NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI®



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne
Canada's university

FACULTÉ DES ÉTUDES SUPÉRIEURES ET POSTOCTORALES



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne
Canada's university

FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSDOCTORAL STUDIES

Heather McAlpine
AUTEUR DE LA THÈSE / AUTHOR OF THESIS

Ph.D. (English Literature)
GRADE / DEGREE

Department of English
FACULTÉ, ÉCOLE, DÉPARTEMENT / FACULTY, SCHOOL, DEPARTMENT

Victorian Emblematics: Structures of Representation in Pre-Raphaelite Literature
TITRE DE LA THÈSE / TITLE OF THESIS

Mary Arseneau
DIRECTEUR (DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS SUPERVISOR

CO-DIRECTEUR (CO-DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS CO-SUPERVISOR

Lorraine Janzen Kooistra (Ryerson University)

Ina Ferris

Ian Dennis

Keith Wilson

Gary W. Slater
Le Doyen de la Faculté des études supérieures et postdoctorales / Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Victorian Emblematics: Structures of Representation in Pre-Raphaelite Literature

Heather McAlpine

Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Ph.D. degree in English

Department of English
Faculty of Arts
University of Ottawa

© Heather McAlpine, Ottawa, Canada, 2009

Library and Archives Canada

Published Heritage Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives Canada

Direction du Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-61253-8
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-61253-8

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

Table of Contents

Title Page i

Table of Contents ii

List of Figures iv

Abstract ix

Dedication xi

Acknowledgements xii

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: The Emblem and its Victorian Contexts 15
- What is an Emblem? 17
- The Development of Emblem Studies 22
- The History of the Genre 33
- Rhetorical and Devotional Emblems 36
- The Emblem and Meditation 39
- Natural and Conventional Theories of Language 41
- The Cupid and Anima and *Schola Cordis* Traditions 43
- The Victorian Context 46

Chapter 2: "Thoughts towards Nature": Pre-Raphaelite Emblematics in *The Germ* 59
- Pre-Raphaelite Beginnings 60
- Aesthetic Hybridity, Emblematic Affinities 68
- *The Germ* 71
- Truth to Nature and "Great Lessonings" 78
- "These symbols had a tongue": Emblematic Poetry in *The Germ* 83
- Typological Emblematics: "The Child Jesus" 99

Chapter 3: "Wise upbraidings": Christina Rossetti's Devotional Emblematics 105
- Background 108
- Naked Emblems in the *Goblin Market* and *Prince's Progress* Volumes 121
- Emblematic Devotional Prose: *Called to Be Saints* and *Time Flies* 150

Chapter 4: "How meet beauty?": Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Emblem **173**
Early Sacramentalism 175
Pre-Raphaelite Connections 183
Emblematic Language: Onomatopoetics 186
God's Language: Hieroglyphics and the Emblem 192
"The Wreck of the Deutschland" 203

Chapter 5: "Devious symbols": Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Unorthodox Emblematics **210**
Background 214
Embracing Emblematics: The PRB Period 233
"Positive Agnosticism" and Revised Works 241
Religious Doubt, Emblematic Continuities: The Later Works 260

Chapter 6: "All are types unmeet": Swinburne and the Limits of the Emblem **276**
Background 277
The Emblem: Admiration and Ambivalence 283
Emblems in Swinburne's Art Criticism 293
Questioning Devotional Emblematics 300
Political Poetry and Rhetorical Emblematics 303
Emblematic Failure and the Sublime 308

Afterword **320**

Appendix: Figures **327**

Works Cited **404**

List of Figures

Figure 1 — Emblem III, Book 1 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (1635).

Figure 2 — Emblem 3 of Andrew Willet's *Sacrorum Emblematum Centuria Una* (1592).

Figure 3 — "*Potentissimus*," in Andrea Alciato's *Emblematum Liber* (1531).

Figure 4 — "*Amiticia Etiam Post Mortem Durans*," in Andrea Alciato's *Emblematum Liber* (1531).

Figure 5 — "*Festina Lente*" (21 July 2009).

Figure 6 — Emblem 6, "*Ficta Religio*" (False Religion) in Andrea Alciato's *Emblematum Liber* (1621).

Figure 7 — Elephant-ant "*festina lente*" motif from Chapter 19, "Polia leads Poliphilo to ruins," in Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499): 244.

Figure 8 — Emblem XX, Book 3 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (1635).

Figure 9 — Emblem 39 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624).

Figure 10 — Emblem 38 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624).

Figure 11 — Emblem 40 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624).

Figure 12 — Emblem IX, Book 5 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (1635).

Figure 13 — Emblem VIII, Book 5 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (1635).

Figure 14 — Emblem X, Book 5 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (1635).

Figure 15 — Emblem I, Book 2 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (1635).

Figure 16 — "Image the Tenth" of Isaac Williams' *The Baptistery, Or, The Way of Eternal Life* (7th ed., 1874).

Figure 17 — Explication for "Image the Tenth" of Isaac Williams' *The Baptistery, Or, The Way of Eternal Life* (7th ed., 1874).

Figure 18 "Hymne" and "Incentive" of Meditation IIII in Henry Hawkins' *The Devout Hart* (1634).

Figure 19 "The tilling of the Heart," Emblem 27 of Christopher Harvey's *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him* (1647).

Figure 20 "The seeding of the Heart," Emblem 28 of Christopher Harvey's *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him* (1647).

Figure 21 "The watering of the Heart," Emblem 29 of Christopher Harvey's *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him* (1647).

Figure 22 "The flying of the Heart," Emblem 38 of Christopher Harvey's *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him* (1647).

Figure 23 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1848-49).

Figure 24 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Proserpine* (1874).

Figure 25 William Holman Hunt, *The Awakening Conscience* (1851-53).

Figure 26 William Holman Hunt, *The Scapegoat* (1854-56).

Figure 27 Filippo Pistrucci, "*Il Mondo*," *Iconologia* (1821).

Figure 28 "The Passionflower," in Peter Parley's (Samuel Griswold Goodrich) *Tales About Plants* (1839).

Figure 29 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "You should have wept her yesterday," frontispiece to Christina Rossetti's *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* (1866).

Figure 30 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "The long hours come and go," title page illustration of Christina Rossetti's *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* (1866).

Figure 31 Emblem II, Book 4 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (1635).

Figure 32 William Holman Hunt, *The Light of the World* (1851-53).

Figure 33 "My Beautiful Lady," etching by Thomas Woolner in *The Germ* 1 (1 Jan 1850).

Figure 34 "The Child Jesus: A Record typical of the five Sorrowful Mysteries," etching

by James Collinson in *The Germ* 2 (31 Jan 1850).

Figure 35 "Cordelia," etching by Ford Madox Brown in *The Germ* 3 (March 1850).

Figure 36 "Viola and Olivia," etching by Walter Howell Deverell in *The Germ* 4 (April 1850).

Figure 37 Three title pages of John Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827, 1875, 1905).

Figure 38 Title page, *The Germ* 1 (1 Jan 1850).

Figure 39 Emblem XIII, Book 3 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (1634).

Figure 40 Emblem XVIII, Book 4 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (1635).

Figure 41 "Holly," in Christina Rossetti's *Called to Be Saints* (1881).

Figure 42 "Cowslip and Veronica," in Christina Rossetti's *Called to Be Saints* (1881).

Figure 43 "Ivy," in Christina Rossetti's *Called to Be Saints* (1881).

Figure 44 Giotto di Bondone, *Lamentation* (1304-06).

Figure 45 "*Tertiae Imaginus*," in Antoine Sucquet's *Via Vitae Aeternae* (1620).

Figure 46 "Fifth Sunday after Epiphany," Christina Rossetti's design for John Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827).

Figure 47a "Motherless baby and babyless mother," illustration by Arthur Hughes for Christina Rossetti's *Sing-Song* (1872).

Figure 47b "Motherless baby and babyless mother," Christina Rossetti's design for *Sing-Song* (1872).

Figure 48 Engraving from Isaac Williams' *The Cathedral* (1841).

Figure 49 "Septuagesima Sunday," Christina Rossetti's design for John Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827).

Figure 50 Emblem XV, Book 3 of Francis Quarles' *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (1635).

Figure 51 Emblem 15 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624).

Figure 52 Emblem XIII, Book 2 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (1635).

Figure 53 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "The Sonnet" (1880).

Figure 54 Emblem XLV, Book 1 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (1635).

Figure 55 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "Golden head by golden head," frontispiece to Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862).

Figure 56 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "Buy from us with a golden curl," illustration for Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862).

Figure 57 Emblem VII, Book 1 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (1635).

Figure 58 "*Ex Parvo Satis*," in Georgette de Montenay's *Emblemes, ou devises chrestiennes* (1571).

Figure 59 Gerard Manley Hopkins, "A Vision of the Mermaids" (1862).

Figure 60 Emblem 22 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624).

Figure 61 Emblem 17 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624).

Figure 62 "Assistance," in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1641).

Figure 63 "Elephantina," in Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499).

Figure 64. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, headpiece sketch for "William and Marie: A Ballad" (c. 1841).

Figure 65 "Poliphilo dreams within his dream," in Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499).

Figure 66 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Sibylla Palmifera* (1866-70).

Figure 67 "*Res Immoderata Cvpido est*," in Otto Vaenius's *Emblematica Amoris* (1608).

Figure 68 "The Story of Bertrand," in John Bewick's *A Looking-Glass for the Mind* (1796).

Figure 69 "Fable XXVII: Fortune and the School-boy," in Thomas Bewick's *Fables of Aesop and Others* (1784; 1886).

Figure 70a William Blake, "Water," in *For Children: The Gates of Paradise* (1793).

Figure 70b William Blake, "Earth," in *For Children: The Gates of Paradise* (1793).

Figure 71 "*Aethiopem Lavare*," in Geffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems, and Other Devises* (1536).

Figure 72 Eugene Delacroix, *The 28th of July: Liberty Leading the People* (1830).

Figure 73 "Thus, O My Soul!" (*Ainsi mon Ame*) in Margaret Gatty's *Emblems for Children* (1872).

Figure 74 Robert Louis Stevenson, Emblem V.II of *Moral Emblems* (1881; 1921).

Figure 75 "Matilda, who told lies and was burned to death," in Hilaire Belloc and BTB (Basil Templeton Blackwood), *Cautionary Tales for Children* (1907).

Figure 76 Heinrich Hoffmann, *Der Struwwelpeter* (1845).

Abstract

This project examines the influence of the emblem on the literature of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. My dissertation builds on the insights of such scholars as Lorraine Janzen Kooistra and D.M.R. Bentley, both of whom have noted the indebtedness of the Rossettis to the English emblem tradition, but I posit a more central role for emblem strategies in the Pre-Raphaelite movement by expanding the scope of emblem studies to include both normative emblems (visual-verbal tripartite constructions) and emblematic discourse that employs a strictly verbal strategy of representation. I mark the trajectory of the emblem through the Pre-Raphaelite movement by focusing on five key points: the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's short-lived illustrated magazine, *The Germ*; the poetry and devotional prose of Christina Rossetti (*Goblin Market and Other Poems*, *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems*, *Called to Be Saints*, *Time Flies*); Gerard Manley Hopkins' onomatopoetic theory of language (as expressed in "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and elsewhere); Dante Gabriel Rossetti's movement from confident belief in the divine and the signifying power of the devotional emblem to religious and representational uncertainty (in works such as "My Sister's Sleep" and *The House of Life*); and Algernon Charles Swinburne's challenging of the emblem's representational limits (in *Chastelard* and "Laus Veneris," as well as in other works). Put simply, the Pre-Raphaelite movement's use of emblematic aesthetic strategies traces an arc from the orthodox and logocentric through the uncertain and eccentric to the unorthodox and subversive. The consistent incorporation of emblem structures into the very diverse literature of this group points to the movement's rootedness in older traditions, calling into question the critical tendency to view Pre-Raphaelite literature as anticipating the modern. The presence of emblems in this literature

also testifies to the emblem's astonishing endurance, flexibility, and usefulness as a tool for both rhetorical and moral-aesthetic ends.

Dedication

For my parents, who have always encouraged me to pursue what I enjoy,

and for Alex, whose unwavering love and support makes it all worthwhile.

Acknowledgements

My thanks are due first and foremost to my advisor, Professor Mary Arseneau, whose patience, enthusiasm for the project, encouragement and dedication saw me through each step of the often challenging dissertation process.

Thanks also to Ryan Stephenson, Colleen Fulton, Katie Moore, Ang Wilson, Hazel Atkins, Janne Cleveland, Dave Lafferty, Robert Evans, Paul and Sylvie Jasen, Mike McAlpine, and many others, too numerous to name, for their camaraderie and encouragement along the way.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the significant support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Ontario Graduate Scholarships program for providing me with scholarships throughout my doctoral candidacy, as well as the Association of Part-Time Professors of the University of Ottawa, the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and the Graduate Students' Association of the University of Ottawa, for supporting my research and conferencing with travel grants.

I wish to extend a special thanks to Stephanie Plowman, Special Collections Librarian at Gonzaga University's Foley Center Library, for her help in accessing the records of the Bischoff Collection of Hopkins materials. I would also like to thank the staff of the Rare Books and Special Collections Library at the University of British Columbia and the British Library Manuscript Reading Room, who helped me explore some of the Rossetti family's key personal documents.

Finally, I am grateful for illustrations which appear by the kind permission of Professor William Barker, The British Library, The English Emblem Book Project, The William Blake Archive, Susan Rossetti Plowden, Glasgow University Library, Michael

Sporn Animation, MIT Press, The Rossetti Archive (Jerome McGann), and The Thomas Cooper Rare Book Library at the University of South Carolina. Every effort has been made to trace and contact all copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked, I would be pleased to make the necessary arrangements at the first opportunity.

Introduction

> Before the knowledge of letters, God was knowne by Hieroglyphicks; And, indeed, what are the Heavens, the Earth, nay every Creature, but Hieroglyphicks and Emblemes of His Glory? (Francis Quarles, "To the Reader," *Emblemes*)

> The works of God above, below,
> Within us and around,
> Are pages in that book, to show
> How God Himself is found. (John Keble, "Septuagesima Sunday," *The Christian Year* 4-8)

In the final chapter of *Speaking Pictures*, Michael Bath interrogates the belief, still widely held, that emblems and emblem books ceased to be taken seriously as a legitimate branch of literature in the early eighteenth century, and that this indicates a fundamental shift in English culture – a Foucauldian epistemic break (255, 270). Indeed, as Bath goes on to demonstrate, while the normative, picture-motto-explication style of emblem book produced during the Renaissance did become marginalized in the nineteenth century, a considerable number of key late-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts remained profoundly indebted to the "symbolic modes" clustered around the emblem (280).[1] The emblematism of these later texts goes largely unnoticed, Bath argues, because the emblem had by this time evolved from a fixed, tripartite verbal-visual form into a discourse, a habit of mind and a set of hermeneutic practices shaping *un*illustrated literature: as a result, while these nineteenth-

[1] Criticism is gradually beginning to acknowledge that such diverse writers as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the Brontës, Alfred Tennyson, Emily Dickinson, John Keble and the Tractarians were aware of and influenced by the emblem. Coleridge makes no fewer than five references to the works of seventeenth-century emblematist Francis Quarles, whom he deeply admired, in his *Notebooks* (Bath 275); Helena Ardholm posits that Charlotte Brontë employs emblematic motifs and discourse to render her characters' spiritual journeys in *Jane Eyre* (95; 104-05); Bath notes Tennyson's use of typology and the discourse of "Types" in *In Memoriam*, and while he cautions that this should not be seen as positive proof that Tennyson consciously participates in the emblem tradition, he urges further study of the possible connection; George Monteiro argues that some of the imagery in the poetry of Emily Dickinson is indebted to the emblem tradition. I discuss Keble's and the Tractarians' relationship to the emblem – which is acknowledged by Karl Josef Höltgen, Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, Aakanksha Virkar-Yates, and others – in more detail below.

century works "do not [appear to] conform strictly with the symbolic structure of the Renaissance emblem," they are in fact participants in that tradition (280). Critics should therefore take care not to be blinded to the emblem structures and strategies operative in non-normative contexts. Like Bath, I want to argue that acknowledging the emblem's extraordinary pliancy and resilience as a discourse allows us finally to recognize its deep influence on the literature and art of the Victorian period. This recognition, in turn, opens up significant new avenues of investigation into Victorian – and specifically, for the purposes of my project, Pre-Raphaelite – poetics.

A comparison of the two passages quoted at the head of this section is revealing of the continuities between Renaissance and Victorian devotional emblematic habits of mind. The first passage is taken from Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (1635), a normative text in the English emblem tradition which combines illustrations with poetic explication, while the second is an excerpt from Oxford Movement divine and poet Keble's popular (unillustrated) book of devotional verse, *The Christian Year* (1827). Quarles' address to the reader draws an analogy between the visible world and Egyptian hieroglyphics, a pictogrammatic genre which inspired early emblems, and which was believed in Quarles' time to have been a vestige of the biblical Adam's perfect, natural language. The earth and all its creatures are cast here as signs authored by God which refer back to Himself and His attributes; "Hierogliphicks" like the ones in Quarles's book call attention to that fact by presenting those signs alongside explications of their significance. Emblems thus do not create meaning, but rather draw out the divine significance already encoded in natural objects by employing a hermeneutic homologous to God's own. Thus, emblems both teach a particular precept, and model a method of "reading" the created world

for further knowledge of God. In other words, emblem books reproduce the sacramental structure of the world beyond their pages and seek to alert readers to it. Although it was composed nearly 200 years later, Keble's *The Christian Year* adopts the same analogical view of the created world, and although it contains no illustrations, its strategies of representation are of a piece with Quarles' own. The passage from "Septuagesima Sunday" quoted above is especially striking in its reiteration of the textual metaphor that Quarles employs:[2] just as Quarles had characterized the natural world as a series of emblems, so in Keble's text the "works of God" are identified as "pages" in a "book" which "show / How God Himself is found" (7-8). In both cases, this description applies equally to the books themselves: although *The Christian Year* contains no pictures and is therefore not normatively emblematic, it consistently "reads" and encourages its readers to decode nature's divine encryptions in a way that places it squarely alongside Quarles in the English emblem tradition.

Just as Quarles and Keble sought to sharpen the ability of their readers to interpret correctly, so my project seeks to attune readers of Victorian poetry to the emblematic structures and strategies at work in the texts of that period. Specifically, my dissertation traces the evolution of emblematic discourse as a strategy of representation central to the literature of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. As I discuss in Chapter 1, the presence of emblem discourse in these works has been chronically overlooked, due in part – ironically – to the impact of studies which identify typology as a central concern in Pre-Raphaelite

---

[2] Keble's use of this metaphor places him within a long tradition of analogical thought which views the world as a "Book of Nature" analogous to the Bible, composed by God, to provide further lessons and guidance to humankind. A notable eighteenth-century iteration of this concept, one which had a profound impact on Keble's own ideas, is Bishop Joseph Butler's popular *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed* (1736). In this treatise, Butler argues that structural parallels between the Bible and nature suggest that both were authored by the same intelligence.

literature, by such scholars as George P. Landow, G.B. Tennyson, and Herbert Sussman. Figuralism is defined as the belief that temporal objects and events are at once tangible reality and symbolic of the transcendent (Sussman, *Fact into Figure* xvii); typology, a major branch of figural hermeneutics, is a method of biblical interpretation in which persons and events in the Old Testament are understood as "prefiguring" the persons and events of the New. Emblematics is a related but distinct signifying practice. While typology and the symbolic practices it entailed were undoubtedly influential on the works of the Pre-Raphaelites, less is presently understood about the equally important role of the emblem in this context: my project seeks to address this omission in criticism.

Those few critics who have acknowledged the presence of emblems in Pre-Raphaelite works have tended to focus on isolated images drawn from existing, normative emblem texts in individual Pre-Raphaelite works. Gisela Hönnighausen's "Emblematic Tendencies in the Works of Christina Rossetti" (1972), for example, argues that Christina makes extensive use of floral emblems in specific poems ("When I am dead, my dearest," "Goblin Market") and devotional prose works (*Time Flies*, *Called to Be Saints*).[3] Lorraine Janzen Kooistra's *Christina Rossetti and Illustration: A Publishing History* (2002) takes a more comprehensive approach, establishing Christina and Dante Gabriel Rossetti's immersion in the English and Italian emblem traditions, and arguing productively that Christina's verbal-visual habits of composition were fully emblematic in their attempt to extend the meaning of her works "by introducing a nonlinguistic form and a hermeneutic framework" (6). However, Kooistra's study directs its attention to Christina's verbal-visual works, and does not examine the emblematic structures which mark her unillustrated poetry

[3] While the informality is regrettable, because I discuss all four Rossetti siblings at various points in this thesis, I will frequently refer to them by their first names.

and prose. D.M.R. Bentley's "Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Anglo-Dutch Emblem Tradition" (2005) closely analyzes Dante Gabriel's indebtedness to the emblems of George Wither and Quarles in his book illustrations and "double works." While Bentley scrutinizes the explicative structures in some of Dante Gabriel's poems, he too focuses mainly on verbal-visual works, calling attention especially to parallels of imagery between normative emblem texts and Dante Gabriel's illustrations and illuminations. Mary Lou McKenna's "Masks of Words and Painted Plots: Swinburne and Nineteenth-Century Emblematics" (1995), meanwhile, is an important step towards recognizing the centrality of emblematics to Algernon Charles Swinburne's poetics, but its analysis is restricted to Swinburne's Mary, Queen of Scots trilogy (*Chastelard*, *Bothwell*, *Mary Stuart*).[4]

While my study builds on the insights of these scholars, it posits a more central role for emblem strategies in the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Through close readings of a selection of poetry and prose works by a range of Pre-Raphaelite authors, this study will attempt to reveal the persistence of the emblem as a discourse and a strategy that shapes Pre-Raphaelite literature from its earliest Ruskin- and Oxford Movement-inspired moral-aesthetic moments in *The Germ* to its more unorthodox, "art-for-art's sake" period in the works of Swinburne. Despite considerable differences in the views and aims of the authors

---

[4] Other scholars have written extensively on the verbal-visual nature of Pre-Raphaelite poetic from a different perspective, including, most notably, Jerome McGann (*Black Riders*, 1993; *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Game That Must Be Lost*, 2000; *The Rossetti Archive*, 2008) and Elizabeth K. Helsinger (*Poetry and the Pre-Raphaelite Arts*, 2008). McGann's work on Dante Gabriel Rossetti's artistic practice understands it as pre-modern experimental pastiche, with an essentially self-reflexive aesthetic goal. (Chapter 5 deals in greater detail with McGann's readings of Dante Gabriel.) In a similar vein, Helsinger discusses what she views as the three main strategies deployed by Dante Gabriel and his fellow Pre-Raphaelite, William Morris, in their quest to revitalize art: formal and thematic repetition; translation of material from other cultures and languages as well as other media; and "acts of attention," by which she means a mode of perception demanded by the experience of poetry and the arts, but also necessary in the everyday activities of a healthy society. Of these, the last most closely resembles what my own project describes as the Pre-Raphaelites' attempt to revive and encourage emblematic habits of mind in their audience. However, while my project identifies those habits of mind as mainly sacramental and concerned with inculcating an awareness of the presence of the spiritual in the temporal, Helsinger's analysis is primarily concerned with Dante Gabriel's interest in liminal psychological states and intense, particularized sensory experience (see especially her chapter "Acts of Attention," 24-54).

who use it, the emblem remains a consistent representational strategy in Pre-Raphaelite works across a span of some 50 years. In this way, along with typological symbolism, emblematics may be understood as a common thread joining the disparate artists and poets associated with the Pre-Raphaelite movement. The variety of uses to which the emblem is put by the participants in this movement can, I argue, serve as an index to both differences and shifts in these writers' aesthetic, religious and ontological beliefs.

My dissertation marks the trajectory of the emblem through the Pre-Raphaelite movement by focusing on five key points: the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's short-lived, manifesto-like magazine, *The Germ*; the poetry and devotional prose of Christina Rossetti; Hopkins' onomatopoetics; Dante Gabriel Rossetti's movement from the stability of orthodox belief in the divine and the signifying power of the devotional emblem to religious and representational uncertainty; and Swinburne's challenging of the emblem's representational limits. Put simply, the Pre-Raphaelite movement's use of emblematic aesthetic strategies traces an arc from the orthodox and logocentric through the uncertain and eccentric to the unorthodox and subversive. The devotional emblem is initially adopted by the PRB as a strategy which allows for the figural representation of nature, and it continues to be used for that purpose by Christina Rossetti and Hopkins, both of whom retained a deep belief that the natural world is a system of signs pointing back to God. Dante Gabriel Rossetti's crisis of religious and ontological doubt caused him to cling to emblematics as a source of stability in his work, but as his revisions to earlier poems show, his focus gradually shifts from the moral didacticism of the devotional emblem tradition to the earthly sensuality of the rhetorical and esoteric traditions. Finally, Swinburne's invocation of emblem strategies to treat the sublime reveals his nostalgia for the now-lost logocentric faith it represents, but his

works continually expose its limitations as a strategy for the representation of "ultimate truths," as well as the illusiveness of "ultimate truths" themselves.

Chapter 1 (The Emblem and its Victorian Contexts) begins by establishing the definition of "emblem" my study employs. Building on the theories of German emblem scholars Albrecht Schöne and Walter Jöns, as well as American scholar Daniel Russell, I discuss the emblem not in terms of its formal elements, which vary widely, but rather as a discourse or a system of representation employed in a variety of texts. Like these critics, I seek to examine dynamic discursive processes rather than fixed forms. This approach is the most appropriate for the purposes of my study, which incorporates discussions of image-text hybrid works, but focuses primarily on verbal elements: not only does it recognize the emblem genre's inherent fluidity, it also allows for the study of emblematic structures in otherwise non-normatively emblematic texts, including unillustrated literature. Along with an overview of major emblem scholarship to date, this chapter provides a brief history of the development of the two major strains of the emblem genre: the rhetorical, which emerges from the Classical tradition of argumentation from commonplaces, and the devotional, which develops alongside Christian meditation and purports to elucidate the divine significance of natural objects. In this context I also discuss the emblem's ties to natural and conventional theories of language and introduce two major sub-categories of the devotional emblem, the Cupid and Anima and *Schola Cordis* (School of the Heart) traditions. Finally, this chapter examines the Victorian context for emblematics, looking specifically at the Tractarian revival of the genre and clarifying distinctions between emblematics and other branches of figural hermeneutics.

Chapter 2 ("Thoughts towards Nature": Pre-Raphaelite Emblematics in *The Germ*)

argues that in its earliest and most coherent phase (1848-50), the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood adopted the representational methods of the emblem to call attention to the sacramental nature of the material world and to align its audience's perceptions of nature with this sacramental view. Following an overview of the Brotherhood's formation and early principles, this chapter attempts a re-examination of early Pre-Raphaelite works by placing them within the context of the English emblem tradition. By closely examining the poetry, illustrations and essays published in the four issues of *The Germ*, the art and poetry magazine that was intended to serve as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's moral and aesthetic mouthpiece, I want to show that from its inception, the Pre-Raphaelite movement drew on both devotional and rhetorical emblematic methods as a way of reconciling its figural aims with its realist aesthetic. As this chapter seeks to demonstrate, the emblem's didactic aims, figural ontology and association with text-image constructions and visual space (as opposed to historiography, typology's area of concern) was uniquely suited to the PRB's mixed-media interests and moral-aesthetic aims. Among the works in *The Germ* that this chapter analyzes are essays setting forth the group's aesthetic principles, including "Modern Giants," "The Subject in Art" (parts I and II), and "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art"; emblematic poems such as Robert Calder Campbell's "Sonnet" and Christina Rossetti's "Song"; and the poem and etching of "The Child Jesus, A Record Typical of the Five Sorrowful Mysteries," whose suggestive parallels with established emblem literature are a strong indication of the group's emblematic aims and methods.

Chapter 3 ("Wise upbraidings": Christina Rossetti's Devotional Emblematics) closely examines Christina Rossetti's use of the devotional emblem, which remained consistent and orthodox throughout her career as a writer of both prose and poetry. Her

continued use of the devotional emblem as a hermeneutic strategy whose goal is the representation of a God-infused natural world signals her unwavering faith in the divine authorship of the temporal world and sets her apart, in this regard, from many of her Pre-Raphaelite fellows who drifted away from figural aesthetics following the collapse of the initial Brotherhood. Christina was exposed to normative emblem books by Isaac Williams, Filippo Pistrucci, Peter Parley, and possibly Quarles, and it is even more certain that she read and admired the "naked" or verbally emblematic works of George Herbert, St. Augustine and John Bunyan, as well as those of the Tractarian poets, including Keble. Moreover, she responded in an active way to several of these texts by hand-illustrating them with small drawings and imitating them in her early work, facts which suggest they had a formative influence on her mature poetry. Thus, while it seems probable that Christina was aware of the normative English emblem tradition, she was also interested in how emblematic discourse could be used as a strategy of sacramental representation in purely – or predominantly – verbal texts. In this chapter, I perform close readings of selected poems in her major volumes, *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862), and *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* (1866). Both of these volumes, I argue, function as extended emblems: the title poems in each function as *picturae*, while the devotional poems which follow explicate the imagery in an explicitly moralizing context. I also examine the emblematic structures which shape two of her devotional prose works, *Called to Be Saints: The Minor Festivals Devotionally Studied* (1881), and *Time Flies: A Reading Diary* (1885), demonstrating their participation in the emblematic traditions of the herbal and the occasional meditation, respectively.

Surprisingly, given the apparent idiosyncrasy of his poetics, Hopkins – who, like

Christina Rossetti, retained strong biblically-based incarnational beliefs – makes straightforward use of devotional emblematic discourse in his writings. Chapter 4 ("How meet beauty?": Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Emblem) reveals how Hopkins' early Tractarian leanings, interest in Pre-Raphaelitism, 1866 conversion to Catholicism and subsequent enrollment as a Jesuit conditioned him for emblematics by exposing him to sacramentalism, a belief which marked both his religious and his artistic practices, and to emblem books in the Jesuit tradition. I argue against the critical tendency to view Hopkins' eccentric, experimental poetics as an anticipation of modernism: indeed, as I show, his poetry is not only typically Victorian in its moral-aesthetic preoccupations, but it also represents an attempt to revive much earlier hermeneutic practices clustered around emblematics. Specifically, I see Hopkins' onomatopoetic approach to language as belonging to the Renaissance tradition of hieroglyphics, a theory which preceded devotional emblematics and posits a necessary relationship between things and the words that name them. As I show, suggestive correspondences between this little-discussed facet of Renaissance emblematics and Hopkins' own beliefs and practices can help to situate some of the most puzzling aspects of his poetics as integral with his sacramentalism and further proof of his participation in the emblem tradition. Through the lens of emblematics, this chapter re-examines a selection of Hopkins' nature poetry ("Spring," "Easter," "To what serves Mortal Beauty?"), his devotional Jesuit poetry ("The Half-Way House," "Rosa Mystica," "The Blessed Virgin Compared to the Air we Breathe"), and his major work, "The Wreck of the Deutschland," as well as contextual material from his journals and sermons.

Despite clear differences of religious affiliation and poetic style, Christina Rossetti and Hopkins employ devotional emblematic strategies in a similarly orthodox way, to

reflect, reaffirm and represent their logocentric or analogical view of nature and the created world. Devotional emblems claim to discover – rather than manufacture – lessons in the objects they examine. The devotional tradition views the significance of a created object as divinely ordained and prior to any intervention on the part of the emblematist; for this reason, the association between signifier and signified in the devotional emblem is believed necessary. Christina and Hopkins draw directly and confidently on this tradition, which in their works forms the center of an aesthetic strategy for representing the ineffable and revealing the presence of the divine in the physical world. For these poets, the meaning of objects and events – and, by extension, the meaning of the signs which represent those things – is stable because it is grounded in and guaranteed by God, who they view as the source of all meaning. Because it springs from precisely this kind of incarnational ontology, the devotional emblem serves both to reflect and to confirm these writers' logocentric views. As the fifth chapter ("Devious symbols": Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Unorthodox Emblematics) will demonstrate, however, the Pre-Raphaelite use of emblematic structures reaches a turning point in the work of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Just as his religious beliefs and aesthetic aims underwent a radical shift in the post-PRB phase of career, so his use of emblems deviates from its initial participation in the devotional mode to draw on the more eccentric and esoteric rhetorical emblem tradition.

While a member of the PRB and a contributor to *The Germ*, Dante Gabriel Rossetti led the charge towards figural hermeneutics with his pious and orthodox use of devotional emblem strategies, a fact evidenced in his early poetry ("My Sister's Sleep"; "St. Luke the Painter") and in his frequent pairing of symbolic paintings with explicative poems ("The Girlhood of Mary Virgin"). In this period, along with his Pre-Raphaelite brethren, Dante

Gabriel sought to revive the devotional impulse and integrated aesthetic and religious sensibility that characterized the art of the middle ages. Following the Brotherhood's collapse in the 1850s, however, he drifted away from orthodox Christian belief and became less sure of the sacramental premises underlying his earlier aesthetic programme. As a result, where his early work is confident, didactic and steeped in sacramentalism, his later work is marked by uncertainty. Contrary to what might be expected, Dante Gabriel's crisis of faith did not lead him to renounce the emblem as a representational strategy. Rather, as this chapter shows, he turned away from devotional and toward rhetorical emblematics as a way of producing discursive stability when he could no longer believe it to inhere in signs themselves. As this chapter shows, his revisions to earlier poems consistently replace devotional emblem motifs with those belonging to more esoteric traditions, and his later poetry, especially *The House of Life*, employs the personified abstractions typical of classical rhetorical emblems to treat more secular and erotic themes. To put the matter simply, Dante Gabriel's use of the emblem was shaped as much by his anxiety over his loss of faith in a sacramental universe as Christina's and Hopkins' was shaped by their security in that belief.

While these three poets differ on issues of world-view and religious belief, all understand the emblem as a fitting strategy for the representation of sublime experience – whether that experience is of a divine nature, as in the case of Christina and Hopkins, or of a more earthly, erotic nature, as in the case of Dante Gabriel. On the other hand, as the sixth and final chapter ("All are types unmeet": Swinburne and the Limits of the Emblem) shows, the work of Algernon Charles Swinburne represents an ironic end-stage in the evolution of Pre-Raphaelite emblematics. His more confident antitheism and republicanism set him apart

from the other Pre-Raphaelite poets, and his playful, subversive use of the emblem reflects this very different religious and political position. Although his bibliomania and passion for emblem literature by such English greats as George Wither bred in him a strong affection for the emblem genre, as well as a nostalgia for the confident belief in "ultimate truths" that tradition represents, he was (somewhat regretfully) unable to see the emblem – as other Pre-Raphaelites did – as a means of achieving or representing such certainty. Indeed, he felt unable to believe in "ultimate truth" itself. Thus, while Christina Rossetti and Hopkins confidently use the emblem to affirm their logocentric views, and while Dante Gabriel Rossetti clings to emblem strategies for comfort in the midst of religious and ontological uncertainty, Swinburne continually employs emblematic structures only to expose their representational limits and to subvert the emblem's traditional role as a strategy for the representation of the ineffable. Looking closely at his Mary, Queen of Scots verse dramas (*Chastelard*, *Bothwell*, *Mary Stuart*), his literary criticism (*William Blake* and *Essays and Studies*) and a selection of both well-known and overlooked poems ("Laus Veneris," *Songs Before Sunrise*, "What is Death?"), I show how emblematic structures in Swinburne's poetry consistently destabilize rather than affirm meaning and "truth."

J. Hillis Miller's *The Disappearance of God* (1963) urged a renewed consciousness of the Bible's centrality to Victorian culture and literature; the work of G.B. Tennyson, Sussman and Landow stressed the influence on Victorians of typological approaches to Scripture; Caroline Levine and Herbert F. Tucker remind us, meanwhile, that a responsible historicist approach to the literature of the Victorian period must also account for its formal elements: by becoming "better readers of form," they argue, we may "invigorate our reading of culture" (85). My study takes heed of all of these suggestions, combining close readings

of visual and literary texts with accounts of their specific historical-cultural contexts to argue that the presence of emblem strategies in Pre-Raphaelite literature is an important indication of the emblem's endurance and relevance in the Victorian period. Far from mere ornament or antique curiosity, the emblem is a central component of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic programme in all its variations, as this project attempts to show. The consistent incorporation of emblem structures into the very diverse literature of this group also points to the genre's astonishing flexibility, adaptability, and usefulness as a tool for both rhetorical and moral-aesthetic ends. While this study builds on the work of previous scholarship which identifies emblem imagery in isolated Victorian texts, it advances a broader claim about the foundational role of emblematics in the evolution of the Pre-Raphaelite poetic. In this way, my dissertation represents a step towards bridging a number of gaps in the study of Victorian literature. Just as the emblem's transformation from a mixed tripartite form into a discourse made it more difficult to trace in non-normative works, so the persistence of disciplinary boundaries between literary and emblem studies has often prevented critics of literature from recognizing emblematic structures in literary texts. At the same time, the near-exclusive focus of emblem studies on Medieval and Renaissance works has led to an under-acknowledgement of the emblem's Victorian incarnations. This study attempts to address these disciplinary deficiencies. Finally, my project builds on recent scholarship that attempts to rescue Pre-Raphaelite art from the critical tendency to evaluate it "according to how closely it anticipates the 'modern'" (Sussman, *Fact into Figure* xv). By highlighting the movement's historical background, rather than its anticipation of modernism, this study gestures towards English Victorian poetry's important but under-recognized affinities with Renaissance traditions and Continental devotional literature.

Chapter 1:

The Emblem and its Victorian Contexts

In her seminal *English Emblem Books* (1948), Rosemary Freeman states that the emblem "ceased to be regarded as a serious branch of literature" (1) after 1686, when the first emblem book for children was produced. More recently, many scholars – including Gisela Hönnighausen (1972), Karl Josef Höltgen (1986), Lothar Hönnighausen (1988), Wendy R. Katz (1993), Michael Bath (1994), Lorraine Janzen Kooistra (2002), Alan R. Young (2005), and D.M.R. Bentley (2005) – have corrected that assumption. Critics now agree on the "enduring relevance and adaptability of the emblem genre" (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 278) in Victorian culture: the Victorian fascination with Medieval and Gothic themes brought about a renewal of interest in the emblem led by "antiquarians, collectors and revivalists" (Höltgen, *Aspects* 141); not only did seventeenth-century emblem books by George Wither and Francis Quarles (among others) remain popular, appearing periodically in new editions well into the nineteenth century, but some fifteen entirely original emblem books were produced between 1809 and 1881 (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 255). Even more important than this continued interest in and production of traditional emblem books, for the purposes of this study, was the persistence in Victorian literature of emblematic discourse. While recent scholarship has made great strides in tracing the emblem's evolution from its sixteenth-century origins as a fixed tripartite form into its later development as a more broadly conceived hermeneutic practice, the extent to which this tradition represents an important model of reading and writing for the Victorians has yet to be established, making studies of the emblem in Victorian literature suggestive but sketchy. Emblem scholars have

begun to turn their attention to the literature of the Victorian period (most notably in *The Art of the Emblem*, 1993) and English literary scholars have started interrogating the role of emblems in specific Victorian texts, but disciplinary and linguistic boundaries continue to obscure the importance of the emblem as a means of signification in nineteenth-century literature more generally.

The interdisciplinary nature of Pre-Raphaelite studies, on the other hand, has generated considerable interest in emblems. The fundamentally verbal-visual nature of the Pre-Raphaelites' most characteristic works, considered in light of the movement's sacramentalism and overtly moral-didactic aims, demands an approach that takes into account the earlier (and likely related) emblem tradition. Several recent studies call attention to the emblematic nature of early Pre-Raphaelite verbal-visual works: Bentley elucidates Dante Gabriel Rossetti's indebtedness to the Anglo-Dutch emblem tradition, while Kooistra's *Christina Rossetti and Illustration: A Publishing History* identifies the emblem as a significant source of both Rossettis' aesthetics, placing vital emphasis on the fact that "[Christina] Rossetti's methods of production were informed by visual-verbal principles and practices at all stages of her creative work" (8). These are important steps toward a more complete understanding of the role of the emblem in Pre-Raphaelite literature. Through an analysis of a range of Pre-Raphaelite texts, my thesis will attempt to further widen the scope of Pre-Raphaelite emblem studies by arguing that the emblem offered a model of signification and interpretation that was uniquely suited to the early movement's focus on reforming the moral perceptions of their English audience, as well as to the sacramental aesthetic that developed out of that project. Furthermore, the emblem presented a way of anchoring and guaranteeing meaning in the works of such Pre-Raphaelite

poets as Dante Gabriel who, in the later stages of the movement, had drifted away from the logocentric, Christian beliefs of the Brotherhood. Finally, as I hope to show, the late-century works of antitheist Charles Algernon Swinburne expose the limits of the emblem as a strategy for the representation of sublimity.

What is an Emblem?

But first: what is an emblem? Although emblematics has received increasing critical attention in the last twenty years, it is still a much-neglected branch of literary study. Thus it seems not only appropriate but necessary to begin with a coherent answer to that question, even though, as early as 1946, Henri Stegemeier hoped that "the term emblem need not be again and again defined by everyone who today discusses the subject" (27). Nearly forty years later, Daniel Russell recalls this quote from Stegemeier even as he struggles to define his subject in *The Emblem and Device in France* (1985). Now some twenty years after Russell's reiteration of Stegemeier's hope, both the term and the branch of literature it denotes remain misunderstood, under-acknowledged, and even unknown to many literary scholars. Part of the reason for this has to do with the deep disciplinary boundaries that continue to divide literature from art history, studies of English culture from studies of continental culture, and English-language literary criticism from that carried out in other languages, notably German.

Although many scholars speak of an English emblem tradition, English emblems are, properly speaking, derivative of a continental genre and "remained in close touch with continental developments during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 9), something even critics who are aware of the emblem often

neglect. Another blind spot is the valuable contribution of German emblem theorists like Albrecht Schöne and Dietrich Jöns, which remained inaccessible to non-German-speakers until Peter Daly's 1979 analysis of them in English. However, just as Stegemeier finishes his thought by admitting that to continually define and re-define the emblem may be appropriate as this was also "the practice of the early creators of emblem books" (27), so Daniel Russell, among others, doubts modern emblem theorists will ever arrive at a "general definition of the emblem which will provide an acceptable description of all emblem books, wherever they were composed, and at whatever time in the history of the emblematic forms" (*Emblem and Device* 16). This is mainly because the emblem was, from its inception, a fluid genre. The notion of what constituted an emblem evolved over time as actual emblems were adapted for different ends in different cultural and historical moments. "To define the emblem," affirms Alastair Fowler, "is to make a rope of sand" (2): definitions that fit the emblems of a particular time and place become incoherent when they encounter slight variations, emblems of a different period or those belonging to another national tradition. Generalising, synchronic statements about the emblem are seldom, for that reason, satisfactory.

A useful starting point in defining the emblem for the purposes of this study would be to describe it as a genre of literature, arising in the Renaissance, which combines an allegorical picture (*pictura*) with a verse explication of that picture (*explicatio*) and a pithy and enigmatic motto (or *lemma*) on a page. Peter Daly and Mary Silcox characterize it as a "mixed form, a hybrid containing graphics and texts" (*Modern Critical Reception* 5). As the history of the emblem will demonstrate, this is the case for some, but not all emblems; however, this configuration of picture and text represents the most readily-recognizable or

"normative" model of the emblem. Thus while a definition that fits all emblems has been elusive, most critics can agree that the work of seventeenth-century author George Wither, for example, is emblematic in this way. The third emblem in *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* (1635) contains a picture showing two inscribed tablets, in front of which is an outstretched arm holding a sword (Fig. 1). The Latin motto, which rings the circular picture, reads "*lex regit et arma tuentur*" – Wither has translated this into an English title which gives the "lesson" or moral of the emblem as "the Law is given to direct; the Sword, to punish and protect." This tripartite structure is undeniably emblematic in the normative sense: it combines a motto and an allegorical picture (the tablets represent the law while the arm and sword figure the enforcement of that law, presumably as carried out by a ruler) with an explication of the picture's meaning in poetic verse.

Emblematic literature is now generally regarded as having extended beyond this normative type. Andrew Willet's *Sacrorum Emblematum Centuria Una* (1592) is classed as an emblematic text even though, unlike Wither's *Emblemes*, it contains no pictures (Fig. 2). First of all, that this book names its verse units "*emblemata*" suggests that the text partakes in the discourse of emblematics. Some of his *emblemata* are concrete or pattern poems (an ancient Greek form revived during the Renaissance at around the same time as the vogue for emblems was at its height), some are acrostics, and others take the form of dialogues. Many of them explicate an absent *pictura*: the second emblem, for instance, addressed to an Earl, "reads" the image of a nobleman's coat of arms as an accurate and flattering portrait of the man:

> Renowned Earle loe in your armes you beare,
>
> not without cause a loftie headed Deare,

such properties well might you haue,
which are found in this beast so braue,
1. as hee the cud doth chawe,
so thinke you on Gods Lawe.
2. leape wee as an Hart
in heauen we haue part:
3. swifte he to runne,
so euil we must shun. (Emblem 2)

While in each of Wither's normative emblems, the allegorical picture in question is presented to the reader in the form of an engraved plate, Willet's emblems either discuss an absent picture or use typography to create a representative or symbolic image in the textual material itself. The actual coat of arms in Willet's emblem is not shown, but his description of it performs the work of an implied *pictura.* Willet's own name for this variation, a "naked emblem," is still applied to this type of unillustrated emblematic work. But while Willet's text calls itself emblematic, it does not at first glance resemble Wither's. However, even Willet's naked emblems come closer to fitting the normative definition than other texts which have at one time or another been identified as emblematic.

My study aims to discuss the emblem not in terms of its formal elements, which vary widely, but rather as a discourse or a system of representation employed in a variety of texts. This way of looking at emblems builds on the work of German emblem scholars Schöne (*Emblematik und Drama im Zeitalter des Barock,* 1964; Emblematics and Drama in the Baroque Period) and Jöns (*Das 'Sinnen-Bild'. Studien zur allegorischen Bildlichkeit bei Andreas Gryphius,* 1966; The Symbol: Studies of Allegorical Representation in the Work of

Andreas Gryphius), as well as that of American emblem scholar Russell (*The Emblem and Device in France*, 1985), all of whom suggest re-examining the emblem as a dynamic and discursive process, rather than as a fixed form. This approach not only recognizes the emblem genre's inherent fluidity but also allows for studies of emblematic structures in otherwise non-normatively emblematic texts, including unillustrated literature. Jöns's distinction between the emblem as an art form (in German, *Kunstform*) and as a mode of thought (*Denkform*) is helpful in this context: while the former refers to considerations of the emblem as a fixed set of formal elements, the latter acknowledges the emblem's basis in and encouragement of an analogical habit of thought which views natural objects and historical events as signifying things beyond themselves, "independent[ly] of the subjectivity of the writer or artist, observer or reader" (Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 13).[1] Devotional emblems present an object which they subsequently explicate as exemplifying a moral or religious lesson, a process which assumes a set of correspondences between the visible world and invisible truths. As we shall see, emblematics is tied in this way to theories of language: some strains of the emblem tradition understand those correspondences as intrinsic and necessary, while others view them as conventional. Both Schöne and Russell stress this discursive aspect of the emblem. As a result, they see the emblem as a literary genre which is based on and aims at teaching a specific hermeneutic habit: Schöne views the emblem as having a "dual function of representation and interpretation, description and explanation" (22); Russell takes this observation further by asserting that the process of mutual elucidation carried on between the parts of the emblem (whether these are visual or textual or both) "stands for a mode of thought that offers a

[1] Jöns builds his own theory on that of C.S. Lewis, who proposed this distinction for medieval symbolism and allegory in *The Allegory of Love* (1936).

special way of reading, structuring and interpreting the world" (Ardholm 29). Thus, emblems not only seek to teach particular truths, but they also (and perhaps more importantly) embody a lesson in interpretation itself: by learning to read emblems, one learns how to "read" the created world outside the text.

The Development of Emblem Studies

This discursive approach to the emblem grows out of what Helena Ardholm has named the "third generation" of emblem studies, which begins in 1980 with Daly's translation of German emblem scholarship into English, and is represented in the work of such recent scholars as Russell, Silcox and Michael Bath. While some pinpoint British antiquarian Henry Green's 1865 paper arguing for the necessity of a facsimile edition of Geffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* (1586) as the beginning of modern emblem studies (Fowler 1), there were other such calls for reprints of earlier emblem books during the nineteenth century, by such key figures as Samuel Taylor Coleridge[2] and Swinburne (*Letters* 4: 104). However, Green's archival work, including his bibliography of all the editions of emblem "father" Andrea Alciato's emblems – something which "remains a milestone" – and his study of *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers* (1870), which examined the source material of specific emblems described in Shakespeare's works, did indeed lay the "academic ground-work" (Manning 17) for the first generation of English emblem studies as it was carried out by Mario Praz (*Studies in Seventeenth-Century*

[2] Coleridge muses that "A full collection... of the books of emblems and symbols, of all sects and parties, moral, theological or political, including those in the Centenaries and Jubilee volumes published by the Jesuit and other religious orders, is a desideratum in our library literature.... I could dream away an hour on the subject" (*Miscellanies* 249, n3).

Imagery, 1939) and Freeman (Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 10).[3]

Praz's *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery* builds on but represents a departure from Green. While Green views the emblem simply as a combination of textual and visual elements – "the motto gives the subject, the device pictures it, the stanzas clothe it in language more or less poetical" (qtd. in Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 11) – Praz focuses on the interconnection of its parts: in his understanding, emblematic elements are joined together in witty combinations to create enigmas (*Modern Critical Reception* 10). The function of the epigram, for Praz, is to solve the puzzle created by this combination of motto and *pictura* (10). This view of the emblem as a riddling genre proved influential on much subsequent art and literary history; indeed, the major work of this period, Freeman's *English Emblem Books*, takes for granted that reading an emblem means "solving" it:

> the man who had successfully followed an emblem writer through his exposition of the connection between a symbol and its significance was left with the same pleasant assurance... [as] the man who to-day follows the oblique approach of an advertiser to his subject or guesses a clue in a crossword puzzle. For both, it is the wit, the apparent lack of any relation between two ideas and the subsequent establishment of an intellectually convincing link between them, that pleases.... (3)

As Daly demonstrates, the view of the emblem as arbitrary and riddling cast it in a negative light for the following several decades. Its purported association with games led many

---

[3] Daly and Silcox criticize Green's Shakespeare study as bearing "all the traces and enthusiasms and limitations of the amateur. It is speculative, imaginative, and on the whole unreliable" (Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 9-10). Despite these flaws of methodology, however, it was still in print in 1970, one hundred years after its first appearance.

scholars to dismiss it as a frivolous, self-contained and marginal literature. As Daly shows, the term "emblem" became

> almost a term of abuse: in German Eichler (1926), Pongs (1927), Seeberg (1927), Fricke (1933), Keil (1940), Vodosek (1964) and Hayes (1968), and in English Beachcroft (1931), Sharrock (1945), Lederer (1946), Freeman (1948), Mazzeo (1952), de Mourgues (1953) and Goldman (1968) have joined in the chorus denouncing the emblem as 'a degenerate form of allegory,' one of allegory's 'bastard children,' 'an objectionable substitute,' and more mildly, 'a secondary cultural phenomenon... the emblem habit,' a 'fad,' 'the strangest of all Renaissance fashions' and an 'irritating sort of learned game.' (Daly, *Emblem Theory* 11)

Later critics also note that this emphasis on the enigmatic nature of the emblem, while helpful in some instances, fails to account for a number of variations on the genre, especially those which claim to expose a natural connection between an object and a lesson, including emblems in the devotional tradition (Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 11).

John Manning's recent book, *The Emblem* (2002), affirms that some emblems were in fact enigmatic, but offers an alternative view of the genre's relationship to recreation and humour: by placing it within the context of Renaissance festival and celebration (9), Manning reclaims the emblem's supposed "frivolity" and re-examines its affinities with satire and children's literature by, first of all, stressing the fact that Alciato first conceived emblem-writing as a break from more serious work (38). He also corrects Freeman's assumption that the end of the emblem's life as a "serious" genre began when Bunyan dedicated his book of moral emblems to children. In Freeman's account, the early emblem

derived its serious moral lessons from mundane things, and its "descent" into children's literature was the sign of an "intellectual degradation" of the genre "that render[ed] the form unworthy of serious attention" (Manning 150). Manning disagrees. Emblems, in his view, were not suddenly relegated to the nursery after 1686: seventeenth-century copies of emblem books by Wither contain marginal notes and markings which "prove that children visited them with active, even assiduous attention" (148), and many early emblematists, including Alciato and the Dutch poet Jacob Cats, promote their books as serious but pleasant aids to children's learning, as well as childlike but "serious play" for adults (143). So not only were emblem books never *not* intended for children, most were also never not "silly." Moreover, this silliness did not mark them out as a specialized literature for children, since the Bible was understood to employ the same technique: "'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise'" (1 Corinthians 1.27, qtd. in Manning 151).

For all its flaws, Freeman's descriptive historical account of the English emblem tradition remains useful as an introduction to the basic features of the most important emblem books produced in England which, as Bath notes, were virtually unknown in her time (*Speaking Pictures* 1). Certainly, there has not yet been a full-length study of the English emblem to rival hers, and many of her evaluations and assumptions about the emblem remained virtually unchallenged by English scholars until 1979, when Daly imported forty years' worth of German theoretical innovations in emblem studies into English in his *Emblem Theory: Recent German Contributions to the Characterization of the Emblem Genre*, which is a comparison and analysis of the work of Schöne and Jöns. The work of these German theorists, which Daly asserts inspired "virtually every piece of research having to do with emblems published by Germanists" (*Emblem Theory* 9) in the

decade preceding his book, represents the second generation of emblem studies which, almost immediately upon its introduction to English-speaking scholars, sparked the third.[4] Unlike Green, Freeman and Praz, whose work was mainly archival with a "descriptive and evaluative" focus (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 1), Schöne and Jöns examine the habit of mind that lies behind the production and interpretation of the emblem. Most importantly, they "begin to view emblems as discourse" (Ardholm 13, n3; Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 12). As Daly and Silcox explain, Schöne's idea of a dual function for emblems is an important correction to the earlier view of the emblem as an enigma: "that which is depicted" in an emblem "means more than it portrays," Schöne argues; the *pictura*, which he refers to as the "*res picta*" (the thing which is depicted) "is endowed with the power to refer beyond itself; it is a *res significans,*" a thing which signifies (Schöne 21, qtd. in Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 13). In this way, the emblem is not a self-contained puzzle; rather, the various parts of the emblem (*pictura*, *explicatio*, motto) explicate one another in order to point outwards to a further signification. In other words, "the picture is not an illustration of the text, nor is the text an explanation of the picture; their purpose is mutual elucidation of an idea" (Daly, *Emblem Theory* 22).

As useful as Schöne's explanation of the emblem's dual function of representation and interpretation has proven for emblem studies in succeeding decades, it is not easy to see how it distinguishes emblems from other kinds of figurative devices. Bath notes that "by definition, any sign involves representation and interpretation, signifier and signified" (*Speaking Pictures* 4), so this is not necessarily the defining characteristic of an emblem. The distinction, for Schöne, is that the emblem requires "facticity" or "potential facticity,"

---

[4] Ardholm adds Sibylle Penkert's *Emblem und Emblematikrezeption* (1978) (The Emblem and its Reception) to her list of influential German emblem studies.

which refers to the credibility of the motif, its conformity to known truths about the natural world:

> Emblems, [Schöne] reminds us, normally moralise the actual properties of objects in the real world, and they thus depend, in ways that not all metaphor does, on a belief shared by author and reader in the reality of their symbolic object and its properties. (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 4)

Bath grants that this notion of "facticity" agrees with the determination, on the part of both Schöne and Jöns, to view the emblem in the light of what they believe to be its indebtedness to medieval allegory and biblical exegetical strategies, especially typology. This indebtedness, Schöne believes, is due to a "related mode of perception" underlying both medieval allegory and the emblem (Schöne 46; qtd. in Daly, *Emblem Theory* 52). The emblem operates by presenting a picture whose meaning is unlocked by an interpretive text, a mechanism which may be traced back

> to the typological exegesis and the allegorical procedures of medieval theology, which understood everything created as an indication of the Creator, and sought to reveal the significance implanted into things by God, to uncover their Christological relevance directed towards the divine centre of meaning. (Schöne 47; qtd. in Daly, *Emblem Theory* 52)

The four-fold method of reading advanced in the medieval patristic-scholastic tradition views meaning in scripture as divided into literal – the level of real historical events – and, simultaneously, spiritual meaning; the spiritual level was further subdivided into allegorical, tropological and anagogical strata. This approach to biblical texts was also applied to the physical world, which was understood sacramentally as a God-authored text, the "Book of

Nature" or the "Book of the Creatures." Schöne argues that the most important level of signification for the emblem is the tropological, which refers to the "significance of things and facts for the individual and his destiny, for his path to salvation and his conduct in the world" (Schöne 47; qtd. in Daly, *Emblem Theory* 52). Many emblems do operate on this basis, interpreting objects or events in light of their spiritual importance to the reader. In this way, the subject matter of the emblem provides a moral lesson while its interpretive mechanism trains the reader to perform his or her own emblematic exegesis on other emblems and, more importantly, on objects in the outside world (Daly, *Emblem Theory* 28). This "imitative and interpretive tendency" in the emblem may in fact account for its prominence "in the English dissenting or Low Church tradition in which the 'signs' of everyday life were to be documented so as to aid in uncovering the course of one's predestination" (Ardholm 26).

Daly asserts that "all the important theoretical work on the genre" after Freeman was carried out by the German scholars in this second generation (*Emblem Theory* 9), and until the publication of his critical study of these German contributions, most English scholars remained either unaware of or unconcerned with them. Partly for this reason, Daly has been viewed as "the most tireless modern apologist for the emblem" (Manning 9) and, along with Bath and Russell, a central figure in the third generation of emblem studies. Contrary to Green, Praz, and Freeman's "static" view of the emblem as a fixed and strictly-defined genre whose manifestations are limited to particular normative artefacts (*Kunstform*), the dynamic approach of Schöne, Jöns, Russell and others opened the possibility of studying the emblem as a flexible, historically contingent genre. As Ardholm contends, this generation of theorists "makes us aware that even though there are many variants of the layout and

appearance of the Renaissance emblem, they are all manifestations of the emblematic habit of mind" (18, n2). Daly's own position is complex, however: while he acknowledges that emblems embody a *Denkform*, he is hesitant to dismiss what he understands to be their essential formal properties. For instance, he disagrees with the assertion that, because some emblem books do not include illustrations, the tripartite model including both verbal and visual elements is not a valid paradigm:

> to deny the *pictura* its central function in the emblem is to deny its contribution to the transmission of meaning through visual signs, which often clarify, enrich and complicate meaning in ways not provided for in the texts.... [it] reduces the genre to the status of epigram to which pictures may be added. (Daly and Silcox, *Modern Critical Reception* 22)

While Daly allows that this may have been the case in 1531 (with the first edition of Alciato's emblems), he argues that to apply this claim to all emblems is historically inaccurate – pictures eventually *did* become essential to the genre. While in *Emblem Theory* he states even more directly his belief that "[t]he emblem is undeniably a three-part structure involving picture and words" (16), he admits here that some critics do "regard the emblem primarily as a literary form" and hence "recognise the allegorical symbolical potentialities of language as the basis of the emblem" (16). In this view, "it matters little whether it is a picture or word that conveys the object, scene, figure or action" (16). By this logic, Daly grants that under some circumstances, it may not only be legitimate but necessary to recognise emblematic strategies in unillustrated literature (17).

Russell, on the other hand, views the emblem as essentially a process or a discursive structure. In *The Emblem and Device in France*, he reiterates the common complaint that

many modern attempts to define the emblem fall apart when they are confronted with the heterogeneity of real examples. As Manning also points out, overly general definitions of the emblem gloss over its sub-genres – to say that emblems only express moral "truths" ignores the existence of the love emblem, the satirical emblem, and so on – but attempts to define the emblem cannot "take refuge" in these sub-genres either: it is futile, Manning argues, to attempt to "establish synchronically viable generic markers that would reconcile different productions at different times under the same broad label" (Manning 22).[5] Russell likewise criticizes as pointless emblem scholarship's continued drive to define the emblem as a verbal-visual three-part form because "modern discussion of this issue is always quickly sidetracked by an apparently insurmountable disagreement over the elementary question of the names to be assigned to the three parts" (*Emblem and Device* 167). Russell sees these recent arguments about emblematics as overly concerned with identifying and classifying formal elements which were never stable or homogenous to begin with. In response to this problem, he proposes that we think of the emblem not as a form in the sense of a fixed

[5] Manning's approach is similar to Daly's in that it traces the history and development of the emblem as a genre of literature with specific – though constantly evolving – characteristics. After demonstrating that a number of seemingly safe assumptions about the emblem are incorrect for at least some examples of the genre (the emblem has three parts; the emblem is always illustrated; the emblem necessarily contains a moral or religious lesson), Manning concludes that "[w]hat is an emblem? is not even a good question. It implies that the answer lies in the same eternal present as the question, and that there is an emblem, a normative type, that the emblem is one thing at all times in all places" (21). As most third-generation critics affirm, it is necessary to historicize the emblem, but this makes the precise nature of the emblem difficult to pin down. For that reason, Manning advocates adopting "a somewhat radical, nominalist position: everything that was called an emblem was indeed an emblem. Even here we are insufficiently liberal.... We probably need to go even further and accept for the sake of argument whatever definition, and whatever fabulous and unlikely explanation that early writers gave for the beginnings, origins [and] developments of the form, as well as the relations to their various cognate manifestations, even though with the benefit of hindsight we now know these to be philologically and linguistically mistaken, if not totally fanciful" (24). Thus Manning, like Daly, understands the emblem as a discrete literary genre with certain identifiable features which developed within a particular sociohistorical context. Contrary to Freeman, Praz, and earlier German scholars who combed through emblem literature in an impossible search for the *Idealtypus*, or emblem specimen that would perfectly match the ideal emblem form, however, Manning views the emblem as an ever-evolving genre that refuses to "conform to static theoretical constructs" (25).

aesthetic structure, but rather as a method of delivery for many different kinds of information; a mode of discourse (or *Denkform*),[6] in other words:

> Perhaps the emblem was simply a way of presenting or communicating moral commonplaces, doctrinal principles, political propaganda, alchemical recipes or even philosophical ideas through the combination of a discursive text with a pseudo-ideogrammatic code of a non-linguistic nature. Instead of talking about emblems, then, it would perhaps be more instructive to explore the idea of an emblematic process. (*Emblem and Device* 164)

This process, as Russell sees it, involves the fragmenting of existing allegorical works or sign systems, and their recombination into "new and striking signifying units" (164). In other words, the emblem genre is so difficult to define precisely because "the emblem demonstrated a process, but it did not provide the coordinates for defining a formal genre" (*Emblem and Device* 179). Hence, it becomes virtually impossible (and certainly impracticable) to talk about the emblem as an artefact. Rather, it must be understood as a series of decisions or actions: both the acts of selecting and recombining and the complementary act of reading and decoding these newly recombined elements are emblematic acts. The emblem is thus not a fixed and transhistorical form, but a set of unique and historically-situated acts of encoding and/or decoding (Russell, *Emblem and Device* 162-3; see also Ardholm 17).

---

[6] The term "discourse" as I use it here is best defined by Michel Foucault as "a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation; it does not form a rhetorical or formal unity, endlessly repeatable, whose appearance or use in history might be indicated (and, if necessary, explained); it is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. Discourse in this sense is not an ideal, timeless form that also possesses a history; the problem is not therefore to ask oneself how and why it was able to emerge and become embodied at this point in time; it is, from beginning to end, historical – a fragment of history, a unity and discontinuity in history itself, posing the problem of its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality rather than its sudden irruption in the midst of the complicities of time" (Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge* 117).

Russell's discursive model of the emblem is the most important and useful approach to the emblem for the purposes of this study: by viewing the emblem as a discourse rather than as a genre with certain essential properties, it becomes possible to read unillustrated texts in the light of emblematic reading and writing practices. Ardholm adopts Russell's understanding of the emblem as a discursive practice for precisely this purpose, in order to study what she identifies as the "emblematic habit of mind" in two Romantic novels, *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*. By placing Russell's "dynamic" theory in opposition to Freeman's more "static" view of the emblem as an "artefact," Ardholm is able to argue that the former "allows for the application of the creative principles of the genre to other modes of discourse" and hence that "Russell's definition acknowledges that emblematic structures in literary texts represent emblems" (Ardholm 28). She interprets Russell's definition of the emblem as a unit of discourse in which "the intrinsic relationship between the components of the emblem stands for a mode of thought that offers a special way of reading, structuring and interpreting the world" (Ardholm 29) in order to argue that emblem discourse may be re-created within otherwise non-emblematic literary genres like the novel: in this view, the emblem need not incorporate a motto, *pictura*, and *explicatio*, but can exist "as a text-only unit in a literary text" (Ardholm 11). The emblem thus corresponds to an "*emblematic discourse* which retains the characteristics of the emblem proper" (Ardholm 11) in certain eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts. This theory allows Ardholm to study emblematic moments in the novel. At the same time, it extends the limits of a study like this one of Pre-Raphaelite literature, which views not only the overtly emblematic nature of the group's illustrated texts and literary paintings as a key to their fundamentally emblematic methods, but also seeks to trace the evolution of emblematic discourse in its unillustrated poetry.

The History of the Genre

The history of the emblem has been more amply discussed elsewhere[7] than the scope and purpose of my own project will allow, but a brief introduction to its development may be helpful in contextualizing the emblem's nineteenth-century manifestations. Originally a continental tradition, the emblem was born in Italy and spread to France, Germany and the Netherlands before crossing the Channel into England some thirty years after its first appearance in Europe. As John Manning notes, "rarely can the birth date of a genre be established so precisely, and its 'father' so clearly identified, than in the case of the emblem" (38): in a letter dated 9 December 1522, the Italian lawyer Andrea Alciato related to a friend that "'During this Saturnalia, I have composed a little book of epigrams, to which I have given the title *Emblemata*'" (qtd. in Manning 38). This unillustrated manuscript work, composed as an amusement during the holiday season, illegitimately found its way into print in 1531 as the illustrated *Emblemata cum commentariis*, a grouping of two hundred and twelve moralised[8] engravings published without the author's permission (see Figs. 3 and 4). As Mario Praz has demonstrated, Alciato's *Emblemata* borrows specifically from the *Greek*

---

[7] For broad historical overviews of the emblem, see, for example, Rosemary Freeman's *English Emblem Books* (1949), which, while problematic in ways I outline here, is nonetheless a good introduction to some of the major English emblem books. John Manning's *The Emblem* (2002) offers an impressive and wide-ranging discussion of both continental and English emblem traditions organized thematically, as well as important corrections to the assumptions underlying some of Freeman's assertions on the topic. Charles Moseley's *A Century of Emblems* (1989) is valuable for its cogent introduction as well as its good selection of plates from a number of the most frequently studied Renaissance and Baroque emblem books. More localized studies of the English emblem tradition include Mario Praz's classic *Studies in Seventeenth Century Imagery* (1964), Karl Josef Höltgen's *Aspects of the Emblem: Studies in the English Emblem Tradition and the European Context* (1986), Peter Daly's *Literature in Light of the Emblem* (1979) and *The English Emblem and the Continental Tradition* (1988), and Michael Bath's *Speaking Pictures* (1994).

[8] To moralise (or moralize) is to explicate the moral significance of a picture (usually in verse), as in the case of an emblem, or, as the following exchange in *As You Like It* illustrates, to orally and extemporaneously explicate the deeper meaning of a live scene: First Lord: "the [wounded stag], / Much marked of the melancholy Jaques, / Stood on th'extremest verge of the swift brook, / Augmenting it with tears." Duke Senior: "But what said Jaques? / Did he not moralize this spectacle?" First Lord: "O yes, into a thousand similes" (2.1.40-45). The wounded stag (or "hart") was a common motif in Renaissance emblems which punningly signified a wounded heart. Jaques's habit of "moralising" scenes like this is an indication of his sentimental and courtly character.

Anthology, a collection of poems and epigrams from the classical and Byzantine periods of Greek literature: 44 of Alciatio's 212 emblems are taken directly from epigrams contained in the *Anthology*, while the rest are "conceived in the same spirit" (Praz 23, 25-6; Freeman, *English Emblem Books* 40). In Alciato's final complete works, his "emblems" were again printed simply as epigrams without illustration, suggesting that this may have been the form in which Alciato originally intended them to appear (Freeman, *English Emblem Books* 40). All of this indicates that the very first emblems were, in fact, "naked" – that is, not illustrated – and were thus conceived as a literary enterprise closely related to the epigrammatic tradition. How they came to be associated with engraved illustrations in their published form is not clear, though Manning offers the plausible explanation that the *Emblemata*'s first publisher appended plates as a shrewd marketing technique, to align the book with the most popular type of literature at the time: "the illustrated fable, the illustrated bestiary, the *Bilder-bibel* and collections of illustrated proverbs" (42).[9]

Despite its accidental or illegitimate origins, the tripartite model of the emblem in Alciato's 1531 printed edition of *Emblemata* became the normative structure most later

[9] Alciato's choice to call his epigrams "emblems" was likely due to the Renaissance distaste for novelty which led authors of the time to keep their work within the boundaries of existing genres. Though Alciato was the first to use *emblema* to name a species of literature, the word is a classical Greek term which referred to mosaic decoration, the grafting of a plant, or a detachable ornament – literally, it means "to set in, or on, to put on, to graft on" (Manning 47). Interestingly, it had never been used to refer to a literary genre, though it had been applied to "a mannered, precious style of speaking or writing" before then (47). Cicero had used the term when speaking about jeweled ornaments which could be applied to household objects during a special occasion, but which would not be present every day. In this way, "decoration disguises the object. It is deliberately made to seem other than it is," and emblemata are thus, metaphorically, "veiled utterances" (Manning 47). This etymology suggests that Alciato saw the emblematic epigram as a device which applies a more elaborate or, at the very least, a different set of terms and descriptions to an ordinary idea in order to defamiliarize and thus provoke a renewed appreciation of its significance in the observer. As with metaphor, simile and allegory, emblems generate meaning through "dislocation: the familiar, everyday or commonplace is changed by virtue of being placed in another context: it has become the bearer of unsuspected meaning, a metonym for a previously hidden reality" (Manning 47).

emblematic works would take.[10] However, as both Russell and Manning note, "there was a vigorous visual and verbal culture that was emblematic in all but name before the 'emblem' was officially invented. We should be careful not to overestimate the importance of accredited 'beginnings'" (Manning 37). While Alciato originated both the form and the term "emblem" as we use it now, most current scholars agree that it is indebted to a number of earlier literary and bimedial art forms (not least of which is the *Greek Anthology*, as mentioned above.) For that reason, Alciato's book has been called a latecomer, as this type of emblematic discourse was already circulating, in various forms, within continental court culture before *Emblemata* appeared in book form (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 8). As Daly, Bath, Manning and other recent emblem scholars have noted, before the first emblem books appeared, the Renaissance saw a proliferation of emblematic products in other contexts: "without exaggeration," writes Manning, "from Catholic Spain to the Protestant Netherlands and from England to Russia the emblem impinged on every aspect of European Renaissance and Baroque life – and death" (16). Interior design drew heavily on such emblematic motifs as, for example, the dolphin and anchor (which signify *festina lente* or "make haste slowly") during this period (Fig. 5). This type of allegorical motif was applied to everything from jewellery, tapestries and painted ceilings to carved furniture and plasterwork (Bath 8).[11] Rosemary Freeman views the vast popularity of emblematic discourse as proof that emblems appealed to Renaissance culture's "taste for allegory" (*English Emblem Books* 1).

---

[10] For discussions of the related genres of impresa and device, which I do not deal with here, see Bath, *Speaking Pictures*, 19-20; Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, Chapter 1; Russell, *The Emblem and Device in France*.

[11] German emblem scholars have named these extra-literary contexts "*andgewandte Emblematik*" or "applied emblematics," a term – and a study – which third-generation English emblem scholars have now adopted.

Rhetorical and Devotional Emblems

Whatever the reason, Renaissance Europe embraced the genre: immediately following the success of Alciato's *Emblemata*, presses all over Europe began producing volumes in the same style. These early emblem books, including ones by the French Sambucus (*Emblemata*, 1564) and the Dutch Hadrianus Junius (*Les emblesmes*, 1567) and Schoonhovius (*Emblemata*, 1618), were, like the *Greek Anthology* and other proto-emblematic and applied emblematic genres, primarily "moral and didactic" (Höltgen, *Aspects* 25). While, as Karl Höltgen notes, these emblem books shared an "undogmatic form of Christianity," they dealt mainly with classical material, most of it focused on "the teaching of secular knowledge and moral philosophy derived from the ancients" (25). Bath's assertion in *Speaking Pictures* (1994) that emblems can be divided into two main types is central to my own understanding of this discourse and its operations in Pre-Raphaelite texts. Bath distinguishes this "moralising" strain of emblematics, which draws on classical and humanist figures and tropes, from the explicitly religious type he calls "devotional" (2). Moralising or rhetorical emblems seek to establish a "truth" by relating it analogically to a proverbial truth or common belief. This branch of emblematics emerges from the Renaissance tradition of commonplaces: during this period, students studying ancient authors were encouraged to select passages of potential rhetorical or factual interest, and copy them down into a notebook, called the "commonplace book," kept expressly for that purpose (Blair 541). It was an exercise recommended by ancient rhetoricians, and adopted as a pedagogical tool during the Renaissance (Yeo 157). Quotes and illustrations were grouped together in these books under thematic "heads," which came to be known as

"common-places" (158).[12] This term derives from the Latin *locus communis*, meaning a general argument that can be used in various situations (157): classical rhetoric encouraged *copia verborum,* the orator's ability to produce copious arguments and illustrations in support of his point, and it was believed that the exercise of keeping a number of turns of phrase, moral lessons, facts and illustrations together would encourage such a facility (158). The very earliest emblems, including those by Alciato, evolved out of this practice and represent self-contained arguments in the same rhetorical style: they frequently combine allegorical personages and accoutrements with a point-by-point explication of each item to make a specific argument. Alciato's Emblem 6, for example, offers the image of a whore dressed in purple and seated on a royal throne, serving wine to a large, languorous crowd, as an illustration of "*Ficta Religio*" or false religion (Fig. 6). Similarly, the popular notion of *festina lente*, the importance of "making haste slowly," is exemplified in several instances by a dolphin (haste) entwined around an anchor (slow) (Fig. 5); in Horapollo's proto-emblematic *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499), the same lesson is embodied in the image of an ant (haste) turning into an elephant (slow) and back into an ant again (Fig. 7). Like the classical rhetorical tradition out of which they evolved, moralising emblems seek to argue particular points by analogy, drawing sometimes novel or witty parallels between seemingly unlike things in order to prove a general claim.

Although occasionally outlandish, the situations depicted in rhetorical emblems generally met the requirement of "potential facticity" in their day: as Bath explains, even in

---

[12] As Sister Joan Marie Lechner points out, "commonplace books envisaged knowledge as 'contained in isolated places, according to its kind,' thus allowing the 'student to picture it in terms of spatial areas'" (qtd. in Yeo 159). She concludes that the practice of keeping a commonplace book encouraged a "'spatializing of knowledge' – a conception of various subjects, such as the arts and sciences, as located in separate departments of a visual field" (Yeo 160). It is interesting to note, for example, that we still use the word "topic," which comes from the Greek *topos*, meaning place, to refer to an interrelated group of ideas.

the absence of factual verification, the force of classical or proverbial authority was enough to lend credibility to these motifs (*Speaking Pictures* 5). However, by drawing lessons from merely conventional associations, the rhetorical branch of emblematics can be said to exert a naturalizing influence on its arguments, in fact producing the "truths" it claims to illustrate or prove. The devotional emblem, on the other hand, purports to discover – rather than manufacture – its lessons in the objects it examines. This strain of emblematics was a later offshoot of the moralising tradition: the first expressly religious emblem book, produced some forty years after Alciato's, was French Protestant Georgette de Montenay's 1571 *Emblemes, ou devises chrestiennes*. Devotional emblems like de Montenay's are based on a figural ontology which views the world as a sacred text authored, along with the Bible, by God, for man's edification. In this view, hermeneutic practices applied to scripture – most notably typological biblical exegesis – are also a valid means of "reading" the natural world for signs of the divine; the religious emblem is "intent on discovering the meanings already inscribed in the books of scripture and nature" (*Speaking Pictures* 6). In other words, the significance of a created object is believed to be ordained by God and prior to any intervention on the part of the emblematist; the association between signifier and signified in this type of emblem is therefore deemed necessary rather than arbitrary or invented. By drawing lessons in a deliberate way from natural objects, devotional emblems teach particular truths while at the same time modelling the sacramental perception their mechanism embodies: the movement of the reader's eye between cryptic picture and explanatory text as he or she interprets an emblem parallels the mental oscillation between visible world and invisible reality he or she ought to make in perceiving creation. A good example of this type of emblem is the "Pelican-in-her-piety" motif which appears in a

number of popular emblem venues, including George Wither's *Emblemes Ancient and Moderne* (1635).[13] In emblem XX, book 3, a pelican is shown plucking its breast and feeding the blood which flows from the wound to its young, who are thereby revived (Fig. 8). This is presented as natural behaviour for a pelican: it was believed to be so, on the basis of the fourth-century Greek naturalistic text, the *Physiologus* (see Daly, "Pelican" 85); the emblem accordingly explicates the animal as a divinely-authored reminder of Christ, who similarly sacrificed himself to save his "children." To render the connection unmistakable, a crucified Christ, to whom Wither refers in the *explicatio* as "our pelican," appears in the background of the *pictura.*

The Emblem and Meditation

The devotional strain of the emblem tradition in England developed alongside the seventeenth-century revival of Christian meditation, which falls into two main categories: formal and occasional (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 2).[14] Formal meditation consists of a set of complex, prescribed steps which usually include visualization, self-analysis and prayer: the practice of praying the rosary is a still-current example of this type of meditation. Each bead on the rosary is a "memory-place" representing a specific prayer, and the practitioner is encouraged to think deeply about the Sorrowful, Joyful or Glorious Mysteries as he or she

---

[13] Peter Daly's "The Pelican-in-her-Piety" is an excellent historical overview of this ubiquitous Christian motif, which continued to influence iconography well into the twentieth century.

[14] Although there has yet to be a systematic study of the affinities between emblems and meditation, Bath, Martz, Charles Moseley, and Ardholm have all noted this relationship, which is believed to have been reciprocal: emblems grew out of meditative practices, and new collections of emblems were subsequently produced as aids to meditation. Both devotional emblems and meditation are based on the humanist notion of the three faculties of the rational soul: memory, understanding, and will. A practitioner of meditation activates his "memory" of an event like the crucifixion, for example, by imaginatively placing himself into the scene, and then contemplates it through a series of mental exercises which are designed to deepen his understanding and appreciation of the event's significance. This, in turn, is meant to engage the practitioner's will to act in accordance with God's law. Emblems aligned with the meditative tradition share this aim.

progresses through the sequence of prayers as spelled out by the beads. Thus the rosary itself is a kind of emblematic text, as each bead is endowed with divine significance the practitioner is encouraged to consider as he or she progresses through the series of prayers. The practice of Ignatian meditation according to the *Spiritual Exercises* (1522-24) is another example of a formalized meditation; indeed, most formal meditation is associated with Catholic ritual.

Occasional meditation, on the other hand, evolved in the seventeenth century as a specifically Protestant alternative to these more ritualized forms of meditation.[15] It is meant to be performed on a casual, daily basis and takes as its objects everyday items and events, which are then "read" through an analogical lens for signs of God's participation in the world. In this way, for instance, a wheatfield overgrown with weeds may become a lesson on the danger of neglecting one's spiritual health. This style of meditation both emerges from and feeds back into the Protestant tradition of the exegetical sermon (Martz 174; Huntley 5). In his *Occasional Meditations* (1633), the Protestant Joseph Hall reads the wheatfield as an emblem of the dangers Christians face: the wheat is mankind, while the weeds represent sin and worldly temptations which, if not checked, will choke out the good crop (Meditation 54). Not only does this type of emblem focus on a particular everyday object or event, it is meant to "induce meditation on the sacrifice of Christ" when the reader next passes by or works in a wheatfield, in this way applying a sacred meaning to everyday objects and tasks (Ardholm 25). Both the content of the emblem and the mechanism by which the reader decodes it are important lessons in this regard: the emblem's figurative

[15] Although formal meditation was associated with Catholic practice, and occasional meditation arose in response to anti-Jesuit feeling in England, both Protestants and Catholics engaged in formal meditation during this period – Hall's *The Art of Divine Meditation* (1606), for instance, is a handbook for a particular system of formal meditation aimed at Protestants. See Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 162; Huntley 3-5.

interpretation of an everyday object as a sign or reminder of God models the correct way to read and interpret the world. Thus, just as devotional emblems seek to impart both a particular lesson and a method of reading, so occasional meditations impart specific lessons and train their practitioners to read everyday objects and events in this way, for signs of God's intervention. As my discussion in Chapter 3 will show, this is the tradition Christina Rossetti draws upon in her devotional prose "diary," *Time Flies* (1885).

Natural and Conventional Theories of Language

Because the emblem is, in some instances, a site of wit and rhetorical invention, and in others, a discourse which professes to explicate meanings already inscribed in nature by God, theories of the emblem are bound up with theories of natural and conventional language. "Put quite simply," Bath states,

> the issue is whether the emblem depends on the invention of original but arbitrary connections between image and meaning, or whether the relation between sign and referent depends on some deeper and more intrinstic ('natural') affinity. (*Speaking Pictures* 3)

This debate is first articulated by Plato in the *Cratylus*, where he argues that names, like instruments, are not simply the product of convention, but naturally adapted to the objects they name. Although John Locke would assert, conversely, that modern language is fallen and arbitrary,[16] Francis Bacon acknowledges that some words share a "similitude or congruity" with the things they represent (*Advancement of Learning* 2.16.3). As an example of this kind of sign, Bacon offers hieroglyphics, which he describes as "things of ancient

[16] In *An Essay on Human Understanding* (3.2.1), Locke repudiates the possibility of natural language, asserting that "words... come to be made use of by men, as the signs of their ideas; not by any natural connection... but by a voluntary imposition, whereby such a word is made arbitrarily the mark of such an idea."

use, and embraced chiefly by the Egyptians"; by his day, however, they have evolved into "impresses and emblems" (2.16.3). Indeed, this interest in hieroglyphics, which sought to discover (or rediscover) and recreate a "natural" language (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 51), was an important source of the devotional emblem. The hieroglyph's combination of image and text in an ideogram was thought to mitigate the weak points of each medium, creating a superior set of signs that came closer to an "intrinsic" relationship with the things they signified than either words or pictures alone (Dimler 81; Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 51). In this way, it was widely believed that ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs were in fact vestiges of the biblical Adam's language, which had an innate correspondence to the things it named (Manning 129). Renaissance discussions of the issue hold up Adam's naming of the creatures as the classic example of natural – "Adamic" – language: "whatsoever Adam called every living thing, that was the name thereof" (Genesis 2:19). Thus, oddly, the hieroglyphic view of the relationship between language and things is entirely consistent with the sacramental view, as well as the emblematic: Quarles makes this link explicit when he characterizes "the Heavens, the Earth, nay every Creature" as "Hieroglyphics and Emblemes of [God's] Glory" ("Preface," *Emblemes*). In his *Religio Medici* (1643), seventeenth-century philosopher Thomas Browne likewise describes nature in these terms, as a "Universal and publick Manuscript," not "graphical or composed of Letters," but rather of "forms, constitutions, parts and operations" inscribed by the "Finger of God" (qtd. in Freeman, *English Emblem Books* 41). The hieroglyphic view, like the emblematic, sees the book of nature as a "natural" language whose signifiers and signifieds are not arbitrarily joined by convention, but united by God, and intended to refer back to Himself. Surprisingly, as Chapter 4 will reveal, this tradition is in fact an important factor in the

development of Gerard Manley Hopkins' seemingly modernist onomatopoetics. Suggestive correspondences between this facet of emblematics and Hopkins' own beliefs and practices can, I believe, situate some of the most puzzling aspects of Hopkins' poetics as integral with his sacramentalism and as further proof of his participation in the emblem tradition.

The Cupid and Anima and *Schola Cordis* Traditions

Within the two main categories of the emblem (the rhetorical and the devotional) are several sub-categories whose motifs exerted a lasting influence on literature and art, including that of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Chief among these are the Cupid and Anima and *Schola Cordis* (or "school of the heart") traditions. The Jesuit-led Counter Reformation in the seventeenth century employed emblematic practice in the service of its Christianizing aims, adapting humanist and even erotic topoi to the representation of those devotional themes stressed in its formal meditative practices (Virkar-Yates 32; Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 178; see also Praz 134-68). In this way, emblems depicting the trials and triumphs of romantic love through the interplay of figures representing Cupid (the god of erotic love) and Anima (the soul) were re-framed as emblems about the progress of the soul towards God: in these versions, Cupid has "acquired a halo, and demands to be recognised as Divine Love, that is to say a metaphor for Christ himself," while the Anima becomes the immortal soul of Christian belief (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 178). The first emblem book to recast rhetorical and erotic emblems in this way was the Flemish Jesuit Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624; Figs. 9-11), a work whose adaptation by the English Quarles into the Protestant (Anglican) *Emblemes* (1635) would become the most popular emblem book in English history (Virkar-Yates 32). Quarles' emblems illustrate aspects of the soul's search

for Christ through the actions of the Cupid and Anima figures, who are shown attempting to fly towards God while chained to an orb (held back by the world; Fig. 12), trapped inside the ribcage of a skeleton (mired in the flesh; Fig. 13; see also Fig. 14), and blowing a bellows at the sun (pride; Fig. 15). Isaac Williams' *The Baptistry, or, The Way of Eternal Life* (1842) is a nineteenth-century re-adaptation of the Cupid and Anima theme for a Tractarian audience: Williams translates the Jesuit Antoine Sucquet's 1620 *Via vitae aeternae* (way of eternal life) from a Latin and Catholic text into an English and Protestant work by replacing the original explications with his own (Figs. 16, 17).

Related to this strain of emblematics, and based even more explicitly on the imagery of Jesuit meditation is the *Schola Cordis* or "school of the heart" tradition. In the late sixteenth century, the Dutch engraver Anton Wiericx produced a set of "cardiomorphic" emblems entitled *Cor Iesu amanti sacrum*, whose illustrations show a large heart which Christ enters in order to inspect, teach and renovate (Virkar-Yates 33-34). Adopted by the Jesuits, whose meditation rituals promoted exactly the process of self-analysis, contrition, cleansing, and resignation to God these emblems literalize, the genre enjoyed widespread popularity in Europe well into the nineteenth century (Virkar-Yates 33). The most influential early example of this tradition – and the text which gave it its name – is Benedictus van Haeften's *Schola Cordis* (1629), whose illustrations depict a heart subjected to a number of mechanical manipulations (Virkar-Yates 34; Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 179). The English Jesuit Henry Hawkins produced the first English set of *Schola Cordis* emblems, *The Devout Heart* (1634; Fig. 18). In Hawkins' *picturae*, Cupid and Anima toss the heart back and forth, sweep it out, pile dishes on it, and cut it in half, actions which emblematize

the soul's progress towards God (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 178).[17] The Protestant Christopher Harvey's *The School of the Heart* (1647), which makes use of much of the same *picturae*, renders this tradition for an Anglican audience (Figs. 19-22); its popularity was such that it remained in print until 1866, often published together with Quarles' *Emblemes* (Virkar-Yates 34).

These emblematic traditions had a lasting influence on (unillustrated) English literature, as subsequent chapters of this project will show: seventeenth-century metaphysical poet George Herbert was deeply influenced by the *Schola Cordis* tradition. Likewise, Hopkins, probably acquainted with that tradition through his Jesuitism, employs its cardiomorphic imagery in "The Wreck of the Deutschland" as a way of representing subjective religious experience. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, on the other hand, reverses the development of the Cupid and Anima tradition from a rhetorical to a devotional mode, replacing the imagery of Christ with that of Cupid in "A Last Confession," for example. While Dante Gabriel's initially orthodox Christianity and Tractarian background made the devotional emblem attractive as a representational strategy and source of imagery in his early works, the instability of his faith in later years made rhetorical emblematics useful as a way of stabilizing meaning, which he could no longer see as grounded in and guaranteed by God. Even later in the century, poets like William Butler Yeats continued to trope both romantic and divine experience in images of hearts flying away, bursting into flame and captured in nets (see, for example, "Into the Twilight," "Aedh Laments the Loss of Love" and others from *The Wind in the Reeds*, 1899).

---

[17] Emblem LXX of *The Devout Heart* shows an angelic figure, possibly Christ, sweeping dust out of a large stylized heart. The *explicatio* reveals the subject of this emblem to be Christ's sacrifice, which "svveps the dvst of sinnes from the hart" (qtd. in Ardholm 24).

The Victorian Context

While there is no doubt that the emblem became part of the landscape of English book culture in the sixteenth century and was eventually absorbed into English literature, it is more difficult to speak of an English emblem tradition as such: the genre remained rooted in its Continental origins to a large degree. The English were indeed "late on the scene" (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 57) in the production of emblem books, but most emblem scholars now agree that Thomas Palmer's manuscript *Two Hundred Poosies*, completed in 1565 or 1566, was the first native English emblem book. And by 1600, seventy years after the emblem's first appearance in Italy, England had just six known emblem books of its own, including those produced only in manuscript (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 57); many of these were translations and adaptations of Continental sources. Its foreign origins and slow start, together with its supposed associations with children's literature, have obscured the enormous importance of the emblem to English literature, especially its persistence as a hermeneutic practice. Recently, Freeman's famous pronouncement that the "end of the life of the convention" (*English Emblem Books* 6) took place as early as 1686 has, like her account of its beginnings, been reexamined. As Manning points out, "If the emblem's life were over in 1686, it took a remarkably long time to die" (149), since, "inconveniently, emblems continued to be published and sold" well into the nineteenth century (10). In fact, perhaps owing to the development of printing techniques or the increasing literacy of the English population, many more emblem books were produced in England in the eighteenth century than in the seventeenth, and still more were published in the nineteenth – Daly and Silcox's bibliography counts about twenty essentially original emblem books published in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a total which "compares quite favorably with the

thirty or so titles which can be claimed to constitute the entire corpus of English Renaissance emblem books published in the preceding 150 years" (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 255).

The category of the emblem was never stable, and underwent considerable change between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries: as Bath argues, emblems were always part of a complex system "whose content and structure evolved through processes of interaction and differentiation over a long period" (*Speaking Pictures* 280). In the Victorian period, especially, when the formal conventions developed during the Renaissance had long been forgotten, emblematic practice became bound up with other kinds of figurative techniques. Normative emblem literature continued to be produced – for example, in Margaret Gatty's books for children – but by this time the emblem's true importance was as a hermeneutic mechanism and a strategy of representation closely allied with typology. However, Victorians were not careful or precise in their use of the terms associated with various signifying practices: the word "emblem" is used interchangeably with "token," "symbol," "type" and "icon" in key Victorian texts on the subject (Höltgen, *Aspects* 143). These words all relate in some way to figuralism, the belief that temporal objects and events are at once tangible reality and symbolic of the transcendent (Sussman, *Fact into Figure* xvii). As Höltgen, Landow and others have noted, this idea enjoyed a tremendous revival in the Victorian period. Nineteenth-century figuralism views "objects from nature and art, common or unusual" as "types or visible signs of an invisible, veiled truth" (Höltgen, *Aspects* 143). Some of the more famous proponents of this idea were Thomas Carlyle, whose *Sartor Resartus* (1833-34) asserts that "all visible things are emblems.... Matter exists only spiritually, and to represent some Idea, and *body* it forth" (56), and John Ruskin, who

hoped "'that some day the language of Types will be more read and understood than it has been for centuries'" (qtd. in Höltgen, *Aspects* 143).

While much attention has been paid to the centrality of that branch of figuralism known as typology to Victorian literature and theology, less is presently understood about the role of emblematics in that context, or about the connection between typology and the emblem. Because the word "emblem" is used relatively loosely in the period, Bath warns against assuming that Carlyle or any other Victorian who uses the term is necessarily referring to its normative, Renaissance incarnation. However, he goes on to suggest that "we may legitimately enquire how far the assumptions of the nineteenth century's 'natural supernaturalism' maintained contact with some of the conventions of Renaissance emblematics" (*Speaking Pictures* 280). With this injunction in mind, I want to argue that in the Victorian period, and especially for the Pre-Raphaelites, emblematics and typology were related but distinct modes of figural or sacramental hermeneutics. In his *Aspects of the Emblem*, Höltgen makes the important observation that the Victorian period's renewed interest in emblems and devotional emblem literature was due in large part to the Oxford Movement's revival of figural hermeneutics in the 1830s and 40s (142). Led by a group of Anglican academics and churchmen including E.B. Pusey, John Keble and John Henry Newman, the Oxford (or Tractarian) Movement sought to reinvest Church of England practice with rituals and trappings (including communion, confession, candles, crucifixes, and incense) associated with the early Roman Church (Reed xxi; Marsh 56). As I hope to show, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was influenced by the Tractarian movement's sacramental beliefs, on the one hand, and the emblem, the literary genre Tractarian sacramentalism helped to revive, on the other. Indeed, the Tractarian movement's

interrelated emphasis on sacramentalism, didacticism and aesthetics was a major factor in the development of the Brotherhood's own art practices. As Kooistra notes, the Tractarian movement's "emphasis on symbol and ritual in both the ceremony of worship and church decoration" had the broader effect of encouraging people to "'read' material signs for their spiritual significance" (*CR and Illustration* 5). Significantly, this stress on interpretation in a sacramental context is also the process devotional emblems are designed to mirror.

Both Sussman (*Fact into Figure*) and Höltgen (*Aspects of the Emblem*) describe the Victorian belief in figuralism as having been formed by the practice of reading and interpreting scripture typologically. On the contrary, I understand figuralism to be an ontology, a set of beliefs about the nature of existence in both the physical and metaphysical senses: in this way, figuralism is productive of and therefore prior to hermeneutic practices such as typological reading. In other words, while there may indeed have been a dialogic relationship between figural beliefs and the hermeneutic practices generated by them as these ideas developed and changed over the course of the period, I view both typology and emblematics as practices which emerged from and continue to operate within a figural ontology. The origins of the figural belief system are ancient, but the particular form it took in the work of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was influenced in large part by the Tractarian tradition: this iteration of figuralism understands the created world as a sacred text authored, along with the Bible, by God, for man's instruction, and readable in the same ways. The 89th *Tract for the Times*, for example, a discourse on "The Mysticism Attributed to the Church Fathers" (1841) authored by Keble, constitutes a key text in the Victorian revival of the figural tradition. In the pamphlet, Keble examines the scriptural and doctrinal basis for a

belief that nature, like the Bible, constitutes a system of signs from God; he proposes that, considered from this point of view, the natural world is in fact "sacramental":

> If one were to call these latter, of the sun and stars, examples of a symbolical or sacramental view of nature, it would perhaps be no improper mode of expressing the fact here intended, viz., that the works of God in creation and providence, besides their immediate uses in this life, appeared to the old writers as so many intended tokens from the Almighty, to assure us of some spiritual fact or other, which it concerns us in some way to know. So far, therefore, they fulfilled at least half of the nature of sacraments, according to the strict definition of our Catechism: they were pledges to assure us of some spiritual thing, if they were not means to convey it to us. (89.6.9)

In the Church of England, a sacrament is defined as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself" (*Christian Instruction* 90); Keble here extends that definition to include all visible things. As the Renaissance context for the devotional emblem discussed earlier makes clear, this sacramental mode of perception was not an Oxford Movement innovation but rather a return to medieval allegorical notions of nature as vocal of the Creator's intentions.

The Tractarian belief that nature is interpretable as a system of signs became known as the doctrine of Analogy: just as the Bible was authored by God through divine inspiration, so nature is a sacred text in which God partially reveals Himself to mankind. G.B. Tennyson defines the doctrine as "a kind of nature *typology* whereby certain objects in nature symbolize and point to truths of both natural and revealed religion" (*Victorian Devotional Poetry* 93; my emphasis). As Sussman (*Fact into Figure*) and Landow

(*Victorian Types, Victorian Shadows*) have argued, typology was the most prominent form of figuralism at work in the Victorian period. However, like "emblem" and "symbol," Victorians often used the term "type" in a loose manner to refer to any sacramental kind of sign. This slippage continues even today. Because I want to show that typology and emblematics are distinct yet related practices, it is important to give these terms the clearest definitions possible. Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis* (1946) traces the roots of typology properly so-called into the writings of the Church Fathers, and defines it as a mode of reading the Bible which

> establishes a connection between two events or persons in such a way that the first signifies not only itself but the second, while the second involves or fulfills the first.... In practice we almost always find an interpretation of the Old Testament, whose episodes are interpreted as figures or phenomenal prophecies of the events of the New Testament. (73)

In the strictest sense, therefore, typology refers to a method of biblical interpretation in which persons and events in the Old Testament are understood as "figures" for the persons and events of the New. For example, the sacrifice of Isaac is often read typologically as a foreshadowing of Christ's sacrifice in the Crucifixion. In such a reading, the Old Testament event or "type" promises another event, or "antitype" in the New Testament, which "completes" the first. This Christ-centered view of history makes all Old Testament events anticipatory of events in the New. As Auerbach notes, type and antitype have no causal or temporal link; they are only connected "vertically" through divine providence, which is "alone able to devise such a plan of history and supply the key to its understanding" (73).

Typology is thus not just a figural method of biblical interpretation, but a providential historiography; a way of understanding time as the unfolding of the divine plan.

While its roots are patristic and medieval, typology enjoyed a tremendous revival in the Victorian period, partly through the Tractarian interest in its workings. Landow asserts that, by the mid-Victorian period, "any person who could read, whether or not a believer, was... likely to recognize allusions to typological interpretations of the scriptures" (*Victorian Types* 3). This figural reading of scripture constitutes typology in the strictest sense; in a broader sense during the Victorian period, however, which is the sense in which Keble uses it, "typology" was also understood to refer to a sacramental view of the natural world. Keble himself transfers the meaning of the term type from biblical history onto the natural world in Tract 89:

> Now let us transfer this notion of a Type, from historical events related in Scripture, to such allusions as are now in question – allusions to the works of nature, and the outward face of things. (89.7.3)

Just as persons and events in the Old Testament could be read as types of Christ and his Crucifixion, Keble explains, so natural objects might be seen as "types" bodying forth certain spiritual truths. In both cases, a "lower" object or event – something more material and less spiritual – anticipates or points to something "higher." Some typologists argued that the events of the Old Testament are simpler and less spiritual in order to prepare us for the eventual revelation that comes in the person of Christ. In a similar way, the familiar physical things of this world are a partial, veiled revelation of the higher and more complex spiritual truths they represent.

What is especially interesting about Keble's tract is his insistence that, while they may seem similar to other forms of signification like "illustration or analogy," natural "types" are distinguished by their divine authorization. Although anyone may attempt to draw an analogy between a natural object and its supposed spiritual meaning, only those correspondences God has already ordained may be considered typologically:

> Let an uninspired poet or theologian be never so ingenious in his comparisons between earthly things and heavenly, we cannot build any thing upon them; there is no particular certainty, much less any sacredness in them: but let the same words come out of the mouth of God, and we know that the resemblance was intended from the beginning, and intended to be noticed and treasured up by us; it is therefore very nearly the case of a Type properly so called. (89.7.3)

Man-made figurative statements which claim to read the temporal for the eternal may be interesting or illuminating, but only a type reveals God because, as Keble explains, the "event or observance itself, to which we annex the figurative meaning, was ordered, we know, from the beginning, with reference to that meaning" (89.7.3). Since God's own will associates the type with its corresponding meaning, he continues, the sign and its signifier become linked in the reverential mind, which "shall never thereafter be able to part with that association; the sign will... habitually prove a remembrance and token of the thing signified." This is a fact he argues God intended when he sanctioned the type, as a way of encouraging all minds to seek signs of His presence on Earth (89.7.3).

Although Keble, Ruskin, and other Victorians use the term "type" more or less indiscriminately to indicate biblical types (Moses-Christ, for instance), natural objects that

manifest some aspect of God, and literary or artistic representations that are intended to be revelatory in a similar way, it is important for my purposes to draw a distinction between the different modes of figural hermeneutics these things represent. Typology properly refers to providential historiography, especially in, but not limited to, the events of biblical history. Taken together, type and antitype are a progressive revelation, a manifestation through time of God's plan for mankind, culminating in the Crucifixion and Resurrection. The ultimate significance of the type, which is often a somewhat cryptic event in the Old Testament, is made clear only in the antitype. In this way, the antitype's "fulfillment" of the type might also be described as an interpretation or an explication. The term "type" was ultimately adapted from this historiographical application to refer to objects in the physical world, as well as representations of these objects in art and literature, considered from a figural point of view. This is fitting, since the ontology underlying the meaning of the term in both contexts is the same. However, the term "emblem" is also appropriate, I would argue, in the latter context – a fact which remains under-acknowledged. Strictly speaking, the devotional emblem is a literary genre that presents a concrete object, either in a picture or a verbal description, which is then explicated within a sacramental ontological framework that views the natural world as a text authored by God for man's instruction. The authority of the emblem – especially the devotional emblem – therefore depends on the same figural or sacramental assumptions as typology. In art and literature, typology appears as a figural way of ordering time, while emblematics is a way of making the visible world intelligible in a sacramental context. Put another way, emblems are to space what types are to time: while a type is fulfilled through time when its significance is explicated in the antitype, in a normative emblem, the image is elucidated on the same page in the verbal *explicatio*; in a

non-normative emblem, image and explication also generally occur in close proximity. Thus, for instance, Keble's casting of light as a "type" for God partakes of the same strategies of encoding and decoding that the devotional emblem employs. Because it is not part of an historical argument, Keble's description and interpretation of light has more in common with the strategies of representation employed in emblematics.

This distinction is important because it clarifies an area of study that, as many critics have noted, appears to have been complex and muddled in the Victorian period. Victorians used the terms "emblem" and "type" interchangeably and with little self-consciousness that the words meant different things. With the benefit of a longer historical perspective, it becomes clear that both emblems and types had a tremendous influence on Victorian literature and art, but are distinct practices that filter down to the period from different sources. Although I recognize that Victorians themselves may not have been aware of these differences, by separating the signifying practices that derive from the emblem tradition from those which descend from typology, I hope to shed new light on the period's indebtedness to an important but little-understood figural hermeneutic. The elision of "emblem" and "type" in Victorian literature has led modern-day critics to focus on the role of typology, while equal attention has not been paid to the emblematic side of sacramental hermeneutics and structures of representation. Moreover, while most emblem theorists recognize that some relationship exists between emblems and types, the distinction between them has never been fully articulated. In scholarship, this has led to the lumping-together of all sacramentally-based signifying practices as "typology." Landow's *Victorian Types, Victorian Shadows* (1980) and *Images of Crisis* (1982) have made a number of Victorian texts more accessible to modern readers by explaining biblical typology and demonstrating

the centrality of this hermeneutic to nineteenth-century art and literature. I believe Landow's observations and the elucidations they make possible of texts previously thought difficult can be furthered and supplemented by a better awareness of the emblematic structures also at work in these texts.

For instance, Landow traces the image of the smitten rock through a number of Victorian paintings and literary works. This image is a reference to Moses' smiting of the rock in the wilderness, which miraculously poured forth water, saving the Israelites from thirst. Read typologically, this event is a prefiguration of the Crucifixion, in which Christ, like the rock, is smitten, and the water and blood which flow from his body save mankind from spiritual death. The image of a smitten rock in a work of literature or art is thus a typological reference because it refers to an historical "type-antitype" unit, but its actual function in the work of art is emblematic: here, type and antitype are collapsed into a single image. The two historical poles have been flattened into a single, static image which still signifies Christ's redeeming power, due to its origins in the biblical text. But while the original typological unit is alluded to, its dehistoricization in the single, iconic image – its flattening out both historically and onto the surface of the page or canvas – transforms it into an emblem. Considered thus emblematically, the image of the rock is in fact strongly reminiscent of a classic emblem motif, the Pelican-in-her-piety (Fig. 8). As mentioned earlier, this emblem of Christ and self-sacrifice developed out of an ancient figural account of pelicans in which they feed their starving young blood plucked from their own breasts, just as Christ sacrificed his blood to save mankind. Static images of the smitten rock thus share more than just Christological allusions with the emblematic motif of the pelican: although the image of the smitten rock is derived from typological biblical exegesis, it

adopts the same strategy of signification as the Pelican-in-her-piety, an image long recognized as emblematic. Both are signs whose elusive meanings, demanding interpretation, model the analogous processes of emblematic reading and sacramental perception. By becoming more alert to homologies like these, I believe we may uncover the surprising extent to which emblems exert a shaping influence on strategies of representation in Victorian literature.

Starting from the premise that the emblem is a discourse or a strategy of representation rather than a set of fixed formal elements, my thesis aims to broaden the scope of both emblem and Pre-Raphaelite studies by demonstrating that a wider variety of texts than previously acknowledged is indebted to the hermeneutic structure of the emblem. Through close analyses of a range of Pre-Raphaelite texts, my thesis will argue that the emblem offered a model of signification and interpretation that was singularly well-suited to the early Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's mission of moral and aesthetic reform. Orthodox poets more peripherally affiliated with the Brotherhood such as Christina Rossetti and Hopkins likewise made use of various traditional emblem structures in their highly sacramental writings. In the later stages of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, emblematics offered Dante Gabriel a means of grounding and guaranteeing meaning after he had drifted away from the logocentrism and orthodox Christianity of his adolescence. Finally, my project will show how the late-century works of antitheist Swinburne expose the limits of the emblem as a strategy for the representation of sublimity. By re-examining the work of the Pre-Raphaelite movement in the context of emblematics, I hope to open a new perspective on some of its best-known works, as well as to recover some of the group's most critically neglected and misunderstood texts. Ultimately, my project aims to illuminate the

importance of emblematics as a strategy of representation that offered Pre-Raphaelite poets the unique advantages of concreteness and didacticism in their attempts to represent the ineffable categories of truth, beauty and the divine.

Chapter 2

"Thoughts towards Nature": Pre-Raphaelite Emblematics in *The Germ*

In its earliest and most coherent phase, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood adopted the representational methods of the emblem in its paintings and poems to call attention to the sacramental nature of the material world, and to align its audience's perceptions of nature with this sacramental view. The PRB's shared belief in figuralism – an ontology in which the created world is a sacred text authored by God, for man's instruction – meant the group believed that objects in the natural world are manifestations of God and that art ought therefore to present these objects to the viewer mimetically, framed in a way that foregrounds their spiritual significance. This chapter will closely examine the PRB's only joint project, the short-lived, manifesto-like art-and-poetry magazine *The Germ*, in order to argue that the group's moral-aesthetic beliefs and aims, as realized in their art and literature, bear suggestive parallels with those underlying the emblem, a genre of literature which is both based on and intended to inculcate a sacramental vision of the natural world. As *The Germ*'s critical essays and statements of intent make clear, and as its poems and etchings demonstrate, the magazine was intended to communicate the Brotherhood's vision for a renewed art, one that hewed more closely to what John Ruskin termed "stern fact," not as a refutation of transcendence, but as a means of revealing it. While the Brotherhood's insistence on pairing an illustration with an explicative poem in each issue of the magazine is perhaps the clearest indication of a direct engagement with the emblem tradition, the group's familiarity with emblems is also affirmed by its members' use – in unillustrated poetry – of imagery (such as the sundial) which is found in well-known examples of the emblem genre; even more significantly, much of the unillustrated poetry in *The Germ*

employs emblematic strategies of representation to various didactic ends, a fact which suggests that emblematic habits of mind were central to early Pre-Raphaelitism. As this chapter will show, the pervasiveness of emblematic structures, themes and references in *The Germ* demonstrates that the emblem was not an isolated interest for individual members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, but underlies the work of the movement as a whole.

Pre-Raphaelite Beginnings

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, established in 1848, was a brief but influential grouping of seven artists and poets who shared a sense that the decadence of the existing art establishment, especially as represented in the Royal Academy, was polluting an already spiritually bankrupt and industrialized English culture. By reinvesting art and poetry with an integrated moral and aesthetic sensibility, the Pre-Raphaelites hoped to develop a fresh approach to art which, in turn, would revitalize the English nation. The group was originally made up of seven "Brothers": dissatisfied Royal Academy painting school students William Holman Hunt,[1] John Everett Millais,[2] Frederic George Stephens,[3] James Collinson[4] and

---

[1] Hunt's only contribution to *The Germ* is the etching that accompanies "My Beautiful Lady" and "My Lady in Death" in the first issue.

[2] Although a founding member of the PRB, Millais would contribute nothing to *The Germ*. He enjoyed a long and successful career as a painter and was elected President of the Royal Academy shortly before his death in 1896.

[3] While Stephens began as a painting student in the Royal Academy, he would later abandon art for criticism, believing he lacked the necessary talent for the former. His work in *The Germ* consists of essays on "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art" (no. 2) and "Modern Giants" (no. 4), discussed at length below.

[4] His sole (but substantial) contribution to *The Germ* was the etching and poem of "The Child Jesus: A Record Typical of the Five Sorrowful Mysteries" (no. 2). A classmate of Dante Gabriel's at the Academy, Collinson was at one time engaged to Christina Rossetti; their relationship ended when Collinson embraced Catholicism. Soon after the demise of *The Germ*, Collinson resigned as a PRB and retreated to Stonyhurst Jesuit College in Lancashire. He eventually left Stonyhurst and married in 1858. His later paintings focus on domestic scenes rather than the kind of overt religious subjects of which "The Child Jesus" is an example ("James Collinson," *The Germ: A Hypertext Edition*).

Dante Gabriel Rossetti,[5] sculptor Thomas Woolner,[6] and budding art critic William Michael Rossetti.[7] Inspired by the writings of Ruskin, who in 1851 would champion the Brotherhood against their critics in the British press, the PRB's main products were a handful of paintings, conceived in a style Herbert Sussman has aptly labeled "symbolic-realist" (*Fact into Figure* xvi), which were exhibited to a "storm of abuse" (Hares-Stryker 22), and four issues of *The Germ*, a magazine intended as a mouthpiece for their aesthetic principles. Though they were never accorded the status of membership, Coventry Patmore, Christina Rossetti and others were also involved in the wider early movement, mainly as contributors to *The Germ*.[8] And although the Brotherhood dissolved after barely two years – existing as an active but "thoroughly informal association" for all of 1849 and the first half of 1850 (W.M. Rossetti, *Some Reminiscences* 1: 71) – it sparked a movement that influenced a number of artists and poets well into the early twentieth century: poets Gerard Manley Hopkins and Algernon Charles Swinburne, illustrator Arthur Hughes, and painter John William Waterhouse, among others, are considered part of this broader Pre-Raphaelite movement.

---

[5] Dante Gabriel contributed seven pieces in total to the magazine: the poems "My Sister's Sleep" (no. 1), "The Blessed Damozel" (no. 2), "Carillon" (no. 3) "From the Cliffs" (no. 3), "Pax Vobis" (no. 4) and the *ut pictura poesis* series of "Sonnets for Pictures" (no. 4), which describe the paintings by Memmling, Mantegna, and Giorgione he had seen in his travels through Europe in 1849, as well as the short story "Hand and Soul" (no. 1). Dante Gabriel would revise many of these pieces for inclusion in his later volumes.

[6] Despite his background in sculpture, Woolner's contributions to *The Germ* were all poetic: "My Beautiful Lady" and "My Lady in Death" (no. 1), "O When and Where" (no. 2) and "Emblems" (no. 3).

[7] In addition to serving as its editor, William Michael was one of the most prolific contributors to the magazine. His poetic contributions are the (untitled) sonnet on the cover of each issue, "Her First Season" (no. 1), a series of poems entitled "Fancies at Leisure" (nos. 2 and 3), "Cordelia" (no. 3), "To the Castle Ramparts," "Jesus Wept," and "The Evil Under the Sun" (no. 4). He also contributed reviews of Arthur Hugh Clough's *The Bothie of Topper-na-fuosich* (no. 1), Matthew Arnold's *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems* (no. 2), George John Cayley's *Sir Reginald Mohun* (no. 3) and Robert Browning's *Christmas Eve and Easter Day* (no. 4).

[8] Patmore's contribution to the magazine consists of three poems: "The Seasons" (no. 1), "Stars and Moon" (no. 2) and "Macbeth" (no. 3); Christina Rossetti's contributions, more fully discussed below, consisted of seven poems: "Dream Land" and "An End" (no. 1), "A Pause of Thought," "Song" and "A Testimony" (no. 2), and "Repining" and "Sweet Death" (no. 3), all published anonymously or under the pseudonym Ellen Alleyn. (All contributions to the first issue were anonymous).

As is now well-known, despite their shared antipathy to the aesthetic principles and methods of the Royal Academy, the disparity of the Brothers' aims and styles quickly pulled the group apart:[9] due in part to his own growing religious doubts, the orthodox, ascetic pictures and poems of Dante Rossetti's early PRB career – for example, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1848-49; Fig. 23) – gave way to unorthodox, sensual and secular works like the later sonnets in *The House of Life* (1847-70) and the double work *Proserpine* (poem 1871-82; painting 1874; Fig. 24), while Holman Hunt's initially accessible, domestic works (*The Awakening Conscience*,[10] 1851-53; Fig. 25) became increasingly stark and didactic (*The Scapegoat*,[11] 1854-56; Fig. 26). While this has led some to question the extent to which the Pre-Raphaelites may be considered a coherent art movement, Landow and Sussman (among others) have shown that under the group's apparent differences lies a shared commitment to figuralism,[12] which manifests itself mainly, they argue, in typological symbolism (Landow, *Victorian Types* 4; Sussman, *Fact into Figure* xvi). This rediscovery of the importance of typological biblical hermeneutics to the poetry of the Victorian period, especially the work of the PRB, has opened up important new perspectives on Pre-

---

[9] As William Michael relates, "keen [personal] antipathies" also "severed the quondam P.R.B.'s" (*Reminiscences* 1: 75).

[10] Several critics have called attention the emblematic character of this painting: every element in the room – the cat who taunts an injured bird; the books; etc – is replete with symbolic meaning: as Ruskin argues in a letter to *The Times* in 1854, there is "not a single object in all that room... but it becomes tragical if rightly read. That furniture, so carefully painted, even to the last vein of the rosewood – is there nothing to be learnt from that terrible luster of it, from its fatal newness.... Nay, the very hem of the girl's dress, which the painter has laboured so closely, thread by thread, has a story in it, if we think how soon its pure whiteness may be soiled with the dust and rain, her outcast feet failing in the street" (*Works* 12: 344).

[11] Ruskin's criticism of Hunt's "insertion of the animal in the exact centre of the canvas, making it look as though it were painted for a sign" (*Notes on Principal Pictures, 1856* 32), may point in an oblique way to its emblematism: this pictorial composition is typical of normative emblems, especially those featuring animals, as the emblem's intent is usually to present the object in a direct and de-contextualized way to the viewer.

[12] It is important to mention, however, that the sources of their figuralism and the ends they attempted to serve with figural techniques also varied widely: for example, Christina Rossetti's use of typology derives mainly from the patristic and Tractarian tradition and serves mainly devotional ends, while Dante Rossetti's typology was always more heavily inflected by the rhetorical, humanist Dantean tradition. As Chapter 5 will show, it serves increasingly secular ends over the course of his career.

Raphaelite poetry, but neglects the role of emblematics, a related figural hermeneutic. This chapter will build on Landow's and Sussman's assertions by arguing that the Pre-Raphaelite movement's figuralism is also expressed in its use of emblematic structures of representation. Didactic in aim and based on a figural ontology, the emblem's association with text-image constructions and visual space (as opposed to historiography, typology's area of concern) was uniquely suited to the PRB's mixed-media interests and moral-aesthetic aims. An emblem always attempts to teach both the particular "truth" it embodies, and, tacitly but more importantly, a lesson in interpretation itself: in reading emblems, one learns to "read" the created world outside the book in a similar manner. By evolving an art which attempts to frame an unmediated presentation of nature within a figural context, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood adopted emblematic strategies to achieve its moral-aesthetic and didactic aims. As the PRB's only joint project, *The Germ* is the most coherent and self-conscious articulation of Pre-Raphaelitism available for study. And as close readings of visual and verbal texts in *The Germ* will show, emblematics was a key component of the Pre-Raphaelites' moral-aesthetic programme from its earliest stages.[13]

The two major sources of first-hand information on the Brotherhood's initial formation are Holman Hunt's memoir, *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* (1905) and William Michael Rossetti's writings, which include *Praeraphaelite Diaries and Letters* (1890), his introduction to a bound edition of all four issues of *The Germ* (1899), and *Some Reminiscences* (1906). While these accounts differ in predictable ways on the question of whose ideas gave the movement its start, both authors emphasize that the initial impetus was the original Brothers' dissatisfaction with the principles and

[13] Unless otherwise stated, all references to material in *The Germ* are taken from the 1965 AMS Press reprint of the magazine's four issues, which includes an introduction by William Michael Rossetti.

methods of the existing art establishment, and their consequent desire to renovate English art by overthrowing the old guard, specifically by renouncing the Royal Academy.[14] Founded by portraitist Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1768, the Royal Academy had, by the mid-nineteenth century, arrogated to itself the authority for canon-formation, but it was in "anything but a vital or a lively condition," according to William Michael: "on the whole, the school had sunk very far below what it had been in the days of Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Blake" ("Introduction," *The Germ* 5). The Brotherhood's main point of contention with the Academy was that institution's insistence on clinging to a neo-classical aesthetic that encouraged artists to represent the natural world in an idealized, rather than a studiously observed and naturalistic way. It was Reynolds' belief, as he states in his first "Discourse," that artists should aim to improve "partial representation by the general and invariable ideas of nature" (Reynolds, *Discourses* 15);[15] in other words, artists must not represent the particular facts of what they see, but rather "correct" the flawed reality of nature in their art by resorting to idealized forms. In practical terms, this meant that students at the Academy

---

[14] Holman Hunt's memoir casts him as the leader of the group, with Millais as a talented sidekick, and Dante Gabriel as his impetuous acolyte (see especially 1: 128). In this version of events, Hunt's conviction that the Academy is a moribund institution and his desire for a more naturalistic approach to representation culminate in his reading of Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, which produces in him something akin to a conversion experience: "by Jove! Passages of it made my heart thrill" (1: 90). His fervor (cf. 1: 82-100) both repels those unsympathetic to his aims, who derisively name him a "Pre-Raphaelite" (1: 100-01), and attracts like-minded followers. William Michael's account, meanwhile, views both Hunt and Millais as the first to "moot some desire for a new movement," but sees Dante Gabriel as having shaped that movement by "add[ing] to the impetus and... giving it a name" (*Reminiscences* 1.62).

[15] Not unique to the Academy, this doctrine emerges out of neo-classical aesthetics and its corresponding neo-platonic belief in the "ethical and moral properties" of the "beautiful" image (Wark, "Introduction," *Discourses* xviii). Reynolds' *Discourses*, which were widely considered statements of policy for the Academy, urge artists to pursue "general and intellectual" beauty, "an idea residing in the breast of the artist, which he is always labouring to impart, and which he dies at last without imparting; but which he is yet so far able to communicate, as to raise the thoughts, and extend the views of the spectator" (*Discourses* 171). As Robert Wark explains, the assumption behind Reynolds' argument here is that in "generalizing from the particular, by eliminating what is specific and individual, we proceed to a 'higher' more universal truth and we approach the abstract idea embodied in a family of forms" ("Introduction," *Discourses* xix). John Barrell's *The Birth of Pandora and the Division of Knowledge* offers an insightful analysis of how "good taste," defined as a preference for the ideal over the particular in landscape art – was a key marker of class and of the ability to govern in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

were made to sketch from antique statuary and copy paintings by the "Great Masters" of the High Italian Renaissance; they were not permitted to paint or draw from the life.[16] The Pre-Raphaelites rejected this technique as "arbitrary" and merely "expedient" (Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelitism* 1: 82), ultimately rejecting these and other aspects of Academy training as unwelcome indoctrination: by encouraging students to copy other works of art rather than observing nature in all its particularity, they believed the Academy was forcing students to adhere to artificial conventions rather than to seek and represent important "truths" in their art.[17] The Brotherhood's insistently didactic focus stood in direct opposition to the Academy's aims, as Victorian journalist and art critic James Ashcroft Noble explained: the "very heart and life" of the PRB's teachings was this belief that art existed "'for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness'" (573).

In the PRB's view, then, the Academy's neo-classical bias hindered the development of individual talent, delayed the growth of a native English style, represented a blasphemous disdain for God's creation and celebrated an especially dissolute period in the history of art. One early convert to the Pre-Raphaelite movement in moral-aesthetics was Ruskin, who recognized in the PRB the same figural principles he had argued for in his own *Modern Painters*. Coming to the defense of the PRB project against its detractors in the public

---

[16] Students were forbidden to draw from live models in the Academy until 1847, when the first life classes were tentatively and almost begrudgingly introduced. Even then, students had to earn their way into the class by first producing "at least six accurately finished Drawings of Groups or Figures from the Antique... accompanied by other drawings as large as nature of a hand and foot" (RA Council Minutes 10: 193, qtd. in Hutchison, *The History of the Royal Academy* 96), prerequisites which ensured the student was versed in the classical canon of proportion and the "proper" methods of representation before being exposed to the flesh. Independent life-schools like the one in Maddox Street which Rossetti mentions attending in his letters of April and June 1848 to his aunt Charlotte Polidori offered an alternative to the Academy's Antique classes, but were expensive: Rossetti reports that the Maddox Street Academy charged "half a guinea monthly" for four classes per week (*DGR: Family Letters* 2: 35-37).

[17] William Michael Rossetti notes the Brothers "hate[d] the notion that each artist should not obey his own individual impulse, act upon his own perception and study of Nature, and scrutinize and work at his objective material with assiduity... but that, instead... he should try to 'be like somebody else,' imitating some extant style and manner, and applying... cut-and-dry rules" ("Introduction," *The Germ* 6).

sphere, Ruskin wrote a series of letters to the *Times* which were ultimately collected in a volume entitled *Pre-Raphaelitism* (1851). In his letter of 15 May 1851, Ruskin argues that "all" artists before Raphael sought to draw "actual facts"; after Raphael, however, artists tended to follow "conventional rules of picture-making" in order to "paint fair pictures rather than represent stern facts; of which the consequence has been that, from Raphael's time to this day, historical art has been in acknowledged decadence"; Ruskin views the PRB as attempting to reverse this trend (qtd. in W.M. Rossetti, *Praeraphaelite Diaries* 300).[18] Against the Academy's moribund principles, Ruskin and the PRB proposed the establishment of an art whose purpose would be "an entire adherence to nature" (*The Germ* no. 1, back cover): rather than reproducing "conventionalities and feeble reminiscences from the Old Masters," as the Academy had encouraged them to do, the Brotherhood sought to paint "pure transcripts and faithful studies from nature" ("Purpose and Tendency," *The Germ* 58). This, they believed, was the only way art could be made to express the "stern fact" or "truth" that would revitalize the morals of English society.[19]

The group's revolutionary aims and methods (defiantly signing their paintings with the cryptic initials P.R.B., which many assumed denoted a secret Anglo-Catholic society;[20]

---

[18] The historical aspect of Ruskin's defense explains in part why the group retained the name "Pre-Raphaelite." It is important to note, however, that the term "Pre-Raphaelite," insofar as it suggests the artists rejected Raphael's work and the work of everyone after him, is a misnomer. In fact, the PRB admired some of Raphael's earlier works, as well as those of other High Renaissance artists such as Titian, Leonardo da Vinci and Mantegna (see for example Dante Gabriel's letter to William Michael, *Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti* 1: 49.17). The PRB's objection to art from Raphael's time onward was based rather on their belief that artists after Raphael adopted the bad habits, which Ruskin alludes to, of idealizing natural forms, of privileging ornament over meaning, and of allowing students to finish their paintings by slavishly imitating the style of these earlier Masters.

[19] In his introduction to *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: His Family Letters* (1895), William Michael Rossetti lists the Brotherhood's agreed-upon aims as: "1. To have genuine ideas to express; 2. To study nature attentively, so as to know how to express them; 3. To sympathize with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by rote; 4. And most indispensable of all, to produce thoroughly good pictures and statues" (135).

[20] As Bentley points out in "The Pre-Raphaelites and the Oxford Movement," "[e]ven the notion of a 'Brotherhood,' which apparently was [Dante Gabriel] Rossetti's, brings with it suggestions of an exclusive

trumpeting their new principles to the reading public in *The Germ*) have led some to identify the PRB as the first modern avant-garde art movement (Sussman, "Pre-Raphaelite" 7; see also Harrison, *CR in Context* 38). However appropriate this designation may seem in hindsight, it obscures the fact that at the heart of the Brotherhood's moral-aesthetic was actually a medievalizing desire to return to a period when art served a public devotional function ("The Germ," *Rossetti Archive* par.1). Indeed, as Sussman contends, despite their stance against the prevailing aesthetic of their time, "the Brothers conceived of their own mission as the restoration of the authentic Western tradition" and not the creation of something wholly new; their movement was part of the wider Victorian interest in reviving "sacramental forms of art and literature through the adaptation of figural methods" (*Fact into Figure* xvi). How to resurrect the "simple, sincere and religious" (Noble 568) art of the medieval period in the very different socio-historical context of the mid-nineteenth century was a question the Brotherhood would confront in *The Germ* ("The Germ," *Rossetti Archive* par. 1).

Although the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood began as a reaction against the Royal Academy led by art students (with the exception of William Michael, a civil servant who also wrote art criticism), the group sought to bring its new aesthetic principles to bear on art in all its manifestations, mobilizing sculpture,[21] criticism, and, most especially, poetry, in the service of its project of reform. The Brotherhood's 1848 list of "Immortals," drawn up at a

---

Catholic sodality, of a closely-knit guild dedicated to the furtherance of some secret religious purpose.... It 'was generally... believed by most of the journalists (c.1850) that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was a hidden and subversive form of Roman Catholic propaganda'" (531). Here Bentley quotes S.N. Ghose, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Contemporary Criticism. 1849-1889* (1929); William Michael Rossetti's *Praeraphaelite Diaries* also records that by 1850, "[t]he mystic letters, with their signification, have appeared in all kinds of papers" and that their use has "been the signal for a perfect crusade against the P.R.B." (272).

[21] While the Pre-Raphaelite movement is not well known for its sculpture, an entry in William Michael's *Praeraphaelite Diaries* describes Woolner's May 1851 designs for a monument honouring William Wordsworth: Wordsworth is to be shown sitting, with emblematic groupings of figures who represent "Control" and "Aspiration" carved in bas-relief around the base of statue (296).

PRB meeting, reveals both the group's Christian basis – it accords Jesus Christ the top position – and its strong literary interests: Shakespeare[22] and the author of the book of Job occupy the second rank, followed by Byron and Goethe. A central aspect of the movement, and one that continues to distinguish it, is its commitment to aesthetic hybridity, particularly in its pairings of verbal and visual material.[23] This emphasis on verbal-visual aesthetics, combined with the movement's focus on sacramental perception, aligns the Brotherhood with the English emblem tradition in several key ways.

Aesthetic Hybridity, Emblematic Affinities

While it is difficult to establish with certainty that every individual member of the Brotherhood was exposed to the emblem tradition, their background in visual art and shared interest – especially around the time of *The Germ*'s conception – in engravings and woodcuts makes it likely that most were aware of the more popular English emblem titles, like Quarles' *Emblemes*, as well as more obscure works like the proto-emblematic *Hypnerotomachia Poliphilii* (1499), renowned in Victorian artistic circles for the exquisiteness of its woodcut illustrations (see, for example, Chatto et al. 219; see also Figs. 7, 63, 64). Furthermore, the renewed popularity of emblem literature in the first half of the nineteenth century and advances in printing technology made new emblematic texts as well as reprints of classic Renaissance emblem books readily available and affordable, putting

---

[22] As a token of their admiration the Brothers agreed in 1851 to "keep, under the same obligation as a P.R.B. meeting, the birthday of Shakespeare" (W.M. Rossetti, *Praeraphaelite Diaries* 295); a resolution which, given the poor attendance of PRB meetings at this stage, may not have amounted to much: in the same diary entry, William Michael notes that "all were present [at a meeting], an event which has not happened for months" (295).

[23] Interesting to note, though it falls outside the scope of my study, is that following the Brotherhood's collapse, Hunt, Millais and Dante Gabriel provided illustrations for Moxon edition of *Poems by Alfred Tennyson* (1857) and the Routledge editions of *The Music-Master* (1854) and Willmott's *Poets of the Nineteenth Century* (1857), a fact which demonstrates their continued interest in the intersections of literature and visual art even post-Brotherhood.

them within reach of most middle-class English families. We do know that the Rossettis, arguably the leaders of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, were exposed to a number of illustrated and potentially emblematic books as children and continued to appreciate that genre of literature as adults: a book of Bible history containing Flemish woodcuts was a particular favourite of Dante Gabriel's (W.M. Rossetti, "Preface," *Poetical Works of DGR* 62); the children also cherished a copy of family friend Filippo Pistrucci's emblematic *Iconologia* (1821, 24; Fig. 27), as well as Peter Parley's moralized herbal, *Tales About Plants* (1839; Fig. 28). Although similarities between some of Dante Gabriel's own illustrations for books (*The Prince's Progress*, 1866; Figs. 29, 30) and some of Quarles' *Emblemes* (Fig. 31) make obvious Dante Gabriel's indebtedness to that text (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 79-81), it is not clear whether he read Quarles in childhood or early adulthood. However, as Bentley notes, the "religious tone of the Rossetti household and the various inexpensive editions of Quarles that were published in the eighteen twenties, 'thirties and 'forties" make it highly likely the family did own a copy of that popular English emblem book (Bentley, "Anglo-Dutch" 7).

Dante Gabriel's "double works," which consist of a painting and a poem conceived as a mutually explicating unit and sometimes incorporated into a single work, are perhaps the clearest examples of the Pre-Raphaelite movement's emblematic affinities: his painting *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (Fig. 23), for example, was carried out simultaneously with a pair of sonnets ("Mary's Girlhood: For a Picture") that Rossetti intended to serve as a gloss on the visual piece, and had affixed to its frame (Surtees 1.11). Less emblematic in the strictest sense, but just as important as an example of the Pre-Raphaelite fascination with verbal-visual modes is Rossetti's combined poem and painting of *Proserpine* (Fig. 24), in

which the text (which does not explicate the image, but is rather a dramatic monologue spoken by Proserpine herself) is painted directly onto the canvas. In a similar fashion, fellow Brothers Hunt and Millais also produced a number of paintings on literary subjects during their Brotherhood years:[24] Millais's *Lorenzo and Isabella* (1849), *Mariana* (1851), and *Ophelia* (1851-52), and Hunt's *Claudio and Isabella* (1849), *Rienzi Vowing to Obtain Justice for the Death of his Young Brother* (1848-49), and *Valentine Rescuing Sylvia from Proteus* (1851), for example, draw on such literary sources as Keats' "Isabella: or, The Pot of Basil" (1820), Tennyson's "Mariana" (1830), Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Measure for Measure*, and Edward Bulwer-Lytton's novel, *Rienzi, Last of the Roman Tribunes* (1835).

Strikingly emblematic in their allegorical visual representations of biblical and religious principles, however, are Hunt's *Scapegoat* (1854-56; Fig. 26) and *Light of the World* (1851-53; Fig. 32), paintings which incorporate passages of scripture as motto-like inscriptions on their highly ornate frames.[25] Hunt chose the verses that would accompany these paintings carefully and deliberately: in *Pre-Raphaelitism*, he describes his consternation and the quarrel that ensued in an exchange of letters to the *Times* when Keble College, Oxford, which bought his *Light of the World*, hung the painting in a new frame with a different piece of scripture as its "legend" (Hunt 1: 416). Hunt had selected "Behold, I stand at the door and knock;" Keble College had substituted "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Seek, and ye shall find" (2: 415), a passage Hunt rejected as "absurdly inappropriate" (2: 415). The figure in the painting, who knocks on a door, carries a lamp,

---

[24] Interestingly, their earlier paintings are more bound up with literary themes than their later work, though both did produce book and magazine illustrations into the 1870s (see note 22, above).

[25] In other cases, the painting was conceived first, and called for an accompanying text: William Michael recalls Millais asking him to "write an illustrative sonnet" for a small portrait he painted in 1848 (W.M. Rossetti, *Praeraphaelite Diaries* 244).

and wears a crown of thorns, is, he insisted, clearly intended to represent Christ, and not a Christian seeking divine aid. As a result of Hunt's remonstrations with the warden of Keble College, "the frame and text were afterwards removed and the former frame restored" (2: 415). Hunt's persistence in ensuring that a particular passage of scripture be affixed to his painting suggests he viewed the text as an integral part of the work: this verse was not intended simply as a sub-title; rather, inscription and image were meant to elucidate one another. In this way, as Lothar Hönnighausen, Virkar-Yates and Höltgen have noted, this painting/poem combination is emblematic; Virkar-Yates further argues that its motif, Christ knocking on a door which the *subscriptio* identifies as a figure for the heart makes the painting a late example of an emblem in the *Schola Cordis* or "School of the Heart" tradition (34).

The Germ

While not every member of the PRB wrote poetry, the work of the movement as a whole is marked by an appreciation for literature and a hybrid aesthetic sensibility that shares a great deal with emblematics. Nowhere is this shared interest in the intersections of the visual and the literary more apparent than in *The Germ* magazine, a project initially suggested by Dante Gabriel and developed by the Brotherhood late in the first year of its association. The idea of producing a magazine was not discussed, William Michael explains, until after the Brotherhood had shown its first paintings "conceived in the new spirit" in the Academy exhibition of 1849, where they were received by the public "with more than moderate though certainly not unmixed favour" ("Introduction," *The Germ* 8). The magazine was intended to be an extension of this public display and a further

elucidation of the Brotherhood's new principles: "*The Germ* aimed to be the exponent of the Praeraphaelite principle of strict naturalism – the treating of a subject in all its details in exact conformity with the rationale of that particular subject" (W.M. Rossetti, *Some Reminiscences* 1: 81). For this purpose, although the bulk of the material contained in each of the four issues was either poetry, short fiction or criticism, each issue was also to feature two etchings. This plan soon proved too ambitious, however, and in the end each number contained only one etching (one each by Hunt, Collinson, Ford Madox Brown[26] and Walter Howell Deverell[27]). Importantly, this visual component was not conceived as a stand-alone plate or cover illustration, but was meant to accompany the first poem in the volume and was accordingly placed on the facing page, a fact which demonstrates the extent to which the Brotherhood's interest in verbal-visual hybridity was an organizing principle of this joint work (Figs. 33-36).

In September 1849, William Michael was appointed editor of the magazine while he was away on holiday, presumably so he would not be able to refuse what would become an onerous job (*Some Reminiscences* 1: 80-83). He recalls that during a PRB meeting that December,

> We talked about the magazine, and [were] quite unanimous in considering that the first number must appear; but all except Stephens and myself [were] somewhat inclined to let it drop after that, whether successful or not.... We debated the propriety of having an article explanatory of the principles in Art of the P.R.B.; but, as so many papers in the first number are to treat of Art,

[26] A painter associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood mainly through his mentorship of the young Dante Gabriel. His most famous picture, *Work* (1852-65), is an attempt to depict the rapidly changing mid-Victorian English social structure in a single, complex and meticulously-detailed image; Brown included a lengthy explication of the painting in a special catalogue he had produced for its exhibition in 1865 (Bennett 163-65).
[27] A painter and fellow Royal Academy student.

> and as the point will necessarily be brought forward incidentally, it [was] not thought needful. (*Praeraphaelite Diaries* 236)

The point of the magazine, as the Brothers envisioned it then, was to expound their artistic principles to the public both directly and by example. And while William Michael and Stephens imagined a potential future for the enterprise, the fact that the majority of Pre-Raphaelites preferred to "let it drop" after only one issue, successful or not, suggests they envisioned *The Germ* as a manifesto, a unique utterance declaring their artistic principles, rather than as an ongoing commercial project. Even the title is emblematic of the Brotherhood's hopes of revolutionizing modern art with their little magazine: *The Germ* evokes an image of potential, a small seed that will grow into an exponentially larger tree. This was but one of sixty-five titles suggested for the magazine by Dante Gabriel and Madox Brown's friend, the painter William Cave Thomas, and discussed by the Brotherhood shortly before the first issue went to print (W.M. Rossetti, "Introduction," *The Germ* 8, 10).[28] Although these names were ultimately abandoned, they provide an interesting insight into the Brotherhood's self-concept and aims. For example, some, like "The Germ," make reference to seeds and other small-but-mighty objects, including "The Atom," "The Ant," "The Acorn," "The Bud," "The Seed" and "The Sower," all of which suggest the Brothers envisioned their magazine as the small but powerful progenitor of a new era in art. Other names, like "The Lantern," "The Luster" and "The Illuminator" reveal the PRB's desire to shed light on important truths and guide the English public through a dark period in art and society. "Illuminator" also aptly connotes book illustration, especially in the sense of religious literature, something much of *The Germ*'s work, particularly the etching for "The Child Jesus" (Collinson, no. 2; Fig. 34) recalls. "The Guide to Nature,"

[28] The full list is reprinted in *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham, 1854-1870*, 67.

"Aspects of Nature" and "The Mirror of Nature," meanwhile, stress the group's commitment to naturalistic representation and their belief that art must both emerge from and lead to a faithful appreciation of the created world. Likely for this reason, when "The Germ" was finally selected as the magazine's title,[29] the subtitle "Thoughts towards Nature in Poetry, Literature and Art" was added, a designation which, as William Michael explains, "indicated accurately enough the predominant conception of the Praeraphaelite Brotherhood, that an artist, whether painter or writer, ought to be bent upon defining and expressing his own personal thoughts, and that these ought to be based upon a direct study of Nature, and harmonized with her manifestations" ("Introduction," *The Germ* 10).

While *The Germ* attracted some attention, it was not the popular success the Brotherhood had hoped it would be. Publication of the magazine was undertaken by the printing firm of Tupper and Sons, possibly more as a family favour than as a business venture: George F. Tupper, the head of the company, was the father of Alexander, John Lucas, and George I.F. Tupper, aspiring Pre-Raphaelite poets whose works – most notably the five-part satiric poem "The Papers of the M.S. Society" (nos. 3 and 4) – appear in the magazine. The first issue of *The Germ* was published on 1 January 1850, and of the 700 copies made, William Michael reports that only 200 were sold, "in about equal proportions by the publishers, and by ourselves among acquaintances and well-wishers" ("Introduction," *The Germ* 10).[30] Only 500 copies were made of the second issue, published January 31, but it sold even fewer than the first: *The Rossetti Archive* reports that only 40 had been sold by February 9 ("The Germ" par. 5). At this point, William Michael recalls, "had we been left

---

[29] The decision to name the magazine "The Germ" was far from unanimous: William Michael relates that when only a few of Thomas's suggestions met with any favour, the list was quickly narrowed and "The Germ" won by a slim margin of six to four against "The Seed" and "The Scroll" ("Introduction," *The Germ* 10).

[30] *The Rossetti Archive* claims only 70 of the 700 copies were sold.

to our own resources, we must now have dropped the magazine. But the printing firm – or Mr. George I.F. Tupper representing it – came forward, and undertook to try the chance of two numbers more" ("Introduction," *The Germ* 10).[31] The Tuppers thus assumed responsibility for the magazine's losses, but along with this came a greater share of control over the magazine's appearance and contents: William Michael alludes to this fact with characteristic diplomacy when he mentions that while he continued to edit the magazine, he "naturally accommodated [himself] more than before to any wish evinced by the Tupper family" (11). One substantial such wish was the alteration, with the third issue, of the magazine's title. As "suggested" (10) by Alexander Tupper, the evocative *Germ* became the more literal *Art and Poetry.* And while this is the only change William Michael attributes to the Tuppers' influence, there are other remarkable modifications. For instance, the illustrations and accompanying poems in the last two issues, Madox Brown's "Cordelia" (no. 3; Fig. 35) and Howell Deverell's "Viola and Olivia" (no. 4; Fig. 36), differ in significant ways from "My Beautiful Lady / Of My Lady in Death" (no. 1; Fig. 33) and "The Child Jesus" (no. 2; Fig. 34). The reliance of "The Child Jesus" on normative emblematic strategies and its overtly religious subject matter attracted controversy for what critics termed its "puseyite" appearance (House 152, Bentley, "Principal Pre-Raphaelite Pictures" 22) – something the Tuppers, who knew the market, might have feared would harm sales. The final two etchings, on the other hand, adopt safe, secular Shakespearean themes and have a merely illustrative relationship to their respective poems. This shift away from the

---

[31] As Noble points out in his 1882 *Fraser's Magazine* article, "A Pre-Raphaelite Magazine," the costs of printing a magazine like *The Germ* made its eventual demise a virtual certainty: "When it is said that each number contained forty-eight closely-printed large octavo pages of letterpress and was illustrated with an etching, it will be very clear to those having practical experience of such matters that the inevitably small sale made the continued existence of the magazine, save as a costly hobby, altogether impossible" (569). Little wonder, then, that the magazine's original price of sixpence was raised to a shilling shortly before it debuted.

High Church "look" and Tractarian themes is also apparent in changes to the fonts used in the last two issues: while the Latin subscript of "The Child Jesus" is carried out in a catholicizing[32] Gothic font which reproduces freehand the Gothic typeface used elsewhere for titles in the magazine (Fig. 38), the English subscript of "Cordelia" has a decidedly more Anglo-Saxon appearance.[33] Thus, while much of the material included in the final two issues remains consistent with PRB aims and principles, in the end the magazine's commercial failure and its publisher's attempt to make it viable may have compromised its aesthetic and ideological coherence as the organ of the Pre-Raphaelite movement.[34]

In spite of the Tuppers' efforts to salvage the publication, "people would not buy 'The Germ,' and would scarcely consent to know of its existence" (W.M. Rossetti, "Introduction," *The Germ* 11); it was discontinued after the fourth issue. However, as William Michael notes, while the magazine may have been "a most decided failure, yet it would be a mistake to suppose that it excited no amount of literary attention whatever" ("Introduction," *The Germ* 11). The magazine was noticed by the press, and reviews – though many were mixed – appeared in a number of the major periodicals of the day, including *The Guardian* and *The Spectator.* Most reviewers found the placement of such polemical material in a magazine bewildering: for instance, *The Spectator* felt "[t]here is a great deal more of individual notion in *The Germ* than the world is accustomed to look for in a periodical, or than is indeed fitted for that kind of publication which, to do any good, must

---

[32] Tractarian publications – specifically the *Lyra Apostolica* and Keble's *The Christian Year* – were known for employing distinctive gothic fonts (Fig. 37).

[33] See, for example "early English capitals," figure 45 in Frank Chouteau Brown, *Letters and Lettering* (1921), which is taken from W. Eden Nesfield, *Specimens of Medieval Architecture* (1862). Brown explains that this style of lettering developed out of the insular medieval English version of Roman capitals.

[34] Another example of the shift away from religious themes and emblematics is the fact that Dante Gabriel's "Sonnets for Pictures" in the fourth issue narrate, rather than explicate, the paintings they are addressed to; in this their focus is markedly different from the emblematic sonnets he was writing for his own paintings at the time, such as *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin.*

represent a class of some kind" (43). Magazines typically cater to large, preexisting readerships; *The Germ*, on the other hand, was preaching a new – and potentially unpopular – message. This confusion is echoed in the *Standard of Freedom*, which pronounced the magazine "so thoroughly spiritual that it is more likely to find 'the fit audience though few' than to attract the multitude" (11). However, even the most negative reviews accurately pinpoint aspects of the PRB's fundamental principles as they are embodied in the magazine, a testament to *The Germ*'s success as a PRB mouthpiece. One of the PRB's aims was to defamiliarize both modern art and the natural world in order to force a re-evaluation of how nature is represented. "In design and execution," reports *The Critic*, "[*The Germ*] differs from all other periodicals" (94). Considering that illustrated magazines had by this time become a staple of the market, this characterization of *The Germ* as different, its "freshness" and "strangeness" to the reader (*Spectator* 43), is a testament to its success on that front.

Critics were also alert to the magazine's role as an expression of the Pre-Raphaelite interest in verbal-visual hybridity: *The Critic* comments that Dante Gabriel's "My Sister's Sleep" (a poem which was not illustrated) is "replete with poetry. What a *picture* it is. A poet's tongue has told what an artist's eye has seen" (95). Indeed, the poem's indebtedness to emblematics in its careful and meaningful visual descriptions (coupled with its stress on vision, both literal and spiritual) makes it a "painterly" poem. In a similar way, *The Standard of Freedom* describes the magazine in its entirety as "genuinely poetical and artistic in its tone" (11). Its appearance is not simply "artistic," nor is its content merely "poetical;" rather, the "tone" of the magazine, its overall effect, is characterized here as both artistic *and* poetical, suggesting that its foremost quality is this aesthetic hybridity. Thus,

while *The Germ* died an early death, little admired or understood, it managed at least to convey a distinct impression of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's new vision for modern art.

Truth to Nature and "Great Lessonings"

In this way, the magazine succeeded in some small way as a manifesto and as a step towards the Brotherhood's main moral-didactic goal, evolving an art that would reawaken the English public's perception of nature as the manifestation of the divine. Although the PRB opted to keep the focus of the magazine on poetry and other texts that would "show" rather than "tell" its novel ideas for art (W.M. Rossetti, *Praeraphaelite Diaries* 236), each issue of *The Germ* also includes a number of prose works which function as quasi-official statements of Pre-Raphaelite principle. Some of these, like the outline of the magazine's aims which appears on the back cover, are direct, while others, including "The Subject in Art," parts I and II (John Tupper, nos. 1 and 3), an essay on "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art" (Stephens, no. 2), an explication of the "Mechanism of an Historical Picture" (Madox Brown, no. 2), "A Dialogue on Art," dealing specifically with its function (John Orchard, no. 4) and "Modern Giants" (Stephens, no. 4) are declarations of intent masking as the criticism of specific pieces of art and poetry. Because these essays were conceived in the spirit of the movement as it was defined through the group's discussions at infrequent meetings, and undertaken independently by their authors, there is some eclecticism among their arguments.[35] However, two points, both of which reveal the

[35] For instance, in his introduction to the bound edition of *The Germ*, William Michael adds a disclaimer to Orchard's "A Dialogue," noting that the author "expressed opinions of his own which may indeed have assimilated in some points to theirs, but he was not in any degree the mouthpiece of [the PRB], nor prompted by any member of the Brotherhood;" specifically, the persona of Christian, who is meant to represent the PRB's beliefs, "forces ideas of purism or puritanism to an extreme, beyond anything which I can recollect as characterizing any of the PRB" (25). However, Orchard's "upholding of the painters who preceded Raphael as the best men for nurturing new and noble developments of art in our own day was more in their line" (25).

emblematic cast of the PRB's core principles, emerge consistently in these essays: first, that art has a moral duty to instruct, especially by conveying higher truths; and, second, that the surest way of achieving this goal is to present nature in as direct a manner as possible in the work of art.

The Brotherhood's belief that, in order to be relevant, art must instruct and be morally elevating, is a fundamental assumption of all *The Germ*'s critical essays. In "Modern Giants," which deals mainly with the question of whether the modern world furnishes appropriate subject matter for art, Stephens takes for granted that the artist's "powers" consist in conveying a moral, and that these powers are "thrown away" if the reader fails to note or "apply" the "lesson" (172). Indeed, he asserts, "God made Boccaccio and Chaucer" for a greater purpose than to "amuse you in your idle hours" (172): while art may delight, in other words, to be great, it *must* instruct. Similarly, Tupper's "The Subject in Art (II)" bases its argument on the assumption that an artist's "best and most original ideas" are merely a vehicle for "his great *lessonings* to piety, truth, charity, love, honour, honesty, gallantry, generosity, courage" (121; my emphasis): whatever methods he may employ, the author or poet's most important task is to convey some instructive "truth" in his work. In "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art," Stephens attempts to establish that this fundamental principle of art is also the cornerstone of the PRB's own practice when he praises the "modern school [of painting]" (that is, the Pre-Raphaelite movement) for attempting to "lead the taste of the public into a new channel" (58). As the PRB, under Ruskin's influence, understood it, "taste" was not merely an issue of personal preference, but an important index to both individual and social morality.[36] By encouraging the public

[36] Ruskin defines beauty as "the approving voice of God, the glorious symbol of Him, the evidence of His kind presence, or the obedience to His will by Him induced and supported" (*Modern Painters* 4: 210); he claims we

to favour "pure" and faithful representations of nature over "sloshy" idealization in art, the Brotherhood believed it was strengthening the moral fibre of the nation: according to its polemical self-description on the back cover of the first issue, the magazine's main aim is "to develope [sic] thought and principle" in its readers. This statement of intent and the later, expanded version which appeared on the back cover of the remaining three issues clearly identify *The Germ* as the mouthpiece of the Pre-Raphaelite movement: both iterations explain that the magazine is "intended to enunciate the principles of those who, in the true spirit of Art, enforce a rigid adherence to the simplicity of Nature either in Art or Poetry." This statement also reveals that the magazine intends to expound these principles both "intrinsically and by review" – that is, through criticism ("direct[ing] attention to the comparatively few works which Art has yet produced in this spirit"), and through the production of original works according to these principles (poems and etchings which "illustrate this aim practically"). The PRB's insistence here on communicating its ideas "intrinsically" shows the extent to which the movement's didacticism parallels the emblematic approach: just as emblems teach both a particular lesson and a method of interpretation, so here the PRB's favoured method of instruction simultaneously seeks to impart "principle" and to "develope" [sic] the reader's own capacity for "thought."

Significantly, this back-cover statement identifies "the true spirit of Art" as "a rigid adherence to the simplicity of Nature." The PRB took for granted that art must instruct, and believed, with Ruskin, that the surest way art could instruct the most worthwhile principles

---

have the power to prefer certain objects over others, and that we therefore have a moral duty to control these preferences (2: 20): this is the basis for his view of taste as an indicator of morality. In "Education in Art," he asserts that "true taste, or the instantaneous preference of the noble thing to the ignoble, is a necessary accompaniment of high worthiness in nations or men" (*Works* 16: 144). And in *The Crown of Wild Olive*, Ruskin makes plain this "old dogma," stating that "[t]aste is not only a part and an index of morality, it is the ONLY morality" (*Works* 18: 434). See also *Modern Painters* vol. 1, section 1 and vol. 4, chapter 5, as well as *The Stones of Venice* II, especially the section on "The Nature of Gothic."

was to represent nature as faithfully as possible. To this end, the magazine promises to include "such original Tales (in prose or verse), Poems, Essays, and the like, as may seem conceived in the spirit, or with the intent, of exhibiting a pure and unaffected style" (back cover, nos. 2-4). Thus, "Nature," for the PRB, referred as much to the actual natural world as to "a pure and unaffected style" of representing it. The PRB endeavoured to represent "Truth" by developing a transparent form of mediation which foregrounds the reality of the subject while de-emphasizing its artifice, its status as a *re*-presentation. In Tupper's "The Subject in Art (I)" (no. 1), for instance, subject matter is presented as the key to the success of a work of art, eclipsing all questions of medium, technique, and composition. The author contends that "works of Fine Art delight us by the interest the objects they depict excite in the beholder, just as those objects in nature would excite his interest" (11). A painting or poem, in other words, may just as well be a collection of actual, tangible items, since the objects represented are the only aspect of the work which have any effect on the viewer or reader. If the items presented in a work of art "excite" any associated ideas in the viewer, they ought to do so exactly as they would in real life, "without reference to the representations being other than the objects they represent" (11). Tupper in fact dismisses the suggestion that any aspect of the artificial *re*presentation of these items could be responsible for their effect: if this were the case, works of art would "delight us like other works of ingenuity, merely from the difficulties they surmount; like an 'egg in a bottle,' a tree made of stone, or a face made of pigment" (11). Because "fine art delights us from its being the semblance of what in nature delights" (14), the subject must be chosen carefully and represented in as transparent a manner as possible. Specifically, artists should not copy antique models: such works merely reproduce other works, and therefore exist at a double

remove from what is most effective (and affecting) in art (14). On the other hand, works of art which just as slavishly copy "nature" produce the most "delight, by presenting us with objects which in nature delight us" (14). The point of art, for the PRB, was therefore not to impress the viewer or reader with technical skill, but rather to employ that technical skill in presenting the audience with a clear and accurate vision of the natural world.

In "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art" (no. 2) Stephens similarly argues that "execution" in painting should "only [be] maintained as a most important aid" (60) to accurate representation. His essay seeks to legitimize the Brotherhood's desire to "encourage and enforce an entire adherence to the simplicity of nature" by arguing that this "new" system of representation is actually a restoration of the noble tradition of devotional painting established by the "early Italian Painters" (58). Just as Tupper encouraged artists to copy nature instead of other works, so Stephens praises the PRB for eschewing "conventionalities and feeble reminiscences from the Old Masters" in order to produce "pure transcripts and faithful studies from nature" (58), a sign that this group pursues "originality in a more humble manner than has been practised since the decline of Italian Art in the Middle Ages" (58). Stephens' argument linking the PRB's aesthetic aims – especially its focus on reproducing (as opposed to representing) the natural world – with those of medieval Italian art reveals the figural assumptions behind the Brotherhood's aesthetic. Their "patient devotedness" to the accurate representation of nature in art, Stephens argues, is in fact a form of spiritual devotion. The same feeling which spurred some to commune with nature and to strive for "a more exact adherence to all her details" in art caused others, who, Stephens adds, "exaggerated" and mistook the feeling, to retreat "to the monastery" and paint pictures of Saints (58-59). Thus, in Stephens' view, the close study and faithful

presentation of nature – in its minutest details and for its own sake – is motivated by the same "high feeling" (59) and devotion to higher truth as the decision to devote one's life to worship. When the faithful reproduction of nature is its object, art becomes a form of devotion:

> The modern artist does not retire to monasteries, or practise discipline; but he may show his participation in the same high feeling by a firm attachment to truth in every point of representation, which is the most just method.... By a determination to represent the thing and the whole of the thing, by training himself to the deepest observation of fact and detail, enabling himself to reproduce, as far as is possible, nature herself, the painter will best evince his share of faith. (59)

Although Stephens' essay cites no specific figural theory, implicit in his line of reasoning is the sacramental belief that the natural world is the creation and manifestation of God, and consequently functions as legible evidence of ultimate truth. If the primary function of art is to provide moral instruction, and nature is the manifestation of higher truths, then there is no better subject matter for art than nature, faithfully represented.

"These symbols had a tongue": Emblematic Poetry in *The Germ*

As *The Germ*'s critical essays reveal, during the period of its greatest coherence, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was held together aesthetically by its members' shared belief in the figural significance of the natural world. Having rejected the Academy's insistence that artists serve rarefied tastes by representing an idealized version of nature, the Brotherhood instead espoused the figural notion that natural objects stand for higher truths. Out of this

conviction emerged the Brotherhood's two linked primary goals: the development of a transparent representationality, and the use of that aesthetic to instruct and morally regenerate its percipients. If natural objects are manifestations of "truth," then it is the duty of the artist to both represent them as accurately as possible and to encourage the audience to "read" them; this, in turn, trains the audience to perceive such signs directly in the natural world. In practice, these goals meant attempting to reproduce nature in all its particularity in the work of art, framed in such a way that its metaphysical significance becomes apparent to the viewer. There are important parallels between these aspects of the PRB's figurally-based aesthetic practices and those associated with emblem literature. Just as the PRB sought to foreground the spiritual significance of natural objects by presenting them in an unusually detailed and realistic way, so a key feature of the emblem is its recontextualization of a natural sign (for example, the pelican in a "Pelican-in-her-Piety" emblem) in order to draw attention to its higher meaning (Christ's self-sacrifice for our sake). And, just as the main objective of art, for the PRB, was to instruct "intrinsically" – especially, through its representation of the natural world, to teach others to go "directly" to nature and discover "truth" firsthand – so the emblem's presentation of a truth in a form which demands interpretation teaches both that truth, and a lesson in hermeneutics which applies as much to the created world as to other emblems. In this way, the aims, goals and assumptions of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood match up in suggestive ways with those of the emblem, a representational strategy which, as the verbal and visual works in *The Germ* reveal, is uniquely suited to the production of figural, didactic art.

Indeed, while *The Germ*'s critical essays reveal the emblematic nature of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's project by demonstrating the group's commitment to figuralism

and didacticism in art, creative pieces throughout the magazine's four issues make direct use of emblematic structures of representation.[37] These structures allow the poems, etchings and short stories in *The Germ* to enact, rather than explain, the group's key moral-aesthetic values. Robert Calder Campbell's[38] "Sonnet" (no. 2), for example, employs a number of emblematic allusions, including typological imagery, existing emblematic motifs, and flower language, to subtly inflect what seems a simple love poem with sacramental meaning:

> When midst the summer-roses the warm bees
>
> Are swarming in the sun, and thou – so full
>
> Of innocent glee – dost with thy white hands pull
>
> Pink scented apples from the garden trees

---

[37] The sonnet, penned by William Michael, that appears on the title page of each issue, was perhaps intended as a poetic statement expounding some of the Brotherhood's main aesthetic goals (see also Fig. 38):

> When whoso merely hath a little thought
> Will plainly think the thought which is in him,--
> Not imaging another's bright or dim,
> Not mangling with new words what others taught;
> When whoso speaks, from having either sought
> Or only found,-- will speak, not just to skim
> A shallow surface with words made and trim,
> But in that very speech the matter brought:
> Be not too keen to cry – "So this is all!—
> A thing I might myself have thought as well,
> But would not say it, for it was not worth!"
> Ask: "Is this truth?" For is it still to tell
> That, be the theme a point or the whole earth,
> Truth is a circle, perfect, great or small?

Here (somewhat ironically, given the sonnet's own mangled syntax), the poet encourages original thought and clear, original expression; one must eschew "words made and trim" (conventional, neat) in order to bring "the matter" in "that very speech" – in other words, poets should seek to body forth or make manifest their ideas in the very language they employ. This desire to make meaning coterminous with or inherent in the sign is an emblematic impulse: in the figural view of nature, objects both *are* and *mean*; theories of natural language likewise understand signs as partaking of the essence of their referents; devotional emblems purport to replicate this relationship in visual and/or verbal art. When the poet encourages "speakers" to make their meaning immanent in their language, he is advocating the use of emblems as a representational device.

[38] Poet, novelist, memoirist and onetime soldier in the Indian army, Robert Calder Campbell (1798-1857) was introduced to the Rossetti family in 1847. He is credited with mentoring Dante Gabriel in his development as a poet, with starting the mania for Keats among the PRB, and with securing William Michael his position as an unpaid art critic at *The Critic*. "The Sonnet" was his only contribution to *The Germ*. ("Robert Calder Campbell," *The Germ: A Hypermedia Critical Edition*).

To fling at me, I catch them, on my knees,
Like those who gather'd manna; and I cull
Some hasty buds to pelt thee – white as wool
Lilies, or yellow jonquils, or heartsease; –
Then I can speak my love, ev'n tho' thy smiles
Gush out among thy blushes, like a flock
Of bright birds from rose-bowers; but when thou'rt gone
I have no speech, – no magic that beguiles,
The stream of utterance from the harden'd rock: –
The dial cannot speak without the sun!

The speaker's expression of love for his lady is troped in a typological image, as "The stream of utterance from the harden'd rock" (13). As Landow has noted, the image of Moses striking a rock which pours forth a stream of water is a common motif in Victorian art and literature.[39] The standard interpretation of this image is that the rock is a typological representation of Christ: it yielded water when smitten by Moses' rod, a fact which signifies "the important truth, that the Mediator must receive the blows of the law, before He could be the source of salvation" (Henry Melvill, qtd. in Landow, *Victorian Types* 67). When Moses is shown in the act of striking the rock, the image is typological because it depicts the Old Testament event and, at the same time, foreshadows the future events of Christ's crucifixion. However, in cases like Campbell's sonnet where only the rock and stream are alluded to, both the Old and New Testament events are telescoped into a single, dehistoricized image, which is thus emblematic. Here, the image tropes the speaker himself as the "harden'd rock" who, smitten by his beloved, is moved to issue a "stream of utterance" attesting his

[39] See especially Chapter 2, "The Smitten Rock," in *Victorian Types, Victorian Shadows*.

love. While Campbell's use of the image of the rock places it into the realm of romantic love, the image retains its Mosaic and Christological associations, flattened into a single, static image whose original status as a sign ordained by God aligns it with the emblem tradition.

Campbell further demonstrates a familiarity with the emblem tradition in "Sonnet" when he employs an image drawn directly from Renaissance emblem literature to trope the speaker's dejected attitude and consequent inability to express himself in the absence of his beloved. The poem ends with the assertion that "The dial cannot speak without the sun" (14): just as sundials cannot "tell" time without sunlight to cast a shadow, so the speaker's eloquence relies on the animating presence of his lady – who, like the sun, is (we assume) radiant and warm. At first glance, this statement appears to be a simple, even weary metaphor, another trope which flatters the lady and emphasizes the lovesick speaker's dependence on her good graces. However, the sundial is also an image commonly seen in the emblem tradition, surfacing in such well-known texts as Quarles' *Emblemes*, where it signifies both the transitory nature of existence and God's ultimate control over the life of man (Fig. 39). The association of this image in a well-known emblem book with mortality raises the possibility that Campbell is making a "*carpe diem*" argument, in the same style as Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time": just as Herrick's speaker advises his reader to "gather ye rosebuds while ye may" (1), so Campbell's speaker "cull[s] / Some hasty buds to pelt" his love (6-7). Perhaps even more appropriate to the tone of Campbell's poem, however, is Hall's reading of the sundial, in *Occasional Meditations*, as a sign of man's dependence on and illumination by God. Hall compares the actuation of the sundial by a sunbeam to the renewed vitality of a man touched by God's grace (Meditation II, 124).

Coming, as Campbell's sundial image does, in the midst of a declaration that only the lady's presence allows him to speak, this may in fact have been the moralized image Campbell had in mind. More than a mere metaphor, then, the sundial functions in "Sonnet" as an intertextual reference to an existing tradition of imagery in emblem literature, thus suggesting a fundamentally emblematic basis to the imagery in "Sonnet."

Campbell's "Sonnet" also employs the popular emblematic tradition of the "language of flowers" to reveal the state of the speaker's mind. Flower language, which enjoyed a tremendous vogue in the nineteenth century,[40] was a code of communication in which plants and flowers functioned as symbols: rosemary denoted "remembrance," for instance, while a yellow carnation meant "disdain" (see Seaton, "A Combined Vocabulary," *The Language of Flowers* 168-97). In this way, nosegays and boutonnières might take on special significance as organic emblems advertising the wearer's character or circumstances, while mixed bouquets were believed capable of sending complex clandestine messages. The meaning associated with each flower was not considered to have been assigned arbitrarily, but based on some inherent quality of the flower itself – its colour, its medicinal properties, or its myth of origin.[41] In this way, flowers constituted a system of natural signs akin to hieroglyphics; their organization into a "language" (a "floriography") accorded them an emblematic status as self-sufficient signs denoting various emotions and personal qualities. As Gisela Hönnighausen notes, this view of flowers "is but an expression of the typological mode of thought" (10) – that is to say, a further example of the figural habit of mind at work

---

[40] Jack Goody's *Culture of Flowers* and Beverly Seaton's *The Language of Flowers: A History* offer excellent overviews of the history of this emblematic trend; while Goody's is geographically and historically comprehensive, Seaton's focuses on the tradition in nineteenth-century Europe and America. Gisela Hönnighausen's "Emblematic Tendencies in the Works of Christina Rossetti" draws an explicit connection between emblematics and the Victorian language of flowers.

[41] See especially Seaton, Chapter 3: "Floral Symbolism" (36-111).

in the Victorian period. The flower language of the nineteenth century has its roots in the medieval and Renaissance tradition of the herbal manual: these books of floral emblems, based on an analogical view of nature, analyze plants according to their inherent, God-given properties (Stannard ix, xi; Seaton 36; Wasserman 40). Gerarde's *Herball* (1636) and Leyte's *Herball* (1578), which Dante Gabriel owned, are classic examples of this style of literature; the Rossetti family also owned Parley's *Tales About Plants* (1839; Fig. 28), an overtly moralizing Victorian version of the herbal manual aimed at children. The page design of these books, which typically combines engravings of the plants with their Latin names and an explanation of their properties, parallels the normative emblem's combination of image, motto and *explicatio*.[42]

Although the speaker of Campbell's sonnet is unable to express his love for the lady who "pull[s] / Pink scented apples from the garden trees / To fling at [him]" (3-5), he finds a voice in the language of flowers. In retaliation for her attack on him, the speaker "cull[s] / Some hasty buds to pelt [her]" with (6-7), including "white as wool / Lilies," "yellow jonquils" and "heartsease" (7-8); "Then," the speaker explains, "I can speak my love" (9): it is only through this selection and presentation of flowers, in other words, that he is able to express himself. White lilies typically signify virginity or purity, and in this case may serve either as a compliment on the lady's virtue or a comment on the purity of the love he offers. Yellow jonquil conveys the desire for the return of one's affections, which means the heartsease likely stands for what its name would suggest, a request that the lady put the speaker's heart at ease by returning his love. In this light, the lady's choice of apples as her

[42] The fascinating tradition of the herbal and its transcription into manuscript form are discussed in Minta Collins, *Medieval Herbs: The Illustrative Traditions*. Other good sources of information on the herbal are *Visualizing Medieval Medicine and Natural History*, ed. Jean A. Givens, Karen M. Reeds and Alain Touwaide, and Jerry Stannard's *Herbs and Herbalism in the Middle Ages*.

missile may be a positive sign: since apple blossoms signify "preference," the fully-formed fruit could in fact indicate that she cherishes a mature and ripe partiality for the adoring speaker.[43] Far from a simple description of the natural environment, these references to plants and flowers function emblematically, within the tradition of floriography, as subtle evocations of the speaker's feelings for his lady, as well as her reciprocation.

Two of the seven poems Christina Rossetti (writing as Ellen Alleyn) contributed to *The Germ* make even more extensive use of the language of flowers: in "Song" (no. 2), Christina relies solely on the flowers' associations with feelings and stages of life to render the speaker's state of mind. Gisela Hönnighausen notes that Rossetti was drawn to emblematics for its acknowledgment of the correspondences between the things of this world and those of the next, a belief which "came to her as a personal and immediate experience" (4). Hönnighausen also argues that Christina shied away from more conventional emblematic imagery, opting instead to use the language of flowers for its basis in the imagery of the natural world. Hönnighausen discovers that "the contemporary floral alphabets provide the key to many of her poems" (1) as well as to her later religious prose and, indeed, that some of Christina's own early works were later included in contemporary books of floral emblems, suggesting that her interest in the emblematic properties of flowers spanned her entire career.[44] Of all her *Germ* works, however, "Song" is the most obviously

---

[43] These meanings are remarkably consistent across the range of flower reference books and are considered standard; Seaton includes an alphabetical chart of flower meanings at the end of *The Language of Flowers* ("A Combined Vocabulary"). Some popular books of floriography in the Victorian period included Henry Phillips' *Floral Emblems* (1825) and Frederic Shoberl's English adaptation of Charlotte de Latour's *Le Langage des Fleurs, The Language of Flowers; With Illustrative Poetry* (1834; see Seaton, Chapter 1: "Flowers in the Nineteenth Century").

[44] In particular, Hönnighausen mentions "When I am dead my dearest," which appeared in *Flower-Lore* (Belfast, 1879), and "The Rose," which was printed in *Flower Emblems of the Seasons of Life* (London, 1871). She also notes that this latter poem was at that time only contained in the private edition of Rossetti's poems printed by her grandfather Polidori in 1847, and was therefore likely offered for inclusion in *Flower Emblems*

shaped by the language of flowers. Its organization as a list of various plants or flowers along with their associations recalls that of many contemporary handbooks to flower language:

> Oh! Roses for the flush of youth,
>
> And laurel for the perfect prime;
>
> But pluck an ivy-branch for me,
>
> Grown old before my time. (1-4)

Here, roses, laurel and ivy are interpreted as representing – standing "for" (1; 2; 3) – different stages of life. Roses often connote love and friendship, while laurel (or bay) has long been associated with strength and accomplishment, as well as, significantly, the poet's crown (whence, of course, the term "laureate").

Ivy and vines like it, meanwhile, are a common emblematic motif denoting friendship,[45] as well as the need for support; specifically, divine help.[46] In his *Collection of Emblemes*, for example, Wither uses ivy as an illustration of the idea, expressed in the motto, that "Though weaknesse unto mee belong, / In my Supporter, I am strong" (4.XVIII; Fig. 40). Like the ivy, flawed humankind requires a bolster; by clinging to Christ, the emblem explains, we may become strong. The most normatively emblematic of all her works, Christina's *Called to Be Saints* (1881) associates each Saint's day in the calendar with a flower, gemstone, or animal, many of which are illustrated in engravings inset throughout the text (G. Hönnighausen 4, Kent and Stanwood 246-47; Figs. 41-43). She

---

by Rossetti herself, which further reveals Rossetti's abiding interest in the language of flowers and floral emblems.

[45] Alciato's emblem 160, "*Amiticia etiam post mortem durans*," uses the image of a grape vine embracing a dry, dying elm to illustrate the concept of friendship and loyalty lasting even after death (Fig. 4).

[46] Emblem XIV of Hadrianus Junius's *Emblemata* (1565) reads ivy in a more secular, political context, as an emblem for the poor, who require the support of the wealth of princes.

aligns St. Thomas, Apostle (21 December) with ivy, and explicates this plant exactly as Wither does, a fact which strongly suggests she was familiar with the earlier emblem: the motto for ivy, in Christina's book, is "Not strong, except with a prop" (251). This interpretation of ivy as weak and dependent seems an appropriate figure for the speaker of "Song," who views herself as one "grown old before [her] time" (4). However, the full explication of this plant in *Called to Be Saints*, which represents a considerable expansion on the ideas found in Wither, complicates the speaker's self-characterization: ivy may be dependent on others for strength, but it is also hardy, tenacious and beautiful:

> Ivy affects not to stand alone, but by clinging and clambering it will scale a lofty height till it overhangs the sustaining oak or pine. Objects which lack beauty, whether decaying trunk, ruin, or chasm, ivy will embrace or bridge over and clothe with grace and comeliness.... Ivy flourishes in sunshine and in shade, it mounts skywards, it nestles in nooks, it refuses not to trail along the ground: everywhere and at all times... it is green.... (251)

Assuming that Christina was aware of Wither's ivy emblem, and that her own "reading" of ivy in 1881 is reasonably consistent with her understanding of it in the PRB period, the speaker's choice of ivy as an emblem for herself in "Song" carries Christian overtones of the joy that may be found in accepting one's frailty and surrendering to the divine, and hints at the hidden resources of strength as well as the possibility of eternal life that accompany such a surrender in the stress on ivy's perennial greenness.

This interpretation is supported by the second and final stanza, which reveals that the speaker's current state is a product of her own choices, rather than of outside circumstances:

> Oh! Violets for the grave of youth,

And bay for those dead in their prime;

Give me the withered leaves I chose

Before in the olden time. (5-8)

Here the speaker aligns herself with those whose lives have ended prematurely in death. Her association of herself with "withered leaves" intensifies the sense, established in the first stanza, that her life has been cut short in some way, though apparently not by a literal death. Violets are associated with sleep (eternal rest in this case); bay (laurel) is a sign of athletic or – more importantly – literary accomplishment, and withered leaves evoke death, as well as the stereotypical "dried-up" image of the spinster. In most floriographies, any kind of wilted or withered plant is an indication of romantic rejection or failure.[47] If the speaker did not receive "withered leaves" from a lover, but rather chose them for herself, it is possible she is the one who rejected love and feels she has become metaphorically "withered." However, withered plants are also a biblical image of man's mortality, a reminder of our ephemerality as well as of the eternal nature of things spiritual and divine: Isaiah 40:8, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever," a passage of scripture on which several of Rossetti's poems meditate,[48] may indeed be the source of this image, which – like the ivy – functions emblematically to signify mortality and to suggest the speaker's belief in the necessity of cultivating a spiritual life. Read in this light, the speaker's selection of withered leaves identifies her sense of having died prematurely as a decision to "die to the world" – to renounce the temporal – in order to embrace the spiritual and "live in Christ."

---

[47] In *Christina Rossetti's Faithful Imagination*, Dinah Roe argues that the violets are a sign of innocence and modesty, and that withered flowers signify melancholy (45).

[48] For example, "One Certainty," "A Better Resurrection" and "'Consider the Lilies of the Field.'"

The apparently simple imagery and sing-song metre of "Song" are deceptive: Christina's emblematic treatment of plants in this poem complicates the motifs of flower language with biblical overtones and imagery in ways that prevent a straightforward interpretation of the poem according to the conventions of either system. Nonetheless, both Rossetti's and Campbell's deployment of the emblematic code of floriography demonstrates that both had a working familiarity with this popular branch of English emblematics. As well, Christina's use of ivy as an emblem of weakness or dependency demonstrates her awareness of and indebtedness to a major text in the tradition. Furthermore, the Brotherhood's inclusion of these poems in the magazine they intended as a mouthpiece suggests not only a recognition of the emblematic techniques at work in both pieces, but an appreciation and a sense of affinity with these methods, as all poems printed in *The Germ* were (ostensibly) chosen as representative of the movement's aims and goals. As Hönnighausen argues, the Pre-Raphaelite "preoccupation with a peculiar combination of realism and symbolism" (1) made floral emblems, which combine a minute study of natural fact and the belief that created objects signify transcendent truths, a uniquely suitable vehicle for the Brotherhood's figural-aesthetic aims.

Traditionally, the devotional emblem models a sacramental hermeneutic which is intended to teach its readers to perceive manifestations of God in the physical world. The movement of the reader's eye between picture and explanation as he or she interprets an emblem parallels the perceptual oscillations between visible world and invisible reality he or she ought to make when viewing creation. In this way, the emblem seeks ultimately to instill the emblematic habit of mind its readers need to perceive God in the temporal world. Christina's "Sweet Death" (no. 3) attempts such a lesson, moving in a deliberately

emblematic way from the detailed description of a natural scene to a full articulation of the moral lessons it teaches, demonstrating that even the most mundane objects are signs placed in our way by God. Each stanza begins with a motto-like statement about death which summarizes a lesson the speaker learns on her way "day by day / Unto the church to praise and pray, / ...crossing the green church-yard thoughtfully" (2-4). Foregrounded here are the speaker's piety and thoughtfulness, two qualities which place her in an ideal frame of mind for receiving sacramental truths.[49] The first stanza begins with the motto-like assertion that "The sweetest blossoms die" (1), and goes on to describe the observation that led to this conclusion:

> I saw how on the graves the flowers
> Shed their fresh leaves in showers;
> And how their perfume rose up to the sky
> Before it passed away. (5-8)

The second stanza proclaims in another motto-like statement that "The youngest blossoms die" (9), a fact the speaker has learned from having seen them "die, and fall, and nourish the rich earth / From which they lately had their birth" (10-11). While these observations are not taken beyond their immediate implications for botany at first, they nonetheless hint at parallels with human life. The graveside location of the flowers evokes human mortality; the "shedding" of their "leaves" and the "pass[ing] away" of their perfume in death also recall the Christian vision of death as the "shedding" of the physical body and the "pass[ing] away" or rising of the soul "up to the sky." Similarly, the unusual use of "birth" to describe the germination of a flower draws an implicit connection with human babies, and the tacit

[49] The speaker's attendance at church suggests a direct exposure to emblematic rhetoric: the tradition of the exegetical Protestant sermon, which is associated with "occasional" religious meditation, has its roots in the English emblem tradition (Huntley 3-4).

lesson here is that death comes even to the very youngest humans, just as it comes to the youngest plants. Importantly, the poet hints at but does not complete either lesson for the reader until the final stanza, where the full "truth" of these natural observations is revealed: "youth and beauty die" (17), a statement meant both literally (the young and beautiful will die) and figuratively (youth and beauty are transitory); and, on an even higher level, the poem cautions that

> Better than beauty and than youth
> Are saints and angels, a glad company:
> And thou, O Lord, our Rest and Ease,
> Are better far than these. (19-22)

Christina here attempts to train the reader's emblematic vision by embedding clues to the lessons taught by the natural scene in the first two stanzas, nudging the reader in the right direction but allowing him to exercise his own interpretive skills. Although it is not one of the poems the PRB chose to illustrate, "Sweet Death" is one of the most emblematic poems in *The Germ*: it defers a complete explication of the natural phenomena it describes, ultimately offering a religious precept (a reminder to eschew the vanities associated with temporal life in favour of spiritual things) and an interpretive map to the preceding stanzas, as well as a key to the correct interpretation of the natural world. In this way, Christina seeks to model a hermeneutic method that is as useful for understanding other emblematic texts as it is for properly reading the created world outside of them.

Although focused on the Romantic issue of poetic inspiration rather than moral or religious truths, Woolner's "Emblems" (no. 3) similarly demonstrates an emblematic habit of mind, presenting and then offering a reading of the elements in a particular scene. The

title suggests Woolner drew consciously on the emblem tradition, but his use of these conventions is markedly different from Christina's: whereas "Sweet Death" draws on the devotional emblem tradition to frame the lessons gleaned from the natural world as intrinsic, ordained by a higher power, and thus objectively true, the lyrical "Emblems" employs emblems rhetorically to show the landscape through the poet's eyes, offering a subjective interpretation of the objects in the scene as the poet understands them and as they relate to his personal situation. The speaker describes himself in a posture of lassitude, "lay[ing] through one long afternoon, / Vacantly plucking the grass" (1-2). He sees

> the sun sink down behind
> The high point of a mountain;
> Its last light lingered on the weeds
> That choked a shattered fountain,
> Where lay a rotting bird, whose plumes
> Had beat the air in soaring. (8-13)

"On these things," the speaker explains, "I was *poring*" (14; emphasis mine); in other words, the speaker examines the objects in this rather desolate scene with fixed attention, as though he were reading a book or a map.[50] In the next stanza the speaker presents the results of this close study, and interprets each object as a sign of his own poetic failure:

> The sun seemed like my sense of life,
> Now weak, that was so strong;
> The fountain – that continual pulse
> Which throbbed with human song:

[50] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the verb "to pore" as "to examine a book, map, etc. with fixed attention; to study or read earnestly or with intense concentration; to be absorbed in reading or study."

The bird lay dead as that wild hope

Which nerved my thoughts when young. (15-20)

In emblematic fashion, the speaker treats the landscape as a text to be read and interpreted. The meanings of these objects do not necessarily inhere in the objects themselves, but as his assertion that "These symbols had a tongue" (21) suggests, they are made to express his emotional state, particularly his feelings of poetic failure. In this way, Woolner is using emblems rhetorically, as arbitrary but convincing illustrations of abstract concepts or ideas. The fountain tropes the poet as an *improvisatore*, one whose poetry flows freely and by inspiration. The image of a "choked" and "shattered" fountain, therefore, is a fitting emblem for a blocked or failed poet. And, just as Shelley's "To a Skylark" and Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" trope the poet as a singing, soaring bird, so the speaker reads the dead bird before him as an emblem of his own poetic collapse. At first glance, these figures seem more like similes than emblems: "the sun seemed *like* my sense of life," for instance (15; emphasis mine). However, the poem is not about describing the landscape for its own sake; rather, it is about the speaker's discovery of external figures for his thoughts in the objects of a natural scene. By presenting and then interpreting the scene, this poem exposes the workings of a mind trained in emblematic habits of thought, and keen to find emblematic representations of abstract ideas and concepts in concrete objects and situations. Just as the reader is taken step-by-step through an emblematic reading of a landscape in "Sweet Death," so "Emblems" is a poem about the act of emblematic interpretation itself. The presence of two such poems in *The Germ* strongly suggests that the PRB viewed the emblematic habit of mind as a key component of its aesthetic method.

Typological Emblematics: "The Child Jesus"

Another sign of the PRB's interest in emblematics is its insistence on the inclusion of both literary and visual material in *The Germ.* Not only is this a clear indication of the group's commitment to aesthetic hybridity, but the fact that the visual element is always placed in conjunction with the verbal, and never stands independently, gives this hybridity a distinctly emblematic appearance and function. The most overtly emblematic of the four poem-illustration pairs produced in *The Germ* is James Collinson's "The Child Jesus: A Record Typical of the Five Sorrowful Mysteries" (no. 2; Fig. 34), which includes all three normative elements: a *pictura* (the etching, depicting Christ crowned and adored by children along a shore),[51] a motto (the Latin subscription, "*Ex ore infantium et lactentium perfecisti laudem*," which means "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise," Psalm 8:2), and an *explicatio* (the accompanying poem). Read together, this tripartite construction argues that Christ's redemption of mankind, which is prefigured typologically in such Old Testament figures as Moses, was also foreshadowed in the details of his own early life. Both the poem and the illustration follow a typological programme in which five events in Christ's childhood prefigure the events commemorated in the five "Sorrowful Mysteries" of the rosary: the killing of Christ's treasured pet dove by a hawk and his subsequent sorrow (61-90) anticipates the Agony in the Garden; the flogging of a donkey with a cross-shaped pattern on its fur (148-67) is a type of the Scourging at the Pillar; Jesus' crowning with hawthorn flowers by children on the beach (169-95) prophecies the Crowning with Thorns; Joseph's refusal to let Jesus help him carry wood, saying one day

[51] The etching also recalls Giotto's *Lamentation* (1304-06), which depicts the Crucified Christ being laid on the ground by his friends, whose faces reveal various states of anguish; angels hover overhead. The angle of the cliff and the position of the friends in Collinson's engraving recall those in Giotto's earlier work. By referencing this work, which depicts the aftermath of the Crucifixion, Collinson further gestures towards Christ's future sacrifice in his own engraving (Fig. 44).

"thou wilt be strong enough / And on thy shoulders bear a tree like this" (211-12) anticipates the Carrying of the Cross; and Mary's dream that Jesus' pet lamb falls into a pit of thorns, where its head, feet and sides are pierced (262-312), foretells Christ's Crucifixion and death. The narrative dimension of the poem is thus organized typologically, but this scheme is supported and amplified by the emblematic organization of the poem-engraving pair. The motto, inscribed under the engraving, taken from the second verse of Psalm 8, is an allusion to the scene depicted in the engraving, in which children miraculously recognize and adore Jesus (181-91). This motto is both a description of the miraculous "truth" the "babes" speak in acknowledging Christ as their king, and an intertextual, biblical allusion to Christ's later recognition in the Temple. In Matthew 21, Jesus quotes this verse when onlookers ask why children are calling him the "Son of David":

> And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? (Matt. 21:15-16)

Jesus' own use of this line of scripture is typological, casting the verse as prophetic and himself as its fulfillment. Its use here as a motto for Collinson's image-poem pair is thus at once an apt, scripturally-based description of the events depicted, a typological allusion to later, similar events in the life of Christ, and an amplification of the typological thrust of the overall work.

"The Child Jesus" immediately attracted controversy for its "puseyite" or Romanizing, High-Church appearance (House 152, qtd. in Bentley, "Child Jesus" 22), a

criticism which recognizes the Pre-Raphaelites' debt to Oxford Movement publications as well as, by extension, their debt to the emblem. While emblem scholars have not yet examined *The Germ*, several works by the Tractarian poet Isaac Williams are in fact now widely considered nineteenth-century emblem books (see Bath, *Speaking Pictures*, Appendix), and similarities between Tractarian publications like these and "The Child Jesus" are revealing. The Latin subscript, for example, is written in a Gothic font reminiscent of such Oxford Movement products as Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827), the *Lyra Sacra* (1861), *Lyra Anglicana* (1870) and the *Lyra Christiana* (1888) (see Fig. 37). In fact, the whole piece resembles the emblems in Williams' *The Baptistery* (1842) (Figs. 16, 17), which borrows its plates from an earlier Franco-Dutch emblem book, Antoine Sucquet's *Via Vitae Aeternae*, or the Way of Eternal Life (1620) (Fig. 45). The manner in which Collinson's etching-poem unit is arranged over two pages also bears a close resemblance to the layout of Quarles' *Emblemes* (see, for example, Fig. 39). Like "The Child Jesus," all of these older works join busy images full of significant figures and items with an explication of their significance on the facing page. As Bentley notes, Collinson's poem supplies "dimensions that are denied to the etching" ("Principal Pre-Raphaelite Pictures" 24), including descriptions of the landscape that draw on liturgical colour symbolism. "The Child Jesus" thus engages emblematic structures and cues in order to support its typological exploration of biblical themes. In making this assertion, I am extending Bentley's argument that the landscape, figures and other elements in the engraving participate in the poem's typological programme by adding that they do so through the invocation of another sacramental mode of representation, emblematics. Further, this use of emblematics seeks to advance the Brotherhood's moral-didactic aim of

reawakening sacramental perception in its audience: just as the poem encourages us to read the events of Christ's life before the Crucifixion as phenomenal prophecies of that event, so the engraving's presentation of a landscape within the verbal and visual discourse of the emblem asks us to see it – and, by extension, the natural world outside the text – sacramentally, as an additional revelation of "truth."

Bentley has also noted the presence in the poem of markedly English flora among the "emblematic" ("Principal Pre-Raphaelite Pictures" 24)[52] plants around Jesus' family home: specifically, "honeysuckle," "moss-rose"[53] (40), "woodbine" (143), "hazel" (145), and "hawthorn trees" (242) ("Principal Pre-Raphaelite Pictures" 25). The odd geographical and historical misplacement of these English items in ancient Palestine isolates and defamiliarizes them within the context of the poem, thereby calling attention to them as emblematic, rather than realistic or merely ornamental elements of the double work. Moreover, the English reader's likely familiarity with these plants would make their iconographic and emblematic meaning more immediately accessible. While the rose has long been associated with the Virgin Mary,[54] its physical properties are also evocative of the Passion, making it a natural emblem of Christ: its thorns correspond to the crown of thorns, and also recall the nails with which he was Crucified; the beautiful bloom on the thorny

---

[52] The most obviously emblematic plant, as Bentley points out, is the "grape vine" (43) whose "purple fruit" (45) and "blossoms" (50) shine like "the marble Altar and the gold / Of God's own Tabernacle" (48-49). Christ established the grape as an emblem of his salvific power during the Last Supper, when he instituted the communion ritual in which wine, transformed miraculously into his blood, is consumed in memory of him. Grapes are an appropriate figure for Christ and his blood: they must be crushed to release their juice, just as Christ's salvation of humankind could only happen through his piercing in the Crucifixion. The comparison of the grape vine on Jesus' house with the "Altar" of "God's own Tabernacle" here is a clear typological reference to the future establishment of the communion ritual.

[53] Although the moss-rose (*portulaca grandiflora*), a low-growing annual originally from Brazil, is now known to be a member of the *portulaca*, and not the *rosaceae* family, it was believed, even in 1922, to have been an exotic-looking relative of the cabbage rose, known to do well in dry soil (see, e.g., Hurst and Breeze, "Notes on the Origin of the Moss-Rose," *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society* 47.1, 1922). Thus at the time this poem was written, the flower would have carried all the significance of an actual rose.

[54] See especially Dante Alighieri's association of the Virgin Mother with roses and a rose garden in the *Paradiso*, a reference the PRB were almost certainly alert to.

stem alludes to Christ's Resurrection, and its sweet smell evokes the sweetness of the eternal life promised to all in that sacrifice. The similarly prickly hawthorn is also suitable as an emblem of Christ, resembling both the "tree" to which Christ was nailed, the nails with which he was Crucified, and the thorns with which he was crowned. Even more significantly, English tradition states that the crown of thorns was made from a hawthorn branch, and that the Holy Thorn at Glastonbury in fact "sprang from one of the thorns out of our Lord's Crown of Thorns which St. Joseph [of Arimathea] brought with him and planted [in England]" (Bett 55). The specific hawthorn spray with which Christ is crowned in this poem (181-86) has flowered,[55] combining allusions to his crucifixion, death and ultimate resurrection into the image of a single plant. Both the rose and the hawthorn therefore function as emblematic props within the typological scheme of the poem's narrative: while the natural properties of both plants (their thorns and blossoms) allow them to stand as visible reminders of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection, their inclusion in a narrative whose main events prefigure the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Passion furthers the typological dimension of the story.

More than a simple interest in the sister arts, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's combination of verbal and visual elements in *The Germ* points to an emblematic interest in modeling the act of interpretation. As the critical essays and statements of intent make clear, *The Germ* was intended to communicate the Brotherhood's vision for a renewed English art, one that hewed more closely to "stern fact" not as a refutation of transcendence, but as a means of revealing it. The PRB's shared belief in figuralism meant the group believed that objects in the natural world were manifestations of God, and that art need only present these

[55] Dante Gabriel Rossetti's sonnet "English May" also uses the image of a blooming hawthorn tree to denote renewed health and spiritual life. See my note, "'Grafted Warmth': Dante Rossetti's Spiritual-Sensual Aesthetic and 'English May.'"

objects to the viewer in the most un-artificial manner possible, but framed in such a way that their "meaning" is made apparent. These moral-aesthetic, didactic aims and the ontology behind them bear suggestive parallels with those of the emblem, a genre of literature which is both based on and intended to inculcate a sacramental vision of the natural world. While the Brotherhood's insistence on pairing an engraving with an explicative poem in each issue is perhaps the most evident indication of its engagement with the emblem tradition, its familiarity with this tradition is also suggested by the inclusion, in unillustrated poetry, of existing emblematic imagery such as the sundial. Much of the unillustrated poetry in *The Germ* employs emblematic structures of representation to various didactic ends, displaying its authors' emblematic habits of mind and demonstrating sacramental vision in the emblematic mode. The pervasiveness of emblematic structures, themes and references in *The Germ* demonstrates that the emblem was not an isolated interest for individual members of the Pre-Raphaelite circle, but underlies the work of the movement as a whole. At its earliest and most coherent stage, the PRB turned to emblematics as a model for morally-didactic, naturalistic art in its quest for a means of representing the ineffable.

Chapter 3

"Wise upbraidings": Christina Rossetti's Devotional Emblematics

Christina Rossetti was never considered an official member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, but her substantial contributions to *The Germ* helped shape that magazine as well as the art and poetry movement it would launch. Emblematic strategies, themes, and references dominate the magazine's aesthetic: in fact, more than a curiosity or an isolated interest on the part of a few members, the emblem's representational structure resonates with the work of the Pre-Raphaelite movement as a whole; Christina's own figural assumptions and emblematic methods place her squarely within that movement. The PRB's decision to include seven of her poems in a magazine they intended as a mouthpiece for their moral-aesthetic goals signals their recognition of the emblematics at work in her poetry. However, while most Pre-Raphaelites would drift away from the devotional emblem tradition and towards more rhetorical, esoteric, and idiosyncratic manifestations of the genre in their later work, Christina's use of the devotional emblem remained consistent throughout her career as a writer of both prose and poetry, a sign of (among other things) her unwavering faith in the divine authorship of the temporal world. Through close readings of *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862), *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* (1866), *Called to Be Saints: The Minor Festivals Devotionally Studied* (1881), and *Time Flies: A Reading Diary* (1885), this chapter attempts to highlight the degree to which emblematic structures constitute a fundamental hermeneutic strategy in Christina's major works.

A number of critics have already remarked on Christina's indebtedness to various strains of the emblem tradition: Gisela Hönnighausen has drawn attention specifically to her use of floral emblems; Arseneau and Bentley note meaningful parallels between Peter

Parley's popular Victorian emblem book about plants and her own *Called to Be Saints*; and by demonstrating that her brother was exposed to the Anglo-Dutch emblem tradition, Bentley's work on Dante Gabriel hints at Christina's own familiarity with that tradition. Lorraine Janzen Kooistra's studies, including "The Dialogue of Image and Text in Christina Rossetti's *Sing-Song*," and the monumental *Christina Rossetti and Illustration: A Publishing History*, go further than any other to date in identifying Christina's compositional method as fundamentally emblematic. As Kooistra demonstrates, Christina pursued visual-verbal hybridity throughout her more than forty-year literary career (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 3). Not only did she hand-illustrate personal copies of her own writings and books by authors she admired, but she consistently sought publication in illustrated venues and conceived several of her own books as illustrated volumes from their earliest stages of composition. Atypically for a writer of her period, Christina also exerted a considerable degree of control over the appearance of her books, especially their illustration: she requested the hiring of certain illustrators and frequently directed their work (Kooistra, "Dialogue" 466; *CR and Illustration* 9, 11-12). While her interest in illustration may have been due in part to marketing savvy – pictures adding beauty and therefore cachet to books in a competitive market – more importantly, it was a way of "introducing a nonlinguistic form and a hermeneutic framework" which would extend the meaning of her poetry (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 6). Considered as an emblematic strategy, this is also a way of encouraging the development of exegetical skill in her readers: by placing image and text together on the page, Christina taught her audience to find figural correspondences by fostering "the hermeneutic habit of interpreting all material signs for their symbolic significance" (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 44). In other words, as Kooistra, Bentley,

Arseneau, and others have noted, her verbal-visual habit of composition and its moralizing purpose were substantially emblematic.

While normative emblems and emblem books continued to circulate during the Victorian period, the emblem had also evolved by this time into a discourse – a habit of thought and a mode of reading. Building on the critical work of Kooistra, Bentley and Arseneau, but taking into account the emblem's discursive evolution, this chapter will focus on the emblematic strategies at work in the verbal component of Christina's works. While the bimediality of her writing practices is an acknowledged sign of their emblematic intent, I argue that the emblem is also "visible" on the level of discourse in her poems and devotional prose. Thus, while I view Dante Gabriel Rossetti's illustrations of *Goblin Market and Other Poems* and *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* as a key to the emblematic mode of these texts, the poetry segment of this chapter ("Naked Emblems in the *Goblin Market* and *Prince's Progress* Volumes") will focus on the emblematic structures in the verbal component of these volumes, examining *Goblin Market and Other Poems* as an extended "naked" emblem whose ultimate lesson is the importance of cultivating emblematic vision, and *The Prince's Progress*, similarly, as a meditation on the difficulty of that important task. Finally, the devotional prose section of this chapter ("'Wise upbraidings': Christina Rossetti's Devotional Emblematics") will examine the emblematic strategies that organize some of Christina's devotional prose volumes, looking specifically at the unusual mix of hagiography and herbal in *Called to Be Saints: The Minor Festivals Devotionally Studied*, and the occasional meditations of *Time Flies: A Reading Diary*, a serious theological text which employs the rhetorical cues of the personal diary to disguise itself as confession. I hope to show that – as was the case for the early PRB – Christina's moral and aesthetic aims

were uniquely well-served by the emblem's figural, didactic method of representation and hermeneutic demands.

Background

Christina's early life, education, and religious background were marked to an extraordinary degree by figural and emblematic beliefs, texts and habits. Educated at home by her staunchly Anglican mother, Christina was exposed from adolescence to the integrated aesthetic and religious sensibilities of the Tractarian movement. Her deep personal engagement with important poetic texts in that movement and her recognition and appreciation of their emblematic focus is signaled by her habit of illustrating some of these books with elaborately-conceived pencil drawings (Fig. 46). Her desire to participate in the emblem tradition is further evidenced by her personal illustration of manuscript copies of several of her own works (for example, Fig. 47b). Finally, among the books we know her to have read in her youth are a number of theological works and unillustrated emblematic texts – including George Herbert's *The Temple* and John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* – which may have served as inspiration for the discursive emblematics of her own volumes. Christina's education, religious upbringing, and habits of reading and illustration demonstrate both the depth and breadth of the influence of emblems on her own work.

Christina Rossetti was born in 1830, the youngest of four children, all of whom were educated at home[1] by their mother Frances, a "devout but not sanctimonious" member of the Anglican Church (W.M. Rossetti, "Memoir" xlvii). Although their father, Gabriele, an Italian expatriate famous in his native land for both his poetry and his politics, remained a

[1] The two boys, Dante Gabriel and William Michael, were later sent to King's College School for a time; Dante Gabriel would go on to pursue his education in painting at the Royal Academy.

Catholic, the children were raised as Anglicans. As William Michael relates, the "dominant tone" of the Anglican church – and of the family's own religious tendencies – at the time of Christina's birth was "evangelical" (xlvii). In 1843, however, the family left their usual parish of St. Katherine's chapel to attend services at Christ Church, Albany Street, one of the foremost churches in the "Tractarian" or Oxford Movement.[2] Led by a group of Anglican academics and churchmen including E.B. Pusey, John Keble and John Henry Newman, the Oxford Movement sought to reinvest Church of England practice with pre-Reformation ritual and trappings (Reed xxi), including "weekly communion preceded by confession, with vestments, crucifixes, candles, incense, a sung liturgy, and other practices associated with the Roman Church" (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 56). The movement's theology was articulated in published sermons and books of religious poetry – including Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827) Newman's *Lyra Apostolica* (1836), and Isaac Williams' *The Cathedral* (1838) – as well as a series of pamphlets entitled *Tracts for the Times* (1833-41), written by Newman, Keble, Pusey, Williams and several others (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 56). These pamphlets are an articulation of High Church doctrine and a showcase for the movement's intense sacramentalism: in addition to arguing for the importance of sacraments in the Church (Baptism, Communion, etc.), the *Tracts* introduce the doctrines of Analogy, a sacramental view of the created world in which all things are signs of an invisible reality; and Reserve, which states that, just as God has veiled Himself in the gross material things of this world, so those who speak or write about Him should employ indirect

[2] While a full description of this movement is beyond the scope of my study, John Shelton Reed offers a comprehensive account in *Glorious Battle: The Cultural Politics of Victorian Anglo-Catholicism.* As Reed explains, the Oxford Movement was "an academic and mostly clerical effort to shore up the Church of England in its relations to the state" (xxi). As it "spread into the parishes and acquired a lay following, its agenda expanded to include the revival of an ever-increasing number of beliefs and practices from the Church of England's pre-Reformation heritage" (xxi). Other valuable overviews of this religious movement include R.W. Church, *The Oxford Movement: Twelve Years, 1833-1845*, and Peter Benedict Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760-1857.* S.A. Skinner's *Tractarians and the 'Condition of England'* examines the social and political implications of Tractarian thought.

means, including "allegory and other veiled modes of utterance" (G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry* 34).[3] One benefit of Reserve's stress on veiling the holiness of the subject in poetry, as Keble explains, is that the poet may instruct while appearing to delight, and thus "deceive the world of taste into devotional reading" (qtd. in G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry* 33-34). This interrelated emphasis on sacramentalism, didacticism and aesthetics in Christina's religious background laid the groundwork for her visual focus and sacramental beliefs (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 5) – in other words, for her emblematic habits of mind and composition – because the movement's "increased emphasis on symbol and ritual in both the ceremony of worship and church decoration" encouraged its adherents to "'read' material signs for their spiritual significance" (5). This stress on interpretation in a sacramental context is precisely the process emblems are designed to mirror: thus, as both a habit of reading and an approach to composition, the discourse of emblematics is particularly appropriate to art in the Tractarian mode – a fact affirmed by Williams' unequivocally and normatively emblematic *The Baptistery* (1842) and *The Cathedral*, which subject seventeenth-century Jesuit emblem plates to Tractarian explication (Figs. 16, 17, 48). In this context, therefore, it seems more than likely that Christina also consciously adopted the discourse of emblematics for her own highly morally-didactic work.

In the early 1840s, the Rossetti women were "swept into the Anglo-Catholic persuasion" (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 56): as Arseneau argues, the theology and aesthetics of Anglo-Catholicism exerted a "transforming influence" (*Recovering CR* 32) on

---

[3] As G.B. Tennyson explains, Isaac Williams' treatment of Reserve is most noteworthy from a poetic standpoint for the connection it draws between Analogy and Reserve: citing Augustine, Williams argues that both scripture and Nature contain "types and shadows" of spiritual matters which serve "for a covering to hide God from us, by this means to lead us on to the gradual knowledge of Him" (Tract 80. 62). In other words, Williams argues, "Analogy is God's way of practicing Reserve" (qtd. in Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry* 47).

Christina, her mother and sister; letters between them show an intense engagement with the theological writings of Tractarian leaders, as well as with the rituals of worship in that mode (32). This "riveting interest" (32) led Maria to later seek a life in the Church (she entered the All Saints Sisterhood in 1873), and shaped Christina's literary vocation, informing her poetics in a fundamental way. Dinah Roe conveys the importance of Christina's beliefs to her art in her statement that Christina's "poetic imagination was shaped by her faith, and her faith by her poetic imagination, in a symbiotic relationship that intensified over her half-century of writing" (1); for Christina, Roe argues, art and religion are joined by their common aspiration to capture the ineffable (12). As G.B. Tennyson has remarked, Tractarianism was not merely an innovation in Anglican worship and theology, but a "self-consistent and coherent aesthetic theory" (*Victorian Devotional Poetry* 13): Arseneau points out that three of the main figures in the movement were poets (Keble, Newman, Williams), and their ostensibly theological writings include "numerous sustained explorations of poetics and aesthetics" (*Recovering CR* 33). She goes on to explain that

> [t]he interpenetration of religion and poetry in Tractarian aesthetics is everywhere apparent in the attention to symbolic forms of devotion, in the Tractarian conception of the Church itself as a work of art, and in the belief that every perception, thought, and action, including poetry, is a potential act of devotion. As Tennyson states, 'it is this comprehensiveness of religion that so marks the Tractarian sensibility and that makes its poetics so inextricable from its worship' (G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry* 33). (*Recovering CR* 33)

That Christina was responsive to the integrated religious and poetic sensibility of Tractarian literature is evidenced,[4] Arseneau argues, by her careful study of Newman, Keble and Williams, demonstrated in her copious marginalia – which includes, most importantly, illustrations – in Williams' *The Altar* (1847) and Keble's *The Christian Year.* Along with Kooistra, I read Christina's illustration of these key Tractarian texts as a clear sign of the emblematic mode in which she read and wrote devotional literature (*CR and Illustration* 12). Even more telling than the crosses marking favorite titles in the table of contents, the underlining of individual lines of verse, and the correction of printing errors in her personal copy of *The Christian Year* (D'Amico, "Comfort" 36) are Christina's small pencil illustrations, one in the top margin of each poem in the volume.[5] D'Amico speculates that the drawings were likely begun in the late 1840s, at a time when Christina was attempting to

---

[4] As Crump and others have noted, the depictions of Tractarian-influenced worship in Christina's novella *Maude* (written 1850, published 1897) reflect the author's own religious devotion at the time it was written. This story is especially interesting because it makes explicit the emblematic implications of the Tractarian movement's infusion of worship with aesthetics, and Christina's receptiveness to this fact: Maude admires the symbolic embroidery-work her cousins are carrying out on a lectern-cover for their Church, and wonders if she "understand[s] the devices" (40). Indeed, she is able to decode "the Cross and the Crown of Thorns," "the keys of S. Peter" and "the sword of S. Paul," but is unsure whether "the flowers mean anything" (40). The girls identify each and hint at their biblical significances, but do not fully explicate them: "'I am the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valleys,' answered Agnes pointing: 'That is balm of Gilead, at least it is what we call so; there are myrrh and hyssop, and that is a palm-branch. The border is to be vine-leaves and grapes; with fig-leaves at the corners'" (40). This heavy use of emblematic imagery in church decoration is typical of the Tractarian moral-aesthetic.

[5] Although none of her illustrations to *The Christian Year* bears an exact resemblance to any existing emblem *picturae*, it seems likely that parts of many of her drawings borrow and recombine imagery – including suns, moons, rainbows and serpents or dragons – from classic emblem texts. For example, just as Christina's "Septuagesima Sunday" illustration shows a female figure on whose head is a crescent moon (Fig. 49), so in emblem XV, book 3 of Quarles' *Emblemes* and emblem XV of Hugo's *Pia Desideria* time is depicted in the image of two figures, one with a crescent moon directly over its head, the other with a sun in the same position (Figs. 50, 51). Similarly, the grapevine, a popular emblem motif from Alciato onwards (Fig. 4), plays an important (but different) role in several of Christina's illustrations, including "The Holy Innocents," "The Circumcision of Christ," "Sexagesima Sunday," "Fourth Sunday After Easter," "Fifth Sunday After Easter," and "Tenth Sunday After Trinity." Her use of the motif in "The Holy Innocents" is especially interesting as a possible adaptation of Wither's emblem 8, book 2 (Fig. 52): "Their friendship firm will ever bide, whose hands unto the cross are tied." At the center of Christina's illustration is a radiating cross with Holy Innocents (denoted by nimbi) scattered around its base, while grapevines, one on either side of the cross, stretch across toward one another. Wither's emblem likewise has a cross at its center, but in his picture it is hands, one on either side, bound with a vine-like rope, which stretch across to touch. The vine's association elsewhere with friendship (Alciato 160; Fig. 4) suggests Christina knew of and adapted these existing emblem motifs for the specific purposes demanded by this group of poems.

develop "any artistic talent she might have had" ("Comfort" 36). This is also the period during which the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, with which Christina was associated, was at its most active, and most committed to representing the divine through the conjunction of verbal and visual elements; for that reason, these drawings may also represent an early Pre-Raphaelite-inspired attempt on Christina's part to find a means of expressing the invisible or ineffable (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 30). Ultimately, however, Christina's illustrations of Keble's and Williams' texts signal the indebtedness of Tractarian poetics to the emblem tradition, Christina's recognition of that fact, and her desire to further that tradition in her own work. As Kooistra asserts, Christina's "addition of a symbolic picture to accompany the scriptural motto and poetic verse effectively transforms her personal copy of Keble's *The Christian Year* into a Victorian version of the seventeenth-century emblem book" (34). In a similar vein, while Williams' unillustrated *The Altar* does not appear in Bath's chronology of nineteenth-century emblem books (*Speaking Pictures* 284), Christina's addition of interpretive drawings to her own copy indicates that, though "naked," it belongs just as much to the later English emblem tradition as *The Baptistery*, which is included in that list.

Christina illustrated eight of her books in total: as well as the above-mentioned *The Christian Year* and *The Altar*, she made drawings in a copy of her father's *L'Arpa Evangelica* (1852)[6] and in her sister's *A Shadow of Dante* (1871);[7] the other four works she illustrated, *Verses (Dedicated to My Mother)* (1847), *Goblin Market and Other Poems*, *Seek and Find* (1879; in manuscript), and *Sing-Song* (1870; also in manuscript) were her own. As Kooistra has observed, Christina only illustrated devotional texts (*CR and Illustration* 28), a fact which suggests that illustration may have formed part of Christina's personal devotional

---

[6] Gabriele's book of religious poetry, published two years before his death (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 28-29).

[7] An historical and critical essay on Dante Alighieri.

practice (*CR and Illustration* 30; D'Amico, "Comfort" 36). Another possible explanation, however, given Christina's Pre-Raphaelite roots and the consistency with which she sought illustrated sites for the publication of her poetry, is, as Kooistra argues, that "illustration had, for [Christina], not only an aesthetic and interpretive function, but also a deeply spiritual significance, for it was by this material means that the invisible could be made visible" (*CR and Illustration* 29). The desire to find a "perfect" mode of representation in the combination of verbal and visual elements was the central motivation for early developers of the emblem. Thus, Christina's illustration of devotional texts can be taken as a sign that her "visual imagination" emerged from and remained bound up with the sacramentalism of the Tractarian movement, and found expression in the related moral-aesthetic tradition of emblematics.

Although the precise details of Christina's early education are vague, what records do remain of books the family owned, including the family commonplace book into which the children copied their lessons, reveal that emblem books and emblematic literature figured prominently in the family library and in the Rossetti children's reading. Christina and her siblings were almost certainly exposed from childhood to a number of texts belonging to various strains of the emblem tradition. Kooistra argues that the Rossetti household was a "visually enriched environment" whose library contained a wide range of illustrated volumes, including fairytales, scientific books and religious texts (*CR and Illustration* 4). Though to what degree its illustrations were in fact emblematic is unclear, one of the children's favorite books was a volume which combined the verbal and the visual in a religious context, a "little book of French or Flemish woodcut-illustrations to Bible history" (W.M. Rossetti, "Memoir," *DGR Works* 1: 62). The family also owned several of the new emblem books that were produced during the revival of the genre's popularity in the

first decades of the nineteenth century, including, most notably, the *Iconologia* (1821), a book of "coloured allegorical designs" based on Ripa's *Iconologia* (1593), authored by a family friend, Italian artist Filippo Pistrucci[8] (1777-1857) (W.M. Rossetti, "Memoir," *DGR Works* 62), and *Tales About Plants* (1839) by Peter Parley (Samuel Griswold Goodrich), a book of moralised botany for children in which, William Michael recalls, Dante Gabriel "enjoyed both text and cuts" (Arseneau and Bentley, "Peter Parley and the Rossettis" 56; W.M. Rossetti, *Some Reminiscences* 1: 31). Given that the four Rossetti children were constant playmates during childhood (W.M. Rossetti, "Memoir," *Family Letters* 1: 57, qtd. in Arseneau and Bentley 57),[9] it is safe to assume that Christina was exposed to the same books as Dante Gabriel, including Parley. This latter book in particular may have had a shaping influence on Christina's linked moral and aesthetic goals, as Arseneau and Bentley demonstrate: just as, through close examinations of individual plant species, Parley attempts to convince the child reader that God's goodness and wisdom can be read "'in the great book of nature'" (Parley vii, qtd. in Arseneau and Bentley 57), so in *Called to Be Saints*, Christina embeds her descriptions of plant species in a sacramental context which views them as "preach[ing] to us" (241). Similarities between Goodrich's book and Christina's own later work (as well as Dante Gabriel's) suggest Parley provided an example of how image and text might be productively merged in a naturalistic, yet explicitly sacramental and didactic context (Fig. 28).

There is no hard evidence that the Rossettis were familiar with any emblem books in the Anglo-Dutch tradition before 1847, but, as Bentley argues, given the "religious tone of

---

[8] William Michael's manuscript list of artworks Christina owned at her death reveals that among her collection were three original works by Pistrucci, one a portrait of Maria and Dante Gabriel, one of herself, and one of all four siblings, made when they were children (Angeli-Dennis collection, box 10, folder 1).

[9] Although William Michael suggests in various family memoirs that the children had few friends outside the family circle (see also "Memoir" xlviii), Marsh contends that "they mixed frequently at tea parties and social visits with children their own age" (*CR: A Writer's Life* 28).

the Rossetti household and the various inexpensive editions of Quarles that were published in the eighteen twenties, 'thirties and 'forties it would be surprising if [they] were not" (Bentley, "Anglo-Dutch" 7). Kooistra is even more confident of the Rossettis' early exposure to Quarles, listing the emblematist without reservation as one of the authors whose books the family owned in Christina's childhood (*CR and Illustration* 4). Certainly, as Bentley argues, Dante Gabriel's review comparing Thomas Gordon Hake's *Madeline, with Other Poems* (1871) and *Parables and Tales* (1872) to Quarles' emblems in their "extreme homeliness" demonstrates his awareness of this tradition in at least the 1870s, but his self-assured explication of the allegorical Christian works he saw in France and Belgium in 1849 may have been "the result of knowledge and experience gained from the Anglo-Dutch emblem tradition" as part of his education at home ("Anglo-Dutch" 7). And, as Lothar Hönnighausen, Höltgen, Bentley and Kooistra have all noted, Dante Gabriel's illustrations for his poem "A sonnet is a moment's monument" (1880; Fig. 53), which include such typical emblematic images as a winged hourglass, a figure labeled "Anima," and an *ouroboros* (Fig. 54), seem conclusive proof that his and Christina's "shared interest in interrelating image and text was founded on a common knowledge of the emblem tradition" (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 64; see also Bentley, "Anglo-Dutch" 12; Lothar Hönnighausen 57; Höltgen, *Aspects* 176). Some of the imagery in Dante Gabriel's illustrations for Christina's *Goblin Market* and *The Prince's Progress* is similar enough to Quarles' *Emblemes* to "raise the likelihood of specific indebtedness" (Bentley, "Anglo-Dutch" 8; see also Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 79; Figs. 29, 30, 55, 56). More than this, however, the placement of Dante Gabriel's illustrations inside Christina's books and the

super-imposition of lines from Christina's text directly onto Dante Gabriel's illustrations[10] transforms the volumes themselves into "modified emblem books for a Victorian audience accustomed to symbolic interpretation" (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 66). Just as Christina's drawings for *The Christian Year* and *The Altar* signal her familiarity with the emblem tradition and her recognition of the emblematics at work in those texts, so Dante Gabriel's illustrations for Christina's books make manifest the emblematic tendencies already present in their verbal component, demonstrating that the siblings were likely so well-versed in the normative English emblem tradition, they had internalized its habits of reading, writing and representation.

Frances Rossetti's commonplace book, which she used in teaching her children, contains an eclectic mix of epitaphs, translations, segments of sermons, and a wide sampling of English literature from the preceding 250 years, including passages from Shakespeare, Dryden, Alfred Tennyson, Byron and Wordsworth,[11] along with many others (Battiscombe 22; see also Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 26). Especially interesting are two excerpts copied into the book by Christina which show evidence of a formative encounter with seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry: the first passage in Christina's hand is George Herbert's "Virtue" (Battiscombe 23), which she imitates in one of her own first poems, "Charity,"

---

[10] As Kooistra astutely notes, because Dante Gabriel's frontispieces appear "before" the poetry, they risk being cut off from the text and functioning as mere stand-alone images. Just as in *The Germ* the PRB made a point of integrating image and text by placing them opposite one another, or adding text directly to the image, so the Rossettis sought to merge the visual and verbal by "bringing the poetic matter forward out of the book proper, as it were, and into the preliminary poetic material. The artist provided a hand-lettered caption taken directly from the poem for each of his four designs. This technique not only effected an immediate visual-verbal interchange, but also ensured that the illustration would be anchored to the poem as a whole" (*CR and Illustration* 67).

[11] Marsh interprets Christina's transcription of the "Ruined Cottage" section of Wordsworth's *Excursion* into the family commonplace book biographically, as a sign of Rossetti's impending mental collapse (*CR: A Writer's Life* 51), and indeed, Christina may have identified with the character of Margaret. However, her choice may also demonstrate an early awareness of and interest in emblematic structures in literature: the crumbling cottage may be read as an emblem of Margaret's increasingly disordered mind.

written in 1844 (D'Amico, "Herbert" 275).[12] She also copied out Herbert's "Misery," a poem she would quote again some fifty years later in her last devotional prose work, *The Face of the Deep* (D'Amico, "Herbert" 275). As D'Amico argues, these references to Herbert at the beginning and end of her poetic career suggest that Christina consistently held the poet in high regard, and that he was an influence on her poetics, especially as a source of "rhetorical devices that could be employed to give shape to spiritual content" (D'Amico, "Herbert" 276, 285). For instance, D'Amico speculates that Herbert's organization of his poems according to a single, central conceit in *The Temple* (1633; an emblematic technique Williams likewise draws on in his illustrated *The Cathedral*) encouraged Christina to order the poems in her own volumes in a similarly deliberate and meaningful way ("Herbert" 285). Herbert's use of emblematics as a structure of meaning in purely verbal, rather than verbal-visual hybrid compositions, may also have proven influential. As Freeman notes in her essay on "George Herbert and the Emblem Books," Herbert makes frequent use of the emblem's sacramentally explicatory structure without relying on actual plates for the visual component (155-56). In "The Church Floore," for instance, the opening question, "Mark you the floore?" initiates a description and elucidation of each aspect of the floor of a church as embodying a spiritual lesson:

> [...] that square and speckled stone,
> Which looks so firm and strong,
> Is PATIENCE:
> And th'other, black and grave, wherewith each one
> Is checker'd all along,

[12] "Charity" has a note, written in her own hand, explaining that "[t]he foregoing verses are imitated from the beautiful little poem 'Virtue' by George Herbert" (qtd. in D'Amico, "Herbert" 275).

HUMILITIE: (1-6)

In *The Temple*, as in Christina's poems about nature and much of her devotional prose, verbal descriptions replace images, but the effect is nonetheless emblematic. Because the emblem is a literary genre that emerges from the desire to make invisible realities intelligible, it is an appropriate strategy of representation for both Herbert's and Christina's meticulous "readings" of tangible objects as lessons in God's love and right belief. Christina's use of emblematics as a moral-didactic technique thus mirrors Herbert's in the sense that both poets employ emblematics as a verbal strategy of representation where other kinds of figurative language would fail – specifically, in expressing the divine.

William Michael's "Memoir" of Christina, appended by way of introduction to his edition of her *Poetical Works* (1906), is helpful in preserving some of the details of her life, but is also invested in maintaining his sister's reputation as a "'spontaneous,' 'ascetic,' 'unblemished,' and 'sweet'" (McGann, "Religious" 132) "poetess," rather than an astute, well-read and deliberate craftsperson. Thus, in describing her education and habits of reading, he characterizes her as

> by far the least bookish of the family – liking a few things heartily, such as *The Arabian Nights* and the lyric dramas of Metastasio, but generally not applying herself with assiduity to either her books or her studies. She 'picked up' things rather than acquired them. ("Memoir" xlix)

As Arseneau, Joel Westerholm, Linda Marshall and Lynda Palazzo have noted, Christina's later devotional prose works reveal her to have had, in fact, considerable interest in natural science, astronomy and botany, and a masterly grasp of the Bible and of theology.[13] Her

[13] Westerholm shows that Christina's deprecations of her own scholarship were "disingenuous": he re-evaluates Christina's devotional prose works as fully authoritative theological works which in some cases follow "the format of a sermon" (13); Arseneau points out that Christina's devotional books "demonstrate

knowledge of seventeenth-century religious poets, especially Herbert, is well-established,[14] and, as Gisela Hönnighausen has argued, Christina's reference to a sermon by seventeenth-century divine Thomas Fuller (1608-61) in *Called to Be Saints* (xvi) demonstrates not only a familiarity with his writings, but also "shows clearly where the intellectual and spiritual origins of her emblematic tendencies lie" (3). But when Mackenzie Bell, Christina's first biographer (who otherwise reads Christina's *oeuvre* as a series of veiled references to her personal life) rightly surmises that her devotional prose evinces a knowledge of seventeenth-century devotional texts, William Michael is dismissive: "'Deep study of 17th century religious writers – '" he replies to Bell's query on the subject – "did she study them at all?" (Bell 374).

William Michael does, however, acknowledge exceptions to Christina's supposedly desultory taste for fantasy and lyric poetry; most notably, he mentions two early favorites which offer more evidence of her fascination with verbal or "naked" emblematics: he recalls that she "supplemented" her reading of the Bible – which was regular – with Augustine's *Confessions*, and also "knew and liked" John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) ("Memoir" lxix). Alongside Herbert's emblematic but unillustrated poetry, these works may

---

Rossetti's wide reading in and engagement with the traditions of biblical exegesis, hagiography, and the writings of the Church Fathers and of various divines" ("Introduction," *Culture of CR* xv); Palazzo affirms that Christina's devotional prose evinces a "razor sharp intellect and vision" which "identified in contemporary theological developments the potential for feminine and feminist theology" ("Poet and Bible" 6). Linda Marshall's "Astronomy of the Invisible" (*Culture of CR* 194-211) outlines Christina's interest in the siderial science of her time, and notes that references to "lunar thermal energy, solar physics, eclipses, celestial spectroscopy, planetary discovery, double stars, variable stars, nebulae, external galaxies, and theories about the structure of the universe" (195) in her devotional writings were meant to function as parables of Christ, as "symbolic analogies" of heaven in the natural world (*Seek and Find* 65; qtd. in Marshall 195) – further proof of the fundamentally emblematic character of Christina's view of the natural world. Interesting to note in this context is William Michael's assertion, in his "Memoir" of Christina, that "[t]here were few things she more disliked than an 'Evidences of Christianity'.... To learn that something in the Christian faith was credible because it was reasonable, or because it rested upon some historic evidence of fact, went against her" (liv). In this way, Christina's interest in science grew not out of a desire, prevalent among some Christians of her time, to "prove" the existence of God or the createdness of the natural world, but rather out of a desire to discover further types and symbols revelatory of Him in His works.

[14] Besides D'Amico's discussion of Rossetti's encounter with Herbert, see also David A. Kent "'By thought, word and deed': George Herbert and Christina Rossetti" in Kent, ed., *The Achievement of Christina Rossetti.*

have shaped Christina's use of emblematics as a verbal strategy of representation. While not normatively emblematic, Augustine's and Bunyan's works emerge nonetheless from the same analogical worldview that underlies the emblematic habit of mind, and both works stress the importance of correctly interpreting the spiritual meaning of earthly events and objects. In the *Confessions*, Augustine adopts a figural approach to autobiography, explicating the spiritual significance and providential character of major events in his own life. In Book 3, for instance, he shows how the hand of God worked through his mother, whose faith grants her superior powers of interpretation, to save him: through God's grace, she "discern[s] the death wherein [Augustine] lay" and cautions him to live a better life (3.11.19). *Pilgrim's Progress* takes place in an analogical world where the success of the pilgrim, Christian – his attainment of the "Celestial City" – depends on his ability to correctly interpret the signs which surround him.[15] His visit to the House of the Interpreter is especially interesting as a series of emblems in narrative form which serve as a key to the rest of the book: the Interpreter shows Christian a dusty room swept and sprinkled with water, which he reads as the sanctification of the heart of a sinful man. Not only is this scene taken directly from the *Schola Cordis* emblem tradition, it serves the dual purpose of modeling emblematic interpretation for both Christian and the reader herself.

Naked Emblems in the *Goblin Market* and *Prince's Progress* Volumes

These biographical (and bibliographical) details demonstrate that while Christina was probably exposed to normative emblem books by Williams, Pistrucci, Parley, and possibly Quarles, it is even more certain that she read and admired the "naked" or verbally

[15] The emblematic character of Bunyan's analogical method is perhaps most apparent in the fact that after *Pilgrim's Progress*, he went on to write *A Book for Boys and Girls* (1686), an unillustrated emblem book intended for children. In later editions, beginning in 1724, woodcuts were added to the text and its title was changed to *Divine Emblems or, Temporal Things Spiritualized* (Manning 149).

emblematic works of Herbert, Augustine and Bunyan, as well as those of Keble and Williams. Moreover, she responded in an active way to these texts through illustration and imitation, a fact which suggests they had a formative influence on her own later work. Thus, it seems probable that Christina was aware of the normative English emblem tradition, but also interested in how emblematic discourse could be used as a strategy of sacramental representation in purely – or predominantly – verbal texts. The centrality of the visual to Christina's literary career and the expressly emblematic intent of that visual stress are important and unmistakable signs that she drew consciously on the emblem tradition in her work. However, looking beyond surface similarities and any specific indebtedness on the part of Christina or her illustrators to individual emblems, these visual cues are also an indication that the emblem is at work on a deeper structural level in the verbal component of Christina's poetry.

Despite its smooth fairy-tale-like surface, Christina's first major long poem, "Goblin Market," has generated extremely varied criticism from Christina's own time to the present. Just as the profusion of ripe goblin fruits overwhelms Laura's judgment, so too confronting the poem's abundance of sensuous imagery and intertextual allusions can overpower the reader's hermeneutic skill, reducing her to the most basic of critical questions: how am I to read this? It is therefore not surprising that the poem has been interpreted at various times as a sexual fantasy, either lesbian or heterosexual (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 232-35; Welter), a critique of advertising and consumer culture (Lysack, Mendoza), a feminist manifesto (Casey, Fauset and Russell), a theological meditation (Marshall, "Transfigured"; Hill), and, in the biographical mode, as evidence that Christina was sexually abused (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 258-64). Indeed, "right reading" is a central concern of nearly all Christina's work, the fundamental assumption of which, as Arseneau has shown, is a "theologically

based belief that the created world is capable of communicating moral and spiritual meaning," if we are prepared to receive it ("Incarnation" 79). Just as the fundamental purpose of the religious emblem is to model a hermeneutic its readers are then encouraged to employ in "reading" the natural world, so Christina's poetry seeks to model a sacramental interpretation of the created world as a God-authored text. As Kent and Stanwood explain, "by what she described as the supernaturalizing of the reader's eyes, she... hoped to help them read the text of everyday life to be filled with... 'spiritual lessons' and 'heavenly meanings'" (12). While this emblematic didacticism is at its most overt in her devotional prose works, it is a more subtle but equally foundational structure in the title poem and "Devotional Pieces" of Christina's first published volume, *Goblin Market and Other Poems*. When considered as a coherent whole, the poems in this volume both assert and enact the importance of cultivating one's ability to "read" the world correctly and act accordingly in the presence of temptation. By embedding "Goblin Market" within the volume to which it belongs, and re-contextualizing that volume within the emblem tradition, I want to suggest that Christina conceived *Goblin Market and Other Poems* as an extended "naked" emblem: the imagistic title poem is the verbal equivalent of a *pictura* while poems in the "Devotional Pieces" section act as an elaborate *explicatio*, instructing our reading of "Goblin Market" by reprising and moralising its imagery through direct references to scripture.

Christina claimed that "the nearest approach to a method" of composition she had was "a distinct aim at conciseness" (Harrison, *Context* 10). This stress on conciseness led, Harrison argues, to a densely "allusive" thematic structure in her poetry and compelled her to "generate meaning by manipulating allusions to Plato, the Bible, Saint Augustine, Dante [Alighieri], Petrarch, Herbert" and others (*Context* 10). As McGann argues, criticism of Christina's poetry should also take into account its elaborate *intra*textuality: the stability of

her sacramental beliefs and the resulting emphasis in her work on the importance of interpretation means that her poems "formulate interpretive keys that can and should be applied either to themselves or to other poems in her corpus" ("Introduction," *Achievement* 12). Indeed, as my discussion will show, Christina consciously draws correspondences between the poems in her volumes, strengthening intertextual associations with intratextual allusion by arranging her poems in meaningful patterns: contrary to William Michael's characterization of Christina's compositional habits as "spontaneous and without revision," Christina's deliberate artistry is affirmed in her careful sequencing of her poems in their original collections into patterns which reveal "deeper logical coherence" (Rosenblum 132). She arranged *Goblin Market*'s sixty-one poems, for example, written at various times between 1849 and 1860, not chronologically, but rather "according to a plan that [would] best do justice to her intentions" (Rosenblum 133, 134) – intentions which, as I will argue, were consistent with those of devotional emblematics. The collection opens with the title poem, followed by forty-four miscellaneous poems, and ends with sixteen poems set apart as "Devotional Pieces." Rosenblum argues in terms similar to McGann's that Christina's

> deliberate sequencing within separate volumes sets up a variety of echoes and cross-references that encourage us to read individual poems as commentary on one another, and the religious poems as a whole as commentary on or elaboration of the secular poems, and vice versa. (155)

As I hope to demonstrate, this combination of allusiveness, explication, and elaborate attention to order in Christina's poetry is fully emblematic in its production of meaning through both inter- and intratextual references: in the case of the *Goblin Market* volume, for instance, specific images and themes introduced in "Goblin Market" reappear in the "Devotional Pieces" alongside biblical teachings and admonitions which explicitly moralise

these elements, effectively transforming the volume into an emblem book. Some of the most effective verbal emblems developed over the course of this volume are those which address the issues of temptation, the deceptiveness of earthly pleasures, and the importance of correctly reading the natural world.

The centrality of the theme of interpretation to both "Goblin Market" and the *Goblin Market* volume as a whole is, on its own, a strong indication of Christina's participation in the emblem tradition. Whatever its particular lesson, a devotional emblem always models a sacramental method of reading: while it may preach any moral precept, its primary objective is to train the reader in a hermeneutic practice. Thus while its immediate lessons may pertain to temptation and self-postponement, the poem's overall message is the importance of interpreting things and events correctly, "giving things a right moral reading" (Arseneau, "Incarnation" 84). While Arseneau's focus is firmly on Christina's sacramentalism, her argument that the acts of reading represented in "Goblin Market" turn that poem into a "paradigm of the kind of interpretation which [Christina] wanted her readers to engage" ("Incarnation" 79) is equally applicable to my argument about Christina's emblematic methods. The paradigm for correct interpretation is presented in Lizzie, who immediately reads the goblin men and their seductive fruit as evil and harmful:

> "No," said Lizzie: "No, no, no;
> Their offers should not charm us,
> Their evil gifts would harm us."
> She thrust a dimpled finger
> In each ear, shut eyes and ran... (64-68).

Here she correctly infers from what she sees and hears that the goblins' wares represent an invitation to stray from the straight path, and closes her eyes and ears to prevent being

tempted. Never derailed by beautiful appearances, Lizzie uses her interpretive skills to discern the spiritual implications of the offering and correctly judge it as morally dangerous to accept. Laura, by contrast, is unable to read this outward show: as Arseneau points out, she badly misinterprets the goblins when she hears their voices as sounding like the "voice of doves" (77) and "kind and full of loves" (79) ("Incarnation" 85). After her "wise upbraidings" (142) fail to convince Laura of the dangers of goblin fruit, Lizzie adopts a typically emblematic approach, performing an interpretation of the lessons signified in past events and natural objects. She reminds Laura about "Jeanie" (147), who also ate goblin fruit, then

> [...] pined and pined away;
> Sought them by night and day,
> Found them no more but dwindled and grew grey;
> Then fell with the first snow,
> While to this day no grass will grow
> Where she lies low:
> I planted daisies there a year ago
> That never blow.
> You should not loiter so. (154-62).

Although Arseneau's claim that Lizzie's reminder presents Laura with a "*typological* prefigurement of what might happen to her" ("Incarnation" 88; my emphasis) puts a finger on its figural basis, Lizzie's description and explication of Jeanie's fate and grave would also accurately be described as emblematic. Lizzie offers the image of Jeanie's attenuated physicality alongside the dead grass and daisies as a *pictura*, the moral of which she interprets as a warning that "You" – Laura – "should not loiter so." Not only can she

discern the moral or spiritual significance of these things, but she also demonstrates a commitment to improving Laura's hermeneutic skill by performing emblematic readings of the signs for her sister. Just as the Interpreter in *Pilgrim's Progress* equips Christian to discern the spiritual value of those objects and personages he encounters along the road by "reading" emblematic scenes for him, so Lizzie attempts to save Laura by teaching her how to read emblematically; her hermeneutic skill is thus expressly identified as emblematic. Further, her attempt to sharpen Laura's emblematic skill mirrors Christina's encouragement of the reader's spiritual perception; this marks Christina's own aim and method, in turn, as emblematic.

The emblem is a pervasive theme, strategy and structure in the *Goblin Market* volume: it operates on both a textual and a metatextual level in "Goblin Market"; it is at work on the level of individual poems in the *Goblin Market* volume, as well as on the level of the book as a whole. Some of the poems, especially those collected in the "Devotional Pieces" section, move emblematically between description and explication, while the overarching structure of the volume as a whole is also itself emblematic. As Roe notes, the layout of the *Goblin Market* and *Prince's Progress* volumes encourages readers to draw connections between the general and devotional poems (96). In this way, the "Devotional Pieces" act as an extended series of *explicationes* to "Goblin Market"'s *pictura*, re-framing the poem's imagery in an explicitly moralised context which emphasizes the importance of correct interpretation. The first poem in that set, for example, "'The Love of Christ Which Passeth Knowledge,'" is written from the perspective of Christ, who suffered for our sins, but could also be appropriate for Lizzie, who "braved" a traumatic encounter with goblins for her sister and offers herself as a saving feast. Compare, for example, the lines

> Who else had dared for thee what I have dared?

I plunged the depth most deep from bliss above;

I not My flesh, I not My spirit spared:

Give thou Me love for love. ("'The Love of Christ Which Passeth Knowledge'" 5-8)

with Lizzie's speech on her triumphant return from her ordeal at the hands of the goblins:

Come and kiss me.

Never mind my bruises,

Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices

(...)

For your sake I have braved the glen

And had to do with goblin merchant men. (466-68; 473-74)

Parallels in the language and the actions ("dar[ing]" and "brav[ing]), motivations ("for thee;" "for your sake") and desires ("Give thou Me love;" "Hug me, kiss me") described here amplify the Christological implications of Lizzie's self-sacrifice by retrospectively "reading" her as a figure for Christ. In a similar way, the voice pleading for salvation in "A Better Resurrection" recalls Laura in her decline: just as Laura "kept watch in vain / In sullen silence of exceeding pain" (270-71) while her "tree of life dropped from the root," saying "not one word in her heart's sore ache" (260-61), so the speaker of "A Better Resurrection" has "no wit, no words, no tears;"

My heart within me like a stone

Is numbed too much for hopes and fears;

(...)

I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief

No everlasting hills I see;

My life is in the falling leaf:

O Jesus, quicken me. (1-8)

In both cases, despondency leads to a failure of language and is figured in the image of a failing plant. The description of a heart numbed "like a stone" also recalls the barren "kernel-stone" (138) Laura saves from her goblin feast, and moralises that object as an emblem of spiritual collapse. Likewise, references to Christ as "sweeter than honey" in "The Love of Christ Which Passeth Knowledge" and "Advent" teach us to be sceptical of fruit billed as "honey to the throat" (554): clearly, the goblins are drawing a false and misleading association between Christ and the fruit, which explains its "poison[ous]" nature (555).

In a similar but more comprehensive way, the devotional poems "Sweet Death" and "'Consider the Lilies of the Field,'" which are themselves structured emblematically, "One Certainty," and "The World" illuminate the spiritual implications of imagery and themes introduced in the more secular narrative context of "Goblin Market." By adopting the emblematic strategy of gradual revelation, deferring a complete disclosure of the lessons we are meant to draw from this tale, Christina teaches specific moral principles as well as a method of reading that applies as much to the text at hand as to the world outside it. "Sweet Death," first published in *The Germ*, reappears in this volume as an exercise in emblematic reading and a reminder that all earthly things are ephemeral. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, "Sweet Death" moves emblematically from descriptions of the plants on a grave to an explication of the moral lessons they teach, thereby arguing that created objects are signs authored by God and demonstrating the habit of reading necessary to discover that fact for oneself. The speaker of the poem foregrounds similarities between the flowers, which "[s]hed their fresh leaves in showers" (6), "die, fall and nourish the rich earth" (10),

and the cycle of human life, stressing in the final stanza that the spiritual lesson of this inevitable decay is the importance of seeking eternal realities:

> Better than beauty and than youth
>
> Are Saints and Angels, a glad company;
>
> And Thou, O Lord, our Rest and Ease
>
> Art better far than these. (19-22)

This poem both instructs and enacts emblematic perception in its gradual revelation of the fact that the physical world, though decadent, is a "stepping-stone" to the divine, if rightly read. Its central image of dying flowers on a grave recalls the "daisies" on Jeanie's grave whose failure to "blow" Lizzie reads emblematically in the context of its immediate importance for Laura, as a sign that she should not associate with goblins. Here, however, that image is detached from the narrative and reprised in an almost purely moralised setting which focuses, first of all, on instructing the reader how to read emblematically, and secondly, on showing why that is important. Thus, while the reader may not extrapolate a moral lesson for herself from Lizzie's reading of the daisy on Jeanie's grave on the first reading, the point-by-point explication of the analogous image in "Sweet Death" both encourages and shows her specifically how to do so.

Like "Sweet Death," "'Consider the Lilies of the Field'" is an exhortation to read the details of nature for the spiritual truths they embody, structured as a series of emblems. The poem's list of moralised images directs our attention to what each flower has to "preach to us if we will hear" (1):

> The lilies say: Behold how we
>
> Preach without words of purity.
>
> The violets whisper from the shade

Which their own leaves have made:

Men scent our fragrance on the air,

Yet take no heed

Of humble lessons we would read. (11-17)

Each flower is presented as a divinely-authored text with a message for mankind: lilies "preach" about the virtue of purity, while violets "read" us a "lesson" in humility. Even the "merest grass" is a sign of God's love, which is powerful but specific enough to "nourish one small seed" (19; 24). Here, plant names act as implied *picturae*, while each plant's "speech" serves as an *explicatio* indicating the lesson it embodies (lilies: purity; violets: humility; grass: the meticulous extent of God's care). In the deliberateness with which they present their meanings, these plant emblems also add up to a lesson about the importance of emblematic reading itself. In "Goblin Market," Lizzie makes a pointed observation of the dead daisy and failing grass over Jeanie's grave as an implied warning to Laura, but does not explicate the image further. "'Consider the Lilies of the Field,'" on the other hand, moralises both flowers and grass by re-contextualizing them in the emblematic framework of an explicitly devotional poem. The dead plants on Jeanie's grave are thus a sign that Laura's consumption of the goblin fruit – a figure for her failure to read – jeopardizes her spiritual life as much as her physical well-being. The devotional reprise of plant imagery in "Consider the Lilies," where it is read emblematically as bodying forth lessons on purity, morality and God's love, instructs the reader to pay close attention to small natural details, which contain "humble" but no less important "lessons" (17) about both the foregoing text as well as the world outside.

Through its allusions to scripture, "One Certainty" further moralises the grass and plant imagery in "Goblin Market" and clarifies the lesson we are to draw from Laura's

mistake. This poem asserts that man, "tossed to and fro by hope and fear" (6) is "Like early dew, or like the sudden breath / Of wind, or like the grass that withereth" (4-5). The comparison of human life to withering grass is a reference to a favorite Bible verse of Christina's, Isaiah 40:7-8: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (noted by Crump, *Complete Poems* 904-05). The use of grass as a figure for that which is temporal in the Bible, a divinely-inspired text, allows it to stand as an emblem for the idea that physical things perish, but spiritual truths "stand for ever." In this way, echoes of the withered daisy and grass on Jeanie's grave in this explicitly moral context give the plants in "Goblin Market" a sharp moral point as emblematic reminders that the physical world is ephemeral and the only lasting thing is God. Likewise, the moral import of Laura's pursuit of the goblin fruits is clarified through its thematic and imagistic echoes with "One Certainty." Laura draws the wrong conclusions about the goblin fruit because she is rendered unable to judge by temptation, which causes her to focus on the sensual reality of physical objects and ignore their invisible meanings (Arseneau, "Incarnation" 85). Her failure as an emblem reader, in other words, is what brings about her spiritual downfall. As Bentley points out ("Meretricious and Meritorious" 68), "One Certainty" offers a warning against exactly the lack of spiritual discernment Laura demonstrates in seeking satisfaction through earthly pleasures: this poem quotes Ecclesiastes 1:8 to argue that "The eye and ear / Cannot be filled by what they see and hear"[16] (2-3): in other words, earthly objects cannot fulfill our most important desires. Indeed, this use of a biblical verse relating directly to the vanity of seeking satisfaction through the senses recalls and moralises Laura's experience with the goblin fruit in an emblematic way: although she

[16] This scriptural passage is quoted a second time – for emphasis, perhaps – in "A Testimony" (lines 43-45).

"ate and ate [her] fill, / Yet [her] mouth water[ed] still" ("GM" 165-66). This single feast sets off a constant, "passionate yearning" (266) for more, and she "dream[s] of melons, as a traveller sees / False waves in desert drouth" (289-90). As the allusion to Ecclesiastes in "One Certainty" makes clear, Laura's goblin feast figures a failure to look beyond the physical to the spiritual, an error which dooms one to a life of "baulked desire" ("GM" 267). The ultimate lesson here is that, just as Lizzie's self-sacrifice is the only cure for Laura's desperate craving, so only by seeking Christ can we be satisfied.

As this discussion has shown, the alluring but deadly fruit in "Goblin Market" is a figure for the Christian's three related enemies, "the devil, the world, and the flesh."[17] The second of these is treated individually in "The World," a sonnet which conveys the duplicity of that enemy by troping it as a woman who is "soft, exceeding fair" (1) when wooing in daytime, but "changeth" into a menacing creature, "[l]oathsome and foul with hideous leprosy" (3) at night. Parallels between this personification and the goblins in "Goblin Market" suggest that the latter are likewise intended as emblems of worldly temptation. The goblins are initially gracious and offer fruits they bill as "sweet to tongue and sound to eye" (30). While these fruits ultimately cause Laura to "dwindl[e], as the fair full moon doth turn / To swift decay and burn / Her fire away" (278-80), the goblins themselves go from "grinning" (371) to "[g]runting and snarling" (393) when Lizzie refuses their demands that she eat. Analogously, in "The World," the title character woos the speaker of that poem "to the outer air" in daytime with

> Ripe fruits, sweet flowers, and full satiety:

---

[17] The version of the baptismal ceremony with which Christina would have been familiar includes a prayer that the individual being baptised "have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph, over the devil, the world, and the flesh" (1816 text). In his "Memoir" of Christina (*Poetical Works of CGR*), William Michael reveals that in 1883, she "implored" him to let her baptise his dying infant son, and "performed the rite unwitnessed save by a nurse" (lvii). The (highly unusual) fact that she once performed this sacrament herself is further confirmation of her familiarity with its wording.

But thro' the night, a beast she grins at me,

A very monster void of love and prayer. (5-8)

Both "The World" and the goblins also resort to violent gestures when crossed: the goblins

trod and hustled [Lizzie],

Elbowed and jostled her,

Clawed with their nails,

(...)

Held her hands and squeezed their fruits

Against her mouth to make her eat. (399-401; 406-07)

"The World" is described in similarly animalistic terms as menacing the speaker with its "pushing horns and clawed and clutching hands" (11). Here "The World"'s fraudulence and malevolence recalls the goblins' own deception, but casts it in starker terms which convey a stronger sense of that enemy's spiritual threat. Laura pays the goblins for her fruit with a lock of hair and a tear "more rare than pearl" (127), pearls being an object which, as Arseneau notes, Christina identifies on biblical authority in *Seek and Find* – but not in this poem – as symbolizing "heavenly treasures" (*SF* 279, qtd. in Arseneau, "Incarnation" 90). Like Laura, the speaker of "The World" is coerced into "sell[ing]" his or her "soul" to the monster (12-14), but identifies the outcome for himself of such a transaction explicitly as "hell" (14). Similarities between Laura's purchase, which is couched in symbolic terms, and this speaker's more explicit exchange thus clarify the moral import and gravity of Laura's actions. While emblematic in its own right, this depiction of "The World" as a monstrous woman re-frames a figure recognizably like the goblins in a more definite set of moral terms. By mapping "The World" onto the goblins, then, it becomes clear that the latter,

though slightly ambiguous in their original context, are as much an emblem of dangerous earthly delights as the former.

Although its sensuous surface and engaging narrative appear to confound deep interpretation, intratextual links between "Goblin Market" and the devotional poems which follow it reprise and moralise the title poem's imagery in an unambiguously religious context, allowing the reader to return and read it with a sharpened sense of the moral values at work in the text as a whole. In this way, the *Goblin Market* volume functions intratextually as an extended emblem. Taking an intertextual view, however, of parallels between "Goblin Market" and Quarles[18] – specifically, Emblem VII, Book 1 of his *Emblemes* (Fig. 57) – reveals further proof of that volume's participation in the English devotional emblem tradition. The deceptiveness of physical reality, its promise of satisfaction and ultimate emptiness – unless encountered as a text with spiritual meaning – is perhaps the key lesson of "Goblin Market." The goblins appear "kind and full of loves" (79) when Laura accepts their offer of fruit, but reveal their true nature when Lizzie refuses their demand that she eat; similarly, the "ripe fruits" which Laura views initially as promising

---

[18] I discuss the parallel with Quarles because it is close enough to suggest indebtedness on Christina's part. Another possible parallel, however, is emblem 190 of Pistrucci's *Iconologia*, "*Il Mondo*" (the World; Fig. 27), which shows a horned Pan-like creature covered in spotted fur. Although the horns and overall beast-like appearance of this figure recall the goblins and the monster in Christina's "The World," Pistrucci (quoting Bocaccio) interprets the figure not as an emblem of worldliness, but rather as representing the diversity of the natural world, which comprises animals and plants, air and fire, etc. Also less likely as a direct reference but no less revealing is a possible connection between the climactic scene of "Goblin Market" and the "Pelican-in-her-Piety" emblem motif. As Peter Daly notes in his article on "The Pelican-in-Her-Piety," the pelican has been understood as a type of Christ for nearly 2000 years. The *Physiologus* (written sometime between the second and fourth centuries AD) describes the pelican's supposed habit of plucking its own breast with its beak and sprinkling its blood on its young to revive them, and therefore interprets the animal sacramentally as typifying Christ (85). The emblematic use of this motif was perhaps most available to English culture via the Anglican Church: it was printed on the title-page of the King James Authorized Version of the Bible (1611) (91), and from there made its way into the carvings on lecterns in many English churches (98). Both Whitney (*A Choice of Emblemes*, 1586) and Wither (*A collection of Emblemes*, 1635) incorporate the motif in their emblem collections as well. Thus, it seems possible Christina had encountered the pelican emblem in one or more venues. If so, then the scene in "Goblin Market" where Lizzie offers her regenerative juices to Laura, who "suck[s]" them, which has frequently been interpreted as Eucharistic, acquires yet another layer of Christological implication in its similarities with the pelican image.

"full satiety" ("The World" 6) are proven a sham when the kernel-stone she saves will not grow and Laura herself "gnashe[s] her teeth for baulked desire" ("GM" 267), dwindling to the point of "knocking at Death's door" ("GM" 321).

These incidents illustrate one of Christina's favourite and most often-treated moral precepts, the notion, set forth in Ecclesiastes 1:2, that "all is vanity." That biblical phrase or some variation of it appears several times throughout the *Goblin Market* volume in reference to the emptiness of the material world and the contrasting fullness and fruitfulness of God. The *vanitas* theme is dealt with in a similar fashion by Quarles in Emblem VII, Book 1 (Fig. 57): as the motto, drawn from 1 Peter 58, makes clear, this emblem is a reminder to be "sober" and "vigilant" because "your Adversary the Devil as a roaring Lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (30). While the *pictura* contains no fruit – rather, it depicts Anima, threatened by Death (a skeleton aiming an arrow), sitting on an orb in which tortured souls are seen burning in the fires of Hell – the fourth stanza of the *explicatio* verbally introduces the motif of fruit as an example of "Earth's false pleasure" (30). Just as Christina's goblins tout their fruit as "[s]weet to tongue and sound to eye" (30), so in Quarles' emblem the world offers fruit which

> is faire, and pleasing to the sight,
> But sowre in tast; false, at the putrid Core:
> Thy flaring glasse is Gemms at her halfe light;
> She makes thee seeming rich, but truly poore.
> She boasts a kernell, and bestowes a shell,
> Performs an inch of her faire promised Ell:
> Her words protest a Heaven: Her works produce a Hell. (30)

The world's "faire" fruits and their "sowre" effects recall the goblin fruits, which are also "like honey to the throat / But poison in the blood" (554-55); the delivered "shell" for the promised "kernell" in Quarles echoes the barren kernel-stone Laura saves; and the goblins' protested "Heaven" certainly produces a living "Hell" (Quarles 1:VII, 30) for Laura, who traverses "death" and "life" ("GM" 523) before recovering. Thus, both Quarles and Christina approach the *vanitas* theme by troping the World and its empty show in the imagery of tempting but deceptive and menacing fruit. And as the moral point of "Goblin Market" is the importance of reading, of looking past the physical surface in order to discern spiritual reality, so the message of Quarles' emblem is the need to remain "vigilant," as spiritual death lies in wait for those who "drows[ily]" bask in earthly delights (epigram 7; 31). Coming as it does in a book of religious emblems, prefaced by a prompting to "[l]et not the tender eye check, to see the allusion to our blessed Saviour figured in these Types" ("To the Reader"), it seems likely that Quarles' stress on "vigilance" to deceptive appearances relates as much to the act of emblematic reading as to any other daily activity. While there is a long tradition of religious art troping vanity as rotting fruit or empty rinds, and so these similarities cannot be considered proof positive that Christina adapted Quarles, correspondences between Quarles' treatment of the vanity theme in his normatively emblematic work and Christina's own in her unillustrated poetry reveal significant similarities in the habit of mind at work in both texts, placing *Goblin Market and Other Poems* securely within the emblem tradition.

By drawing on "literary precedents and biblical types," and by establishing a complex network of interconnections within her own texts, Christina

> encourages her readers to look beyond the immediate and temporal to the permanent, unchangeable truth reiterated symbolically throughout the

> material world for "those who have eyes to see." (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 68)

Put another way, her poetry consistently adopts a figural point of view on the visible world, and seeks to reproduce that perspective in the reader by modeling an accordingly emblematic habit of mind. *Goblin Market* treats this self-reflexive lesson hopefully: Laura ultimately acquires appropriate interpretive skills, and the moral lessons hinted at throughout the title poem are fully unpacked for the reader in the devotional poems that follow. Here, the spiritual significance of the visible world is not only accessible, but actively "preach[ed] to us" by the created objects themselves, if we will only "hear" it ("'Consider the Lilies of the Field'" 1). Although the same sacramental ontology and emblematic method are at work in *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems*, this volume takes a less sanguine view of the act of "right reading," exploring instead the difficulty of carrying out this duty and the dangers associated with abdicating it. Not only does the Prince in the title poem fail repeatedly to interpret the spiritual significance of his physical surroundings with disastrous results, but the dominant tone of the "Devotional Pieces" in this volume is also one of loss, disappointment, and remoteness from Christ. Rather than reassuring the reader of the legibility of spiritual truth by offering clear-cut moral explications of the title poem's imagery, these devotional poems express a measure of doubt about the accessibility of ultimate realities, demonstrating that while "flowers preach to us if we will hear," grace and acts of will are nonetheless required to interpret the message.

While critics such as Arseneau and Peterson have highlighted the central role of interpretation in "The Prince's Progress," neither has focused on the particular role of emblematic modes of representation and interpretation in this poem, or in the volume as a whole. Arseneau rightly identifies the major source for Christina's poem as Bunyan's

Pilgrim's Progress, whose narrative she characterizes as "overtly symbolic" ("Pilgrimage" 281). Unlike Bunyan's Christian, whose education by the Interpreter and determination to reach the Celestial City allow him to read his surroundings correctly, she notes that Christina's Prince repeatedly fails or refuses to "attempt any symbolic, moral, or spiritual interpretation of his experiences and choices" or of the heavily moralised landscape that surrounds him ("Pilgrimage" 280, 283). Peterson likewise observes that while Bunyan's Christian "correctly interprets persons, places, and things according to the biblical paradigms he has learned in the House of the Interpreter" (222), Christina's Prince "misses the clues" and "fails as a faithful reader of the scriptures" (222). Indeed, as Arseneau goes on to argue, the Prince misses or misinterprets signs most Christian readers of the poem familiar with biblical imagery would easily have recognized, a fact which would identify him explicitly as a failed reader ("Pilgrimage" 280). Both Arseneau and Peterson view the Prince's failures in light of Christina's figural hermeneutics: for Arseneau, the Prince dramatizes the mortal errors of forgetting Christ – whose Incarnation enables the connection between the natural world and its spiritual meaning, as well as our ability to interpret natural signs – and enjoying the material world for its own sake, rather than sacramentally ("Pilgrimage" 280, 290); similarly, Peterson views the Prince's main failing as a lack of typological exegetical skill (222).

While both of these interpretations correctly identify figural hermeneutics as the main issue in the poem, neither reading accounts for the emblematic structures at work in the text. Devotional emblematics and sacramentalism are based on the same basic belief in God's authorship of the natural world and the correspondence of its objects to spiritual truths; in this way, sacramental beliefs are complementary to devotional emblematic modes of reading and writing. And, as was explained in Chapter 1, typology is a figural mode of

historiography, while emblematics is an equivalent set of hermeneutic skills applied to the interpretation of static images and objects. "The Prince's Progress" stresses the sacramental or figural quality of the natural world, but does so by emblematic means: the largely hermeneutic focus of the Prince's journey and his obvious failures of interpretation along the way provoke the reader into exercising his or her own exegetical skill. By showing that some aspects of Christina's work previously identified as sacramental or typological are also accurately described as emblematic, I hope to clarify the differences between these terms, and to bring attention to emblematics as an equally influential but historically under-acknowledged strategy of representation in Christina's poetry. When "The Prince's Progress" and its volume are viewed through the lens of emblematics, it becomes clear not only that some of the key imagery in this work adapts existing emblem motifs, but also that the work as a whole serves as a cautionary tale against the spiritual dangers associated with a lack of emblem-reading skill.

"The Prince's Progress" is a long narrative poem which, as Arseneau has shown, draws consciously on such classic texts in the allegorical and emblematic traditions as Spenser's *Fairie Queene*, Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* and, as its title makes apparent, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. In Christina's poem a Prince "of purpose weak" ("PP" 47) sets out from his "world-end palace" (13) to claim his weeping, waiting (6) bride who, in her "royal palace" (429), set in a valley "fat" with the Eucharistic and sacramental elements of "wine, oil and bread" (422), like the "Celestial City" of Bunyan's poem, serves as a figure for Christ and the Heavenly Kingdom. He is delayed by multiple deviations from the path, and his bride dies before he arrives. By reassuring himself that "life is good" and that his bride will forgive him for loitering on the path (221-22), the Prince, a figure for the unmotivated, failed Christian, makes a series of bad decisions, ultimately missing his chance

to unite with his intended. While the forward progress of Bunyan's Christian is enabled by his ability to interpret a series of emblematic figures which stand for elements of Christian doctrine, the Prince's inability to read biblically-derived emblematic situations fatally impedes his journey. Almost immediately after he sets out, he is pulled into a dalliance with a milk-maid whose hair, described as "serpent-coils," recalls Satan's form in Eden (94). Her invitation to him to sit "idl[y]" (82) with her under an "apple-tree" (81), a plant long associated iconographically with the forbidden Edenic Tree of Knowledge, adds further ominous details to this emblem of sexual temptation. The Prince's glib refusal to heed these emblematic warnings results in the loss of a full day's journey and a detour into a wasteland (95, 121).

The next figure he encounters, a wizard in a cave who promises the Prince an "Elixir of Life" (203), is likewise an emblem whose lesson is readily apparent to those with a working knowledge of the Bible: his spurious promise of eternal life through a magic potion clearly marks him as a false prophet or "Evil Counsellor," a personage Christina explicated elsewhere in a note as a "'counterfeiter of the Divine Person'" (qtd. in Arseneau, "Pilgrimage" 286). Especially revealing of this figure's falsity and evil import, as well as his emblematic construction, is his association with a bellows, which he asks the Prince to use:

> Take that pair of bellows you see –
> Too heavy for my old hands they be –
> Take the bellows and puff and puff:
> When the steam curls rosy and free
> The broth's boiled enough. (206-10)

The bellows is frequently used in emblem literature as a figure for folly, untruthfulness or pride: Emblem I in Book 2 of Quarles' *Emblemes*, for example, shows a fool pointing a bellows at the sun in an illustration of "false pride" (Fig. 15). Several French devotional emblem books likewise employ the bellows as a sign of false flattery. The *pictura* of "*Ex Parvo Satis*" ("enough from a little") in de Montenay's *Emblemes, ou devises chretiennes* (1571), for instance, depicts a "false fire" fanned by wolves wielding bellows, which only Christ's blood, which flows from a nearby tree, can extinguish (Fig. 58). The Prince's failure to recognize the wizard's bellows as an emblem of falsehood is a hermeneutic failure on his part; the fact that his "hopeful mood" (219) and confidence that this potion will grant eternal life (220) accompany his use of the bellows, meanwhile, are clear emblematic signals to the reader that the wizard's promises are false, and that the Prince has been led astray. It seems likely that Christina expected her readers to recognize the biblical imagery she employs emblematically in the poem, as well as the classic emblem motif of the bellows: not only does the reader's correct interpretation of these emblems reveal key moral aspects of the characters and situations, but his or her recognition of the Prince's failure to read the emblems that surround him (which results in the ultimate failure of his quest) serves as a lesson in the vital spiritual importance of correct interpretation. While in "Goblin Market," there is reassurance that "a sister" is always there "[t]o fetch one if one goes astray" (565), the consequences of incorrect reading are considerably more dire here: to ignore the spiritual meaning of the created world – to be a bad emblem reader, in other words – is to potentially isolate oneself irreparably from Christ.

While the emblematic situations of "The Prince's Progress" expose the cost of failing to interpret, the "Devotional Pieces" in *The Prince's Progress* volume further elaborate the spiritual implications of right reading. "Despised and Rejected," "Dost Thou

Not Care?" and "Good Friday," for example, moralise the motif of failed reading resulting in a failed union. In the title poem, the Prince neglects to interpret signs that would keep him on the right path and subsequently fails to connect with his bride, a figure for Christ. In the devotional poems, similarly, the poetic personae are isolated from a more literally-presented Christ by their inability or unwillingness to hear, see, or emotionally relate to him. In "Despised and Rejected," for example, Christ appears at the despairing speaker's door and pleads to be let in:

> 'Friend, open to Me.' – Who is this that calls?
> Nay, I am as deaf as are my walls:
> Cease crying, for I will not hear
> Thy cry of hope or fear. (8-11)

Although the speaker initially refuses him entry, Christ remains outside "all night long" (38) continuing to "harp" (40) in the speaker's ears, asking the speaker to "'Rise, let Me in'" (41), and ultimately "Pleading with tears" (42), insisting that

> 'My Feet bleed, see My Face,
> See My Hands bleed that bring thee grace,
> My Heart doth bleed for thee,
> Open to Me.' (45-48)

Despite Christ's tireless and impassioned entreaties, the speaker continues to refuse him, and soon, "footsteps echoing like a sigh / Passed me by" (52-53) – Christ finally relents, leaving the speaker alone. The lesson here is that Christ seeks union with us, but in order to receive his grace, we must be receptive to him and decide to let him in. Just as, in "The Prince's Progress," the landscape and all its elements are obvious signs pointing the Prince in the right direction ("Still his road wound towards the right" [168]) which he ignores, so here the

speaker fails to "hear," remaining willfully "deaf" to Christ's ministrations. By recontextualizing the situation of misinterpretation as a failed conversation with Christ, the spiritual significance of the Prince's failure to "read" becomes apparent: just as the speaker of "Despised and Rejected" literally denies Christ by refusing to hear his pleas, so the Prince figuratively denies the Incarnation by ignoring the God-authored signs which surround him.

In a similar way, the failures of the speakers of "Dost Thou Not Care?" and "Good Friday" to unite with Christ are expressed as a failure to see him, in the former case, and an inadequacy of imagination, in the latter. In expressing her state of doubt and fear, the speaker of "Dost Thou Not Care?" seems particularly concerned with Christ's seeming distance, absence or invisibility. She describes Christ as "veiled within [His] glory, gone apart / Into [His] shrine, which is above," a fact which leads her to wonder, "Dost Thou not love me, Lord, or care / For this mine ill?" (3-6). Just as in Herbert's "The Collar," the speaker's "sigh[ing] and pin[ing]" (3) is brought to a sharp end when the voice of God calls "*Childe*" (35), so in "Dost Thou Not Care?" the voice of God interjects to reassure the speaker: "*I love thee here or there, / I will accept thy broken heart, lie still*" (7-8). Clearly, though hidden, Christ is still present and available; the speaker's sense that he is "veiled" and "gone apart" (3) and therefore *in*visible points rather to her own despair, which renders her unable to perceive Christ "here or there." The speaker's sense that Christ is "out of sight" and therefore "out of heart" (13) points specifically to this sacramental connection between belief and perception: if Christ is not first present in the speaker's "heart," the speaker will be unable to "sight" him in the physical world that veils his presence. Parallels between the Prince and this speaker, whose failures are identified more overtly as spiritual, explicate the Prince as an emblem of the perdition which accompanies a failure to look

beyond the material. Appropriately, in this way, Christina employs an emblematic strategy to preach the importance of seeking grace through the cultivation of sacramental perception.

Likewise, true to her roots in Tractarian poetics and theology, Christina emphasizes the imaginative and emotional aspects of the sacramental outlook, as well as the centrality of grace to its performance, in "Good Friday." Its speaker's attempt to "weep" (4) while standing beneath the Cross, while "number[ing] drop by drop Thy Blood's slow loss" (3) is strongly reminiscent of Jesuit meditation, which requires its practitioners to vividly imagine specific details of the Crucifixion in order to elicit a visceral emotional response. But this unusually graphic image does not have its desired emotional effect on "Good Friday"'s persona, leading her to trope herself as a "stone" (1) and a "rock" (16), images with typological resonance which evoke both impenetrability (in their hardness)[19] and the potential for salvation (in their allusions to Moses, Christ, and perhaps Peter). Although the speaker is able to imagine this vivid scene, she needs God's help to connect with it emotionally, and so calls on God to

> give not o'er,
>
> But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd of the flock;
>
> Greater than Moses, turn and look once more
>
> And smite a rock. (13-16)

This prayer to be smitten employs a typological reference in an emblematic way: Moses smote the rock in the desert to get water and save his people; the typological fulfillment of that event was the salvific piercing of Christ's side during the Crucifixion. By telescoping

---

[19] The image of a heart of stone signifying resistance and emotional hardness is also biblical: 1 Samuel 25:37 relates the story of Nabal, whose drunken defiance of David nearly results in his own destruction; when he sobers up and learns that his wife has saved his house from attack, "his heart died within him, and he became as a stone." Job 41:24 describes Leviathan's heart as being "as firm as a stone." And in Zechariah 7:12, the people are described as having "made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear [God's] law."

these events into a single, de-historicized image, the speaker uses the smitten rock as an emblem for spiritual renewal through divine intervention. As her failed meditation and the Prince's many missed interpretive opportunities in "The Prince's Progress" show, grace is a necessary component of right reading and its corollary, right action. In this way, "Dost Thou Not Care"'s dialogue between the soul and Christ, which dramatizes the lesson that the numinous is accessible (with effort) in and through the phenomenal, and the failure of imagination in the absence of God's help shown in "Good Friday," emblematically moralise the Prince's failure as a spiritual failure, and reaffirm the importance of sacramental habits of mind.

"Weary in Well-Doing," "Martyrs' Song," and "After This the Judgment" present speakers whose similarities with the Prince serve only to highlight where he falls short as a "pilgrim," the emblematic figure for a Christian. Both Arseneau and Peterson note that while the Prince's accoutrements – the staff and hat which lie unused (Arseneau, "Pilgrimage" 281) – construct him as a pilgrim like Bunyan's Christian, he completely fails to meet the expectations raised by this comparison. The speakers of these devotional poems are also identified as "pilgrims," and their successes reveal the Prince's insufficiencies in that role. In "Weary in Well-Doing," the poetic voice describes herself in several instances as "going" (1; 6; 11), a term which suggests journeying; the martyr of "Martyrs' Song" also "trod[s]" a "path" (3); the speaker of "After This the Judgment" describes her comrades as "fellow-pilgrims" (4), which explicitly identifies the speaker herself as one. While the Prince consistently follows his own inclinations, stopping and starting his trek along the "tedious road" (392) at his own pace, often ignoring the "voice of doom" (19) and "bodiless cries" (375) which urge him on, the personae in these devotional poems act entirely in accordance with God's will, no matter how "tedious" they may find the duty:

Now I would stay; God bids me go:

Now I would rest; God bids me work.

(...)

I go, Lord, where Thou sendest me;

Day after day I plod and moil... ("Weary in Well-Doing" 6-7; 11-12)

By counterpointing her own desires with God's will, this speaker emphasizes the degree to which she has surrendered her life to God, marking herself as a successful counter-example to the Prince. Similarly, the speaker of "Martyrs' Song" highlights the God-directed nature of her own journey to Heaven: consistently invoking God's "grace" (37), this speaker keeps her focus on the divine goal by asking for God's help, and declaring her "love" (57), "thank[s]" (57) and "ador[ation]" (55). Thus certain of her way, the speaker declares,

Be it flood or blood the path that's trod,

All the same it leads home to God:

Be it furnace-fire voluminous,

One like God's Son will walk with us. (3-6)

While the martyr of "Martyrs' Song" and her fellows vow to traverse "flood," "blood" and "fire" to attain their goal, the Prince nearly drowns in a river ("PP" 303-30), is waylaid by milkmaids and sylphs, and reacts to the volcanic wasteland by "halting" (153). Although he eventually arrives at the palace, his hesitations cause him to miss the true goal of union with his bride.

The pilgrim in "After This the Judgment" initially appears less successful than the other speakers in these poems: she admits she lags behind her fellows who "pass" her on their way "Thro' the dry desert, thro' the waterflood" (35) and "attain / That hidden mansion of perpetual peace" (4-5) before her. The presence of flood and desert along her route

recalls the landscape of "The Prince's Progress." Significantly, however, unlike the Prince, this pilgrim makes a point of turning to God for help in her quest:

> speed me with a song,
> A melody of heaven to reach my heart
> And rouse me to the race and make me strong;
> (...)
> Draw Thou mine eyes, draw Thou my heart above. ("After This the Judgment" 10-12, 25)

As well as being an example of reliance on God for guidance and strength, this pilgrim's stress on focusing "eyes" and "heart" on God also signals the importance of sacramental reading and interpretation, especially as devotional activities that bring one closer to the divine. The Prince's failure to connect with his bride is the direct result of his failure to focus on and "interpret" the signs that surround him. By reprising and recontextualizing the pilgrim motif of "The Prince's Progress" within an explicitly devotional context, therefore, the congruities between the Prince and the speakers of "Weary in Well-Doing," "Martyrs' Song" and "After This the Judgment" throw his failures into relief, and "read" him emblematically as a reminder to seek God's will by interpreting the things of this world rather than enjoying them for their own sake.

By carefully ordering her poems and drawing meaningful correspondences between them, Christina allowed her *Goblin Market* and *Prince's Progress* volumes to function not as mere collections of her poetry, but as extended emblems, intratextually self-illuminating wholes. Her attention to form, her background in Tractarian poetics and theology, and her desire to instruct her reader in both moral truths and the habit of mind required to learn them made the emblem a natural choice for the structure of her poems and their volumes.

Although stark differences in tone between *Goblin Market* and *The Prince's Progress* may at first suggest Christina took a more pessimistic view of the task of interpretation later in life, or even that she lost faith in the stability of signs – Katherine J. Mayberry argues, for instance, that *The Prince's Progress* evinces a "mistrust of symbols and of the many possible meanings that a single object may have" (33) – in fact, as the devotional poems attest and as Arseneau affirms, Christina's "symbolism" remains "intensely logocentric" ("Pilgrimage" 290). As I have shown, far from a belief in the fluidity of signs, "The Prince's Progress" and its related devotional poems demonstrate Christina's conviction that God is the ultimate arbiter of all meaning – "albeit in an analogical and reserved way" (Arseneau, "Pilgrimage" 290) – and that all signs therefore have a stable meaning that may (indeed, must) be accessed. However, the Prince's hermeneutic failures are a recognition that interpretation is often difficult and requires spiritual and mental preparation, most notably a determination to overcome the fleshly temptations of the material world. As Arseneau explains, Christina

> uses symbols such as a cup, grass, a lily, the harvest, or the coming of day, not as one who created their symbolic associations, but as one who writes within a preexisting and divinely sanctioned tradition which gives such symbols their meaning. ("Pilgrimage" 290)

Arseneau sees Christina's logocentrism as a consequence of her strong incarnational beliefs. Building on this analysis, I understand Christina's trust in the divine ordination of meaning as, additionally, a sign of her participation in the English devotional emblem tradition. Just as religious emblem writers purport to discover, rather than create the associations between earthly objects and divine referents, so Christina's poetry is based on and attempts to teach

the idea that, because God underlies all things, interpretation is a crucial act of devotion which brings us closer to Him.

Emblematic Devotional Prose: *Called to Be Saints* and *Time Flies*

Like fellow Victorian emblematist Margaret Gatty, Christina capitalizes on the emblem's ability to perform "double-edged teaching" (Katz, "Emblems" 240). In Gatty's emblems for children, as in Christina's poetry, "the emblem demands that the [reader] learn to 'read' it, to understand its allegorical intent, and to merge its three parts" whose meaning is "not immediately apparent" ("Emblems" 240); both Gatty and Christina encourage the reader to read actively and "to work through an interpretation" (240) in order to "get at" the meaning of the text at hand. Thus, while Gisela Hönnighausen rightly argues that Christina's emblematic habit of mind is most apparent in her religious prose works, where representations of the natural world take place within the emblematic framework of "a medievalizing system of correspondences" (2), the more atypical and obscure verbal emblematics at work in her volumes of poetry may ultimately make those books more effective as emblems. Still, the more obvious indebtedness of Christina's devotional prose to the normative strains of the English emblem tradition makes these books important as proof of her active participation in that genre. While the moralisation of plant illustrations in *Called to Be Saints* is alone enough to reveal that book's emblematic character, for example, its harmonization of saints, precious stones, animals and plants into a totalizing sacramental vision represents an ambitious attempt to demonstrate the emblematic character of the natural world itself: in *Called to Be Saints*, all created things are presented as potentially mutually elucidating. However, the clear resemblance of Christina's devotional prose texts to such emblematic traditions as the herbal manual and the occasional meditation

has not been fully acknowledged; as a result, the substantial contribution of these works to Victorian emblem discourse has been largely ignored. Criticism of *Time Flies*, for example, has slipped all too often into biographical voyeurism: until recently, commentators on that text concerned themselves primarily with linking its moralised anecdotes to documented events in Christina's life. In this way, the book's relationship to such serious theological texts as Bishop Joseph Hall's *Occasional Meditations*, which reveals its emblematic-didactic, rather than its private and confessional character, has been overlooked.

In a letter to Alexander Macmillan offering him *Called to Be Saints*,[20] Christina described the book as "a sort of devotional reading-book for the red-letter Saints' Days" (*Letters of CGR* 2: 109). The diverse material in this rather unusual volume is grouped around 21 saints or feasts. While sections vary slightly, all include "The Sacred Text," a collection of biblical passages in which the saint is mentioned or the feast established; "Biographical Additions," which usually consist of legends associated with the saint; "A Prayer" picking up on some quality embodied by the particular saint or occasion; "The Memorial," which harmonizes biblical passages summing up the saint's life or the institution of the feast with the verses of a psalm; and – most emblematically – a discussion of a plant associated in some way with the saint or feast under discussion, which includes an engraving, a motto, and a description that reveals the plant's (and by association, the saint's) moral significance or "lesson" (Figs. 41-43). Some saints are also associated with animals, while others are accompanied by precious stones. After Macmillan turned it down, Christina set the manuscript aside for a period, but later approached the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), an Anglican missionary society and publishing

[20] When Christina initially offered this book to Macmillan in 1876, it was titled *Young Plants and Polished Corners*.

house which had also produced *Annus Domini* (1874) and *Seek and Find* (1879); the SPCK issued the book in an ornate octavo edition in 1881 (Kent and Stanwood 246). Aside from lavish engravings, this volume features headlines and titles set in gothic type, elaborate ornamental rules framing each page, and decorative, engraved initial letters at the head of each subsection (Kent and Stanwood 246). As Kent and Stanwood point out, this "care for the physical design of the book is characteristic of much Tractarian publishing of which *Called to Be Saints* is a particularly splendid example" (246). However, such attention to the visual dimension of the book also hints at Christina's (and the SPCK's) underlying emblematic desire to integrate moral and aesthetic purposes by combining verbal and visual elements. As Kooistra notes, while there is no evidence that Christina had any input in the book's design, *Called to Be Saints* "is an important publication because it realizes so fully [her] emblematic purposes for this book in particular and for her art in general" (*CR and Illustration* 12). By including these plant images, which she pointedly explicates, Christina "provide[s] object lessons in correspondences for her audience and foster[s] the hermeneutic habit of interpreting all material signs for their symbolic significance" (*CR and Illustration* 44). Even in the unillustrated portions of this work (as in her other unillustrated devotional works), however, her obvious reliance on the divinely-authored sign system of the created world makes her writing emblematic as it seeks to "express the numinous" (*CR and Illustration* 44) and to "[train] the eye of her reader to see the material world with spiritual eyes" (*CR and Illustration* 141).

By harmonizing saints and their feasts with emblematic plants, stones, animals and virtues, Christina seems to apply an expanded version of Richard Hooker's[21] definition of

[21] Hooker (1554-1600) was an Anglican priest and theologian.

the sacramental value of Saints' Days, quoted as an epigram to *Called to Be Saints*, to all created objects:

> They are the splendour and outward dignity of our religion, forcible witnesses of ancient truth, provocations to the exercise of all piety, shadows of our endless felicity in heaven, on earth everlasting records and memorials, wherein they that cannot be drawn to hearken unto that we teach, may only by looking upon that we do, in a manner read whatsoever we believe. (Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity* v)

Here, Hooker outlines the significance of Saints' Days in terms which line up exactly with Christina's own sacramental view of the created world and her emblematic approach to representing it. Like natural objects – and like emblems – Saints' Days are defined by their moral-didactic role as visible signs of moral and spiritual precepts: they "witness" to truths, "shadow" our ultimate happiness, serve as "records" and "memorials" of "teachings," and, most importantly, they are readily available to interpretation. The applicability of this definition to all elements included in Christina's book transforms the Saints' Days, thus understood, into a figure for all objects and events. Christina therefore draws our attention to Saints' Days not merely for their own sake, but also as a pretext for expanding the reader's sacramental awareness and training his emblematic perception more generally. As she affirms in the prefatory "Key to My Book," this volume represents an attempt to "find some emblem which may befit" each of the saints and feasts and hold it up as a "mirror" showing forth their "grace," a quality which is itself, as she reminds us, just a partial reflection of "our common Lord" (xv). She goes on to frame a justification for her method in expressly emblematic terms:

> I think the Gospel records more lessons drawn by our Master from a seed or a plant than from a pearl. So I will, as it were, gather simples and try to spell out their lessons.... Fuller remarks of a flower: 'In the morning when it groweth up, it is a lecture of Divine Providence: in the evening when it is cut down and withereth, it is a lecture of human mortality.'[22] Let us learn something from the grass of the field which God clothes. (xv-xvi)

Christ's habit of explicating the spiritual lessons to be found in plants and other "simples" is offered here as a model for Christina's own emblematic scheme as well as for the ideal approach to reading it. Actual physical plants "preach" (492) specific spiritual truths, functioning as "stepping-stone[s] towards heaven" by "turn[ing] our minds to purity and piety" (149). Christina embeds representations of these into her own text, where she can manipulate them as elements of a divine sign system. Through "learning something" from Christina's emblematic representations of the "grass of the field," the reader is encouraged ultimately to go out and "learn something" from the actual grass as well.

On the one hand, Christina's insistence that "[n]o graver slur could attach to my book than would be a reputation for prevalent originality" (xvii) is a gesture of humility designed to deny the potential charge that this book represents a transgressive performance of biblical exegesis by a woman. While mainstream Victorian Anglicanism frowned on any involvement by women in theological discourse beyond simple religious instruction to children (Westerholm 12) – Ruskin, for example, characterizes theology as a "dangerous science for women" (*Sesame and Lilies* 73) – the Tractarian movement was specific in its denial of female authority in religious practice and preaching. As Westerholm notes,

---

[22] Gisela Hönnighausen takes Christina's quotation of Thomas Fuller (1608-61) as solid proof of her "emblematic tendencies" (3) and of their "intellectual and spiritual origins" in seventeenth-century devotional writing.

"[o]riginality in biblical interpretation entails speaking authoritatively and prophetically, claiming to represent God"; Christina, on the other hand, "claims that she writes only what she learned from others" (12). At the same time, this denial of originality acknowledges that she believes herself to be working within an established tradition and, consequently, that she sees herself not as assigning her own meanings to the plants, stones and animals she explicates, but rather as drawing on a divinely-authorized significance that pre-exists her encounter with them. While the "connect[ion]" (107) between Groundsel or Chickweed and the Holy Innocents may be Christina's innovation, for instance, the qualities which make these plants an appropriate match, she believes, are divinely ordained: "as God Almighty bestowed on those [the Holy Innocents] grace and glory," she instructs, "let us in due proportion endeavour to discern in these [plants] His bounty and His beauty" (107). Although Christina selects them, Groundsel and Chickweed are not arbitrary figures for the Innocents; rather, in her view, these plants possess an innate "harmlessness" and simplicity which God "bestowed" on them – as He also did on the Innocents – as a reminder of His benevolence. Christina does not assign these qualities when she assigns the plant to the saint, but rather discovers them, just as she urges us to "discern" them – i.e., to exercise our spiritual perception (107). By allowing the emblematist to defer authority in this way, the devotional emblem tradition offers itself as a strategy especially well-suited to the woman hermeneut.

While the emblematic character of Christina's treatment of the plants in this book is unmistakable, combining as it does the three elements of the normative emblem (picture, motto, explication), her emblematics is also at work on a more discursive level. For example, although her discussions of precious stones are not accompanied by illustrations, mottoes or other emblematic trappings, Christina nonetheless verbally presents the stones

and "reads" them emblematically, in terms which emphasize the importance of emblematic perception itself. This is perhaps most apparent in her categorization of the Chrysolyte stone (associated with St. Peter) as a "twofold *emblem*" (332; my emphasis). Her lengthy naturalistic description of this gem acts as an implied *pictura* emphasizing its iron content and large size, which she then reads as signifying

> first, the supremacy of that inherent power by which the sole Head and solid Foundation Rock of the Church subdues the world: 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron'... and secondly, of the dignity of that 'Cephas [Peter], by interpretation a stone,' whose unexampled confession of faith won for him an unexampled blessing. (332)

By discovering correspondences between the Chrysolyte's natural qualities and the wording of select passages in the Bible, Christina turns a simple natural metaphor into an emblem by suggesting that God Himself formed the Chrysolyte as a memorial of His and Peter's attributes. While it lacks a picture, a motto and most of the traditional elements of a normative emblem, her discussion of the Chrysolyte is no less fully emblematic. Even more exemplary is the sub-section on Beryl (associated with St. James the Great). Reminding us that "He who fashioned it can, if it please Him, give it a voice, that this stone may... teach us" (354), Christina reads the Beryl's green colour as "an encouragement to pray," as it is the colour of "hope" on earth, and thus of "fulfilled hope" in heaven (355). More importantly, however, the Beryl becomes a figure for emblematics itself: one of its "alleged wondrous powers" is an ability to let whoever "gazes through the Beryl" see the invisible (356) – a privilege, Christina is quick to remind us, already vouchsafed to faithful Christians. Those with "supernatural" or emblematic sight "look not at the things which are

seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal – 2 Corinthians iv. 18" (356).

Perhaps the most effective of all Christina's emblematic meditations on plants in *Called to Be Saints* is the one on Holly (Fig. 41). By initially providing details which hint at but do not elaborate the plant's spiritual significance, reserving a full explication for the final paragraph of the *explicatio*, Christina supplements a rather spare *pictura* (consisting of a single leaf) with important botanical detail, pushing the reader to exercise his or her own interpretive skill in "reading" the Holly plant. The spatial references in its motto, "[p]rickles below, no prickles above" (59) hint at a comparison between earth and heaven; the ostensibly factual description of the plant is couched in similarly suggestive terms:

> towards the ground the bush is clothed with strong defensive armour; whilst such twigs as grow high up the stem are often adorned with smooth leaves destitute of lateral prickles.... Its berries are plentiful, and usually of a rich red colour. (59-60)

Characterizing the low prickly leaves as "defensive armour" implies at the very least a deliberateness in the plant's design, although this adumbration of the motto still does not fully connect the Holly's physical attributes with its spiritual significance. In the following paragraph, however, the authorial voice assumes a more didactic tone as the meaning of the plant is unfurled: the direction to the reader to "dwell on its familiar name of holly as derived from holy-tree" (60) signals this shift. Picking up on her earlier description, Christina performs a point-by-point reading of the plant's characteristic features which makes explicit its createdness as an emblem of the eternal happiness promised in the Crucifixion:

> its blossom shadows forth the hue of innocence, and its leaf the flourishing of hope, and its berry the colour of the blood which is the life; its earthward side is guarded by sharpness, as of self-denial; its heavenward aspect is smooth, as by peaceful contemplation; its leaf fades not, its blossom is comely, its fruit is the crown of its beauty. (60-61)

This passage finally unfolds the spiritual meaning hinted at in the motto and initial description, interpreting the "prickles below" as an emblem of self-denial – the hardness of a life stripped of worldly pleasures – and the smoothness "above" as prefiguring the comfort the penitent will find in heaven. And although the Christological implications of Holly are not touched on explicitly here, references to "the blood," and, in the final line, to everlasting life ("fades not"), comeliness (a word used frequently in the bride and bridegroom imagery of the Song of Solomon) and a "crown"– as well as the plant's acknowledged thorniness more generally[23] – evoke biblical descriptions of Christ both direct and typological. Further, the colours of the three main parts of the plant, its flower (white), leaf (green) and berry (red), "shadow forth" or figure Christ in their associations with his "innocence" (Hebrews 4.15 states that he was "without sin"), "the flourishing of hope" in Christ's redemption of mankind, and his "blood," which effected that salvation.

Christina's treatment of Cowslip and Veronica (Fig. 42) is both emblematic in its inclusion of all three normative emblematic elements, and meta-emblematic in its reading of

---

[23] While Christina takes an explicit, didactic approach to some objects in this book, like holly, she limits her discussion of others to suggestive description. In this way, she trains the reader's emblematic perception in some passages, while allowing him space to exercise his newfound skill in others. For instance, the emblematic meaning of Gorse is in many ways similar to that of Holly, but Christina is far less explicit in her treatment of this plant. The prickly nature of both makes them apt emblems of the Crucifixion, but the Gorse's connection with that event is merely suggested by its description, and never fully explicated. Its motto, "thorns a safeguard," as well as the description of its thorns, which "are discoloured at the point as if by rust" – a fact which might lead one to "fancy they had pierced, and grown rusty in piercing" – strongly suggest the Crucifixion, just as the description of its "golden glory of bloom," which overtakes the "leaves and thorns alike" in springtime, suggests, but is never explicated as a symbol of, the Resurrection.

the plants as emblems about emblematic insight. The motto of this sub-section, "Each has his separate gift of God," expresses the ontological view underlying emblematics itself: all things are created by God, who assigns attributes and virtues which, when correctly read, bring our thoughts back to Him. Accordingly, Christina proposes that, though its blossoms produce a soporific wine, "perhaps the Cowslip's most obvious use is to be beautiful," and by this means to "cheer man and woo the eyes of his heart towards God, Who made this fair creature and gave it for our solace" (240). Without a more specific lesson of its own, the Cowslip comes to represent the createdness and therefore the meaningfulness of all natural objects. In a similar way, the blue flower Veronica, which translates suggestively as "true image," brings the "hue of heaven to our feet," thus "calling our thoughts skywards" (241). Glossing over the plant's "medicinal and nutritive properties," Christina sums it up simply as "a humble little plant which under so many endearing aspects preaches to us the love of God towards mankind" (241). While her discussions of other plants point to specific, minutely-described attributes – the shape of leaves, the colour of thorns – as recalling moral truths or aspects of Christ's life, here the lesson she draws is general, relating to a basic principle of God's interaction with mankind through his creation. Christina interprets the overall beauty of these plants as a reminder of the most basic "truth" underlying the act of sacramental reading itself: God's authorship of all temporal objects. Whatever the particular lessons Christina sets out to teach, she always intends "the method of her commentary" to "supernaturalize" the reader's vision, allowing him or her to "read the text of everyday life to be filled with... 'spiritual lessons' and 'heavenly meanings'" (Kent and Stanwood 12).

After suffering years of neglect, most of Christina's devotional prose texts have now been given due credit as serious theological works which demonstrate her resistance to the Victorian (and, more specifically, Tractarian) proscription of female authority in both

religious practice and theological discourse. *Called to Be Saints*, *Letter and Spirit* and *The Face of the Deep* have received special attention from scholars like Westerholm, D'Amico, Palazzo and Arseneau, who read them as authoritative texts which attempt to carve out a feminist space within the dominant religious discourses of their time (Westerholm "Magnify" 11-12; D'Amico *CR: Faith, Gender and Time* 15-16; Palazzo *CR's Feminist Theology* ix; Arseneau *Recovering CR* 2-3). However, *Time Flies: A Reading Diary* has not received comparable consideration as an authoritative theological text: with the exception of a handful of feminist scholars like Palazzo, most critics who discuss *Time Flies* at all do so in the context of biography, taking for granted that the book is primarily a memoir.[24] Intended as a daily devotional reader but structured as a personal diary with a brief essay for each day in the year, *Time Flies* appears to be a collection of Christina's personal observations, anecdotes, and reflections, each of which provides the occasion for a minor moral or spiritual lesson.[25] This appearance is bolstered by the existence of a copy of the work in which she made marginal notes identifying many of the people and places mentioned. Critics from Bell (1898) to Kent and Stanwood (1998) persist in focusing on the book's intimate, confessional, and apparently personal nature – qualities which, I argue, Christina employs to veil the deliberateness of what is actually a serious didactic devotional work. By placing *Time Flies* within the emblematic context of Protestant meditation literature, in addition, it becomes apparent that Christina uses the hallmarks of the genre of

---

[24] Another notable exception to this trend is the recent work of Roe, whose *Christina Rossetti's Faithful Imagination* examines *Time Flies* as a highly creative spiritual autobiography intended to spark contemplation in its readers.

[25] The notebook belonging to Christina's fictional heroine Maude bears a striking resemblance to this text, and reveals perhaps the impression Christina was aiming for with *Time Flies*: "Her writing-book was neither Common-Place Book, Album, Scrap-Book nor Diary; it was a compound of all these; and contained original compositions not intended for the public eye, pet extracts, extraordinary little sketches and occasional tracts of journal" (20).

occasional meditation to retain the sense of modesty expected of a woman writer while at the same time assuming the authority necessary to a writer of devotional texts.

Along with its subtitle – *A Reading Diary* – a number of textual cues in *Time Flies* mark it as a diary or journal. The most obvious is the organization of its essays – or "entries" – by the days of the calendar year. Cinthia Gannett notes that dated entries became a convention of the diary genre during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when etiquette manuals instructed young women to keep a record of their social activities, and blank books began to be sold as ready-made "Ladies' Diaries" (130). Strengthening this illusion of diary form is the fact that Christina occasionally returns to a single topic or theme in two or more consecutive entries, making it seem as though she gave further thought to a particular occurrence or issue over the course of a day, and later jotted down her modified impressions. And, as would be expected of someone writing a private rather than a public text, Christina employs an informal, conversational style, replete with hesitations and rhetorical questions. Her entry for March 30, for instance, relates how,

> Once in Scotland, while staying at a hospitable friend's castle, I observed, crossing the floor of my bedroom, a rural insect.... Towards my co-tenant I felt a sort of good will not inconsistent with an impulse to eject it through the window. (306-07)

This glimpse into the private space of Christina's bedroom encourages us to read the tale of the millipede, along with its subsequent moralisation as a lesson in unforeseeable consequences, as a confession rather than a theological pronouncement. Her admission to the uncharitable but understandable urge to be rid of an insect is ultimately self-deprecating and evokes the candid, confidential tone of letter- and diary-writing. Even in her more

theologically sophisticated pieces, however, like the entry for January 31, which deals with the ontological question of God's omniscience, she maintains the same understated rhetoric:

> A friend once put it to me that the choice of each man's free will must be unknown beforehand even to God Omniscient Himself. To foreknow would involve to preordain, and that which is ordained is not free:– so, I suppose, my friend might have gone on to argue, handling a mystery far beyond my comprehension.
>
> Yet one thing I seem to comprehend clearly. Either we must accept God's Omniscience as compatible with man's freedom of choice, or else we in truth set human free will as a limit of Divine Omniscience.
>
> Limited Omniscience is a contradiction in terms. (299)

Although she does ultimately adopt a position on the issue, her language undermines the forcefulness of her argument by balancing statements of its salient points against verbal tags that construct the essay as the memory of a conversation with a friend, rather than as a theological disquisition. By carefully manipulating these verbal and textual cues, Christina mediates a didactic, devotional text through the private discourse of the memoir or diary.

These signs evoking the feminine genre of the diary have proven effective over the years: although references to the first-person speaker's family, friends and childhood memories fill the book, no specific names, places or dates are mentioned; so while there is in fact no evidence in the text itself that Christina is the speaker, generations of readers have assumed she is. As D'Amico notes, "*Time Flies* is in many ways a personal document, one in which [Christina] often speaks in the first person and relates personal experiences," so "a reader is strongly inclined to interpret the speaker... as [Christina] herself" (CR *Faith, Gender and Time* 159). Her biographer Bell, for example, acknowledges the "spiritual"

character of *Time Flies*, but characterizes it nonetheless as a "spiritual *autobiography*" (338; my emphasis) most interesting for what it reveals about Christina's personal life, family relationships and failed love affairs. Later biographers, including Battiscombe and Marsh, likewise gloss over the book's theological aspects to root out its psychological insights.[26] And at least one contemporary reader's sense of the book as a personal confession has been documented: a young girl named Lisa Wilson sent Christina a four-leafed clover to replace the "four-leafed trefoil" (307) she describes finding as a child but, undervaluing the rare object, leaving behind, in the April 2 entry. In its own time the book was seen as the lyrical outpouring of a devout Christian, but its deliberateness as a homiletic text continues to elude even modern-day feminist critics. We know she did in fact draw from her own life: with help from William Michael, Bell deciphered a number of *Time Flies*' "autobiographical allusions" (viii), and recently, Christina's annotated personal copy of the book and her published letters, which include notes alerting friends mentioned in the book to passages in which they appear, have allowed Kent and Stanwood to more fully identify the personal details, which they provide in some thirty footnotes to their edition of Christina's prose. More than just rigorous archival scholarship, these footnotes demonstrate the editors' assumption that readers want to know the "truth" behind the anecdotes; that the book's autobiographical allusions are as important as its biblical and theological references, which make up the rest of the 87 notes.

---

[26] For instance, while in *Christina Rossetti: A Writer's Life*, Marsh acknowledges that the purpose of Christina's anecdotes is ultimately "devotional" (530), she describes *Time Flies* as "the closest of all Christina's writings to autobiography" (529), a work whose real interest is as "a complex and thoughtful history of her inner life" (530). Most notably, she reads Christina's inclusion in that book of a sonnet written by James Collinson, her onetime fiancé, as the revelation of "a secret long nursed" (533): her lingering pain over their failed engagement. "Hidden thus among various moral, devotional, and anecdotal entries are many significant memoirs and reflections" (533), Marsh concludes.

The continued interest in *Time Flies* as autobiography – even where its devotional intent is acknowledged – reveals both the persistence of gender-based generic expectations and the effectiveness of Christina's rhetoric. In *Christina Rossetti's Feminist Theology*, Palazzo both calls for and partially enacts a revision of Christina's devotional prose texts as "volumes, each with a specific structure and argument, and each with a theological message to convey" (ix). Palazzo argues that Christina's work "needs to be revalued as theology... and it needs to be added to the rich and varied history of religion in nineteenth-century England" (ix). In a similar vein, Roe argues for the importance of recognizing that Christina consciously employs the conventions of autobiography as a deliberate rhetorical strategy for teaching Christian lessons, and not for the purposes of confession (143). Adding to these assertions, I want to revisit *Time Flies* as a serious emblematic work by arguing that Christina's use of diary conventions is both deliberate and deliberately misleading, and that these conventions align the book with a branch of the emblem tradition. By staying within the realm of personal experience and drawing attention to her lack of authority, Christina's textual persona conforms to the Victorian feminine ideals of privacy, domesticity and piety. These rhetorical indirections, in turn, create a space in which she is free to discourse on theology. This strategy underlines Christina's sympathetic femininity, disarming possible critics of both her theology and her forwardness in writing for the public, and the importance the diary form accords small, mundane details models the sacramental attitude to life the book itself promotes. Ultimately, *Time Flies*' dual purpose – as a theological work with its own set of arguments and a model or handbook to the reader's independent devotions which prepares him or her to read the Book of Nature – places it comfortably within the emblem tradition.

Similarities between *Time Flies* and other texts and genres reveal the emblematic roots of Christina's book. The calendrical organization of Christina's essays, for instance, creates a suggestive parallel with Keble's *The Christian Year*, which is also structured by dates. Rather than one homespun reading per day, however, Keble's work provides a more formal poem for each Sunday and holiday in the church calendar and was intended as a companion in the home to the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, a way of bringing the liturgy into the everyday lives of its readers (G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry* 82-83). Christina's intimate engagement with that book, apparent in her extensive illustration of her personal copy of it, may indicate that the emblematic concerns she discerned in *The Christian Year* also shaped the form and message of *Time Flies*. However, her use of ordinary calendar dates rather than important days in the liturgical year as an organizing principle marks it as a private rather than a public text, keeping it safely outside of official Church discourse.[27] Similarly, this book's associations with the traditions of the commonplace and the spiritual journal, genres of literature geared towards fostering an emblematic habit of mind, suggest Christina's book seeks to do the same. By copying down and organizing disparate bits of information into common places in a blank notebook, scholars from the Renaissance on were able to draw connections over a wide range of subjects, thus developing their ability to think and read analogically, skills requisite to verbal argumentation as well as the emblematic habit of mind. Gannett notes that the keeping of a commonplace book turned many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century scholars onto the habit

[27] Although it enjoyed enormous success, Keble's work was part of the controversial Oxford Movement, while, as Palazzo has noted, *Time Flies* successfully eschewed the kind of "controversy and complex argument" Tractarian publications generated, thus supplying the "Victorian need for an accessible theology" (Palazzo 95). Indeed, *Time Flies* was reportedly embraced by clergy, laypeople, Anglicans and Methodists alike (D'Amico 148). Such wide acceptance was made possible in part, I would argue, by the rhetorical placement of this text in the realm of private, rather than public discourse. Christina's avoidance of controversy may have been due to her relationship with the SPCK, who stood to benefit from the sale of her books. Thus the cautiousness of her discourse may signal her awareness that the success or failure of her books affected not just herself, but a religious organization she was committed to helping.

of keeping a personal journal, which suggests an affinity between the two genres of writing (108). The custom of keeping a spiritual journal, in turn, arose out of the medieval tradition of religious autobiography and was adapted most notably by seventeenth-century dissenters. Such journals were kept as a record of daily activities and thoughts which the diarist could later re-read and examine for evidence of God's intervention in his or her life (Gannett 110). The relationship between the emblem and this kind of diary-writing, considered a "great Protestant art form" (Mallon, qtd. in Gannett 110), is clear in the diary's ability to "organize and interpret" the daily occurrences of life by transforming them into spiritual revelations (Gannett 110). In much the same way, *Time Flies* describes and interprets ordinary life – that collection of events and occupations William Michael once referred to as Christina's "day-to-day humdrum" (*Some Reminiscences* 1: 127) – for its moral significance or for signs of God's agency.

Perhaps the clearest evidence of *Time Flies*' indebtedness to the emblem tradition, however, is in its parallels with an older genre of devotional literature, occasional meditation. As was outlined in the first chapter, during the seventeenth century, both Catholics and Protestants engaged in various styles of meditation on religious subjects. The formal meditation of the Jesuits, for example, consisted of a set of prescribed steps which include imaginative visualization of the Crucifixion, self-analysis, and prayer.[28] With the growth of anti-Catholic and anti-Jesuit feeling in England, Protestants developed occasional meditation as a way to distinguish their practice from Catholic, especially Ignatian,

---

[28] Emerging from the Thomistic belief that "fallen humanity could attain spiritual insights only through material objects," Jesuit meditation seeks to understand the Passion in a proximate way by producing and contemplating a vivid scene in the imagination (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 166-67). As Louis L. Martz explains, the Exercises of St. Ignatius were initially intended to be performed over one month set aside for extraordinary devotions (25-26). However, as they grew in popularity, they were adapted for daily use and included several prescribed steps which include a preparatory prayer, introspection into one's own spiritual state, and the "composition of place," or placement of oneself imaginatively in a precisely-detailed scene, usually of Christ's life (26-27).

methods.[29] As its name suggests, occasional meditation encourages a meditative attitude to ordinary life, requiring its practitioners to recognize and contemplate the divine significance of things as they occur, rather than engaging in specialized meditation in a particular time and place (Huntley 3). This style of meditation was "initiated by and modeled on the emblem" (Ardholm 23) – indeed, one of the genre's most famous seventeenth-century practitioners, Bishop Joseph Hall, refers to his own extemporized meditations as "emblems" (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 166) – and it aimed, like the emblem itself, to "'teach moral truth so that memory will grasp it not as a mere formula but... as an experience which will be a guide to understanding and conduct'" (Moseley, *Century* 6, qtd. in Ardholm 23). In *The Reluctant Pilgrim*, J. Paul Hunter also notes that occasional meditation sought to make its readers aware of "spiritual matters" by causing them to meditate "upon the objects of creation, even objects not ordinarily regarded as emblems" (96, 97). Just like the emblem proper, in other words, occasional meditation sought to instill an emblematic habit of mind by uncovering "the hidden 'meanings' God has ascribed to his creations" (Ardholm 23). While formal meditation is rigorous, intellectual, and practiced mainly by clerics, occasional meditation was intended to be accessible to and practicable by anyone (Martz 56). So, for example, one seventeenth-century occasional meditation reads the act of sweeping a room as a sign of Christ's sacrifice, which, we are reminded, "svveps the dvst of sinnes from the hart" (Hawkins, Meditation IIII, qtd. in Ardholm 24; Fig. 18). This analogy not only teaches a particular doctrinal truth by associating it with something familiar, it also seeks to "induce [further] meditation on the sacrifice of Christ" when the reader next cleans his or her own

[29] See especially Chapter 7, "Exegesis and Meditation: The Spiritual Emblem in England" in Bath's *Speaking Pictures* and Frank L. Huntley's introduction to his edition of Joseph Hall's *The Art of Divine Meditation* and *Occasional Meditations* for a more thorough explanation of the differences between formal and occasional meditations.

house, "thereby importing sacred meaning and significance to an everyday task" (Ardholm 25).

One of the most important texts in this tradition is Bishop Joseph Hall's *Occasional Meditations*, published in 1633. Containing 134 essays on topics like "the Sight of a [sun] Dial," "a Fair Prospect," "a Spider in His Window," "the Occasion of a Redbreast Coming into his Chamber," and "the Barking of a Dog," Hall's *Meditations*, like Christina's *Time Flies*, offers brief emblematic homilies on the objects and events of everyday life. Despite having been produced 252 years apart, Christina's and Hall's texts have suggestive similarities: in terms of form, both are varied collections of discrete, moralised observations, though Hall's essays are numbered rather than dated. Each of Hall's meditations, like Christina's diary entries, is at once a theological disquisition – a small sermon, in fact – and a handbook to emblematic perception. In his proem, Hall asks the reader to "take out my lesson and learn to read God's great book by mine" (123) and reminds us that "Everything that we see reads us new lectures of wisdom and piety" (123). Early on in *Time Flies*, Christina similarly alerts the reader to her use of analogical observations, or as she calls them, "Parable[s] of Nature" (315) and asks permission to use "here or there an illustrative story or a personal reminiscence," in order to "point and clench" her lesson (297). She explains that her diary entries are "all alike written down in the humble wish to help others by such means as I myself have found helpful" (*TF* 298); like Hall, Christina hopes her moralised observations will teach her readers to see the world as a sign system signifying God. Both Christina's individual diary entries and Hall's essays typically begin with an observation, whether of some sense impression – the sight of a piece of money under water (Hall 153) – or of a general principle like the human tendency to gossip (Rossetti, *TF* 115) – and then explicate the moral or theological lesson it represents. Interestingly, both Hall and

Christina turn the observation of a spider web into a homily on temptation: "see how cunningly this little Arabian hath spread out his tent for a prey, how heedfully he watches for a passenger," writes Hall; "What is this but an emblem of those spiritual free-booters that lie in wait for our souls?" (131). In like fashion, Christina interprets a funnel-shaped spider web as "an apt figure of the world. It exhibits beauty, ingenuity, intricacy," but also contains the mortal threat of the spider at its base (*TF* 311).

Hall's language, like Christina's, is simple and familiar. However, while Christina makes extensive use of the diary-like first person mode, Hall often employs the second person singular or first person plural voice, which foregrounds his authority. For example, his essay "Upon the Sight of Grapes" orders the reader to "Mark the difference of these grapes. There you see a cluster whose grapes touch one another, well ripened; here you see some stragglers which grow almost solitarily, green and hard. It is thus with us" (150). Similarly, "Upon the First Rumour of the Earthquake at Lyme" begins by asking, "Good Lord, how do we know when we are sure? If there were man or beast in that wood, they seemed as safe as we now are..." (153). Hall's use of the imperative mood, the pronouns "we" and "us," and his suggestion of proximity in the demonstrative pronoun "these" and the word "now" construct the reader's spatial and, by implication, his ideological point of view as identical with Hall's. By contrast, Christina's use of the first-person mode, which does not assume the reader's assent, veils the authority she ultimately claims. The four-leafed-clover entry on April 2, for instance, begins: "I have an impression (for I will not relate my adventure quite positively) that in my youth, being at that time too ignorant to appreciate such a rarity, in one of my country walks, I found what I can only call a four-leafed trefoil" (307). Christina has an "impression" rather than a memory; she insists she will not relate this "impression" accurately; she even doubts her own linguistic authority to

properly name the plant. Moreover, by basing this lesson on a story about her childhood, she associates herself with "ignorant" youth and evades adult accountability. However, the concluding sentence of her entry tacitly assumes a more authoritative tone: "but one thing then remains for us to do: to walk humbly and thankfully among this world's whole fields of three-leafed trefoil" (308). While this appears initially as a consolation pertaining only to Christina herself, it presents the reader, included in "us," with a lesson: to be happy with our lot in life. The often-quoted strawberry episode from July 17 makes use of many of the same strategies. Christina relates how as children, she and "a little girl" watched a strawberry ripen over a period of days, only to discover it "half-eaten, and good for nothing" (318). Christina downplays her own authority to "read" this situation by foregrounding her femininity and youth, and by admitting that she at first believed she had waited "in vain" (318). Upon reflection, she decides that "on a very lowly level we had obeyed a council of prudence, and had practised self-restraint" (318), a conclusion which both reinforces her self-deprecating rhetorical stance and implies a moral lesson. Like Hall, who ends many of his essays with a scriptural quotation or an invocation asking for help in taking the lesson to heart, Christina ends her meditation with a prayer to "'Let patience have her perfect work'" (318), a passage from James 1:4 whose imperative mood allows it to serve – rather cleverly – as both a personal prayer and a direct instruction to the reader.

While we cannot be certain Christina ever read or even knew of Hall, his *Occasional Meditations* was one of the most often-read religious books of the seventeenth century, and belongs to a broad tradition of dissenting devotional literature in the emblematic mode Christina *was* aware of, which includes texts like *Pilgrim's Progress* and Wither's *A Collection of Emblemes*. However, the degree to which occasional meditation influenced Christina in the writing of *Time Flies* is less important than what similarities between the

book and this tradition reveal about the public, didactic, and emblematic character of the work; a work which, until recently, was considered interesting only as a window onto Christina's personal life. Taking into account Christina's meticulous craftsmanship of her published books, the diary-like, autobiographical facade of *Time Flies* should be understood as both a deliberate, gendered screen for its intended public aim, and a theological statement in and of itself on the sacramental importance of the details of everyday life.

The emblem is foundational to the work of all early Pre-Raphaelite Brothers and associates, but Christina's work engages most fully, most fruitfully, and most consistently with this tradition. The books and poetry she read most enthusiastically growing up, her close ties to a fundamentally bimedial art movement, and her lifelong pursuit of illustration as part of her reading and writing practices reveal Christina's development as a writer to have been marked by an abiding interest in combining the visual with the verbal. Beyond simple ornamentation or an advantage in the book trade (although these considerations had their place as well), Christina's pairing of images and words attempts to express the ineffable by supplying the defects in fallen human language with what she believed to be the perfect, divinely-ordained sign system of God's creation. Her works' bimediality is resonant with emblematics in its "double-edged" desire to expose both the meaningfulness of all created things, and to instruct readers in accessing that meaning. Christina had so internalized the emblem's topoi, conventions and strategies that they permeate even the verbal component of her poetry and prose, transforming her most straightforward unillustrated descriptions of plants, animals, people and scenery into small-scale sermons on patience, purity, the vanity of the material world, and the consequent importance of "rightly" interpreting it. Her Tractarian-inspired sacramental aesthetic allowed her to see the world as

a text authored by God; the discourse of emblematics provided her with the tools to represent it that way, and to teach others how to read it.

Chapter 4

"How meet beauty?": Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Emblem

In a letter dated 1885, Gerard Manley Hopkins expresses bewilderment at friend and eventual literary executor Robert Bridges' trouble understanding one of his poems: he suggests that perhaps "there is something you have not seen and I see;" yet he goes on to propose that "if the whole world agreed to condemn it or see nothing in it I should only tell them to take a generation and come to me again" (*Reader* 207). This was advice it seems Bridges took to heart in delaying the publication of Hopkins' collected poems until he felt the public was ready, nearly thirty years after the poet's death.[1] The appearance in 1918 of Hopkins' *Poems* meant that, despite having written his oeuvre squarely within the Victorian period – between approximately 1860, when he won the annual poetry competition at Highgate School with "The Escorial," and his death in 1889[2] – he was for years considered a modernist poet. Even recent scholars who otherwise acknowledge him as a Victorian continue to foreground his poetry's innovation and seeming novelty. Over the past twenty-five years, historicist scholarship has worked to extricate Hopkins' poetry from the modernist context into which it was embedded, but critics who would study Hopkins as a Victorian poet must continue to push against the common perception that, even if not

[1] In line with the tendency of simplified cultural histories to frame WWI as modernism's ground zero, there is a persistent assumption among critics that the traumas of the Great War prepared the public for Hopkins' seemingly un-Victorian work which was, by implication, unintelligible to readers of its own time. Ironically, his poetry would prove unintelligible in a different way to the New Critics, who embraced his experimentation but wholly disregarded his religious imagery and themes. Indeed, his formal and linguistic experimentation, first labeled, apologetically, as "Oddity and Obscurity" in 1918 (Bridges, "Preface" 12), were hailed in the 1930s, when critics finally took notice, as presciently proto-modern.

[2] For the beginning and end points of Hopkins' poetic career, I refer to Norman H. MacKenzie's *Poetical Works*, which lists "The Escorial" as poem 1 and "To RB" as the last poem Hopkins wrote before his death.

modern, Hopkins' work is nonetheless "*sui generis*[3]...original" (Ballinger 1) or "so very idiosyncratic" that it bears "little or no classificatory analysis or contextual study" (Groves 105).

In fact, as critics including Landow, G.B. Tennyson, and Robert J. Barth have shown, for all his linguistic and formal experimentation, Hopkins was fully a product of the Victorian period, deeply influenced by Pugin's championing of Christian Gothic architecture, Ruskin's moral-aesthetic directives, the Tractarian movement's sacramental aesthetic, and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's push for social reform through art. This chapter not only seeks to contextualize Hopkins as a Victorian and a participant in the Pre-Raphaelite movement, but will also attempt to argue that a major aspect of his poetry revives much older traditions clustered around the emblem. While both Martz and Bath mention Hopkins in passing as a poet whose work participates in the emblem tradition, no full reappraisal of his poetry has yet been made from that point of view. His early Tractarian leanings, interest in Pre-Raphaelitism, 1866 conversion to Catholicism and subsequent enrollment as a Jesuit conditioned him for emblematics by exposing him to sacramentalism, a belief which marked both his religious and his artistic practices. This background also introduced Hopkins to the meditational literary tradition as represented in St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*, along with other major texts in the Jesuit devotional emblematic tradition. As I hope to demonstrate, re-placing his poems in this emblematic context opens a new perspective on his aesthetics. Further, the unusual word choice, alliteration and assonance which grew out of Hopkins' apparently unique onomatopoetic theory of language

[3] It is interesting to note that this phrase is often used in criticism which hits the disciplinary wall separating literary and emblem studies. As well as marking literary criticism's bewilderment over Hopkins' methods here, it signals G.B. Tennyson's failure to recognize the explicitly emblematic character of Isaac Williams' work in his *Victorian Devotional Poetry: The Tractarian Mode*.

can, I argue, best be understood not as symptoms of modernism, but rather as belonging to the Renaissance tradition of "hieroglyphics," the belief in a necessary relationship between words and things which feeds directly into devotional emblematics. For Hopkins, as for other Pre-Raphaelites, the emblem offered a model of sacramental reading and writing, one that would prove both plastic and didactic enough for his ambitious moral-aesthetic aims.

Early Sacramentalism

Born into a wealthy family in 1844, Hopkins was raised in what biographer Norman White describes as a "moderately High Anglican" home (17). Bible-reading and prayers at home, as well as Holy Communion at church, were cornerstones of the family's religious practice. Later, however, both he and his sister showed more "puseyite" leanings: in 1878, Millicent entered the Anglican convent of All Saints, Margaret Street;[4] and during his undergraduate days at Balliol College, Oxford, Hopkins heard lectures by leading figures in the Tractarian movement. He also attended some of the churches at the centre of the movement, including Littlemore, a chapel built by Cardinal Newman in 1836 (Groves 105). Although, as Peter Groves is quick to note, R.W. Church pinpoints the end of the Oxford Movement as taking place shortly before Hopkins' birth, his time at Oxford coincided with a period of active struggle between the University's High Church party, represented by E.B. Pusey and Cannon Liddon at Christ Church College, and its liberal and utilitarian party, which was centered around Balliol and its master, Benjamin Jowett (105; White 52). Despite his reverence for Jowett, Hopkins identified almost immediately with Balliol's "Ritualist set" and became a devotee of Liddon (White 62). Driving this interest in

[4] Interesting to note is the fact that Millicent joined the same convent as Christina and Dante Gabriel's sister, Maria Rossetti (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 314).

Ritualism, but leading, ultimately, to his dissatisfaction and break with Anglicanism was Hopkins' growing belief in the importance of the Real Presence in the Eucharist. In the summer of 1866, Hopkins found himself unable to take Holy Communion in a church which holds not only that "the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten... only after an heavenly and spiritual manner.... [by] Faith," but also that the doctrine of Transubstantiation is "repugnant" (White 126). As he argued in a letter around this time, "[t]he great aid to belief and object of belief is the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Religion without that is sombre, dangerous, illogical, with that it is... *loveable*" (*Further Letters* 17).

The same fervent sacramentalism that drove Hopkins into the Roman Catholic Church also had a profound influence on his view of nature. Along with many other High-Church Anglicans and Anglo-Catholics of his time and earlier (including, it should be noted, Christina Rossetti), Hopkins viewed the created world as the original sacrament – a physical expression of the Second Person of the Trinity, and a point of interchange between the believer and God. Hopkins was most likely primed for the intensification of his religious sacramentalism by his concurrent interest in Ruskin and figural aesthetics: as Allison Sulloway has famously declared, Ruskin was Hopkins' "silent don" (x). J. Hillis Miller's observation that for Hopkins, "[b]elief in the Incarnation and its repetition in the Eucharist offer the only escape from a world which has become universally 'sordid' by the disappearance of God" (*Disappearance* 312), hints at the degree to which Hopkins' sacramental aesthetic was shaped by that of Ruskin, who in *Modern Painters* famously defined beauty as "the symbolizing of divine attributes in matter" (Ruskin, *Works* 1: 210). In this way, Ruskin's sacramentalism likely served as an early channel of figuralism and,

consequently, as a source of emblematics for Hopkins. In his youth, he delighted in sketching natural scenes, carrying out his studies with a precision and particularity likely influenced by Ruskin's popular handbook, *The Elements of Drawing* (1857), which stresses the moral necessity of a close and accurate observation of natural phenomena and forms.[5] His Oxford letters and school-work, moreover, are infused with Ruskinian language and ideas (Ballinger 26-27). Even after he had given up sketching, Hopkins continued to keep minutely-detailed written accounts of natural observations which fed his poetry.

The sacramental thrust of these observations leads occasionally to emblematic moments in which Hopkins "reads" nature for divine meaning: "I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at," he writes in 1870; "I know the beauty of our Lord by it. It[s inscape] is [mixed of] strength and grace" (*Reader* 43). The bluebell for hopkins is more than a beautiful natural object: he views it as an emblem and reads its inherent qualities as representative of God's. His fascination with St. Winefred's Well in Wales may also be explained in part by his understanding of it as a similar kind of emblem. In "Jesu Dulcis Memoria" (1866), Hopkins had compared Christ to "a springing well" (17); in 1874, in an actual well, Hopkins saw this emblem come to life:

> The strong unfailing flow of the water and the chain of cures from year to year took hold of my mind with wonder at the bounty of God in one of His saints, the sensible thing so naturally and gracefully uttering the spiritual reason of its being... and the spring in place leading back the thoughts by its spring in time to its spring in eternity.... (*Reader* 66)

---

[5] Side-by-side comparisons of Hopkins' and Ruskin's sketches suggest that Hopkins was in fact using that book (see White, 70-71, figs. 12, 13).

The free-flowing water and its reputation for miraculous cures make this well, in Hopkins' view, a "sensible" and natural "utter[ance]" of God – in other words, an emblem of His mercy through Christ's saving sacrifice, which, like the water, is available in a "strong unfailing flow" to all who seek it.

His sacramentalism drives not only these observations on the divine truths "uttered" by natural objects, but also the didactic notations in his poetry calling the reader's attention to "lessons" or "sermons" in nature. In "Easter" (1866), for example, Hopkins urges the reader to "Gather lessons from the skies; / Take a lesson from the ground" (13-14). Expanding on this exhortation, "Spring" (1877) makes emblematic use of the traditional two-part structure of the sonnet: the octet describes natural beauty on a spring day, while the sestet performs a sacramental exegesis of the natural scene. The first part of the poem details the speaker's impression that

> Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
> Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
> The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;
> The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush
> The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
> With richness [....] (3-8)

By comparing the eggs to "heavens," Hopkins indicates more than their colour: as in *Called to Be Saints* Christina Rossetti would describe the blue Veronica as a plant which "brings the hue of heaven to our feet," thus "calling our thoughts skywards" (241), Hopkins' characterization of the eggs as "heavens" is also a reminder of their divine origin and significance. The volta of this sonnet is an emblematic rhetorical question: "What is all this

juice and all this joy?" (9). The answer, "A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning / In Eden garden" (10-11), reads springtime as an emblem of the earth's createdness and continued perfection as a manifestation of God by employing a typological image of the Garden of Eden. At the heart of Hopkins' emblematics, therefore, is a deeply-felt sacramental sensibility and a desire to instill that sensibility in the reader.

Just as, a decade or more earlier, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Holman Hunt and Millais had found in Ruskin's *Modern Painters* the impetus to break with the Academy and evolve an art which called attention to the sacramental significance of the natural world, so, as I have mentioned, Hopkins was steeped from an early age in a Ruskinian sense of the divine origin and moral imperative of aesthetic experience (Ballinger 33). Interestingly, however, where Hopkins dissents from Ruskin is perhaps more revealing than where the two agree. While Hopkins "devoured" Ruskin's championing of figural art, he rejected Ruskin's complementary allowance for the power of the imagination in discerning beauty and its corollary, moral fitness (33). Theorizing in *Modern Painters* a "reciprocal action between the intensity of moral feeling and the power of the imagination" (*Works* 3: 257), Ruskin grants these faculties "tremendous, even divine authority" to access otherwise unavailable truths (Ward 61). Although Ward explains Hopkins' opposition to this idea as a mistrust of his own mercurial moods (62), I want to suggest that it had more to do with the extreme logocentrism of Hopkins' sacramental beliefs. Unlike the "natural supernaturalism" of Wordsworth and Coleridge, in which the perception of divinity in the natural world is "activated" or even projected by the percipient's own imaginative powers, sacramentalism understands natural phenomena as signs ordained by the deity whose meanings are prior to any perception of them. In other words, the incarnationalist believes Christ is really and

objectively communicated to us through the landscape, even if the observer is unaware of that fact. Thus, although Ruskin is often rightly identified as a major source of Hopkins' incarnational aesthetic, Hopkins' figural views actually occupied an even more extreme logocentric position.

His untitled poem simply dated "Maentwrog" – a Welsh district with many waterfalls (Mackenzie 242) – is a good illustration of Hopkins' intense logocentrism:

> It was a hard thing to undo this knot.
> The rainbow shines, but only in the thought
> Of him that looks. Yet not in that alone,
> For who makes rainbows by invention?
> And many standing round a waterfall
> See one bow each, yet not the same to all,
> But each a hand's breadth further than the next.
> The sun on falling waters writes the text
> Which yet is in the eye or in the thought.
> It was a hard thing to undo this knot.

The rainbow is, paradoxically, both a biblically-established emblem (given and explicated by God as a sign of His covenant with Noah), and a phenomenon commonly offered as philosophical proof of the subjective nature of perception. Science tells us that a rainbow is caused by the refraction of light through water vapour, and that its existence is therefore dependent on the perceiver's vantage point – that "[t]he rainbow shines, but only in the thought / Of him that looks" (2-3). Yet the rainbow is "not in [the thought] alone, / For who makes rainbows by invention?" (3-4). In Hopkins' view, its perspectival nature does not

make the rainbow a purely subjective phenomenon as, after all, "The sun" – clearly a pun on Son – is what (or who) "writes the text" on the "falling waters" (8). In other words, despite the fact that each viewer sees a different rainbow, rainbows nonetheless have an objective reality as the inscription of God on the landscape; the rainbow therefore exists prior to any individual perception of it. By defending the objective reality of this most fleeting and intangible of natural phenomena, Hopkins implies that all natural objects are similarly grounded in the ultimate reality of God. As will become clear later in this chapter, this extreme incarnational and logocentric view impacted Hopkins' understanding even of individual words, which became for him not arbitrary signifiers, but micro-emblems with a necessary and perfect relationship to their (God-given) meanings.

Critics such as Margaret Johnson (1997), Bernadette Waterman Ward (2002) and Jerome Bump (2004) have argued that Hopkins' encounter with Tractarianism had a lasting influence on both his theology – which, like that of Keble, Pusey and Liddon, emphasizes incarnationalism and draws heavily on patristic sources – and his poetry, especially in its Analogical or Christic view of the created world and use of Reserve. Both Ballinger and Groves problematize this view, however, arguing that Hopkins' figuralism predates his time at Oxford and is therefore solely attributable to his early interest in Ruskin's "signic"[6] or sacramental worldview (Ballinger 41); that such incarnationalism is simply an orthodox Christian belief (Groves 107); that Hopkins himself attributes no poetic influence to the Tractarians and indeed, if he mentions them at all, it is only to denigrate their poetry (Ballinger 41); and, finally, that while Reserve is "uncontroversially" part of Hopkins' intellectual background, clear connections between that concept and Hopkins' poetry are "elusive" (Groves 109). In fact, as his notebooks and letters intimate, Hopkins always

[6] This neologism, coined by Ballinger, is useful for my discussion of Hopkins' view of nature.

believed to some degree in the Real Presence, but this belief intensified during the years in which he was exposed to Tractarianism at Oxford, growing from "moderately High Church" to Ritualist, and finally crossing over into Roman Catholicism – an evolution which mirrors that of Newman, the very person Hopkins sought for help with his conversion. And, as the Article of Faith quoted earlier makes clear, the intensity of Hopkins' Eucharistic beliefs ran counter to mainstream Anglican orthodoxy; indeed, this was a main reason for his conversion. Once Hopkins' logocentrism had surpassed Ruskin's, as Ward notes, he looked to the Tractarians for "a more orderly art" (56) that affirmed a more substantial connection between this world and God (62): the Tractarian reverence for poetry's likeness to the "nature of sacraments" (76) apparently filled that need.

Ballinger makes much of the fact that Hopkins once described Tractarian poetry as the "weak transference" of Romantic poetry into the Victorian Church (41), but also acknowledges that Tractarian religious beliefs likely confirmed Hopkins' pre-existing signic views (42). A problem with this assertion is its dissociation of Tractarian religion from Tractarian poetics, and its assumption that Hopkins could so easily accept one while rejecting the other. As G.B. Tennyson and others have established, the movement's aesthetics and religion were inextricably linked:

> So closely wedded are the two in Tractarian thinking, and so visible is the Tractarian religious commitment otherwise, that there is an almost irresistible temptation to say that the fundamental principle of Tractarian poetics is the subordination of art to religion. (*Victorian Devotional Poetry* 23)

While this may in fact be overstating the case, Tractarianism's sacramental poetics did provide a unique model for the integration of theology and aesthetics. Although Hopkins

might not have cared for Newman's or Keble's poems, it seems likely, especially given his growing logocentrism and interest in Tractarian religious doctrine while at Oxford, that Tractarian poetics offered Hopkins an approach to art that would allow him to represent the beauty of the physical while foregrounding its transcendence.

Pre-Raphaelite Connections

Hopkins' interest in Ruskin and the Tractarians meant that he shared a great deal of his intellectual and aesthetic background with the early Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, but it was still necessary in 2001 for Francis Fennell to argue, first, that "Hopkins knew well and was strongly influenced by Pre-Raphaelitism" and, second, that "Hopkins identified his own poetic mission with what he conceived to be the Pre-Raphaelite mission" (309). Indeed, he was too young to have been part of either the original PRB group or the later circle which formed around D.G. Rossetti in the "Jovial Campaign," although he was aware of the artists involved and their ideas (Fennell 310).[7] What's more, Hopkins' retired life as a Jesuit and consequent reluctance to publish in the secular world kept him from belonging, in his lifetime, to any aesthetic movement whatsoever – as he once told Bridges, "I do not write for the public. You are my public and I hope to convert you" (*Reader* 87). Although in life Hopkins never collaborated with any of the central Pre-Raphaelite poets or artists,[8] his

[7] This was the ill-fated project to paint murals in the debating hall of the Oxford union, undertaken in 1857 by a team of artists including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones.

[8] One exception to this statement might have been Richard Watson Dixon, one of Hopkins' Highgate teachers and a poet whose acquaintance with D.G. Rossetti associated him in a peripheral way with the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Hopkins reconnected with Dixon by correspondence in 1878, and the two often exchanged and discussed their poems. When Dante Gabriel asked Dixon in 1881 to contribute to Thomas Hall Caine's anthology of poetry (*Sonnets of Three Centuries*), Dixon included two sonnets by Hopkins in his submission, to which Hopkins himself added a further three, a fact which suggests that Hopkins saw his own work as fitting in with that of the Pre-Raphaelites. (Dante Gabriel, on the other hand, rejected Hopkins' poems, saying "I cannot in any degree tolerate Mr. Hopkins' sonnets, though perceiving well he is an able man" [qtd. in Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 485]). See White, Chapters 24, 25; *The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and*

moral-aesthetic values and didactic goals intersect in significant ways with those of the movement, and his awareness of Pre-Raphaelitism almost certainly made it an influence on his poetry. As the early Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, stimulated by Ruskin, developed an aesthetic that would alert its viewers to the transcendence of natural objects, so Hopkins' early immersion in Ruskin drove him to a poetry which flows from the careful observation of nature, and calls attention to its divine significance (White 75).[9]

While Hopkins and the PRB shared a deep interest in Ruskin's aesthetic theory, Hopkins was also directly influenced by his interest in the Brotherhood itself: the names of almost all early members of the Pre-Raphaelite circle appear in Hopkins' notebooks, in his comments on either painting or poetry (Ward 60); while at Highgate, a classmate introduced him to the work of Millais, who became (and remained) Hopkins' favorite artist (White 29-30); he greatly admired Christina Rossetti, whose poems he copied into his journal, and several of his own early poems – most notably, "A Voice from the World" (1865) and "*Fraterno nobis*" (1867) – were written in response to her "Convent Threshold" (1862). Revealingly, as Ward notes, it was in imitation of her work, rather than in direct observation of nature, that Hopkins wrote his earliest devotional poems (60).

However, the most direct evidence of Hopkins' Pre-Raphaelitism, as Fennell argues, is his proposed essay (never completed) on "Some Aspects of Modern Medievalism" (309). After having met Christina Rossetti and Holman Hunt at a party during his vacation from Oxford in 1864, Hopkins immediately began making notes on the "Modern Medievalist" movement, which he associates not with Sir Walter Scott or Alfred Tennyson, but, among

---

Richard Watson Dixon; Jude V. Nixon, "'Goldengrove Unleaving': Hopkins' 'Spring and Fall,' Christina Rossetti's 'Mirrors of Life and Death,' and the Politics of Inclusion."

[9] These debts were immediate as well as lasting: Hopkins' school-prize poem, "The Escorial," both demonstrates his awareness, at age 16, of Ruskin's and Pugin's theory that architecture serves as an index to the morality of a society, and argues his conviction that "the ways / Of art best follow nature" (48-49).

others, "Miss Rossetti. D.G. Rossetti" (qtd. in Fennell 310). As Fennell explains, from the Brotherhood's inception until the early 1860s, "Pre-Raphaelitism" was synonymous in general parlance with "Ruskinianism," which was itself associated with a preference for "things medieval" (312) – medieval being a designation which, as at least one of Hopkins' sermons shows he understood, had to do with the perception that medieval art, more so than the art of any other period, served the noble goal of reflecting and producing a "healthy soul" (315).[10] In his notes on "Modern Medievalism," Hopkins identifies the other two modern schools of poetry as the "Lake" school of Wordsworth and the "sentimental" school of Byron, movements to which, his ambivalence towards these authors makes clear, Hopkins did not see himself as belonging (Fennell 316). His 1881 attempt to have his poems published alongside Dante Gabriel's in Hall Caine's *Sonnets of Three Centuries* suggests he saw his own work as having an affinity with that of the PRB. Indeed, his absorption of Ruskin and his lifelong effort to reconcile spirituality and aesthetics made his identification with the "school of Rossetti" (Fennell 316) virtually inevitable. Thus it makes sense to view Hopkins as belonging to the tradition of Pre-Raphaelitism as one whose poetry, like that of the early PRB, seeks to instruct by framing the created world in a figural context.

His appreciation of the Pre-Raphaelite project was no doubt a factor in Hopkins' youthful passion for verbal-visual composition, in both the reading material he chose for himself and in his own creative activity. While no records currently available of the books Hopkins read in childhood or adolescence contain any overtly emblematic titles, he and his

---

[10] In an 1881 sermon on the Sacred Heart, for instance, Hopkins questions why that devotion, so popular now, did not exist in the middle ages, concluding that the devotion was given to modern Catholics as an antidote to their "loss of heart" – an argument which, Fennell asserts, reveals his desire to "bring back the middle ages, not as part of some program of deliberate archaism but rather... to answer the needs of [his own] times" (314). In his nostalgia for the Middle Ages as a period in which art sought first and foremost to elevate, ennoble and instruct the spirit, Hopkins falls very much in line with Ruskin, Carlyle, and, most importantly, the PRB.

brothers did subscribe to *Once a Week* magazine, which they loved for its combination of textual and visual art (White 30). At Highgate School, Hopkins frequently illustrated his school friend Marcus Clarke's stories, and was famous among his classmates for his comic drawings, as well as for illustrating his own letter headings (White 30). The frequent obtrusions of words onto the pages of his sketch-books reveal his facility with both media as well as his tendency to combine them where one or the other would not suffice (White 73-74). Especially suggestive of the emblematic roots of Hopkins' verbal-visual creative impulses, however, is his illustrated manuscript poem "A Vision of the Mermaids" (Fig. 59) which – in a page design that bears strong resemblances to Wither's emblems – is headed by a circular vignette depicting mermaids in a sea-scape and written out in two neat columns (White 40). *Once a Week*'s 1863 publication of Hopkins' poem "Winter with the Gulf Stream" and the magazine's placement of it opposite an engraving by Millais might also in fact be seen as a tacit recognition that Hopkins' interest in visual-verbal pairings is both Pre-Raphaelite in its origins and emblematic in its intent. As Aakanksha Virkar-Yates has argued, Hopkins' interest in Pre-Raphaelite art was an important "conduit" of emblematic influence on his work (34).

Emblematic Language: Onomatopoetics

As his religious convictions and asceticism intensified, however, Hopkins gave up drawing out of a sense that it inflamed his propensity for "fleshliness."[11] By 1875, he had turned his creative energies entirely to making detailed verbal "sketches" of natural scenes

[11] The word "fleshly" resonates with the key term in contemporary criticism surrounding Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Poems* (1870): Robert Buchanan's review of Dante Gabriel's book expresses his disgust at its sensuality and labels Dante Gabriel as the leader of the "Fleshly school of poetry." Hopkins' giving up drawing because of its encouragement of "fleshliness" may therefore suggest an attempt on his part to distance himself from this so-called "school."

(Ballinger 29). Although he continued to believe, as Ruskin had taught, that "outward beauty is the proof of inward beauty, outward good of inward good" (*Reader* 143), Hopkins nonetheless worried that his delight in beautiful objects was leading him into temptation: he felt he was prone to becoming absorbed in the forms of things themselves, rather than appreciating and reading them as signs of God.[12] In an 1879 letter, for example, he expresses his belief that "no one can admire beauty of the body more than I do, and it is of course a comfort to find beauty in a friend or a friend in beauty. But this kind of beauty is dangerous" (*Reader* 234). Reproducing beautiful forms by drawing them could lead to sin, but the copious verbal notations on nature he continued to keep throughout his life – as well as his abandonment of the pursuit of an art career for one in religious poetry – suggest that for Hopkins, words allowed him to keep a safe distance from the realm of the visual and provided a better (perhaps because more "Reserved") vehicle for the revelation of sacramental truth: as White affirms, "Hopkins' verbal sketches of natural details are his transference of Ruskin's precepts to the medium of words" (76). Put another way, following his ascetic retreat from the image, Hopkins transferred his visual-verbal creative impulses onto language, a medium which would preserve his emblematic desire to foreground the sacramental meaning of the physical world while minimizing temptation. His difficult and complex linguistic play may thus be understood as an attempt to push the limits of language at least in part in an effort to transpose emblematic discourse from the more accommodating medium of text-image constructions onto the strictly verbal. As I hope to show, by exploiting onomatopoeia and the idiosyncratic vocabulary White refers to as his "word-hoard," Hopkins attempts to represent in words the sacramental truths normative emblems

[12] Another factor in Hopkins' acute self-awareness of this potential error might have been his suppressed homosexuality, which, as White has suggested, occasionally expressed itself in sexually-charged descriptions of the forms of trees and other natural objects (White 152-53).

convey through picture and text, producing a poetry he hoped would not only "educate," but "convert" (*Reader* 250, 87).

One example of such an emblematic poem, and one which itself tackles the vexed question of the physical, is "To what serves Mortal Beauty?" (1885). Here the poetic voice echoes Hopkins' earlier letter in characterizing physical beauty as "dangerous" because it "does set danc-/Ing blood" (1-2). The sonnet's interrogation of the usefulness of such beauty signals the poet's sense, on the one hand, that beautiful objects pose a threat, and his awareness, on the other, that God made these objects for some purpose. The response offers both an explanation of that purpose and a proposed set of guidelines for how to encounter beauty in a safe way:

> See, it does this:
>
> Keeps warm Men's wits to the things that are; what good means – where a glance
>
> Master more may than gaze, gaze out of countenance. (3-5)

Temporal beauty catches our attention: though they appeal to our fallible senses, created objects are nonetheless capable of leading our thoughts upward to their creator. Beauty thus keeps our "wits" or minds "warm" and alert to God's works, which, interpreted correctly, will remind us of his greatness, mercy, glory, or any other of his qualities. The answer's colloquial opening "see" also operates as a command to the reader, emphasizing that at issue here is the fraught nature of the visual, and that the solution is not to stop looking, but rather to look in a moderate, responsible way: by merely "glanc[ing]," the viewer remains "master" of himself, while he risks losing himself in a "gaze." Thus, the problem of "how [to] meet beauty" (12) – how to reconcile the knowledge that beautiful objects signify some aspect of

the divine with the fact that their beauty can stimulate inappropriate desire – is resolved in the injunction to "Merely meet it; own, / Home at heart, heaven's sweet gift; then leave, let that alone" (12-13). This stress on the importance of maintaining one's distance – look and give thanks, but "let that alone" – is a figure for the need to establish a safe spiritual and emotional vantage point on beautiful things. By developing a consistent focus on the divine origin and significance of the beautiful object, the poet suggests, the viewer can prevent appropriate admiration for God's work from slipping into idolatry or fleshliness.

This combination of (self-)control and sacramentalism is precisely what Hopkins himself hoped to achieve by transferring his creative impulses onto the verbal. Non-normative emblematic strategies, moreover, presented a uniquely apposite framework for poetry in this mode. Emblems – even those which employ visual components – decontextualize natural objects, removing them from their usual environments and re-positioning them in a moral and didactic framework in order to foreground their spiritual meanings. Objects are thus presented to the viewer at a safe remove, in a context where the obvious and natural response to them becomes a sacramental interpretation. The naked emblem's replacement of visual representations with verbal descriptions is an even more successful strategy of distantiation and re-contextualization. By representing beautiful objects in such a way that their divine significance is emphasized, and seeking to reproduce this habit of observation in the reader, the emblem grants a license to enjoy beauty: its focus on discerning the divine message intended by created objects produces a safe vantage point on beauty for the emblem reader, tempering admiration of the temporal with devotion to the spiritual. In this way, significantly, the emblem itself models the correct manner of "meet[ing] beauty" proposed in "To what serves Mortal Beauty."

Further confirmation of the emblematic nature of Hopkins' verbal turn and search for a morally-didactic poetry is his heightened fascination with emblematics following his conversion. Although he no longer drew, there is substantial evidence that Hopkins continued to gravitate towards reading materials that combined images and text, opting for increasingly normative emblematic works after he became a Jesuit. An important focus of the Society of Jesus is formal meditation carried out according to St. Ignatius Loyola's programme, the *Spiritual Exercises*, in which the practitioner is directed to place himself imaginatively in a biblical scene, such as the Crucifixion, while reflecting on its mysteries and performing introspection. Bath, Freeman and others have shown that this and other forms of meditation developed in a reciprocal relationship with the devotional emblem tradition: the emblematic habit of mind emerges from meditation's focus on interpreting natural phenomena, and later meditation handbooks often include emblems as a support to meditative practice.[13] Indeed, the emblem was a favourite tool among Jesuits (Praz 170; Dimler, "Jesuit Emblem Books" 64) and Jesuit emblem books meant as aids to meditation constitute an important number of the emblem books produced in England from the seventeenth century onward ("Jesuit Emblem Books" 63).[14] Thus, if White's claim that Hopkins had likely never heard of the Jesuits until a year before he entered Manresa House (185) is true, it suggests that Hopkins' first few years as a Jesuit may have been a period of immersion in Jesuit literature, some of which is likely to have been emblematic. Jesuit novices were encouraged to read spiritual books and saints' lives during their "*ad lib*" or

---

[13] See especially Bath, *Speaking Pictures*, Chapter 7 ("Exegesis and Meditation: The Spiritual Emblem in England"), Freeman, *English Emblem Books* 34 and Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation* 61n4. Manning also makes an interesting observation on the symmetry between the tripartite normative emblem structure and the Trinitarian structure of Ignatian meditation (121).

[14] Richard G. Dimler's "Jesuit Emblem Books: An Overview of Research Past and Present" provides an excellent survey of the role of emblems in Jesuit literature, as well as an introduction to other research on this topic.

free time (White 177), and among those books available for perusal at Manresa House were, Hopkins' letters reveal, several emblematic works. In an 1879 letter to Bridges, for example, Hopkins reports that he has been reading a book on the life of the Polish Jesuit St. Stanislaus, the events of which are "commented on [by] emblems" in the text (*Letters of Hopkins to Bridges* 95). And as Virkar-Yates has persuasively demonstrated, similarities between the heart imagery in the English Jesuit Henry Hawkins' *The Devout Heart* (1634),[15] Quarles' *Emblems* (1635), and Hopkins' "Wreck of the Deutschland" make it extremely likely Hopkins was also familiar with those volumes, which belong to the emblematic tradition of the "School of the Heart" or *Schola Cordis*. As was outlined in the first chapter, emblems in this vein trope the process of spiritual growth and refinement in images of a heart in various situations: growing wings and flying ("Deutschland" stanza 3); being scoured and engraved by Christ ("Deutschland" stanza 23); or being ploughed, sown, and watered (Virkar-Yates 41; see for instance Figs. 18-22). Hopkins also employs imagery from this tradition in his descriptions, in both "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and "The Caged Skylark" (1877), of the soul as a bird caged in the "bower of bone" ("Deutschland" 137) or "bone-house" ("Skylark" 2) of the body. This image, derived from Ignatian meditation, is also a motif in Quarles' *Emblemes* (emblem VIII, book 5; Fig. 13). Finally, the supplication in his 1876 poem "*S. Thomae Aquinatis Rhythmus ad SS. Sacramentum*" asking Christ to

> Bring the tender tale true of the Pelican;

---

[15] The structure of Hawkins' work makes it clear his emblems were intended as aids or supplements to meditational practice: each of the twenty sections is divided into five parts – picture, hymne, preamble, meditation and colloquy – which correspond to the five parts of Ignatian meditation: composition of place (imaginative participation in a Biblical scene), petition for divine grace, preparatory prayer, reflection and colloquy. As Karl Höltgen has also observed, normative (tripartite) emblems also replicate this structure, with the picture standing in for the composition of place, the explication acting as the analysis, and the final epigram standing for the colloquy ("Henry Hawkins" 604-05).

Bathe me, Jesu Lord, in what thy bosom ran –

Blood that but one drop of has the worth to win

All the world forgiveness of its world of sin. (21-24)

is unambiguous proof that Hopkins was familiar with the popular Christological emblematic motif of the pelican feeding its young with the blood of its own breast, something he could have encountered in a number of places – including medieval works of art, Wither's *A collection of Emblemes* (Fig. 8), carvings on numerous Church of England pulpits, or on the title page of various editions of the King James Bible – before or after his conversion.[16]

God's Language: Hieroglyphics and the Emblem

His growing knowledge of the Jesuit emblem tradition – especially Hawkins – might also have brought Hopkins an awareness of the hieroglyphic theory of language, a set of ideas which would have appealed to his logocentrism and shaped his understanding of the representational power of words. The Renaissance interest in hieroglyphics, which sought to discover (or rediscover) a "natural" or "Adamic" language (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 51), was an important source of the devotional emblem. In part, hieroglyphic theory entailed viewing the natural world as a system of signs written by God: seventeenth-century philosopher Thomas Browne, for instance, described nature in these terms, as a "Universal and publick Manuscript," not "graphical or composed of Letters," but rather of "forms, constitutions, parts and operations" inscribed by the "Finger of God" (qtd. in Freeman, *English Emblem Books* 41). Thus, the hieroglyphic view of the natural world is entirely consistent with both the sacramental view, and what I have called the emblematic view: Quarles makes this link explicit when he characterizes "the Heavens, the Earth, nay every

[16] See Daly, "The Pelican-in-her-Piety" 83-108.

Creature" as "Hieroglyphics and Emblemes of [God's] Glory" ("Preface," *Emblemes*). The hieroglyphic view, like the emblematic, sees the book of nature as a "natural" language whose signifiers and signifieds are not arbitrarily joined by convention, but united by God, and intended to refer back to Himself.

Renaissance interest in hieroglyphics also involved the search for a similarly perfect mode of human language. The language Adam used to name the creatures, for example, which reputedly had natural and intrinsic affinities with the objects it named, was thought to have been just such a language: a hieroglyphic "Alphabet," Browne argues, is what allowed Adam to assign "every creature a name peculiar to its nature" (qtd. in Freeman, *English Emblem Books* 41). The use of the term hieroglyphic itself, in this context, comes from the Renaissance belief that ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs were in fact vestiges of this Adamic language (Manning 129). As Francis Bacon argues, all words have meaning either by "some similitude of congruity" with the things they represent, or merely "by contract or acceptation" (*Advancement of Learning* 2.16.3) – modern language, which, as Locke asserts, is fallen, arbitrary and conventional, [17] falls into this latter category, while hieroglyphic language belongs to the former. Just as the worldview fostered by hieroglyphic belief was explicitly associated, during the Renaissance, with an emblematic understanding, so that period's attempt to reproduce hieroglyphic language relied on, among other things, emblematic techniques. The ideogrammatic combination of image and text was thought to mitigate the weak points of each medium, creating a superior language that came closer to the "intrinsic" than either words or pictures alone. According to Dimler, Hawkins' emblems

[17] In *An Essay on Human Understanding* (3.2.1), Locke repudiates the possibility of natural language, asserting that "words... come to be made use of by men, as the signs of their ideas; not by any natural connection... but by a voluntary imposition, whereby such a word is made arbitrarily the mark of such an idea."

must be understood in light of hieroglyphic theory, as they attempt to represent the divine by employing precisely these hieroglyphic methods ("Jesuit Emblem Books" 81).

Suggestive correspondences between this little-discussed facet of Renaissance emblematics and Hopkins' own beliefs and practices can, I believe, situate some of the most puzzling aspects of Hopkins' poetics as integral with his sacramentalism and further proof of his participation in the emblem tradition. The study of hieroglyphics saw the natural world as the "alphabet" of God and attempted to restore a "natural" human language; Hopkins saw intrinsic connections between sign and signifier in the natural world and sought to reproduce these connections in his representation of it (Ward 62). At the heart of this mission is Hopkins' sense of the particularity of creation (von Balthasar, qtd. in Ballinger 168), a notion he expresses in the term *inscape*:[18] in much the same way as the Saussurean sign acquires meaning through its difference from all other signs in the system, for Hopkins, every natural object possesses its own inherent "inner coherence" that identifies it as a manifestation of the divine but distinguishes it from every other object (Martin 205, qtd. in Ballinger 4). In its postlapsarian state as a set of negotiated markers, on the other hand, human language falls far short of being able to capture these unique particularities. Thus, like early Pre-Raphaelite painting, which sought to call attention to the divine significance of natural objects with a minutely-detailed, hyper-realistic aesthetic, Hopkins' approach to words is an attempt to redeem our "fallen" language – to create an idiom capable of

---

[18] Although any study of Hopkins must deal to some extent with the terms "inscape" and "instress," Hopkins' refusal to define these terms and his varying uses of them make them difficult to pin down. Dennis Sobolev highlights the difficulties critics have found in interpreting "inscape" when he lists a "sampling" of eighteen distinct meanings critics have assigned to that word, including "external design," "the individual self," "parallelism," and "the sign of divine presence" (219). By looking at a range of Hopkins' uses of the term, Sobolev makes a compelling argument for the term's "actual" meaning as being "embodied organized form" (228). My use of this term seeks also to incorporate the sense, occasionally assigned to the word by Hopkins himself, that the form embodied by the creature in question is unique to it, and ordained by God. In this I follow Martz's definition of inscape as "the unique 'relation between the parts of the thing to each other and again of the parts to the whole' by which a discerning observer grasps the unique nature of every thing" (322).

capturing and embodying the inscape of things – and, through the restoration of that language, to redeem fallen humankind. In his search for a "natural" language, therefore, Hopkins follows directly in the path of Renaissance seekers of Adamic language and hieroglyphics.

Miller's contention that Hopkins' sacral approach to language can best be described as "onomatopoetic"[19] is, I would argue, another recognition of its hieroglyphic roots. Miller's account attempts to link Hopkins' sacramentalism with his interest in the relationship between sound and meaning in words by viewing both through the lens of onomatopoeia: just as an onomatopoeia is imitative, both referring to and partaking in the thing it represents, so for Hopkins, the incarnational nature of all earthly objects makes them "chime" or "rhyme" with Christ (Ballinger 92). As Hopkins argues in his commentary on the *Spiritual Exercises*, the Holy Ghost is manifested in the creatures of this world, and

> All things therefore are charged with love, are charged with God and if we know how to touch them give off sparks and take fire, yield drops and flow, ring and tell of him. (*Reader* 303)

His approach to poetic language follows directly from this onomatopoetic ontology: natural objects are "charged" with God, and if we can find the right way to "touch" them – that is, if we can properly capture and understand them – they will "ring," revealing their essential resonance or assonance with Christ. Hopkins reasserts this conviction in "God's Grandeur" (1877):

> The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
>
> It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

[19] Hopkins himself uses the word onomatopoeia in a journal entry detailing similar-sounding words: "I think the onomatopoetic theory has not had a fair chance.... These [words] must be onomatopoetic" (qtd. in White 86).

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

Crushed. (1-4)

This (w)ringing[20] of Christ from the landscape is what Hopkins set out to accomplish in his poetry. In his search for a language adequate to the task, Hopkins looked for words that would imitate in their substance and inscape the substance and inscape of the things they name (Ballinger 218). Accordingly, in his journals Hopkins collects and organizes groups of words according to sound: "*Grind, gride, gird, grit, groat, grate, greet... crush, crash....* Original meaning to *strike*, *rub*, particularly *together*" (qtd. in White 86). In this project, Hopkins was working from the theory that words have an intrinsic meaning related to their sound, and that the sound of a word is itself a replication of what it refers to: words with similar sounds share similar meanings, and clusters of similar-sounding words are therefore "variations of some *ur*-word and root meaning" (Miller, qtd. in Ballinger 216). Like the "natural" idiom sought by the emblematic tradition of hieroglyphics, Hopkins' onomatopoetic approach endeavours to redeem fallen human language by patterning it after the language of God – which is, as Hopkins believed, creation itself – thereby restoring its ability to represent the divine as expressed in the particularity of the natural world.

While there is no direct evidence that Hopkins was immediately aware of or purposely set out to revive hieroglyphics, its links to Jesuit emblematics and striking parallels with Hopkins' own theories about the relationship between words, things, and God strongly suggest that Hopkins' unusual poetics is not an anticipation of modernist experimentation, but rather rooted in this older tradition. Hopkins might have been exposed to the emblem in any one of several areas – his knowledge of the Tractarians, his admiration

[20] Significantly, bells and ringing imagery are prominent motifs in "The Wreck of the Deutschland"; see especially stanzas 9, 10.

of Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites, and his career as a Jesuit – and there are a number of signs that he sought to incorporate emblematic strategies into his own work from an early age, from his mixed-media journaling and self-illustrated poetry manuscripts to his more sophisticated experiments with an onomatopoetic, sacramental model of language. As this chapter has already established, references in his poetry to existing emblems (the devout heart, the pelican) prove that Hopkins was at the very least superficially aware of the emblem's image vocabulary. As this section of the chapter will demonstrate, however, emblematics is also at work on a more profound discursive level in Hopkins' poetry as a strategy for "manifest[ing] mystery" (Secker 245) or representing the divine. While the mix of Protestant and Jesuit emblematics in "The Half-Way House" re-enacts Hopkins' conversion from the Protestant to the Catholic church, his fully Catholic Marian poems, "Rosa Mystica" and "The Blessed Virgin Compared to the Air we Breathe," borrow extensively from the Jesuit tradition of Marian emblems, like the *Parthenia Sacra* (sacred garden) of Henry Hawkins. Finally, as I hope to show, the critical characterization of Hopkins' "Epithalamion" as a poetic failure stems from a misrecognition of its emblematic method. In all of these poems, Hopkins works to reveal God's word in the things of this world; his language attempts, furthermore, to pattern itself after God's language, striving for particularity and an intrinsic relationship to the things it represents – in part because these things are, themselves, manifestations of the divine.

In its references to both Protestant and Jesuit emblematic traditions, "The Half-way House" (1865) embodies the hybridity of Hopkins' emblematic background. The title might have been drawn from a January, 1849 *Punch* cartoon lampooning Oxford and its High Anglican movement – which proved for many a step along the road to Catholicism – as "the

Half-way House to Rome." The title might also have been inspired by Newman's explanation, in the *Apologia* (1865), that there are "but two alternatives, the way to Rome, and the way to Atheism: Anglicanism is the half-way house on the one side, and Liberalism is the halfway house on the other" (185, qtd. in Mackenzie 281-82). The poem is clearly an account of Hopkins' journey from the Church of England to that of Rome: when his "national old Egyptian reed" (7), a biblical metaphor for the Anglican church, "[gives] way," the poet takes "of vine a cross-barred rod or rood" (8) and, "hungered" for "love's proper food" (10), a figure for the Eucharist, chases after "Love," who away "on wings dost ride" (3). Finally, the poet is "cheered" with "peace and food" where "four rough ways meet" (12) – a reference to the position of the altar inside a cruciform church and the consumption of the sacramental meal – reassured Love is with him "in the breaking of the bread" (18). The journey or pilgrimage motif of this poem – its depiction of the poet's taking up of his "rod" (8) in order to "chase" (11) after Love – as well as its reliance on personified abstractions links it to the Protestant emblem tradition as exemplified in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Just as that book treats every object emblematically and stresses interpretation as a key to the devout life, so this poem employs significant actions and objects to tell the story of a religious conversion. However, the presence of a winged "Love" whose presence in the "bread," among other clues, makes clear that "He" (18) is a figure for Christ, aligns the poem even more explicitly with Catholic Eucharistic theology as well as with the "Anima" tradition of Jesuit emblematics. Antoine Sucquet's *Via Vitae Aeternae* (1620) and Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624) are two examples of Jesuit emblem books in this tradition, which represents the soul's progress toward union with God in images of the infant Jesus as winged Cupid leading the Anima, or soul, to God (Dimler,

"Jesuit Emblem Books" 66; Moseley 18). Hopkins' placement of the pilgrim's staff in the hands of his own Anima produces an image strikingly similar to one of Hugo's *picturae* (emblem 22; Fig. 60), which shows Anima holding a pilgrim's staff and hat (Dimler, "Jesuit Emblem Books" 67). Whether Hopkins' image is a direct reference to Hugo's, chosen, perhaps, for its incorporation of elements also featured in a well-known English Protestant emblem text, or merely coincidental, this poem about the moment of Hopkins' conversion seems itself to have been consciously conceived as a "half-way house" between the two emblem traditions.

Although Hopkins wrote little poetry after his entry into the Society of Jesus, he allowed himself to participate in annual Mary day (May 1) celebrations by writing poems in honour of the Virgin (White 202). Two of his Marian poems, "Rosa Mystica" (early 1870s) and "The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air we Breathe" (1883), are extended emblematic contemplations of that figure – the latter in a medieval mode, and the former in the tradition of Hawkins' *Parthenia Sacra* (1633). The *Parthenia* is a complex text that presents itself as a sacred garden containing twenty-four natural emblems of the Virgin, including the rose, the lily, the dew and the bee, and was intended, Hawkins' "Introductory Epistle" relates, to

> make her appeare to your viewes, not in the habit or fashion of a Gardener, which office she rather yealds (as proper) to her Sonne, but of a Garden, under the veyle of Symbols, to deliciate a while with her Devotes. (qtd. in Seaton 45)

Like *The Devout Heart*, this book was intended to stimulate religious meditation (Seaton 45), making it likely Hopkins had not only read this text, but was responding to it – possibly even attempting to reproduce it – in his own poetry. Each stanza in "Rosa Mystica" consists

of a set of questions about the "Mystical Rose" (a traditional name for Mary likening her lack of original sin to the thornlessness of prelapsarian roses [Mackenzie 308]), a set of answers, and a prayer asking for her care and protection or promising further devotion. For example, stanza 6 asks

> What was the colour of that blossom bright?
>
> White to begin with, immaculate white.
>
> But what a wild flush on the lakes of it stood
>
> When the rose ran in crimsonings down the cross-wood!
>
> *In the gardens of God, in the daylight divine*
>
> *I shall worship His wounds with thee, mother of mine.* (31-36)

The characterization of Mary as an "immaculate" white rose is a commonplace of this emblem tradition, as is the depiction of Christ as a rose, turned red to figure his wounds, growing on the same tree. The dialectical strategy Hopkins adopts in each stanza of this poem further suggests the process of interpretation associated with emblematics: questions figure the reader's interrogation of a *pictura*, the answers parallel the revelation provided in the *explicatio*, and the prayer stands in for the devotional re-focusing of the concluding epigram or invocation.

In "The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air we Breathe," Hopkins draws on a different set of conventions for the representation of Mary, figuring her immaculacy and status as a conduit for God's grace in images of the air, an element which surrounds and sustains us, but is invisible, pure and transparent. The medieval and Renaissance tradition Hopkins draws on here figures the Virgin in various images of transparency, including air

and glass.[21] In contrast to "Rosa Mystica"'s more traditional emblematic structure, this poem does not engage directly with the reader but offers description after description of the *pictura*, air, in an effort to point up its similarities with the Virgin:

> Wild air, world-mothering air,
> Nestling me everywhere,
> That each eyelash or hair
> Girdles; goes home betwixt
> The fleeciest, frailest-flixed
> Snowflake; that's fairly mixed
> With, riddles, and is rife
> In every least thing's life;
> This needful, never spent
> And nursing element[.] (1-10)

Although elements of the description hint at the air's significance as a figure for the Virgin ("world-mothering," for instance), the emblematic turn finally comes with the assertion that this element "Minds" the poet "in many ways" (16) of

> her who not only
> Gave God's infinity
> Dwindled to infancy
> Welcome in womb and breast,
> Birth, milk, and all the rest
> But mothers each new grace

[21] Medieval and Renaissance art (such as, for example, Jan Van Eyck's *Arnolfini Wedding*, 1434) often includes images of sunlight through glass or water intended to figure the Blessed Virgin; for further information about traditional Marian types, see R.T. Davies, *Medieval English Lyrics*, 371-78.

That does now reach our race –

Mary Immaculate. (17-24)

As Hopkins goes on to demonstrate, the air is an apt emblem for the Virgin's sinlessness and consequent ability to "Let all God's glory through" (30) without staining or deflecting it. Finally, just as in "Rosa Mystica" Hopkins ends each stanza with an invocation that parallels the epigram in a normative emblem, so here the last verse paragraph is a prayer to Mary to comfort and surround the poet, to "[b]e... O thou dear / Mother, my atmosphere" (114-15). A hint at Hopkins' belief in the appropriateness of these emblematic techniques for Marian poetry is his assertion that, like the emblem itself, Mary is a "veil," adapting divine truths for human understanding: her "hand," her role in the Incarnation, "leaves [God's] light / Sifted to suit our sight" (112-13).

Less successful, certainly, than either "The Half-way House" or his Marian poems, but perhaps more indicative of Hopkins' integration of emblematic strategies into his poetry is the unfinished "Epithalamion," undertaken in honour of his brother Everard's 1888 wedding. Hopkins admitted "it had some bright lines," but he "could not get it done" (qtd. in Mackenzie 489). Set at a pleasant bathing spot along a river, the poem introduces a "listless stranger" (14) who, happening upon a group of boys in the water, strips down, "looks about him, laughs [and] swims" (42). Almost without warning, at this point, the idyll becomes a lesson on marriage: "What is..... the delightful dean? / Wedlock. What the water? Spousal love" (46-47). William H. Gardner criticizes the "disconcerting abruptness of the exegesis," calling it "extraneous and unconvincing" (*Study* 2: 362, 1: 186). A number of critics[22] also suggest that, despite its links to a classical tradition of wedding poetry involving the imagery of water and boys, this poem suffers from the fundamental

[22] See, for example, Mackenzie's note on the poem; L. Adey, "A Reading of Hopkins' 'Epithalamion.'"

unsuitability of the image to the lesson. Indeed, if the poem is regarded as a classical epithalamion or typical idyll, Hopkins' sudden elucidation of his own imagery seems heavy-handed, even an admission of poetic failure. However, I would argue that in pushing exegesis to the forefront, presenting an image before proceeding to an overt explication of its individual parts, Hopkins is in fact employing emblematic methods to craft a sermon in verse: sermons, after all, served for centuries as a major source and venue for emblematic discourse as they sought to draw religious lessons from objects and events that would be familiar to their audience.[23] Motivated by his religious vocation, Hopkins may have undertaken this poem as an opportunity to preach his own wedding sermon to a Protestant younger brother in whose wedding he was otherwise unable to participate. In this way, while "Epithalamion" is not among Hopkins' most successful pieces, negative criticism of the work may arise at least in part from a misrecognition of his technique as allegorical or metaphorical, rather than emblematic.

"The Wreck of the Deutschland"

Aside from occasional Latin elegiacs and Mary poems like the foregoing, Hopkins mostly gave up poetry from the time he entered the Jesuit order, believing it distracted him from his more pressing priestly duties.[24] This changed in December of 1875, when he came across a newspaper story about the wreck at the mouth of the Thames of a ship from Germany, the *Deutschland.* Deeply moved by the tragedy and affected by accounts of the bravery and devotion of five exiled German nuns, passengers on the ship, who called on

[23] Accounts of the extravagantly odd imagery in some of Hopkins' actual sermons would seem to bear out my claim: in one, he likens a cow's udder to the Church and her teats to the seven sacraments (Ballinger 13).
[24] Hopkins went so far as to burn his existing poems after becoming a Jesuit, but because he had sent copies of many of them to Robert Bridges, those poems survive.

Christ as they drowned, Hopkins saw the wreck as an event replete with meaning (White 250). Although he had all but "given up" poetry at this point, Hopkins felt sanctioned to write something about this event when his rector said "that he wished someone would write a poem on the subject" (*Letters of Hopkins to Bridges* 4, qtd. in White 250). The result was Hopkins' major work, a startlingly unconventional poem which he attempted to have published in the Jesuit newsletter *The Month* – without success, a disappointment which, some have speculated, may have prevented him from seeking publication for any other poem (White 259). Although the poem is formally divided into two parts, Gardner has argued that "The Wreck of the Deutschland" falls into roughly four movements: Part the First, which comprises ten stanzas, examines the poet's own heart and soul in the experience of reflecting on the tragedy and in relation to God; the first portion of Part the Second (stanzas 11-17) narrates the shipwreck itself and introduces the figure of the tall nun, who Hopkins believed to have been the chief sister; third, her story and its significance are explored through stanza 30; and finally, in stanzas 31-35, the poet questions the spiritual fate of the nonbelievers on the ship, reflects on fate and God's will, and concludes with a prayer for England's conversion to Catholicism (Keating 16).

In "The Wreck of the Deutschland," Hopkins is at great pains to show that God's ongoing presence in the world is as legible in a disastrous event – a shipwreck in a storm with considerable loss of life – as it is in a joyful miracle, and that even disaster may be understood through faith as a blessing, an opportunity for martyrdom and salvation. A key theme of the poem is thus the difficulty, for the fallen and limited human imagination, of grasping the immensity of God's plan, and the consequent inability of fallen human language to adequately express the divine or represent ultimate "truths." God's sublimity

defies expression: he is "Beyond saying sweet, past telling of tongue" (69). The poet's contemplation of this, moreover, disrupts the linguistic fabric of the poem itself. In his moments of meditation on the terrible aspects of God, "the frown of his face / Before me, the hurtle of hell / Behind" (17-19), the poet's linguistic stumbling replicates the intellectual and spiritual difficulty of comprehending the divine: "Behind, where, where was a, where was a place?—" (19). His encounter with the awesome power of God renders him incoherent, forcing him back to the beginning of his question – which is itself unclear – several times over. In the same way, even the joyful contemplation of the mercy and tenderness embodied in Christ, the "King, Head" (221), and "Master" (220), who "cure[s] the extremity" (222), both defies imagination and disrupts speech:

> But how shall I... Make me room there;
> Reach me a... Fancy, come faster –
> Strike you the sight of it? look at it loom there,
> Thing that she... There then! (217-20)

Ordinary human language is inadequate to express the qualities of God, but Hopkins' sacramentalism and related belief in the potential of hieroglyphic language to represent the ineffable provide him with a framework suited to that task: emblematics.

Nature imagery in "The Wreck of the Deutschland" is especially indicative of the emblematic character of Hopkins' vision. The poet demonstrates that every material object has spiritual meaning, and that to grasp that meaning, one must read the world correctly, with an attitude of reverence and gratitude. In stanza five, the poet describes "kiss[ing] [his] hand / To the stars" and "Starlight" (33-35), a gesture of adoration which allows him to "[waft]" God out of these things, to savour God's presence in them in the same way one

might perceive the odour of a perfume. Acknowledging that the attitude necessary for this understanding is not always easy to maintain, the poet admits that he finds God whenever and wherever he can: "I greet him the days I meet him, and bless when I understand" (40). This stanza establishes the sacramental ontology that shapes the poet's understanding of the wreck's significance: not random, accidental or the work of some evil force, the *Deutschland*'s sinking – like every event – is rather the work of a God who challenges us to "read" it as emblematic of his love. The poet takes up that challenge in his description of the storm on the night of the wreck: in "[God's] sight" (167), he argues, a vantage point we are encouraged to try to adopt, the "Storm flakes" of snow and sea water are not the trappings of calamity but rather "scroll-leaved flowers, lily showers – sweet heaven was astrew in them" (168). In other words, these things – like the event itself, for which they function as a metonym – only appear negative to those without sacramental faith; those who cultivate the mind of Christ, however, are able to understand them as blessings. The description of flowers as "scroll-leaved" echoes Ruskin in its naturalistic evocation of a petal's spiraling shape, but it also suggests textuality: understood correctly, the snow is a handwritten "scroll" or note from God – much like the Bible itself – which we are bound to "read" and interpret. Hopkins' troping of the snowflakes as "flowers," "lil[ies]," and as "heaven" itself, moreover, encourages the reader to decode the message of both the storm and the shipwreck as emblematic reminders of the eternal life offered to all through Christ.

Amplifying this emblematic reading of the shipwreck is Hopkins' belief that the number of the nuns who drowned – five – signifies the five wounds Christ received during his Crucifixion. The nuns' exile under the German Falk laws[25] and their death in transit made them, in his view, analogues of Christ. On the one hand, in their religious lives and

[25] German laws, enacted in 1873, which severely restricted the rights of Catholics in that country.

martyrdom, the nuns are conscious emulators of Christ, shaping their actions and identity in imitation of the events of his own life. But there is more than symbolic resonance in the drowning of the five nuns for Hopkins, and numerological symbolism supports that belief: "Five!" the poet exclaims, is "the finding and sake / And cipher of suffering Christ" (169). Taken together, as a group of five martyrs, the nuns are an emblem of Christ's suffering, a "Stigma, signal, cinquefoil token" (175) of him.[26] Hopkins does not view the drowning of these nuns as a chance occurrence, nor is his own use of that event in his poem a symbol he believed himself responsible for having developed or created. Rather, Hopkins understood the drowning of the five nuns as an emblem "written" in the events of the shipwreck by the hand of God. By making this God-authored emblem the focal image of his poem, Hopkins calls attention to the continued presence and participation of God in human history, and invites the reader to interpret what he sees as a clear and direct message to mankind.

The single detail in accounts of the shipwreck that stood out most for Hopkins was the tallest nun's repeated calling on Christ:

> She to the black-about air, to the breaker, the thickly
> Falling flakes, to the throng that catches and quails,
> Was calling 'O Christ, Christ, come quickly':
> The cross to her she calls Christ to her, christens her wild-worst Best. (189-92)

The nun's address of this plea to the air, waves and snow suggests that she (like the poet and, ideally, the reader) views these objects as physical manifestations of the deity she calls on. The purport of her cry is plainly intelligible to the reader, and must be so to the poet,

---

[26] This description of them as a "token" of Christ clearly denotes their function as a representation of Christ and his passion, but the term itself also carries important emblematic overtones: "token" suggests coinage, and coins were for centuries a major site of heraldic and emblematic imagery.

who has just quoted it and described the circumstances of its utterance in detail. For that reason, it seems unlikely that the next line – "The majesty! what did she mean?" (193) – expresses any real confusion over the meaning of the nun's cry. Although subsequent lines in the stanza appear to flesh out the question by wondering whether she cried out of love or a desire for heaven – motivations which are not in fact mutually exclusive – the net effect of the poet's initial exclamation and seemingly redundant question is to call the reader's attention to the situation as one which demands interpretation – in other words, to alert the reader to the emblematic implications of the scenario itself. The question is not, "what did the nun's speech mean?" but rather, "what does the nun herself signify?". The answer, moreover, is already hinted at in Hopkins' characterization of the tall nun as a "lioness" (135) – the lion being a frequent biblical figure for Christ – and a "prophetess" (136), as well as his description of the five nuns together as a "token" of Christ: she is, herself, also a sign of Christ. In this way, the poet cues the reader to the emblematic nature of the wreck and the persons and objects associated with it, but withholds an explication. This technique, itself derived from the emblem, encourages the reader to develop his or her interpretive abilities, looking more closely at other events and objects in the poem – as well as in the world outside the text – to discover the solution for him or herself.

Landow has asserted that the "persistent inability of critics to perceive how deeply Hopkins is rooted in his Victorian environment appears nowhere more clearly than in their failure to perceive the genesis of his most characteristic poems in typology" (*Victorian Types* 6). As I have shown, typology and emblematics are closely related modes of figural hermeneutics, and while Landow and others have successfully drawn attention to the key role of the former in Victorian poetry, the latter remains severely under-acknowledged,

except as an element present in various discrete poems. This chapter has offered a supplement to Landow's project by suggesting that we may even more productively re-contextualize Hopkins' poetry by recognizing its emblematic strategies, and by recognizing that its figural origins identify it as part of a larger movement in Victorian poetry. Just as critics sometimes view the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's break with conventional aesthetics as *avant-garde*, even though that break sought to revive the moral-aesthetic ideals and methods of medieval art, so the late publication and critical discovery of Hopkins' work has obscured not only the context in which it was written, but even more so the older tradition to which its methods are indebted. Re-placing Hopkins' poetics within the Victorian contexts of Pre-Raphaelitism and emblematic revival to which it belongs allows us to understand its idiosyncrasy and seeming modernism as rooted in a well-established medieval and Renaissance tradition, as Pre-Raphaelite, and as of a piece with his Jesuit background, sacramental beliefs and moral-aesthetic aims. Close attention to the emblematic strategies that shape his poems reveals that, far from an iconoclastic proto-modern, Hopkins was in fact – poetically at least – a traditional Jesuit and a model Victorian.

Chapter 5

"Devious symbols": Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Unorthodox Emblematics

Give honour unto Luke Evangelist;
  For he it was (the aged legends say)
  Who first taught Art to fold her hands and pray.
Scarcely at once she dared to rend the mist
Of devious symbols: but soon having wist
  How sky-breadth and field-silence and this day
  Are symbols also in some deeper way,
She looked through these to God and was God's priest.
And if, past noon, her toil began to irk,
  And she sought talismans, and turned in vain
    To soulless self-reflections of man's skill –
    Yet now, in this the twilight, she might still
  Kneel in the latter grass to pray again,
Ere the night cometh and she may not work.
("St. Luke the Painter")

So far, this project has traced the relatively straightforward use made of emblematic structures in *The Germ*, a mouthpiece which exemplified the early moral-didactic work of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and in the devotional works of Christina Rossetti and Gerard Manley Hopkins, both of whom, though they belonged to different sects, were highly orthodox Christians. Hopkins, Christina and the early PRB shared a belief that the world is a text authored by God; English devotional emblematics therefore offered an ideal hermeneutic structure for their poetry, which seeks, above all, to call attention to the sacramental nature of objects and events, and to instill similarly sacramental habits of reading and observation in the minds of its readers. Consequently, while Hopkins, Christina and the PRB deploy the devotional emblem in varying and mainly non-normative ways, their use of its representational strategies is remarkable for its consistent, almost unwavering logocentrism. For these poets, the meaning of objects and events – and, by extension, the meaning of the signs which represent those things – is stable because it is grounded in and guaranteed by God, who is the source of all meaning. Because it springs from precisely this

kind of incarnational ontology, the devotional emblem serves both to reflect and to confirm these writers' logocentric views.

In the early days of his career as a painter and writer and as a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Dante Gabriel Rossetti espoused these beliefs and participated in these emblematic practices; by many accounts,[1] he was a driving force behind the Brotherhood's adoption of them. As his early sonnet, "St. Luke the Painter" illustrates, in his PRB phase Dante Gabriel sought to revive the devotional impulse that characterizes the art of the middle ages. Just as "Art" in the poem learns she can look through ordinary physical objects, "sky-breadth and field-silence and this day" (6), to God, so Dante Gabriel sought, in his own work as well as in the collective work of the movement, to call attention to the natural world as a set of signs authored by and signifying the divine. For these reasons (and at some points, to an even greater degree than Christina or his Pre-Raphaelite brethren), Dante Gabriel adopted emblematic strategies as a means of framing the imagery of the natural world in ways that render its spiritual meaning legible. However, as he drifted away from the High-Church habits of his adolescence – indeed, from orthodox Christian belief altogether – following the Brotherhood's collapse in the 1850s, he became less sure of the sacramental premises underlying his earlier aesthetics and art practices. As a result,

---

[1] In *Some Reminiscences*, William Michael casts founding PRB members Hunt and Millais as the first to "moot some desire for a new movement," but insists that Dante Gabriel shaped that movement by "add[ing] to the impetus and... giving it a name" (1: 62). Further, William Michael's introduction to *The Germ* names Dante Gabriel as "the author of the [magazine] project" (8). Turn-of-the-century critic James Ashcroft Noble also sees Dante Gabriel as the "prime mover" of both the PRB and *The Germ* ("A Pre-Raphaelite Magazine" 568), and Joseph Knight's 1887 biography of Dante Gabriel argues that "it may fairly be supposed" that Dante Gabriel "was, from the poetic side at least, the dominant influence in the establishment of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood" (29). William Fredeman's introduction to his 2002 edition of Dante Gabriel's *Correspondence*, meanwhile, characterizes the painter-poet as "a born leader" who "spearheaded the movement – although he always denied it" (xxvii). Finally, McGann's *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Game that Must be Lost* suggests a lead role for Dante Gabriel in the PRB, describing his key project of 1847-48 as the development of "an intellectual and programmatic basis for practices of the imagination" (xvi), and his *Rossetti Archive* article on Holman Hunt's *Pre-Raphaelitism* is even more explicit in identifying Dante Gabriel as the PRB member who most fully inhabits the Pre-Raphaelites' moral-aesthetic aims and goals.

where his early work is confident, didactic and steeped in sacramentalism, his later work is marked by uncertainty: as McGann has noted, "it is a commonplace of Rossetti studies that his work divides into two clear phases or periods" along these lines (*Game* xvi).

Contrary to what might be expected, however, Dante Gabriel's crisis of faith did not lead him to renounce the emblem as a representational strategy. Rather, as this chapter will show, he continued to employ emblematics as a way of producing discursive stability when he could no longer believe it to inhere in signs themselves. Whereas his earlier use of the emblem draws on the strategies of emblems in the devotional mode, his later use invokes those of the rhetorical mode. As Bath explains, emblems may be divided into two broad categories: devotional emblems view the relation between sign and referent as divinely-ordained and prior to the emblematist's intervention, while rhetorical emblems, on the other hand, grow out of the classical tradition of commonplaces, a style of argumentation in which the emblematist draws novel or witty connections between signifier and signified (*Speaking Pictures* 2-3). In the first case, emblems are understood both to discover and to function as "natural" signs: their meaning depends on an intrinsic affinity between sign and signifier; in the second case, however, emblems function as "conventional" signs: their meaning depends on an arbitrary relationship between the sign and its meaning (Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 3). The devotional emblem claims to discover natural analogical relationships between things and ideas; rhetorical emblems, on the other hand, discursively produce such relationships. In this way, while Dante Gabriel's orthodox sacramental beliefs made devotional emblematic strategies appropriate to his work during the PRB years, the rhetorical emblem's ability to construct stable significances made the continued use of emblematic strategies in his later work not merely possible, but attractive.

In other words, Dante Gabriel's use of the emblem was shaped as much by his anxiety over his loss of faith in a sacramental universe as Christina's and Hopkins' was shaped by their security in that belief. As has been established by such critics as Bentley, McGann and Peter N. Keane, Dante Gabriel continually revised and re-wrote his poems, often producing several versions over several decades. These revisions frequently remove or tone down references to Christian (especially Catholic or Anglo-Catholic) ritual and iconography, as well as to prayer, faith, and God (Smulders 66; Keane 20; Landow, *Victorian Types* ch. 6). This fact, combined with William Michael's persistent suggestion in various biographical statements that Dante Gabriel was an agnostic, like himself (C. Maxwell, "Devious Symbols" 24; William Michael Rossetti, "Memoir," *DGR: Family Letters* 380; Smulders 64-65), has – perhaps naturally – led many to view the Dante Gabriel of the 1860s on as a forerunner of the Aesthetic movement who, casting off the fashionable Tractarian poetics of his youth, sought to produce an art that reveals the essential materiality of the physical world. On the contrary, my argument will follow Bentley's assertion, in his critical pair of articles on "Positive Agnosticism," that Dante Gabriel moved away from "straightforward Christian transcendentalism" towards an "uncertain theology and idiosyncratic individualism" (71) that explores the possibility of faith without adhering to any particular creed. At the same time, Dante Gabriel's artistic practices shifted from the confident, Tractarian-inflected allegorical realism of his Brotherhood period to a more "esoteric" and uncertain "handling of symbolism" (71), but one that is no less indebted to the emblem tradition. This chapter will show that Dante Gabriel did remain concerned with matters spiritual, and continued to use emblem strategies throughout his career. However, as the subject matter and themes of his work become less overtly Christian and less

orthodox, so his use of emblematics tends less towards the "natural" and more towards the rhetorical or conventional, as a way of shoring up meaning against ontological and hermeneutic uncertainty.

Background

Dante Gabriel was born Gabriel Charles Dante Rossetti, the second of four children, on 12 May 1828. In what would prove a prescient gesture, his parents named him after his father (Gabriele); his godfather, Charles Lyell, the father of the geologist by the same name whose contention in *Principles of Geology* (1830-33) that the earth is millions of years old would shake the foundations of Christian belief; and the poet Dante Alighieri, whose spiritual-sensual works would have a major influence not only on Dante Gabriel's career, but on his interpretation of the events of his personal life as well (Knight 13). Around the time of the PRB's formation, he began to use the name Dante Gabriel Rossetti in public contexts, a rearrangement of his given names which stressed his affinity for the medieval Florentine poet. Among his family, however, his name remained Gabriel. Educated at home until 1836, he briefly attended King's College School, where he learned Latin and Greek; in 1841, Dante Gabriel enrolled at Sass's drawing school, and in 1845 he graduated to the Antique School of the Royal Academy, where he would struggle with both its academic structure and its neo-classicism until finally leaving in 1848 to seek private instruction under Ford Madox Brown (McGann, "Introduction," *Collected Poetry* xvii). Thus began his Pre-Raphaelite years, early highlights of which were the production of *The Germ*, the first exhibitions of controversial PRB paintings, and Ruskin's letters to *The Times* in their defense, as well as Dante Gabriel's composition of an unpublished collection of

poems entitled "Songs of the Art-Catholic." Mindful of publisher Leigh Hunt's advice to pursue painting over poetry as a livelihood (*Correspondence* 1: 47.5a), Dante Gabriel gave up writing poetry in 1853. In 1861, however, he turned back to it; after publishing a volume of his translations, *The Early Italian Poets,* in 1861, he made plans for a companion volume of original work, but his wife's death from an overdose of chloral in 1862 put an end to that scheme: in a fit of guilt, he buried the notebook containing his work with her. In time, he returned to the idea of publishing his own works, and in 1868, he had the manuscript exhumed and set about revising; he published *Poems* in 1870, followed in 1881 by *Ballads and Sonnets* and a new, augmented version of *Poems*, also in 1881 (McGann, "Introduction," *Collected Poetry* xix-xxi).

Although their interests and beliefs would later diverge, Dante Gabriel's earliest education at home exposed him to many of the same emblematic works of literature and art described in Chapter 3 in relation to Christina Rossetti. Indeed, as William Michael has noted, although he and Dante Gabriel attended school outside the home for brief periods, the better part of their learning took place at home with their mother.[2] Reading was the major source of "home entertainment" for the children (Marsh, "Introduction," *Collected Writings* xii), and, as was detailed in Chapter 3, what little information about the Rossettis' home education can be gleaned from Frances's commonplace book reveals that their lessons also included the reading and copying of literary texts. A significant portion of those texts combined verbal and visual modes: as Kooistra has noted, the Rossetti household was a "visually enriched environment" whose modest library contained a range of "fairy-tale, science and religious books embellished with woodcuts" (*CR and Illustration* 4). William

[2] William Michael goes so far as to assert that the children's home education and activities were the chief formative influence on their creative lives ("Memoir," *DGR: Family Letters* 69-72).

Michael recalls that a "little book of French or Flemish woodcut-illustrations to Bible history" (W.M. Rossetti, "Memoir," *DGR Works* 1: 62) was a particular favourite of Dante Gabriel's;[3] the children also delighted in several emblematic works, including family friend Filippo Pistrucci's distinctly emblematic *Iconologia* (1821, 24; Fig. 27), and Peter Parley's moralized herbal, *Tales About Plants* (1839; Fig. 28). While Kooistra lists Quarles without reservation as an emblematist whose books the family owned (*CR and Illustration* 4), Bentley cautions that there is no proof Dante Gabriel or his siblings were familiar with Anglo-Dutch emblem books, including Quarles, before 1847. However, he notes that the "religious tone of the Rossetti household and the various inexpensive editions of Quarles that were published in the eighteen twenties, 'thirties and 'forties" make it highly likely the family did own a copy (Bentley, "Anglo-Dutch" 7). In his April 1873 *Fortnightly* review of Thomas Gordon Hake's *Madeline, with Other Poems* (1871) and *Parables and Tales* (1872), Dante Gabriel bestows what is perhaps a backhanded compliment on Hake in asserting that his poems produce "much the same impression as the old verse-inscribed Emblems of a whole school of Dutch and English moralists" in their "extreme homeliness" (*DGR Collected Works* 2: 627, 2: 633). This reveals at least his awareness of that tradition by the 1870s; his self-assured explication of the allegorical Christian works he saw during an 1849 tour of churches and museums in France and Belgium, on the other hand, may indeed have been "the result of knowledge and experience gained from the Anglo-Dutch emblem tradition" (Bentley, "Anglo-Dutch" 7) as part of his education at home.[4]

---

[3] This is very likely the same book listed as item 651 in the catalogue for the 1882 auction of books belonging to D.G. and W.M. Rossetti, an illustrated Dutch vernacular Bible: "Biblia Sacra, in Dutch, cuts by C. Van Sichem, Antwerp, 1657.... [w]ood engraved illustrations on nearly every page (some 2 to the page), wood-engraved boarders [sic]...."

[4] For these facts I am indebted to Bentley's "Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Anglo-Dutch Emblem Tradition," a thorough examination of the degree to which Dante Gabriel was familiar with that branch of normative

Whether or not Dante Gabriel was familiar with Quarles in childhood, his early education, like that of his sister, was certainly otherwise marked by works which combined visual and verbal elements to instruct moral precepts and model an analogical habit of mind. As the list of books he owned in (approximately) 1866 and the list of books auctioned off in 1882 after his death reveal, these formative encounters ignited a lifelong fascination with emblematic literature. The variety of emblematic traditions represented on these lists is, I would argue, reflective of Dante Gabriel's own eclectic and unorthodox approach to the emblem and its representational strategies. Strains that interested him and have particular bearing on his own work were those in the English Protestant devotional tradition, herbals, and rhetorical, esoteric and alchemical Italian emblems.

Like his sister, Dante Gabriel enjoyed Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, a work that directly influenced both her "Prince's Progress" (which he illustrated[5]) and his own "Bride's Prelude," and had a lasting impact on his use of verbal emblematic strategies, especially personified abstraction. He owned two editions of this work, one published in 1831 that may have been the family copy, and the other an illustrated edition of 1864 with cuts by fellow Pre-Raphaelite Frederic George Stephens. Stephens' illustration of *Pilgrim's Progress* confirms both its emblematic character and the Pre-Raphaelites' alertness to it: while the original text is not emblematic in the normative sense of including both *picturae* and *explicationes*, its story of Christian's journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City elaborately tropes the growth and development of the soul in allegorical

---

emblematics. Its analysis of the striking similarities between Dante Gabriel's visual works and those of Anglo-Dutch emblematists is especially revealing.

[5] In "Pilgrimage and Postponement: Christina Rossetti's *The Prince's Progress*," Arseneau makes an observation that bears in interesting ways on the issue of the Rossettis' collaboration on this volume: she notes that similarities between Christina's "ever-delaying Prince" (291) and the poetic personae of Dante Gabriel's "The Hill Summit" and "The Landmark" – read in the context of Dante Gabriel's deviation from orthodox belief and his concurrent "divergence from a symbolic practice which had been very similar to her own" (293) – suggest that Dante Gabriel was in fact a prototype for Christina's Prince.

figures which stress the importance of correctly interpreting objects and events. Especially revealing of the emblematic strategies at work in this text is the episode at the House of the Interpreter, where Christian is shown pictures and scenes which he is then taught to "read" as lessons about faith. As was discussed in Chapter 3, Bunyan's analogical method derives from the traditions of Protestant meditation and the Protestant sermon, both of which view the created world as a set of lessons demanding extraction and elucidation. Verbal emblematic strategies are especially apparent in Bunyan's use of personified abstraction – every item, element of the landscape, and character is the embodiment of some ideal or precept. In this way, for example, the Slough of Despond represents doubt and despair, while the characters named Faithful and Hopeful stand for those traits. As this chapter will show, Dante Gabriel's own poetry frequently resorts to this technique, troping love, life, death, youth and other concepts as allegorical figures whose attributes, appearance, and actions provide a gloss on the abstract notions they are meant to represent. Unlike Bunyan, however, Dante Gabriel employs these analogical strategies in treating temporal themes like love, rather than points of Christian doctrine.

As an 1858 letter to Charles Eliot Norton demonstrates, the adult Dante Gabriel's religious doubt led to a nostalgia for the confident logocentrism of Bunyan's emblematic techniques:

> Your 'Shady Hill' is a tempting address, where one would wish to be. It reminds one somehow of the Pilgrim's Progress where the pleasant names of Heavenly places really make you feel as if you could get there if the journey could only be made in that very way – the pitfalls plain to the eye and all the wicked people with wicked names. I find no shady hill or vale, though, in

> those places and pursuits which I have to do with. It seems all glare and change, and nothing well done. (*Correspondence* 2: 58.16)

Here he suggests not only that he is no longer able to access the stable meaning of the clearly-moralized world of *Pilgrim's Progress*, but that such a world may no longer exist, even for those with faith. This longing for a return to the analogical landscape of *Pilgrim's Progress* points, on the one hand, to his own loss of faith in the belief system that would allow such an unambiguous interpretation of the world; on the other, it signals his fear that such uncomplicated interpretation is no longer possible under any circumstances. As we will see, Rossetti comforts himself in the face of this uncertainty by turning instead to idiosyncratic emblematic structures in his poetry, a performative strategy that – he appears to hope – will allow him to produce stable meaning in the absence of religious belief.

Another of the Rossettis' shared literary interests was George Herbert: Christina's meaningful ordering of poems in her *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862) volume was, as I have argued in Chapter 3, a strategy possibly inspired by Herbert's *The Temple*. The siblings' exposure to Herbert in childhood and Dante Gabriel's involvement in Christina's work both as a collaborator (he illustrated her *Goblin Market* and *Prince's Progress* volumes) and as an editor[6] make it likely that Dante Gabriel was aware of the presence of these ordering structures in his sister's works, and was alert to their origin in Herbert as well. Tying Dante Gabriel himself even more directly to Herbert is his ownership of a copy of *The Temple*, the publication date of which – 1844 – suggests it was a book the adolescent Dante Gabriel may have purchased for himself at a formative period in his life.[7]

---

[6] Their correspondence shows frequent communications between the two regarding her work, in which Dante Gabriel offers responses which range from support for elements he approves of to suggestions for change.

[7] Dante Rossetti's correspondence from this age reveals that he was an avid bibliophile, spending, on at least one occasion, all his Christmas money on books and illustrations (*Correspondence* 1: 42.4).

Despite obvious differences, striking parallels between *The Temple* and Dante Gabriel's own *House of Life* suggest that Rossetti drew inspiration from Herbert's methods in composing his own spiritual-sensual text. As Freeman has noted, Herbert makes frequent use of the emblem's sacramentally explicatory structure without relying on actual plates for the visual component ("Herbert" 155-56). Likewise, while Rossetti's interest in pairing visual and verbal elements resulted in many "double works," some of which employ poems later collected in his volumes, these volumes themselves were not illustrated. Emblematic discourse, however, is at work in the verbal dimension of these volumes. A particularly significant parallel between *The Temple* and *The House of Life* is the fact that both works are structured around a central architectural conceit with emblematic implications. Herbert's representation of the various physical aspects of a church – all of which stand in for aspects of the spiritual Church – is carried out in poems named for its parts: "The Church-Porch," for instance, the first poem in the volume, is a set of moral instructions meant to cleanse and prepare the reader for his or her entrance into the main area of this poetic and metaphorical edifice.[8] In much the same way, though to very different purposes, *The House of Life* uses the metaphorical structure of a house – a symbol of domestic life – to figure various aspects of a love relationship. Rossetti refers to the sonnets in the sequence as "stanzas," a term

[8] Dante Gabriel's pair of sonnets by the same name was also likely written with Herbert's piece in mind. Composed in 1853, the first was published in *Poems* 1881, while the second remained unpublished until after Dante Gabriel's death. The first, addressed to his sister Maria, describes entering a church and is concerned with the building's threshold as an absolute barrier separating pure and impure, sacred and profane: it begins with a direction to "shake... off the dust we have / Upon our feet, lest it defile the stones / Inscriptured" (1-3). Having entered, the speaker hopes to "find there / Silence, and sudden dimness, and deep prayer" (13), in contrast to the "hot noon" and "heavy sunshine" (10, 11) outside. The description of the stones as "inscriptured" is a reflection, on the literal level, of the memorial engravings found on the floors of English churches. On a figural level, however, this description might also be read as a Herbertian acknowledgement of the spiritual meaning that is emblematically inscribed in all the parts of a physical church. The second sonnet, addressed to Christina, rehearses the process of leaving church after the service, "cross[ing] again the threshold of our King / Where His doors stand against the evil street, / And let each step increase upon our feet / The dust we shook from them at entering" (5-8). The conclusion of this second sonnet, which expresses deep regret that "[i]t is... bidden" (14) that the speaker and his sister "[m]ust... of very sooth go home" (9), has often been interpreted in the light of Dante Gabriel's loss of and nostalgia for the faith of his adolescence.

intended, especially in response to criticism of the poem, to stress the importance of reading each sonnet as part of the larger poem, and not as an individual work; but the meaning of this term in Latin – "rooms" – makes it even more appropriate to the architectural conceit (Marsh, "Introduction," *Collected Writings* xxiv). Thus while Herbert poetically constructs a house of God, the parts of which he then reads emblematically for spiritual lessons about the relationship between man and the divine, Dante Gabriel builds the house of Man, which he reads – no less emblematically – for spiritual lessons about earthly love.[9] I deal more fully with the emblematic implications of *The House of Life* later in this chapter.

In *Some Reminiscences*, William Michael states Peter Parley's (Samuel Griswold Goodrich's) illustrated and moralized book of botany, *Tales About Plants*, was a favourite of Dante Gabriel's: he "enjoyed both [its] text and [its] cuts" in childhood (Arseneau and Bentley, "Peter Parley and the Rossettis" 56; W.M. Rossetti, *Some Reminiscences* 1: 31). More than just a childhood diversion, Dante Gabriel's admiration for this book was to have a significant influence on his own later work. However, the critical tendency to view Dante Gabriel as seeking to strip away nature's spiritual significance in his later poetry has perhaps obscured the importance of this link. Indeed, as a list of his books reveals, Dante Gabriel's early love for Parley translated into a lifelong interest in similar, lavishly-illustrated herbal manuals. In 1866, Dante Gabriel owned an illustrated 1636 edition of Gerarde's *Herball,* and auction records show he was also in possession of Leyte's *Herball* (1578) at the time of his death. While Renaissance herbals like these adopt a more scientific, medically-focused approach to flora than the more overtly moralistic flower manuals that would gain popularity

[9] Another curious similarity, though admittedly not one that reveals much about either text, is the fact that both Rossetti and Herbert continued to revise and re-work their texts over the course of many years: *The Temple*, Herbert's only book of poetry, represents a lifetime of composition and painstaking revision, while *The House of Life* has been described in similar terms as a "masterwork" which existed in a state of flux from its inception in the 1840s until its author's death in 1882.

in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Parley's being a good example of this trend), their understanding of plants and flowers as endowed by God with certain inherent properties is nonetheless rooted in the medieval system of correspondences (Stannard ix, xi; Seaton Ch. 3). Moreover, the page design of these books, which typically combines engravings of the plants with their Latin names and an explanation of their properties, parallels the normative emblem's combination of image, motto and *explicatio.* Christina Rossetti's *Seek and Find* makes clear that the traditions of the herbal and the devotional emblem overlap; Parley's book likewise merges naturalistic particularity with analogical moral-didacticism; Leyte's and Gerarde's herbals, on the other hand, focus on the material object in a way that assumes, but does not insist on, its divine authorship. Dante Gabriel's childhood exposure to Parley almost certainly influenced his early, overtly sacramental approach to plant imagery (the meaningful lilies in such poems and paintings as "The Girlhood of Mary Virgin," for example), but the subtly emblematic inflections of meaning accomplished by seemingly more scientific plant imagery in his later poems ("The Woodspurge"), as I hope to show, were likely shaped by his reading of Leyte and Gerarde (C. Maxwell, "Devious Symbols" 20).

Bentley's excellent article on "Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Anglo-Dutch Emblem Tradition" demonstrates that similarities between his works and emblems by Wither and Quarles are striking enough "to raise the likelihood of specific endebtedness" (8). As this chapter will explore in detail, Bentley exposes parallels that leave little doubt of Rossetti's intimate awareness of Wither, Quarles and other emblematists in that line. What we know of Rossetti's library, however, shows us that his tastes in normative, visual-verbal emblem books ran considerably more to the Italian, the rhetorical, and the esoteric: from William

Michael's memoirs of both Christina and Dante Gabriel we know the Rossettis owned a copy of family friend Pistrucci's *Iconologia* (1821), and among the books Dante Gabriel owned in 1866 were Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1641) and Francesco Colonna's *Poliphilii Hypnerotomachia* (1499).[10] While Anglo-Dutch emblematists like Wither and Quarles (and, later, Isaac Williams[11]) concentrate on drawing religious principles from the intrinsic qualities of earthly objects, these Italian emblematists mine the iconographical traditions of ancient myth, fable and heraldry for "commonplace" truths which they use to construct emblematic portraits representing such concepts as emulation, poverty, discretion and logic. Ripa's *Iconologia* – a classic text which Pistrucci's work emulates – was intended as "an encyclopedia of symbolically-conceived personified abstractions" (Manning 97): both Ripa's and Pistrucci's books combine plates depicting human figures (presented in a variety of positions, attributes, attire and accoutrements) with texts which decode these details in the emblematic fashion. The figure of "Assistance" in Ripa, for example (Fig. 62), is an old man with a halo, dressed in white, crowned with olive branches and wearing a heart-shaped pendant around his neck, who extends his right arm with an open hand. In his left hand, he carries a stake surrounded by vines; to his right is a stork. The epigram (here in its English translation) explicates every aspect of the image:

> His age intimates his *Discretion*; not being intent upon *Avarice*, in giving his Helping-Hand. The white Raiment shews *Sincerity* without self-interest. The splendid Ray denotes *Divine Assistance*, without which as the Wife

[10] Mason Tung's "From Personifications to Emblems: A Study of Peacham's Use of Ripa's *Iconologia* in *Minerva Brittania*" more fully examines Henry Peacham's translation of this style of emblematics into English.
[11] Williams' *The Baptistery* re-uses the cuts from the Dutch Boethius à Bolswert's *Via Vitae Aeternae*, pairing them with his own Tractarian text.

> without the Husband, it is like the Vine without the Stake: the Stork, the Natural Affection of *Parents* towards their *Children*. (Ripa, *Iconologia* fig. 7)

While the stork and the vine clinging to a stake might be seen as "natural" emblems for assistance, other elements of the *pictura* (old age, the colour white) are conventional. Dante Gabriel's frequent use of this kind of personified abstraction in his poems has been characterized in criticism as "awkward and old-fashioned" (Marsh, "Introduction," *Collected Writings* xxiv). Indeed, as a strategy derived from an ancient rhetorical tradition, it is "old-fashioned." However, by placing it in the context of the emblem, its significance as a means of representing complex abstract concepts in a concise, poetically-appropriate fashion becomes more clear.

As a description of the *Hypnerotomachia* in an 1861 *Treatise on Wood Engraving, Historical and Practical* demonstrates, it was noted in Rossetti's time for the exquisiteness of its woodcuts: the authors of this treatise rank the cuts "among the best that have appeared in Italy" and relate that scholars frequently ascribe their designs (mistakenly) to Raphael (Chatto et al. 219). For those reasons alone, the *Hypnerotomachia* may have been appealing to Dante Gabriel in the first instance as a model for his visual art. More interesting, however, is the possibility that the book's eclecticism, esoterism and attempt to erect a new structure of meaning through an "obscure," proto-emblematic "medley of fable, history, antiquities, mathematics and various other matters" (Chatto et al. 218) offered an apt model for Rossetti's own artistic efforts in the face of semiotic and ontological uncertainty. Indeed, the case of Colonna's text – its eclectic emblematic method and the cultural-

historical circumstances that eclecticism was intended to confront – is instructive about both the "how" and the "why" of Rossetti's own use of emblems.

The *Hypnerotomachia*, which means "the battle of love during sleep," consists of 192 illustrations. We follow the narrator, Poliphilo, through a dream in which he chases his love, Polia, through a symbolically-rich landscape consisting of temples, monuments, and ruins covered in polyglot characters, including (supposed) hieroglyphs, Greek characters and Latin inscriptions (Fig. 63). A persistent theme in the book is s*emper festina tarde* (always make haste slowly, an adage that would enjoy tremendous popularity in later emblematic literature), expressed in such proto-emblematic *picturae* as that of an ant (hasty) turning into an elephant (slow) and back again (Fig. 7), as well as of a dolphin (hasty) wrapped around an anchor (slow) (Manning 68-69). Although Polia and Poliphilo participate at times in seemingly Catholic rituals, pagan gods like Cupid, Venus, and Mars also intervene in the lovers' story. Nathaniel Wallace, one of few recent emblem scholars to tackle this "chaos of absurdities" (Chatto et al. 218), considers the *Hypnerotomachia* in its historical context as part of a fifteenth-century movement which "questioned the validity of a conventional medieval sign-system resting on religious doctrine" (18). In other words, in Colonna's time, the hermeneutic framework established by medieval figuralism was in decline, leaving such texts as the Bible and the Book of Nature open to a wide range of divergent interpretations (Wallace 18). As Wallace argues, Colonna's reliance on multiple, occasionally competing proto-emblematic visual and verbal sign systems is a response to the "loss of a repository of universally accepted signs" in medieval figuralism, and an attempt to establish stable meaning in their absence (18).[12] Although nearly four hundred years separate Dante Gabriel

[12] While the normative emblem tradition as we know it would coalesce later, around the more systematized approaches of early sixteenth-century texts, Colonna's book is an early gesture in that direction. As Wallace

and Colonna, the two composed under analogous circumstances of hermeneutic and ontological doubt, and employ similarly eclectic emblematic strategies to achieve similar ends. In the early part of his career, Dante Gabriel participated in a movement which attempted to resurrect the biblically-based sign system of devotional emblematics in its art; in later years, however, his faith in the sacramental doctrine behind that strain of the emblem waned. It seems possible to assume, consequently, that his faith in the efficacy of devotional emblematic signs was also shaken. Thus, just as Colonna's work had done, so Dante Gabriel's later work, carried out in a context of religious and hermeneutic anxiety, employs an eclectic and unconventional melange of emblematic motifs not, as some have argued, to call attention to the impossibility of making meaning, but as an attempt to impose coherence on drifting signs.

While Colonna's eccentric proto-emblematics attempts to establish a stable sign-system, William Blake's (1757-1827) Romantic emblematics dismantles and re-shapes the by-then established tradition for his own esoteric purposes (L. Hönnighausen 40). For this reason, Dante Gabriel's 1847 purchase of one of Blake's illustrated manuscript notebooks should be understood as a key moment of his formative years. The notebook, which has since become known as "The Rossetti Manuscript," includes fragments of commentary – most of it ridicule – on Reynolds' *Discourses*,[13] as well as preliminary sketches for the

---

and others argue, the emblem's combination of word and image was an attempt to "combat semiotic fragmentation" (18): in other words, it was believed that by combining words and images, the weaknesses of each mode of communication were compensated for by the other. See my discussion of hieroglyphics in Chapter 4 for more information; also Manning 56, Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 51.

[13] Reynolds' *Discourses* were widely considered statements of policy for the Academy. This series of lectures urges artists to pursue "general and intellectual" beauty, "an idea residing in the breast of the artist, which he is always labouring to impart, and which he dies at last without imparting; but which he is yet so far able to communicate, as to raise the thoughts, and extend the views of the spectator" (*Discourses* 171). As Robert Wark explains in the introduction to his edition of the *Discourses*, the assumption behind Reynolds' arguments is that in "generalizing from the particular, by eliminating what is specific and individual, we proceed to a 'higher' more universal truth and we approach the abstract idea embodied in a family of forms"

designs of "Songs of Experience" and "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell." In 1793, Blake turned the notebook over and used the verso of its pages for drafts of poems which would ultimately be included in "Songs of Experience," including, most notably, "The Tyger" (Erdman 7-9). Not only does Dante Gabriel's desire for the notebook – for which he paid the exorbitant sum of 10 shillings – reveal an interest in Blake's eccentric version of emblematics, his possession of it at this critical juncture makes the notebook a likely source for the visual-verbal experimentation he would begin to undertake in the next year. Robert Essick has characterized Blake as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's "most important British precursor" (163): indeed, not only did Blake's innovative melding of image and text offer a compelling model for the Brotherhood's own multi-media works, but his repudiation of Reynolds and the Academy in the irreverant annotations to the *Discourses* which appear in the notebook likely confirmed the Brotherhood's own convictions (Pittman 215). While Blake's visual-verbal aesthetic was thus instrumental to the formation of the Brotherhood and the earliest phases of its work, his idiosyncratic approach to the emblem had a lasting effect on Dante Gabriel. As Frye, Nanavutty, Hagstrum and others have noted, many of Blake's works are complex re-workings of traditional emblem literature: "Not only do Blake's 'Gates of Paradise' and 'All Religions Are One' owe many details to emblems," writes Hagstrum, "they are emblems" (48); likewise, Frye notes that "the Songs of Innocence and of Experience are in the direct tradition of the emblem-books in English literature," although he is careful to explain that the relationship between Blake's texts and images is one of complication rather than, as he believes to be the case with many traditional emblems, simplification (35-42). As Mary Lynn Johnson points out, Blake "fus[ed] his own

---

("Introduction," *Discourses* xix). The PRB would share Blake's hatred and rejection of Reynolds' aesthetic principles.

ideas with conventional conceits to create rich and strange new symbols" (153). This is precisely how Dante Gabriel approaches the emblem in the latter part of his career: he re-invests traditional emblem motifs with new, sometimes personal meanings; he re-casts atypical objects and events as emblematic; and he adopts emblematic strategies for unorthodox aims. Blake's filtering of the emblem through the Romantic lens of the subjective and the contingent likely demonstrated for Dante Gabriel the plasticity of emblem discourse, its usefulness for an art that transcends – or undermines – orthodoxy.

While Dante Gabriel and William Michael drifted from orthodox Christian belief in adulthood, all the Rossetti children had the same religious upbringing, the foundation of which in the years after 1843 was regular attendance at Christ Church, Albany Street. As was mentioned in Chapter 3, Christ Church was at the forefront of the Oxford or Tractarian Movement in London (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 56; Reed xxi). This movement, which sought to reinvest Church of England practice with pre-Reformation ritual and trappings (Reed xxi), including "weekly communion preceded by confession" as well as "vestments, crucifixes, candles, incense, a sung liturgy, and other practices associated with the Roman Church" (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 56), was led by Anglican clerics and intellectuals E.B. Pusey, John Keble and John Henry Newman. Its theology was articulated in published sermons and books of religious poetry – including Keble's *The Christian Year* (1827) Newman's *Lyra Apostolica* (1836), and Isaac Williams' *The Cathedral* (1838) – as well as in a series of pamphlets entitled *Tracts for the Times* (1833-41), written by Newman, Keble, Pusey, Williams, and others (Marsh, *CR: A Writer's Life* 56). Evident in its literature is the movement's stress on sacramentalism: beyond highlighting the importance of Church sacraments (Baptism, Communion, etc.), the *Tracts* introduce the doctrines of Analogy, a

sacramental view of the created world in which all things are signs of an invisible reality; and Reserve, the notion that God veils Himself in the visible objects of this world, and that the faithful are encouraged to follow God's example in using indirect means of communication, including "allegory and other veiled modes of utterance," in order to veil from full exposure divine truths for which the uninitiated are not yet ready (G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry* 34).

The Tractarian movement's interrelated emphases on sacramentalism, didacticism and aesthetics laid the groundwork for Christina Rossetti's "highly visual sensibility and her sacramental view of life" (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 5) – in other words, for her emblematic habits of mind and composition – because its "increased emphasis on symbol and ritual in both the ceremony of worship and church decoration" encouraged adherents to "'read' material signs for their spiritual significance" (Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 5). In this way, as I have argued (and as Isaac Williams' *The Baptistery* and *The Cathedral* illustrate) the Tractarian movement was a source of emblematics to which Christina and other members of the Pre-Raphaelite movement were not merely alert, but which they, in turn, adopted as a moral-aesthetic strategy because it offered a means of reconciling naturalistic representation with sacramental intent. And although William Michael is careful to point out that Dante Gabriel "formally adhered to no church" in adulthood, he notes that his brother was "powerfully affected by the Anglo-Catholic fervor that profoundly influenced both his sisters" ("Memoir," *DGR Works* xvi). Thus, while Dante Gabriel would later drift away from the High Church Anglicanism that marked his early years, his own "highly visual sensibility and sacramental" – or, at the very least, analogical – "view of life"

and approach to art was, like that of his sister, shaped by the emblematic tendencies of Oxford Movement doctrine, worship, and literature.[14]

Another important influence on the young Dante Gabriel's development as a poet and artist was the burgeoning field of book illustration. As has been widely documented by such scholars as Kooistra, Kate Flint and Richard Altick, illustrated literature saw a tremendous growth in popularity beginning in the 1850s: illustrated newspapers and periodicals edged out their text-only competitors, while the illustrated gift-book became a staple of the trade and a tradition of Christmas gift-giving.[15] Dante Gabriel would later become a major participant in this trend, illustrating his sister's volumes of poetry (Figs. 29, 30, 55, 56) and meticulously designing his own from end-papers to binding. As a letter detailing one of his favourite pastimes in adolescence reveals, he was interested in the illustration and design of books from a young age. In a letter to his brother in 1842, Dante Gabriel divulges that he has spent all his Christmas money buying prints and engravings to add to his own unillustrated copies of his favourite novels:

> I will begin, then, with the prints I have bought for my Waverley Novels – viz: a proof of 'The Pass of Aberfoil – Stand'... [and] Warren's 'Escape,' from the Protestant Annual, which I intend to introduce into The Pirate, & of which, as well as of 'The Widow Maclure's Son,' plenty of copies are to be had at the Publisher's in Oxford St. (*Correspondence* 1: 42.4)

---

[14] Catherine Maxwell's comparison of the Tractarian movement's insistence on the participation of the senses in worship to the stress on sensory experience in Ignatian meditation and its emblematic literary aids, which encourage the participant to "[find] God in all things," further elaborates the connection between Tractarianism, meditation, and emblematic literature in the devotional mode ("Devious Symbols" 26).

[15] See, for example, Kooistra, *CR and Illustration* 2, and "Poetry in the Victorian Marketplace" (2007); as well, Richard Altick's *Paintings From Books, Art and Literature in Britain, 1760-1900* (1985), 294.

That Dante Gabriel would take such delight in scouring shops, selecting individual illustrations and inserting them into his unadorned novels strongly suggests that his interest lay not in illustrated books themselves (in which case he might have spent his money on illustrated editions), but in illustrat*ing* literature. Kooistra argues that Christina's assembly of scrap-books for sick children – a hobby she took quite seriously – replicated, on a smaller scale, the kind of control she wanted to exert over her own volumes of poetry, and points to the fundamentally verbal-visual nature of her creative impulse (*CR and Illustration* 2-3). By the same token, I would argue, Dante Gabriel's early experiments with designing and assembling his own custom-illustrated editions of books both reflects the visually-enriched nature of his education and experience of literature to that point, and foreshadows his leading role, a few years later, in a movement that would draw on emblematic techniques, including, notably in his case, linked visual and verbal elements.

While the books he owned and his taste for illustration reveal much about the emblematic character of his education and aesthetic background, the literature and artworks he produced show him to have been an active participant in the emblem tradition. The Rossetti family collaborated on two in-house illustrated newsletters: *Hotch-Potch*, which ran from 1841 to 1843, and *The Illustrated Scrap-Book*, which replaced it until 1846. These newsletters, many of which include an editorial in the form of a mini-sermon, written by Frances, on such lessons as being content with one's lot, are indicative of the didactic and verbal-visual focus of the Rossettis' approach to literary production. For example, an issue of the *Scrap-Book* the adolescent Dante Gabriel was working on in August of 1843 contained some of his "choicest specimens of sketching," as he himself put it, some of which accompany "poetic effusions" by Christina (*Correspondence* 1: 43.3). And as a letter

to the editor of *Smallwood's* magazine from 1841 reveals, one of Dante Gabriel's first serious attempts at poetry was in fact a "double work":[16] in offering his poem "William and Marie. A Ballad" for consideration, he adds that "the enclosed sketch" (Fig. 64) is "intended, if considered sufficiently good, as a headpiece to the ballad" (*Correspondence* 1: 41.1). In the pen-and-ink drawing, a man in armour stands over a man who lies prone, having apparently been attacked with the sword which now lies under him; the knight figure hoists a woman who arches her back in protest. There is no scenery or context: rather, the figures are placed, like statues or actors, on a raised platform. William Michael's note on the verso of the sketch identifies the source for the design as a painting by the emblematist Pistrucci, the "Rape of the Sabines." While Dante Gabriel's sketch is more illustrative than emblematic in the strictest sense, representing a moment of crisis in the ballad, its placement of the poem's main features (protagonists, villain, sword) in an abstract environment recalls the stark, decontextualized composition of the woodcuts in emblems by Ripa and Colonna. More importantly, however, it shows how central the combination of verbal and visual elements had already become to Dante Gabriel's compositional method by the time he was 13 years old.

[16] While the origin of this term is unclear, Maryan W. Ainsworth uses it to discuss the relationship between Dante Gabriel's linked paintings and poems in her *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Double Work of Art* (1976); Miller uses this term in "The Mirror's Secret: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Double Work of Art" (1991); McGann takes it up again in his *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Game that Must be Lost* (2000), as well as in his online *Rossetti Archive*, where it serves as the title of an extensive gallery of Dante Gabriel's visual-verbal compositions. McGann views "Mary's Girlhood" / *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* as typical of the "double work," a "composite set of textual and pictorial materials" in which the painting is executed first, and the poem is then composed as an elaboration or gloss on the original picture ("Double Works Exhibit," *Rossetti Archive* par. 1-2).

Embracing Emblematics: The PRB Period

Dante Gabriel's earliest complete mature double work is *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*,[17] (Fig. 23) the poems and painting of which were completed in 1849. The painting, Rossetti's first major work in oil, and his first as a Pre-Raphaelite brother, is the most normatively emblematic of all his works – both in terms of its structure (its combination of *pictura,* the painting, and *explicatio,* the poems) and its iconography: the picture and the poems draw heavily on traditional Catholic symbols. In a letter to Charles Lyell dated 14 November 1848, Rossetti characterizes the painting as "belong[ing] to the religious class which has always appeared to me the most adapted and the most worthy to interest the members of a Christian community" (*Correspondence* 1: 48.12). On the right is a young Mary seated with her mother, St. Anne, who supervises Mary's embroidery of a lily on a long red cloth. Over the heads of both figures are thin gold haloes within which are inscribed the Latin versions of their names, "S. Anna" and "S. Maria SV" (such haloes or glories – called nimbi – were a convention of saint portraiture in the late medieval period). At their feet are a palm branch and a brier. On the left is a small childlike angel who waters a potted lily placed on top of a stack of books; the titles on the spines of these name six of the seven cardinal virtues in Latin including "*Caritas*" (charity), "*Fides*" (faith), and "*Fortituda*" (fortitude). In the centre is a window with a cross-shaped trellis, along which crawls a vine; a haloed St. Joachim can be seen pruning it, on the right, while a haloed dove rests on the cross to the left. At least one critic's response to this visual work is revealing of its emblematism: Laura Doan remarks with surprise that despite the "symbolic clutter" of

[17] Although McGann views *The Blessed Damozel* as the first and most important of Rossetti's double works, I am focusing on *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* here as an illustration of a double work entirely completed in Rossetti's earliest period in order to draw a contrast between this and later double works. While he began the poem "The Blessed Damozel" in 1847, making it the earliest-undertaken of his double works, he did not start work on the painting until 1871, and he continued to revise the poem until the end of his life.

the painting, "the image is static rather than dynamic" and makes sense "only within the confines of a conventional iconographical context," unable to stand independently, "like a joke without a punchline" (477). In fact, the painting's abundance of static symbolic elements and consequent resistance to narrative, as well as its dependence on a specific interpretive key align *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* with *picturae* in the normative emblem tradition.

In a letter Dante Gabriel wrote to Lyell while working on the painting, he asserted that it contained "various symbolic accessories which it is needless to describe" (*Correspondence* 1: 48.12). This may merely have been a reflection of his confidence in his friend's interpretive skill, as several months later, he would write a poem for the express purpose of decoding many of the painting's symbolic elements. Rossetti ultimately composed two sonnets to accompany – indeed, to be physically adjacent to – the painting: while Alastair Grieve relates that Dante Gabriel initially inscribed the first sonnet on the original frame and had the second printed in the catalogue of the Free Exhibition (*The Pre-Raphaelites* 65), Virginia Surtees' *Catalogue Raisonné* claims both were "printed on a slip of gold-covered paper and fixed to the frame of the picture" at its first installation (1.11).[18] Whatever the case, both poems were clearly intended as adjuncts to the painting: painting and poems together constitute the complete work of art. The first sonnet, written around the same time as the painting itself was begun (November 1848), acts as a verbal extension of the imagery in the painting and adds information about Mary's inner state,[19] while the

[18] That slip of paper does not survive; in 1864, Dante Gabriel had the painting re-framed when he re-painted parts of it; at that time, he had both sonnets inscribed on the frame itself (McGann, *Rossetti Archive*, "*The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*," note about the frame).

[19] Doan's article on "Narrativity and Transformative Iconography in D.G. Rossetti's Earliest Paintings" explores in detail the relationship between the paintings *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* and *Ecce Ancilla Domini!* and the two sonnets that accompany *Girlhood*, parts of which relate not to that painting, but to *Ecce*.

second, written in March of 1849, explicitly identifies the strategies in this set of works as emblematic in its performance of a point-by-point interpretation of the most important pieces of imagery. The painting's multiple references to the rituals and vestments of Anglo-Catholicism – the red cloth's resemblance to an altar-cloth, the use of cruciform shapes, the inclusion of halos, etc. – has been well-documented.[20] My reading of it, however, will attempt to highlight its specifically emblematic character.

The demonstrative pronoun "this" in the first sonnet's opening line – "This is that blessed Mary" (1) – serves first of all to direct the reader's attention to the painting and to the figure of the Virgin. But the poetic voice's insistence that "*This* is *that*" Mary (emphasis added) also strengthens the painting's sacramental character by suggesting that the figure does not merely re-present the original, but shares in its essence in much the same way natural objects, seen sacramentally, partake in Christ. The following lines describe her virtues (which include simplicity, patience, faithfulness and wisdom) before comparing her to "an angel-watered lily, that near God / Grows and is quiet" (10-11). This simile likening the Virgin to a lily is based on conventional symbolism (the lily and the rose are common types of Mary in medieval art and poetry), and characterizes Mary as God's nurtured protegée. More importantly, however, the simile makes a direct reference to the figure of the angel who waters the lily in the painting itself. In this way, the simile identifies the angel-lily group as an emblem for the Virgin, who is thus doubled: one might read both the angel-lily grouping and the more literally-presented figure of the Virgin as mutually-explicating emblems within a larger emblematic context: the angel-watered lily stands in for the qualities which characterize Mary, but Mary is also the "meaning" of the lily.

---

[20] See for example, Bentley, "Positive Agnosticism," 78-79, and "The Pre-Raphaelties and the Oxford Movement."

Whereas the first sonnet expands on and extends the painting in the manner of a verbal *pictura*, the second acts as an *explicatio*; it is in this poem that the emblematic thrust of the work comes to the fore. The first line makes clear that this is an exegetical exercise with its announcement that "These are the symbols" (1); the sonnet goes on to explicate a number of the images point by point. The "Tripoint" on the "cloth of red" (behind Mary and Anne) is the first aspect of the painting decoded: its second point is imperfect, the poet explains, "to teach / That Christ is not yet born" (2-4). This design is therefore an emblem relating to the typological prefigurement of Christ, a prophecy which has not yet been fulfilled. The use of the term "teach" here is especially important, gesturing as it does towards the didactic impulse motivating this and all devotional emblematic practice: the artist/poet does not mean to baffle his audience with obscure, esoteric symbology, but rather seeks to impart religious truths while at the same time instructing the emblematic method of reading. Predictably, because these images derive from a long tradition of religious iconography, the seven-thorned briar and seven-leaved palm are explained as emblematic of the sorrowful and joyful mysteries, respectively (9-10), while the haloed dove outside the window, like the imperfect tripoint, is a figure for the Holy Spirit which shows that the moment of Christ's conception has not yet arrived (11-12). Likewise, the books inscribed with Latin titles are, as would be expected, figures for "[t]hose virtues... wherein the soul is rich" (6), while the lily standing on them, the poem asserts, is "[t]herefore" (7) "innocence, being interpreted" (8). In this way the poem adds a new layer of interpretation to the lily, which the previous sonnet had identified as emblematic of Mary: here not just the lily itself but its placement within the scene (on top of the books) is meaningful, teaching that innocence is the highest of all virtues. Not only does this retroactively enrich the first

simile, it transforms both Mary and the lily into emblems for innocence. Thus, Mary, the lily, and the quality of innocence are placed into a triad – another Trinitarian echo – in which Mary and the angel-watered lily are emblematically equivalent to one another, and further act as emblems of that key Christian trait.

While the overt references to Anglo-Catholic doctrine and ritual in those few poems Dante Gabriel chose to make public during his PRB period – "The Girlhood of Mary Virgin," "Ecce Ancilla Domini!," "My Sister's Sleep" – might, as McGann and Riede suggest, have been added merely for the sake of ornamentation (Riede 23), these same themes appear in a poem he did not intend for publication and which was never published in his lifetime, entitled "Sacrament Hymn." Dante Gabriel wrote the poem in 1850 but later told William Allingham (in an 1860 letter) that he "never meant... to print [it]" and that he wrote it in imitation of hymnist Charles Wesley merely "to enrage [his] friends" (qtd. in *DGR Collected Works* 2: 666).[21] These comments have led McGann to argue that the poem is "a classic instance of Rossettian pastiche" ("Sacrament Hymn," *Rossetti Archive* par. 1). Dante Gabriel's indication that he wrote it as an exercise in imitation would appear to support that reading. However, while Dante Gabriel's religious faith is uncertain, and the motivations behind his adoption of Christian symbols unclear, little evidence exists to suggest he began his career as an atheist, and his PRB poetry and paintings use religious symbols in fairly orthodox ways. At the very least, this poem's focus on Eucharistic practice and the theology behind it reveals Dante Gabriel's fascination with Anglo-Catholic sacramentalism and ritual. Though composed in a predominantly anapestic meter, rather

[21] After Dante Gabriel's death, William Michael had the poem published in *Pall Mall Magazine* 16 (1898): 480-96.

than the common meter traditional to English hymnody, "Sacrament Hymn" is presented as a meditation on the comforting and encouraging power of the Eucharist:

> On a fair Sabbath day, when His banquet is spread,
>
> It is pleasant to feast with my Lord:
>
> His stewards stand robed at the foot and the head
>
> Of the soul-filling, live-giving board.
>
> (...)
>
> No feast where the belly alone hath its fill, –
>
> He gives me His body and blood;
>
> The blood and the body (I'll think of it still)
>
> Of my Lord, which is Christ, which is God. (1-4; 17-20)

The central conceit of the poem, which likens the sacramental meal to a king's feast and the communicants to pilgrims whose consumption of the meal gives them the strength to continue their journey, is almost certainly a reference to *Pilgrim's Progress*. The "guests" at the banquet in Dante Gabriel's poem carry heavy "burthens" of wealth, want, and shame (5-7) which they set down to partake of the Eucharist, an act which lightens their load: "Much smaller [the burdens will] seem in the lane that grows strait, / And much lighter to lift at the stile" (11-12). These figures line up in suggestive ways with those central to Bunyan's emblematic text: Bunyan's Christian also carries a burden which represents sin; once he finds the correct path to the Celestial City (salvation), he too must pass through a stile or "wicket gate" in order to begin his journey on the "straight and narrow" King's Highway, a biblically-derived figure for the morally-correct way of life. The fact that Dante Gabriel wrote a poem on the subject of the Eucharist suggests at least an Oxford Movement-inspired

curiosity about sacramental beliefs at the time it was written. As Bentley notes, Dante Gabriel's early pictures "imply an artist who certainly understood, probably entertained and possibly accepted the Christian hypothesis and its implications, both spiritual and artistic" (Bentley, "Positive Agnosticism" 79). No matter how sincere his discussion of the Eucharist in this poem, the fact that he structured it according to some of the main emblematic figures of *Pilgrim's Progress* demonstrates the centrality of emblem strategies to his aesthetic practice.

Rossetti's early work pursues the twin emblematic goals of instructing religious truths and instilling a sacramental habit of mind: in paintings and poems like "Mary's Girlhood," the act of viewing itself "becomes an exegetical activity" (Smulders 65; L. Hönnighausen 6, 54). Intertextual references to the moralized universe of *Pilgrim's Progress* place the imagery of "Sacrament Hymn" within a stable hermeneutic framework; in the "Girlhood," objects and events are also interpretable as having single, stable meanings. The emblematic character of these works reflects the author's investment, at this period, in an aesthetic that assumes the world is similarly ordered and meaningful. Although his early work is thus characterized by an allegorical-realist treatment of "relatively straightforward Christian" themes, suggestive of an alignment with orthodox Christian belief ("Positive Agnosticism" 71), his faith in this system began to break down sometime around 1853. In a diary entry that year, his close friend William Bell Scott records that Dante Gabriel

> has changed his entire moral nature and views of life.... With regard to his poetry, the spirit that had made him choose "Songs of the Art Catholic" as a

> general rule died out.... His curious materialistic piety disappeared, burst like a soap bubble. (qtd. in Bentley, "Positive Agnosticism" 86)

Fellow PRB Holman Hunt likewise witnessed this shift, later writing that by the mid-1850s, Dante Gabriel had "completely changed his philosophy" (qtd. in Bentley, "Positive Agnosticism" 86). As Bentley notes, the early-to-mid 1850s was a time Dante Gabriel spent "questioning and severing the connection that he had largely taken for granted during his Pre-Raphaelite days between images (whether natural or artistic) and fixed, recognizable significances of an allegorical or spiritual order" (90).

From this point forward, as Keane, Bentley and others have demonstrated, his revisions alter titles and remove or substantially re-word passages that contained Catholic or orthodox Christian allusions. New works, moreover, employ such allusions only to problematize them. Much of William Michael's biographical and literary commentary on Dante Gabriel attempts to brand his 1850s crisis of faith as a turn towards Huxleyan agnosticism; while several scholars question the accuracy of this claim, its effects on the critical understanding of Dante Gabriel's religious views have been long-lasting,[22] and a substantial body of Rossetti scholarship is devoted to reading his revisions and later poems as focused on capturing pure aesthetic moments,[23] expressing interiority, and dramatizing his inner struggles.[24] In *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Limits of Victorian Vision* (1983), for example, Riede casts doubt on the idea that Dante Gabriel's faith was ever genuine,

---

[22] William Michael's note on "Ave" in his edition of the works admits that the poem "seems most to indicate definite Christian belief, and of a strangely Roman Catholic kind," but quickly asserts that "such an inference would be... erroneous" (*DGR Collected Works* 661n; qtd. in Smulders 64).

[23] See especially Sussman, "Rossetti's Changing Style," 6, 8; James G. Nelson, "Aesthetic Experience and Rossetti's 'My Sister's Sleep.'"

[24] While the title of Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi's article on "The Image of the Anima in the Work of Dante Gabriel Rossetti" (1974) would lead one to expect a helpful close study of traditional emblem iconography in the work of Dante Gabriel, in fact the "Anima" in question is that proposed in Jungian psychoanalysis. Gelpi reads "Hand and Soul" as symbolic of the poet's struggle to bring the male and female halves of his "divided self" into "unity."

asserting that "little evidence exists to support the notion of Rossetti's belief" at any point in his life (22). "Rossetti's Art-Catholic work is never wholly successful," Riede asserts, "since his lack of real faith is never completely hidden by the superficial imagery" (23). Even Sussman, whose *Fact into Figure* (1979) helpfully places the work of Rossetti and other Victorians in its proper historical context by examining it as part of the movement to revive figuralism in art, asserts (in "Rossetti's Changing Style: The Revisions of 'My Sister's Sleep'") that early and later versions of "My Sister's Sleep" provide "a rare, specific instance of a Victorian poet rewriting an early work as what can best be called a modernist poem" (6). The stylistic changes in the later poem, he goes on to argue, signal Dante Gabriel's lack of faith by creating "an entirely secular world" in which "events operate not as symbols of transcendent realities but as stimuli for mental sensations" (7). Carol Christ's reading of "The Woodspurge" as denying any "meaning to the landscape beyond its mere existence" by "introduc[ing] the possibility of a religious interpretation... only to refuse the significance offered" (qtd. in Bentley, "Positive Agnosticism" 92) likewise casts Dante Gabriel as an agnostic – even atheistic – materialist whose work anticipates the modernist concern with subjectivity and "things themselves."

"Positive Agnosticism" and Revised Works

In fact, however, the question of Dante Gabriel's belief – what he believed, to what extent, and when his beliefs changed – is not so easily settled. Just as Riede argues no proof exists of his ever having had faith, so no decisive proof exists that he did not. Indeed, Richard Watson Dixon recalls Rossetti asking, furious at charges of irreligion, "do not my works testify to my Christianity?" (qtd. in *DGR: Family Letters* 1: 407). Like Bentley, I

believe Dante Gabriel's post-1853 ontology is best described as a "positive agnosticism." According to Bentley (after Jacques Sommet), while agnosticism tends towards the belief that anything beyond material phenomena is unknown and unknowable, and therefore treats these questions as closed, "positive agnosticism" is an uncertainty about God that "takes the form of a quest" for further knowledge (Bentley, "Positive Agnosticism" 83). Significantly, while Dante Gabriel lost whatever certainty he may have had and was thenceforth incapable of sustaining belief, he was also not content in unbelief: his Anglo-Catholic background had provided him with a map and an interpretive key to life; without its reassuring principles and "truths," he was lost and anxious.[25] Like his 1858 letter to Norton in which he longs to view the world as an emblematic text like *Pilgrim's Progress*, an 1865 letter to James Smetham (a Pre-Raphaelite associate and devout Christian) reveals that while he does not consider himself a believer, he wishes he were:

> I had better tell you frankly at once that I have no such faith as you have.... Its default in me does not arise from want of natural impulse to believe, nor of reflection whether what I should alone call belief in a full sense is possible to me. (*DGR: Family Letters* 2: 582)

As his interest in spiritualism and emulation of Dante Alighieri's spiritual-sensual treatment of love suggests, Dante Gabriel did not renounce the possibility of faith in something beyond visible reality; indeed, he admits to having a "natural impulse" in that direction but

---

[25] Bentley reads "The Landmark" in this context as a poem expressive of Dante Gabriel's anxiety over the loss of *Pilgrim's Progress*-like signposts and symbols in the world following his crisis of faith: "The goal-seeking speaker expresses surprise and disappointment at the discovery that his progress through life is not being sign-posted in quite the way he had been led to suppose" ("Positive Agnosticism" 88). The poem begins with a confused question: "Was *that* the landmark?" (1). Oblique references to Christ in the poet's use of terms like "station" and "altar-stone" to describe the signs he had hoped to find marking his path make the poem's religious implications that much clearer. Interesting to note here is that in figuring a loss of sacramental belief, Dante Gabriel employs verbal emblematic strategies which are analogous to those he uses in "Sacrament Hymn."

is simply unable to accept an orthodox system of belief. His agnosticism is therefore marked by a persistent and melancholy yearning for the religious certainty which underpinned the representational certainty of his earliest works. This, in turn, is what made emblematics an attractive strategy throughout his career.

That several of his major poems were first written during his most orthodox Anglo-Catholic, Pre-Raphaelite period and subsequently altered following his loss of faith presents a prime opportunity to study the effect of this turn on his poetics. Critics frequently make use of comparisons between early and later versions of his poems to argue that his later approach anticipates modernism in its rejection of Christian imagery and spiritual themes. These and a good number of other analyses seek to cast Dante Gabriel as a proto-modernist, and therefore overlook or downplay evidence that later versions of his early poems retain any trace of a spiritual or religious framework. Keane's analysis of his alterations shows that in many cases, while Dante Gabriel's editing and rewriting removes or tones down references to Anglo-Catholic and orthodox imagery, ritual and belief, his poems retain a religious core (21). Indeed, Keane finds that some of his revisions, like those carried out on an early version of "The Hill Summit," develop spiritual themes and symbolic meanings that had previously only been latent (135). Keane's demonstration that, while Dante Gabriel excised orthodox elements from his poetry, he retained a spiritual-symbolic framework, makes possible a view of the trajectory of his work that sees it move away from orthodoxy, but remain rooted in emblematics.

The versions of "My Sister's Sleep" which appeared in *The Germ* (1850) and *Poems* (1870) show Dante Gabriel moving away from straightforward sacramentalist emblematics and towards a rhetorical emblematics that questions the validity of his earlier moral-

aesthetic approach. In the earlier version, the first-person poetic persona observes and interprets natural imagery in a straightforwardly sacramental way. Despite narrating the death of a young girl, this version of the poem offers reassurance that even in times of tragedy, God's plan prevails; His promise of salvation allows us to place death in its proper perspective. Stanzas 7 and 8 of the earlier version, which Dante Gabriel would remove entirely from the later version, are the clearest statement of the speaker's belief in God's reassuring presence. In an obvious reference to the sacrament of Eucharist, the speaker describes his mind in Stanza 6 as "dr[i]nk[ing]" the "stillness and the broken lights" of the night-time scene like a "sharp strengthening wine" (21-24). By likening his absorption of his physical surroundings to the consumption of "strengthening wine" – a description of that beverage which, in its likening of the physical effects of wine to the spiritual effects of consuming communion wine, echoes that in the more overtly sacramental "Sacrament Hymn" – the speaker identifies his mode of perception as almost literally sacramental. After consuming the "stillness and the broken lights" of the room, the speaker is able to find reassurance in his surroundings:

> Silence was speaking at my side
> With an exceedingly clear voice:
> I knew the calm as of a choice
> Made in God for me, to abide.
>
> I said, 'Full knowledge does not grieve:
> This which upon my spirit dwells
> Perhaps would have been sorrow else:

But I am glad 'tis Christmas Eve.' (25-32)

The speaker's ability to hear "silence" speaking and feel a sense of calm which he compares to fore-ordainment ("a choice / Made in God for me") is evidence of a strong faith in God's providence made possible through sacramental perception. The "full knowledge" to which he refers, moreover, is the revelation in Christ of God's salvific plan for mankind – that these events take place on Christmas Eve, the anniversary of Christ's birth, offers further reassurance of the divine ordering of things. This faith[26] (so strong he refers to it as "knowledge") is what allows him to be "glad" in spite of his sister's imminent death. Dante Gabriel's removal of these stanzas in the later version is not, as Sussman has argued, indicative of his desire to abandon spirituality in favour of a materialist aesthetics. As Bentley has argued, Dante Gabriel remains curious about matters of faith and spirit, and as Keane demonstrates, moreover, he left untouched the last two stanzas of this poem, which include an account of the narrator and his mother kneeling to pray, allowing the poem to retain, "at its core, a religious theme" (22). Thus, it seems more likely that his deletion of stanzas 7 and 8 reflects not a loss of interest in or renunciation of spiritual themes, but a loss of certainty about God, Christ, salvation, and the providential nature of human events that is expressed in these lines.

Subtle changes in the poem's wording provide further proof that Dante Gabriel's revisions point to his uncertainty, rather than a desire to pursue a materialist aesthetic. More importantly, these changes do not alter the emblematic framework at the core of the poem. Catherine Maxwell argues that

---

[26] It is interesting to note that the stanza form and metre of "My Sister's Sleep" is that which would later come to be known as the "In Memoriam" stanza after Tennyson's poem; Dante Gabriel's use of it predates the publication of Tennyson's poem. Also interesting in this respect is the speaker's use of "knowledge" in describing his faith reveals the strength of his belief. In Tennyson's poem, by contrast, the poetic speaker uses such terms as "guess," "hope," and "trust" when discussing his faltering faith.

> In their revised form, the figures of the poem may have lost a pronounced Catholic character and become less explicit, but this particular symbolic dimension cannot be so easily dismissed, and the images retain an integral spiritual suggestiveness. ("Devious Symbols" 24)

Although the poem's imagery becomes less overtly Catholic in nature, it continues to function emblematically. In the fourth stanza of *The Germ* version, for example, an outdoor scene is presented in terms which hint at its meaningfulness, its status as a set of markers indicating God's presence in the landscape:

> Without, there was a good moon up,
> Which left its shadows far within;
> The depth of light that it was in
> Seemed hollow like an altar-cup. (13-16)

This description of the moon as "good" is an indication of its phase and therefore its size and the quality of its light, but it also imparts a sense of harmony and fitness to both the moon and the landscape it illuminates. Like the earlier comparison of the effect of his sensory experience of the room to a "strengthening wine," the speaker's description of the frost effect around the moon as making the light seem "hollow like an altar-cup" amplifies the sacramental quality of the image by being a reference to a literal church sacrament (again, the Eucharist). The moon's position – appearing to be "in" the "altar-cup" – turns it into the round Host, about to be dipped in the wine-made-Christ's-blood contained in the chalice.[27] This strikingly Eucharistic image demonstrates the speaker's sacramental understanding of nature: just as the communion ritual transforms the bread and wine into signs of Christ's

[27] The practice of dipping the Host into the wine of the Eucharistic meal – known as "intinction" – is one of the four sanctioned methods by which the Precious Blood may be administered, according to the Latin Rite of the Roman Catholic Church.

body and blood, so the speaker's sacramental vision transforms the moon and its light into the Eucharistic vehicles; and therefore, just as the communicant partakes of the divine in consuming the communion meal, so the speaker partakes of God in viewing the moon.

As critics have frequently noted, the later version of this stanza excises these overt references to God and the sacraments, substituting what many have described as a more material, pictorial approach to the event:

> Without, there was a cold moon up,
> Of winter radiance sheer and thin;
> The hollow halo it was in
> Was like an icy crystal cup. (13-16)

The moon here is no longer "good," but "cold," an image which strips the comforting overtones from the earlier description. By emphasizing the bleakness of the sensory experience, Dante Gabriel suggests a landscape devoid of the spiritual significance which lent it its earlier harmony: the moon is "cold," not just because it is winter, but because it offers no meaning beyond itself. Its frosty ring of light is still troped as a cup, but the religious overtones of "altar-cup" have been replaced with the more secular image of an "icy crystal cup." The new description of the light effect as a "hollow halo," however, is perhaps the most telling change. This image evokes the nimbi – in Dante Gabriel's earlier portraiture, especially – around the heads of saints and angels, which is usually depicted as a warm, golden ring or glow. The description of the moon's halo as "hollow" here, in the midst of a scene which is otherwise rendered emphatically as cold, further suggests an emptying-out of conventional religious iconography which calls into question not only the ability of such images to represent the divine, but the sacramental assumptions behind that

representational strategy. More significant, however, is the fact that such images, though altered, continue to be used in spite of the later speaker's lack of confidence in God, salvation and the immortal soul: in other words, though they no longer serve devotional ends, the emblematic elements of the poem remain. While in the earlier version, the image of an altar-cup acts as an emblem of God's participation in the world, the later version employs the image of a "hollowed-out" halo as an emblem for the lack of any clear sign of the divine presence in the landscape. In this way, faith or no faith, emblems persist.

Dante Gabriel's dramatic monologue "A Last Confession" undergoes a similar divestment of references to Christianity in its 1869 revisions for the *Poems* volume of 1870. While Dante Gabriel's changes to "My Sister's Sleep" transform straightforward religious imagery into emblems of uncertainty, a decision which sheds light on his position of questing doubt, "A Last Confession" replaces the explicitly devotional emblem at the centre of an important moment in the narrative with an emblem that draws instead on Greco-Roman mythology in a manner typical of rhetorical emblematics. This substitution of an emblem from one tradition for an emblem from another is illustrative of the author's shift away from the straightforward sacramentalism on which devotional emblems are based, and his continued desire for discursive stability, something rhetorical emblems are able to construct. The dramatic monologue, originally composed in 1849 (McGann, "A Last Confession," *Rossetti Archive*), consists of the dying confession of an Italian patriot wounded in the uprising of 1848 who recounts his discovery of a young girl, abandoned by her starving parents, whom he raises to young adulthood. Eventually, driven to madness with frustration at his unrequited love and her apparent indifference to him, he stabs her with a knife he had bought to serve either as a "pledge" between them or "a parting gift" (24-25).

The most substantial revision to this poem is to a scene in which the speaker remembers bringing his ward, then a child, the gift of an image: in the earlier poem, the image is of

> great Jesus Christ
> Whom yet she knew but dimly. I had not
> Yet told her all the wondrous things of Faith,
> For in our life of deadly hate, the child
> Might ill be taught that God and Truth were one. (141-45)

This image of the crucified Christ is a key component of the child's religious education. Just as a typical devotional *pictura* invites interpretation, provoking a series of questions in the percipient who must then interrogate the emblem as a whole to find its meaning, so this crucifixion scene demands an interpretation which leads to the discovery of moral and religious precepts: the speaker's presentation of the scene to the child, who is confused by the image of the suffering man, occasions a discussion about the nature and purpose of Christ's sacrifice:

> when I
> Had given her the Christ, and she had asked
> Why the good Lord was always shown in pain,
> I spoke to her, and told her how the Lady
> She loved was now the Queen of the whole world,
> And how that image was her blessed Son
> To whom all things in Heaven and earth and Hell
> Bow down for homage. And she knelt and prayed
> Her hands in one of mine. (152-60; Fitzwilliam MS, *Rossetti Archive*)

As Rosemary Freeman, Wendy Katz and others have shown, from the eighteenth century on, emblems were a preferred method of moral and religious instruction to young children who, while they might have been unable to read, would nonetheless be spurred by the allegorical images to ask appropriate questions.[28] This is precisely the reaction the image of Christ elicits in the young girl.

As Keane remarks, this image and the discussion it provokes is entirely "consonant with the young Dante Gabriel's pietism" (106). The later version, by contrast, replaces the image of Christ with one of Cupid, reflecting Dante Gabriel's swerve away from orthodoxy, but his continued use of emblematics:

> I brought her from the city, one such day
> When she was still a merry loving child, --
> The earliest gift I mind my giving her;
> A little image of a flying Love
> Made of our coloured glass-ware, in his hands
> A dart of gilded metal and a torch. (142-48; *Poems* 1870, *Rossetti Archive*)

The child insists on hanging the image on the wall herself, but it falls and breaks; Cupid's arrow pierces her hand. Much has been made of the appropriateness of the symbolism – both of the image itself (blind Cupid, led by passion rather than reason) and the sexual overtones of its wounding of the child's hand ("'That I should be the first to make you bleed...!'" [174]) – as foreshadowing the poem's equally bloody, sexually-charged climax (Keane 106). More importantly, however, while the content of the image is changed in the

---

[28] See Katz, *The Emblems of Margaret Gatty: A Study of Allegory in Nineteenth-Century Children's Literature*; also Freeman, *English Emblem Books* 6. Manning disputes Freeman's claim that the genre was adapted for children from an early period, viewing it instead as "serious play" for adults from its inception (143-50).

later version, its emblematic nature and function remain. Just as the image of Christ causes the child to ask "Why the good Lord was always shown in pain," so the image of Cupid – identified here explicitly as an emblematic figure for Love – draws from the child a set of questions that interrogate its symbolic apparatus: on seeing the image, the narrator says, the child

> fain would know
> Why were his poor eyes blindfold, why the wings
> And why the arrow. What I knew I told
> Of Venus and of Cupid, -- strange old tales. (148-51; *Poems* 1870, *Rossetti Archive*)

In typical rhetorical emblematic fashion, each main element of this image (blindfold, wings, arrow) carries a meaning that demands interpretation. Thus, Dante Gabriel's revisions eliminate a major reference to Christ and Christian belief, but graft pagan imagery – central to such rhetorical emblematic works as the *Hypnerotomachia* – onto what remains of the emblematic framework. The centrality of emblematic imagery and interpretation to this scene – which is itself a key moment in the story, as it establishes the relationship between the characters as one of parent and child while foreshadowing the relationship's ultimate tragic end – along with the author's decision to keep it in an altered form, is a sign that even after his faith became uncertain, Dante Gabriel retained emblematics as a key strategy in his work.

His early poetry is not the only site of Dante Gabriel's agnostic revisions: his expressly propagandistic Pre-Raphaelite prose tale, "Hand and Soul," first published in *The Germ* (no. 1), comes in for similar changes and deletions. And, just as revisions to his

poetry remove references to Anglo-Catholic images and themes without disturbing the works' emblematic structures, so his re-writing of "Hand and Soul" plays down the earlier version's comparison of the work of the artist to that of the priest, but retains the emblematic sense that art should not simply represent visible objects, but do so in a way that frames them as the visible manifestation of abstract concepts. "Hand and Soul" tells the story of a young Italian in the Quattrocento, Chiaro dell'Erma, whose desire to learn to paint is the result of his "extreme longing after a visible embodiment of his thoughts" ("Hand and Soul," *The Germ* 23). Abandoning his popular portraits of saints in search of a more exigent aesthetic, Chiaro turns to "cold" and "laboured" intellectualized allegory (a jab at the neo-classical idealization promoted by the Royal Academy of Dante Gabriel's own day), an approach which, while well-intentioned, fails spectacularly when an encounter between warring local factions leaves Chiaro's allegorical mural of peace spattered with blood. Just as he is about to give up, however, a projection of his own soul appears to him as a beautiful woman, the emblematic character Anima. As was discussed in Chapter 4, this figure for the soul, typically depicted as a winged female, was originally developed in the Jesuit tradition of emblematics, as an aid to meditation. Sucquet's *Via Vitae Aeternae* (1620) and Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (1624) are key works in this tradition, but the Protestant Quarles also adapted a number of Anima-themed plates from these books in his own *Emblemes* (see for instance Figs. 9, 11, 12, 14, 39). As Bentley notes, Dante Gabriel may have been introduced to the Anima figure through Anglo-Dutch emblem books like Quarles' ("Anglo-Dutch" 7). These works illustrate the soul's progress toward union with God in images of the infant Jesus as a winged Cupid leading the Anima through a series of trials on the way to Heaven (Dimler, "Jesuit Emblem Books" 66; Moseley 18). The demand of Chiaro's Anima that he paint her

exactly as she appears ("Hand and Soul," *Germ* 31) thus employs a reference to an emblematic tradition in order to express the Pre-Raphaelite tenet that the artist must "[s]et [his] hand and [his] soul to serve man with God" (31) – a moral-aesthetic aim the PRB shared with writers of devotional emblems. Just as the devotional emblem attempts to teach religious truths by framing objects in a sacramentally-understood, naturalistic way, so Dante Gabriel and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood believed artists should strive to instruct and ennoble by expressing their own "soul" in the representation of things as they really are. God has imbued the visible world with meaning; the artist's task is merely to present it in a way that makes that meaning intelligible to the viewer.

Rossetti's changes to the story as he prepared to include it in *Poems* (1870) excise specific references to Catholic ritual and belief, especially as they relate to artistic practice, but retain the Anima and his original argument about the emblematic nature of art. In their PRB phase, Dante Gabriel and his Pre-Raphaelite brothers shared a sense that the work of the artist ought to be analogous to that of the priest: both were agents of God with a sacred trust, and both delivered sacraments (literally, in the Eucharist; or figuratively, in the sacramental presentation of nature in art). In "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art," for example, "John Seward" (F.G. Stephens) argues that artists were once a branch of the clerical class, and ought still to shoulder such a duty towards God and their fellow men; he therefore urges modern artists to pursue work which expresses truth in its highest form.[29] Dante Gabriel's decision to title his first collection of poems "Songs of the Art-Catholic"

[29] In this essay Stephens asserts that "the Arts were, for the most part, cleric, and not laic, or at least were under the predominant influence of the clergy, who were the most important patrons by far, and their houses the safest receptacles for the works of the great painter. The modern artist does not retire to monasteries, or practice discipline; but he may show his participation in the same high feeling by a firm attachment to truth in every point of representation, which is the most just method. For how can good be sought by evil means, or by falsehood, or by slight in any degree? By a determination to represent the thing and the whole of the thing, by training himself to the deepest observation of its fact and detail, enabling himself to reproduce, as far as possible, nature herself, the painter will best evince his share of faith" (*The Germ* 58-59).

was likewise driven by this moral-aesthetic belief. In the first version of the story, Dante Gabriel places his ideal Pre-Raphaelite artist in situations which amplify the priestly nature of his work. In the later version, however, these attempts to link art practice with the practice of Catholic ritual are removed. While the later version still mentions that the lodging Chiaro takes on his arrival in Pisa is opposite the "Church of San Petronio" (the church is San Rocco in *The Germ* version), for example, it deletes a long passage describing the space in terms which suggest its overlap with that of the church:

> During the offices, as he sat at work, he could hear the music of the organ and the long murmur that the chanting left[;] sometimes... his ear caught faintly the single voice of the priest. (25)

That the sounds associated with the Catholic mass cross the space between the church and his room and penetrate the latter associates Chiaro with the priest, on the one hand, and Chiaro's artwork with the priest's duties, on the other. Driving home this analogy is the fact that the focal point of the artist's room is a miniature shrine to the Blessed Virgin, a "consecrated image" before which "stood always" a fresh-cut lily and rose (25). The shrine is also eliminated in the later version, a move which further detaches the practice of art from devotional practice, making Chiaro a less explicitly Catholic, less priestly figure. Significantly, while Dante Gabriel removes all major references to Catholic ritual and the priestly nature of art, the main emblematic thrust of the story – its use of the emblematic figure of Anima to deliver the lesson that art should make manifest ultimate truths – remains.

"Jenny," begun in 1848-49 and revised substantially both before and after its publication in *Poems* 1870, is a rare poem of Dante Gabriel's in that it treats a contemporary

social issue, in this case prostitution. In contradiction to the "Art-Catholic" pieces mentioned above, this poem was always predominantly secular in tone and was therefore never subjected to the same kind of modification. However, the poem makes occasional use of emblematic imagery in describing Jenny and her place in the social order, and the first-person narrator adopts a secular, analogical approach to the material world that evokes rhetorical emblematics. Unlike the devotional emblem, which explicates objects and events within a sacramental context as natural signs signifying invisible truths, the rhetorical emblem bases its moralisation of objects on conventions established by myth, folklore, or common knowledge. "Jenny" is a dramatic monologue,[30] a meditation on a sleeping prostitute. The narrator, a young scholar who has encountered Jenny on a rare evening away from his studies, sits on her bed with her head in his lap and wonders about her past and her life:

> Poor shameful Jenny, full of grace
> Thus with your head upon my knee; --
> Whose person or whose purse may be
> The lodestar of your reverie? (18-21)

The narrator employs an inverted echo of the "Hail Mary" prayer ("Hail, Mary, full of grace") to draw a complex comparison between Jenny, who, though a prostitute, is also in some ways the innocent victim of men's desires – a "poor flower left torn" (14) – and the Blessed Virgin. Even more revealing of the narrator's analogical mind, however, is his frequent troping of Jenny as a text which, though obscure, may be read in flashes. In looking at her sleeping, half-undressed body, he declares "You know not what a book you seem, / Half-read by lightning in a dream!" (51-52) and goes on to compare her brain (a text

[30] Some have characterized this poem as an interior monologue; either designation is appropriate.

perhaps less desirable or available than her physical form) to "a volume seldom read" (158). Although the narrator recognizes that the Jenny he sees is a particular woman, she also becomes, in his perception, a collection of signs with meaning beyond the literal and material:

> Yet, Jenny, looking long at you,
> The woman almost fades from view.
> A cipher of man's changeless sum
> Of lust, past, present, and to come,
> Is left. A riddle that one shrinks
> To challenge from the scornful sphinx. (276-81)

These assertions illuminate the strength of the narrator's emblematic sense: Jenny's status as a "cipher" – a sign or an emblem – of lust and its toll on humanity is so prominent in the narrator's view, it "almost" trumps her individuality or personhood. Just as most emblems are, considered from one perspective, a riddle requiring solution, so too does Jenny, when considered as the visible manifestation of an "invisible" (shameful, unmentionable) social problem, demand interpretation. This figural view of Jenny is of course appropriate to a poem which uses the particularity of the dramatic monologue to gesture toward larger social and moral principles; it is also proof that Dante Gabriel's interest in the emblematic framing of particular and naturalistic detail persists in the rhetorical mode in later versions of his earlier poems.

From this meditation on Jenny as a text, the narrator embarks on an extended simile likening "Lust" to "a toad within a stone" (282). This odd digressive passage is perhaps best

understood as an emblematic "cameo," a strikingly still moment in the midst of the monologue that dwells on and attempts to articulate a single idea:

> Like a toad within a stone
> Seated while Time crumbles on;
> Which sits there since the earth was curs'd
> For Man's transgression at the first;
> Which, living through all centuries,
> Not once has seen the sun arise;
> Whose life, to its cold circle charmed,
> The earth's whole summers have not warmed;
> Which always—whitherso the stone
> Be flung—sits there, deaf, blind, alone;—
> Aye, and shall not be driven out
> Till that which shuts him round about
> Break at the very Master's stroke,
> And the dust thereof vanish as smoke,
> And the seed of Man vanish as dust:—
> Even so within this world is Lust. (282-97)

In a manner wholly congruent with typical verbal emblematics, Rossetti first describes and elaborates on, then identifies the image of the toad in the stone as signifying "Lust." That this word is capitalized calls attention to it as the solution of the riddle posed by the unusual image, but also aligns this passage with the emblematic technique of personified abstraction. In Renaissance iconography, a lexicon which had tremendous influence on the development of rhetorical emblematics, toads were frequently used as symbols of lust and sexual appetite.

Here, the image of the toad trapped inside a stone "for all centuries" (286) and unable to emerge until the stone itself is broken at the end of time figures the indestructibility of lust and its association with "Man's transgression at the first" (285), original sin. On returning to his original train of thought, the speaker blames Jenny's beauty for "goading" him to "think of toads" (301-02), an admonition which recognizes the eccentricity of the emblem vehicle, but reinforces its association with lust by hinting at the narrator's own desire for the attractive Jenny. With his knowledge of northern European Renaissance art, Dante Gabriel is likely to have known about this iconographic tradition and to be using it here in a deliberately emblematic way, as a meditation on what he considers the root cause of Jenny's plight.

Another animal image in the poem reveals the rootedness of this work in emblematic habits of thought. Both Bentley and Bryan Rivers discuss the image of the "fiery serpent" which the narrator employs in a passage which describes Jenny's habitual surroundings in a manner that hints at the moral implications of Jenny's work:

> When, wealth and health slipped past, you stare
> Along the streets alone, and there,
> Round the long park, across the bridge,
> The cold lamps at the pavement's edge
> Wind on together and apart,
> A fiery serpent for your heart. (149-54)

Bentley argues that this last image, a possible reference to the plague of "fiery serpents" God sends the Israelites (Numbers 21), identifies prostitution as a similar "plague" on Victorian society, and suggests this poem itself, which deals with the issue directly, is thus

analogous to the "brazen serpent," the harmless representation Moses erects which cures the sting in those who look at it (Rivers, "The Fiery Serpent" 5). As Rivers explains, the image of the "fiery serpent" was frequently invoked and explicated "typologically" in Victorian sermons, read for example as "an embodied image or parable of spiritual and eternal truths" (Lyttleton 187, qtd. in Rivers, "The Fiery Serpent" 5). As I have explained, the terms "type" and "emblem" were often used interchangeably in the Victorian period, but the first refers specifically to the figural understanding of events in time, while the second relates to the figural understanding of objects. In other words, although Rivers uses "type" here in its Victorian sense, the sermon in question could also be said to treat the "fiery serpent" as an emblem. This emblem circulated widely in the period and is used in Rossetti's poem as a shorthand means of identifying Jenny's sin. Rivers' reading of the image adopts an historicist approach, identifying the "long park" as Hyde Park, a common site for prostitutes at the time, and the "fiery serpent" as the Serpentine River where many "shameful" Victorian women drowned themselves, but his analysis affirms the emblematic dimensions of the image: by "adroitly fusing topological and typological modes of representation through the punning allusion to the 'fiery serpent,'" Rivers argues, Dante Gabriel "invests the familiar and mundane landscape of Hyde Park and the Serpentine with a powerful biblical reference" ("Fiery Serpent" 10-11). Although in this way he clearly identifies Dante Gabriel's poetic method as drawing lessons from the landscape by framing naturalistic details in an analogical context, Rivers does not trace this technique back to its roots in the tradition of emblematics. In fact, however, by mapping an analogical understanding onto the real landscape of Hyde Park, Dante Gabriel is able to construct the landscape emblematically as signifying immoral behaviour and its consequences.

Religious Doubt, Emblematic Continuities: The Later Works

Many of the poems Dante Gabriel composed after his crisis of faith have been held up as anticipations of a modernist aesthetic, and as seeking to represent a purely material world of sensation rather than of spirit. One of *Poems* 1870's earliest critics, Robert Buchanan, denounced the book as the work of a godless, "fleshly" poet who

> put[s] on record for other full-grown men to read, the most secret mysteries of sexual connection, and that with so sickening a desire to reproduce the sexual mood, so careful a choice of epithet to convey mere animal sensations, that we merely shudder at the shameless nakedness.... It is simply nasty. (338)

Buchanan was the first to openly charge Dante Gabriel with materialism, but the initially derogatory statement was later reclaimed by critics who view it as a positive sign of the poet's adoption of a modernist worldview. While this perspective on his work illuminates some aspects of his method, it fails to recognize the emblematics – eclectic, idiosyncratic and esoteric – still at work in many of his later poems. However, this may equally be due to the disciplinary boundaries which continue to separate literary studies from studies of the emblem, as even criticism of his work which attempts to recuperate Dante Gabriel as a poet interested in the spiritual by revealing his complex symbolism misses the overtly emblematic nature of that symbolism.

"The Woodspurge," for example, a poem which appears to argue that an accurate perception of a plant is all the speaker has gained from a moment of sorrow spent outside, has been held up by various critics over the years as a prime example of Dante Gabriel's

modernism, concern with materiality, and rejection of both religious faith and the figural ontology such faith supports:

> From perfect grief there need not be
>
> Wisdom or even memory:
>
> One thing then learned remains to me, –
>
> The woodspurge has a cup of three. (13-16)

In fact, however, the poem is constructed around an emblematic framework that points to Dante Gabriel's lingering interest in figuralism and his curiosity about the invisible realities latent in the visible world. Catherine Maxwell's outstanding essay on "The Woodspurge," "Devious Symbols: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Purgatorio," reacts against the prevailing critical understanding of the poem as belonging to the "English empirical tradition" (19). Instead, Maxwell demonstrates how allusions to texts Dante Gabriel was familiar with from childhood place the poem within a tradition that "establishes significant connections between this piece and other important and misunderstood elements" in his work, revealing that the poem's "pared-down language is extraordinarily condensed and overdetermined to a degree that shatters any illusion of artless immediacy" ("Devious Symbols" 19). This element, Maxwell asserts, is an Anglo-Catholic sacramentalism, vestiges of which, she argues, continued to influence his work even after his retreat from formal religion ("Devious Symbols" 26). The accurately-rendered image of the woodspurge itself, as Hoxie Neale Fairchild reveals, was drawn not from an observation of nature, but from "a picture in a botany textbook" (qtd. in C. Maxwell, "Devious Symbols" 20); Maxwell suggests that this textbook was in fact Gerarde's *Herball*, whose identification of the plant's usefulness in concocting purgative medicines "restores a level of symbolic meaning" to the image critics

have read as simply naturalistic: given Dante Gabriel's knowledge of the medicinal purposes Gerarde assigns to woodspurge, it seems likely that the plant's usefulness in digestive purgation allows it to function here as a symbol of the emotional equivalent, catharsis. Maxwell also traces the source of the speaker's hunched position, expressive of despair, to a personified abstraction of "Pianto" (lamentation) in Pistrucci's *Iconologia.* The speaker of "The Woodspurge" describes his demeanor thus:

> Between my knees my forehead was, —
>
> My lips, drawn in, said not Alas!
>
> My hair was over in the grass,
>
> My naked ears heard the day pass. (5-8)

The figure of "Pianto" is described in strikingly similar terms as "that of a young man, dressed in black, kneeling with his head bowed and his hair falling forward" (C. Maxwell, "Devious Symbols" 32). Finally, an episode in the early part of Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia* in which the hero, dejected, lies down under an oak tree (Fig. 65), may also have suggested the situation portrayed in "The Woodspurge": as Maxwell explains, "Several details – the hero's prostrated grief, his weary lips, the naming of a symbolic plant and his looking to the herbs for last-resort refreshment or succor... are purged into a simpler form in Rossetti's poem" ("Devious Symbols" 34).

What is most interesting about Maxwell's analysis, from the perspective of this project, is that it (correctly, in my view) identifies the main sources of imagery in "The Woodspurge" as the *Herball*, the *Iconologia*, and the *Hypnerotomachia*, key texts in Dante Gabriel's library associated with the emblem tradition; her analysis mentions Jesuit meditational emblems in discussing the highly aesthetic character of Dante Gabriel's

religious background; it even notes the participation of Colonna's text in the development of emblematics. Despite this, Maxwell's study identifies the "important but misunderstood" element in Dante Gabriel's work in broad terms as a sacramental symbolic-naturalism rather than what, in more precise terms, it is: emblematics. While much of his work does bear the traces of a Tractarian-based sacramental aesthetic, and while this is in part what creates the conditions of possibility for his use of emblematic strategies, it is difficult not to see Maxwell's findings as requiring further contextualization, signalling as they do in an overwhelming way Dante Gabriel's participation in the emblem tradition.

Another text whose emblematic overtones have been overlooked is *The House of Life*, a sonnet cycle published in various forms in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1869 (as "Of Life, Love and Death: Sixteen Sonnets"), *Poems*, 1870 (as "Songs and Sonnets, towards a work to be called 'The House of Life'"), and *Ballads and Sonnets*, 1881. Depending on the edition, the work consisted of 16, 50, 100 or 101 sonnets composed between 1847 and 1870 (McGann, "The House of Life," *Rossetti Archive*). That Dante Gabriel continued to work on refining, reshaping and revising this sequence throughout his career shows that it occupied an important place in his imagination. Moreover, the fact that the overall structure of the sequence is emblematic, and that emblem strategies are also present in the imagery of the individual poems, demonstrates the key role of the emblem in the poetics of his later career. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the architectural metaphor in the title of this work immediately aligns it with such important emblematic texts as Herbert's *The Temple*, in which each poem performs an emblematic reading of a physical part of a church (the porch, the floor, etc.), and Isaac Williams' *The Cathedral,* which combines visual and verbal elements to carry out a similar but more normatively emblematic reading of a house of

worship. Both of these works were well-known to Dante Gabriel – he owned the Herbert work, and his sisters, who were fond of Williams, likely brought that work to his attention as well. The poems in these books break the cathedral down into its basic physical components and "read" each one as having a precise spiritual significance; in this way, the collections themselves adopt the structure of the edifice they seek to interpret. In much the same way, each of Dante Gabriel's sonnets treats some detail of a love relationship, troping it in ways which highlight the spiritual significance of earthly love. However, while Herbert's and Williams' texts adopt devotional and meditative emblematic strategies, performing interpretations of the parts of a church which train their readers to view that building as an *aide-memoire* on religious doctrine, Dante Gabriel's sonnet cycle adopts a rhetorical emblematic approach to the construction of a secular house which moralizes each "room" as embodying some aspect of romantic love. Adding to its overall emblematic character, the "house" is filled with personified abstractions such as Love, Life, Youth and Death, a "complete *dramatis personae* of the soul" (Rossetti, qtd. in Marsh, "Introduction," *Collected Writings* xxiv) derived from the rhetorical emblematic tradition as it is expressed in Colonna, Ripa and Pistrucci.

As the introductory sonnet in the sequence, the "Sonnet on the Sonnet," indicates, Dante Gabriel viewed the sonnet form itself as emblematic: his attempt to characterize it aligns the sonnet with other kinds of emblematic utterances and strategies which share the same basic aims. That Dante Gabriel wrote this poem in 1880 reveals the persistence of his interest in the emblem to the end of his life and career. The octet first identifies the sonnet as

a moment's monument, –

Memorial from the Soul's eternity

To one dead deathless hour. (1-3)

Here one function of the sonnet is described as the capturing and preservation of an epiphanic instant. This assertion sheds light on Dante Gabriel's habitual use of emblem strategies to impose order and meaning on subjective experience. Considered from a literal perspective, moreover, because they re-present events and ideas, monuments themselves are a chief site of such emblematic elements as heraldry or, as the many monuments depicted in the *Hypnerotomachia* show, proto-emblematic hieroglyphics. The 1851 designs for Pre-Raphaelite brother Woolner's Wordsworth statue, the base of which was to feature emblematic groupings representing "Control" and "Aspiration," reveal the extent to which the PRB considered emblematics appropriate to monuments (W.M. Rossetti, *Praeraphaelite Diaries* 296); I would suggest that, due perhaps in part to his fascination with Colonna's text, this association persisted for Dante Gabriel. The emblematic nature of the sonnet is further emphasized in the poem's comparison of the sonnet to a "flowering *crest* impearled and orient" (8; my emphasis), which amplifies its association with heraldry, itself an early form of emblematics. Likewise a combination of visual and verbal elements (crest; motto), heraldic devices adopt physical objects (roses, ravens, fleurs-de-lys) as signs of some essential family trait.[31]

The sestet, meanwhile, carries out an extended comparison of the sonnet to a coin:

its face reveals

The soul, – its converse, to what Power 'tis due: –

Whether for tribute to the august appeals

Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,

[31] See, for example, Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 170.

It serve; or, 'mid the dark wharf's cavernous breath,

In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death. (9-14)

Like monuments and heraldic devices, coins are a common venue for emblematic imagery. Often combining an image of something intended to represent the authority that produced it (a monarch's head or a crest) with text – generally a motto in the normative sense – coins and other types of money are a site of everyday emblematic art. Beyond their surface adornments, however, coins are emblematic in the sense that they partake in the value they represent: before the abolishment of the gold standard, the face value of money had an intrinsic connection to an absolute value, defined in terms of the piece's exchangeability for a given amount of gold. In this way, coins functioned as a kind of natural language in much the same way devotional emblems were supposed to represent the meanings inherent in given objects. The two sides of the coin correspond to the two levels of the sonnet: while the coin's "face reveals / The soul," the figurative meaning signified by objects on the literal level, "its converse," reveals "to what Power 'tis due," on what system of belief that figurative meaning is erected. Especially telling in this poem is its admission of uncertainty about the "Power" to which any given coin may be due: Life, Love, and Death are all suggested as possible substitutes for Caesar. This uncertainty about the authority behind meaning and its troping as a dislocation of value in money mirrors the unmooring of signs and signifiers, the "severing [of] the connection" between images and "fixed, recognizable significances" (Bentley, "Positive Agnosticism" 90) which accompanied Dante Gabriel's turn from orthodoxy to agnosticism. Visible objects are no longer signs written by the finger of God, but arbitrarily constructed and defined.

As Charles Moseley, Lothar Hönnighausen (57) and Bentley have noted, the illustrated manuscript version of this sonnet which Dante Gabriel produced as a birthday gift for his mother (Fig. 53) removes all doubt of its roots in and preoccupation with the emblem tradition. As Bentley remarks, the style of this piece owes a great deal to Blake's illuminated poetry, but similarities with "The Invocation" to Quarles' *Emblems, Divine and Moral* also hint at its indebtedness to that emblematic text.[32] The focal point of the design, which surrounds the hand-written text, is a winged female figure stretched horizontally across the top of the page; in one hand, she carries a harp, and in the other, a winged hourglass. Block letters in the upper left-hand corner identify this figure as the emblematic "Anima." Trailing rose bushes grow up the margins, converging behind the Anima figure. Inset in the middle of the left-hand margin are two vignettes representing the two sides of the coin: one contains a butterfly, while the other contains a snake eating its own tail, a motif Bentley identifies as the *ouroborus*, an emblem of eternity featured in the works of Blake, Wither and other major emblematists ("Anglo-Dutch" 10; Fig. 54). While this double work combines image and text in what seems a normative emblematic manner, the text is more like a verbal extension of the *pictura* than an *explicatio* in the strict sense: the poem does not offer an explication of the image, but rather mirrors it. On the other hand, the letter to his mother (dated 27 April 1880) which describes the illustrated manuscript provides a wholly emblematic point-by-point *explicatio* – one Bentley characterizes as strikingly Quarlesian ("Anglo-Dutch" 12) – of the image:

---

[32] As Bentley demonstrates, "it is as much the differences as the similarities between the engraving and the illuminated manuscript that are striking" ("Anglo-Dutch" 12): while the "soul" in Quarles' emblem looks to God and asks for help channelling God's "current" into poetry in order to fill men's hearts with love, Rossetti's looks downward at a sign of the passage of time, and "claims for poetry the power only to give permanency to fleeting moments" ("Anglo-Dutch" 12-13).

> The Soul is instituting the 'memorial to one dead deathless hour,' a ceremony easily effected by placing a winged hour-glass in a rose-bush, at the same time that she touches the fourteen-stringed harp of the Sonnet, hanging round her neck. On the rose-branches trailing over in the opposite corner is seen hanging the Coin, which is the second symbol used for the Sonnet. Its 'face' bears the Soul, expressed in the butterfly; its 'converse,' the Serpent of Eternity enclosing the Alpha and Omega. (*Letters* 4: 1760)

As Bentley notes, every individual element of the picture – the winged hourglass, the coin, the *ouroborus*, the Anima, even the roses – is itself derived from other emblematic texts, signalling Dante Gabriel's familiarity with the emblem tradition. His reconfiguration of these elements into a wholly new *pictura*, combined with his addition of an *explicatio*, shows moreover that he was also a participant in that tradition. However, it is important to note that while he uses conventional elements in a conventional way, Dante Gabriel does so for a highly unconventional purpose. Unlike Quarles and Wither, whose emblems sought to teach the reader about God by revealing the ultimate truths latent in visible objects, Dante Gabriel employs these emblem strategies to construct a theory of the sonnet and of poetic language more generally which calls into question the very possibility of stable and inherent meaning.

In his study of "Pre-Facing Simile Vehicles in Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Sonnets," Ernest Fontana makes the helpful observation that Dante Gabriel opens ten of his sonnets with an "as" clause that introduces the vehicle of a simile; in eight of these cases, he defers the necessary "so" clause to the ninth line or sestet of the poem; seven of these sonnets

belong to *The House of Life*.[33] While Fontana is more concerned to analyse this "signature stylistic and epistemic move" in terms of the "domain incongruity" – the epistemic distance between vehicle and tenor – of the similes in question, I believe his findings can be re-framed in an emblematic light as pointing out the ways in which Dante Gabriel structures his sonnets emblematically. As Fontana notes,

> these simile vehicles often involve the narratizing of an extended moment of recognition, a slow, gradual unfolding of perception that parallels the reader's gradual elucidation of the complexities of the simile vehicle. (442)

This process of "gradual elucidation" is remarkably similar to the emblem reader's gradual recognition of the meaning of an emblem as he or she oscillates between *pictura* and *explicatio*; a movement which, further, parallels the mental oscillation between visible world and spiritual meaning the emblem models and encourages. Considered in this way, the octet's presentation of a simile vehicle corresponds to the emblematic *pictura*, while the sestet, which presents the tenor, reveals the ultimate meaning of the emblem; the *explicatio* is implied, left up to the reader to produce through his or her reading of the poem. In "The Birth-Bond" (Sonnet XV), for instance, an image of the special life-long bond between twins is offered as an emblematic representation of the intimate bond the speaker feels toward his love from the first moment of their meeting:

> Have you not noted, in some family
> Where two were born of a first marriage-bed,
> How still they own their gracious bond...
> [...]

[33] These are "Bridal Birth" (II), "The Birth-Bond" (XV), "Pride of Youth" (XXIV), "Transfigured Life" (LX), "From Dawn to Noon" (LXXX), "Lost on Both Sides" (XCI), and "Life the Beloved" (XCVI).

> ... [how] each
> Shall for the other have, in silence speech,
> And in a word complete community?
> Even so, when I first saw you, seemed it, love,
> That among souls allied to mine was yet
> One nearer kindred than life hinted of. (1-11)

The lack of an explicit, point-by-point unpacking of the grounds linking vehicle and tenor that would be expected in a normative emblem actually encourages an emblematic style of reading here by forcing the reader to move back and forth between octave and sestet in order to interpret and grasp the full extent of the figure. As Fontana notes, however, vehicle and tenor in Rossetti's sonnets are frequently "radically heterogeneous" (445): siblings, for example, are not an obvious or especially appropriate figure for lovers. In a similar way, in "Life the Beloved" (XCVI), Dante Gabriel tropes the early stages of spring in the image of a friend whose face is sickly in reality, but remains healthy in one's memory: in both cases, the connection is potentially revealing, yet obscure. Most important is the fact that, although vehicle and tenor have become disconnected in these poems, verbal tags consistently establish emblematic relationships between the images and their meanings. This detachment of sign and meaning within a persistently emblematic framework illustrates Dante Gabriel's retreat from the Christian "universe of correspondences and analogies" (Fontana 445), on the one hand, and his retention of the hermeneutic mechanisms associated with it, on the other.

From his early paintings of the 1840s and early 1850s, notorious for their use of Catholic imagery and symbolism and characterized by an overtly emblematic approach to

the elucidation of the visual element by a verbal component (for example, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*), Dante Gabriel turned famously to lush three-quarter-length portraits of beautiful women (such as *Lady Lilith* and *Sibylla Palmifera*; Fig. 66) which, while they are occasionally accompanied by poems, appear to place the physical and sensual before the spiritual. In fact, however, as Lothar Hönnighausen argues, despite "considerable differences" between these pictures and his earlier Anglo-Catholic work, many of these later works are best understood as "symbolic portraits" which "presuppose a public interested in symbolic representation and a willingness to uncover emblematic meanings" (40). In the same way that Pistrucci's *Iconologia* presents figures clothed, positioned and accoutered in a manner decoded as emblematic of such abstract concepts as "Nature" and "Despair," so these portraits are emblematic renderings of concepts like "Soul's Beauty" and "Body's Beauty." By the same token, it is helpful to think of Dante Gabriel's extensive use of personification in *The House of Life* as a series of verbal emblematic portraits in miniature. As in his paintings, so in this sonnet sequence, his use of that technique is driven by a rhetorical emblematic impulse to find appropriate visual or physical correlatives to abstract concepts that he no longer saw as tied in any necessary way to a particular set of signs. In total, 69 of *The House of Life*'s 101 sonnets contain one or more of 52 distinct concepts, personified in condensed emblematic portraits. These include Love, Life, Death, Youth, Beauty, Fate, Too-late, Hope, Joy, Pain, Art and Peace, as well as all the seasons, several months of the year, and Sleep.[34] By far the most common persona is Love, which appears

[34] The complete list is as follows: Love, Life, Death, Beauty, Hope, Day, Night, Time, Fame, Youth, Oblivion, Song, Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, Fate, Passion of Love, Love's Worship, May, June, New Love, Old Love, To-day, Yesterday, Earth, Sleep, Joy, Ruth, Memory, Past, Sweet Love, Desire of Love, Love's Fatality, Pain, Work, Will, Lord of work and peace, Lord of life, Lord of will, Lord of death, November, Art, Lady Beauty, Peace, The World's grey Soul, The green World, Might-have-been, No-more, Too-late, Farewell, (new) Self.

on its own or in one of several altered shapes which highlight its forms and changes (Passion of Love, Love's Worship, Sweet Love, Desire of Love, Love's Fatality) in nearly each of the 69 poems that contain such portraits.

While the scope of this chapter prevents me from discussing all 52 personae or all 69 poems that contain them, a sonnet that best exemplifies Dante Gabriel's use of emblematic portraiture is "Love Enthroned" (I). The emblematics of this poem derive from the rhetorical tradition of arguing from commonplaces: by employing a complex series of intertwined (and to a certain degree, mutually-elucidating) emblematic figures, the poet constructs an argument that Love is all-powerful. The poet opens by recounting the process by which he arrived at this conclusion: "I marked all kindred Powers the heart finds fair" (1). In other words, the poet claims to have assembled and analyzed all possible influences on the human heart, which he goes on to list and describe:

> Truth, with awed lips; and Hope, with eyes up-cast;
> And Fame, whose loud wings fan the ashen Past
> To signal-fires, Oblivion's flight to scare;
> And Youth, with still some single golden hair
> Unto his shoulder clinging, since the last
> Embrace wherein two sweet arms held him fast;
> And Life, still wreathing flowers for Death to wear. (2-8)

While here, as is the case with the "as-so" sonnets, the *explicatio* is left un-elaborated, each personification is described in a way that reveals, in very few words, something essential about the "Power" in question: the figure of Truth with its "awed lips" emphasizes the sense of accountability to a higher authority one has in speaking the truth; Hope's "up-cast" eyes

suggest not only its expression in an optimistic outlook, but also its rootedness in faith. The image of Fame as having "loud wings" which "fan the ashen Past" is a remarkably condensed figure: its wingedness suggests both its ability to soar and to travel quickly; the loudness of these wings references its tendency to broadcast itself; its fanning of the "ashen Past," an image whose evocation of the winged Phoenix rising from its own ashes hints that Fame may be reborn out of failure, expresses its ability to revive the "Past's" glories in order to stave off "Oblivion," which is in turn troped simply as darkness. The figure of "Life" making a garland of flowers "for Death to wear" is an image of the former's ephemerality and the inevitable possession, by Death, of all of the "fruits" of Life.

Thus, in eight lines, Dante Gabriel constructs seven emblematic portraits; in the final six, he translates these into an argument about Love's interconnectedness with but superiority to these "powers":

> Love's throne was not with these; but far above
> All passionate wind of welcome and farewell
> He sat in breathless bowers they dream not of;
> Though Truth foreknow Love's heart, and Hope foretell,
> And Fame be for Love's sake desirable,
> And Youth be dear, and Life be sweet to Love. (9-14)

Despite the fact that Truth and Hope have privileged access to Love (as able to "foreknow" and "foretell" it, which identifies them as conditions for Love), that Love is what makes Fame desirable (because it attracts adulation), and that Youth and Life are both precious to Love (because they are conditions for its existence and success), Love is placed on a "throne" located "far above" these, as well as above "the wind of welcome and farewell," an

image suggestive of change and loss, in a "breathless bower." This poem is thus an excellent example of the influence of such rhetorical emblem texts as the *Iconologia*s on Dante Gabriel's poetic methods: by appealing throughout the poem to emblematic topoi which claim to body forth some essential facet of ideas such as truth, hope, and fame, the poet constructs an argument that although love is to some degree contingent on these, it is ultimately timeless and all-powerful.

While the work of the PRB, Christina Rossetti and Gerard Manley Hopkins is characterized by a consistently straightforward and unproblematic use of devotional emblematics, a representational strategy that is both based on and reflects an incarnational understanding of the visible world, Dante Gabriel's shift away from the ontological and semiotic certainty of his PRB days toward the insecure unbelief of his later adulthood produced a literary parallel: a shift from devotional to rhetorical emblematics. While his 1868-69 revisions remove the sacramental echoes from his earlier works, and while the manner and purpose of Dante Gabriel's use of emblematics are consequently radically altered, he continued to make use of various forms of that strategy throughout his career. Readings of his work which take into account its indebtedness not just to the Anglo-Dutch, devotional and meditational emblem traditions, but which also recognize its rootedness in the rhetorical emblematic tradition can shed new light on his puzzling or seemingly old-fashioned use of elaborate conceits and personified abstractions. While his use of devotional emblematics in his early work purported to "discover" the meanings already inherent in objects and events, his later work employs rhetorical emblematic strategies as a means of producing stability in signs whose signifiers, following his crisis of faith, had begun to drift. By drawing on a tradition in which meaning could be created and imposed

arbitrarily on signs, Dante Gabriel was able to stabilize meaning in his works, in spite of his ontological doubt. As this chapter suggests, and as the next chapter will show, despite vast differences of religious and aesthetic belief – from Christina through Dante Gabriel to Swinburne – poets associated with the Pre-Raphaelite movement all share a common reliance on the representational strategies of the emblem.

Chapter 6

"All are types unmeet": Swinburne and the Limits of the Emblem

As the prevailing critical view of Algernon Charles Swinburne – a poet preoccupied with sexual, political, religious and poetic transgression – would lead one to expect, his work departs in significant ways from that of the other Pre-Raphaelites treated in this study. Devotional emblematics is a fundamental aesthetic strategy in the work of the early PRB, whose *Germ* magazine tellingly combines images and text in a wholly normative emblematic fashion, and whose poems seek to draw their readers' attention to natural detail, framed sacramentally; the emblem is likewise a key tactic in both Christina Rossetti's and Hopkins'[1] sacramental poetics. Dante Gabriel's use of the emblem evolves from a technique that discovers and affirms an analogical universe into one that attempts to produce ontological and hermeneutic stability where he can no longer believe there to be any. In this way, Dante Gabriel's use of the emblem represents a falling-away from the confident logocentrism of the early PRB and its more devout associates, but stops short of casting doubt on the emblem's ability to stabilize meaning. Swinburne's use of emblematics, on the

---

[1] Renée Overholser's "'Our King Back, Oh, Upon English Souls!': Swinburne, Hopkins, and the Politics of Religion" (*Victorian Religious Discourse*, 2004) draws a fascinating series of parallels between "the masterfully vituperative, radically republican Swinburne" who called for "England's conversion to the cause of international revolution against the Roman Catholic Church," on the one hand, and Hopkins, who called "for England's reconversion to its Catholic roots," on the other (131). Both began as High Church Anglicans; both attended Balliol, where both underwent conversion (Hopkins to Catholicism, Swinburne to atheism); in 1856, Swinburne was one of the founding members of Old Mortality at Oxford, an undergraduate group devoted to radical philosophy and thought; eight years later Hopkins founded the Hexameron society, which was intended "to preserve men... with good church feeling" from the "snare of such societies as the Old Mortality" (qtd. in Overholser 132). It is interesting to note that Hopkins' return to poetry during his Jesuit years is marked by his use of Swinburne's own voice to gainsay that "powerfully defiant heretic" (133): Overholser argues that Hopkins was able to construct "a 'serviceable' poetic by transmuting Swinburne's texts to the uses of Roman Catholicism" (145). Finally, just as *The Wreck of the Deutschland* is Hopkins' response to Vatican Council I (in the sense that its edicts provoked the *Kulturkampf* which led Germany to expel the group of nuns who perished in the wreck), so Swinburne's angry indictment of the Catholic church in *Songs before Sunrise* is in part a reaction to the Council's affirmation of papal primacy (135-39).

other hand, subverts the form itself: while the other Pre-Raphaelites in this study turn to the emblem as a strategy of representation in situations where other methods fail – specifically in representing the ineffable – Swinburne's invocation of emblem strategies to treat the sublime exposes the failures and limitations of that strategy, thereby undermining the role the emblem was traditionally thought to play as a vehicle for the expression of ultimate truths.

Background

Born in London in 1837 to naval captain (later admiral) Charles Henry Swinburne and Jane Ashburnham, the daughter of an Earl, Algernon Charles Swinburne was raised in what biographer Philip Henderson has characterized as an "ardent[ly] Anglo-Catholic" home (8): both parents were deeply affected by the Oxford Movement, and this in turn influenced Swinburne's own religious outlook from childhood into adolescence. In an 1875 letter to E.C. Stedman, then in the process of writing an article about the poet for *Scribner's Monthly*, Swinburne addresses the complex issue of his early faith and his later antitheism, which, despite its vehemence, was tinged with a sense of regret:

> Having been as a child and boy brought up a quasi-Catholic, of course, I went in for that as passionately as for other things (e.g. well-nigh to unaffected and unashamed ecstasies of adoration when receiving the Sacrament); then when this was naturally stark dead and buried, it left nothing to me but a turbid nihilism: for a Theist I never was.... (qtd. in Henderson 190)

Although he would renounce religion altogether during his time as an undergraduate at Balliol College, Oxford, the adolescent Swinburne nevertheless shared with the other Pre-

Raphaelites – especially Christina Rossetti – this moral-aesthetic enthusiasm for the rituals and trappings of High Anglican worship. What is most significant about this passage, however, is Swinburne's description of his transformation from High Anglicanism to antitheism as a death: the change may have been natural and inevitable, but it was also accompanied by feelings of loss, rather than of (for example) affirmation or liberation from an oppressive creed. Indeed, as a letter from Swinburne's friend and housemate of the last twenty years of his life, Theodore Watts-Dunton, to the poet's sister Isabel reveals, Swinburne viewed his turn away from the beliefs his family continued to hold as having placed a barrier between himself and his loved ones; religion was an issue he found painful, because he believed it had "severed him from his most beloved ties" (qtd. in Lafourcade 301).[2] His desire for fellowship on the basis of shared beliefs is also vividly apparent early on, in a letter he wrote to his mother in 1855 while on a trip to Cologne, Germany. Attending a church service at the Roman Catholic Cathedral there, he reports feeling

> quite miserable, it was such a wretched feeling that while they were all praying, old men and tiny children kneeling together, I was not one of them, I was shut out as it were. I could have sat down and cried, I was so unhappy. (qtd. in Henderson 24)

As an adolescent, he was confident in his own faith; in adulthood, he was confident in his antitheism. However, Swinburne seems also to have been profoundly affected in his youth by the knowledge that he could not worship alongside Catholics, and later, that his

---

[2] Swinburne was taken out of Eton and placed with two different private tutors, both Church of England ministers, to prepare him for Oxford. The reasons for his withdrawal from Eton are unclear, but Georges Lafourcade speculates that it might have been an attempt to groom Swinburne for a career in the Church after Oxford: "Algernon was not physically very strong; his religious faith was whole and perfect; he read aloud beautifully and with a fine sense of rhythm; he reveled in the Bible and the classics" (Lafourcade 52). As his mother's letters to Watts-Dunton during Swinburne's middle age reveal, her hope for his "return to the religious faith of his youth" was unfailing (qtd. in Henderson 238).

antitheism set him apart from his family and the great majority of his peers: this fact appears to have caused him some grief, something many critics overlook. While the dominant tone of much of his major poetry is indeed vehemently anti-Christian (his "Hymn to Proserpine," for example, laments that "the world has grown grey from [Christ's] breath" [35]), there are subtle hints that the poet mourned the loss of a creed he found himself unable to cling to. This nostalgia – in the truest sense of the word, meaning the pain resulting from an inability to return "home" – is expressed especially in his ambivalent handling of emblematics. Swinburne's clear affection for the emblem tradition conflicts in a fundamental way with his antitheism's rejection of the religious grounds on which the emblem predicates its signifying power.

Swinburne was educated at Eton until 1853, where he acquired an extensive knowledge of Greek and Latin poetry, as well as some background in French and Italian literature. As Georges Lafourcade notes, English literature was not taught at Eton, with the exception of Shakespeare's plays, which students were assigned to translate into Greek (31; 35-36). Swinburne had already been introduced to that playwright (in censored, family-friendly form) by his mother, who gave him *Bowdler's Family Shakespeare* when he was a child; he claimed to have been studying the bard on his own from the tender age of six (Lafourcade 29). Indeed, independent reading of a wide variety of subjects was encouraged at Eton, and by many accounts, the autodidactic Swinburne devoured a number of "antique" volumes at school, preferring especially sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English works. One schoolmate recalls seeing him "perched up Turk-or-tailor wise in one of the windows looking out on the yard, with some huge old-world tome, almost as big as himself, upon his lap" (qtd. in Henderson 14). Besides Shakespeare, his favourite authors were "Marlowe,

Spenser, Ben Jonson, Ford, Massinger, Beaumont, [and] Fletcher" (Henderson 14-15). His considerable pocket-money made it possible for him to purchase the complete works of these authors, many of which were then being reprinted (Lafourcade 36). This passion for Elizabethan drama persisted throughout Swinburne's life: a highlight of Max Beerbohm's account of his visit to the elderly Swinburne in 1899, for example, is his description of the poet's daily reading of "at least one play by an Elizabethan or Jacobean dramatist" (qtd. in Henderson 250), and of Swinburne's proud display of the rare editions he had collected:

> ...he conducted me to a chair near the window, left me there, flew away, flew up the rungs of a mahogany ladder, plucked a small volume, and in a twinkling was at my side: 'This, I think, will please you!' It did. It had a beautifully engraved title-page and a pleasing scent of old, old leather. It was the *editio princeps* of a play by some lesser Elizabethan or Jacobean dramatist.... (qtd. in Henderson 252)

His Mary, Queen of Scots blank-verse plays (*Chastelard*, *Bothwell* and *Mary Stuart*), written in the same style and in much the same archaic diction as Renaissance dramas, suggest that the depth of Swinburne's affection for the literature of that period was such that he sought ways of participating in it himself. Especially interesting about this abiding literary preference are the clear ties it establishes between Swinburne and the emblem tradition. Indeed, for years, emblem studies has focused on Renaissance literature, especially drama, and the presence of emblematic strategies in plays of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras has been well-established by such scholars as Silcox, Daly, Russell, and Philip Collington, to name only a few.[3] It seems likely that the verbal emblematics at work in Renaissance drama

[3] See for example *Other Voices, Other Views: Expanding the Canon in English Renaissance Studies* (1999),

provided Swinburne with a model for his own use of those strategies. His reproductions of those works, moreover, show that Swinburne used emblem strategies in an adept and deliberate – though complex – way.

While his childhood reading and early education laid the groundwork for his interest in emblematics, Swinburne's time at Oxford would bring him into closer contact with a number of the emblem sources that influence his mature work. Although he would there convert from the High Anglicanism of his upbringing to antitheism, Swinburne arrived at Oxford in 1856 with his faith intact – indeed, he later admitted he was in the midst of "a recrudescence of Anglican ritualism" (qtd. in Lafourcade 60) at the start of his first year. While much has been made of the influence of his school friend John Nichol, a freethinking dissenter (Lafourcade 61), Swinburne seems also to have felt alienated by the heavily "theological atmosphere" of Oxford (lately the site of Oxford Movement controversy), on the one hand, and by the extreme rationalism of Balliol College, most notably of Benjamin Jowett, on the other (Lafourcade 57). In November of 1856, Swinburne belonged to the group of men who would found the Old Mortality Society, a club dedicated to "stimulating and promoting the interchange of thought among the members on the more general questions of literature, philosophy, science, as well as the diffusion of a correct knowledge and critical appreciation of our Standard English authors" (qtd. in Henderson 26). Discussions among the members of this group turned mainly on politics and religion, and it quickly developed into a highly "unorthodox institution" (Lafourcade 60); the extreme views of its head, Nichol, are generally seen as having been instrumental in the destruction

---

edited by Silcox, Helen Ostovich and Graham Roebuck; Collington's "'A Puppet-Play in Pictures': Thomas Middleton's Emblematic Drama" appears in that collection; also Daly and Manning (eds), *Aspects of Renaissance and Baroque Symbol Theory, 1500-1700* (1999).

of Swinburne's personal orthodoxy (Lafourcade 61; Henderson 26-7). It was through this friendship and his participation in the society that Swinburne developed the antitheistic and republican views that would mark his long career.

While at Oxford, Swinburne was also famously drawn into the Pre-Raphaelite circle when Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones embarked on their ill-fated 1857 "jovial campaign" to paint murals on the walls and ceiling of the Oxford Union. However, as Lafourcade suggests, Swinburne was primed for this meeting by the time he had spent at Wallington Hall with Lady Pauline Trevelyan, a neighbour of the Swinburnes in Northumberland, before he went to Oxford (53). Swinburne was encouraged in his early attempts at writing poetry by Lady Trevelyan, but more importantly, his frequent visits to her house exposed him to an atmosphere "faintly laden with Pre-Raphaelite incense" (Lafourcade 53): like Ruskin, Lady Trevelyan was an early admirer of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and defended their cause in the press (in Lady Trevelyan's case, in *The Scotsman*); Ruskin himself visited the house often and consulted on its decoration; the painter William Bell Scott, then heavily influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites' new style, was at that time in the midst of painting a series of eight large murals at Wallington Hall (Lafourcade 53). Thus, by the time Swinburne encountered the Pre-Raphaelites themselves, he was likely already versed in and sympathetic to their aims. Morris's poetry – especially *The Defense of Guinevere* – had the biggest influence on Swinburne: its style, medieval themes, and archaic language "caused Swinburne to completely alter his [own]" (Lafourcade 70; Cochran 58). Lafourcade goes so far as to claim that Swinburne began writing his own "Queen Yseult" (which would be published in *Undergraduate Papers*, the magazine of Old Mortality) "[a] few days, perhaps a few hours after meeting Morris for the first time" in

November of 1857 (70). This marked the beginning of lifelong friendships between Swinburne and some of the major Pre-Raphaelites as, almost immediately, Swinburne was embraced by the group and given the affectionate nickname of "Little Carrots" (Henderson 29). Noting his exceptional poetic ability, Dante Gabriel took on the role of mentor to Swinburne, critiquing his poetry and even consulting doctors about Swinburne's mysterious ailments (Henderson 73). In 1862, following the death of Dante Gabriel's wife Elizabeth Siddal Rossetti, Swinburne moved into Dante Gabriel's house in Chelsea. This arrangement would last until 1864, when Dante Gabriel's nervous breakdown and Swinburne's own drunken antics put an end to the relationship: Swinburne received a politely-worded letter asking him to move out (Henderson 79). Nonetheless, his encounter with the second generation of Pre-Raphaelites would shape Swinburne's poetry in a fundamental and lasting way. Many critics (including, for example, Rebecca Cochran and Antony H. Harrison) have noted the influence of Morris's medievalism on Swinburne's poetry, but it is also likely that emblematics is something the lover of Elizabethan drama would have recognized in the work of the Pre-Raphaelites and understood as confirming his own aesthetic predispositions.

The Emblem: Admiration and Ambivalence

Over the course of his seventy-three years, Swinburne produced an extraordinary range of works whose frank and unorthodox approach to sexuality, politics and religion presented a number of challenges to Victorian taboos. In his groundbreaking critical essay on *William Blake* (1868), Swinburne became one of the first to treat the works of that visionary engraver-poet (and emblematist) seriously, clearing the way for future studies. He also produced a book-length *Study of Shakespeare* (1879), as well as a number of shorter

critical essays on the works of such writers as Dante Gabriel Rossetti (whose style, he declares, "excels that of any English poet of our day" [*Essays and Studies* 62]), Lord Byron, Victor Hugo (a "name imperishable" [14]), Coleridge and others; many of these were first published in the *Fortnightly Review* before being collected in *Essays and Studies* (1875). He also wrote plays, including two classical verse dramas based on Greek myth – *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865) and *Erechtheus* (1876) – and a trilogy of verse dramas on the life and death of Mary, Queen of Scots. *Chastelard* (1865) details the Catholic Queen's love for that courtier and his subsequent execution; the enormous *Bothwell* (1874) deals at length with the illicit passion between Mary and the title character, with whom she was alleged to have plotted the death of her second husband; the final play, *Mary Stuart* (1881) depicts the Queen's last days in prison and her execution on the orders of her cousin, Queen Elizabeth I. In true Victorian fashion, Swinburne also wrote a novel, *Love's Cross-Currents* (1905). His poetic production, however, was by far his most considerable and influential, consisting of some dozen volumes. *Poems and Ballads*, first published in 1866, was reissued with additional poems as *Poems and Ballads, Second Series* in 1878, and as *Poems and Ballads, Third Series* in 1889. In the earlier part of his career, Swinburne courted controversy, following his hymns to French decadent poet Charles Baudelaire in *Ave Atque Vale* (1868) with a set of poems dedicated to Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini, *Songs Before Sunrise* (1871), and *Songs of Two Nations* (1875), which praises the republican movements in France and Italy. Many of his later works, written after the once-uncontrollably alcoholic Swinburne had been taken to Wimbledon to live under the careful stewardship of his friend Watts-Dunton, engage less directly with controversial themes, focusing instead on the delights of babies, the English countryside, especially its seascapes, and great English poets

– a change which may have reflected his improved health and the natural beauty of his surroundings.[4] Among these later works are *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems* (1882), *A Century of Roundels* (1883), and *A Midsummer Holiday* (1884).

Criticism of Swinburne touches rarely on his participation in the emblem tradition. More often, and with good reason, critics focus on the many ways in which his poetry addresses and traverses sexual, political, religious, and poetic boundaries.[5] Contemporary reviews of his work are alike in registering shock: the *London Review* denounces the poetry as "a carnival of ugly shapes" (xiii; qtd. in Pease 43); John Morley in the *Saturday Review* describes it as displaying "the feverish carnality of a schoolboy"; in the *Athenaeum*, meanwhile, Robert Buchanan accuses Swinburne of being "unclean for the mere sake of uncleanness" (qtd. in Hyder 23, 31). Recent critics have attempted to assess the challenges that Swinburne's poetry posed to the expectations and norms of his day. As Alison Pease so vividly puts it,

> His depictions of sexually enslaved, sexually ambiguous characters biting one another and sucking the blood from inflicted bruises were just the kind of thing that could bring a Victorian family's reading session in the parlor to an unfortunate and abrupt close. (46)

---

[4] According to his biographers, Swinburne's daily routine in Wimbledon involved a morning constitutional through the common, a bottle of beer at the local pub, lunch, a nap, and reading and writing through the afternoon and evening. His housemate and guardian, Watts-Dunton, reportedly weaned Swinburne, who was taken to Wimbledon from London near death from years of alcohol abuse, from hard liquor to port, to sherry, to wine, and finally to beer, which was meted out to him in limited quantities for the rest of his life. Swinburne and Watts-Dunton also made occasional holidays to the seaside in France.

[5] See Allison Pease, "Questionable Figures: Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads*"; Joseph E. Riehl, "Swinburne's Doublings"; Jerome McGann, "Swinburne's Radical Artifice; or, The Comedian as A.C."; Thaïs Morgan, "Rereading Nature: Wordsworth Between Swinburne and Arnold"; Jonathan Smith, "Une Fleur du Mal? Swinburne's 'The Sundew' and Darwin's *Insectivorous Plants*"; Cassandra Laity, "T.S. Eliot and A.C. Swinburne: Decadent Bodies, Modern Visualities, and Changing Modes of Perception"; Valeria Tinker-Villani, "Atheism and Belief in Shelley, Swinburne and Christina Rossetti," to name only a few examples.

Perhaps for this reason, the emblematic implications of Swinburne's work – and its continuities in this regard with more orthodox Pre-Raphaelite poetry – have largely been ignored. Lothar Hönnighausen's *The Symbolist Tradition*, one of few critical works to address the emblematic aspects of Swinburne's poetry, establishes Swinburne as a participant in the late stages of the emblem tradition, noting especially that while his use of flower imagery is never made to function in a directly emblematic way, its ornate and allusive structure is nonetheless fully rooted in "the tradition of the Victorian floral emblems" (41).

Mary Lou McKenna's "'Masks of Words and Painted Plots': Swinburne and Nineteenth-Century Emblematics" is a more substantial study – indeed, the only substantial study to date – of the centrality of emblematics to Swinburne's poetics. Looking specifically at the Mary, Queen of Scots trilogy, McKenna argues that Swinburne "incorporates emblematic detail into a complex body of symbolism itself embedded in a self-reflexive and meta-linguistic discourse that foregrounds the politics and artifice of all signification" (178). McKenna explores Swinburne's familiarity with the emblem tradition, arguing that his integration of emblematic detail throughout the Mary Stuart series suggests that he was interested in more than its historical associations with Mary, a known maker of emblems which served as secret messages in her needle-work and dress (184). Rather, Swinburne is concerned with the emblem's promise to create and guarantee meaning. As McKenna concludes, however, his intrigue is overlaid with skepticism about the emblem's "ability to access an objective reality or to adequately convey subjective truths and ideals" (197), and the emblem motifs in his verse dramas serve to destabilize rather than ground or affirm the Queen's identity.

A highlight of McKenna's discussion of emblematics in the Mary, Queen of Scots plays is her analysis of the Queen's "breast-clasp" or brooch, the motif of which the Queen herself describes in her first appearance in *Chastelard*:

> A Venus crowned, that eats the hearts of men:
> Below her flies a love with a bat's wings,
> And strings the hair of paramours to bind
> Live birds' feet with. (1.2.12-15)

The "legend" or motto of this image is "*Cave*" – beware (23). Whether the brooch identifies Mary as a fatal woman or is merely a commonplace about the perils of love is unclear. As McKenna notes, far from a definitive statement about Mary, the motif's ambiguity allows both the brooch and Mary herself to elude definition. McKenna argues that the Queen's image throughout the trilogy is shifting and constructed by men, who hold the balance of epistemological power: Darnley, for instance, advises the Queen to "get you some painting" because, he asserts, "looking with this face of yours / None shall believe you holy" (*Chastelard* 4.1.513-14; McKenna 191). Complicating McKenna's view, however, is the fact that the men in these plays are consistently revealed to be incapable of reading or interpreting emblems, while Mary is presented as possessing superior interpretive power. In the brooch scene in *Chastelard*, for example, Mary's description and partial explication of the brooch are occasioned by Chastelard's inability to properly see it, much less read it: "what device?" he asks; "the word is ill to catch" (1.2.11). Following Mary's description, he confesses that "I see the Venus well enough, God wot, / But nothing of the legend" (1.2.24-25), which suggests that one of the keys to its meaning is unavailable to him. Chastelard is thus established almost immediately as a failed reader of emblems, while Mary is presented

as a master explicator and interpreter. Later, Chastelard is also unable to grasp the meaning of Mary's assertion that men are uninterpretable until after their death, a statement which reveals her assumption that they are in fact readable, or have a signic quality: it is only "when the man is held fast underground" that one can "say for sooth what manner of heart he had" (2.1.38-39), she declares, to which Chastelard replies, "Madam, your speech is hard to understand" (2.1.43). Indeed, given his performance with the brooch, this admission of confusion suggests that the very notion of reading analogically or emblematically – something Mary is clearly adept at – may be entirely unfamiliar to him.

Even the ambiguity of motifs associated with Mary – which reflects the moral ambiguity of Mary herself – is something the final play, *Mary Stuart*, suggests she has the power to manipulate to suit her own ends. Although by this point she has been stripped of her temporal authority, forced to abdicate the throne of Scotland, and is imprisoned in England, Mary continues to exert power over (and through) language. In discussing Mary's potential as a threat to the authority of the English throne, courtier William Davison tells Queen Elizabeth that

> This queen hath skill of writing: and her hand
> Hath manifold eloquence with various voice
> To express discourse of sirens or of snakes,
> A mermaid's or a monster's, uttering best
> All music or all malice. (4.3.198-202)

Contrary to McKenna's claim that it is the utterances of men which construct Mary, and that by comparison, Mary's own emblems have little power to signify with certitude (191), this passage expressly identifies Mary as the author of her own image. What's more, the fluidity

and ambiguity of her image are cast as a sign and a source of her power, rather than, as McKenna claims, factors which compromise it (190-91). Through "discourse," Mary is capable of adapting herself to suit a variety of situations, transforming herself into the emblematic figures of the snake, siren, mermaid or monster, depending on what her position demands. This ability and the power it denotes, as Davison suggests, are part of what makes her a threat.

Indeed, Mary offers a direct challenge to male epistemological authority in *Chastelard* when she implies that she has the power to destabilize language. Darnley presents the Queen with her alleged lover Chastelard's death warrant (he is to be punished for having been found in the Queen's private chambers), and asks her "do you not love him? Nay, but verily?" (4.1.409). Mary's true feelings for the courtier remain in doubt: the reader has seen her profess her love to him – how sincerely, we are not sure – and her attempt to deny that love here happens through a sarcastic assertion of it that casts further doubt on her feelings for both Darnley and Chastelard. She acknowledges male linguistic authority when she notes that if "ye will have me love him, ye will swear / That I do love him; who shall say he lie?" (4.1.415). However, she advises Darnley to

> Look on your paper; maybe I have wept:
> Doubtless I love your hanged man in my heart.
> What, is the writing smutched or gone awry?
> Or blurred – ay, surely so much – with one tear.
> One little sharp tear strayed on it by chance? (4.1.416-20)

This coy suggestion that her tears – which it is not clear she has actually cried, and whose authenticity, if she has cried them, is also questionable – have blurred the writing on the

death warrant argues that, as a Queen, she has the ability to destabilize the linguistic foundations on which men erect their authority. Mary's assertion of her claim to this power appears to rest on an appeal to feminine sensibility, rather than reason, but the doubtful sincerity of her "tears" in fact subverts this argument. Taken together with other examples of her linguistic power throughout the trilogy, this exchange is an important indicator of Swinburne's understanding of signs as fluid, ungrounded, and therefore subject to the power structure which governs those who use them.

My argument in this chapter builds on McKenna's observations of the Mary, Queen of Scots dramas while broadening their scope to include a wider variety of Swinburne's works. Like McKenna, I see Swinburne as ambivalent about the emblem's capacity to represent "truth." While he appears to find the rhetorical emblem tradition useful in limited applications, as a way of defining key terms and clarifying abstract concepts (like Dante Gabriel Rossetti, making extensive use of personification), emblems often fail in his poetry to perform their traditional function of embodying that which might otherwise be deemed unrepresentable. Thus, Swinburne believes in the epistemological value of emblems, their ability to convey information, but, in contrast to many of the other Pre-Raphaelites, denies them any special ontological power to contain or convey the ineffable. For Swinburne, all language, even the emblem, fails in the face of the sublime.

Swinburne's reputation as a republican, an atheist (an anti-Christian, in fact) and a sexual "deviant" whose poetry celebrates physical and sexual pleasures makes any connection between his poetry and the emblem tradition seem, at best, unlikely. In fact, however, his classical education and self-confessed bibliomania (*Swinburne Letters* 5: 234-35) familiarized him with several strains of emblematics. In an 1879 letter to editor

Alexander Grosart he confides that among his "choicest treasures" is a "wretched reprint" of one of George Wither's books, a volume he identifies in a later essay as the "lyric and satiric poems" (Swinburne, "Lamb and Wither" 68).[6] Acknowledging the prevailing view of Wither by this time as old-fashioned, he encourages Grosart to undertake a new edition of the emblematist's works, declaring "what a boon (with all his shortcomings) on how many accounts would a complete reissue of Wither be to us all!" (*Swinburne Letters* 4: 104).[7] Swinburne's 1885 article, "Charles Lamb and George Wither," printed in *The Nineteenth Century*, describes in detail his copy of Wither's volume, which was interleaved with annotations by Charles Lamb. The dominant tone of the essay is one of nostalgia, as Swinburne revels in both the "sanguine temperament" (69) of Wither's own compositions and the "charm" and "tenderness" of Lamb's commentary on them (66-67). Wither appears to have been Swinburne's favourite emblematist: his is listed as the 80th of Swinburne's 100 favorite books in a list he sends the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* (*Swinburne Letters* 5: 134), and on several occasions, he works oblique references to Wither's *Abuses Stript and Whipt* (1613) into his correspondence (*Swinburne Letters* 3: 319; 6: 45). While this affection for Wither may suggest that Swinburne's interest in emblems was based on fond memories of reading Wither's emblems in childhood, further letters show Swinburne to have

---

[6] An amusing series of letters to Lord Houghton (Richard Monckton Milnes) and to Watts-Dunton around this time chronicles Swinburne's diplomatic attempts to ask Lord Houghton to return his copy of Wither, which he had lent the peer ten years previously, and his resentful mockery of that gentleman to Watts-Dunton. "Do you know or remember anything of the fortunes of a treasured book of mine which if I am not mistaken was once in your hands?" he politely inquires of Houghton (*Swinburne Letters* 3: 123). On Houghton's return of the book, Swinburne tells Watts-Dunton: "Ten years had it lain in the pieuvre-like and tentacular clutch of old Houghton – but he has undertaken to disgorge it at last" (*Swinburne Letters* 3: 148).

[7] Swinburne's call for a reprint of classic emblem titles recalls fellow bibliophile Coleridge's wish for a "full collection, a *Bibliothece Specialis*, of the books of emblems and symbols, of all sects and parties, moral, theological or political, including those in the Centenaries and Jubilee volumes published by the Jesuit and other religious orders," something he declares "a desideratum in our library literature..." (qtd. in Bath, *Speaking Pictures* 277).

been an active connoisseur in adulthood of the emblem genre more generally. In one instance, he recommends the Flemish Otto Vaenius's *Emblematica Amoris* (1608; Fig. 67), of which he owns an "exquisite copy," over that emblematist's *Amoris Sacri* (1615), which he characterizes as "a much commoner and far inferior set of engravings" (*Letters* 4: 104). His interest in this book appears to have been more than superficial: he expresses his desire to know "who was his anonymous rhyming commentator and exponent to our countryman (*à la* Quarles)" (4: 104). This curiosity about the English translation of Vaenius suggests that he gave the matter considerable thought, and his comparison of it to Francis Quarles' English translations of the emblems in the Dutch Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* reveals his familiarity with the work of those emblematists as well.

Moreover, the catalogue of the Sotheby sale of Swinburne's books, which took place in June 1916, shows that he owned a number of other emblematic works besides those he mentioned in his letters: among these are *The Looking-Glass for the Mind*, an emblem book aimed at children with woodcuts by John Bewick (1814; Fig. 68); *Fables of Aesop and Others* with woodcuts by Thomas Bewick (1818; Fig. 69); *The Ship of Fools* (1874), an allegorical tale with emblematic woodcuts; *Reproductions of the Woodcuts in the Dream of Poliphilus* (1893) (or the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, the same esoteric proto-emblematic work that influenced the emblematics of Dante Gabriel Rossetti); Quarles' *Divine Fancies digested into Epigrammes, Meditations and Observations* (1632); and John Spencer's *Things, New and Old, or a Storehouse of Similes, Sentences, Allegories, etc.* (1658).[8] Given the predominance of emblematic works in his library, it seems that Swinburne's bibliomania had a decidedly emblematic focus.

[8] The sales catalogue is reproduced in John Woolford's *Poets and Men of Letters*, vol. 6 of *Sale Catalogues of Libraries of Eminent Persons.*

Emblems in Swinburne's Art Criticism

More than a passive consumer of emblematic material, as his critical prose reveals, Swinburne was alert to and interested in the emblematic structures at work in both visual and poetic works that fall outside the generally acknowledged boundaries of the emblem tradition; he was especially aware of emblematics in works by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Blake. As McKenna points out, his comments on Dante Gabriel's *Sibylla Palmifera* (Fig. 66) in his essay on the Royal Academy exhibition of 1868 ("Notes on Some Pictures of 1868," *Essays and Studies*) reveal his facility with emblematics, his ability to identify and interpret the painting's emblematic content (McKenna 180-81):

> The mystic emblems in the background show her power upon love and death to make them loyal servants to the law of her lofty and solemn spirit. Behind this figure of the ideal and inaccessible beauty, an inlaid wall of alternate alabaster and black marble bears inwrought on its upper part the rival twin emblems of love and death.... (376-77)

Here, not only does Swinburne interpret the main figure of the painting as a figure for ideal beauty, he also goes on to explicate key elements of the background as emblems of love and death, and reads the whole scene in light of these devices. His analysis of Dante Gabriel's poem "The Card-Dealer" in the same collection of essays ("The Poems of Dante Gabriel Rossetti," *Essays and Studies*) performs a similar exegesis of that work, at once pointing to its overtly emblematic character and displaying his own attentiveness to it:

> The sharpness of symbol and solidity of incarnation with which the idea is invested bring it so close to us that the mere type itself assumes as it were a bodily interest over and above its spirit and significance... whether the dealer

> be fortune or passion or ambition; pleasure or fame or any desire of man's, we see her mistress of the game in that world of shadows and echoes which is hers if ours. (88)

Swinburne refers to the female figure in the poem as a "type," a term which, as Höltgen has noted, was used interchangeably with "emblem" in the Victorian period (*Aspects* 143). And while Swinburne does not present a single, confident interpretation of this type, supposing that she may stand for any one of several concepts ("fortune or passion or ambition; pleasure or fame or any desire of man's"), his short-list of possibilities is itself an appropriate response to the emblem, which demands that the reader work to decode it. Finally, his "Notes on Designs of the Old Masters at Florence" (also collected in *Essays and Studies*) further reflects his "alertness to the emblematic properties of figure and dress" (McKenna 181): his comment on a fresco by Lippino identifies the "strange typical figure of a woman holding what seems some armorial blazon on a scroll in her hand" and speculates that "some doubtful evil ... is half expressed and half suppressed by her features and action" ("Florence" 329). Swinburne's interpretations of visual works thus display his awareness of and alertness to their emblematic strategies, revealing his own fundamentally emblematic habits of mind. At the same time, however, the multiplicity of meanings he suggests for the emblems he finds reveals his lack of confidence in the genre's ability to generate stable meanings.

Swinburne's *William Blake: A Critical Essay* (1868) has been characterized as "a brilliant and highly polemical 'art for art's sake' manifesto, by far the most important to come out of England ("Life of William Blake, 'Pictor Ignotus,'" *Rossetti Archive* par. 4), and an attempt to introduce the ideas of such French Decadents as Charles Baudelaire into

English discourse on art. Indeed, Swinburne's study frames Blake as the prototype of the Aesthete, hailing him as an "original thinker" (13) and a daring iconoclast who rejected "all that was accepted for art, all that was taken for poetry" – especially that which too often centered on "didactic and religious reflection" (13) – "as barren symbols" (3) and produced instead an oeuvre which has the author's very "life" and "blood... infused or woven into it" (5). However, woven through Swinburne's own text are terms which bring Blake's work firmly into the context of the emblem tradition: as he argues, "the passion for hints and types, common to all men of highly toned nerves and rapid reflectiveness of spirit, was not with Blake a matter of fugitive impulse or casual occasion" (33); in other words, Swinburne argues, emblematic habits of mind were of central importance to both the man and his work. The primacy of emblematics to Swinburne's view of Blake has been overlooked, likely due to the critical placement of *Blake* as a key text in the Aesthetic or "art for art's sake" movement, popularly understood to repudiate the kind of didacticism and moral-aesthetic aims emblematics generally entails.[9] In fact, as my discussion of Swinburne's political poetry will show, neither Swinburne nor any other key Aesthetic wholly rejects didacticism in art. Further, as Höltgen, Bath, Lothar Hönnighausen ("Preface"; 1-2; 6) and others have shown, certain strains of the emblem tradition do seek primarily to instruct, but emblematic discourse in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was eclectic and plastic, adapting itself to a wide range of aims. Finally, as Chapter 5 notes, since Swinburne's time, Blake's verbal-visual texts have been acknowledged as fully emblematic by such critics as Frye, Nanavutty

[9] Although critics often assume that the Aesthetic movement rejects emblematics (see note 10), in fact, as I discuss in my conclusion, there are several ways in which key fin-de-siècle texts incorporate emblematic strategies. As I attempt to show, by examining the continued presence of emblematics in the work of such major turn-of-the-century authors as Oscar Wilde and W.B. Yeats, we may complicate the view that this movement represents a totalizing rejection of the moral-aesthetic ideals of such high Victorians as Ruskin.

and Hagstrum. Thus, even though Swinburne's aim in the study may indeed have been to construct Blake as a paradigm of Aestheticism, that goal did not prevent Swinburne from identifying and commenting on the emblematic structures that are in fact fundamental to the artist-poet's major works.

Given Aestheticism's assumed distaste for anything that resembled the emblem,[10] it is especially startling that Swinburne frames a portion of his argument about Blake's affinities with the Aesthetic movement in emblematic terms. Although some variant of the phrase "art for art's sake" had been used in French criticism before this point,[11] it was introduced into England by two critics at the same moment: Walter Pater uses the slogan in his 1868 review of William Morris's poetry, published in the *Westminster Review*, and Swinburne uses it the same year in his *Critical Essay* on Blake. Describing Blake's aesthetic principles, on the one hand, and his manner of dealing with those contemporary forces antithetical to his project, on the other, Swinburne notes admiringly the poet-artist's emblematic ability to "[get] whole classes of men or opinions embodied... in some one representative individual" in order to make "clear and amenable to critical reason" what had before seemed mere "clamour of bodiless rhetoric" (101):

---

[10] Studies of Aestheticism and Decadence frequently emphasize those movements' rejection of didactic goals in art; many of the major figures commonly associated with those movements, moreover, made their rejection of these goals explicit. Karl Beckson's introduction to *Aesthetes and Decadents*, for example, stresses the "supremacy of form" over utility as a "central concept" of art in the 1890s (xxiii). Oscar Wilde's famous assertion in his preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) that "all art is quite useless" and that "there is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book" place formal beauty above moral concerns in literature. This privileging of aesthetics over didacticism would appear to leave little room for emblematics in art. However, Wilde's work in fact engages continuously with questions of morality: the portrait of Dorian Gray itself, for example, becomes an emblem of Dorian's manifold sins. This lack of critical attention to turn-of-the-century emblematics is, I would argue, the result of a mistaken belief that the didacticism of emblems renders them incompatible with the fin de siècle's supposed rejection of morality in art. My afterword addresses this issue more fully.

[11] It appears in the writings of such Decadent figures as Theophile Gautier and Victor Cousin; Gautier was however reportedly the first to adopt it as a slogan. One of the first appearances of this idea in English was Poe's discussion, in his essay on "The Poetic Principle" (1850) of the advantage of writing a poem "simply for the poem's sake" (*Complete Tales and Poems* 892).

> he had a faith of his own, made out of art for art's sake, and worked by means of art; and whatever made against this faith was as hateful to him as any heresy to any pietist. In a rough and rapid way he chose to mass and sum up under some one or two *types*, comprehensible at first sight to few besides himself, the main elements of opposition which he conceived to exist. Thus for instance the names of Locke and Newton, of Bacon and Voltaire, recur with the most singular significance in his writings, as *emblems or incarnate symbols* of the principles opposite to his own.... (101; my emphasis)

Not only are Blake's works rife with emblematic strategies, Swinburne argues, but these habits of mind likewise structure Blake's thought about art itself. As Swinburne notes, Blake constructs Enlightenment thinkers Locke and Voltaire as emblems of those ideals his art works against, in this way using emblematics as a rhetorical technique to clarify, consolidate and make tangible the issues at stake.

By ascribing these emblematic habits to Blake, Swinburne demonstrates his familiarity with them; his admiration for Blake's emblematic strategies, moreover, points to his own belief in their efficacy. Indeed, two years earlier, in his *Notes on Poems and Reviews*, a response to negative criticism of his *Poems and Ballads*, Swinburne had employed similar tactics. In answering charges of immorality leveled at him by the British press, Swinburne constructs an emblematic portrait of "Virtue, as she appears incarnate in British journalism" (6):

> something of a compound creature –
>
> 'A lump neither alive nor dead,
>
> Dog-headed, bosom-eyed, and bird-footed;'

> nor have any dragon's jaws been known to emit on occasion stronger and stranger sounds and odours.... I find myself at last able to analyse their component parts. (6)

The hybrid creature Swinburne conjures up to emblematize Virtue as "she" is constructed by the English press is borrowed from a pair of lines (35-36) in Shelley's "The Witch of Atlas" which describe the lowest category of creature that emerges from "wet clefts" (34) to glimpse the beautiful Witch. This intertextual reference to grotesque, cave-dwelling beasts who crawl out of shadows to gaze upon beauty explicates Swinburne's emblematic image of his critics as covetous, base and impure. According to Swinburne's own analysis, Blake had held up Locke and Voltaire as emblems of the Enlightenment in a rhetorical move which concentrates and clarifies Enlightenment ideals in order to facilitate his rejection of them. Here, in much the same way, Swinburne uses Shelley's image to create a vivid emblem of the morality of his critics, a strategy which consolidates the "clamour" of their "bodiless rhetoric" (*Blake* 101) by *em*bodying it, thereby rendering it manageable and readily refutable.

Swinburne's analysis of Blake's work makes clear his awareness of its rootedness in the emblem tradition: Blake's verbal-visual methods are based on the interplay of image and text in the normative emblem, and the majority of his figures, images and situations, as Swinburne reads them, constitute "types" and "emblems" in a wholly normative sense. Swinburne identifies the character Leutha (*Visions of the Daughters of Albion*), for example, as "the spirit emblematic of physical pleasure.... type of womanhood and freedom" and the eagles that tear her flesh in the story as "emblems of her lover's scorn" (229). Similarly, he interprets Blake's book for children, *The Gates of Paradise* (1793), as a set of emblems

intended to teach the child reader about the human condition. This work combines eighteen plates with inscriptions which range from single words ("Water"; "Earth") to brief epigrams ("At length for hatching ripe he breaks the shell") which explore aspects of the natural world and trace the course of human life from birth to death. Swinburne's discussion of the first few plates in this book reads the "symbols" (20) representing water and earth – human figures with the haunting, expressive faces typical of Blake's work, surrounded in their illustrations by water and earth, respectively (Fig. 70) – as emblematic of human experience:

> the water, blind and mutable as doting age, *emblem* of ignorant doubt and moral jealousy; the heavy melancholy earth, grievous to life, oppressive of the spirit, *type* of all sorrows and tyrannies that are brought forth upon it, saddest of all the elements.... (20; my emphasis).

In spite of his desire to cast Blake as a proto-Aesthetic poet, he interprets Blake's images of water and earth not simply as representations of those objects for representation's sake, but as "emblems" of moral and spiritual issues in the life of man. Because these plates themselves are accompanied only by a word or an aphorism, Swinburne's interpretation effectively fills the gap by completing the *picturae* with unmistakably emblematic *explicationes* of his own. *William Blake: A Critical Essay* thus demonstrates not only Swinburne's familiarity with the emblem, in his ability to recognize emblematic habits as responsible for some of Blake's more unusual or challenging works, but it also shows his own adeptness at emblem-making, in his ability to complete the devices Blake leaves open-ended. Moreover, the convergence of emblems and Aestheticism in this essay testifies to the enduring relevance of emblematics in the discourse of that movement. Consequently, this demonstrates the Aesthetic movement's continuities with the moral-aesthetic impulses of

such High Victorian movements as Pre-Raphaelitism.

Questioning Devotional Emblematics

As his interpretation of the emblems at work in Blake's poetry, as well as his rhetorical use of these strategies in his own critical prose suggest, Swinburne was well-versed in the English emblem tradition. In spite of his pursuit of the shocking, the transgressive and the anti-Christian, his poetry also makes fairly straightforward use of the emblem as a rhetorical tool, especially as a means of clarifying and defining key issues and concepts. His use of the emblem for this purpose stands in marked contrast to the use made of it by most other Pre-Raphaelites, who invoke the emblem primarily as a means of representing that which (it was believed) could not otherwise be represented in language, especially the divine. Indeed, in spite of his enthusiasm for emblematics, Swinburne's antitheism erodes the very grounds on which the signifying power of the devotional emblem traditionally rests: without faith in God or the divine createdness of the visible world, its objects cease to operate convincingly as signs of higher truths. Unlike Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who continued using emblems after his crisis of faith as a way of imposing stability on signs that had become untethered, Swinburne appears to have recognized – with some measure of regret – that such strategies were no longer available to him. His inclusion of the traditional emblem motif of "washing the Ethiop" in "Laus Veneris" is especially interesting in this context.

The story of "Laus Veneris" is based on the German Renaissance folk-tale of Tannhäuser, a minstrel knight who enters the mountain of Venus, an underground paradise of "unholy pleasures," where he stays for a year. A sudden longing to return to earth seizes

him, and he invokes the Virgin Mary, who helps him return; he rushes directly to Rome to seek forgiveness for his sin from Pope Urban IV. Refusing Tannhäuser's suit, the Pope declares that Tannhäuser cannot be saved any more than the Pope's staff can grow leaves. Dejected, the knight returns to the mountain of Venus, torn between the bliss of carnal pleasure and a deep sense of loss over his damnation. Not long after his departure, however, the Pope's staff blooms, signifying that salvation is, in fact, possible for Tannhäuser. Messengers are sent to retrieve him, but he is never found (Remy, par. 29). While in the traditional tale, Tannhäuser seeks Christian salvation, which he is initially denied by the Pope but ultimately granted by God (although the sign arrives too late), Swinburne's adaptation of this legend in "Laus Veneris," a long dramatic monologue spoken by Tannhäuser, sees the knight as making a conscious decision to turn his back on Christ and return to Venus and her carnal pleasures. In this version, Tannhäuser is pulled out of Venus' clutches by God, and not by his own initiative: God has "bro[oken]" Tannhäuser's "bands / To save [his] soul alive" (330-31). But when he reaches the Pope, rather than begging forgiveness, Tannhäuser declares that,

> though the Lord's blood be right sweet,
> The spot it takes not off the panther's skin,
> Nor shall an Ethiop's stain be bleached with it. (354-56)

Further, he accepts the Pope's assertion of his damnation, and even rejects the blossoming of the staff as a sign that he may be saved:

> Yea, what if dried-up stems wax red and green,
> Shall that thing be which is not nor has been?
> Yea, what if sapless bark wax green and white,

Shall any good fruit grow upon my sin? (373-76)

While the knight afterwards returns to Venus "right heavy, with small cheer" (385), knowing that "There should not grow sweet leaves on this dead stem" (379), he regards the pagan goddess as "more dear / Than my own soul, more beautiful than God" (386-87).

What is most significant about this poem, for my purposes, is the way in which it uses emblems to cast doubt on the signifying ability of emblems themselves, especially those belonging to the devotional tradition. In the original legend, the blossoming of the Pope's staff is a direct message from God, an irrefutable sign of Tannhäuser's salvation and a contradiction of the Pope's own pronouncement on the subject. The story therefore argues that God's language, which is uttered through natural signs, trumps man's: devotional emblematics is erected on this very premise. In Swinburne's version, however, Tannhäuser repudiates the significance of the blooming staff: even if God (if He existed) were to speak through the staff, Tannhäuser has chosen pleasure over salvation, an act which renders the sign meaningless. In this way, Swinburne suggests, even the divine ordination of signs (a possibility he seems to accept at least for the sake of argument) could not guarantee their meaning; all signs are subject to interpretation. Interestingly, Tannhäuser clinches this point by adapting a classical rhetorical emblem: just as the dark skin of the "Ethiop" can never be "bleached" white, he tells the Pope, so his own sin cannot be cleansed even by the blood of Christ (354-56). "To Wash an Ethiop white" is an ancient proverb, likely originating in Aesop, which evolved into an emblem of futility (K. Newman 142). Geffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems* reproduces this scenario under the motto "*Aetheopem lavare*" (Fig. 71) as a lesson in the superiority of Nature's power over man's will to change it:

Leave of with paine, the blackamore to skowre,

With washinge ofte, and wiping more than due:

For thou shalt finde, that Nature is of powre,

Doe what thou canst, to keepe his former hue.... (57)

Swinburne was likely familiar with that key English emblem text. Here he adapts this emblem to the argument that man's pleasure-seeking nature is more powerful even than God's desire that man should overcome it. Swinburne's use of a rhetorical emblem to refute a devotional emblem in "Laus Veneris" hints at his ambivalence towards the latter tradition and his sense of the former's utility; it also testifies to his fascination with emblematics as a site where important issues of language and ontology are brought to the fore.

Political Poetry and Rhetorical Emblematics

His political poetry provides further evidence that Swinburne viewed the emblem as an appropriate rhetorical device in limited, didactic contexts. His 1871 *Songs Before Sunrise*, a volume of poems praising Italian republican Giuseppe Mazzini and calling for the creation of an Italian republic, draws heavily on the rhetorical emblematic tradition of personification.[12] In contrast to the hectic verse of *Poems and Ballads*, many of the poems in *Songs Before Sunrise* adopt a statelier, more formal tone. Landow suggests that when

[12] Swinburne seems first to have tested this technique in *Poems and Ballads* (first series) with the sonnet "A Cameo," which purports to describe the emblematic figures crowded onto a carved gem: "Desire" (1) is flanked by "Pain, whose body shone like fire" (4), and "Pleasure, with gaunt hands" (5) that "Satiety" (7) keeps hold of while "strange loves suck the breasts of Hate" (10) and "Death" stands behind a "gaping grate" (13) "Upon whose lock [is] written *Peradventure*" (14). While Brooks Wright's 1953 *Explicator* note on the poem leaves much to be desired in terms of analysis (he pans it as "one of the weakest... of the collection in which it appears" and concludes by declaring it "a hasty, preliminary sketch by a man who knows what he wants to say but has not yet hit on the way to say it"), his criticism is insightful in its recognition of the poem's emblematism on the one hand, and its inversion of traditional emblematics, on the other. As Wright notes, Swinburne's impossible cameo is crowded with six allegorical figures and a host of other figures with "no more personality than a capital letter can give them"; Satiety and Pleasure are represented as gaunt and unhappy in an ironic inversion of their typical emblematic forms, something which, as Wright rightly argues, is "entirely typical of Swinburne."

Swinburne came to see himself at this period as the bard of the Italian republican cause, he took more care to prevent alienating his readers, turning for this reason to a de-sacralized version of the widely-recognized technique of scriptural typology (*Victorian Types* 160). The emblem, a related technique, likewise figures prominently in Swinburne's text in the form of portraits which characterize aspects of the political situation and what the poet believes must happen. In the "Prelude," for example, Swinburne casts the youth of Italy as the fitting agents of political change by constructing an emblematic scenario around the figure of "Youth," who starts out "[sitting] and [singing] by Time" (2), shedding "tears" (3) and expressing "hopes and fears" (4). Feeling the winds "shake and shower / The rose-red and the blood-red leaf" (17-18), objects the poet interprets as emblems of "Delight whose germ never grew grain, / And passion dyed in its own pain" (19-20) – likely a reference to the oppressiveness of the Italian political status quo – Youth stands up, crushing underfoot

> Fear and desire, mistrust and trust,
> And dreams of bitter sleep and sweet,
> And bound for sandals on his feet
> Knowledge and patience of what must
> And what things may be, in the heat
> And cold of years that rot and rust
> And alter; and his spirit's meat
> Was freedom, and his staff was wrought
> Of strength, and his cloak woven of thought. (21-29)

Here, Youth is equipped as a pilgrim: his sandals represent knowledge and patience, virtues that will assist him in his journey; the troping of freedom as "meat" to his spirit argues that it

is essential to his progress; like a cloak, thought will protect him from the difficult political climate; and like a staff, strength will prop him up in his arduous quest. This figure of Youth with its significant accoutrements recalls Bunyan's emblematic *Pilgrim's Progress*, as well as the emblematic figures that populate such Italian emblem books as Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1593) and Filippo Pistrucci's 1823 version of that text. In all of these works, concepts such as "Legality," "Poverty," "Arrogance" and "Assistance" are represented in human figures whose dress, posture and trappings reveal what are deemed the essential qualities of those abstractions.

Further examples of this technique abound in the volume, inflecting nearly every poem. "The Eve of Revolution," for instance, includes an emblematic portrait of England as an old man, a characterization which stresses the country's "brave" republican past and current feebleness to effect political change at home or in Italy. He was once strong, having "clothed the naked souls of slaves / And stripped the muffled souls of tyrants bare" (213-14). Now England is once again exhorted to lift his "armèd head" to "sunward and the fair / Daylight of time and man" (218-20), an emblematic image in which the light signifies the dawning of a new political era. England's lifting of its gaze toward the dawn represents the country's acknowledgment and support of republican government. While "The Eve of Revolution" is an address to emblematic figures, "The Watch in the Night" is a series of speeches performed by figures who act as emblematic stand-ins for various concepts, groups, and positions, such as "Statesman," "Captives," and "Christian." Night in this poem signifies the revolutionary struggle for freedom in Italy; the emblematic figure of "Christian," when asked "what of the night?", replies "I cannot tell; I am blind" (73-4) and expresses its wish to "return to the dear dead light" (77). The blindness of this figure and its

nostalgia for a time it knows has irrevocably passed are emblems of the Church's refusal to acknowledge the new realities of Italy's political climate, and its complicity in the oppression of the Italian people.

Songs Before Sunrise also makes frequent use of emblematic portraits of women, especially mothers, in treating the concepts of Italy, freedom and liberty. This iconography may derive from classical personifications of Victory (such as the winged Nike), or from the imagery popularly associated with French republicanism. In Eugene Delacroix's famous painting *Liberty Leading the People* (1830; Fig. 72), for example, Liberty is represented as a female figure bravely hoisting a flag and leading the charge on the tyranny of the French King Charles X; her bared breast, meanwhile, suggests nurturing. Swinburne's "Tenebrae" characterizes Liberty similarly as "sole mother and maker, / Stronger than sorrow, than strife" (130-35). "The Halt Before Rome" likewise represents Freedom in the emblematic figure of a mother, although in this poem she is beset by fire and ultimately dies (62-77). Much of Swinburne's "Mentana: First Anniversary," meanwhile, is spoken by the mournful female figure of Italy, a mother who mourns her children who have died in the cause of Italian freedom:

> Of mine earth were your dear limbs made,
>
> Of mine air was your sweet life's breath;
>
> At the breasts of my love ye were fed,
>
> O my children, my chosen, my dead [...] (67-70)

She goes on to exhort those of her children who are still living to take up the cause. The combination of didacticism and ornamentation that the rhetorical strain of emblematics offers likely made it attractive to Swinburne in the production of such overtly polemical

verse: in each case, these personifications allow him to set and define the terms of his argument and bring clarity to an otherwise chaotic set of issues without having to deviate from the kinds of figurative language appropriate to poetry.

Swinburne's use of the emblem as a tool of argumentation aligns his work with the rhetorical tradition of emblematics, which emerged from the classical technique of arguing from commonplaces. As his use of a rhetorical emblem to throw the efficacy of natural emblems into doubt in "Laus Veneris" suggests, however, Swinburne was less sure of the other major strain of emblematics, the devotional. The devotional emblem tradition, which grew out of the Renaissance interest in Adamic or natural language and a belief in the superior signifying power of image-text hybrids like hieroglyphics, understands the emblem as capable of representing things ordinary language cannot, especially "higher truths" associated with the divine. Critics including Margot K. Louis, William Wilson, and Malcolm Hardman have noted Swinburne's "pessimism in regard to language" (Louis, "Wise Words" 55): Hardman's reading of Swinburne's poetry suggests that, in the poet's view, language "has not helped to make a knowable world; it has merely pretended to arrange the unknowable world" (20). And as I have suggested in my discussion of the image of the blooming staff in "Laus Veneris," Swinburne's doubts about the representational power of language converge on emblematics. Certainly, in that instance, his denial that even the divine ordination of a sign could guarantee its meaning conforms to his acknowledged atheism and anti-Christianity. What's more, Swinburne's refusal in his version of the story to allow the blooming staff to serve its traditional purpose as a sign of the divine reveals a deep mistrust of emblems in the devotional mode. It is wholly unsurprising that an atheist would doubt the ability of any linguistic tool to represent a being he does not believe to

exist. In spite of his unbelief and his rejection of the divine, however, Swinburne's poetry reveals him to have been a firm believer in other, non-theistic sources of sublime experience.

Emblematic Failure and the Sublime

While the category of the sublime changed over time, from its Longinian origins (in *Peri Hupsous*) as an oratorical strategy designed to create a sense of awe around a particular subject, to its Burkean (*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*) and Kantian (*Critique of Judgment*) redefinitions as an experience or state of mind, a "mixture of pleasure and pain that forces man to recognize the limits of reason" (Pease 46) and suspends the "motions" of the "soul" (Burke 58), the sublime is always associated with the struggle between human reason and that which exceeds its grasp (Shaw 4). As Philip Shaw explains,

> whenever experience slips out of conventional understanding, whenever the power of an object or event is such that words fail and points of comparison disappear, *then* we resort to the feeling of the sublime. As such, the sublime marks the limits of reason and expression together with a sense of what might lie beyond these limits.... (2)

This gap between experience and the ability of language to represent it is precisely where devotional emblems were believed to fit: all of the other Pre-Raphaelite poets in this study employ emblems as a strategy in this way. Several of Swinburne's poems about existential issues, political and artistic figures, and children are characterized by just such a failure of language in the face of experiences whose ontological scope defies representation. However, for Swinburne, even emblems, the traditional vehicle for the representation of the

ineffable, fail to bridge that gap. The speakers of "Cromwell's Statue" and "William Shakespeare," for example, struggle for words adequate to describe those personages, a failure which establishes Swinburne's apparent belief in (non-theistic) sublime experience, on the one hand, and the inability of language to capture it, on the other. In "What is Death?", meanwhile, a poem about reading an emblem about death with a child, Swinburne's nostalgia for emblematics and the certainties it once represented offers a challenge to his atheism. And strikingly, while Pease argues that Swinburne's "sexually enslaved, sexually ambiguous" poetic characters like Sappho, Hertha and Faustine shocked his Victorian audience because they represent "an unframed, sublime excess" that "cannot be... contained within the privileged Victorian ideology that seeks to reify itself in its artistic images" (46-47), the same might be said of the child figures in several of his mildest, most sentimental poems.

The republican Oliver Cromwell's status as the champion of freedom and liberty – the highest political ideals, according to Swinburne – makes him a sublime figure for Swinburne, and one whose importance to English history, the poet suggests, defies description. In meditating on the House of Commons' 1895 refusal to erect a statue of the erstwhile Protector, Swinburne declares such an honour pointless: "What needs our Cromwell stone or bronze to say / His was the light that lit on England's way" (1-2). The magnitude of Cromwell's contribution to English politics renders any sort of material tribute powerless to capture it, making such tributes unnecessary:

> There needs no clarion's blast of broad-blown fame
> To bid the word bear witness whence he came
> Who bade fierce Europe fawn at England's heel

[...]

There needs no witness graven on stone or steel

For one whose work bids fame bow down and kneel... (25-30)

So powerful is Cromwell's reputation, in Swinburne's view, it exceeds the bounds of fame itself; therefore, unlike other important figures whose deaths motivate their admirers to erect monuments which re-present their fading memory, Cromwell requires no such representation: this kind of memorial, Swinburne argues, would in fact serve only to limit his stature and degrade the ideals for which he stood:

His praise is in the sea's and Milton's song;

What praise could reach him from the weakling throng

That rules by leave of tongues whose praise is shame... (21-23)

The inferiority of the current "weakling" leaders of England make their "tongues" unfit to praise such a high figure; by contrast, Cromwell's is a "time-commanding name" which "Speaks England" (31-32). His exalted position grants Cromwell a kind of linguistic ownership over England, a power which is vested specifically in his name. If his name is big enough to contain or "speak" England, then England cannot contain Cromwell; consequently, no English attempt to represent Cromwell in the language of text or statuary could be adequate. In this instance, therefore, languages of various kinds are shown as failing to express the political sublime.

In much the same way, Swinburne declares language inadequate to "speak" the great English bard, William Shakespeare. Although all the figures treated in Swinburne's *Sonnets on English Dramatic Poets (1590-1650)* are lauded in enthusiastic terms (Marlowe, for example, is hailed as "Son first-born of the morning, sovereign star!" [2]), all but

Shakespeare are deemed, at the very least, representable. In the sonnet on "John Ford," for instance, the poet calls for the creation of a "likeness" of Ford's soul in "marble from the mountain's heart / Where hardest night holds fast in iron gloom" and

> Gems brighter than an April dawn in bloom,
> That his Memnonian likeness thence may start
> Revealed, whose hand with high funereal art
> Carved night, and chiseled shadow.... (1-6)

Contrary to Cromwell, to whom no statue could do justice, Ford and his poetic legacy are entirely representable in a monument: the monument described here, the poet affirms, is fully capable of "speak[ing]" the poet "famous" (7). Even the materials proposed for its construction hold potential emblematic significance, as their natural properties suggest such qualities as strength and brilliance. Swinburne's sonnet to Shakespeare, on the other hand, declares that

> Not if men's tongues and angels' all in one
> Spake, might the word be said that might speak
> Thee. (1-3)

Unlike Ford, Shakespeare and his work may not be "spoken," that is, represented in language. This sonnet tropes Shakespeare in figures whose sublimity is generally acknowledged: the sun, without whom "day were night on earth" (11), and God, with whom he cleverly elides the poet:

> praise God for him; but he
> Exults not to be worshiped, but to be.
> He is; and, being, beholds his work well done. (7-9)

Ultimately, however, the speaker resigns himself to the linguistic impossibility of capturing such an important poet, asking "what power" could possibly be in the "[s]treams, winds, woods, flowers, fields, mountains, yea, the sea" to "praise the sun?" (4-5). Devotional emblematics is premised on a figural understanding of natural objects as God's language, and therefore as capable of expressing that which would otherwise surpass the signifying power of human language. Here, however, the possibility of natural language is refused. The only appropriate praise for Shakespeare is therefore an acknowledgment that "he can be praised of none" (6): his greatness, in other words, exceeds the grasp of even God's language.

In these poems, Swinburne demonstrates the failure of language to approach the sublime in the realms of art and poetry, and casts doubt on the linguistic theory which forms the basis for devotional emblematics. In "What is Death?", the poet extends this pessimism about language to emblems in an explicit way, by demonstrating that the technique of emblematics, traditionally appealed to when other forms of language fail, is equally inadequate to represent the sublime. However, there is also evidence here of an ambivalence towards the genre, as Swinburne's fondness for emblems and nostalgia for the time when they might indeed have served the purpose they claim to comes up against his confirmed atheism. The poem recounts an exchange between an adult speaker (very likely Swinburne himself) and a beloved child (likely Herbert Mason or "Bertie," Watts-Dunton's nephew and a favourite of the poet's[13]) as they read a book of woodcuts – clearly an emblem book –

[13] Swinburne's biographers have noted Swinburne's deep – perhaps excessive – affection for Bertie. As Henderson relates, Swinburne's mother, Watts-Dunton, and Bertie's parents became concerned by Swinburne's "excessive adulation" for the boy, and decided Bertie should be taken away for a month's holiday in 1881. The child's departure prompted Swinburne to write *A Dark Month*, a series of love poems lamenting Bertie's absence and longing for his return (Henderson 239).

together:

> Looking on a page where stood
>
> Graven of an old-world wood
>
> Death, and by the grave's edge grim,
>
> Pale, the young man facing him,
>
> Asked my well-beloved of me
>
> Once what strange thing this might be,
>
> Gaunt and great of limb. (1-7)

Although the emblem was initially a genre intended for the diversion and education of adults (Manning 162), its didactic potential and combination of words with pictures made it attractive as an educational tool for children. Indeed, between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, a number of emblem books were produced expressly for the moral and religious instruction of children.[14] The child in this poem appears to be reading just such a book: his response to the image, a question about what this enigmatic *pictura* represents, is fully appropriate to the reader of an emblem, and forms part of the typical learning process associated with that genre of literature. By moving his or her attention between the picture, which arouses curiosity, and the *explicatio*, which elucidates each component of the figure, the reader learns about a particular concept while acquiring a hermeneutic skill. In Swinburne's scenario, the adult looking on performs the role of *explicatio* – perhaps because he is reading the textual portion to the child – and identifies the figure: "Death, I told him"

---

[14] To name a few of these: Bunyan, *A Book for Boys and Girls* (1686); Anon., *Emblems for the Entertainment and Improvement of Youth* (1729?); Stacy Grimaldi, *A Suit of Armour for Youth* (1824); William Pinnock, *The Golden Treasury, being a Guide to Youth* (1830, 42); Peter Parley (Samuel Griswold Goodrich), *Tales About Plants* (1839); Margaret Gatty, *A Book of Emblems* (1872); Robert Louis Stevenson, *Moral Emblems* (1881, 1882). See especially the appendix to Michael Bath's *Speaking Pictures*, which contains a (thorough but not exhaustive) chronological list of English emblem books published before 1900.

(8). As would be expected of an emblem-reader, the child's resultant "surprise" (8) at this answer elicits more questions. At this point, however, the usefulness of the emblem genre as a teaching tool breaks down: the poem ends with the child's difficult question: "What is Death?" (14). Left unanswered – possibly to show that it is unanswerable – this query and the awkward silence which follows it expose the limits of the emblem, the ultimate absurdity of its moral-didactic project of elucidating the ineffable in the face of unbelief.

In spite of the speaker's apparent knowledge in "What is Death?" that the emblem is no longer capable of grounding and guaranteeing meaning, there is a clear note of nostalgia in his affection for the emblem book, whose "old-world" pictures recall the "old-world tome[s]" Swinburne was remembered to have read voraciously while a child himself at Eton. The speaker's fondness for the form also suggests nostalgia for a time when it was possible to believe that it had a special signifying power. His atheism meant that for Swinburne, emblems no longer had such power: the grounds upon which the devotional emblem claims this power is the existence of a creator God – something the poet did not accept. However, as was suggested earlier in this chapter, Swinburne's own writings about his beliefs reveal him to have been more open to the possibility of some kind of spiritual reality, and more regretful over the (seemingly inevitable) loss of his childhood faith than has perhaps been acknowledged. Confronted with an innocent child's question, "what is Death?", which his atheism precludes him from answering in a comforting way, the speaker comes to regret both the fact that emblems are an insufficient vehicle for teaching the child about such difficult concepts, and the loss of the ontological certainties about life and death that the emblem form embodies. The reader may indeed wonder what the image of the gaunt figure represents and consult the *explicatio* to learn that it is Death, but as Swinburne

demonstrates, this exercise will ultimately reveal nothing essential about that imponderable. Here the emblem and the issues it raises about the power of language to represent "higher truths" serves as a jumping-off point for deeper questions about the nature of existence and the mysteries of death: the poem ties the problem of how to adequately represent or explain death with the question of what death itself ultimately represents when there is no God. The silence at the end of this poem is perhaps the space in which those questions, still unanswerable, form.

As this poem demonstrates, and as McGann's recent article on "Swinburne's Radical Artifice" notes, the poet had a surprising love of children, as well as of the elderly (205).[15] Indeed, given his extremely elevated rhetorical treatment of babies and children in his poetry, "worship" might be a more appropriate term. Much as he deemed Shakespeare and Cromwell unspeakable, Swinburne's poetry consistently treats children as sublime beings who defy representation. Isobel Armstrong's characterization of the poems in Browning's *Men and Women* as "Grotesque" because they are presented as "the scenes of restless secondary revision, an attempt to produce coherence, rather than as coherent representations in themselves" (*Victorian Poetry* 294) could apply just as accurately to Swinburne's poems about babies and children. A cluster of poems dealing with children in *Tristram of Lyonesse* (1882) – "Herse," "Seven Years Old," and "A Child's Battles" – both establish the inadequacy of language in general to express the wonders of children and expose the failure of emblems more specifically in that project. In "Herse" – the word itself an obsolete verb meaning "to glorify or extol" (OED) – the poet declares a baby "the holiest thing that lives"

[15] As his biographers relate, Swinburne was fascinated by children and babies, frequently fussing over those he encountered on his daily walks and describing them in rapturous terms to Watts-Dunton on his return (see Henderson 238, Lafourcade 294).

(5) and adults, "desertless of such glorious grace" (15), unfit to gaze on or speak of an infant:

> Heart, hold thy peace; eyes, be cast down for shame;
>
> Lips, breathe not yet its name.
>
> In heaven they know what name to call it; we,
>
> How should we know? (9-12)

As was discussed in Chapter 4, the theory of hieroglyphics – the belief in a "natural" or "perfect" prelapsarian language, one whose signs did not stand in for but were rather identical with the things they represent, was an important factor in the development of emblematics. The pictograms of Egyptian hieroglyphics were thought of as one manifestation of such a language; emblems, which combined images with words in order to compensate for shortcomings in both modes of communication, were thought of as another – they emerged in an attempt to bring fallen human language closer to its perfect Edenic roots. Swinburne's assertion that "In heaven they know what name to call [babies]" (11) is an allusion to just such a theory of language. Not only are "men" (50) unworthy to speak the natural, intrinsic name for babies as a category, but there is no earthly language suited to the representation of such sublime beings:

> What speech may name a new-born child? what word
>
> Earth ever spake or heard?
>
> [...]
>
> We have no word [...]
>
> To call a baby by. (51-58)

The speaker goes on to consider a number of tropes for babies – "Rose, ruby, pearl of

stormless seas" (59) – all of which are declared unsatisfactory. The only possible comparison is with "somewhat born above" (67), to wit, "A dew-drop out of heaven" (72). Although the poet ultimately accepts the dew-drop analogy in the absence of anything better, the entire poem constitutes a search for the correct figure, of which there turns out to be just one, and that imperfect. Such radical restriction on the appropriate way to "speak" babies demonstrates the poet's mistrust of language in representing the sublime. At the same time, while he appears to believe in the existence of a natural or perfect language, his denial of mankind's ability to know or use such a language puts the strategy of emblematics out of reach.

The ineffectiveness of the emblem as a technique for representing the sublime is further stressed in "Seven Years Old," when the poet turns to emblems as a way of resolving such a representational difficulty, only to find them insufficient. The speaker heaps image upon potentially emblematic image in an attempt to find a sign that will adequately represent the splendour of the child's seven years of life:

> Seven white roses on one tree,
> Seven white loaves of blameless leaven,
> Seven white sails on one soft sea,
> Seven white swans on one lake's lee,
> Seven white flowerlike stars in heaven
> All are types unmeet to be
> For a birthday's crown of seven. (1-7)

The poet's characterization of these images as "types" identifies them as emblematic attempts to represent the child's seven years; none of these, however, is acceptable – all are

judged "unmeet":

> Not the radiance of the roses,
>
> Not the blessing of the bread,
>
> Not the breeze that ere the day grows is
>
> Fresh for sails and swans.... (8-11)

Though this admission of linguistic and representational failure may be explainable in part as a gesture of humility (the speaker goes on to insist that the child's "Brown bright eyes and fair bright head" are "Worth a worthier crown than this is, / Worth a worthier song instead" [29-31]), the fact is the poet finds that "Nothing sweetest, nothing best" is capable of figurally containing or "Hold[ing] so good and sweet a treasure" (15-16). Just as the speaker of "A Child's Battles" declares his "song" a deficient "token" of thanks and insists the child take his "love," instead (145-50), a gesture which renders the love itself the only worthy token of his love, all the poet of "Seven Years Old" can offer the child is "a word" which, while "Warm with love" (43-44) is nonetheless "far from heaven" (47) – in other words, it falls short of expressing the child's sublimity or "godhead" (28).

Both Susan E. Lorsch (*Where Nature Ends*) and Thaïs E. Morgan ("Rereading Nature") argue that Swinburne's poetry is characterized by its rejection of the incarnational metaphor of "Nature as a Book" (Morgan 429). The belief that nature is a system of signs authored by God and readable by man is the fundamental assumption of devotional emblematics, which is itself central to the poetics of the early Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, of such orthodox figures as Christina Rossetti and Gerard Manley Hopkins, and of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whether during the period of his orthodoxy or afterward. By contrast, Swinburne embraces "the 'designification' of nature" (Morgan 429-30), the movement away

from the Christian view of the natural world as an incarnation of the Holy Spirit, "a direct instrument of divine justice influencing human destiny," and toward the view of nature as amoral matter "operating indifferently to personal human destiny" (Riehl 7). Although Swinburne therefore never subscribes to the devotional emblem, he continues to draw on rhetorical emblems as a way of integrating didactic material into his poetry. At the same time, however, Swinburne's work presents the emblem as a technique with limitations: while the other Pre-Raphaelites in this study ascribe special powers of signification to the emblem, using it in contexts where other modes of communication were believed to fail, such as in representing the ineffable, Swinburne continually exposes its limits in that regard. Not only does he see ordinary human language as imperfect and its powers of referentiality as dubious, Swinburne further doubts the ability of natural or so-called "perfect" linguistic forms like hieroglyphics and the emblem to perform as advertised and so uses the form only to undermine it. This unusual late Pre-Raphaelite's emblematics thus represent an instructive contrast to earlier and more orthodox poets, revealing continuities as well as disjunctures within the movement and its use of the emblem.

Afterword

See how the children in the print
Bound on the book to see what's in 't!
O, like these pretty babes, may you
Seize and apply this volume too!
And while your eye upon the cuts
With harmless ardour opes and shuts,
Reader, may your immortal mind
To their sage lessons not be blind.
(Robert Louis Stevenson, *Moral Emblems* I.I)

By identifying the emblematic strategies at work throughout the literature of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, my dissertation attempts to contribute to the growing body of criticism which closely examines the influence of the emblem tradition on Victorian texts. As my discussion has shown, an increasing number of scholars – including Höltgen (1986), Bath (1993), Katz (1993), Ardholm (1999), Kooistra (2002), and Bentley (2005) – has made strides in correcting earlier assumptions about the fixity of the emblem's verbal-visual form and its irrelevance after 1700. Criticism's newly-heightened alertness to the presence of emblems in nineteenth-century and/or non-normative contexts represents a marked change from scholarship conducted as recently as thirty years ago. In 1982, Tennyson expressed confusion over the mixture of devotional verse, illustrations, epigraphs from biblical and poetic sources and religious motifs in Isaac Williams' *The Baptistry, or, The Way of Eternal Life*: he ultimately gives up on classifying the work, declaring it "*sui generis*" (*Victorian Devotional Poetry* 159). More recently, however, as emblem scholars have begun to examine post-Renaissance literature, bringing their specialized knowledge to bear on conventions previously unknown to experts of Victorian poetry, Williams' text has been properly identified as an early Victorian emblem book. As Bath shows, by appending new English *explicationes* with a more Protestant doctrinal focus to plates borrowed from the

Jesuit Antoine Sucquet's 1620 *Via vitae aeternae* (the way of eternal life), *The Baptistry* adapts a Renaissance Catholic work for a Victorian High Anglican audience.

It is my hope that this dissertation furthers ongoing critical efforts to enrich both emblem studies and literary studies by drawing more attention to the presence of the emblem as a fundamental strategy in Pre-Raphaelite texts. Despite these efforts, however, I recognize also that considerable lacunae in the understanding of nineteenth-century emblematics remain: specifically, studies of the degree to which emblems shape the literature of the fin de siècle or decadent period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, while suggestive, remain sketchy. Furthermore, what little scholarship currently exists in this area has tended to ignore unillustrated or atypically emblematic works in favour of overtly normative examples and purely religious texts. For example, Bath makes note of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Moral Emblems* (1881) in his chronology of emblem books, but does not discuss it at any length, and mentions Hilaire Belloc's *Cautionary Tales for Children* (1907) in passing, but does not include it in his chronology (Appendix, *Speaking Pictures* 282-85). Likewise, recent criticism of late-Victorian illustrated literature and children's books occasionally notes, but, with the exception of Katz's studies (1987, 1993), does not fully engage with its emblematic aspects. This lack of critical attention to turn-of-the-century emblematics may well be attributable to the emblem's perceived incompatibility with the fin-de-siècle rejection of morality in art. However, as my discussion of Swinburne in Chapter 6 suggests, emblem discourse persists in this literature, where it is frequently adapted from its classical, devotional and Christian roots to serve more unconventional ends. Many late-Victorian writers employ parodies of the emblem to critique both established morality and the assumption that art can or should instruct it; some

also use the emblem as an aesthetic framework for expressing fundamental – albeit unorthodox – "truths." A closer examination of the emblem's shifting roles in turn-of-the-century literature might offer a new perspective on that period's complex relationship to earlier mainstream Victorian culture.

A helpful investigation into emblematics in the fin de siècle would focus on the emblem strategies at play in both illustrated and unillustrated literature published between 1880 and 1910. In particular, the poetry, parables and confessional prose of Oscar Wilde, the mystical 1890s poetry of William Butler Yeats, and the unusually sophisticated illustrated books written ostensibly for children by Stevenson and Belloc would prove most revealing of the continuities between the emblem tendencies of earlier Victorian literature and the works of this period. Calling attention to the continued presence of emblems in the work of these major turn-of-the-century authors would further critical efforts to complicate the view that their work represents a total reaction against the earlier moral-aesthetic ideals of such high Victorian thinkers as John Ruskin.

While it has long been established that William Blake and the Pre-Raphaelites are important sources of Yeats' mystical aesthetic, the strong possibility that these artists' use of emblematics was also influential on his work has not yet been explored. Likewise unacknowledged is the fact that Yeats' involvement from 1890 onward with the hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn exposed him to further sources of the emblem in the moralized imagery and iconography of Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry, as well as the Tarot. Normatively emblematic in form (consisting of an allegorical picture and motto) and based on the analogical belief that objects in the visible world correspond to spiritual truths, the iconography of the Tarot provided Yeats with a fresh system of symbols as well as a flexible

and esoteric hermeneutic framework for the poetic expression of his mystical beliefs. Several critics (Kruger, Perry, Buchelt, Leavitt) have remarked on the Tarot motifs present in some of Yeats' poems, especially those collected in *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899), but no-one has yet examined the Tarot as a branch of emblematics. Re-framing the imagery of, among other things, wands and hearts (burning, flying, caught in nets) in such poems as "Into the Twilight," "Aedh Laments the Loss of his Love" and "Mongan laments the Change that has come upon him and his Beloved" as both emblematic and belonging to an esoteric tradition could open a new perspective on Yeats' mystical poetry and poetics.

Despite Wilde's famous assertion that "all art is quite useless," his work engages continuously with questions of morality: the portrait of Dorian Gray, for example, becomes a reflection (an emblem, even) of Dorian's sins. An examination of how Wilde's parables and fairy tales – such as those in *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* (1888) which explicate fantastic images and events as moral lessons dealing with such issues as greed and self-sacrifice – participate in the emblematic traditions of the sermon and the occasional meditation could serve as an important corrective to criticism of Wilde as simply working against the moral didacticism of earlier Victorian art. Likewise revealing in this regard are his prison writings, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898) and *De Profundis* (1905), which make use of emblematic discourse in a more explicitly Christological context, to critique the arbitrariness of human laws while at the same time theorizing a new morality based on an essential human nature. Noting the centrality of emblematics to some of the key works of this notoriously decadent figure could shed new light on the extent to which his work does in fact pursue moral and didactic aims.

As Katz and Kooistra have demonstrated, earlier writers of emblem books for

children such as Stacy Grimaldi (*A Suit of Armour for Youth*, 1824), Christina Rossetti (*Sing-Song*, 1872), and Margaret Gatty (*A Book of Emblems*, 1872; Fig. 73) use emblems in a straightforwardly didactic way, as a representational strategy which allows both the instruction of a particular lesson and the inculcation of a habit of reading. Two turn-of-the-century emblem books supposedly aimed at children, Stevenson's *Moral Emblems* (1881; Fig. 74) and Belloc's *Cautionary Tales for Children* (1907), appear consciously to invert these earlier works, co-opting the emblem in order to critique the very values – social, hermeneutic and moral-aesthetic – it typically sought to instill. Although Stevenson's book announces itself as a collection of moral emblems and resembles other normative examples of that genre, its text-image pairs playfully shirk their duty. The moral authority of the emblem rests on its "facticity," the perceived truth or credibility of the figure from which its lesson is drawn: by consistently calling attention to themselves as fictional and printed objects, therefore, Stevenson's emblems undermine their own authority to teach. One explication offers a reassurance that the boat in the picture will not sink only because she "sails in printer's ink" (II.I); others present nonsensical mock-morals such as "Abbots should / Never go walking in a wood" (II.III). It is significant that Stevenson goes directly to the emblem in his effort to question the usefulness of art, a move which suggests that emblems remain highly visible at the turn of the century and continue to represent a certain impulse in literature, the didactic genre *par excellence*.

Belloc's macabre *Cautionary Tales*, meanwhile, takes an ironic final step away from the emblem as a morally-instructive discourse (Fig. 75). With its crude, disjointed drawings and lessons drawn from gruesome accounts of the consequences of breaking the rules,

Cautionary Tales represents a loose parody of emblem literature in the *Struwwelpeter* line.[1] Where Stevenson's emblems elude facticity, Belloc's immediately dispense with it: his "Introduction" reassures the reader that the stories in this book are simply "not True." Not only does this disclaimer – and the outlandish nature of the "tales" which follow – remove the foundation on which the moral authority of his stories should rest, it challenges all such claims for moral authority in art. Most significantly, like Stevenson's *Moral Emblems*, *Cautionary Tales* carries out this challenge through a parodic adaptation of emblematics, a further suggestion that the emblem remained one of the most recognizably didactic literary genres into the early twentieth century.

As the field of emblematics expands to account for more varieties and periods of literature, and as the study of literature grows increasingly interdisciplinary, the emblematic structures shaping a wide range of cultural products become increasingly visible. This expanded awareness of emblems among scholars of nineteenth-century literature has already rescued some texts otherwise thought to be unreadable – Williams' *The Baptistry*; Gatty's *A Book of Emblems*; and, in the case of my own study, for example, Swinburne's seemingly quaint poems about children – from obscurity and critical neglect, but much more may, and indeed ought, to be done on this front. This effort to recover emblems as a widely-read and therefore influential branch of literature, as well as a key source of imagery and representational strategies in the nineteenth century, promises first of all to correct the critical tendency to judge turn-of-the-century works according to how closely they anticipate

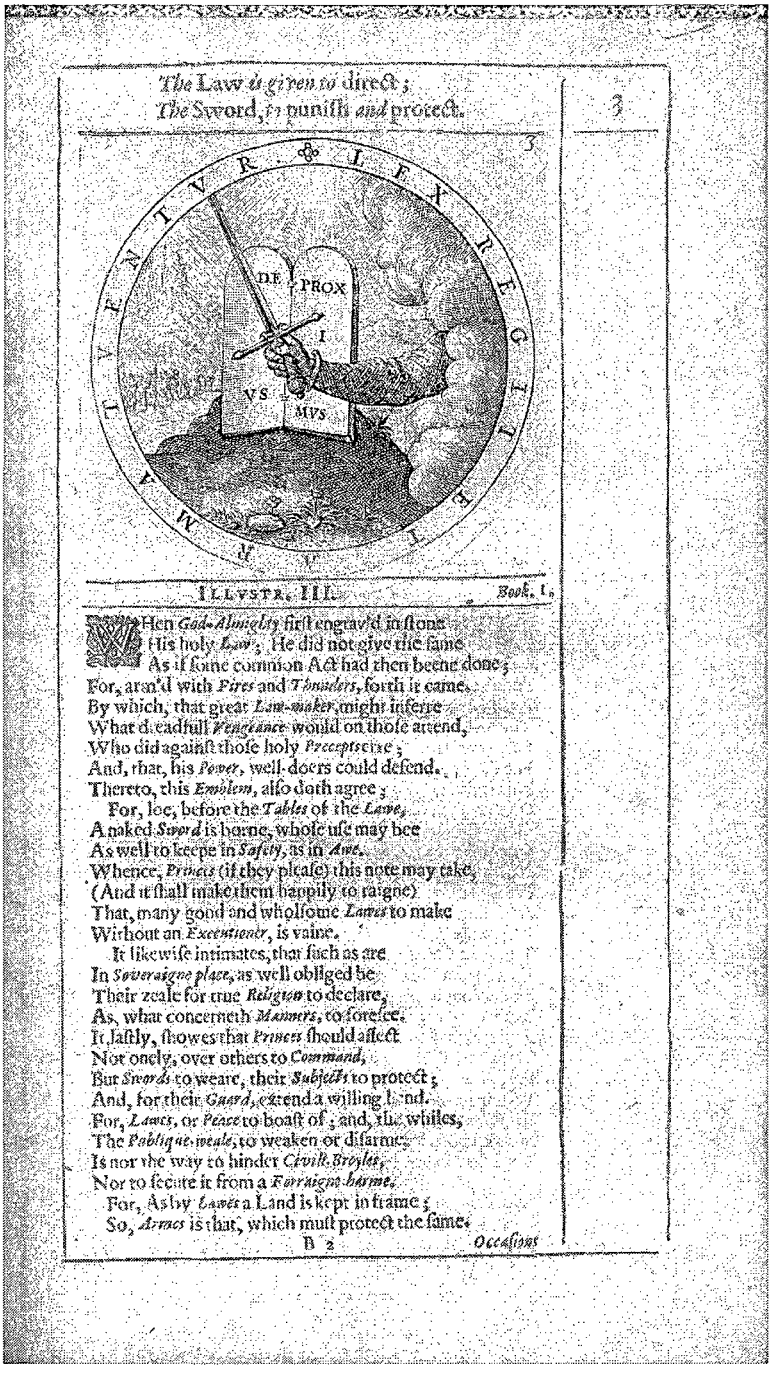
---

1 Literally translated as "Shock-headed Peter" or "Slovenly Peter," *Der Struwwelpeter* was a popular illustrated German children's book written in 1845 by Heinrich Hoffmann and translated into English in 1848 (Mark Twain also produced a later English translation of the work). The didactic but often gruesome cautionary tales and their illustrations depict the consequences for children of failing to follow the rules: for example, the eponymous character is friendless due to his refusal to groom himself; "Cruel Frederick" taunts a dog who retaliates by biting him and stealing his sausages after he falls ill; "Flying Robert" goes outside during a storm, and is transported to his doom. (See Fig. 76)

the modern, emphasizing instead their continuities with older literary movements and, in some cases, their surprising rootedness in didactic and devotional traditions. As a result, we may correct easy assumptions about the anti-didactic focus of Aesthetic art, while at the same time questioning that movement's own self-definition as one which completely eschews questions of morality. Finally, a renewed understanding of the role of the emblem may help bring to light even more works which have been rendered obscure simply because they do not fit into existing critical narratives.

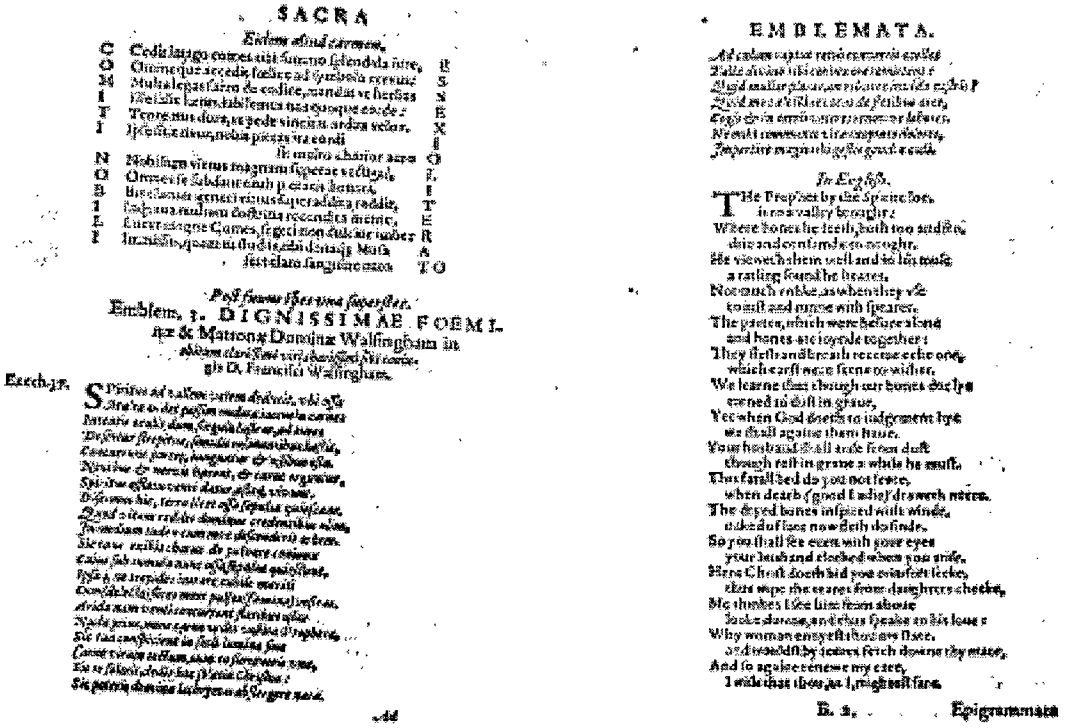
Appendix:

Figures



When God-Almighty first engrav'd in stone
His holy Law; He did not give the same
As if some common Act had then beene done;
For, arm'd with Fires and Thunders, forth it came.
By which, that great Law-maker, might inferre
What dreadfull Vengeance would on those attend,
Who did against those holy Precepts erre;
And, that, his Power, well-doers could defend.
Thereto, this Emblem, also doth agree;
For, loe, before the Tables of the Lawe,
A naked Sword is borne, whose use may bee
As well to keepe in Safety, as in Awe.
Whence, Princes (if they please) this note may take,
(And it shall make them happily to raigne)
That, many good and wholsome Lawes to make
Without an Executioner, is vaine.
It likewise intimates, that such as are
In Soveraigne place, as well obliged be
Their zeale for true Religion to declare,
As, what concerneth Manners, to foresee.
It, lastly, showes that Princes should affect
Not onely, over others to Command,
But Swords to weare, their Subjects to protect;
And, for their Guard, extend a willing hand.
For, Lawes, or Peace to boast of; and, the whiles,
The Publique weale, to weaken or disarme,
Is not the way to hinder Civill Broyles,
Nor to secure it from a Forraigne harme.
For, As by Lawes a Land is kept in frame;
So, Armes is that, which must protect the same.

Fig. 1. Emblem III, Book 1 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (London: Henry Taunton, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (12 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/withe003.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



SACRA

EMBLEMATA.

Emblem. 1. DIGNISSIMAE FOEMI-næ & Matronæ Dominæ Walsingham in gis D. Francisci Walsingham.

Ezech. 37.

In Ezechiel.

Epigrammata

Fig. 2. Emblem 3 of Andrew Willett's *Sacrorum Emblematum Centuria Una* (Cambridge: John Legate, 1592); *EEBO* (12 June 2009) <http://gateway.proquest.com.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:12083:6>.

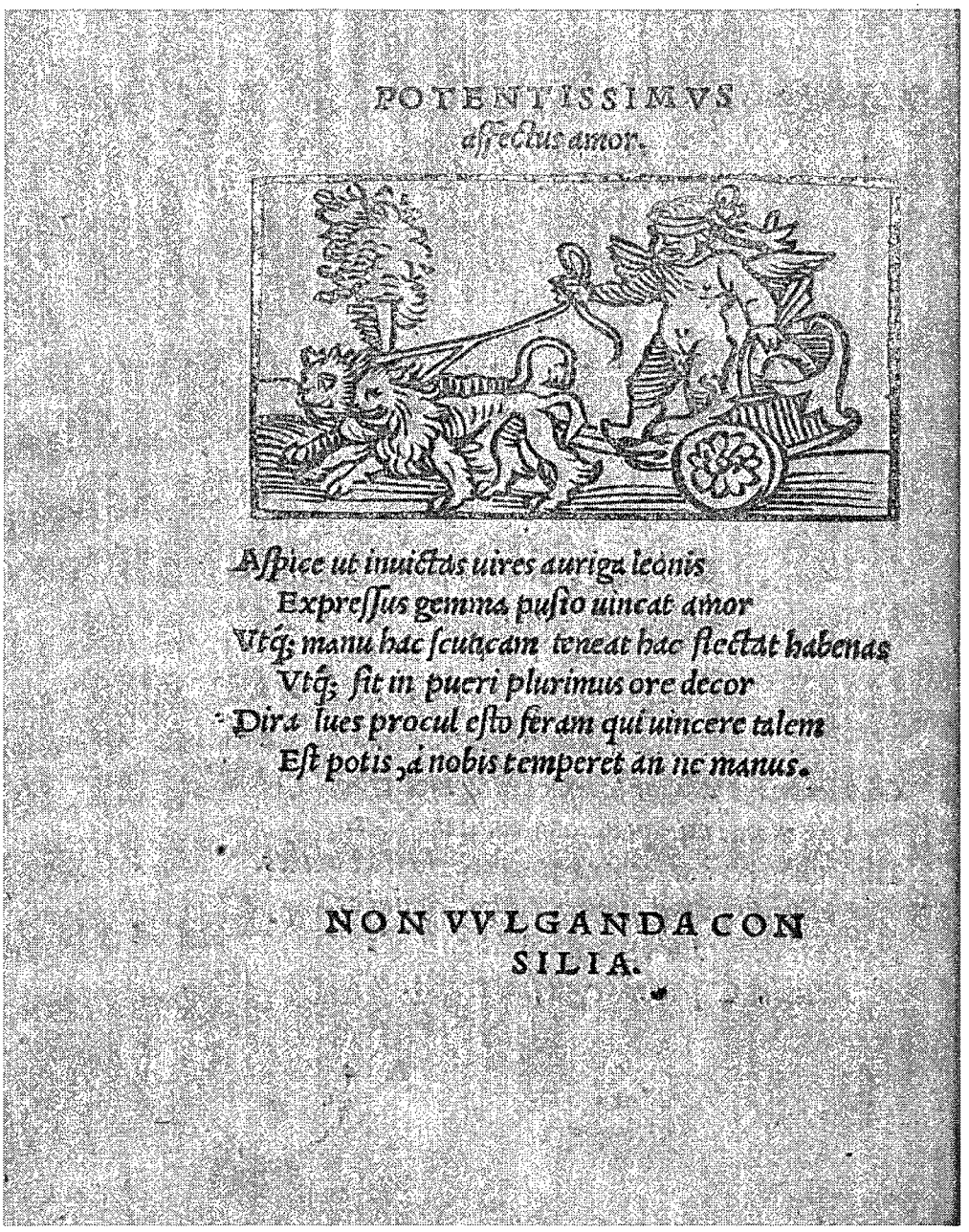


Fig. 3. "*Potentissimus*," in Andrea Alciato's *Emblematum Liber* (Augsburg: Heinrich Steyner, 1531); *Alciato at Glasgow*, ed. Alison Adams, Glasgow University Emblem Website (12 June 2009) <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/alciato/emblem.php?id=A31a007>.

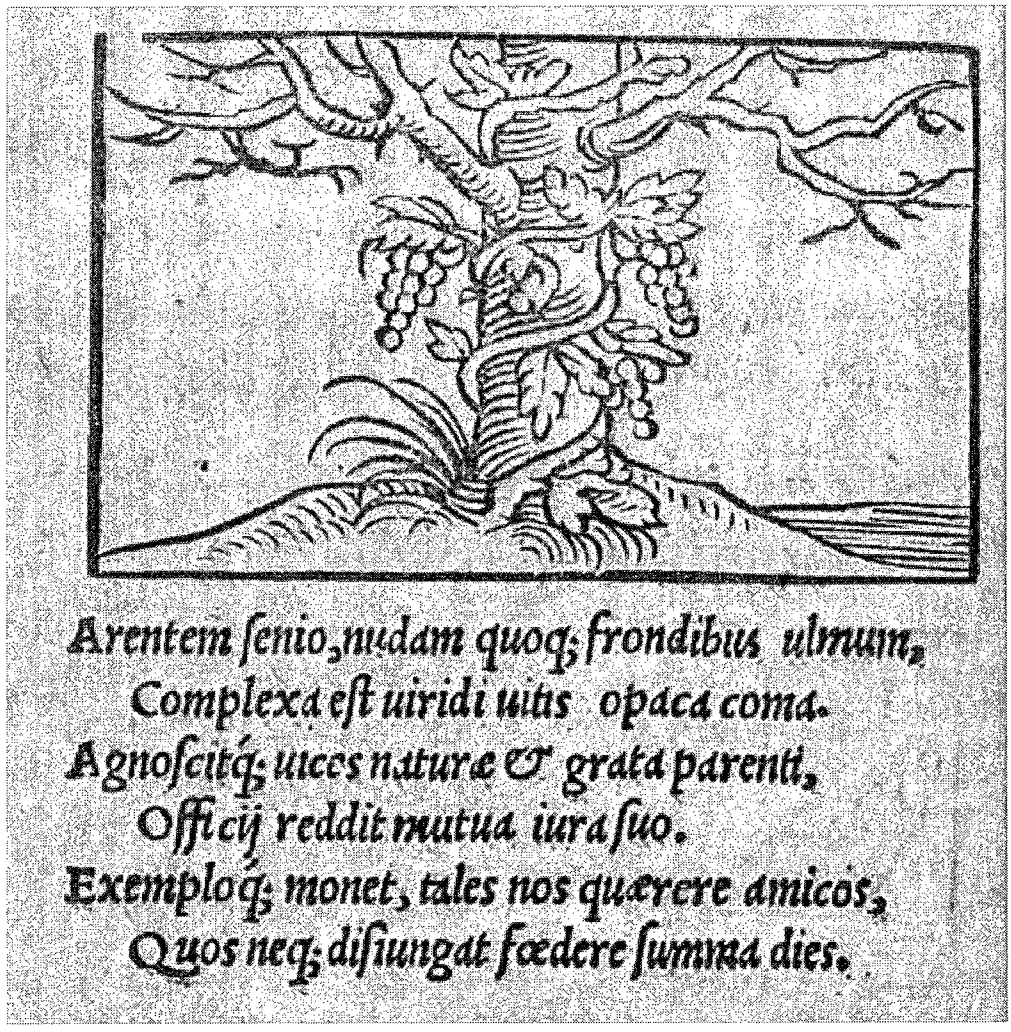


Fig. 4. "*Amiticia Etiam Post Mortem Durans*," in Andrea Alciato's *Emblematum Liber* (Augsburg: Heinrich Steyner, 1531); *Alciato at Glasgow*, Ed. Alison Adams, Glasgow University Emblem Website (12 June 2009) <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/alciato/emblem.php?id=A31a012>.

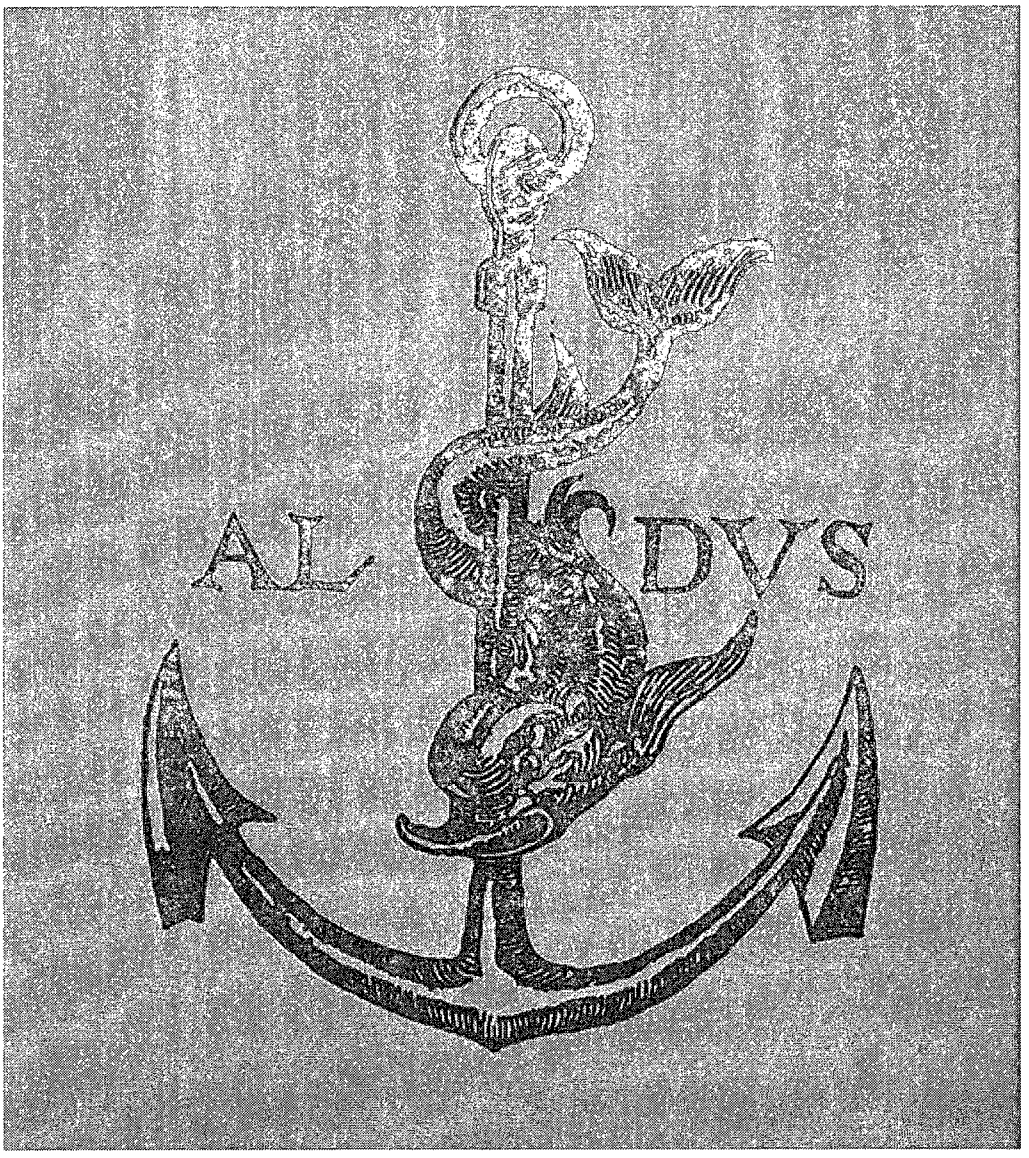


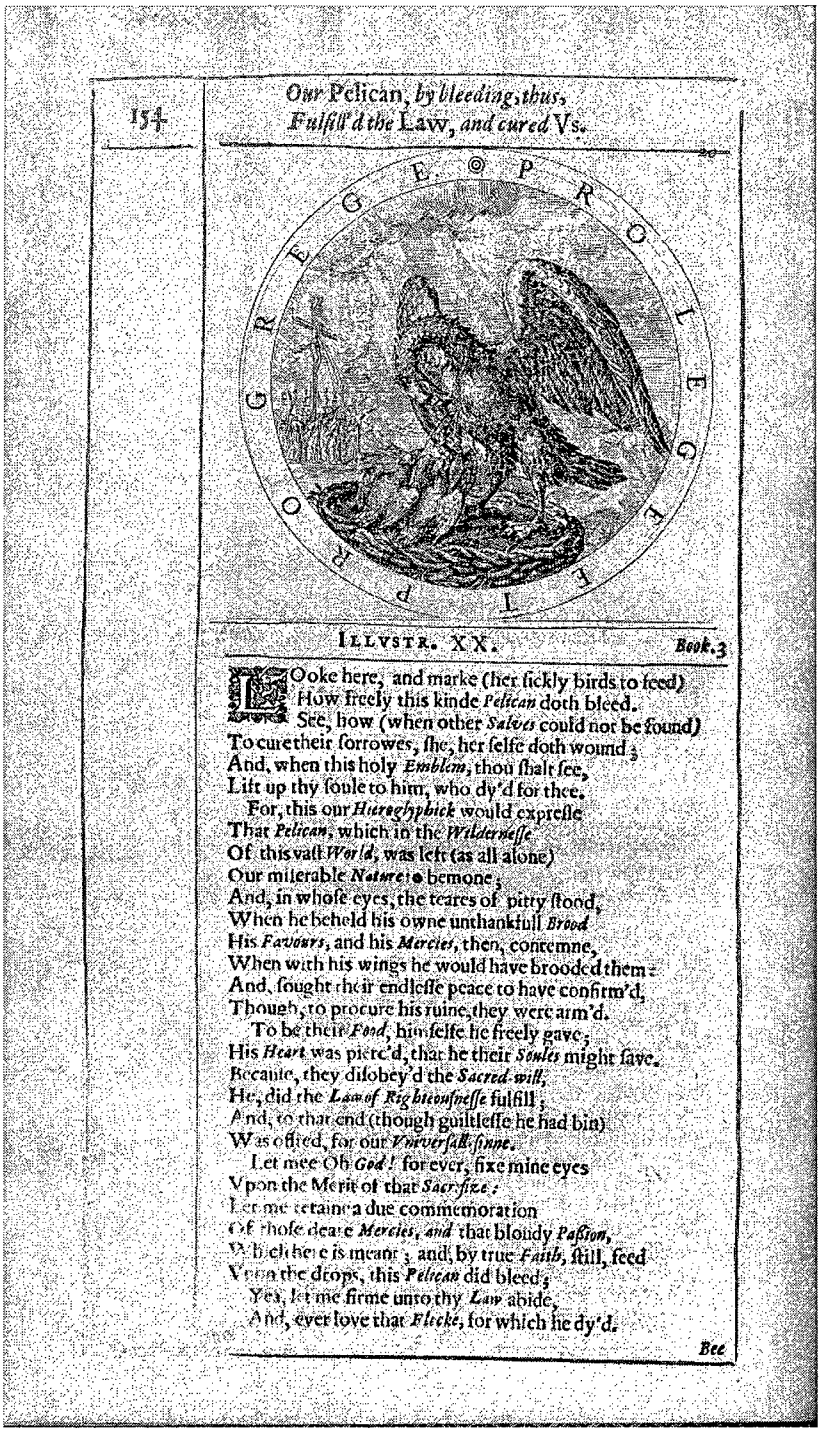
Fig. 5. "*Festina Lente*"; *Wikimedia Commons* (21 July 2009) (26 July 2009) <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AldusManutius.jpg>.



Fig. 6. Emblem 6, "*Ficta Religio*" (False Religion) in Andrea Alciato's *Emblematum Liber* (Padua: Tozzi, 1621): 40. Image courtesy of William Barker, University of King's College, Halifax.



Fig. 7. Elephant-ant "festina lente" motif, from Chapter 19, "Polia leads Poliphilo to ruins," in Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499): 244; *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: Re-Cognizing the Architectural Body in the Early Italian Renaissance*, ed. Liane Lefaivre (MIT Press, 1995), (12 June 2009) <http://mitpress.mit.edu/e-books/HP/hyp244.htm>.



154

Our Pelican, *by bleeding, thus,*
Fulfill'd the Law, *and cured* Vs.

ILLVSTR. XX. *Book.3*

LOoke here, and marke (her ſickly birds to feed)
How freely this kinde *Pelican* doth bleed.
See, how (when other *Salves* could not be found)
To cure their ſorrowes, ſhe, her ſelfe doth wound;
And, when this holy *Emblem*, thou ſhalt ſee,
Lift up thy ſoule to him, who dy'd for thee.
For, this our *Hieroglyphick* would expreſſe
That *Pelican*, which in the *Wildernesſe*
Of this vaſt *World*, was left (as all alone)
Our miſerable *Nature*: o bemone;
And, in whoſe eyes, the teares of pitty ſtood,
When he beheld his owne unthankfull *Brood*
His *Favours*, and his *Mercies*, then, contemne,
When with his wings he would have brooded them:
And, ſought their endleſſe peace to have confirm'd,
Though, to procure his ruine, they were arm'd.
To be their *Food*, himſelfe he freely gave;
His *Heart* was pierc'd, that he their *Soules* might ſave.
Becauſe, they diſobey'd the *Sacred will*,
He, did the *Law of Righteouſneſſe* fulfill;
And, to that end (though guiltleſſe he had bin)
Was offred, for our *Vniverſall ſinne*.
Let mee Oh *God!* for ever, fixe mine eyes
Vpon the Merit of that *Sacrifice*:
Let me retaine a due commemoration
Of thoſe deare *Mercies*, *and* that bloudy *Paſſion*,
Which here is meant; and, by true *Faith*, ſtill, feed
Vpon the drops, this *Pelican* did bleed;
Yea, let me firme unto thy *Law* abide,
And, ever love that *Flecke*, for which he dy'd.

Bee

Fig. 8. Emblem XX, Book 3 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (London: Henry Taunton, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (12 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/withe154.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



Fig. 9. Emblem 39 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1624); *Emblem Project Utrecht* (12 June 2009) <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/hu1624039.html>.
.



Fig. 10. Emblem 38 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1624); *Emblem Project Utrecht* (12 June 2009) <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/hu1624038.html>.

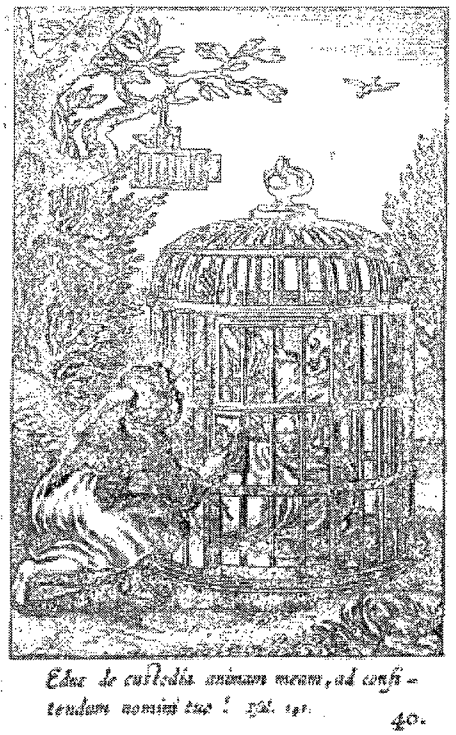


Fig. 11. Emblem 40 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1624); *Emblem Project Utrecht* (12 June 2009) <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/hu1624040.html>.

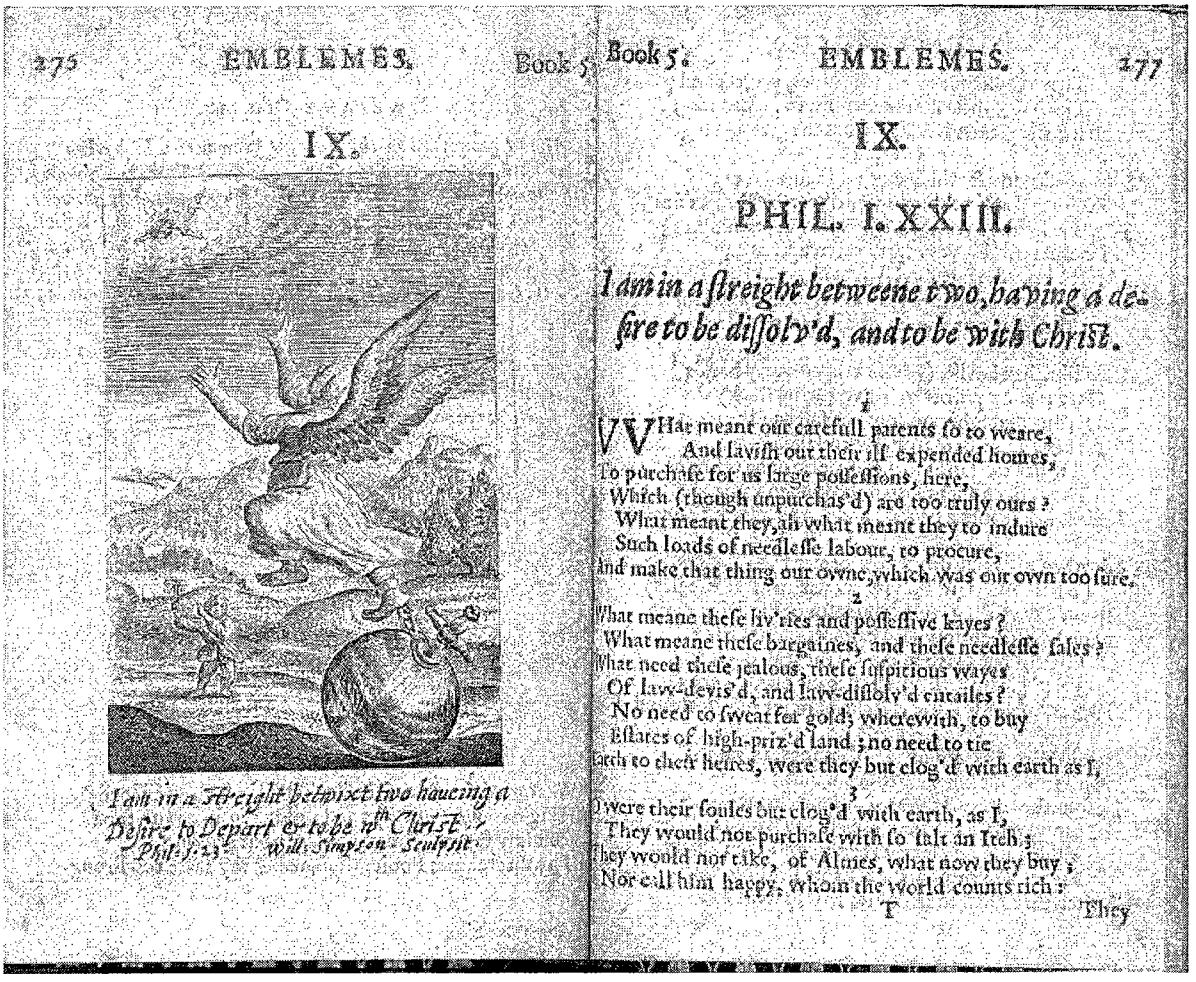


Fig. 12. Emblem IX, Book 5 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (12 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/qu276_77.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

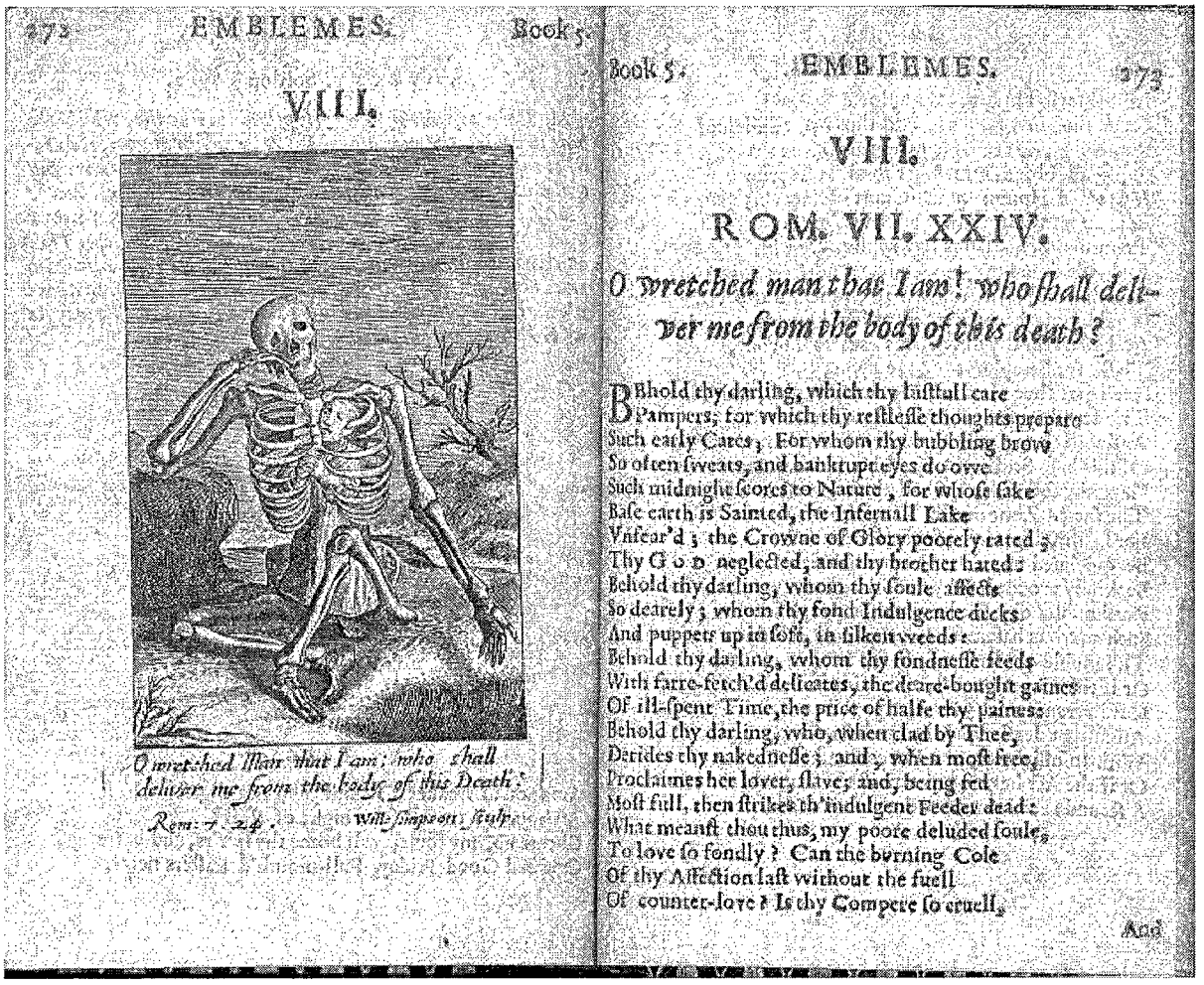


Fig. 13. Emblem VIII, Book 5 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (12 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/qu272_73.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

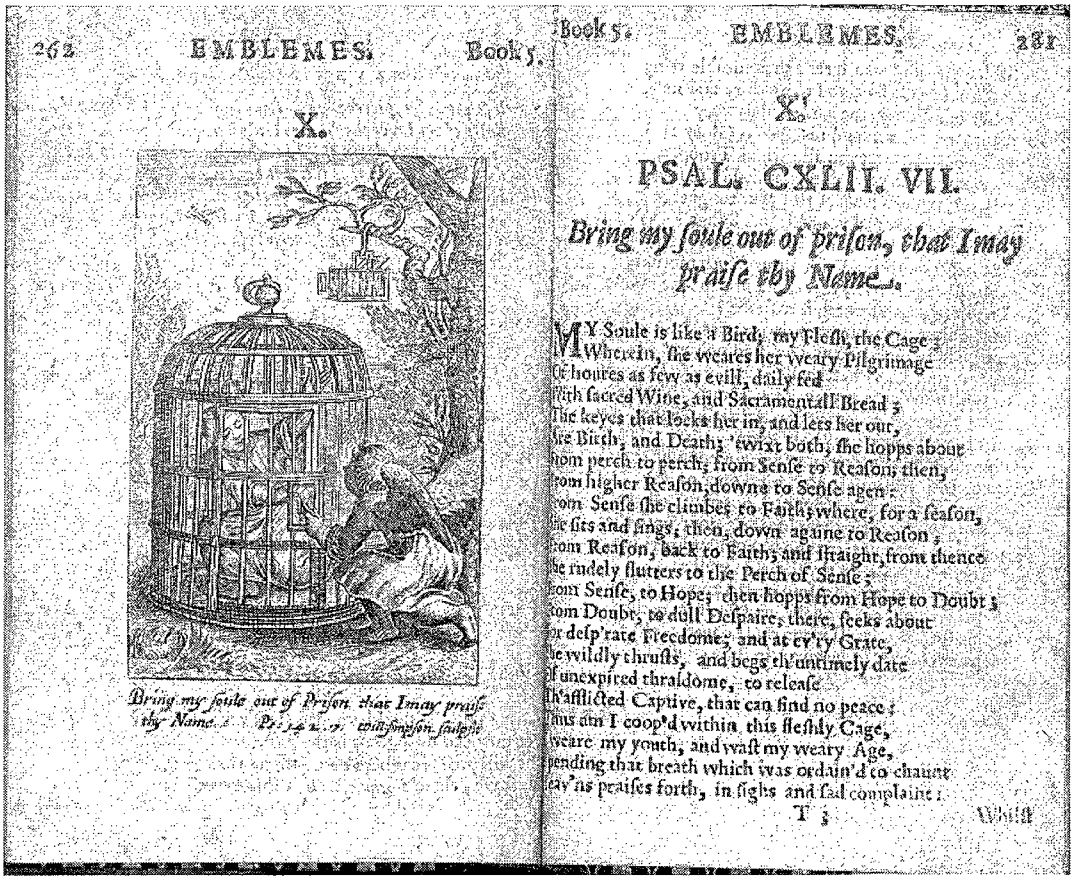
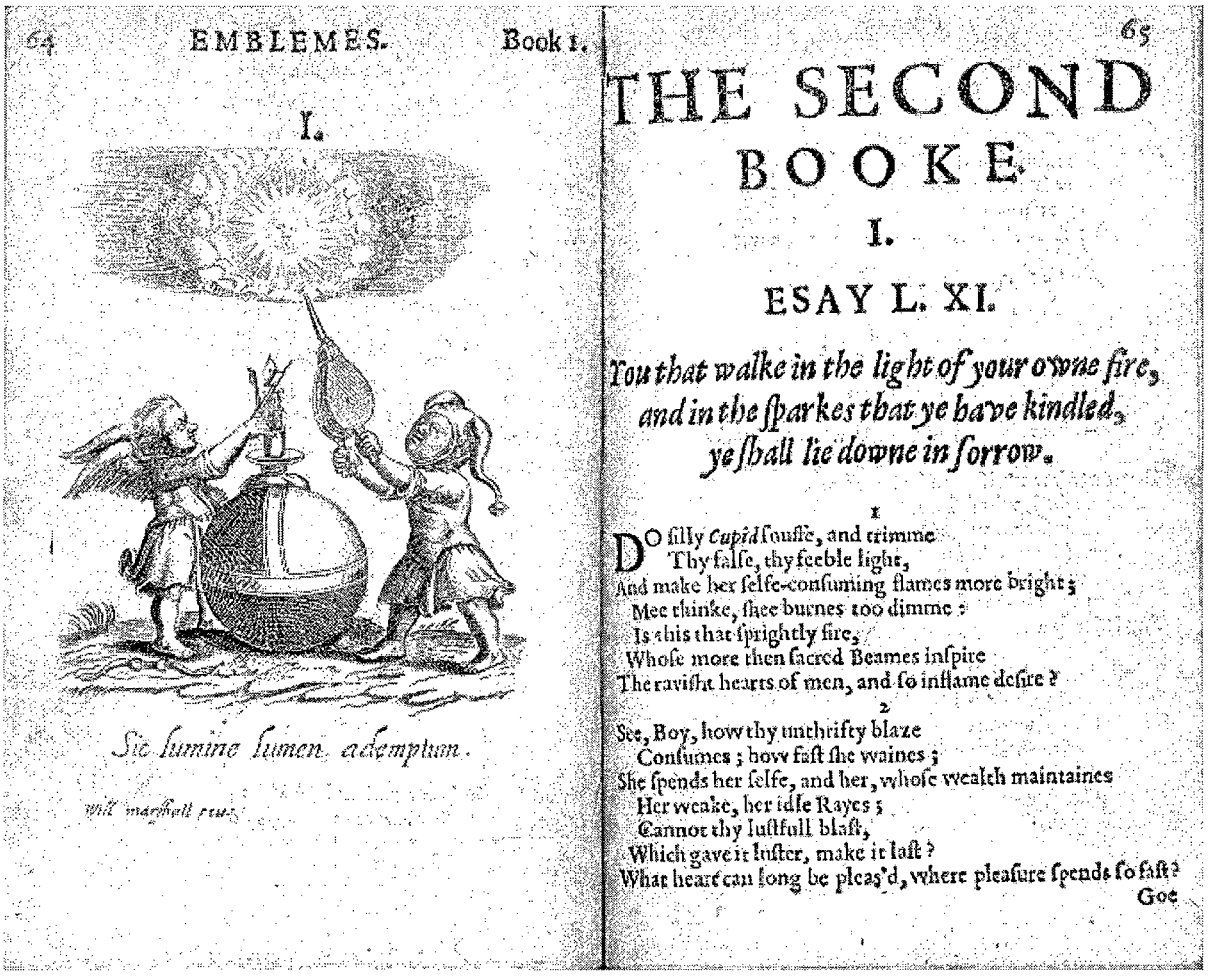


Fig. 14. Emblem X, Book 5 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004) (25 July 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/qu280_81.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

.



64 EMBLEMES. Book 1.

I.

Sic lumine lumen ademptum.

will marſhall fecit

65

THE SECOND BOOKE

I.

ESAY I. XI.

You that walke in the light of your owne fire, and in the ſparkes that ye have kindled, ye ſhall lie downe in ſorrow.

1

DO ſilly *Cupid* ſouſſe, and trimme
Thy falſe, thy feeble light,
And make her ſelfe-conſuming flames more bright;
Mee thinke, ſhee burnes too dimme:
Is this that ſprightly fire,
Whoſe more then ſacred Beames inſpire
The raviſht hearts of men, and ſo inflame deſire?

2

See, Boy, how thy unthrifty blaze
Conſumes; how faſt ſhe waines;
She ſpends her ſelfe, and her, whoſe wealth maintaines
Her weake, her idle Rayes;
Cannot thy luſtfull blaſt,
Which gave it luſter, make it laſt?
What heart can long be pleas'd, where pleaſure ſpends ſo faſt?

Goe

Fig. 15. Emblem I, Book 2 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635); *The English Emblem Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (12 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/qu064_65.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



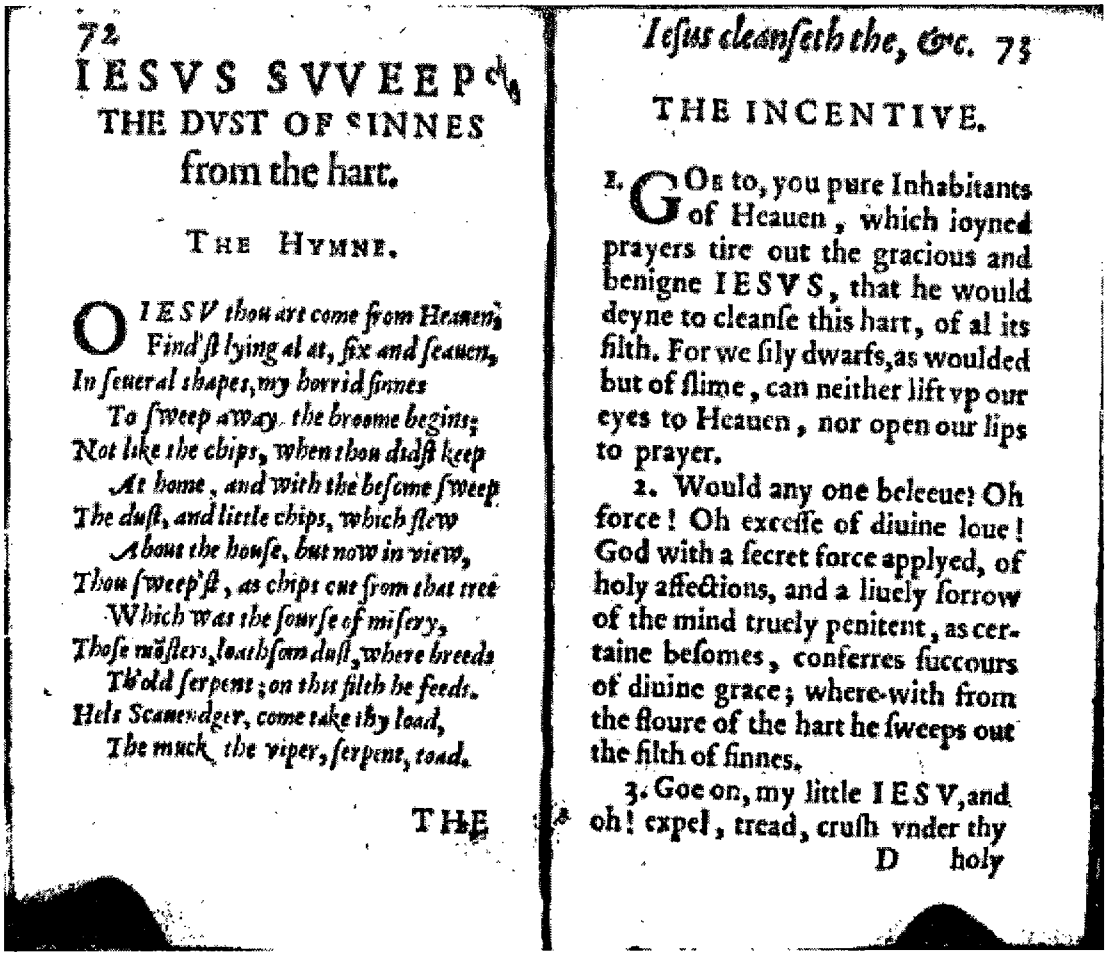
Fig. 16. "Image the Tenth" of Isaac Williams' *The Baptistery, Or, The Way of Eternal Life* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1846); *Google Books* (15 June 2009) <http://books.google.ca/books?id=xH0NAAAAYAAJ&dq=isaac%20williams%20the%20way%20of%20eternal%20life&pg=PA114>.

IMAGE THE TENTH.

Behold, I pray thee, the dangers that beset thee, and flee to the asylum of devotion and prayer.

CONSIDER how the World [A], the Devil [B], and Sin [C], together with Death [D], are pursuing thee; and flee for refuge to the crucified Jesus [E], Who most lovingly inviteth all unto Him. Betake thee also unto Prayer [F] and the presence of God, as to an asylum and place of refuge. Thus did the great Anthony [G], and very many other Saintly men, triumph over their enemies with the arms of prayer. By the same did Moses [H] overcome the Amalekites. Imitate these, and with vast strides press thou forward unto Christ and the imitation of Him. For "whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved." From Thy Cross, O blessed Jesus, we hear Thee speaking these words, "Come unto Me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." O words most sweet in the ears of a sinner! But how shall we come unto Thee, unless Thou draw us unto Thee "with the cords of a man," with the cords of love? Draw us, we pray Thee, unto Thee, that we may hasten, as the hart unto fountains of water; for we are labouring and walking heavily in difficult and uncertain ways. Lead us in the way of Thy commandments, and teach us Thy paths. We are, alas, burdened with many sins; help us, and for the glory of Thy name deliver us; despise not us sinners, O God of our Salvation!

Fig. 17. Explication for "Image the Tenth" of Isaac Williams' *The Baptistery, or, The Way of Eternal Life* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1846); *Google Books* (15 June 2009) <http://books.google.ca/books?id=xH0NAAAAYAAJ&dq=isaac%20williams%20the%20way%20of%20eternal%20life&pg=PA115>.



72

IESVS SVVEEPS
THE DVST OF SINNES
from the hart.

THE HYMNE.

O *IESV thou art come from Heauen,*
Find'ſt lying al at, ſix and ſeauen,
In ſeueral ſhapes, my horrid ſinnes
To ſweep away the broome begins;
Not like the chips, when thou didſt keep
At home, and with the beſome ſweep
The duſt, and little chips, which flew
About the houſe, but now in view,
Thou ſweep'ſt, as chips out from that tree
Which was the ſourſe of miſery,
Thoſe müſters, loathſom duſt, where breeds
Th'old ſerpent; on this filth he feeds.
Hels Scauenger, come take thy load,
The muck, the viper, ſerpent, toad.

THE

Ieſus cleanſeth the, &c. 73

THE INCENTIVE.

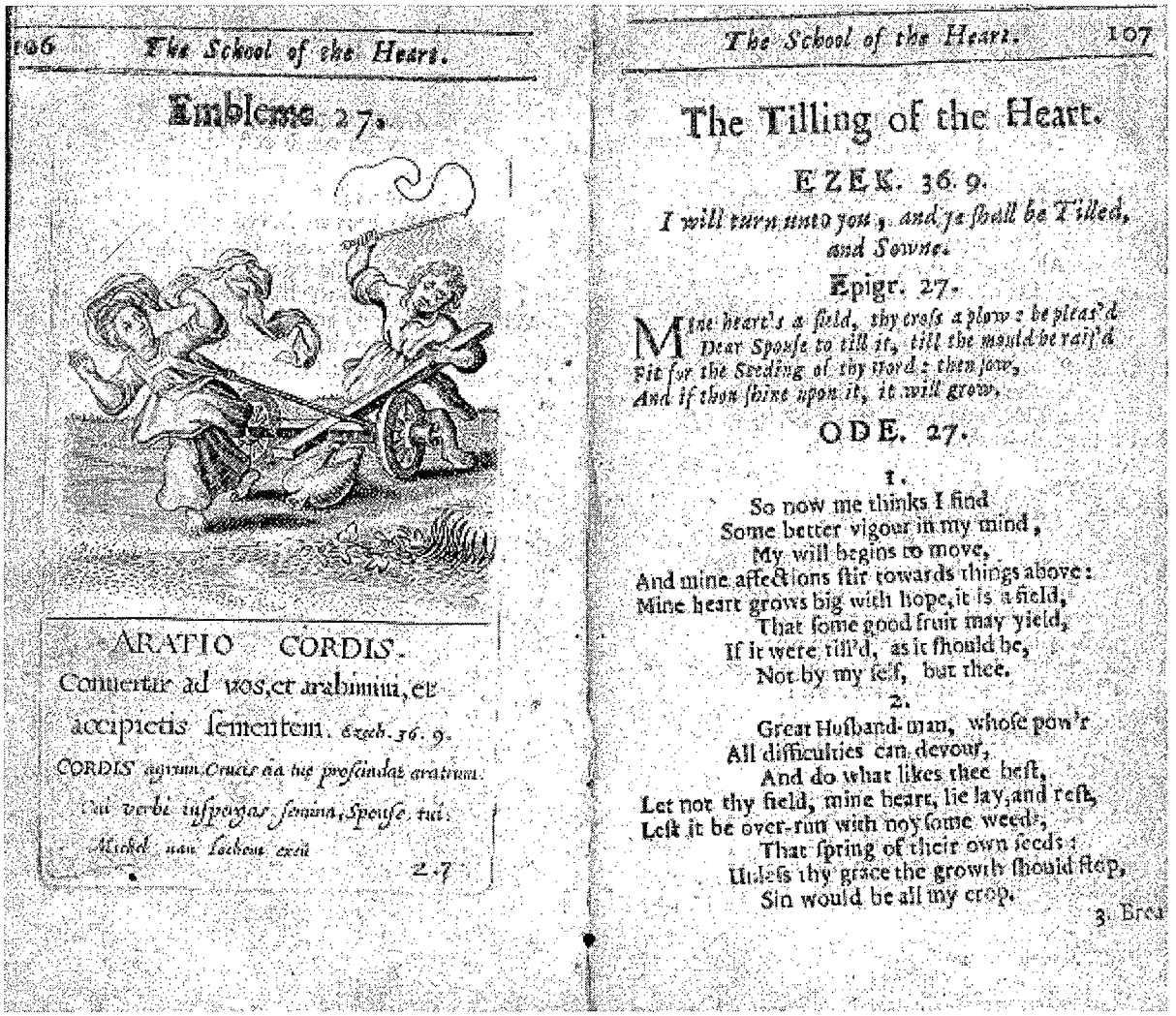
1. GOe to, you pure Inhabitants of Heauen, which ioyned prayers tire out the gracious and benigne IESVS, that he would deyne to cleanſe this hart, of al its filth. For we ſily dwarfs, as woulded but of ſlime, can neither lift vp our eyes to Heauen, nor open our lips to prayer.

2. Would any one beleeue? Oh force! Oh exceſſe of diuine loue! God with a ſecret force applyed, of holy affections, and a liuely ſorrow of the mind truely penitent, as certaine beſomes, conferres ſuccours of diuine grace; where-with from the floure of the hart he ſweeps out the filth of ſinnes.

3. Goe on, my little IESV, and oh! expel, tread, cruſh vnder thy

D holy

Fig 18. "Hymne" and "Incentive" of Meditation IIII in Henry Hawkins' *The Devout Hart* (1634); *EEBO* (15 June 2009) <http://gateway.proquest.com.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:4178:38>.



106 The School of the Heart.

Emblema 27.

ARATIO CORDIS.

Convertar ad vos, et arabimini, et accipietis sementem. Ezech. 36. 9.

CORDIS agrum Crucis ea hic profundat aratrum.
Cui verbi insperges semina, Sponse, tui.
Riget non Lachrym. exili

27

The School of the Heart. 107

The Tilling of the Heart.

EZEK. 36. 9.

I will turn unto you, and ye shall be Tilled, and Sowne.

Epigr. 27.

Mine heart's a field, thy cross a plow: be pleas'd
Dear Spouse to till it, till the mould be rais'd
Fit for the Seeding of thy word: then sow,
And if thou shine upon it, it will grow.

ODE. 27.

1.

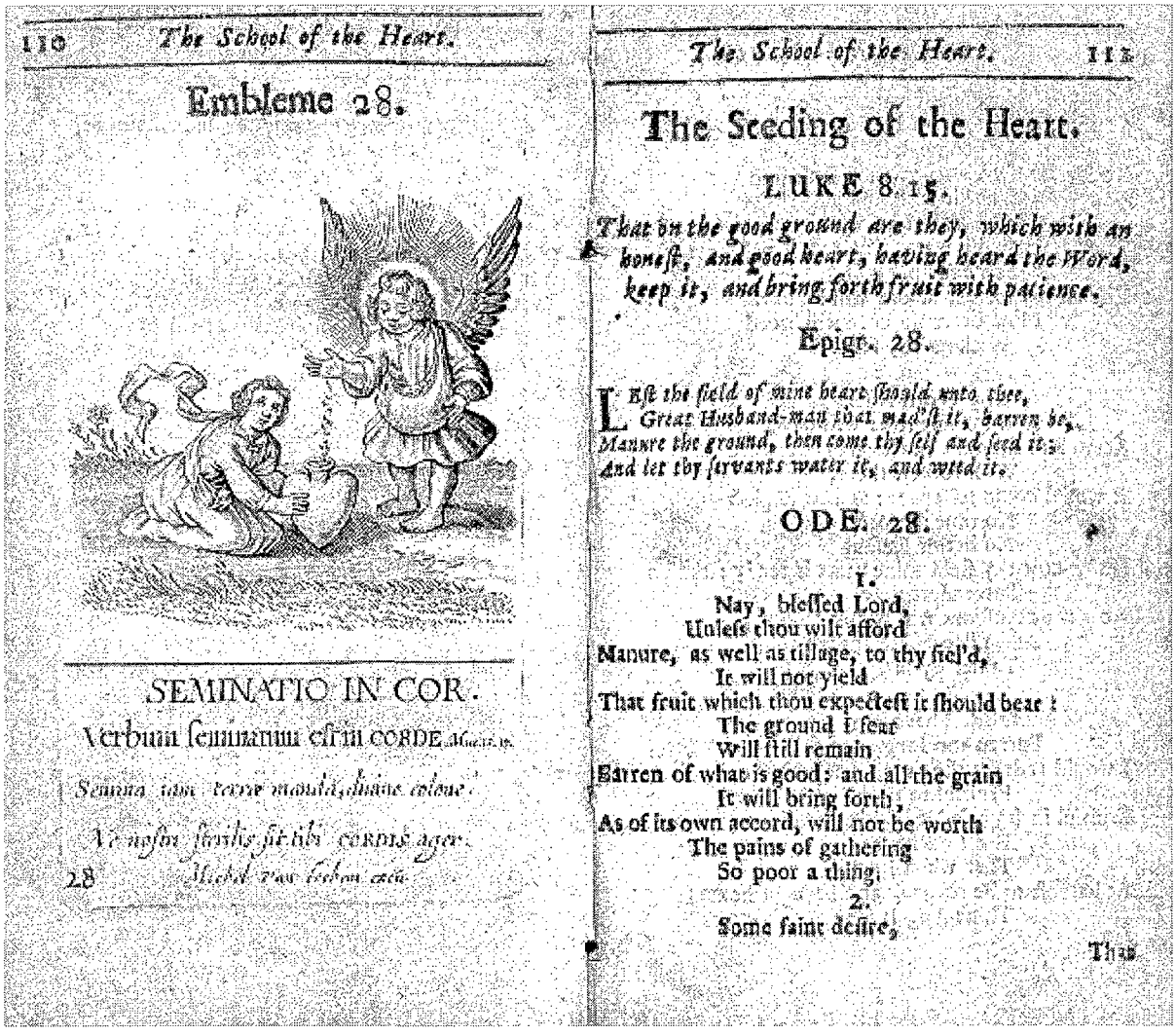
So now me thinks I find
Some better vigour in my mind,
My will begins to move,
And mine affections stir towards things above:
Mine heart grows big with hope, it is a field,
That some good fruit may yield,
If it were till'd, as it should be,
Not by my self, but thee.

2.

Great Husband-man, whose pow'r
All difficulties can devour,
And do what likes thee best,
Let not thy field, mine heart, lie lay, and rest,
Lest it be over-run with noysome weeds,
That spring of their own seeds:
Unless thy grace the growth should stop,
Sin would be all my crop.

3. Ere

Fig. 19. "The tilling of the Heart," Emblem 27 of Christopher Harvey's *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him* (London: Lodowick Lloyd, 1676); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (15 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/ha106_07.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



110 *The School of the Heart.*

Embleme 28.

SEMINATIO IN COR.

Verbum ſeminarium eſt in CORDE

28

The School of the Heart. 111

The Seeding of the Heart.

LUKE 8. 15.

That on the good ground are they, which with an honeſt, and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Epig. 28.

LEſt the field of mine heart ſhould unto thee,
Great Husband-man that mad'ſt it, barren be,
Manure the ground, then come thy ſelf and feed it;
And let thy ſervants water it, and weed it.

ODE. 28.

1.

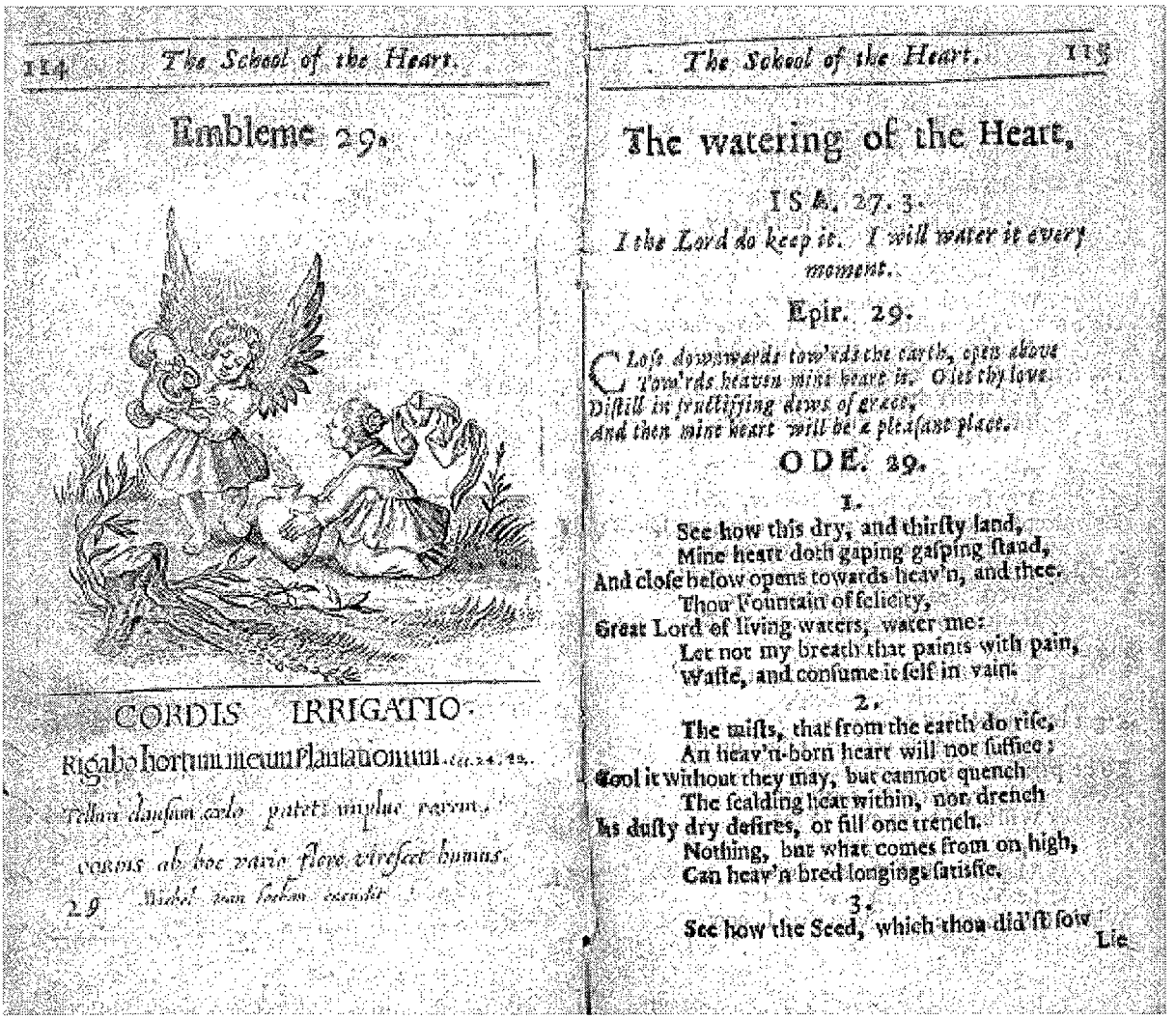
Nay, bleſſed Lord,
Unleſs thou wilt afford
Manure, as well as tillage, to thy field,
It will not yield
That fruit which thou expecteſt it ſhould beare:
The ground I fear
Will ſtill remain
Barren of what is good: and all the grain
It will bring forth,
As of its own accord, will not be worth
The pains of gathering
So poor a thing.

2.

Some faint deſire,

Thus

Fig. 20. "The seeding of the Heart," Emblem 28 of Christopher Harvey's *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him* (London: Lodowick Lloyd, 1676); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (15 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/ha110_11.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



114 *The School of the Heart.*

Emblem 29.

CORDIS IRRIGATIO.

Rigabo hortum meum Plantationum. Isa. 27. 3.

Tellus dum sudum cælo patet: imbue rorem,
Corpus ab hoc pare: flete: vireſcet humus.

29 *Nobis non lachrymæ cessant.*

The School of the Heart. 115

The watering of the Heart,

ISA. 27. 3.

I the Lord do keep it. I will water it every moment.

Epir. 29.

Close downwards tow'rds the earth, open above
Tow'rds heaven mine heart is. O let thy love
Distill in fructifying dews of grace,
And then mine heart will be a pleasant place.

ODE. 29.

1.

See how this dry, and thirsty land,
Mine heart doth gaping gasping stand,
And close below opens towards heav'n, and thee,
Thou Fountain of felicity,
Great Lord of living waters, water me:
Let not my breath that paints with pain,
Waste, and consume it self in vain.

2.

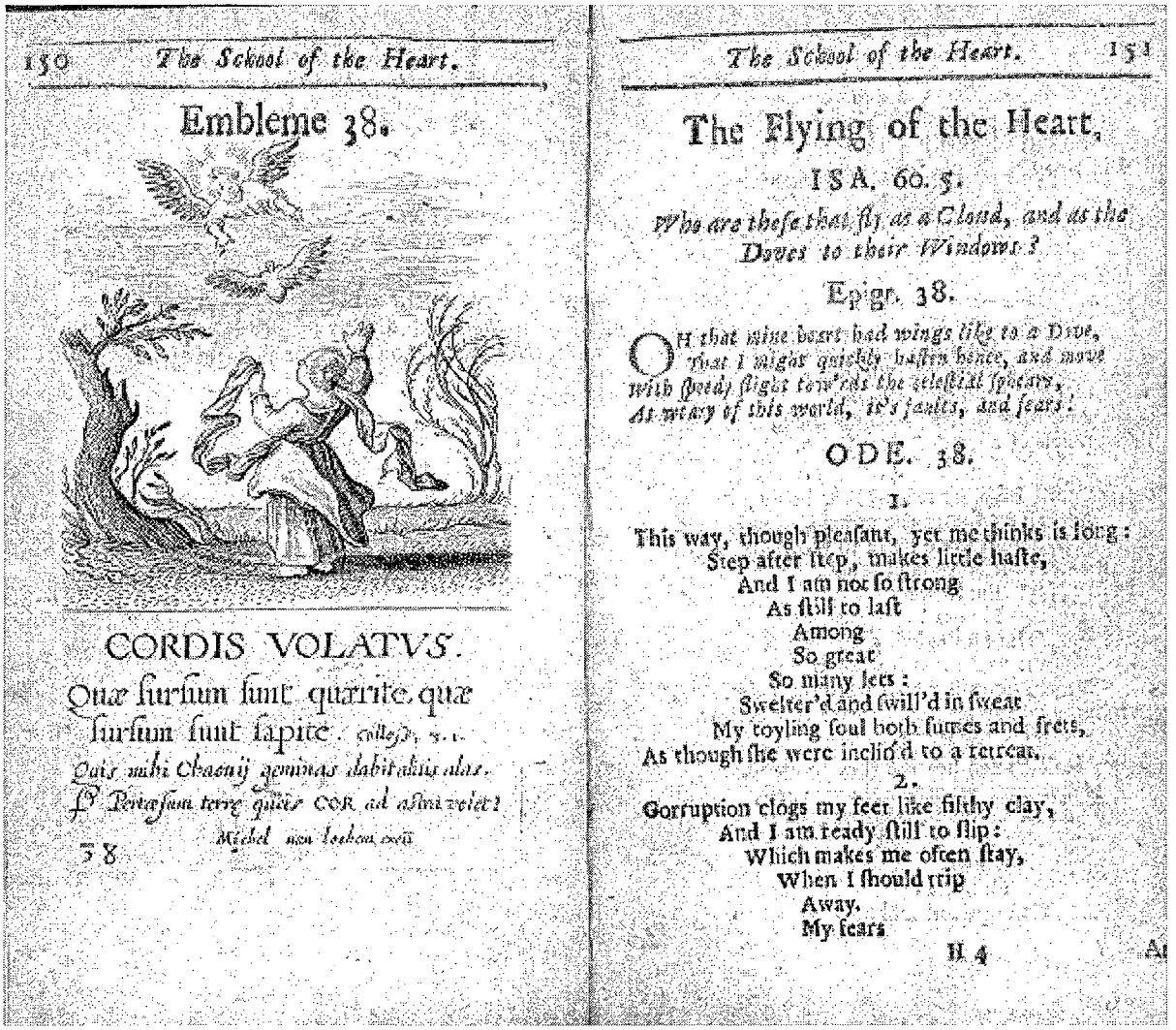
The mists, that from the earth do rise,
An heav'n-born heart will not suffice:
Cool it without they may, but cannot quench
The scalding heat within, nor drench
Its dusty dry desires, or fill one trench.
Nothing, but what comes from on high,
Can heav'n bred longings satisfie.

3.

See how the Seed, which thou did'st sow

Lie

Fig. 21. "The watering of the Heart," Emblem 29 of Christopher Harvey's *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him* (London: Lodowick Lloyd, 1676); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (15 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/ha114_15.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



150 *The School of the Heart.*

Embleme 38.

CORDIS VOLATVS.

Quæ ſurſum ſunt quærite, quæ ſurſum ſunt ſapite. *Coloſſ.* 3. 1.

Quis mihi Oloanij geminas dabit olitis alas.
Et Peregrinum terræ quiete COR. *ad aſtra volet?*
Michael non Iordan. excu.

38

The School of the Heart. 151

The Flying of the Heart.

ISA. 60. 8.

Who are theſe that fly as a Cloud, and as the Doves to their Windows?

Epigr. 38.

OH that mine heart had wings like to a Dove,
That I might quickly haſten hence, and move
With ſpeedy flight tow'rds the celeſtial ſpheare,
As weary of this world, it's faults, and fears!

ODE. 38.

1.

This way, though pleaſant, yet me thinks is long:
Step after ſtep, makes little haſte,
And I am not ſo ſtrong
As ſtill to laſt
Among
So great
So many lets:
Swelter'd and ſwill'd in ſweat
My toyling ſoul both fumes and frets,
As though ſhe were inclin'd to a retreat.

2.

Corruption clogs my feet like filthy clay,
And I am ready ſtill to ſlip:
Which makes me often ſtay,
When I ſhould trip
Away.
My fears

H 4

Fig. 22. "The flying of the Heart," Emblem 38 of Christopher Harvey's *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him* (London: Lodowick Lloyd, 1676); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (15 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/ha150_51.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

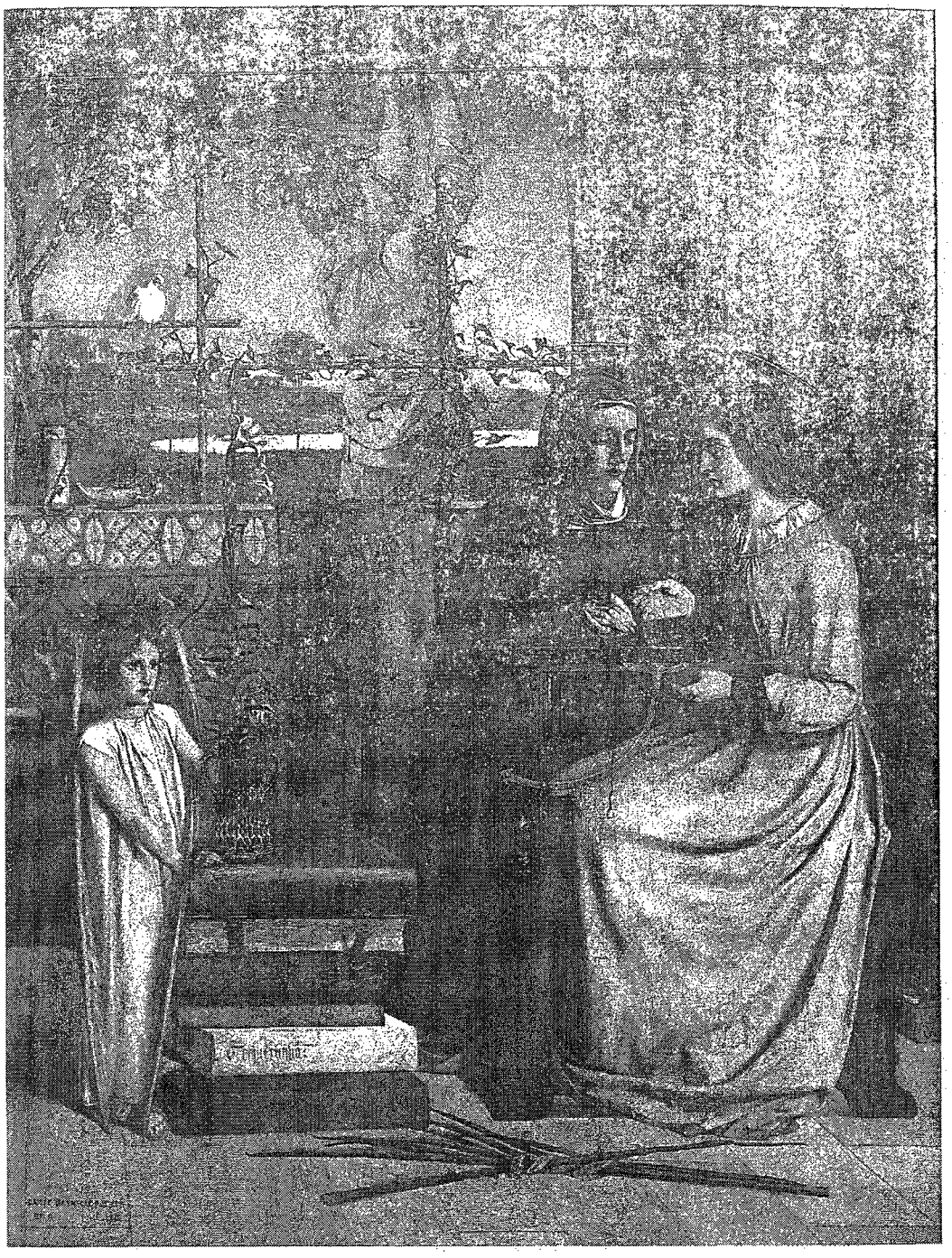


Fig. 23. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* (1848-9), Tate Gallery, London; *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008), (12 June 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/zoom/s40.tate.img.html>.



Fig. 24. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Proserpine* (1874), Tate Gallery, London; *Wikimedia Commons* (4 March 2007), (16 June 2009) <http://commons.wikimedia.org /wiki/File:Proserpine-(utdrag).jpg>.



Fig. 25. William Holman Hunt, *The Awakening Conscience* (1851-53), Tate Gallery, London; *Wikimedia Commons* (14 March 2009), (19 June 2009) <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hunt-AwakeningConscience1853.jpg>.

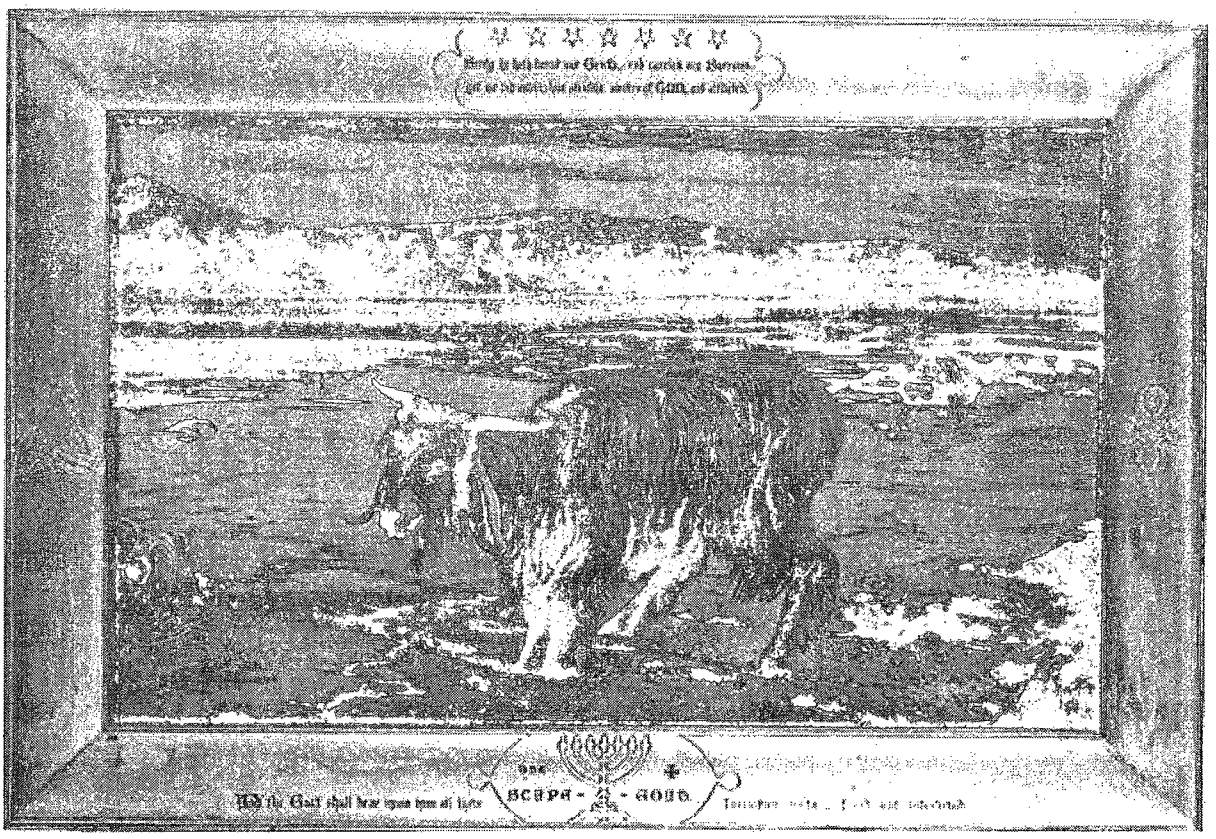
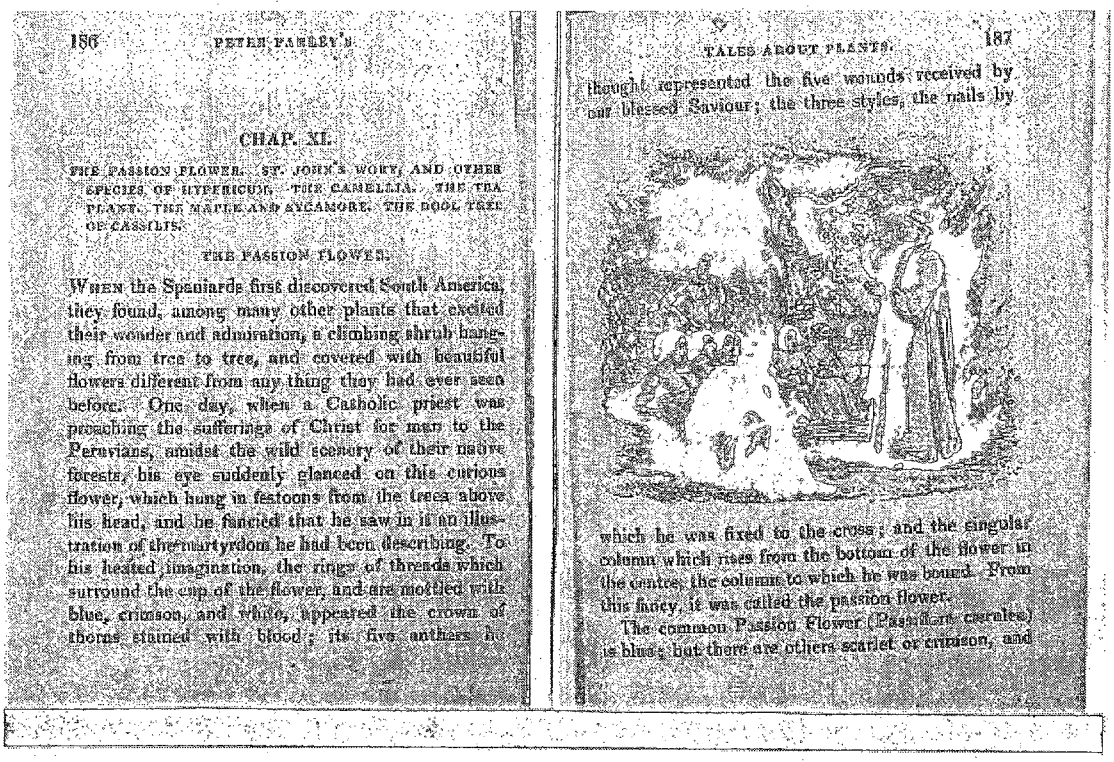


Fig. 26. William Holman Hunt, *The Scapegoat* (1854-56), Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool; *Wikimedia Commons* (7 March 2006), (12 June 2009) <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Scapegoat.jpg>.



Fig. 27. Filippo Pistrucci, "*Il Mondo*," *Iconologia* (Milan: Paolo Antonio Tosi, 1821).



186 PETER PARLEY'S

CHAP. XI.

THE PASSION FLOWER. ST. JOHN'S WORT, AND OTHER SPECIES OF HYPERICUM. THE CAMELLIA. THE TEA PLANT. THE MAPLE AND SYCAMORE. THE COOL TREE OF CASSILIS.

THE PASSION FLOWER.

When the Spaniards first discovered South America, they found, among many other plants that excited their wonder and admiration, a climbing shrub hanging from tree to tree, and covered with beautiful flowers different from any thing they had ever seen before. One day, when a Catholic priest was preaching the sufferings of Christ for men to the Peruvians, amidst the wild scenery of their native forests, his eye suddenly glanced on this curious flower, which hung in festoons from the trees above his head, and he fancied that he saw in it an illustration of the martyrdom he had been describing. To his heated imagination, the rings of threads which surround the cup of the flower, and are mottled with blue, crimson, and white, appeared the crown of thorns stained with blood; its five anthers to

TALES ABOUT PLANTS. 187

thought represented the five wounds received by our blessed Saviour; the three styles, the nails by

which he was fixed to the cross; and the singular column which rises from the bottom of the flower in the centre, the column to which he was bound. From this fancy, it was called the passion flower.

The common Passion Flower (Passiflora coerulea) is blue, but there are others scarlet or crimson, and

Fig. 28. "The Passion Flower," in Peter Parley's (Samuel Griswold Goodrich), *Tales About Plants* (London: Thomas Tegg, 1839): 186-7.



Fig. 29. "You should have wept her yesterday," by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, frontispiece to Christina Rossetti's *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* (London: Macmillan 1866); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008), (12 June 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/sa137.s185.rap.html>.

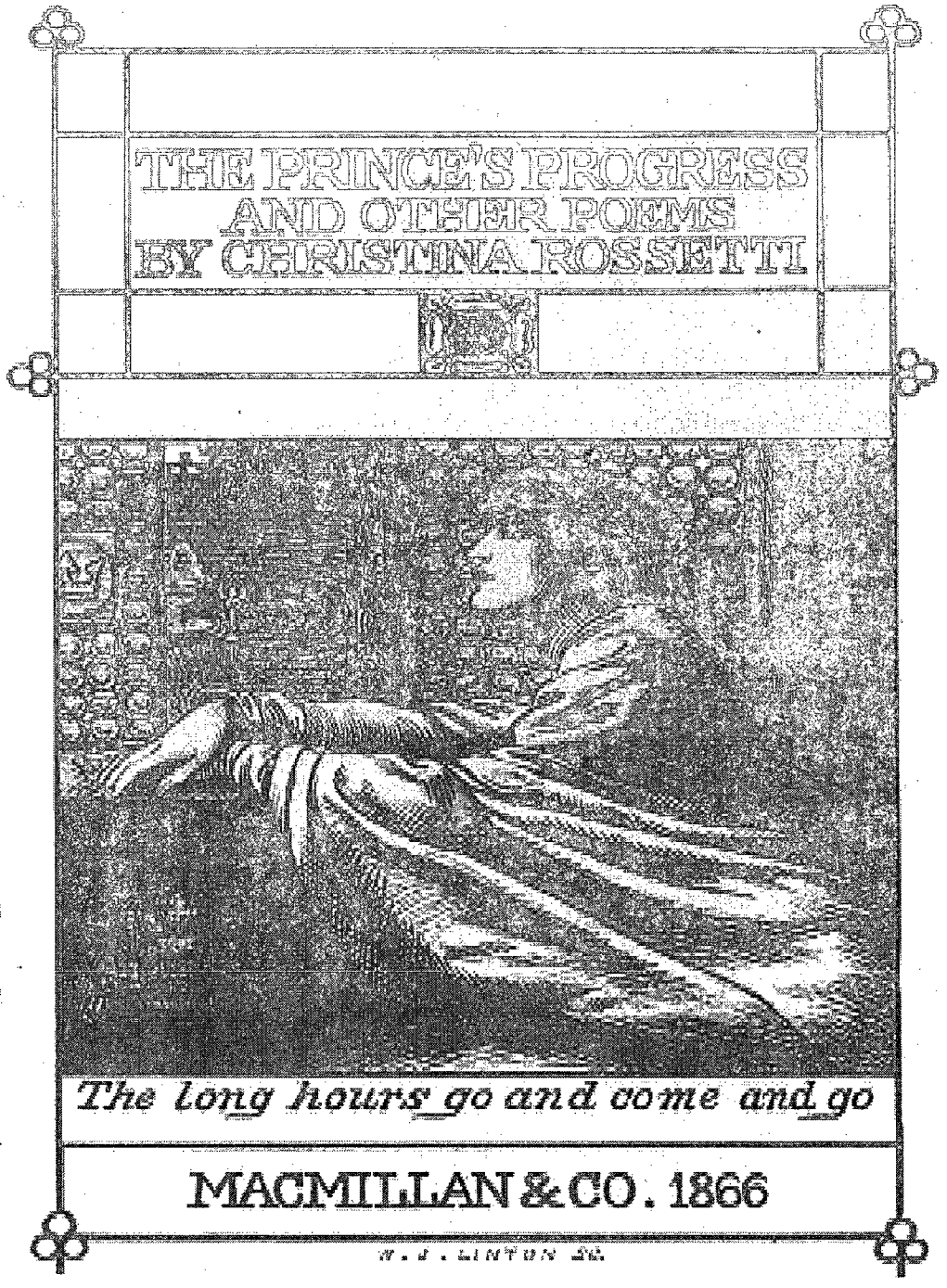


Fig. 30. "The long hours come and go," by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, title page illustration of Christina Rossetti's *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* (London: Macmillan, 1866); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008), (12 June 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/zoom/sa138.m.img.html>.



Fig. 31. Emblem II, Book 4 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004) (15 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/qu188_89.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

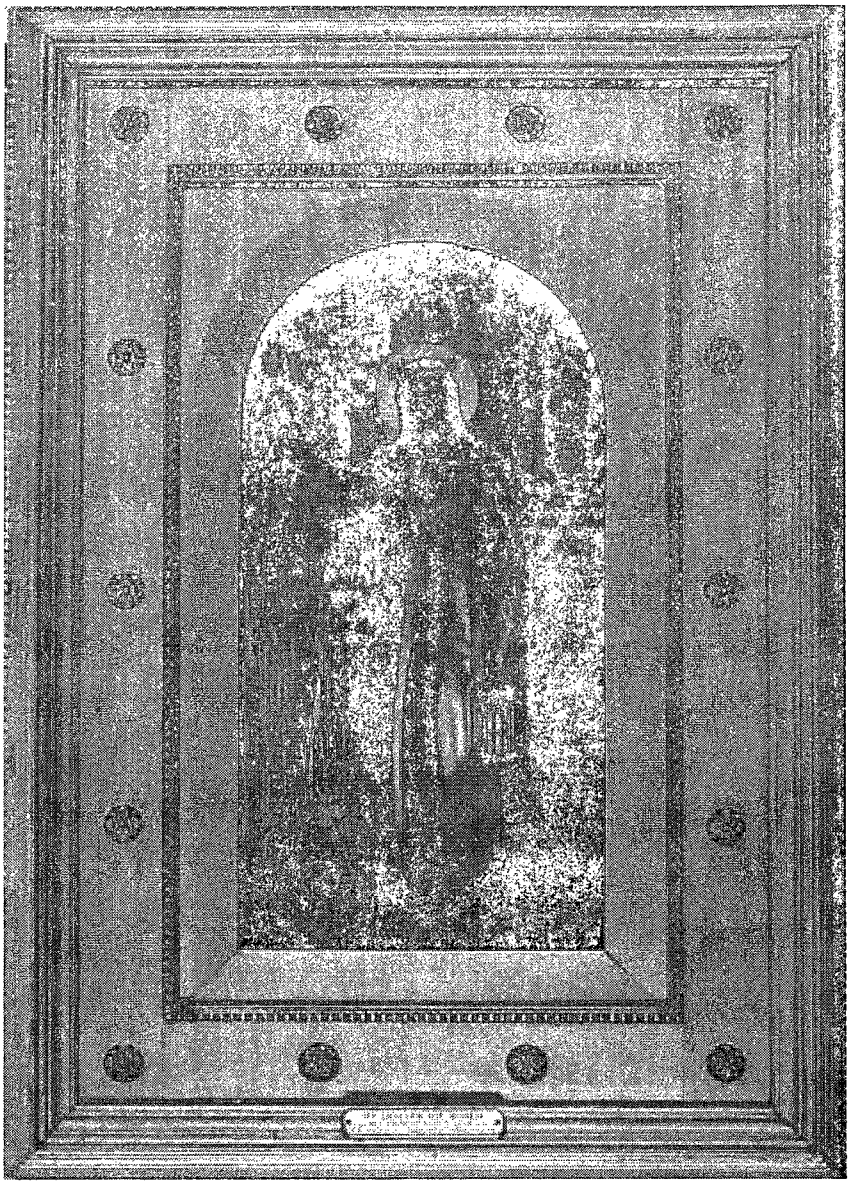
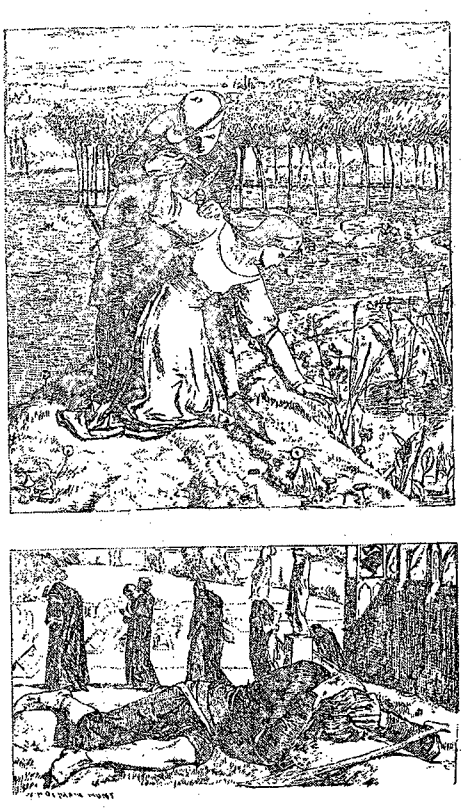


Fig. 32. William Holman Hunt, *The Light of the World* (1851-53), Manchester City Art Gallery; *Wikimedia Commons* (9 April 2009), (12 June 2009) <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hunt,_William_Homan_-_The_Light_of_the_World_-_1853-54.jpg>.



My Beautiful Lady.

I LOVE my lady; she is very fair;
Her brow is white, and bound by simple hair;
Her spirit sits aloof, and high,
Altho' it looks thro' her soft eye
Sweetly and tenderly.

As a young forest, when the wind drives thro',
My life is stirred when she breaks on my view.
Altho' her beauty has such power,
Her soul is like the simple flower
Trembling beneath a shower.

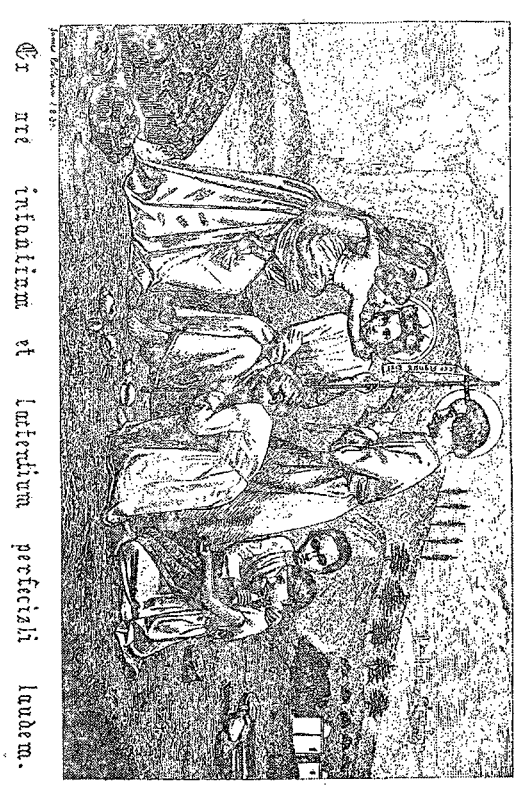
As bliss of saints, when dreaming of large wings,
The bloom around her fancied presence flings,
I feast and wile her absence, by
Pressing her choice hand passionately—
Imagining her sigh.

My lady's voice, altho' so very mild,
Maketh me feel as strong wine would a child;
My lady's touch, however slight,
Moves all my senses with its might,
Like to a sudden fright.

A hawk poised high in air, whose nerved wing-tips
Tremble with might suppressed, before he dips,—
In vigilance, not more intense
Than I; when her word's gentle sense
Makes full-eyed my suspense.

Her mention of a thing—august or poor,
Makes it seem nobler than it was before:
As where the sun strikes, life will gush,
And what is pale receive a flush,
Rich hues—a richer blush.

Fig. 33. "My Beautiful Lady," etching by Thomas Woolner in *The Germ* 1 (1 Jan 1850); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008) (1 Aug 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/img/ap4.g415.1901.1.jpg>.



49

The Child Jesus.

A Record typical of the five Sorrowful Mysteries.

"O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow."
Lamentations i. 12.

I. The Agony in the Garden.

Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth,
And his wife Mary had an only child,
Jesus: One holy from his mother's womb.
Both parents loved him: Mary's heart alone
Beat with his blood, and, by her love and his,
She knew that God was with her, and she strove
Meekly to do the work appointed her;
To cherish him with undivided care
Who deigned to call her mother, and who loved
From her the name of son. And Mary gave
Her heart to him, and feared not; yet she seemed
To hold as sacred that he said or did;
And, unlike other women, never spake
His words of innocence again; but all
Were humbly treasured in her memory
With the first secret of his birth. So strong
Grew her affection, as the child increased
In wisdom and in stature with his years,
That many mothers wondered, saying: "These
Our little ones claim in our hearts a place
The next to God; but Mary's tenderness
Grows almost into reverence for her child.
Is he not of herself? I' the temple when
Kneeling to pray, on him she bends her eyes,
As though God only heard her prayer through him.
Is he to be a prophet? Nay, we know
That out of Galilee no prophet comes."

But all their children made the boy their friend.

Three cottages that overlooked the sea
Stood side by side eastward of Nazareth.
Behind them rose a sheltering range of cliffs,
Purple and yellow, verdure-spotted, red,
Layer upon layer built up against the sky.

D

Fig. 34. "The Child Jesus: A Record typical of the five Sorrowful Mysteries," etching by James Collinson in *The Germ* 2 (31 Jan 1850); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008) (1 Aug 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/img/ap4.g415.1901.49.jpg>.

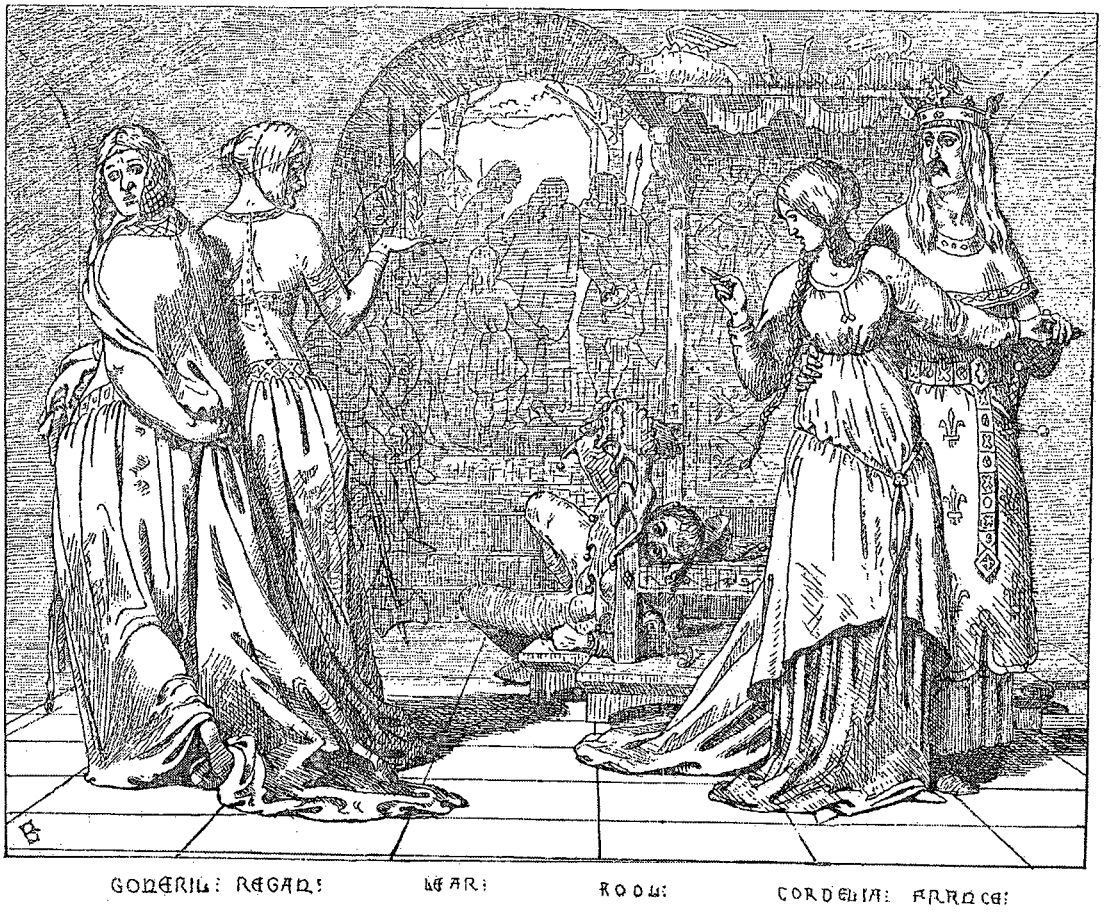


Fig. 35. "Cordelia," etching by Ford Madox Brown in *The Germ* 3 (March 1850); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008) (1 Aug 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/img/ap4.g415.1901.v3v.jpg>.



145

Viola and Olivia.

When Viola, a servant of the Duke,
Of him she loved the page, went, sent by him,
To tell Olivia that great love which shook
His breast and stopt his tongue; was it a whim,
Or jealousy or fear that she must look
Upon the face of that Olivia?

'Tis hard to say if it were whim or fear
Or jealousy, but it was natural,
As natural as what came next, the near
Intelligence of hearts: Olivia
Loveth, her eye abused by a thin wall
Of custom, but her spirit's eyes were clear.

Clear? we have oft been curious to know
The after-fortunes of those lovers dear;
Having a steady faith some deed must show
That they were married souls—unmarried here—
Having an inward faith that love, called so
In verity, is of the spirit, clear
Of earth and dress and sex—it may be near
What Viola returned Olivia?

Fig. 36. "Viola and Olivia," etching by Walter Howell Deverell in *The Germ* 4 (April 1850); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008) (1 Aug 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/img/ap4.g415.1901.145.jpg>.

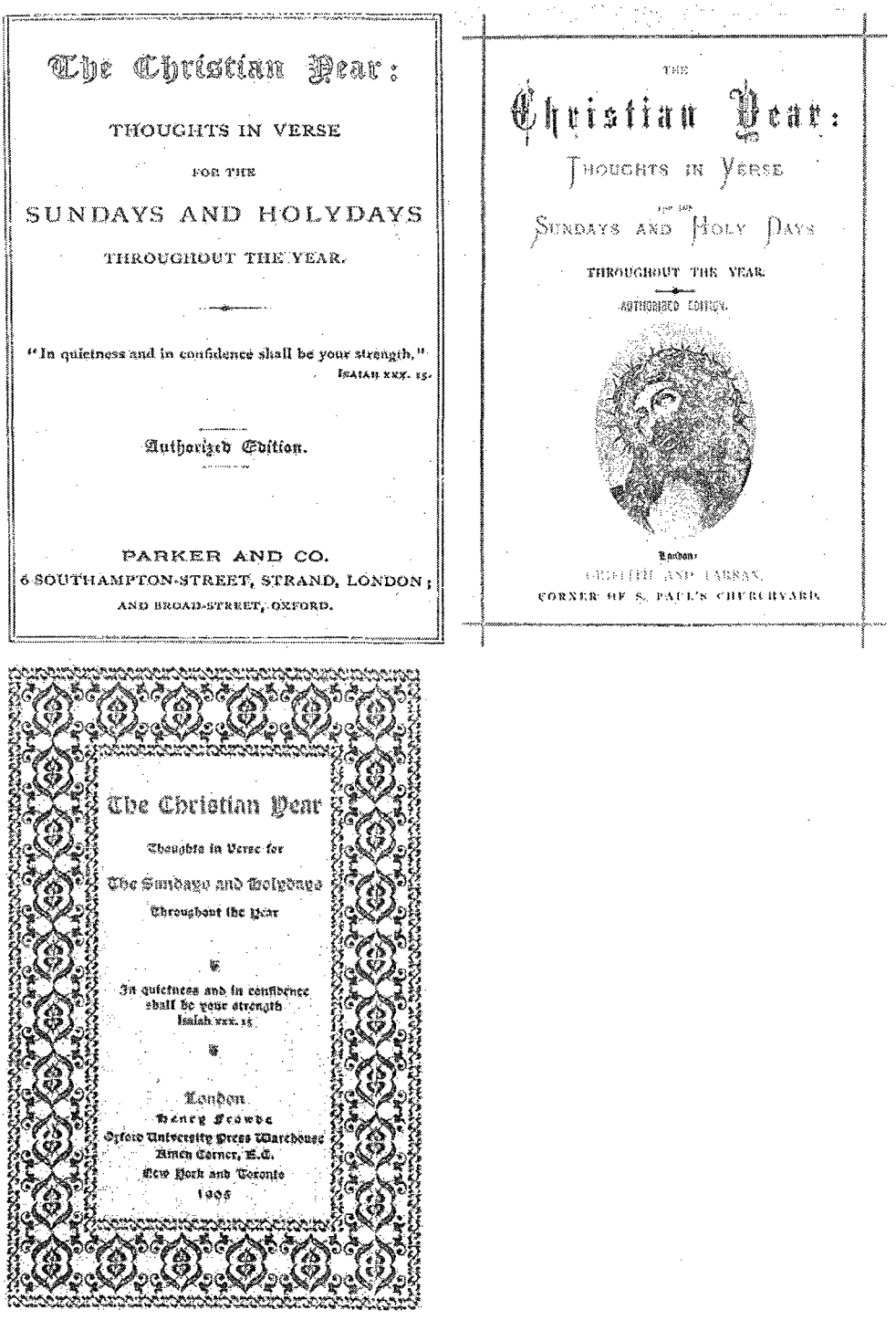
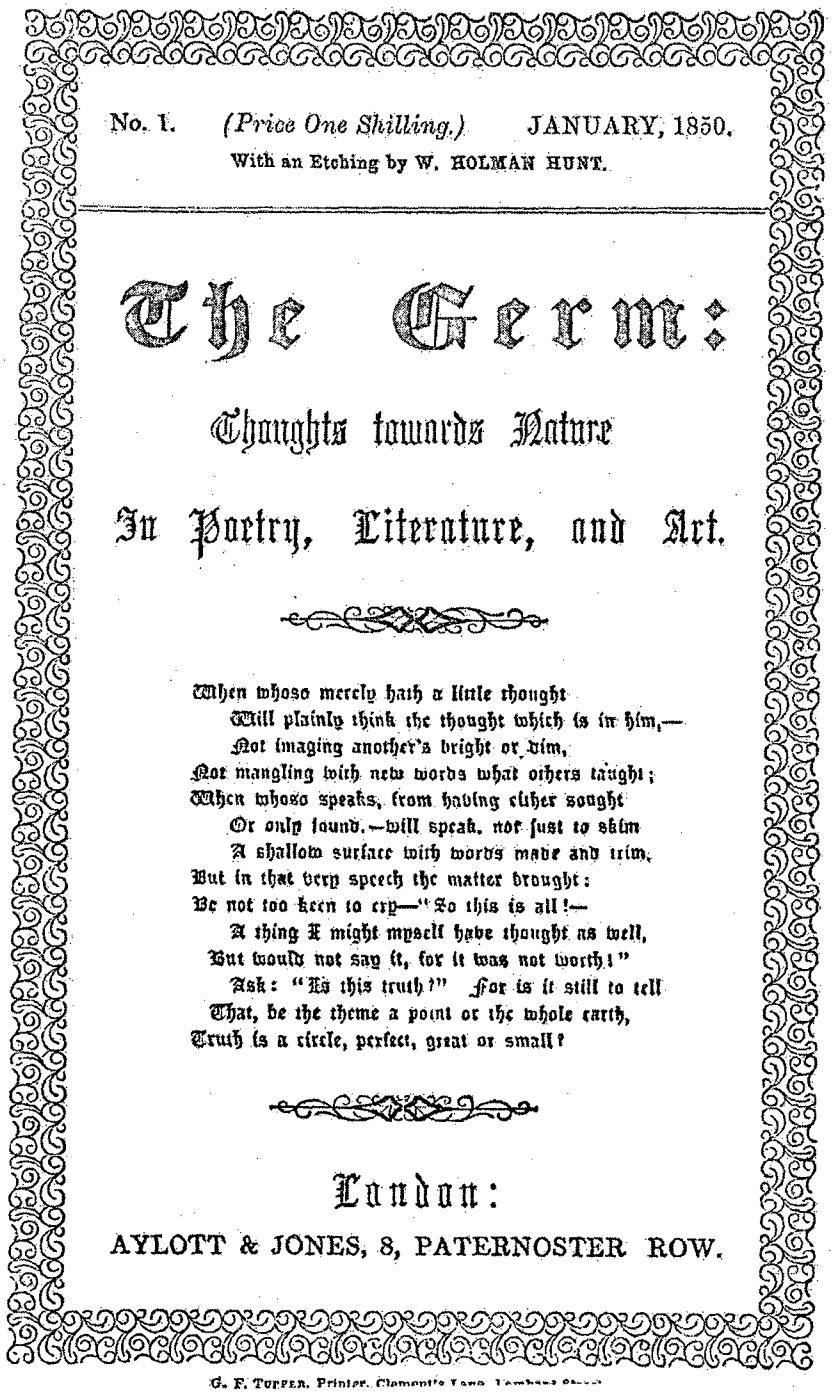


Fig. 37. Three title pages of John Keble's *The Christian Year* (top left, first edition, 1827; top right, 1875; bottom left, 1905); rpt. in G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry: The Tractarian Mode* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1981) 84-85.



No. I. *(Price One Shilling.)* JANUARY, 1850.

With an Etching by W. HOLMAN HUNT.

The Germ:

Thoughts towards Nature

In Poetry, Literature, and Art.

When whoso merely hath a little thought
Will plainly think the thought which is in him,—
Not imaging another's bright or dim,
Not mangling with new words what others taught;
When whoso speaks, from having either sought
Or only found,—will speak, not just to skim
A shallow surface with words made and trim,
But in that very speech the matter brought:
Be not too keen to cry—"So this is all!—
A thing I might myself have thought as well,
But would not say it, for it was not worth!"
Ask: "Is this truth?" For is it still to tell
That, be the theme a point or the whole earth,
Truth is a circle, perfect, great or small?

London:

AYLOTT & JONES, 8, PATERNOSTER ROW.

G. F. TUPPER, Printer, Clement's Lane, Lombard Street.

Fig. 38. Title page, *The Germ* 1 (1 Jan 1850); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008) (1 Aug 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/img/ap4.g415.1.titlepage.jpg>.

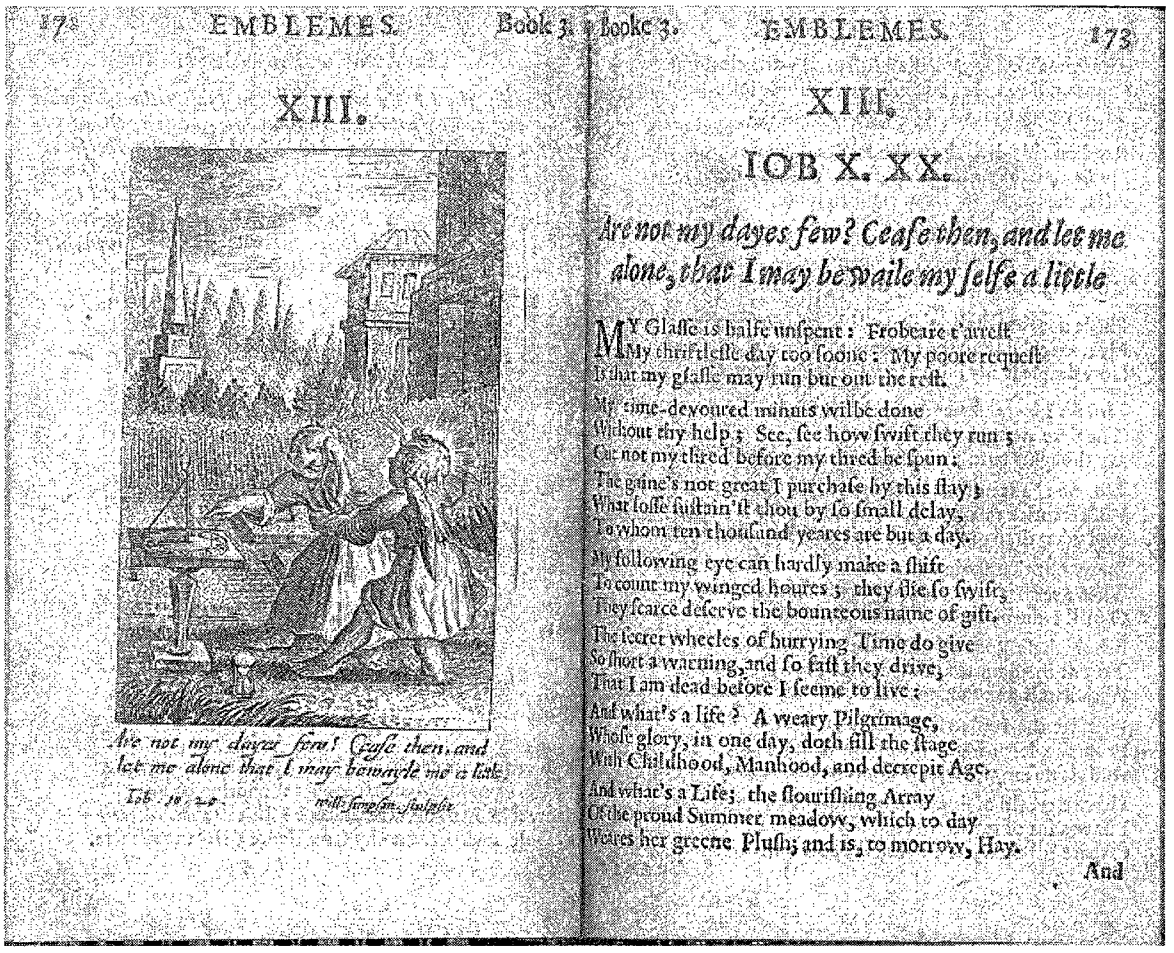
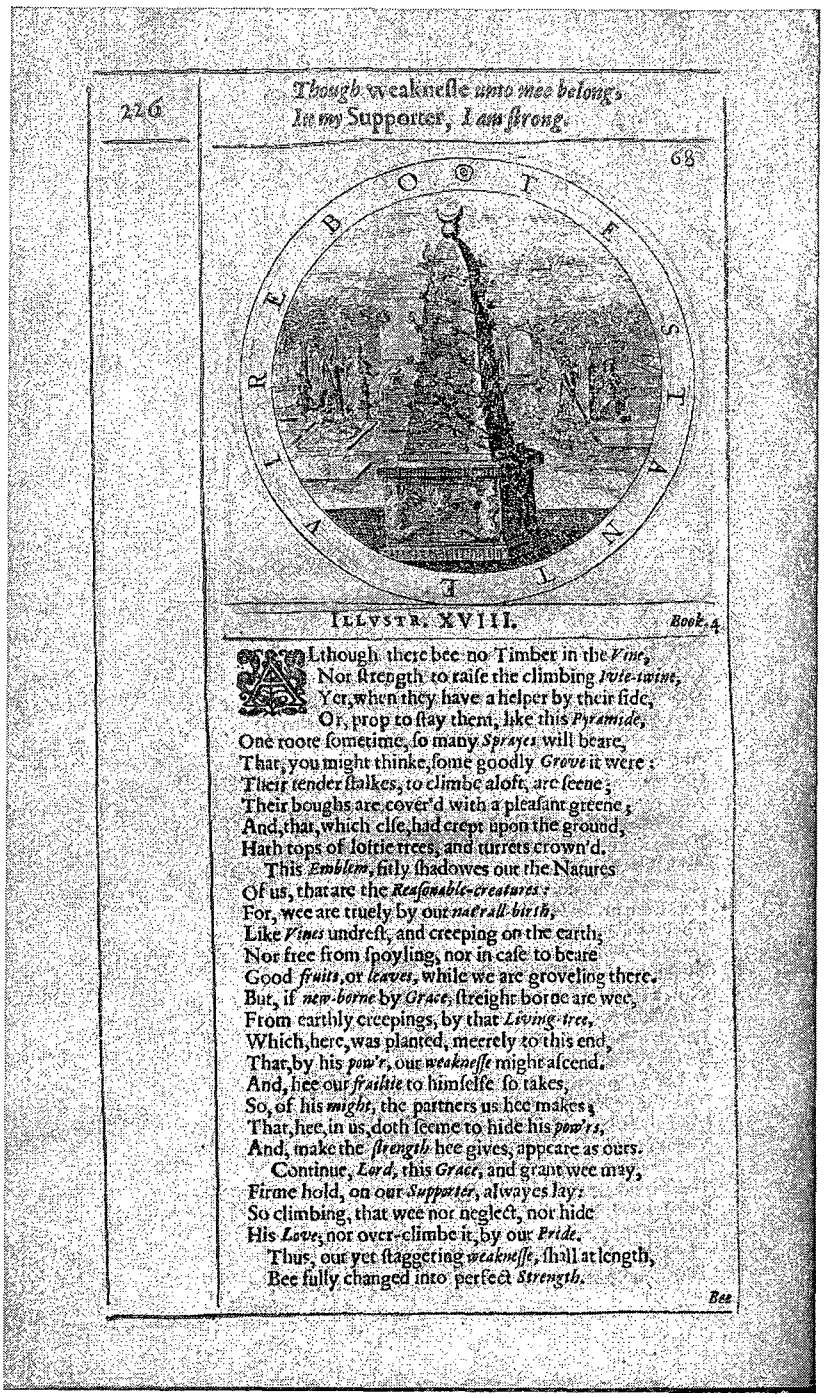


Fig. 39. Emblem XIII, Book 3 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635): *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (15 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/qu172_73.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



226 *Though weakneſſe unto mee belong,*
In my Supporter, I am ſtrong.

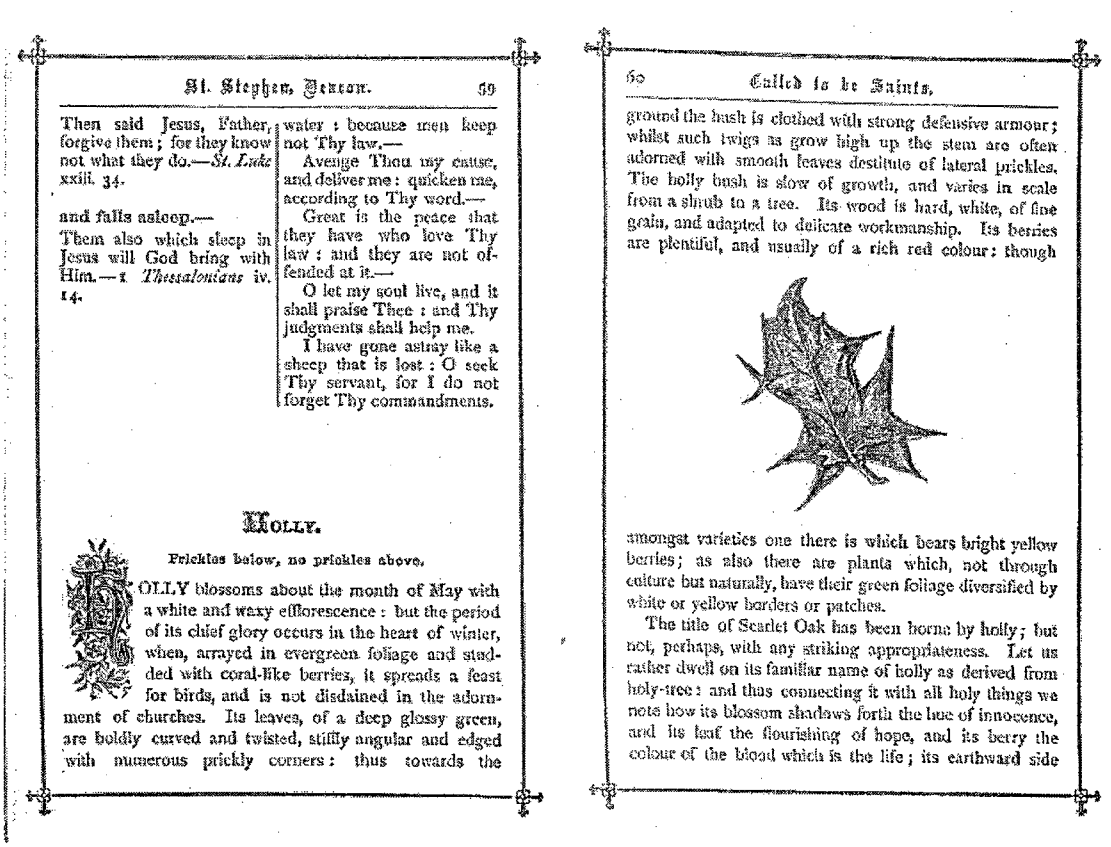
68

ILLVSTR. XVIII. Book. 4

ALthough there bee no Timber in the *Vine*,
Nor ſtrength to raiſe the climbing *Ivie-twine*,
Yet, when they have a helper by their ſide,
Or, prop to ſtay them, like this *Pyramide*,
One roote ſometime, ſo many *Sprayes* will beare,
That, you might thinke, ſome goodly *Grove* it were:
Their tender ſtalkes, to climbe aloft, are ſeene;
Their boughs are cover'd with a pleaſant greene,
And, that, which elſe, had crept upon the ground,
Hath tops of loftie trees, and turrets crown'd.
This *Emblem*, fitly ſhadowes out the Natures
Of us, that are the *Reaſonable-creatures*:
For, wee are truely by our *naturall birth*,
Like *Vines* undreſt, and creeping on the earth,
Nor free from ſpoyling, nor in caſe to beare
Good *fruits*, or *leaves*, while we are groveling there.
But, if *new-borne* by *Grace*, ſtreight borne are wee,
From earthly creepings, by that *Living-tree*,
Which, here, was planted, meerely to this end,
That, by his *pow'r*, our *weakneſſe* might aſcend.
And, hee our *frailtie* to himſelfe ſo takes,
So, of his *might*, the partners us hee makes;
That, hee, in us, doth ſeeme to hide his *pow'rs*,
And, make the *ſtrength* hee gives, appeare as ours.
Continue, *Lord*, this *Grace*, and grant wee may,
Firme hold, on our *Supporter*, alwayes lay:
So climbing, that wee nor neglect, nor hide
His *Love*, nor over-climbe it, by our *Pride*.
Thus, our yet ſtaggering *weakneſſe*, ſhall at length,
Bee fully changed into perfect *Strength*.

Bee

Fig. 40. Emblem XVIII, Book 4 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (London: Henry Taunton, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (15 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/withe226.htm>.Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



St. Stephen, Denton. 59

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.—*St. Luke* xxiii. 34.

and falls asleep.—

Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.—1 *Thessalonians* iv. 14.

water: because men keep not Thy law.—

Avenge Thou my cause, and deliver me: quicken me, according to Thy word.—

Great is the peace that they have who love Thy law: and they are not offended at it.—

O let my soul live, and it shall praise Thee: and Thy judgments shall help me.

I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost: O seek Thy servant, for I do not forget Thy commandments.

Holly.

Prickles below, no prickles above.

HOLLY blossoms about the month of May with a white and waxy efflorescence: but the period of its chief glory occurs in the heart of winter, when, arrayed in evergreen foliage and studded with coral-like berries, it spreads a feast for birds, and is not disdained in the adornment of churches. Its leaves, of a deep glossy green, are boldly curved and twisted, stiffly angular and edged with numerous prickly corners: thus towards the

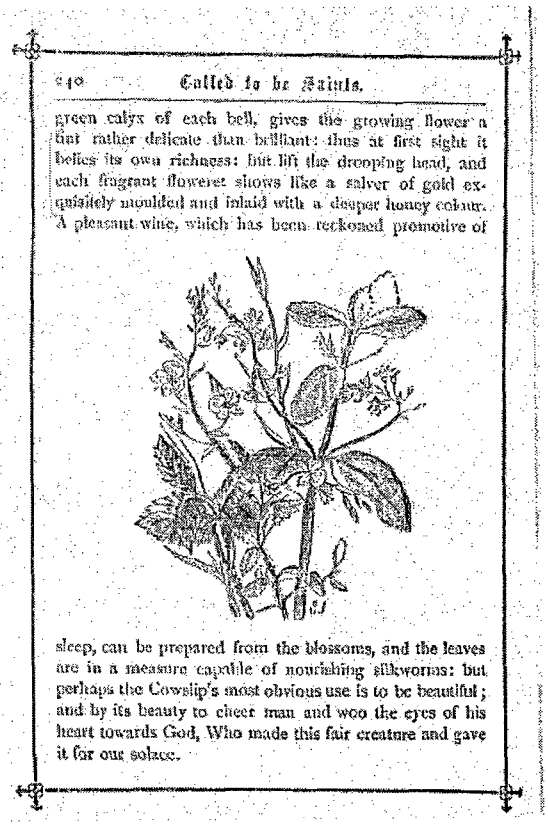
60 Called to be Saints.

ground the bush is clothed with strong defensive armour; whilst such twigs as grow high up the stem are often adorned with smooth leaves destitute of lateral prickles. The holly bush is slow of growth, and varies in scale from a shrub to a tree. Its wood is hard, white, of fine grain, and adapted to delicate workmanship. Its berries are plentiful, and usually of a rich red colour: though

amongst varieties one there is which bears bright yellow berries; as also there are plants which, not through culture but naturally, have their green foliage diversified by white or yellow borders or patches.

The title of Scarlet Oak has been borne by holly; but not, perhaps, with any striking appropriateness. Let us rather dwell on its familiar name of holly as derived from holy-tree: and thus connecting it with all holy things we note how its blossom shadows forth the hue of innocence, and its leaf the flourishing of hope, and its berry the colour of the blood which is the life; its earthward side

Fig. 41. "Holly," in Christina Rossetti's *Called to Be Saints* (London: SPCK, 1881): 59-60.

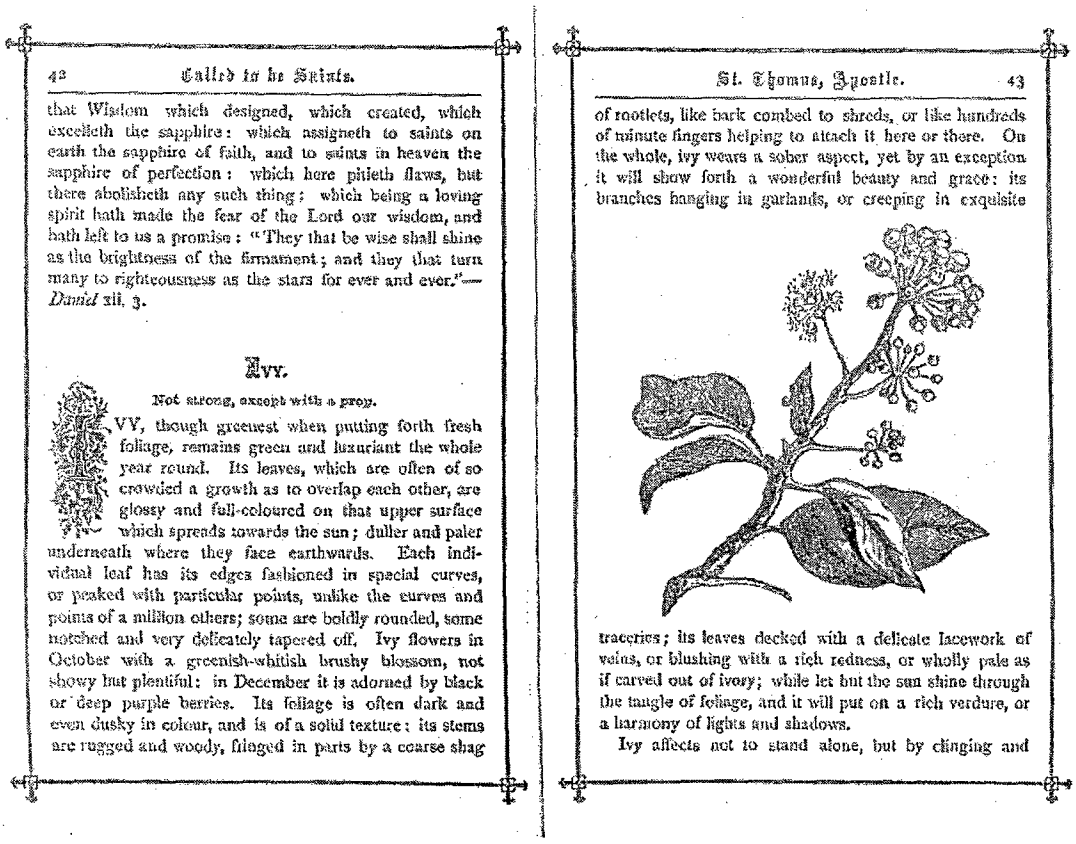


240 Called to be Saints.

green calyx of each bell, gives the growing flower a tint rather delicate than brilliant: thus at first sight it belies its own richness: but lift the drooping head, and each fragrant floweret shows like a salver of gold exquisitely moulded and inlaid with a deeper honey colour. A pleasant wine, which has been reckoned promotive of

sleep, can be prepared from the blossoms, and the leaves are in a measure capable of nourishing silkworms: but perhaps the Cowslip's most obvious use is to be beautiful; and by its beauty to cheer man and woo the eyes of his heart towards God, Who made this fair creature and gave it for our solace.

Fig. 42. "Cowslip and Veronica," in Christina Rossetti's *Called to Be Saints* (London: SPCK, 1881): 240.



42 Called to be Saints.

that Wisdom which designed, which created, which excelleth the sapphire: which assigneth to saints on earth the sapphire of faith, and to saints in heaven the sapphire of perfection: which here pitieth flaws, but there aboliseth any such thing; which being a loving spirit hath made the fear of the Lord our wisdom, and hath left to us a promise: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."—*Daniel* xii. 3.

Ivy.

Not strong, except with a prop.

IVY, though greenest when putting forth fresh foliage, remains green and luxuriant the whole year round. Its leaves, which are often of so crowded a growth as to overlap each other, are glossy and full-coloured on that upper surface which spreads towards the sun; duller and paler underneath where they face earthwards. Each individual leaf has its edges fashioned in special curves, or peaked with particular points, unlike the curves and points of a million others; some are boldly rounded, some notched and very delicately tapered off. Ivy flowers in October with a greenish-whitish brushy blossom, not showy but plentiful: in December it is adorned by black or deep purple berries. Its foliage is often dark and even dusky in colour, and is of a solid texture: its stems are rugged and woody, fringed in parts by a coarse shag

St. Thomas, Apostle. 43

of rootlets, like bark combed to shreds, or like hundreds of minute fingers helping to attach it here or there. On the whole, ivy wears a sober aspect, yet by an exception it will show forth a wonderful beauty and grace: its branches hanging in garlands, or creeping in exquisite

traceries; its leaves decked with a delicate lacework of veins, or blushing with a rich redness, or wholly pale as if carved out of ivory; while let but the sun shine through the tangle of foliage, and it will put on a rich verdure, or a harmony of lights and shadows.

Ivy affects not to stand alone, but by clinging and

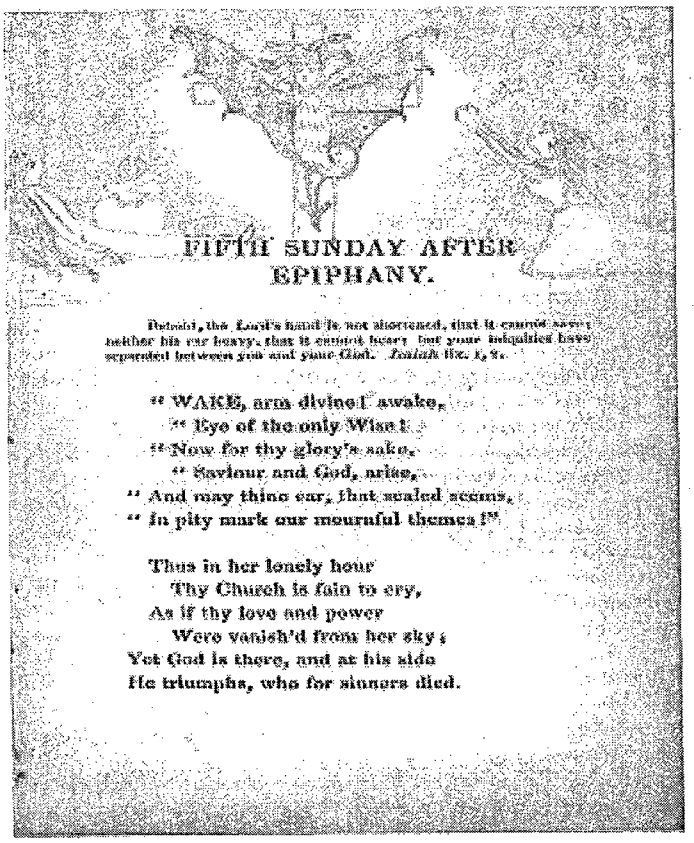
Fig. 43. "Ivy," in Christina Rossetti's *Called to Be Saints* (London: SPCK, 1881): 42-43.



Fig. 44. Giotto di Bondone, *Lamentation* (1304-06), Scrovegni Chapel, Padua; *Wikimedia Commons* (19 May 2005), (16 June 2009) <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Giotto_di_Bondone_009.jpg>.



Fig. 45. "*Tertiae Imaginus*," in Antoine Sucquet's *Via Vitae Aeternae* (1620); *Internet Archive*, Getty Library, Getty Research Institute (16 June 2009) <http://www.archive.org/stream/antonisucqueteso01sucq#page/86/mode/2up>.



FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

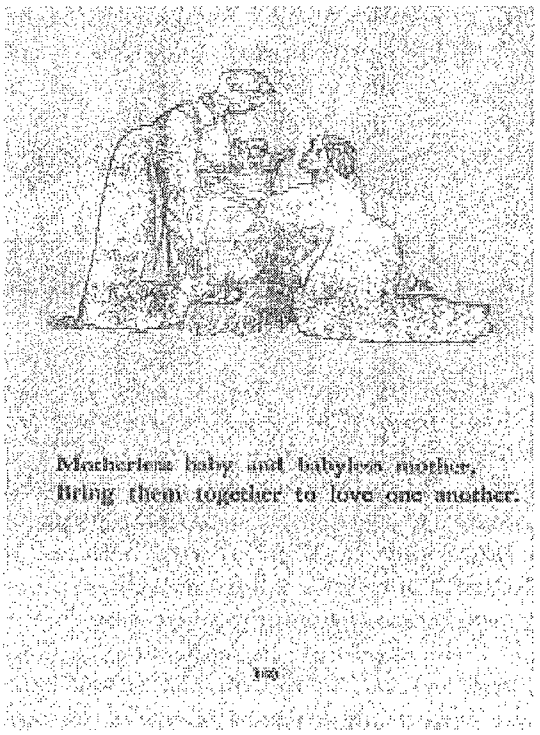
Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God. *Isaiah* lix. 1, 2.

" WAKE, arm divine! awake,
" Eye of the only Wise!
" Now for thy glory's sake,
" Saviour and God, arise,
" And may thine ear, that sealed seems,
" In pity mark our mournful themes!"

Thus in her lonely hour
Thy Church is fain to cry,
As if thy love and power
Were vanish'd from her sky;
Yet God is there, and at his side
He triumphs, who for sinners died.

Fig. 46. "Fifth Sunday after Epiphany," Christina Rossetti's design for John Keble's *The Christian Year* (London: Parker, 1827) © The British Library Board (Loan 113); rpt. in Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, *Christina Rossetti and Illustration: A Publishing History* (Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 2002): 37.

.



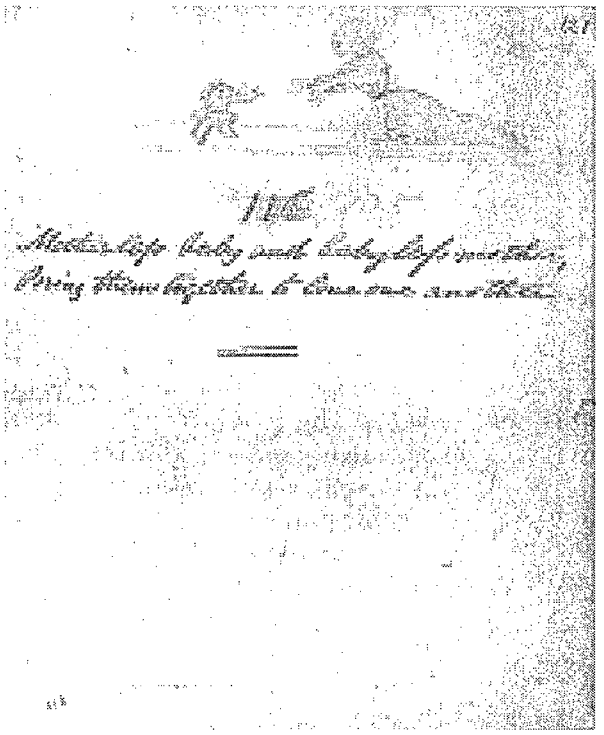


Fig. 47a (left). "Motherless baby and babyless mother," illustration by Arthur Hughes for Christina Rossetti's *Sing-Song* (London: Routledge, 1872); rpt. in Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, *Christina Rossetti and Illustration: A Publishing History* (Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 2002): 107.

Fig. 47b (right). "Motherless baby and babyless mother," Christina Rossetti's design for *Sing-Song*, © The British Library Board (Ashley MS 1371); rpt. in Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, *Christina Rossetti and Illustration: A Publishing History* (Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 2002): 107.

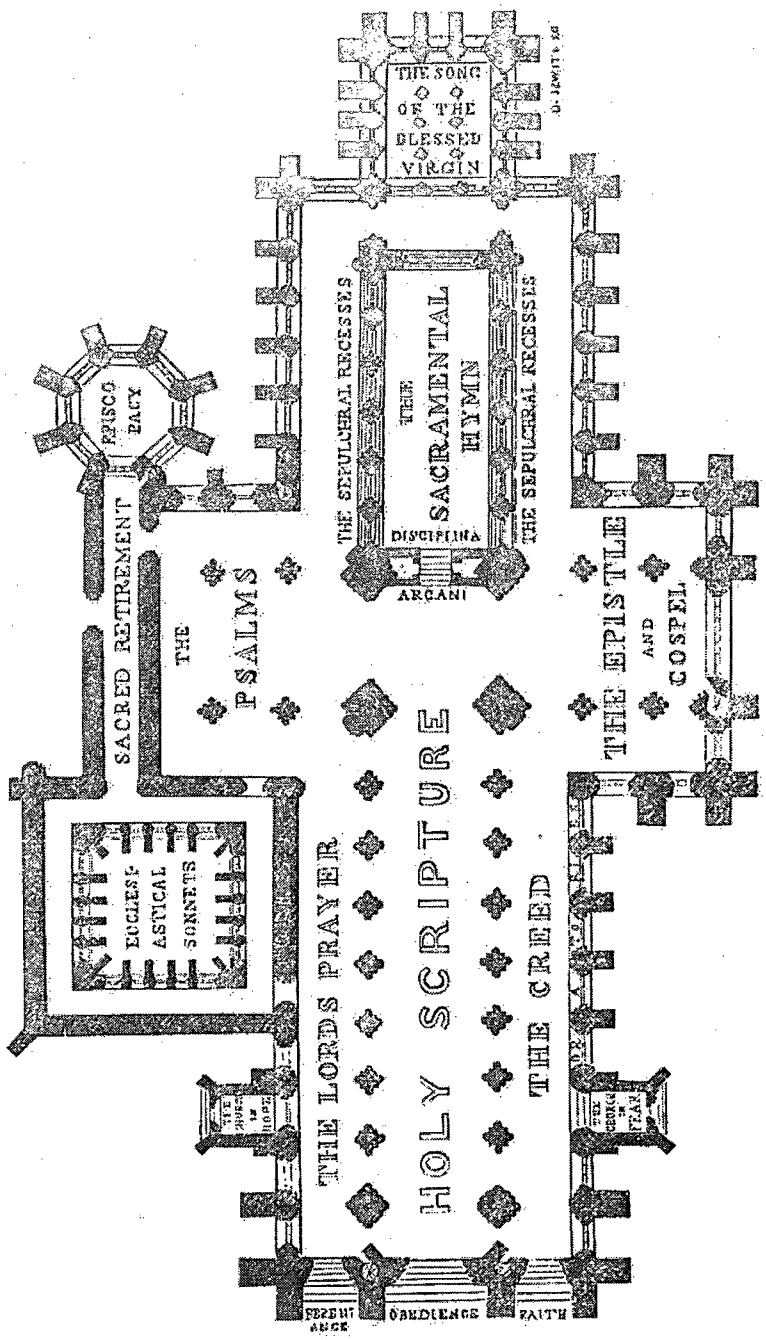


Fig. 48. Engraving from Isaac Williams' *The Cathedral* (London: Parker, 1841); rpt. in G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry: The Tractarian Mode* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1981): 158.

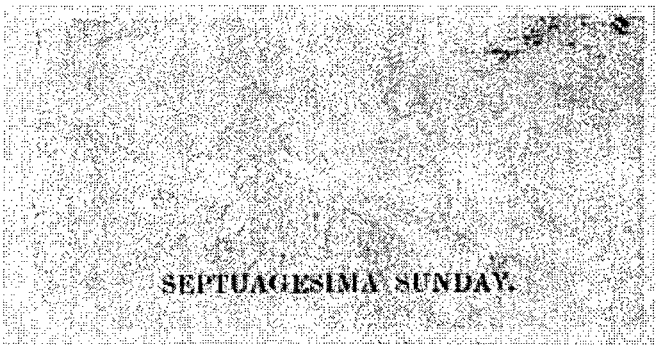


Fig. 49. "Septuagesima Sunday," Christina Rossetti's design for John Keble's *The Christian Year* (London: Parker, 1827) © The British Library Board (Loan 113); rpt. in Diane D'Amico, "Christina Rossetti's *Christian Year*: Comfort for the 'Weary Heart,'" *Victorian Newsletter* 72 (1987): 39.

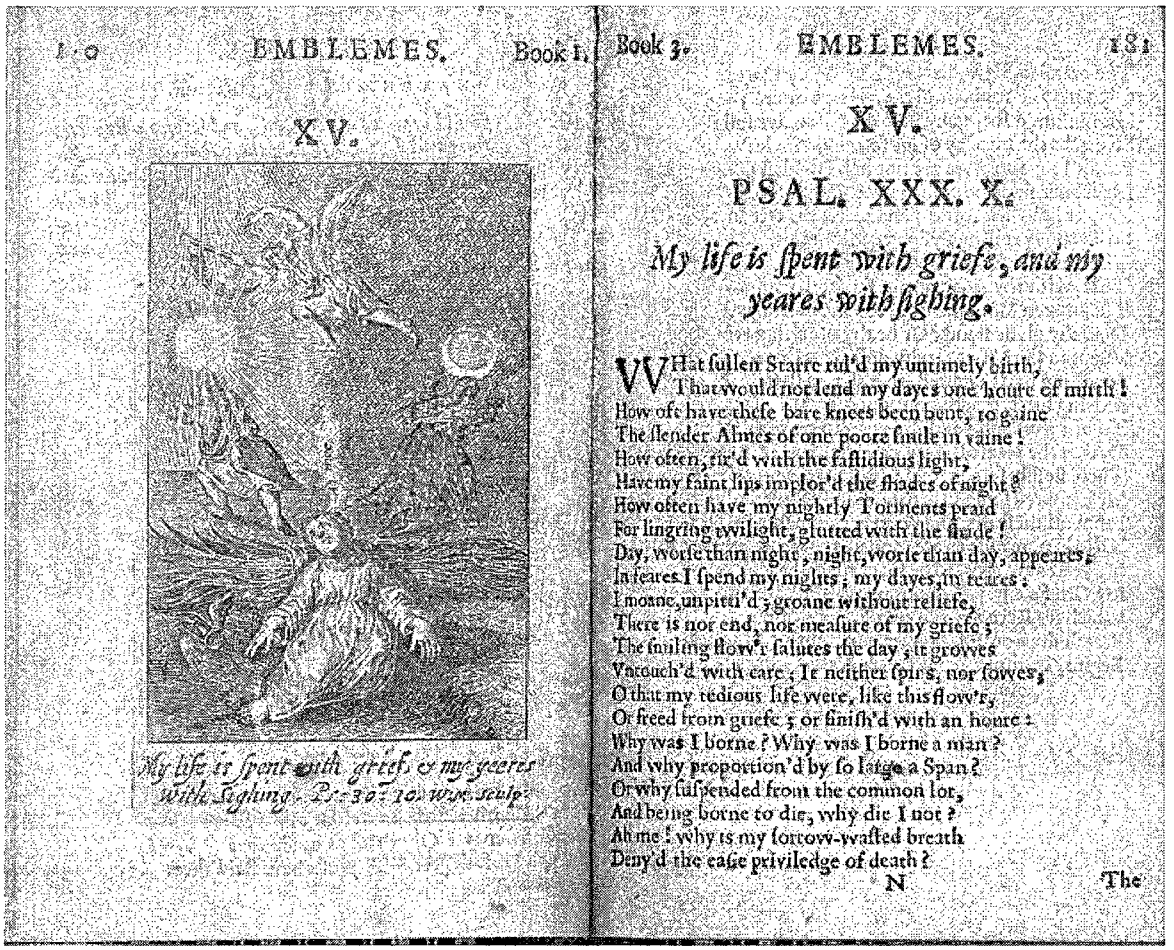
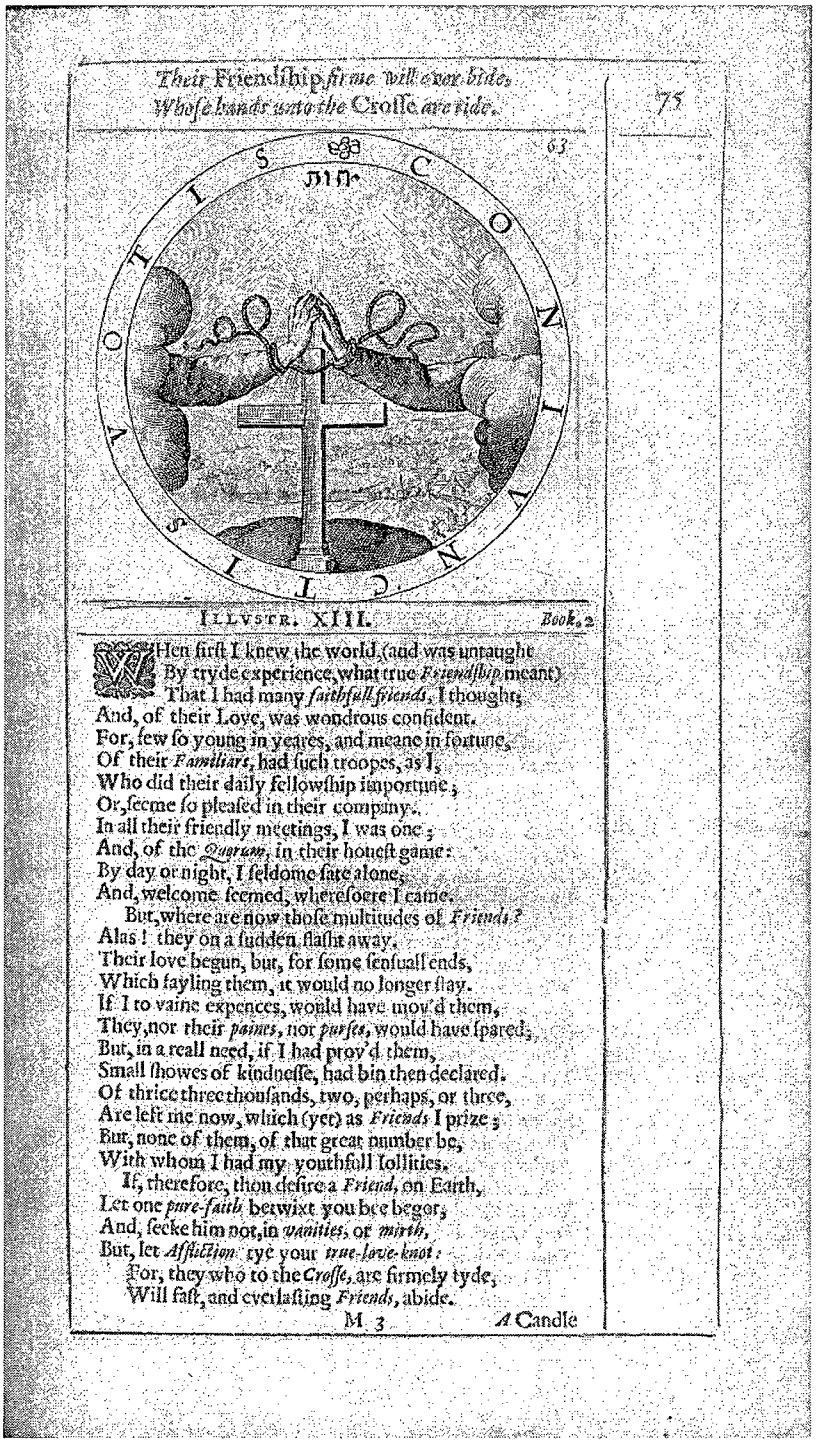


Fig. 50. Emblem XV, Book 3 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, divine and moral* (London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (15 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/qu180_81.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



Fig. 51. Emblem XV of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1624); *Emblem Project Utrecht* (16 June 2009) <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/hu1624015.html>.

.



Their Friendſhip firme will ever bide,
Whoſe hands unto the Croſſe are tide.

75

63

SOLI DEO GLORIA

ILLVSTR. XIII. *Book.* 2.

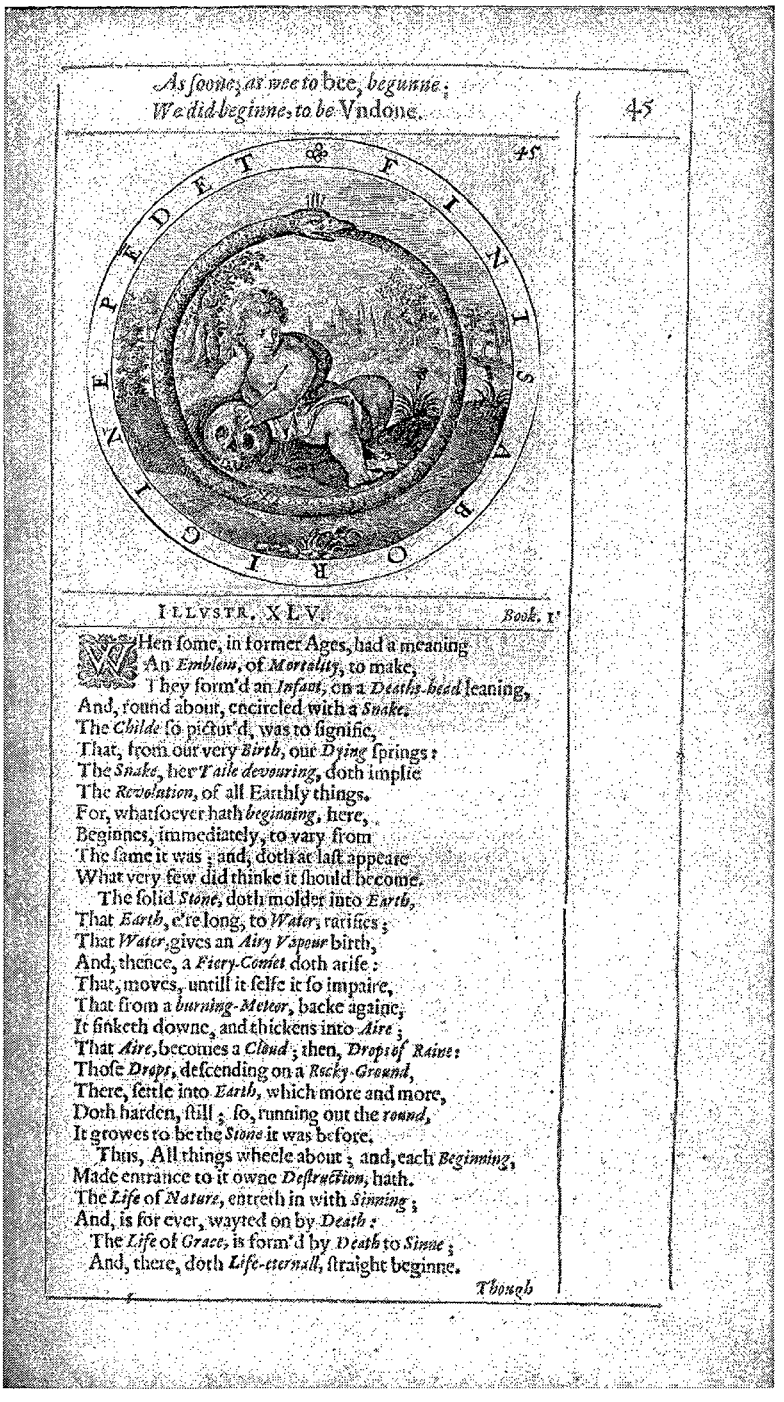
WHen firſt I knew the world, (and was untaught
By tryde experience, what true *Friendſhip* meant)
That I had many *faithfull friends*, I thought;
And, of their Love, was wondrous confident.
For, few ſo young in yeares, and meane in fortune,
Of their *Familiars*, had ſuch troopes, as I;
Who did their daily fellowſhip importune;
Or, ſeeme ſo pleaſed in their company.
In all their friendly meetings, I was one;
And, of the *Quorum*, in their honeſt game:
By day or night, I ſeldome ſate alone,
And, welcome ſeemed, whereſoere I came.
But, where are now thoſe multitudes of *Friends?*
Alas! they on a ſudden flaſht away.
Their love begun, but, for ſome ſenſuall ends,
Which fayling them, it would no longer ſtay.
If I to vaine expences, would have mov'd them,
They, nor their *paines*, nor *purſes*, would have ſpared;
But, in a reall need, if I had prov'd them,
Small ſhowes of kindneſſe, had bin then declared.
Of thrice three thouſands, two, perhaps, or three,
Are left me now, which (yet) as *Friends* I prize;
But, none of them, of that great number be,
With whom I had my youthfull lollities.
If, therefore, thou deſire a *Friend*, on Earth,
Let one *pure-faith* betwixt you bee begot,
And, ſeeke him not, in *vanities*, or *mirth*,
But, let *Affliction* tye your *true-love-knot*:
For, they who to the *Croſſe*, are firmely tyde,
Will faſt, and everlaſting *Friends*, abide.

M 3 *A* Candle

Fig. 52. Emblem XIII, Book 2 of George Wither's *Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* (London: Henry Taunton, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (16 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/withe075.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



Fig. 53. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "The Sonnet" (1880); *The Rossetti Archive,* ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008) (16 June 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s258.rap.html>.



As ſoone, as wee to bee, begunne;
We did beginne, to be Vndone. 45

45

PEDETENTIM PROGREDIOR

ILLVSTR. XLV. *Book.* I.

WHen ſome, in former Ages, had a meaning
An *Emblem*, of *Mortality*, to make,
They form'd an *Infant*, on a *Deaths-head* leaning,
And, round about, encircled with a *Snake*.
The *Childe* ſo pictur'd, was to ſignifie,
That, from our very *Birth*, our *Dying* ſprings:
The *Snake*, her *Taile devouring*, doth implie
The *Revolution*, of all Earthly things.
For, whatſoever hath *beginning*, here,
Beginnes, immediately, to vary from
The ſame it was; and, doth at laſt appeare
What very few did thinke it ſhould become.
The ſolid *Stone*, doth molder into *Earth*,
That *Earth*, e're long, to *Water*, rarifies;
That *Water*, gives an *Airy Vapour* birth,
And, thence, a *Fiery-Comet* doth ariſe:
That, moves, untill it ſelfe it ſo impaire,
That from a *burning-Meteor*, backe againe,
It ſinketh downe, and thickens into *Aire*;
That *Aire*, becomes a *Cloud*; then, *Drops of Raine*:
Thoſe *Drops*, deſcending on a *Rocky-Ground*,
There, ſettle into *Earth*, which more and more,
Doth harden, ſtill; ſo, running out the *round*,
It growes to be the *Stone* it was before.
Thus, All things wheele about; and, each *Beginning*,
Made entrance to it owne *Deſtruction*, hath.
The *Life* of *Nature*, entreth in with *Sinning*;
And, is for ever, wayted on by *Death*:
The *Life* of *Grace*, is form'd by *Death* to *Sinne*;
And, there, doth *Life-eternall*, ſtraight beginne.

Though

Fig. 54. Emblem XLV, Book 1 of George Wither's *A collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, quickened with metricall illustrations, both Moral and divine* (London: Henry Taunton, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (16 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/withe045.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries



Fig. 55. "Golden head by golden head," by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, frontispiece to Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (London: Macmillan, 1862); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008), (16 June 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/sa75.s143.rap.html>.

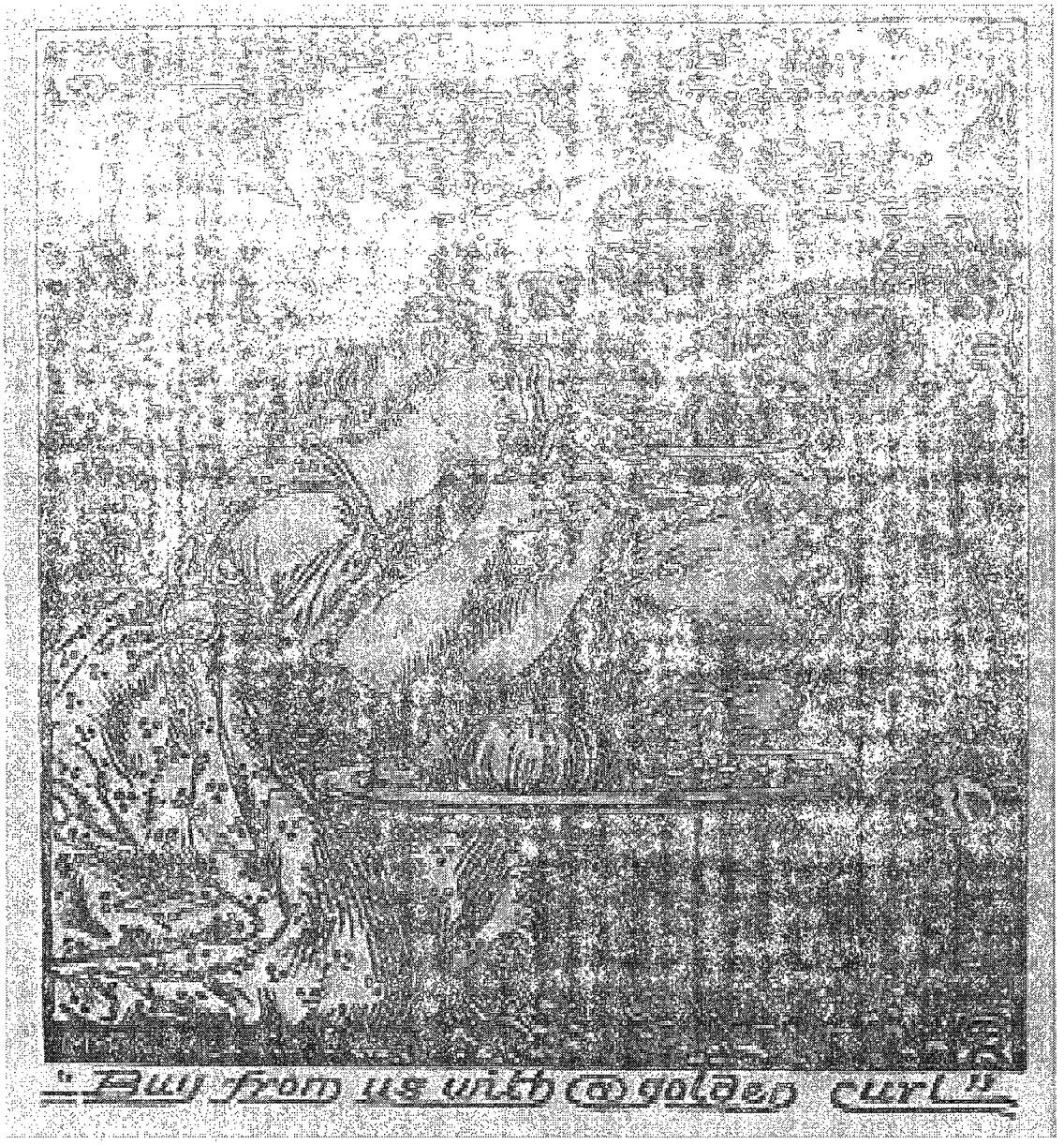


Fig. 56. "Buy from us with a golden curl," by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, illustration for Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (London: Macmillan, 1862); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008), (16 June 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/sa74.s143.rap.html>.

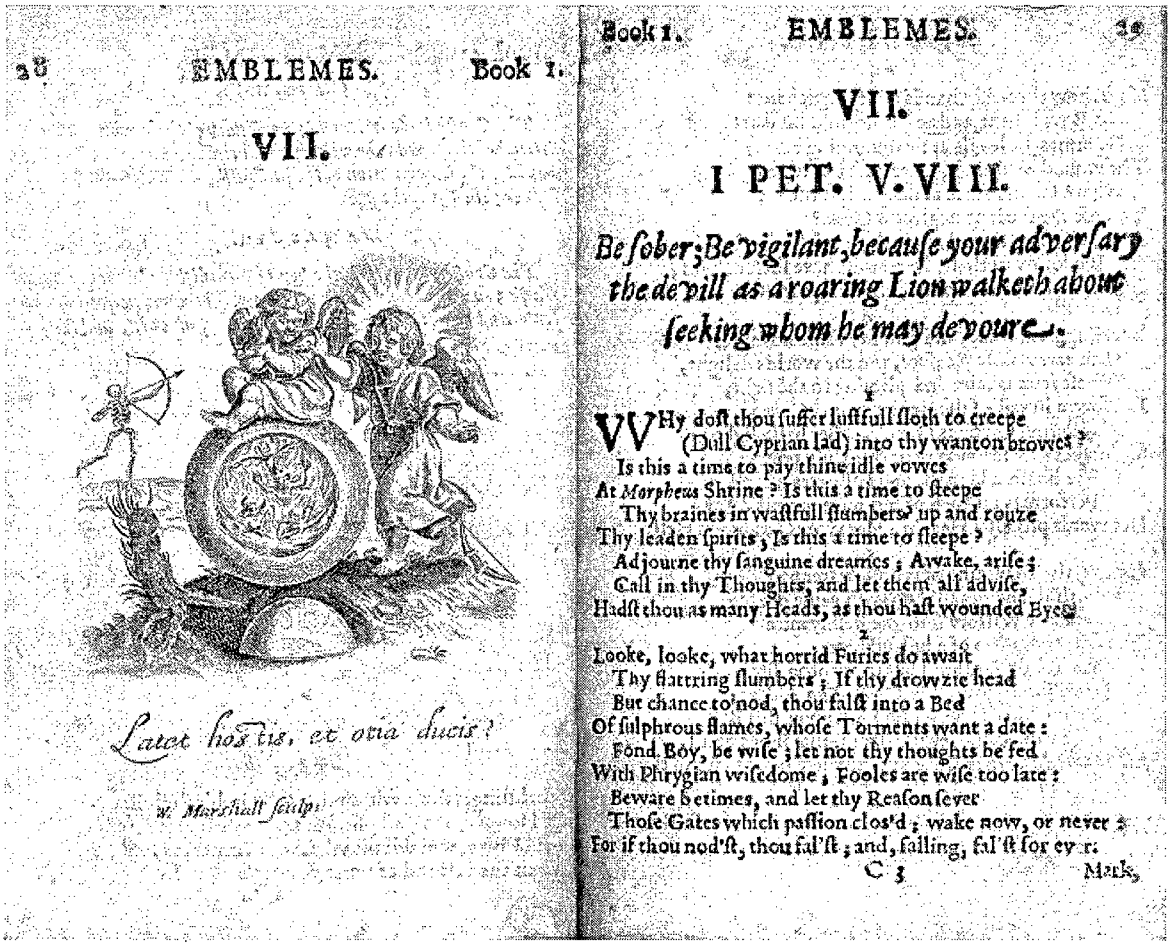


Fig. 57. Emblem VII, Book 1 of Francis Quarles' *Emblemes, Divine and Moral* (London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (12 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/qu028_29.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

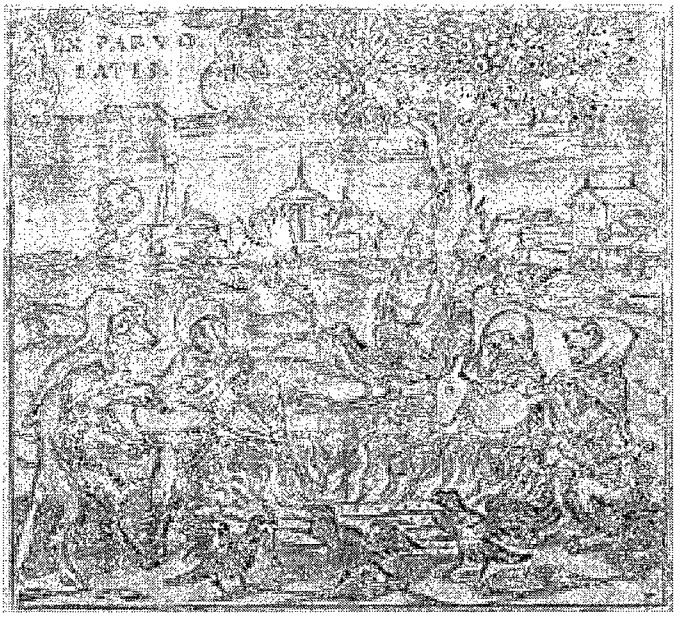


Fig. 58. "*Ex Parvo Satis*" in Georgette de Montenay's *Emblemes, ou devises chrestiennes* (Lyons: Jean Marcorelle, 1571); *French Emblems at Glasgow*, ed. Alison Adams, Glasgow University Emblem Website (17 June 2009) <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/emblem.php?id=FMOa007>.

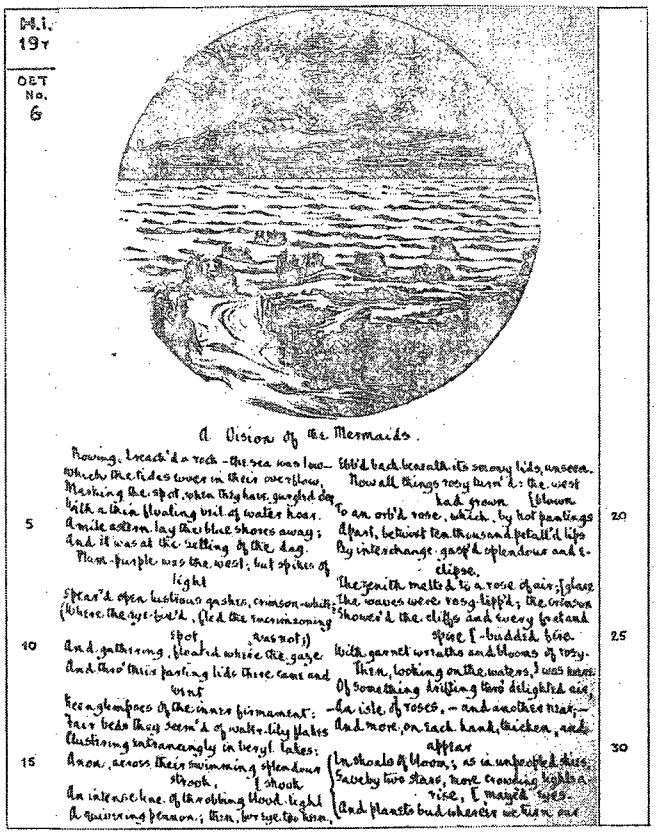


Fig. 59. Gerard Manley Hopkins, "A Vision of the Mermaids" (1862); rpt. in Norman H. MacKenzie, ed., *The Early Poetic Manuscripts and Note-Books of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London: Garland Publishing, 1989): 73.



Fig. 60. Emblem 22 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1624); *Emblem Project Utrecht* (12 June 2009) <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/hu1624022.html>.



Fig. 61. Emblem 17 of Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1624); *Emblem Project Utrecht* (12 June 2009) <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/hu1624017.html>.



Fig. 62. "Assistance," in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia; or, Moral Emblems* (London: Benjamin Motte, 1709); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (16 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/Ripa/Images/ripa002b.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.

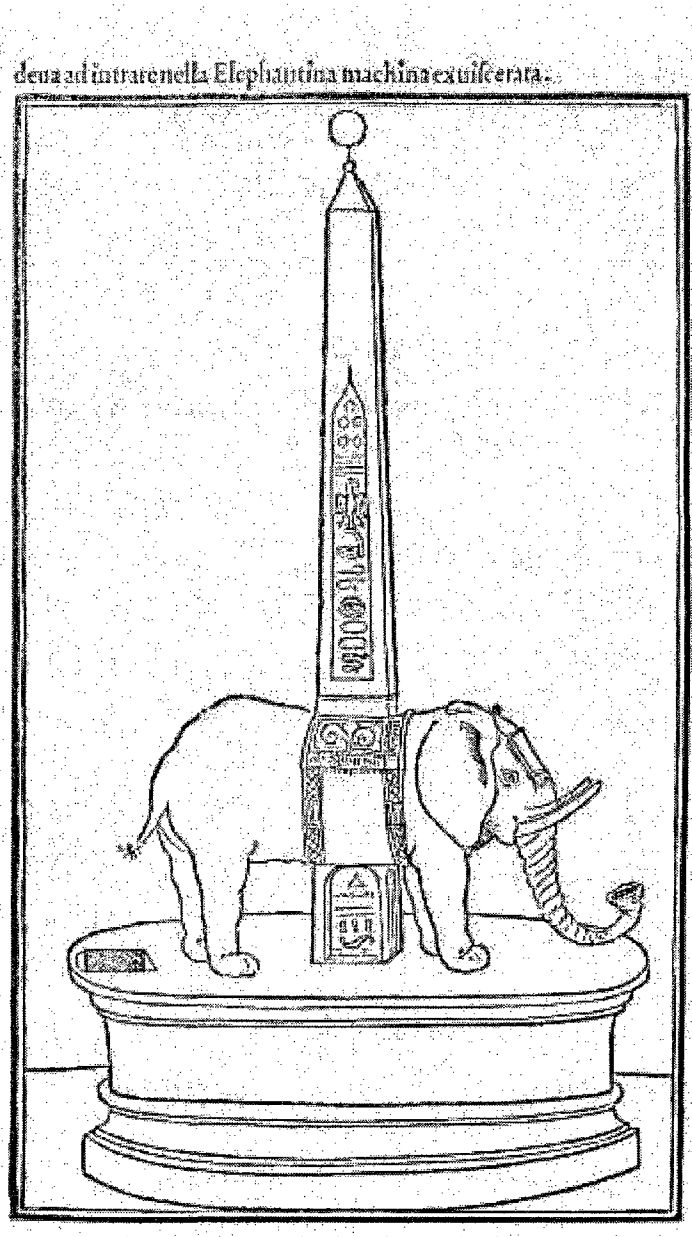


Fig. 63. "Elephantina," in Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499); *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: Re-Cognizing the Architectural Body in the Early Italian Renaissance*, ed. Liane Lefaivre (MIT Press, 1995) (12 June 2009) <http://mitpress.mit.edu/e-books/HP/hyp038.htm>. With permission.

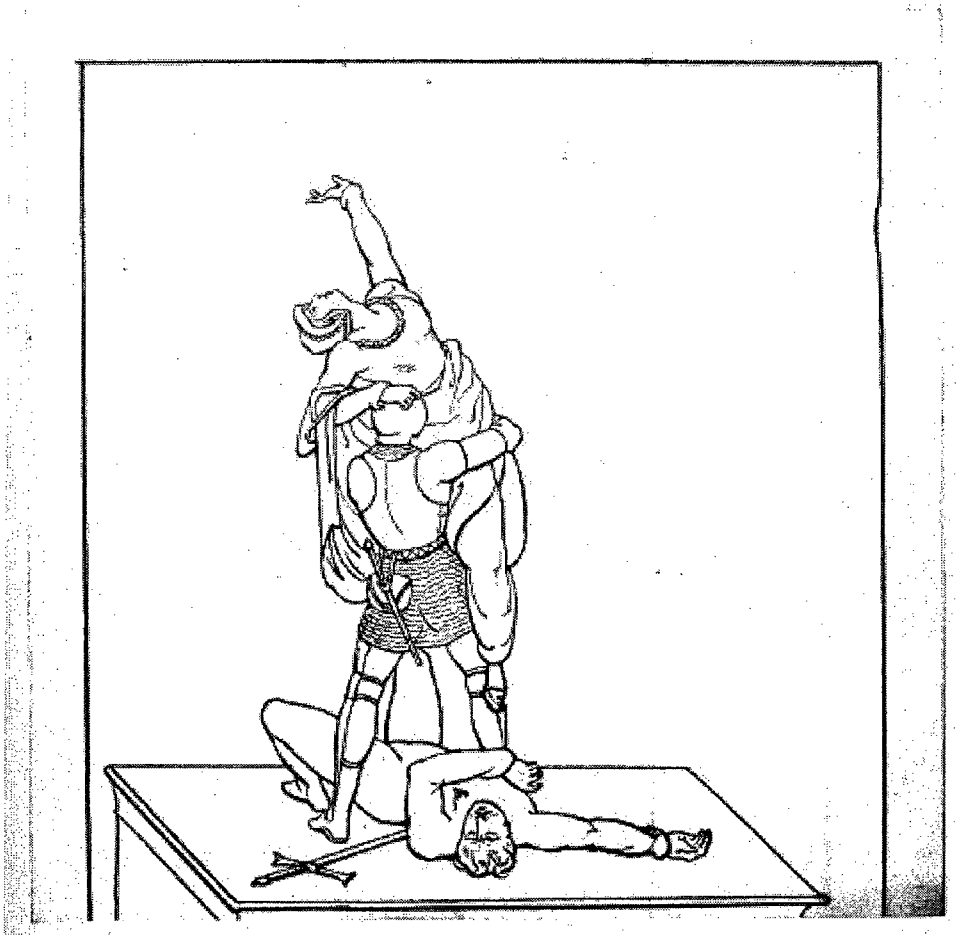


Fig. 64. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, headpiece sketch for "William and Marie: A Ballad" (c. 1841); *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008) (15 June 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/f83.rap.html>.



POLIPHILO QVIVI NARRA, CHE GLI PARVE ANCORA DI DORMIRE, ET ALTRONDE IN SOMNO RITROVARSE IN VNA CONVALLE, LAQVALE NEL FINE ERA SERATA DE VNA MIRABILE CLAVSVRA CVM VNA PORTENTOSA PYRAMIDE, DE ADMIRATIONE DIGNA, ET VNO EXCELSO OBELISCO DE SOPRA. LAQVALE CVM DILIGENTIA ET PLACERE SVBTILMENTE LA CONSIDEROE.

LA SPAVENTEVOLE SILVA, ET CONSTIpato Nemore cuaſo, & gli primi altri lochi per el dolce ſomno che ſe hauea per le feſſe & proſternate mẽbre diffuſo relicti, me ritrouai di ñouo in uno piu delectabile ſito aſſai piu che el præcedente. El quale non era de monti horridi, & crepidinoſe rupe intorniato, ne falcato di ſtrumoſi iugi. Ma compoſitamente de grate montagniole di non troppo alteria. Siluoſe di giouani quercioli, di roburi, fraxini & Carpini, & di frondoſi Eſculi, & Ilice, & di teneri Corylli, & di Alni, & di Tilie, & di Opio, & de infructuoſi Oleaſtri, diſpoſti ſecondo laſpecto de gli arboriferi Colli. Et giu al piano erano grate ſiluule di altri ſiluatici

Fig. 65. "Poliphilo dreams within his dream," in Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499); *The Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: Re-Cognizing the Architectural Body in the Early Italian Renaissance*, ed. Liane Lefaivre (MIT Press, 1995) (12 June 2009) <http://mitpress.mit.edu/e-books/HP/hyp020.htm>. With permission.



Fig. 66. D.G. Rossetti, "Sibylla Palmifera" (1866-70). Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool; *The Rossetti Archive*, ed. Jerome J. McGann (2008), (12 June 2009) <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s193.rap.html>.



Fig. 67. "*Res Immoderata Cvpido est*," in Otto Vaenius's *Emblematica Amoris* (Antwerp: Hendrick Swingen, 1608); *Emblem Project Utrecht* (16 June 2009) <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/v1608016.html>.



THE STORY OF BERTRAND, A POOR LABOURER, AND HIS LITTLE FAMILY.

THINK yourſelves happy, my little readers, ſince none of you perhaps know what it is to endure hunger day after day, without being able to enjoy one plentiful meal. Confident I am, that the following relation will not fail to make an impreſſion on your tender hearts.

Bertrand was a poor labourer, who had ſix young children, whom he maintained with the utmoſt difficulty. To add to his diſtreſſes, an unfavourable ſeaſon much encreaſed the price of bread.

Fig. 68. "The Story of Bertrand," from John Bewick's *A Looking-Glass for the Mind.* (London: J. Crowder, 1796); *Google Books* (16 June 2009) <http://books.google.ca/books?id=mPcYAAAAYAAJ&ots=jzPJdYxA5j&dq=thomas%20bewick%20looking-glass%20for%20the%20mind%20bertrand&pg=PA31>.

Let a place be appointed by the court, said he, for the plaintiffs and defendants to work in. It will then soon appear which of us are capable of forming such regular cells, and afterwards of filling them with so delicious a fluid. The Wasps refusing to agree to this proposal, sufficiently convinced the judge on which side the right lay, and he decreed the honey-combs accordingly.



FABLE XXVII.

Fortune and the School-boy.

We are always ready to censure Fortune for the ill effects of our own carelessness.

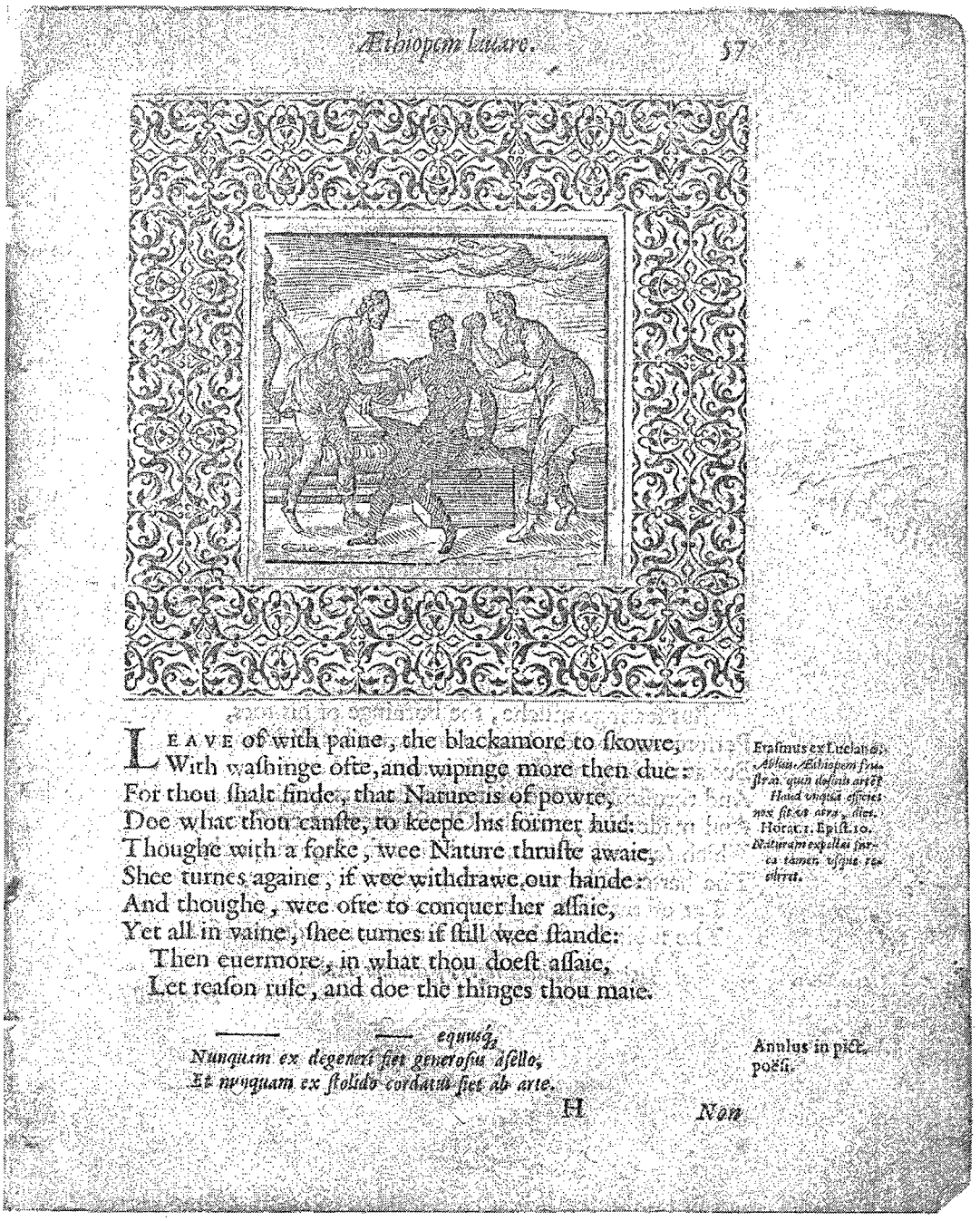
A SCHOOL-BOY, fatigued with play, threw himself down by the brink of a deep pit, where he fell fast asleep. Fortune happening to pass by, saw him in this dangerous situation, and kindly gave him a tap on the shoulder: My dear child, said she, if you

Fig. 69. "Fable XXVII: Fortune and the School-boy," from Thomas Bewick's *Fables of Aesop and Others* (London: E. Walter, 1784; 1886); *Google Books* (16 June 2009) <http://books.google.ca/books?id=qvAYAAAAYAAJ&dq=thomas%20bewick%20fables%20of%20aesop%20and%20others&lr=&pg=PA36>.



Fig. 70a. (left) William Blake, "Water," in *For Children: The Gates of Paradise* (1793); *The Blake Archive*, ed. Morris Eaves, Robert N. Essick, and Joseph Viscomi (26 March 2009) (1 June 2009) <http://www.blakearchive.org/exist/blake/archive/object.xq?objectid=gates-child.d.illbk.04&java=yes>. Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection, Library of Congress. © 2009 the William Blake Archive.

Fig. 70b. (right) William Blake, "Earth," in *For Children: The Gates of Paradise* (1793); *The Blake Archive*, ed. Morris Eaves, Robert N. Essick, and Joseph Viscomi (26 March 2009) (1 June 2009) <http://www.blakearchive.org/exist/blake/archive/object.xq?objectid=gates-child.d.illbk.05&java=yes>. Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection, Library of Congress. © 2009 the William Blake Archive.



Æthiopem lauare. 57

LEAVE of with paine, the blackamore to ſkowre,
With waſhinge ofte, and wipinge more then due:
For thou ſhalt finde, that Nature is of powre,
Doe what thou canſte, to keepe his former hue:
Thoughe with a forke, wee Nature thruſte awaie,
Shee turnes againe, if wee withdrawe our hande:
And thoughe, wee ofte to conquer her aſſaie,
Yet all in vaine, ſhee turnes if ſtill wee ſtande:
Then euermore, in what thou doeſt aſſaie,
Let reaſon rule, and doe the thinges thou maie.

Erasmus ex Luciano. Abluis Æthiopem frustra, quin desinis arte Haud unquã efficies nox sit ea atra, dies. Horat. 1. Epist. 10. Naturam expellas furca tamen vsque recurret.

—— —— equum,
Nunquam ex degeneri fiet generoſus aſello,
Et nunquam ex ſtolido cordatus fiet ab arte.

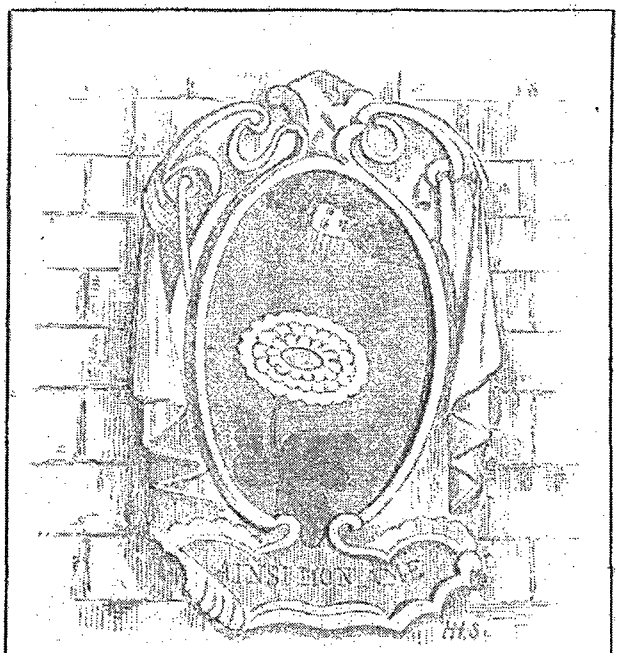
Annius in pict. poëſi.

H Non

Fig. 71. "*Aethiopem Lavare*," in Geffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems, and Other Devises* (Leiden: Francis Raphelengius for Christopher Plantin, 1586); *The English Emblem Book Project* (Penn State University, 2004), (12 June 2009) <http://emblem.libraries.psu.edu/whitn057.htm>. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.



Fig. 72. Eugene Delacroix, *The 28th of July: Liberty Leading the People* (1830), Louvre Museum, Paris; *Wikimedia Commons* (21 July 2009), (27 July 2009) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix_-_La_libert%C3%A9_guidant_le_peuple.jpg>.



AINSI MON AME.

"THUS, O MY SOUL!"*

"THUS:" does the word need comment? would some one have it explained?

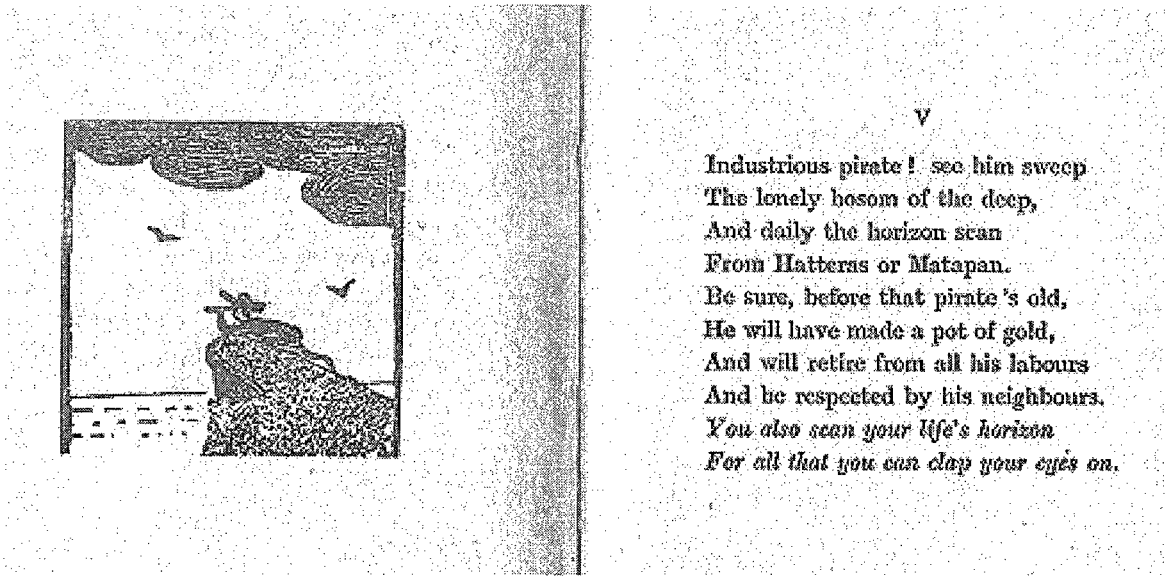
Thus through the realms of what seems boundless space, stream rays celestial, life-giving, from the fountain of light—the mighty sun that rules our system—upon the little earthly flower.

Thus turns the little earthly flower, day by day, to its distant lord; not discerning him by sight, but seeking after him by the surer instinct of its inner being.

. . . O heavenly light,—Light of light—so dis-

* *Ainsi mon Ame.* The emblem figured above with this French motto was the original "sign" on Child's Banking House, and is still preserved within the building.

Fig. 73. "Thus, O My Soul!" (*Ainsi mon Ame*), in Margaret Gatty's *Emblems for Children* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1872); *Google Books* (1 June 2009) <http://books.google.ca/books?id=iS0DAAAAQAAJ&dq=margaret%20gatty%2C%20emblems%20for%20children&lr=&pg=PA33>.

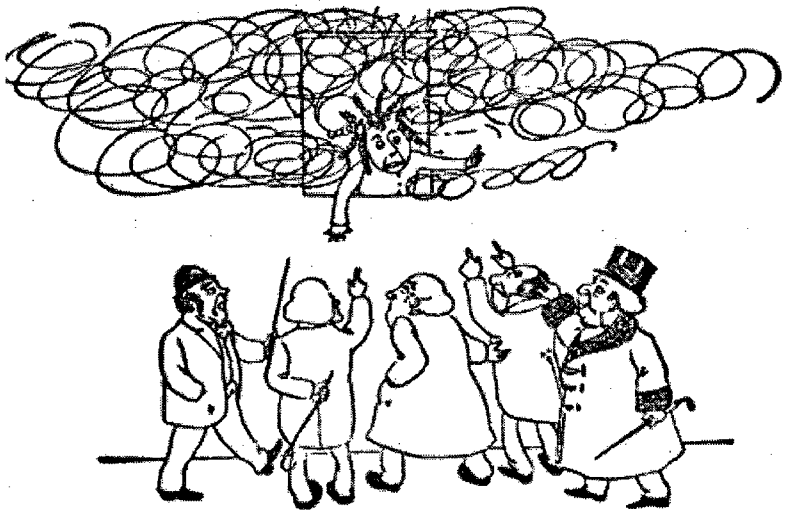


V

Industrious pirate! see him sweep
The lonely bosom of the deep,
And daily the horizon scan
From Hatteras or Matapan.
Be sure, before that pirate's old,
He will have made a pot of gold,
And will retire from all his labours
And be respected by his neighbours.
You also scan your life's horizon
For all that you can clap your eyes on.

Fig. 74. Robert Louis Stevenson, Emblem V.II of *Moral Emblems and Other Poems Written and Illustrated with Woodcuts* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1921). Image courtesy of Rare Books and Special Collections, University of South Carolina Libraries.

And throw the window up and call
To People passing in the Street—
(The rapidly increasing Heat
Encouraging her to obtain
Their confidence)—but all in vain!
For every time She shouted "Fire!"



They only answered "Little Liar!"
And therefore when her Aunt returned,

Fig. 75. "Matilda, who told lies and was burned to death," illustration by BTB (Basil Templeton Blackwood), for Hillaire Belloc, *Cautionary Tales for Children* (London: Duckworth, 1907); image courtesy *Michael Sporn Animation*, ed. Michael Sporn (16 July 2009) <http://www.michaelspornanimation.com/splog/?p=1455>.



Fig. 76. Heinrich Hoffmann, *Der Struwwelpeter* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Rutter und Soning, 1845); *Wikimedia Commons* (17 Dec. 2005) (27 July 2009) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:H_Hoffmann_Struwwel_03.jpg>.

Works Cited

Adams, Alison. *Webs of Allusion: French Protestant Emblem Books of the Sixteenth Century.* Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance 388. Geneva: Droz, 2003.

----- and Laurence Grove, eds. *Emblems and Art History.* Glasgow: U of Glasgow P, 1996.

Adey, L. "A Reading of Hopkins' 'Epithalamion.'" *Victorian Newsletter* 42 (Fall 1972): 16-20.

Ainsworth, Maryan W. *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Double Work of Art.* New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1976.

Akbari, Susan Conklin. *Seeing Through the Veil: Optical Theory and Medieval Allegory.* Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2004.

Alciatio, Andrea. *Emblematum Liber.* Padua: Tozzi, 1621.

Allingham, William. *The Music Master.* London: Routledge, 1855.

Altick, Richard. *Paintings from Books: Art and Literature in Britain, 1760-1900.* Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 1985.

Ardholm, Helena M. *The Emblem and the Emblematic Habit of Mind in* Jane Eyre *and* Wuthering Heights. Goteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1999.

Armstrong, Isobel. "Christina Rossetti in the Era of the New Woman and Fin de Siècle Culture." *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 13 (Spring 2004): 21-48.

-----. *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics.* London: Routledge, 1993.

Arseneau, Mary. "Incarnation and Interpretation: Christina Rossetti, the Oxford Movement, and 'Goblin Market.'" *Victorian Poetry* 31.1 (Spring 1993): 79-93.

-----. "Pilgrimage and Postponement: Christina Rossetti's 'The Prince's Progress.'"

Victorian Poetry 32.3 (October 1994): 279-98.

-----. *Recovering Christina Rossetti: Female Community and Incarnational Poetics.* Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

-----. *Symbol and Sacrament: The Incarnational Aesthetic of Christina Rossetti.* London, ON: Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Western Ontario, 1991.

----- and D.M.R. Bentley. "Peter Parley and the Rossettis." *English Language Notes* 31.1 (September 1993): 56-60.

-----, Antony H. Harrison and Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, eds. *The Culture of Christina Rossetti: Female Poetics and Victorian Contexts.* Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 1999.

Auerbach, Erich. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature.* Trans. Willard R. Trask. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1953.

Augustine. *Confessions.* Trans. E.B. Pusey. 10 March 2008. <http://www.ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/englishconfessions.html>.

Austin, Carolyn F. "Mastering the Ineffable: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's 'The Vase of Life' and the Kantian Sublime." *Victorian Poetry* 45.2 (Summer 2007): 159-73.

Bacon, Francis. *The Advancement of Learning.* 1605. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891.

Ballinger, Philip. *The Poem as Sacrament: The Theological Aesthetic of Gerard Manley Hopkins.* Louvain: Peeters Press, 2000.

Barrell, John. *The Birth of Pandora and the Division of Knowledge.* London: Macmillan, 1992.

Barth, Robert, S.J. "The Sacramental Vision of Gerard Manley Hopkins." *Seeing Into the Life of Things.* Ed. John L. Mahoney. New York: Fordham UP, 1998.

Bath, Michael. "Inserts and Suppressions: Seventeenth-Century Poetic Usage of the Term

'Emblem.'" Bath, Campa and Russell 1-14.

-----. *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture.* New York: Longman, 1994.

-----, Pedro F. Campa and Daniel S. Russell, eds. *Emblem Studies in Honour of Peter M. Daly.* Baden-Baden: Verlag Valentin Koerner, 2002.

-----, J. Manning and A.R. Young, eds. *The Art of the Emblem.* New York: AMS Press, 1993.

----- and Daniel S. Russell, eds. *Deviceful Settings: The English Renaissance Emblem and its Contexts.* New York: AMS, 1999.

Battiscombe, Georgina. *Christina Rossetti: A Divided Life.* London: Constable, 1981.

Beckson, Karl, ed. *Aesthetes and Decadents of the 1890's: An Anthology of British Poetry and Prose.* Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1993.

Bell, Mackenzie. *Christina Rossetti: A Biographical and Critical Study.* Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1898. AMS reprint, 1973.

Bennett, Mary. *The Pre-Raphaelites.* London: Tate Gallery/Allen Lane, 1984.

Bentley, D.M.R. "'Ah, Poor Jenny's Case': Rossetti and the Fallen Woman/Flower." *University of Toronto Quarterly* 50 (Winter 1980): 177-98.

-----. "Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Anglo-Dutch Emblem Tradition." *Victorian Newsletter* 108 (Fall 2005): 6-13.

-----. "From Allegory to Indeterminacy: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Positive Agnosticism." *Dalhousie Review* 70 (Spring 1990): 70-106 and 70 (Summer 1990): 146-68.

-----. "The Pre-Raphaelites and the Oxford Movement." *Dalhousie Review* 57 (1977): 525-39.

-----. "The Principal Pre-Raphaelite Pictures of James Collinson." *Victorian Review* 30.1 (2004): 21-43.

-----. "Rossetti's Pre-Raphaelite Manifesto: The 'Old and New Art' Sonnets." *English Language Notes* 15 (Mar. 1978): 197-203.

Berg, Maggie. "John Ruskin's Definition of D.G. Rossetti's Art." *Victorian Poetry* 20.3-4 (Autumn-Winter 1982): 103-12.

Bett, Henry. *English Myths and Traditions*. London: Batsford, 1952.

Birch, Jonathan. *Divine Emblems, after the Manner of Master Francis Quarles*. London: Thomas Ward, 1838.

Böker, Hans J. and Peter M. Daly, eds. *The Emblem and Architecture: Studies in Applied Emblematics from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries*. Turnhout: Brepols, 1999.

Bornstein, George and Theresa Tinkle, eds. *The Iconic Page in Manuscript, Print, and Digital Culture*. Ann Arbor, MI: U of Michigan P, 1997.

Boyd, Timothy. "'A Regular Illustrated Book': William Allingham and his Pre-Raphaelite Friends Make *The Music Master*, 1854-1855." *Publishing History* 37 (1995): 17-49.

Bregy, Katherine. "Gerard Hopkins: An Epitaph and an Appreciation." *Catholic World* 88.526 (Jan. 1909): 433-47.

Brennan, Thomas J. "Creating From Nothing: Swinburne and Baudelaire in 'Ave Atque Vale.'" *Victorian Poetry* 44.3 (Fall 2006): 251-71.

Bridges, Robert. Preface. *Poems*. By Gerard Manley Hopkins. Ed. Robert Bridges. London: Humphrey Milford, 1918.

Brittain, Clark M. "God's Better Beauty: Hopkins, Pusey, and Tractarian Aesthetics."

Christianity and Literature 40.1 (1990): 7-22.

Brown, Frank Chouteau. *Letters and Lettering: A Treatise with 200 Examples.* Boston: Bates & Guild, 1921.

Brown, Matthew. "The Thick Style: Steady Sellers, Textual Aesthetics, and Early Modern Devotional Reading." *PMLA* 121.1 (Jan 2006): 67-86.

Buchelt, Lisabeth C. "Alchemical and Tarot Imagery in Yeats' Later Plays: *The Resurrection* and *A Full Moon in March.*" *Cauda Pavonis: Studies in Hermeticism* 16.1 (Spring 1997): 1-9.

Bump, Jerome. "Hopkins, Christina Rossetti, and Pre-Raphaelitism." *The Victorian Newsletter* 57 (Spring 1980): 1-6.

-----. "The Victorian Radicals: Time, Typology, and Ontology in Hopkins, Pusey, and Müller." *Victorian Religious Discourse: Currents and Crosscurrents.* Ed. Jude V. Nixon. New York: Macmillan, 2004. 27-49.

Bunkers, Suzanne L. "Whose Diary is it, Anyway? Issues of Agency, Authority, Ownership." *A/b: Auto/Biography Studies* 17.1 (Summer 2002): 11-27.

Bunyan, John. *The Pilgrim's Progress.* 1678. London: Oxford UP, 2003.

Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful.* Ed. Adam Phillips. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.

Carlyle, Thomas. *Past and Present.* Ed. Richard D. Altick. New York: The Gotham Library, 1965.

-----. *Sartor Resartus.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987.

Casey, Janet Galligani. "The Potential of Sisterhood: Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market.*" *Victorian Poetry* 29 (Spring 1991): 63-78.

Casteras, Susan P., ed. *Pocket Cathedrals: Pre-Raphaelite Book Illustration.* New Haven, CT: Yale Center for British Art, 1991.

Chatto, William Andrew, John Jackson and Henry George Bohn. *A Treatise on Wood Engraving, Historical and Practical: With Upwards of Three Hundred Illustrations Engraved on Wood.* London: HG Bohn, 1861.

Christ, Carol T. and John O. Jordan, eds. *Victorian Literature and the Victorian Visual Imagination.* Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1995.

Clements, R.J. *Picta Poesis: Literary and Humanistic Theory in Renaissance Emblem Books.* Rome: Edizione di Storia e Letteratura, 1960.

Cochran, Rebecca. "Swinburne's 'Lancelot' and Pre-Raphaelite Medievalism." *The Victorian Newsletter* 74 (Fall 1988): 58-62.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Miscellanies, Aesthetic and Literary: To which is Added The Theory of Life.* London: George Bell and Sons, 1885.

Collington, Philip. "'A Puppet-Play in Pictures': Thomas Middleton's Emblematic Drama." Silcox, Ostovich and Roebuck 91-131.

Collins, Minta. *Medieval Herbs: The Illustrative Traditions.* Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2000.

Conley, Susan. "Rossetti's Cold Women: Irony and Liminal Fantasy in the Death Lyrics." Arseneau, Kooistra and Harrison 260-84.

Contreras, Jorge L. "James Collinson, the Campo Santo, and the Birth of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood." *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 15 (Spring 2006): 5-18.

Crane, Walter. *The Decorative Illustration of Books.* 1896. London: George Bell and Sons, 1972.

Crary, Jonathan. *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.

Cronin, Richard, Allison Chapman and Antony H. Harrison, eds. *A Companion to Victorian Poetry*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.

Cummings, Robert. Rev. of Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures*. *Emblematica* 9.2 (Winter 1995): 403-11.

Curtis, Gerard. *Visual Words: Art and the Material Book in Victorian England*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002.

Dalton, William. *Christian Instruction, founded on the Catechism of the Church of England*. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1852.

Daly, Peter M. "The Arbitrariness of George Wither's Emblems: A Reconsideration." Bath, Manning and Young 201-34.

-----, ed. *Emblem Scholarship: Directions and Developments. A Tribute to Gabriel Hornstein*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.

-----. *Emblem Theory. Recent German Contributions to the Characterization of the Emblem Genre*. Lichtenstein: Kraus Thomson Organization, 1979.

-----. *The English Emblem and the Continental Tradition*. New York: AMS Press, 1988.

-----. *Index Emblematicus. The English Emblem Tradition: van der Noot, Giovio, Domenichi, Whitney*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1988.

-----. *Literature in Light of the Emblem: Structural Parallels Between the Emblem and Literature in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1979.

-----. "The Pelican-in-her-Piety." Daly, *Emblem Scholarship* 83-109.

-----, Wolfgang Lottes, and Karl Josef Höltgen, eds. *Word and Visual Imagination: Studies in the Interaction of English Literature and the Visual Arts.* Nürenberg: Universitätsbund Erlangen-Nürenberg, 1988.

----- and John Manning, eds. *Aspects of Renaissance and Baroque Symbol Theory, 1500-1700.* New York: AMS Press, 1999.

----- and Mary V. Silcox. *The English Emblem: Bibliography of Secondary Literature.* New York: K.G. Saur, 1990.

----- and Mary V. Silcox. *The Modern Critical Reception of the English Emblem.* New York: K.G. Saur, 1991.

D'Amico, Diane. "Christina Rossetti's *Christian Year*: Comfort for the 'Weary Heart.'" *Victorian Newsletter* 72 (1987): 36-42.

-----. *Christina Rossetti: Faith, Gender and Time.* Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State UP, 1999.

-----. "Reading and Rereading George Herbert and Christina Rossetti." *John Donne Journal* 4.2 (1985): 269-89.

----- and David A. Kent. "Rossetti and the Tractarians." *Victorian Poetry* 44.1 (April 2006): 93-103.

Davies, R.T. *Medieval English Lyrics: A Critical Anthology.* Chicago, IL: Northwestern UP, 1964.

Dawson, Gowan. "Intrinsic Earthliness: Science, Materialism, and the Fleshly School of Poetry." *Victorian Poetry* 41.1 (April 2003): 113-29.

DeGraff, Kathryn. Rev. of *The Victorian Illustrated Book*, ed., Richard Maxwell. *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 12.2 (Fall 2003): 109-12.

DeMan, Paul. *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke and Proust.* New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1979.

De Maré, Eric. *The Victorian Woodblock Illustrators.* London: Gordon Fraser, 1980.

De Montenay, Georgette. *Emblemes ou devises chrestiennes.* Lyons: Jean Marcorelle, 1571.

Demoor, Marysa. "Art-Catholic Revisited: Dante Rossetti's Early Paintings and Northern Renaissance Art." *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 14 (Spring 2005): 5-14.

Dimler, Richard G. S.J. "Edmund Arwaker's Translation of the *Pia Desideria*: The Reception of a Continental Jesuit Emblem Book in Seventeenth-Century England." Daly, *The English Emblem and the Continental Tradition* 203-23.

-----. "Jesuit Emblem Books: An Overview of Research Past and Present." Dimler, *Studies* 63-122.

-----, ed. *Studies in the Jesuit Emblem.* New York: AMS Press, 2006.

Doan, Laura. "Narrativity and Transformative Iconography in D.G. Rossetti's Earliest Paintings." *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 71.4 (Winter 1988): 471-83.

Doughty, Oswald. "A Minor Preraphaelite: John Lucas Tupper." *English Miscellany* 11 (1960): 175-209.

Dreyfus, Hubert L. and Paul Rabinow. *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983.

Drucker, Johanna. *Figuring the Word: Essays on Books, Writing, and Visual Poetics.* New York: Granary Books, 1998.

Dundas, Judith. "Emblems on the Art of Painting: Pictura and Purpose." Adams and Grove 69-91.

Dunne, Tom. *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Comprehensive Bibliography.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976.

Edgecombe, Rodney Stenning. "Allegorical Topography and the Experience of Space in Isaac Williams' *Cathedral.*" *English Studies* 80.3 (June 1999): 224-38.

Erdman, David V. Introduction. *The Notebook of William Blake: A Photographic and Typographic Facsimile.* Ed. David V. Erdman. Naples, FL: Readex Books, 1977.

Eron, Sarah. "Circles and the In-Between: Shaping Time, Space, and Paradox in Swinburnian Verse." *Victorian Poetry* 44.3 (Fall 2006): 293-309.

Essick, Robert N. "Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Frederic Shields, and the Spirit of William Blake." *Victorian Poetry* 24.2 (Summer 1986): 163-72.

Farnsworth, Jane. "'An equall, and a mutuall flame': George Wither's *A Collection of Emblemes* 1635 and Caroline Court Culture." Bath and Russell 83-96.

Faulkner, Peter. "From Romance to Duty: Thomas Woolner and 'My Beautiful Lady.'" *Journal of the William Morris Society* 12.3 (Autumn 1997): 26-35.

Fauset, Eileen, and Elizabeth Russell. "Christina Rossetti: Contemporary Feminist." *BELLS* 6 (1995): 143-55.

Fennell, Francis. "Hopkins and Pre-Raphaelites." *Studies* 90.349 (Autumn 2001): 309-19.

Findlay, L.M. "'Who hath given man speech?': Swinburne, Myths of Origin, and Logocentrism." *University of Toronto Quarterly* 60.2 (Winter 1990/1): 274-91.

Fisher, Judith. "Image vs. Text in the Illustrated Novels of William Makepeace Thackeray." Christ and Jordan 60-87.

Fletcher, Angus. *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1964.

Flint, Kate. *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.

Fontana, Ernest. "Pre-Facing Simile Vehicles in Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Sonnets." *Style* 39.4 (Winter 2005): 440-47.

Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language.* London: Pantheon, 1972.

-----. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences.* New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

Fowler, Alistair. "The Emblem as a Literary Genre." Bath and Russell 1-31.

Fredeman, William E. *Pre-Raphaelitism: A Bibliocritical Study.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1965.

-----, ed. *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.* 9 vols. Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2002.

Freeman, Rosemary. *English Emblem Books.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1948.

-----. "George Herbert and the Emblem Books." *The Review of English Studies* 17.66 (April 1941): 150-65.

Frye, Northrop. "Poetry and Design in William Blake." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 10 (1951): 35-42.

Gannett, Cinthia. *Gender and the Journal: Diaries and Academic Discourse.* New York: SUNY Press, 1992.

Gardner, William H. *Gerard Manley Hopkins, 1844-1889: A Study of Poetic Idiosyncrasy in Relation to Poetic Tradition.* 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1966.

Gatty, Margaret. *A Book of Emblems.* London: Bell, Daldy, 1872.

Gelpi, Barbara Charlesworth. "The Image of the Anima in the Work of Dante Gabriel Rossetti." *Victorian Newsletter* 45 (Spring 1974): 1-7.

Rev. of *The Germ*. *The Art-Journal* 1 Mar. 1850: 96.

Rev. of *The Germ*. *The Critic* 213.9 (15 Feb. 1850): 94-95.

Rev. of *The Germ*. *The Literary Gazette and Journal of the Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences, &c* 19 Jan. 1850: 47.

Rev. of *The Germ*. *John Bull* 30.1522 (11 Feb. 1850): 91.

Rev. of *The Germ*. *The Spectator* 12 Jan. 1850: 43.

Rev. of *The Germ*. *The Standard of Freedom* 2 Mar. 1850: 11.

Rev. of *The Germ*. *Weekly Dispatch* 2515 (20 Jan. 1850): 38.

The Germ: A Hypermedia Edition. Ed. Jerome J. McGann. 8 Dec 1994. 27 Jan 2009. <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/courses/ennc986/germ.html>.

The Germ: Thoughts towards Nature in Poetry, Literature and Art. New York: AMS Press, 1965.

"The Germ." *The Complete Writings and Pictures of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: A Hypermedia Archive*. Ed. Jerome J. McGann. June 2008. 15 September 2007. <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/ap4.g415.raw.html>.

Givens, Jean A., Karen M. Reeds, and Alain Touwaide, eds. *Visualizing Medieval Medicine and Natural History, 1200-1550*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006.

Glasgow, Eric. "Thomas Woolner: Art and Literature." *Victorians Institute Journal* 21 (1993): 257-60.

Grigely, Joseph. *Textualterity: Art, Theory, and Textual Criticism*. Ann Arbor, MI: U of Michigan P, 1995.

Grimaldi, Stacy. *A Suit of Armour for Youth*. London: S. Bentley, 1824.

-----. *The Toilet*. London: 1821.

Goldman, Paul. *Victorian Illustration: Pre-Raphaelites, the Idyllic School and the High Victorians*. Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 1996.

-----. *Victorian Illustrated Books*. London: British Museum, 1994.

Goodwin, Gregory H. "Keble and Newman: Tractarian Aesthetics and the Romantic Tradition." *Victorian Studies* 30.4 (1987): 475-94.

Goody, Jack. *The Culture of Flowers*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993.

Grass, Sean C. "Nature's Perilous Variety in Rossetti's 'Goblin Market.'" *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 51.3 (December 1996): 356-76.

Grove, Laurence. "Visual Cultures, National Visions: The Ninth Art of France." Wygant 43-57.

Groves, Peter. "Hopkins and Tractarianism." *Victorian Poetry* 44.1 (Spring 2006): 105-12.

Hagstrum, Jean H. *William Blake, Poet and Painter: An Introduction to the Illuminated Verse*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1969.

Hall, Joseph. *The Art of Divine Meditation*. 1606. Ed. Frank Livingstone Huntley. Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1981.

-----. *Occasional Meditations*. 1633. Ed. Frank Livingstone Huntley. Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1981.

Hamon, Philippe. "Qu'est-ce qu'une description?" *Poétique* 12 (1972): 465-85.

Hardman, Malcolm. "Faithful to the Greek?: Swinburnian Patterning (Hopkinsian Dapple)." *The Yearbook of English Studies* 32.1 (January 2002): 19-35.

Hares-Stryker, Carolyn, ed. *An Anthology of Pre-Raphaelite Writings*. New York: NYU Press, 1997.

Harrison, Antony H. *Christina Rossetti in Context.* Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina P, 1988.

-----. *Swinburne's Medievalism: A Study in Victorian Love Poetry.* Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State UP, 1988.

Harvey, Christopher. *Schola Cordis, or, the heart of it selfe gone away from God and brought back by Him.* London: Lodowick Lloyd, 1676.

Hawkins, Henry. *The Devout Heart.* 1634.

-----. *Parthenia Sacra.* 1633.

Helsinger, Elizabeth K. *Poetry and the Pre-Raphaelite Arts: Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris.* New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2008.

-----. "William Morris Before Kelmscott: Poetry and Design in the 1860's." Richard Maxwell 209-38.

Henderson, Philip. *Swinburne: The Portrait of a Poet.* London: Routledge, 1974.

Herrick, Robert. "To the Virgins: To Make Much of Time." *Works of Robert Herrick.* Vol. 1. Ed. Alfred Pollard. London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1891. 114-15.

Hill, Marylu. "'Eat Me, Drink Me, Love Me': Eucharist and the Erotic Body in Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market.*" *Victorian Poetry* 43.4 (Winter 2005): 455-72.

Holly, Michael Ann and Keith Moxy, eds. *Art History, Aesthetics, Visual Studies.* New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2002.

Höltgen, Karl Josef. *Aspects of the Emblem: Studies in the English Emblem Tradition and the European Context.* Kassell: Edition Reichenberger, 1986.

-----. *Francis Quarles 1592-1644: Meditativer Dichter, Emblematiker, Royalist.* Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1978.

-----. "Henry Hawkins: A Jesuit Writer and Emblematist in Stuart England." *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540*-1773. Ed. J.W. O'Malley, Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven Harris and T. Frank Kennedy. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1999: 600-626.

Hönnighausen, Gisela. "Emblematic Tendencies in the Works of Christina Rossetti." *Victorian Poetry* 10.1 (Spring 1972): 1-15.

Hönnighausen, Lothar. *The Symbolist Tradition in English Literature: A Study of Pre-Raphaelitism and Fin de Siècle.* Trans. Gisela Hönnighausen. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley. *The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon.* Ed. Claude C. Abbott. London: Oxford UP, 1955.

-----. *The Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins.* Ed. Claude C. Abbott. London: Oxford UP, 1956.

-----. *A Hopkins Reader.* Ed. John Pick. London: Oxford UP, 1953.

-----. *The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges.* Ed. Claude C. Abbott. London: Oxford UP, 1955.

-----. *Poems.* Ed. with a Preface by Robert Bridges. London: Humphrey Milford, 1918.

-----. *The Poetical Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins.* Ed. Norman H. Mackenzie. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

Hosmon, Robert Stahr. "*The Germ* (1850) and *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (1856)." *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter* 2.1 (Apr. 1969): 36-47.

House, Humphrey. *All in Due Time.* London: Hart-Davis, 1955.

Hunt, William Holman. *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.* 2 vols.

London: Macmillan, 1905.

Hunter, J. Paul. *The Reluctant Pilgrim: Defoe's Emblematic Method and Quest for Form in Robinson Crusoe.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1966.

Huntley, Frank Livingstone. *Bishop Joseph Hall and Protestant Meditation in Seventeenth-Century England.* Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1980.

Hurst, C.C. and Mabel S.G. Breeze. "Notes on the Origin of the Moss-Rose." *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society* 47.1 (1922): 1-16.

Hutchison, Sidney C. *The History of the Royal Academy, 1768-1986.* London: Robert Royce, 1986.

Hugo, Herman. *Pia Desideria.* Antwerp: Hendrick Aertssens, 1624.

Hyder, Clyde, ed. *Swinburne: The Critical Heritage.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970.

Jay, Martin. *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought.* Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1993.

James, Philip. *English Book Illustration 1800-1947.* London: Penguin, 1947.

Johnson, Margaret. *Gerard Manley Hopkins and Tractarian Poetry.* Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1997.

Johnson, Mary Lynn. "Emblem and Symbol in Blake." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 37.2 (Feb 1974): 151-70.

Jöns, Walter. *Das 'Sinnen-Bild.' Studien zur allegorischen Bildlichkeit bei Andreas Gryphius.* Stuttgart: J.B. Metzlersche, 1966.

Junius, Hadrianus. *Emblemata.* Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1565.

Keary, Charles Francis. "*The Germ.*" *Macmillan's Magazine* 34:5 (Sept. 1876): 439-47.

Kachur, Robert M. "Repositioning the Female Christian Reader: Christina Rossetti as Tractarian Hermeneut in *The Face of the Deep.*" *Victorian Poetry* 35.2 (July 1997): 193-214.

Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Judgment.* Trans. J.H. Bernard. London: Macmillan, 1914.

Katz, Wendy R. "Emblematic Form and Reading Strategy in the Emblems of Margaret Gatty." Bath, Manning and Young 235-50.

-----. *The Emblems of Margaret Gatty: A Study of Allegory in Nineteenth-Century Children's Literature.* New York: AMS Press, 1993.

Keane, Robert N. *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: The Poet as Craftsman.* New York: Peter Lang, 2002.

Keating, John E. *The Wreck of the Deutschland: An Essay and Commentary.* Kent, OH: Kent State University Bulletin, 1963.

Keble, John. *The Christian Year.* London: Parker, 1827.

Kelvin, Norman. "Dante Gabriel and Christina Rossetti: A Pairing of Identities." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 32.1 (2004): 239-59.

Kent, David A., ed. *The Achievement of Christina Rossetti.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1987.

-----. "By thought, word, and deed': George Herbert and Christina Rossetti." Kent, *Achievement* 250-73.

----- and P.G. Stanwood, eds. *Selected Prose of Christina Rossetti.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998.

Klemin, Diana. *Illustrated Book: Its Art and Craft.* New York: Bramhall House, 1970.

Knight, Joseph. *Life of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.* 1887. Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1972.

Knoepflmacher, U.C. and G.B. Tennyson, eds. *Nature and the Victorian Imagination.* Berkeley: U of California P, 1977.

Kooistra, Lorraine Janzen. *The Artist as Critic: Bitextuality in Fin-de-Siècle Illustrated Books.* Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1995.

-----. *Christina Rossetti and Illustration: A Publishing History.* Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 2002.

-----. "The Dialogue of Image and Text in Christina Rossetti's *Sing-Song.*" *Victorian Poetry* 37.4 (Winter 1999): 465-91.

-----. "Poetry and Illustration." Cronin, Chapman and Harrison 392-419.

Kristeva, Julia. *Semeiotike: Recherches pour une sémanalyse.* Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1969.

Kruger, Kathryn Sullivan. "The Tarot in Yeats' Stories of Red Hanrahan." *Eire-Ireland: A Journal of Irish Studies* 26.2 (Summer 1991): 62-77.

Lafourcade, Georges. *Swinburne: A Literary Biography.* New York: Russell & Russell, 1932.

Laity, Cassandra. "T.S. Eliot and A.C. Swinburne: Decadent Bodies, Modern Visualities, and Changing Modes of Perception." *Modernism/modernity* 11.3 (2004): 425-48.

Landow, George P. *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin.* Princeton NJ: Princeton UP, 1971.

-----. *Images of Crisis: Literary Iconology, 1750 to the Present.* Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.

-----. *Victorian Types, Victorian Shadows: Biblical Typology in Victorian Literature, Art and Thought.* Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980.

Lang, Cecil Y, ed. *The Swinburne Letters.* 6 vols. New Haven: Yale UP, 1959.

Laurent, Beatrice. "Hidden Iconography in 'Found' by Dante Gabriel Rossetti." *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 15 (Fall 2006): 14-26.

Leavitt, June. *Esoteric Symbols: The Tarot in Yeats, Eliot, and Kafka.* Lanham, MD: UP of America, 2007.

Levine, Caroline. "Strategic Formalism: Toward a New Method in Cultural Studies." *Victorian Studies* 48.4 (Summer 2006): 625-57.

Lewalski, Barabara. *Protestant Poetics.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1979.

Loach, Judi. "Architecture and Emblematics: Issues in Interpretation." Adams and Grove 1-21.

Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding.* 1689. London: Penguin, 1997.

Lorsch, Susan E. *Where Nature Ends: Literary Responses to the Designification of Landscape.* New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1983.

Lougy, Robert E. "Swinburne's Poetry and Twentieth-Century Criticism." *Dalhousie Review* 48 (1968): 358-65.

Louis, Margot K. *Swinburne and His Gods: The Roots and Growth of an Agnostic Poetry.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1990.

-----. "Swinburne, Clough, and the Speechless Christ: 'Before a Crucifix' and 'Easter Day.'" *The Victorian Newsletter* 72 (Fall 1987): 1-4.

-----. "Wise Words and Wild Words: The Problem of Language in Swinburne's *Atalanta.*" *Victorian Poetry* 25.1 (Spring 1987): 45-56.

Lysack, Krista. "Goblin Markets: Victorian Women Shoppers at Liberty's Oriental Bazaar." *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 27.2 (2005): 139-65.

Low, Frances H. "Favorite Books of Childhood." *The Strand.* 14 August 1894: 128-36.

MacQueen, John. *Allegory.* The Critical Idiom, 14. London: Methuen, 1970.

Mallon, Thomas. *A Book of One's Own.* New York: Penguin, 1986.

Manning, John. *The Emblem.* London: Reaktion Books, 2002.

Marsh, Jan. *Christina Rossetti: A Writer's Life.* New York: Viking, 1994.

-----. Introduction. *Collected Writings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.* By Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Ed. Jan Marsh. Chicago: New Amsterdam Books, 2000.

Marshall, Linda. "Astronomy of the Invisible." Arseneau, Kooistra, and Harrison 194-211.

-----. "'Transfigured to His Likeness': Sensible Transcendentalism in Christina Rossetti's 'Goblin Market.'" *University of Toronto Quarterly* 63.3 (1994): 429-450.

Martin, Robert Bernard. *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Very Private Life.* New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1991.

Martz, Louis L. *The Poetry of Meditation.* New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1962.

Maxwell, Catherine. "Devious Symbols: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Purgatorio.*" *Victorian Poetry* 31.1 (Spring 1993): 19-40.

-----. *Swinburne.* Tavistock: Northcote House, 2004.

Maxwell, Richard, ed. *The Victorian Illustrated Book.* Charlottesville, VA: UP of Virginia, 2002.

Mayberry, Katherine J. *Christina Rossetti and the Poetry of Discovery.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1989.

McAlpine, Heather. "'Grafted Warmth': Dante Rossetti's Spiritual-Sensual Aesthetic and 'English May.'" *The Explicator* 63.3 (Spring 2007): 151-54.

McDonald, Peter D. "Ideas of the Book and Histories of Literature: After Theory?" *PMLA* 121.1 (Jan 2006): 214-28.

McGann, Jerome J. *Black Riders: The Visible Language of Modernism.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1993.

-----. Introduction. *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Collected Poetry and Prose.* By Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Ed. Jerome J. McGann. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2003.

-----. *The Complete Writings and Pictures of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: A Hypermedia Archive.* 2008. 12 June 2009. <http://www.rossettiarchive.org>.

-----. *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Game That Must Be Lost.* New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2000.

-----. "Introduction." Kent, *Achievement* 1-17.

-----. "Medieval versus Victorian versus Modern: Rossetti's Art of Images." *Modernism/ Modernity* 2.1 (1995): 97-112.

-----. "The Religious Poetry of Christina Rossetti." *Critical Inquiry* 10.1 (1983): 127-44.

-----. "Swinburne's Radical Artifice; or, The Comedian as A.C." *Modernism/modernity* 11.2 (2004): 205-18.

-----. *The Textual Condition.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1991.

-----. "Visible and Invisible Books: Hermetic Images in N-Dimensional Space." *New Literary History* 32.2 (2001): 283-300.

McKenna, Mary Lou. "'Masks of words and painted plots': Swinburne and Nineteenth-Century Emblematics." *Emblematica* 9.1 (Summer 1995): 177-97.

Meisel, Martin. *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial, and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1983.

Mendoza, Victor Roman. "'Come Buy': The Crossing of Sexual and Consumer Desire in Christina Rossetti's 'Goblin Market.'" *ELH* 73.4 (2006): 913-47.

Miller, J. Hillis. *The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth-Century Writers.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1963.

-----. "The Mirror's Secret: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Double Work of Art." *Victorian Poetry* 29.4 (Winter 1991): 333-49.

Miner, Earl, ed. *Literary Uses of Typology.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1977.

"Miscellanea." *The Builder* 8.363 19 Jan 1850: 34.

Mitchell, W.J.T. *Blake's Composite Art: A Study of the Illuminated Poetry.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1978.

-----. *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986.

-----. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1994.

Mödersheim, Sabine. "The Emblem in the Context of Architecture." Daly, *Emblem Scholarship* 159-75.

Möller, Joachim, ed. *Imagination on a Long Rein: English Literature Illustrated.* Marburg: Jonas, 1988.

Monteiro, George. "The Experienced Emblem: A Study of the Poetry of Emily Dickinson." *Prospects: An American Journal of American Cultural Studies* 6 (1981): 187-280.

Morgan, Thais E. "Rereading Nature: Wordsworth Between Swinburne and Arnold." *Victorian Poetry* 24.4 (Winter 1986): 427-39.

Morgan, Victor. "Perambulating and Consumable Emblems: The Norwich Evidence." Bath and Russell 176-206.

Morris, William. *The Collected Works of William Morris.* Ed. May Morris. New York: Oriole, 1973.

-----. *The Defense of Guenevere and Other Poems.* London: Bell and Daldy, 1858.

-----. *The Defense of Guenevere and Other Poems.* Hammersmith: Kelmscott, 1892.

-----. *The Earthly Paradise.* Hammersmith: Kelmscott, 1896.

-----. *The Ideal Book: Essays and Lectures on the Arts of the Book.* Ed. William S. Peterson. Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1982.

-----. *Poems by the Way.* Hammersmith: Kelmscott, 1891.

Moseley, Charles. *A Century of Emblems.* Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1989.

Musello Cantalupo, Catherine. "Christina Rossetti: The Devotional Poet and the Rejection of Romantic Nature." Kent, *Achievement* 274-300.

Nanavutty, Piloo. "Blake and Emblem Literature." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 15.3/4 (1952): 258-61.

Neale, James Mason. *Text Emblems.* J.T. Hayes, 1861.

Nelson, James G. "Aesthetic Experience and Rossetti's 'My Sister's Sleep.'" *Victorian Poetry* 7.2 (1969): 154-58.

Nesfield, W. Eden. *Specimens of Medieval Architecture.* London: Day & Sons, 1862.

Newman, John Henry. *Apologia Pro Vita Sua.* London: J.M. Dent, 1864.

-----, ed. *Tracts for the Times.* 1833-41. 6 vols. New York: AMS Press, 1969.

Newman, Karen. "'And wash the Ethiop white': Femininity and the Monstrous in *Othello.*"

Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology. Ed. Jean Elizabeth Howard, Marion F. O'Connor. New York: Methuen, 1987. 143-62.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Birth of Tragedy & The Genealogy of Morals.* Trans. Francis Golffing. New York: Anchor Books, 1956.

Nixon, Jude V. "'Goldengrove Unleaving': Hopkins' 'Spring and Fall,' Christina Rossetti's 'Mirrors of Life and Death,' and the Politics of Inclusion." *Victorian Poetry* 43.4 (Winter 2005): 473-84.

Noble, James Ashcroft. "A Pre-Raphaelite Magazine." *Fraser's Magazine* (May 1882): 568-80.

O'Gorman, Francis. "'Death lies dead': The Allusive Texture of Swinburne's 'A Forsaken Garden.'" *Victorian Poetry* 41.3 (Fall 2003): 348-52.

-----. "Swinburne's Returns: The Endurance of Writing in *Poems and Ballads, Second Series* (1878)." *Cambridge Quarterly* 33.3 (2004): 197-216.

O'Halloran, Kay L., ed. *Multimodal Discourse Analysis: Systemic Functional Perspectives.* London: Continuum, 2004.

O'Malley, J.W., S.J. et al., eds. *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540-1773.* Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1999.

Østermark-Johansen, Lene. "Swinburne's Serpentine Delights: The Aesthetic Critic and the Old Master Drawings in Florence." *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 24.1 (March 2002): 49-72.

Overholser, Renée V. "'Our King Back, Oh, Upon English Souls!': Swinburne, Hopkins, and the Politics of Religion." *Victorian Religious Discourse: New Directions in Criticism.* Ed. Jude V. Nixon. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. 131-53.

Packer, Lona Mosk. *The Rossetti-Macmillan Letters*. Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 1963.

Palazzo, Lynda. *Christina Rossetti's Feminist Theology*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

-----. "The Poet and the Bible: Christina Rossetti's Feminist Hermeneutics." *Victorian Newsletter* 92 (October 1997): 6-9.

Parley, Peter (Samuel Griswold Goodrich). *Tales About Plants*. London: Thomas Tegg, 1839.

Paulson, Ronald. *Emblem and Expression: Meaning in English Art of the Eighteenth Century*. London: Thames, 1975.

Pease, Allison. "Questionable Figures: Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads*." *Victorian Poetry* 35.1 (Spring 1997): 43-56.

Peattie, Roger W., ed. *Selected Letters of William Michael Rossetti*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1990.

-----. "The Huntington Library Manuscript of 'The P.R.B. & Walter Howell Deverell.'" *Huntington Library Quarterly* 51:2 (Spring 1988): 89-94.

-----. "William Michael Rossetti and the Defense of Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads*." *Harvard Library Bulletin* 19 (1971): 356-65.

Perry, Susan. "The Tarot as Alternate Structure in Yeats' 'The Circus Animals' Desertion.'" *Yeats Eliot Review* 14.4 (Spring 1997): 11-17.

Peters, Robert L. "Algernon Charles Swinburne and the Use of Integral Detail." *Victorian Studies* 5.4 (June 1962): 289-302.

Peterson, Linda H. "Restoring the Book: The Typological Hermeneutics of Christina

Rossetti and the PRB." *Victorian Poetry* 32.3-4 (October 1994): 209-32.

Pinkus, Karen. "Emblematic Time." Adams and Grove 93-108.

Pistrucci, Filippo. *Iconologia.* Milan: Paolo Antonio Tosi, 1821.

Pittman, Philip. "Blake, Rossetti, and Reynolds: A Detail." *Notes and Queries* 21 (1974): 215-16.

Podnieks, Elizabeth. "Private Lives/Public Texts: Women's Diary Literature." *A/b: Auto/Biography Studies* 17.1 (Summer 2002): 1-10.

Poe, Edgar Allen. *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allen Poe.* New York: Random House, 1975.

Praz, Mario. *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery.* Rome: Edizione di Storia e Letteratura, 1964.

Preziosi, Donald, ed. *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998.

Quarles, Francis. *Emblemes, divine and moral, together with Hieroglyphicks of the life of man.* London: G.M. for John Marriot, 1635.

Radford, Ernest. "The Life and Death of the Germ." *The Idler* 13 (March 1898): 227-33.

Ray, Gordon N. *The Illustrator and the Book in England from 1790 to 1914.* New York: Dover, 1991.

Reed, John Shelton. *Glorious Battle: The Cultural Politics of Victorian Anglo-Catholicism.* Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 1996.

Reid, Forrest. *Illustrators of the Eighteen Sixties.* New York: Dover, 1975.

Remy, Arthur F.J. "Literary or Profane Legends." *The Catholic Encyclopedia.* Vol. 9.

New York: Robert Appleton, 1910. 23 Jul. 2009 <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09121a.htm>.

Reynolds, Sir Joshua. *Discourses on Art.* Ed. Robert R. Wark. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1975.

Ridenour, George M. "Time and Eternity in Swinburne: Minute Particulars in Five Poems." *ELH* 45 (Spring 1978): 107-30.

Riede, David G. *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Limits of Victorian Vision.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1983.

Riehl, Joseph E. "Swinburne's Doublings: 'Tristram of Lyonesse,' 'The Sisters,' and 'The Tale of Balen.'" *Victorian Poetry* 28.3/4 (Autumn/Winter1990): 1-17.

Ripa, Cesare. *Iconologia; or, Moral Emblems.* London: Benjamin Motte, 1709.

Rivers, Bryan. "The 'Fiery Serpent': Typological Topography in Dante Rossetti's 'Jenny.'" *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 15 (Fall 2006): 5-13.

-----. "Rossetti's 'Jenny.'" *The Explicator* 63.2 (Winter 2005): 82-5.

Roe, Dinah. *Christina Rossetti's Faithful Imagination: The Devotional Poetry and Prose.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Rose, Andrea, ed. *The Germ: The Literary Magazine of the Pre-Raphaelites.* Facs. ed. Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1992.

Rosenblum, Dolores. "Christina Rossetti and Poetic Sequence." Kent, *Achievement* 132-58.

Rossetti, Christina. *Annus Domini: A Prayer for Each Day of the Year, Founded on a Text of Holy Scripture.* London: Parker, 1874.

-----. *Called to Be Saints: The Minor Festivals Devotionally Studied.* London: SPCK, 1881.

-----. *Christina Rossetti: The Complete Poems.* Text by Betty Flowers and R.W. Crump. Notes and Introduction by Betty S. Flowers. London: Penguin, 2001.

-----. *The Face of the Deep: A Devotional Commentary on the Apocalypse.* London and Brighton: SPCK; New York: Young, 1892.

-----. *Goblin Market and Other Poems.* (1862). Rossetti, *CP* 5-85.

-----. *Letter and Spirit: Notes on the Commandments.* London and Brighton: SPCK; New York: Young, 1883.

-----. *The Letters of Christina Rossetti.* 4 vols. Ed. Antony H. Harrison. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1997-2004.

-----. *Maude.* Kent and Stanwood 17-51.

-----. *A Pageant and Other Poems.* London: Macmillan, 1881.

-----. *The Poetical Works of Christina Georgina Rossetti.* Ed. William Michael Rossetti. London: Macmillan, 1906.

-----. *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems.* (1866). Rossetti, *CP* 89-181.

-----. *Seek and Find: A Double Series of Short Studies of the Benedicite.* London and Brighton: SPCK; New York: Young, 1879.

-----. *Selected Prose of Christina Rossetti.* Ed. David A. Kent and P.G. Stanwood. New York: St. Martin's, 1998.

-----. *Sing-Song: A Nursery Rhyme Book.* London: Routledge, 1872.

-----. *Time Flies: A Reading Diary.* London and Brighton: SPCK; Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1886.

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel. *Ballads and Narrative Poems.* Hammersmith: Kelmscott, 1893.

-----. *Ballads and Sonnets.* London: Ellis and White, 1881.

-----. *The Collected Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.* 2 vols. Ed. William Michael Rossetti. London: Ellis and Elvey, 1887.

-----. *Collected Writings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.* Ed. Jan Marsh. Chicago: New Amsterdam Books, 2000.

-----. *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.* Ed. William Fredeman. 9 vols. Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2002-08.

-----. *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Collected Poetry and Prose.* Ed. Jerome J. McGann. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2003.

-----. *Dante Gabriel Rossetti; his family letters, with a memoir by William Michael Rossetti.* 2 vols. London: Ellis and Elvey, 1895.

-----. *Hand and Soul.* Hammersmith: Kelmscott, 1894.

-----. *Letters.* Ed. Oswald Doughty and John Robert Wahl. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965.

-----. *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham, 1854-1870.* Ed. George Birkbeck Hill. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1897.

-----. *Poems.* London: Roberts, 1870.

-----. *Sonnets and Lyrical Poems.* Hammersmith: Kelmscott, 1894.

Rossetti, Maria. *A Shadow of Dante.* London: Rivingtons, 1871.

-----. *The Rivulets: Or, A Dream Not All a Dream.* London: privately printed, 1846.

Rossetti, William Michael. "Introduction." *The Germ.* New York: AMS Press, 1965.

-----. "Memoir." *Dante Gabriel Rossetti; his family letters with a memoir by William Michael Rossetti.* 2 vols. London: Ellis and Elvey, 1895.

-----. "Memoir." *Poetical Works of Christina Georgina Rossetti.* Ed. William Michael Rossetti. London: Macmillan, 1906.

-----, ed. *Praeraphaelite Diaries and Letters*. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1890.

-----. "Preface." *Poetical Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*. 2 vols. Ed. William Michael Rossetti. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1887.

-----. *Some Reminiscences*. 2 vols. New York: Scribner, 1906.

Ruskin, John. *Elements of Drawing*. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1857.

-----. Letter to *The Times*. 13 May 1851. Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin* 12: 319-23.

-----. Letter to *The Times*. 30 May 1851. Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin* 12: 324-27.

-----. Letter to *The Times*. 5 May 1854. Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin* 12: 328-32.

-----. Letter to *The Times*. 25 May 1854. Ruskin, *The Works of John Ruskin* 12: 333-35.

-----. *Modern Painters*. 9 vols. London: J.M. Dent. 1843-60.

-----. *Notes on some of the Principal Pictures exhibited in the rooms of the Royal Academy, 1856*. London: Smith, Elder & co., 1856.

-----. "Pre-Raphaelitism." *The Works of John Ruskin* 12: 337-92.

-----. *Sesame and Lilies*. New York: James B. Millar, 1884.

-----. *The Stones of Venice*. 3 vols. London: Smith, Elder & co., 1851-53.

-----. *The Works of John Ruskin*. Ed. E.T. Cook, Alexander Wedderburn. 39 vols. London: G. Allen, 1903-12.

Russell, Daniel. "Directions in French Emblem Studies." *Emblematica* 5 (1991): 129-50.

-----. "The Emblem and Authority." Proceedings of the First International Conference on Word and Image. *Word & Image* 4.1 (1988): 81-87.

-----. *The Emblem and Device in France*. Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1985.

-----. *Emblematic Structures in Renaissance French Culture*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1995.

-----. "Emblematic Structures in Sixteenth-Century French Poetry." *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik* 14 (1982): 54-100.

Schaff, Philip, ed. *The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England.* 1571. *The Creeds of Christendom.* 3 vols. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1877.

Schöne, Albrecht. *Emblematik und Drama im Zeitalter des Barock.* München: C.H. Beck, 1964.

Scott, Sir Walter. *Anne of Geierstein; Or, the Maiden of the Mist.* 3 vols. Edinburgh: Cadell, 1829.

Seaton, Beverley. *The Language of Flowers: A History.* Charlottesville, VA: UP of Virginia, 1995.

Secker, Josephine Evetts. "Henry Hawkins, S.J., 1577-1646: A Recusant Writer and Translator of the Early Seventeenth Century." *Recusant History* 11 (1972): 237-52.

Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It. The Norton Shakespeare.* Ed. Stephen Greenblatt. New York: Norton, 1997. 1591-1657.

Shaw, Philip. *The Sublime.* London: Routledge, 2006.

Silcox, Mary, Helen Ostovich and Graham Roebuck, eds. *Other Voices, Other Views: Expanding the Canon in English Renaissance Studies.* Newark, DE: U of Delaware P, 1999.

Sinnema, Peter W. *Dynamics of the Pictured Page: Representing the Nation in the* Illustrated London News. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998.

Smith, Jonathan. "Une Fleur du Mal? Swinburne's 'The Sundew' and Darwin's *Insectivorous Plants.*" *Victorian Poetry* 41.1 (Spring 2003): 131-50.

Smulders, Sharon. "A Breach of Faith: D.G. Rossetti's 'Ave,' Art-Catholicism, and *Poems,*

1870." *Victorian Poetry* 30.1 (Spring 1992): 63-74.

Stannard, Jerry. *Herbs and Herbalism in the Middle Ages.* Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1999.

Starzyk, Lawrence J. "'The Peril of Pleasure Unavoidable': Rossetti and the Verbal Incarnation of the Visual." *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 14 (Fall 2005): 5-16.

-----. "Swinburne's 'Notes on Designs of the Old Masters at Florence': The Exegesis of Icons." *The Victorian Newsletter* 96 (Fall 1999): 15-21.

Stegemeier, Henri. "Problems in Emblem Literature." *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 45 (1946): 26-37.

Stewart, Garrett. "Reading Figures: The Legible Image of Victorian Textuality." Richard Maxwell 345-67.

Sobolev, Dennis. "Inscape Revisited." *English* 51 (Autumn 2002): 219-34.

Sucquet, Antoine. *Via Vitae Aeternae.* Antwerp: Henricum Aertssium, 1630.

Sulloway, Allison. *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Victorian Temper.* New York, NY: Columbia UP, 1972.

Suriano, Gregory. *The Pre-Raphaelite Illustrators.* New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2000.

Surtees, Virginia. *The Paintings and Drawings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: A Catalogue Raisonné.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1971.

Sussman, Herbert. *Fact into Figure: Typology in Carlyle, Ruskin, and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.* Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 1979.

-----. "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and Their Circle: The Formation of the Victorian Avant-Garde." *The Victorian Newsletter* 57 (Spring 1980): 7-9.

-----. "Rossetti's Changing Style: The Revisions of 'My Sister's Sleep.'" *The Victorian*

Newsletter 41 (1972): 6-8.

Swinburne, Algernon Charles. *Bothwell. Works* 8: 141-387; 9: 5-285.

-----. "Charles Lamb and George Wither." *The Nineteenth Century* 17 (Jan. 1885): 66-91.

-----. *Chastelard. Works* 8: 1-133.

-----. *The Complete Works.* 20 vols. Ed. Sir Edmund Gosse and Thomas James Wise. New York: Russell & Russell, 1968.

-----. *Essays and Studies.* London, 1875.

-----. *Mary Stuart. Works* 9: 291-475.

-----. *Notes on Poems and Reviews: Laus Veneris, and other Poems and Ballads.* London: J.C. Hotten, 1866.

-----. *Poetical Works.* J.D. Williams, 1884.

-----. *The Swinburne Letters.* 6 vols. Ed. Cecil Y. Lang. New Haven: Yale UP, 1960-62.

-----. *William Blake: A Critical Essay.* London: John Camden Hotten, 1868.

Tennyson, Alfred, Lord. *Enoch Arden.* London: Moxon, 1866.

-----. *Poems by Alfred Tennyson.* London: Moxon, 1857.

Tennyson, G. B. "The Sacramental Imagination." Knoepflmacher and Tennyson 370-90.

-----. "'So Careful of the Type?': Victorian Biblical Typology: Sources and Applications." *Essays and Studies* 37 (1984): 31-45.

-----. "Tractarian Aesthetics: Analogy and Reserve in Keble and Newman." *The Victorian Newsletter* 55 (Spring 1979): 8-10.

-----. *Victorian Devotional Poetry: The Tractarian Mode.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1981.

Thomas, Julia. *Pictorial Victorians: The Inscription of Values in Word and Image.* Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 2004.

Tinkler-Villani, Valeria. "Atheism and Belief in Shelley, Swinburne and Christina Rossetti." *Victorian Keats and Romantic Carlyle: The Fusions and Confusions of Literary Periods.* Ed. C.C. Barfoot. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999.

Tobin, Thomas J. *Pre-Raphaelitism in the Nineteenth-Century Press: A Bibliography.* Victoria, BC: English Literary Studies, University of Victoria, 2002.

Todd, R. *The Opacity of Signs: Acts of Interpretation in George Herbert's* The Temple. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1986.

Tucker, Herbert F., ed. *A Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture.* Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999.

-----. "Tactical Formalism: A Response to Caroline Levine." *Victorian Studies* 49.1 (Fall 2006): 85-93.

Tung, Mason. "From Personification to Emblems: A Study of Peacham's Use of Ripa's Iconologia in *Minerva Brittania.*" Daly, *The English Emblem and the Continental Tradition* 109-50.

-----. "Literal Illustration in Victorian Print." Richard Maxwell 163-208.

Vaughan, William. "Incongruous Disciples: The Pre-Raphaelites and the Moxon Tennyson." Möller 148-60.

Virkar-Yates, Aakanksha. "The Heart's Bower: Emblematics in Gerard Manley Hopkins's *The Wreck of the Deutschland* (1876)." *Literature & Theology* 22.1 (March 2008): 32-47.

Von Balthasar, Hans Urs. *Studies in Theological Style: Lay Styles.* Trans. Andrew Louth,

John Saward, Martin Simon, and Rowan Williams. 7 vols. Vol 3. *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*. Ed. John Riches. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986.

Wagner-Lawlor, Jennifer. "Metaphorical 'Indiscretion' and Literary Survival in Swinburne's 'Anactoria.'" *Studies in English Literature* 36 (Fall 1996): 917-34.

Wallace, Nathaniel. "Architextual Poetics: The *Hypnerotomachia* and the Rise of the European Emblem." *Emblematica* 8.1 (Summer 1994): 1-27.

Ward, Bernadette Waterman. *World as Word: Philosophical Theology in Gerard Manley Hopkins*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic U of America P, 2002.

Wark, Robert. Introduction. *Discourses*. By Joshua Reynolds. Ed. Robert Wark. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1975.

Welter, Nancy. "Women Alone: Le Fanu's 'Carmilla' and Rossetti's 'Goblin Market.'" *Victorian Sensations: Essays on a Scandalous Genre*. Ed. Kimberley Harrison, Richard Fantina. Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 2006: 138-148.

Weninger, Stephen. "Symbol and Thing in *Dantis Amor*." *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 8 (Spring 1999): 5-15.

Westerholm, Joel. "'I Magnify Mine Office': Christina Rossetti's Authoritative Voice in her Devotional Prose." *The Victorian Newsletter* 84 (October 1993): 11-17.

White, Gleeson. *English Illustration. "The Sixties": 1855-70*. 1897. Bath: Kingsmead Reprints, 1970.

White, Norman. *Hopkins: A Literary Biography*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995.

Whitman, John. *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.

-----, ed. *Interpretation and Allegory: Antiquity to the Modern Period.* Boston: Brill, 2000.

Whitney, Geffrey. *A Choice of Emblemes.* Leiden: Francis Raphelengius for Christopher Plantin, 1586.

Wilde, Oscar. *The Portrait of Dorian Gray.* New York: Norton, 1988.

Willet, Andrew. *Sacrorum Emblematum Centuria Una.* Cambridge: John Legate, 1592.

Williams, Isaac. *The Altar.* London: J. Burns, 1847.

-----. *The Baptistry.* London: Parker, 1842.

-----. *The Cathedral.* London: Parker, 1838.

-----. *Meditations and Prayers Selected from* The Way of Eternal Life. Oxford: Parker, 1845.

Willmott, R.A., ed. *Poets of the Nineteenth Century.* London: Routledge, 1857.

Wilson, William. "Algernon Agonistes: 'Thalassius,' Visionary Strength, and Swinburne's Critique of Arnold's 'Sweetness and Light.'" *Victorian Poetry* 19.4 (Winter 1981): 381-95.

Wither, George. *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, Quickened with metricall illustrations, both Morall and Divine.* London: Henry Taunton, 1635.

Woolford, John, ed. *Poets and Men of Letters: Sale Catalogues of Libraries of Eminent Persons.* 7 vols. London: Mansell, 1972.

Wright, Brooks. "Swinburne, 'A Cameo.'" *The Explicator* 12 (1953): 13.

Wygant, Amy, ed. *New Directions in Emblem Studies.* Glasgow: U of Glasgow P, 1999.

Young, Alan R. "Sir John Tenniel's Emblematic Shakespeare Cartoons for *Punch.*" Daly, *Emblem Scholarship* 229-47.