

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

These are marked in the text and notes by an asterisk, thus *

- p.27 De la Charge et Dignite de l'Ambassadeur was not dedicated by Hotman to the Earl of Pembroke. The English translation of 1603 was dedicated to the Earl by its editor and bookseller James Shawe.
- p.33 n.1 See also his 'Government Suppression of Elizabethan Catholic Books: the Case of Leicester's Commonwealth', Library Quarterly, vol.xlvii, 1977, pp.163-77.
- p.35 n.1 See also his '"The Letter of Estate": An Elizabethan Libel', NQ, vol.ccxxvi, 1981, pp.21-35.
- p.36 n.2 On the state of England in 1578 viewed from the position of the Protestant cause by Thomas Wilson and including reluctant support for the French marriage, see Albert J Schmidt, 'A Treatise on England's Perils, 1578', Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte, vol.xlvi, 1955, pp.243-9.
- p.48 n.3 On Faranore see D C Peck, 'The Earl of Leicester and the Riot at Drayton Bassett, 1578', NQ, vol.ccxxv, 1980, pp.131-5.
- p.66 n.1 What appears to have been Humphrey's presentation copy of his book to Leicester was sold by Evans in the second part of the sale of James Bindley's library, 1819, lot 1910.
- p.80 n.2 Daniel Rogers cites Lipsius' edition of Tacitus in his annotations on Leland's Genethliacon, 1543, p.54 according to his own pagination. The poem is bound up with other works by Leland, collected and annotated by Rogers in BL 1075 m 16.
- p.86 n.6 The second Oxford volume of memorial verses was in honour of Hatton and was first recorded in the revised edition of SFC as 19017.5. The unique copy is at Lambeth.
- p.95 It was not James but Hugh Sandford who was the Earl of Pembroke's tutor.
- p.107 n.2 See also the references to Leicester as a Machiavellian in D C Peck, '"The Letter of Estate": An Elizabethan Libel', pp.24, 30, 31.
- p.191 n.1 It is possible that Spenser's replacement for the journey overseas was Richard Lloyd who was in Paris on 26 October 1579 and shortly afterwards requesting Leicester's leave to travel to Italy, see above pp.48, 49.
- p.192 This discussion of the sources of the Calender's form should be modified in the light of R S Luborsky, 'The Allusive Presentation of The Shepheardes Calender', Spenser Studies, vol.i, 1980, pp.29-76. Stressing the debt to editions of Marot's poems Luborsky does not suggest Sannazaro as an influence, but Bruce R Smith does so in the succeeding article, 'On Reading The Shepheardes Calender', ibid., pp.63-93.
- p.245 The letter to Lady Kytson does not belong to 1581 but to 1585.
- p.247 The letter to the Queen does not belong to 1581 but to 1585; Feuillerat prints it in vol.iii, p.147.

ABSTRACT

Leicester's Literary Patronage: A Study of the English Court, 1578-1582.

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D. Phil.

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During the Duke of Alençon's second courtship of Queen Elizabeth the Earl of Leicester emerged as the leading opponent of the marriage. At the same time he began to patronize a circle of writers which included Gabriel Harvey, Edmund Spenser and Philip Sidney, who helped to create the 'golden' literature of the English Renaissance. In this thesis I investigate their relations with Leicester and by a detailed examination of their main works, such as the Spenser-Harvey Letters, the Old Arcadia, the Shepheardes Calender and the Faerie Queene, and their development, show how they reflect the Earl's intellectual and political concerns. I argue that Alençon was a notable patron and that his growing knowledge of his rival's academic interests encouraged Leicester to maintain his own literary faction. One of his aims was to show the French that English culture was not provincial and he demonstrated this in the entertainment The Four Foster Children of Desire for which he was largely responsible.

Having outlined the background of the crisis of the courtship I evoke Leicester's life and circumstances during this period, particularly his relationship with the Queen and patronage at Oxford. I then describe the distinctive interests of his circle in law, history, politics and poetry and go on to establish that Alençon took part in the French academic movement and that his courtiers included distinguished poets and thinkers. The second half of the thesis is a series of detailed studies of Harvey, Spenser and Sidney in relation to Leicester, and their writings during the Alençon courtship. Finally I examine the court entertainments of this period and argue for the Four Foster Children as a turning-point in Elizabethan literature.

My conclusion is that Leicester was a more loyal and discriminating patron than he is usually said to have been and that he played a significant part in introducing the 'golden' age of Elizabethan literature.

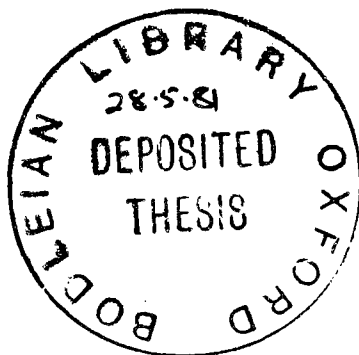
Leicester's Literary Patronage:

A Study of the English Court,

1578-1582

by

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The thesis contains about 100,000 words.

Conventions and Abbreviations.

I have tried to reproduce quotations from texts as exactly as possible, with the exception of the normalization of 'j' and 'i', 'u' and 'v' and the long 's'. Where the tilde has been expanded, or letters supplied, this has been indicated by underlining. Elisions in Latin and French quotations and Latin accents are not reproduced.

References to books and articles are given with details of date and place of publication for the first time, in abbreviated forms thereafter, or if within five notes by the standard Latin short-hand formulas, but are given in full in the 'List of Works Cited'. Where no place of publication is given for books it is assumed to be London; for books with titles in French it is assumed to be Paris.

Cross-references within the thesis are generally given by chapter and section numbers. To facilitate the following of some diplomatic and all of Sidney's correspondence I have supplied details of the writer, his place and date of writing and of his recipient.

References to some standard works such as DNB, G.E.C.'s Complete Peerage, and the biographical dictionaries for the two universities compiled by Venn and Foster have not been given. Information as to the Queen's and the court's movements and activities has been taken without citing it from 'A Court Calendar', Chambers, vol.iv, Appendix A; further details of Leicester's attendance at the Council have been taken equally silently from APC.

The following works are referred to by these short titles:

- Arber Ed. E A Arber, A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London; 1554-1640, 5 vols., 1875-94.
- Buxton E J M Buxton, Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance, 2nd ed., 1964.
- Chambers E K Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, 4 vols., Oxford 1923.
- Collins Ed. Arthur Collins, Letters and Memorials of State, 2 vols., 1746.
- Dorsten J A van Dorsten, Poets, Patrons, and Professors, Sir Philip Sidney, Daniel Rogers, and the Leiden Humanists, Publications of the Sir Thomas Browne Institute Leiden, General Series, no. 2, Leiden and London 1962.
- Hailes Hubert Languet, Epistolae ad P. Sydneium, ed. Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, Edinburgh 1776.
- Harvey Gabriel Harvey, Works, ed. A B Grosart, 3 vols., 1884-5.
- Judson A C Judson, The Life of Edmund Spenser, Baltimore 1945. (Variorum, vol.x).
- Letter Book The Letter-Book of Gabriel Harvey, A.D. 1573-1580, ed. E J L Scott, Camden Society, NS, vol.xxxiii, 1884. All references are to the folio numbers of the original, BL MS Sloane 93, against which all quotations have been checked.

- Letters The Spenser-Harvey Letters in Edmund Spenser, Poetical Works, ed. J C Smith and E De Sélincourt, Oxford 1912, pp. 609-43.
- Lodge Edmund Lodge, Illustrations of British History, 2nd ed., 3 vols., 1838.
- Marginalia Gabriel Harvey, Marginalia, ed. G C Moore Smith, Stratford-upon-Avon 1913.
- Miscellaneous Prose Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and J A van Dorsten, Oxford 1973.
- Nashe The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. R B McKerrow, 2nd ed., rev. F P Wilson, 5 vols., Oxford 1958.
- Nichols Ed. John Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, new ed., 3 vols., 1823.
- Osborn James M Osborn, Young Philip Sidney 1572-1577, New Haven and London 1972.
- Pears Ed. S A Pears, The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet, 1845.
- Revels Documents Ed. A Feuillerat, Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth, Bang's Materialen, vol. xxi, Louvain, Leipzig and London 1908.
- Read, Burghley Conyers Read, Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth, 1965.
- Read, Walsingham Conyers Read, Mr Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth, 3 vols., Oxford 1925.
- Ringler The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. W A Ringler, Oxford 1962.
- Robertson Philip Sidney, The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia, (The Old Arcadia), ed. Jean Robertson, Oxford 1973.
- Rosenberg Eleanor Rosenberg, Leicester: Patron of Letters, New York 1955.
- Shepherd Philip Sidney, An Apology for Poetry or The Defence of Poesy, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd, 1965.
- Sidney The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. Albert Feuillerat, 4 vols., Cambridge 1912-26.
- Skinner Quentin Skinner, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, 2 vols., Cambridge 1978.
- Spenser The Works of Edmund Spenser, A Variorum Edition, ed. E Greenlaw, C G Osgood and F M Padelford, 10 vols., Baltimore 1932-57.
- Spenser, Prose Spenser's Prose Works, ed. Rudolf Gottfried, Baltimore 1949. (Variorum, vol. ix).
- Wood Anthony à Wood, Athenae Oxonienses, new ed., ed. Philip Bliss, 4 vols., 1813-20.
- Yates F A Yates, The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century, Studies of the Warburg Institute, vol. xv, 1947.

The following abbreviations are used:

<u>APC</u>	<u>Acts of the Privy Council</u>
<u>BHR</u>	<u>Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance</u>
<u>BIHR</u>	<u>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</u>
<u>BL</u>	<u>British Library</u>
<u>CSP</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers</u>
<u>CSP D. Add.</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers Domestic Additional</u>
<u>CSP For.</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers Foreign</u>
<u>CSP Ire.</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers Irish</u>
<u>CSP Sp.</u>	<u>Calendar of State Papers Spanish</u>
<u>CUL</u>	<u>Cambridge University Library</u>
<u>DNB</u>	<u>Dictionary of National Biography</u>
<u>EHR</u>	<u>English Historical Review</u>
<u>ELH</u>	<u>Journal of English Literary History</u>
<u>ELN</u>	<u>English Language Notes</u>
<u>ELR</u>	<u>English Literary Renaissance</u>
<u>ES</u>	<u>English Studies</u>
<u>HLQ</u>	<u>Huntington Library Quarterly</u>
<u>HMC</u>	<u>Historical Manuscripts Commission</u>
<u>MLN</u>	<u>Modern Language Notes</u>
<u>MLQ</u>	<u>Modern Language Quarterly</u>
<u>MLR</u>	<u>Modern Language Review</u>
<u>MP</u>	<u>Modern Philology</u>
<u>NLH</u>	<u>New Literary History</u>
<u>NQ</u>	<u>Notes and Queries</u>
<u>NS</u>	<u>New Series</u>
<u>OED</u>	<u>Oxford English Dictionary</u>
<u>OHS</u>	<u>Oxford Historical Society</u>
<u>PMLA</u>	<u>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</u>
<u>PQ</u>	<u>Philological Quarterly</u>
<u>PRO</u>	<u>Public Records Office</u>
<u>RES</u>	<u>Review of English Studies</u>
<u>RN</u>	<u>Renaissance News</u>
<u>SEL</u>	<u>Studies in English Literature</u>
<u>SP</u>	<u>Studies in Philology</u>
<u>STC</u>	<u>Short Title Catalogue of English Books 1475-1640</u>
<u>TLS</u>	<u>Times Literary Supplement</u>
<u>VCH</u>	<u>Victoria County History</u>

'For all the favourite Earl had a bow, a smile at least, and often a kind word. Most of these were addressed to courtiers, whose names have long gone down the tide of oblivion; but some, to such as sound strangely in our ears, when connected with the ordinary matters of human life, above which the gratitude of posterity has long elevated them. A few of Leicester's interlocutory sentences ran as follows:

"Poynings, good morrow, and how does your wife and fair daughter? Why come they not to court? - Adams, your suit is naught - the Queen will grant no more monopolies - but I may serve you in another matter. - My good Alderman Aylford, the suit of the City, affecting Queenhithe, shall be forwarded as far as my poor interest can serve. - Master Edmund Spenser, touching your Irish petition, I would willingly aid you, from my love to the Muses; but thou hast nettled the Lord Treasurer".

"My lord", said the poet, "were I permitted to explain -"

"Come to my lodging, Edmund," answered the Earl - "not to-morrow, or next day, but soon. - Ha, Will Shakespeare - wild Will! - thou hast given my nephew, Philip Sidney, love-powder - he cannot sleep without thy Venus and Adonis under his pillow! We will have thee hanged for the veriest wizard in Europe. Hark thee, mad wag, I have not forgotten thy matter of the patent, and of the bears".

The player bowed, and the Earl nodded and passed on - so that age would have told the tale - in ours, perhaps, we might say the immortal had done homage to the mortal".

Sir Walter Scott, Kenilworth, ch. xvii.

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

To adjust the minute events of literary history is tedious and troublesome; it requires indeed no great force of understanding, but often depends upon enquiries which there is no opportunity of making, or is to be fetched from books and pamphlets not always at hand.

S. Johnson, 'Life of Dryden', Lives of the Poets, ed. G Birkbeck Hill, Oxford 1905, vol.i, p.368.

It is hardly surprising that the superabundant richness of English culture during the Renaissance has caused its literary history to be largely ignored, and its intellectual history almost totally neglected. Yet if we are to understand and learn to love that culture we cannot afford to ignore its historical development. Far too often we approach the writers of the second half of the sixteenth century as if they existed in an historical vacuum, as if the Queen came to the throne and all was suddenly Elizabethan: this is done with brilliant, but also rather amusing effects by Scott in Kenilworth. Literary history should show how writing changed not just from author to author but from generation to generation, even if possible from year to year. It is important that we should try to become as conscious of the 1560's and 1570's having an individual style and atmosphere as we are of the 1960's and 1970's. Writing about Shakespeare Emrys Jones has said that, 'What we need is a more historically adequate idea not only of the man himself but of the age which produced him'.¹ It is constantly remarkable how easily we accept the image of a fixed and unchanging world, of a single and unified culture.

Literary history in itself is still unfashionable; even a newly-founded and promising-sounding journal New Literary History concerns itself as its sub-title suggests almost exclusively with 'theory' of literary history or the 'Interpretation' of its problems. While there are hopeful signs of activity from those who defend this kind of writing in theory,² the practice of it is rare and generally unsatisfactory. Admirable in many ways for its breadth and

1. The Origins of Shakespeare, Oxford 1977, p.1.

2. For example Alastair Fowler's encouraging article, 'The Selection of Literary Constructs', NLH, vol. vii, 1975-6, pp. 39-55.

inclusiveness the third volume of the Cambridge History of English Literature¹ inevitably suffers from presenting the fragmented view of the 'Renaissance and Reformation' of seventeen different specialists. Its successors, the works by or edited by Baugh, Legouis and Cazamian and Daiches all more or less follow its pattern of a general introduction to the period followed by a discussion of the works of individual authors within the contexts of poetry, drama and miscellaneous prose, notably fiction. This emphasis on contextual criticism is to a certain extent justified by Hallett Smith's Elizabethan Poetry, (Cambridge, Mass. 1952), probably the best and most stimulating survey of verse during this period, but a work written with a profound anti-historical bias, while at the same time including much historical material.² On the other hand the contextual approach has also helped and encouraged the idea that a collection of diverse critical essays and remarks on selected authors and themes can constitute a literary history. Produced by university teachers for a student market the 'Sphere' series calls itself a 'History of Literature in the English Language' and aspires to being a 'comprehensive survey'. How it could be either of these it would be impossible to say, but it would be more honest to call itself as its 'Pelican' rival did, a 'Guide' and a highly selective one at that.³

The most interesting contribution to the literary history of this period is C S Lewis' English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, (Oxford 1954). Like George Saintsbury's History of Elizabethan Literature, (2nd ed. 1890), which it resembles it is endlessly readable and exciting. Its first short-coming is clearly its exclusion of the drama and its cursory treatment of

-
1. Ed. A W Ward and A R Waller, Cambridge 1909.
 2. See Hallett Smith's, 'An Apologie for Elizabethan Poetry', NLH, vol. i, 1969-70, pp. 35-43 and Sears Jayne's rejoinder, 'Hallett Smith's Analysis of the Historical Assumptions behind his Elizabethan Poetry', ibid., pp. 45 - 51.
 3. See the anonymous and damning review especially of vol. ii of the 'Sphere' series, English Poetry and Prose, 1540 - 1674, ed. C B Ricks, 1970, in TLS, 27 November 1970, pp. 1383, 1384.

the pre-Jacobean features of the end of Elizabeth's reign in the Epilogue, 'New Tendencies'. Lewis' volume received curiously few scholarly or critical reviews which went beyond pointing out its deliberately controversial arguments. However Gladys Willcock rightly saw that because of Lewis' unhistorical method, his rejection of "'movements' and 'isms'", especially in his provocative attack on Christian Humanism he can offer no explanation other than 'genius' for Sidney, Spenser and Shakespeare.¹ Another reviewer clearly felt how wrong he was to ignore intellectual developments and the scholarly problems which bedevil this particular period: 'Les problèmes d'érudition, de même que les courants d'idées et d'art, sont presque complètement négligés'.² Lewis spent his time reading texts and writing brilliantly about them rather than studying 'facts and problems'. On the whole we ought to be glad that he did this but it still does not produce a fully adequate kind of literary history.

In his same review Poirier observed that the biographies in the book 'sont réduites à des notes rédigées dans le style de Who's Who'.³ Lewis' neglect was not idiosyncratic, for literary biography in this period is as little in favour today as literary history. Wallace's standard life of Sidney is over half a century old and has not yet been superseded; Judson on Spenser carefully evades dealing with the intellectual background to his life. Over twenty years ago Alastair Fowler wrote:

One of the main reasons for the continuation of many crippling misconceptions about Elizabethan literature is our lack of adequate biographies.⁴

Far too little work has been done since then to remedy the deficiency, and what has been done tends to be fragmented and limited to scholarly articles

1. See RES, NS, vol. vii, 1956, p. 196.

2. Michel Poirier, 'La Littérature Anglaise du XVIIe Siècle', Etudes Anglaises, vol. ix, 1956, pp. 131-5, esp. p. 133.

3. Ibid., p. 131.

4. Protestant Attitudes to Poetry, 1560 - 1590, University of Oxford D. Phil. 1957, p. 8 n. 3.

on minute or precise points of biography. On account of this I have preferred to supply my own biographical details of my three main authors Harvey, Spenser and Sidney rather than rely exclusively on secondary sources. I have been particularly concerned with tracing their movements as exactly as possible, believing that misconceptions easily arise because our stereotype of Elizabethan life does not extend to the quotidian. The classic example of the dangers of the synoptic view is that of making Greville part of the 'Areopagus' as the Oxford Companion to English Literature does, when he was out of the country during part of 1578 and most of 1579 and 1580: he is never mentioned in the Spenser-Harvey Letters.¹

If we are to write true literary history we cannot afford to limit ourselves to what appears most obviously to be 'literature'. The Elizabethans saw little difference between the writing of poetry, history, philosophy, technical works or of political theory. Nor did they see these types of writing as being mutually exclusive or antipathetic; ideas could be conveyed as well in poetry or fiction as in plain prose, if not better. This is one of the arguments of Sidney's Defence of Poetry and is strikingly realised in Greville's account of the New Arcadia in his Life of Sidney and in Walpole's famous remarks about the Faerie Queene as well as in such later works as Greville's 'A Treatise of Monarchy' or Daniel's Civile Wars. Recognising this in Chapter III I discuss the attitudes of Leicester's intellectual circle to law, history and political theory as well as to poetry. In this way Emrys Jones has argued that, 'We need to expand our sense of the size of the Tudor intellectual world',² but there has always been a strong resistance to doing this. An apt instance of this reluctance could be taken from Hugh Trevor-Roper's Laud, when he

1. Ringler, p. xxx n. 1.

2. Origins of Shakespeare, p. 5.

maintains that:

The one work of political theory published in England during the reign of Elizabeth, while the Continent buzzed with new heresies, was a slim volume by Sir Thomas Smith, complacently justifying the status quo.¹

On the other hand it is dangerously easy to over-estimate the importance of particular themes and concepts in the Tudor world. What we still need is not so much the history of individual ideas as broad and general intellectual history.

Although C S Lewis' book covers many writers normally excluded from a literary history he cannot hope to provide the background needed for his study. While Alastair Fowler's survey of protestant attitudes to poetry is a first rate example of the kind of comprehensive general survey we need, W S Howell and Walter J Ong's work on logic and rhetoric could also be confidently put into this class if they were not so hotly attacked and criticised for being unreliable and often simply wrong. Much of Fowler's work was based on the study of continental theologians and literary theorists as well as on contemporary attitudes in England. In my thesis I shall examine more than purely 'literary' texts such as drama, poetry and fiction and shall look in those especially in the Old Arcadia and the Shepheardes Calender for matter, for information and ideas which are not normally associated with 'literary values'. In the same way I shall use letters, marginalia, state papers, discourses and other 'non-literary' writings as evidence in this thesis; I shall also draw upon material objects, inventories of books and paintings and particular copies of books and manuscripts for the same purpose.

1. Archbishop Laud, 2nd ed., 1962, p. 10; cf. Trevor-Roper's pupil Kevin Sharpe's Sir Robert Cotton, Oxford 1979, pp. 222, 223, especially his remark that Englishmen were concerned with the 'art of politics not political theory' during Elizabeth's reign. I shall discuss Smith's 'slim volume' below, ch. III, pt. iv.

Equally if it is wrong to limit our conception of literature to poetry, drama and fiction, it is just as mistaken to limit Englishmen to the vernacular. Although comparatively little Latin verse was written during Elizabeth's reign, Latin was still the language for official letters, academic writings and much personal and private as well as public poetry. On account of its unique status Latin made England part of an international culture allowing even speakers of High and Low German, whose languages were generally thought of as being rude and impossible to learn, to communicate with the English. Instead of examining the historical development of the many different kinds of writing during the sixteenth century and placing England in its European neo-Latin context, as W W Greg did in his excellent Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama, (1906), authors have generally ignored the historical context and sought to prove specific debts to continental vernacular literature, especially to Italian poetry. Neo-Latin literature might as well have not existed for Hallett Smith who fails even to mention George Buchanan, the greatest neo-Latin poet of the century in the British Isles and perhaps in Europe. Lewis invokes Buchanan by name half-a-dozen times but does not discuss him; he is only mentioned twice in Baugh's History. There are encouraging signs that the importance of the international language is being recognised again. Useful work is being done on it and Ian McFarlane's life of George Buchanan should restore the subject to its rightful place in our view of the sixteenth century.¹ In my own work I shall discuss in detail some of Gabriel Harvey and Daniel Rogers' Latin poetry and refer to poems and prose works in Latin by members of Leicester and Alençon's circles.

1. The best summary of work on the subject is Lawrence V Ryan, 'Neo-Latin Literature', in ed. W M Jones, The Present State of Scholarship in Sixteenth-Century Literature, Columbia and London 1978, pp. 197 - 257.

Writers have also tended to make assumptions and blindly follow myths about the period which eventually undervalue it. At its worst this produces the vision of a culture founded upon roast beef and Yorkshire pudding - one which A L Rowse has sometimes tended to promote and whose origins may be derived from Kenilworth.¹ Very much better, but still a gross over-simplification of the period's diversity is the school which could be called the aesthetic and effete or 'lacey' one. This delights in the intensity of the Elizabethan lyric and finds all of Sidney's works as well as his life utterly arcadian. Mona Wilson is perhaps the best representative of this romantic and highly selective group of writers, who found their image of the age reflected in Virginia Woolf's Orlando, but Roy Strong seems increasingly to want to belong to it as well as to my third and final group. These are the believers in a 'conspiracy theory' as an explanation for the wonders of the time. This is at its most ridiculous in disputes over the identity and existence of Shakespeare, but it also has a more serious, attractive and so credible side which makes it more dangerous. The 'conspiracy theory' is also extraordinarily resilient, passing the secrets of its existence from one group or individual to another and constantly expanding its empire. Muriel Bradbrook's work on the 'School of Night' is the obvious example of this, but Frances Yates in her books on John Florio, Giordano Bruno and latterly Shakespeare himself must bear some of the blame for this. She too has suggested the importance of John Dee who exercises such a fascination for believers in secret and arcane conspiracies and has recently brought her studies in the Elizabethan 'occult tradition' together.² Now there may be more or less truth in all this, and there is much in Frances Yates' work which is genuinely

1. Cf. S Schoenbaum. Shakespeare's Lives, Oxford 1970, p. 761.

2. The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age, 1979.

illuminating, but what is unsatisfactory is the lack of precision and exact scholarship with which this 'occult tradition' has been studied: so that because Sidney is known to have visited Dee he can be called a member of his 'circle'. Further it is sad how often the broad brush-strokes of this kind of work are taken to produce a picture with the exact verisimilitude of a miniature. Too many easy connexions are made, too many complex doctrines and ideas are casually invoked and the nature of individual intellectual belief is uncritically made a constant, unchanging factor. Books which capture the historical imagination as being the 'answer' to the problems raised by the diversity and richness of Elizabethan culture paradoxically tend to over-simplify it.

Before this kind of exciting and adventurous work can be done successfully there should be a solid foundation of careful scholarship and accurate general surveys. Chambers' Elizabethan Stage has allowed much of the best critical and interpretative work in this period to be written about the drama. Chambers did not set out to discover new facts with which to dazzle the reader, but to organise and arrange what was already known yet which was inaccessible and chaotically dispersed. His book is a masterpiece of exact and disciplined scholarship, indispensable for anyone working on the period. No comparable study exists for non-dramatic Elizabethan literature and in the absence of one writers will go on struggling in a sea of misapprehension, false assumptions and error. Yet Ringler's edition of Sidney's poems has produced almost a revolution in their study because of his scrupulous examination of their textual and biographical problems.

However even if we have scholarly reference works they soon become worse than useless if they are not kept up to date and if they are not accurate in the first place. The Dictionary of National Biography's treatment of the circle with which I am concerned is deeply misleading.

According to Lee in his life of Sidney the members of the 'Areopagus', 'seem to have often met in London during 1579 to engage in formal literary debate.' Lee derives his information from the Spenser-Harvey Letters, but he and J W Hales in their article on Spenser embroider on this source for Sidney and Spenser's relationship saying it, 'rapidly ripened into a deep and tender friendship, of singular and excellent influence, both morally and intellectually'. J B Mullinger writing on Harvey ignores the subject, mentioning neither Sidney nor the 'Areopagus.' This may all appear trivial, but when one reads in the most recent edition of the Oxford Companion to English Literature in the entry for Sidney that:

He saw much of Spenser at Leicester House, and received the dedication of his 'Shepherds Calender'. He became a member of the Areopagus (a club formed chiefly for the purpose of naturalizing the classical metres in English verse, which included Spenser, Fulke Greville, Harvey, Dyer and others).

one realises that if the DNB is not directly responsible for this it can do nothing to correct it. Undoubtedly the most useful and impartial tool for this period, now being successfully revised, is the Short Title Catalogue and its derivatives, especially F B Williams' Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verse, (1962).

The existence and activities of the 'Areopagus' is the great myth of this period. Inseparable from it is the creation of what John Buxton calls the 'New Poetry', which inaugurates C S Lewis' 'Golden Period' of Tudor literature. While Buxton sees his movement as Sidney's planned campaign drawing largely on French and Italian poetry, Lewis finds the flowering 'unpredictable'. He cannot give any explanation for it, but begins his chapter on Sidney and Spenser by pointing out the importance of neo-platonism for the two authors and their conceptions of poetry.¹ If eventually I

1. Buxton, pp. 102, 104, 111; C S Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama, Oxford 1954, pp. 1, 2, 319, 320. I am myself sceptical about the importance of neo-platonism as a source of inspiration to English writers.

cannot explain exactly why the undoubted flowering occurred then I want at least to try to illustrate its historical course. I shall do this in the second part of the thesis by examining afresh works like the Harvey-Spenser Letters, the Shepheardes Calender, the Old Arcadia and Defence of Poetry and the early stages of the Faerie Queene, which are associated with it, having established its intellectual and political background in the first part.

Surprisingly this has not been done before; the exact nature of the 'Areopagus' has been much discussed and Eleanor Rosenberg in her invaluable book on Leicester's patronage and its motivations has suggested the Earl's importance as a literary patron of a loosely connected group of writers. But a detailed and synoptic account of the links between the Earl and his intimate circle and of the personal and literary relations between Harvey, Spenser and Sidney during this period is still needed.¹ This is what I propose to supply in this thesis, to show that Leicester was the patron of a highly intellectual group of men with wide and common interests of a political as well as a literary kind. By concentrating on his circle during a very short period I want to show that they were stimulated by the Duke of Alençon's courtship of the Queen and the political difficulties and upheavals which it caused at court. Writing about a much later period Samuel Hynes has said:

I assume that a close relation exists between literature and history, and I think that this relation is particularly close in times of crisis, when public and private lives, the world of action and the world of imagination interpenetrate.²

As I shall show in Chapter I the Alençon courtship, which lasted from 1578

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1. I shall refer to what has been written on the 'Areopagus' below, ch. III, pt. vi. The promising title of Adele Biagi's Sir Philip Sidney: L'Areopago e la Difesa della Poesia, Naples 1958, belies its derivative and commonplace contents; a better but equally derivative account is given in W R Gair, Literary Societies in England from Parker to Falkland (c1572-1640), University of Cambridge Ph. D. 1968, ch. IV.
 2. The Auden Generation, 1976, p.9.

until 1582 was precisely such a time of crisis. As leader of the opposition to the marriage Leicester's own rôle is crucial to my thesis and having evoked his circumstances at this time in my second chapter, I shall argue in Chapter III that he encouraged his intellectual circle partly for political ends. Further I want to explore the effect the wholesale importation of French culture had during the marriage negotiations and to demonstrate similarities between the Earl's and Alençon's worlds, by examining in Chapter IV the Queen's young suitor who has rarely been taken seriously by historians and has been largely ignored.

In general Anglo-French cultural relations are still neglected by literary historians of the sixteenth century, in spite or perhaps because of their very full treatment in Sidney Lee's French Renaissance in England. There he does actually suggest that Alençon's presence in England, in particular with Bodin, 'served incidentally to quicken the development of English scholarship and learning'.¹ Yet Lee's study is limited to the purely 'literary' influence of France on English poetry, drama and fiction, scarcely touching on other types of writing. A more recent book by Anne Lake Prescott although very useful and full of important material confines itself to contemporary English attitudes to five major French writers.² The most striking example of the immediate effect of the Alençon courtship on English culture and art emerges in the pair of entertainments put on in May 1581 by the English under Leicester and Sussex, and in the New Year of 1582 by Alençon himself. Part of the first of these, the Four Foster Children of Desire, attempts astonishingly to create an entertainment in the French style of Henri III's court. It was the most magnificent and ambitious show put on during the Queen's reign and I shall examine it and other court entertainments against their political background in Chapter VIII.

1. Oxford 1910, p. 40.

2. French Poets and the English Renaissance, New Haven and London 1978.

Finally I want to suggest that Leicester's patronage was so influential that it played a vital part in transforming Elizabethan literature from being 'Drab' or 'Tudor' to being 'Golden'. I think that this time of the Alençon courtship conforms to the process which G R Elton describes in relation to Cromwell's administrative revolution of the 1530's:

... any rigid division of past life into chronological periods can only lead to disaster. But he would be a bold man, and a bad historian, who would deny the existence of periods - even of moments in time - when things underwent changes so profound that only the word 'revolution' can adequately describe them and only a firm date can place them.¹

Gascoigne, who like Mulcaster and most of Leicester's authors used and 'believed in' the vernacular, was an important transitional figure in this transformation, but Sidney and Spenser were undoubtedly the first 'Golden' writers and Harvey the friend of both men. All three were patronised by Leicester and were under his influence; all began great works, designed to be the national epics England still lacked, possibly celebrating the Queen and Leicester, while in contact with him. I argue in Chapter III that Leicester gained his vision of intellectual life partly from the Cambridge humanists of the previous generation and that Harvey who gets pride of place in the second half of my thesis and who was in such close contact with Sir Thomas Smith, was instrumental in bringing this vision to Leicester's attention. The argument follows on in Chapter IV that Leicester was stimulated into action by knowledge of his French rival's academic interests.

The juxtaposition of Leicester and Alençon as patrons also suggests the problem of the significance of dedications. None of the three main English writers with whom I am concerned dedicated major works to the Earl, while the evidence for the intellectual atmosphere of Alençon's circle is adduced, with the notable exception of Jean Bodin, mainly from dedications. The notorious case of Gosson's dedication to Sidney suggests not so much

1. The Tudor Revolution in Government, Cambridge 1966, pp. 7, 8.

that writers often knew nothing about their patrons, but that they might be unaware of one area of their interests - in Gosson's case, Sidney's little-publicised enthusiasm for poetry. Eleanor Rosenberg has shown that Leicester's patronage was deliberate and well-organised: Alençon is like him in this respect that the works dedicated to him can be related to each other and show a distinct and common group of interests in the patron. For Sidney, Spenser and Harvey Leicester was undoubtedly a benevolent patron, but the need to present works to him in public was removed by their close contact with him as nephew and in some way as his servants. If they did not actually dedicate their writings to him they frequently allude to him in them.

Despite John Buxton's work Sidney still needs more recognition as a distinguished patron in his own right, but his and Leicester's interests sufficiently coincide to allow them to be treated together. Their circles' enormous influence on the succeeding generation of thinkers has been recognised by Christopher Hill and there is evidence that their heirs saw the period of the Alençon courtship as being especially important and significant for them.¹ As Chambers observes, the relaxation of the Queen's habitual 'financial stringency' has been dated to Alençon's visit in 1581.² The great revival of chivalry manifested in accession day tilts comes into its own from then onwards. Later writers recall the obsession with fashion in dress and entertainments of what Sir Bounteous Progress in Middleton's A Mad World, My Masters calls, 'that...queasy time'.³ Edmund Bohun drawing on Robert Johnston's History says:

The coming of the Duke of Alençon into England, opened a way to a more free way of living, and relaxed very much the old severe form of Discipline...There were then acted Comedies and Tragedies with much cost and splendor.

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1. C Hill, Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution, Oxford 1965, esp. pp. 132-8.
 2. Chambers, vol. i, p.5.
 3. Middleton, Works, ed. Bullen, 1885, vol. iii, p. 322; cf. Jonson, Works, ed. Herford and Simpson, vol. iv, 1932, p. 42, vol. vii, 1941, p. 412 and Dekker, Non-Dramatic Works, ed. Grosart, vol. ii, 1885, p. 57.

Robert Cary talks of the court triumphs put on at this time for Alençon:

They were such as the best wits and inventions in those days could devise to make the court glorious, and to entertain so great a guest.¹

The courtship has caught the romantic imagination of succeeding generations, from the anonymous author of the novel, The Secret History of the Duke of Alancon and Q. Elizabeth: a true History, 1691, to the producers of the B.B.C. television series Elizabeth R. The courtship became a dramatic event in itself, an object of aesthetic appreciation. The Queen flirted and sulked, was happy, angry and heartbroken, and exchanged gifts and kisses all in public. Even her privacy, her moments alone with Simier, Alençon, the ambassadors or her courtiers were jealously and carefully observed. Scenes were arranged and presented for those who watched to create a five act drama in as many years. Given this aspect of the courtship I cannot help being reminded of Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra, despite its usual association with the Queen and Essex. The disproportionately aged lovers, from different cultures act out their extraordinary love affair in just this world where the distinctions between the public and the private have disappeared. It is worth mentioning Mary Herbert's choice of the subject in the Tragedie of Antonie, her version of Garnier's Senecan drama.

During the Alençon courtship England was on the brink of a social and intellectual revolution. With Europe eagerly watching to see what the apparently love-smitten Queen would do and the English court so divided as to threaten civil war, Leicester was bound to use what patronage and influence he could to promote his cause. Whatever we think of his politics and methods we ought to pay him his due for being the noble and discreet patron of men who produced some of the finest writing of the English Renaissance, and who provided the authors of the next generation with a theoretical and practical literary inspiration.

1. The Character of Queen Elizabeth, 1693, p. 345; Robert Carey, Memoirs, ed. F H Mares, Oxford 1972, p. 4.

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND.

For the Virgin Queen marriage could not just be a matter of personal taste, it was the determining factor in home and foreign policy, and could neither be divorced from political nor religious considerations. England's destiny revolved around the problems of the Queen's marriage and the succession. During her reign the real struggle in Europe was between Hapsburg and Valois, so that her choice of partner from among the eligible princes of Europe had an international as well as a domestic significance. At home the Queen's single state worried her Tudor supporters; her judicious flirtations with favourites encouraged personal loyalty, but also factionalism along political, religious and ultimately social lines which helped to set powerful nobles against each other rather than against the crown. The importance of the Queen's courtships, exclusive of their sentimental interest, has always been recognised. Until Alan Kendall's biography the only substantial books about the Earl of Leicester dealt not with him alone, but in relation to the Queen.¹ No account of her or her reign can avoid a chapter or just a few pages about her involvement with Francis Hercules, Duc d'Alençon, fourth son of Henri II and Catherine de Medici. The Queen's relations with Alençon show that the overriding political motivation for their affair succumbed at times to a genuine romantic passion; but also that by a judicious flirtation she could satisfy English interests in the Netherlands without offending France or Spain too badly.

The initial idea during the 1560's of a marriage to Charles, the eldest of Catherine's three surviving sons after the death of Francis II, gave way towards the end of the decade in favour of a match with Henri, Duc d'Anjou.² When

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1. Alan Kendall, Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester, 1980; Milton Waldman, Elizabeth and Leicester, 1944 and Elizabeth Jenkins, Elizabeth and Leicester, 1961.
 2. My narrative is mainly drawn from R B Wernham, Before the Armada, 1966, ch. xxiii; N M Sutherland, The Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the European Conflict 1559 - 1572, 1973, ch. viii, ix; Read, Walsingham, vol. i, ch. ii-iv; Mary Dewar, Sir Thomas Smith, 1964, ch. xii; A M F Robinson, 'Queen Elizabeth and the Valois Princes', EHR, vol. ii, 1887, pp. 40-77 and F J Levy, 'A Semi-Professional Diplomat: Guido Cavalcanti and the Marriage Negotiations of 1571', BIHR, vol. xxxv, 1962, pp. 211-20.

the third War of Religion ended in August 1570 the Queen sent Cobham to promote a possible match with the Archduke Charles of Austria and Walsingham on his first major diplomatic mission to find out what was going on in France. Cobham's embassy was unsuccessful and Charles was soon engaged and then married elsewhere. Walsingham returned to England in September in time to see the Anjou courtship revived by two Huguenots then in London, the Cardinal Châtillon and the Vidame of Chartres. It was still hoped at this time that Anjou would become a great Protestant leader ready to free the Netherlands from Spanish rule. The process would be repeated with his younger brother Alençon and the same system of checks and balances operated in both cases. As younger brothers each stood to gain a crown; there was the hope of an Anglo-French league against Spain and even the possibility that France might break with Rome if the Pope too obviously favoured the Spanish. While Elizabeth really preferred to keep the Netherlands rebellious under Spain, not wanting France in control of the whole of the coast opposite England, a French marriage would help to resolve the problems of Scotland and Mary.

When Walsingham returned to the French court in the new year of 1571, rapidly to be joined by Buckhurst as a negotiator, the proposed marriage seemed to be getting under way. The forces against it however soon made their presence felt. In March Châtillon died under circumstances which strongly suggested poison. In April the Ridolfi plot against the Queen began. Clearly the hardcore Roman Catholics and those who favoured Spain were worried. Anjou himself was tempted away from the marriage by offers of the leadership of the League, but he vacillated in his attitude to the Queen mainly because of the problem of religion. To try to sort out the difficulties Paul de Foix and Guido Cavalcanti went several times between the two countries, but with very little success: Anjou would not yield over his religion. To a certain extent this suited the Queen since what she really wanted was an alliance without a marriage. When

de Foix left England in September 1571 the negotiations had more or less broken down.

They were soon revived. By the autumn the Queen had discovered the full extent and true purpose of the Ridolfi plot and arrested Norfolk. If she now knew without a doubt what Spain's attitude was to her, the victory of Lepanto suggested to Catherine de Medici that France would need English support if she were to be safeguarded against the traditional enemy. The time was ripe for a new set of negotiations to be undertaken on a more realistic basis. Accordingly at the end of 1571 Elizabeth sent her former ambassador Sir Thomas Smith to join Walsingham and begin discussions which culminated in April 1572 with the signing of the Treaty of Blois. While in France Smith became very keen on the idea of the Queen^{'s} marrying Alençon. The proposal was not an entirely new one, for Catherine de Medici had suggested it as early as July 1571.¹ Being the youngest and least important of the brothers Alençon was the most elusive and unknown. The question of what he actually looked like was to virtually dominate the marriage negotiations of the next ten years: was he hideous from the effects of the smallpox or not? The familiar difficulty of his religion seems at first to have worried the diplomats and courtiers far less. Smith reported that he was 'not so obstinate, papistical, and restive like a mule as his brother is'. When she first suggested the match his mother had said that he 'ne sera pas si difficile' as his elder brother. In his case it was a matter of applying the right pressure:

And as for his Religion, I do not doubt, upon conference had with some, but that he would be reduced to any conformity, so that the sticking in that matter proceedeth rather from others than from himself....

1. Read, Walsingham, vol. i, p. 176 n.1.

Walsingham reported.¹ As a potential leader of the Protestant cause Alençon like his brother before him got Walsingham's and even the potentially jealous Leicester's support.

Unfortunately for them, with the Treaty of Blois the Queen had got the defensive alliance she wanted, could put off the problem of the Netherlands and was not inclined to rush into a politically sensitive marriage. When Montmorency and de Foix came to England to ratify the Treaty they were instructed by Catherine de Medici to offer Elizabeth Alençon's hand. The Queen entertained them lavishly, building a banqueting house at Whitehall as she was to do again for the Commissioners in 1581. There were shows of Lady Peace and Apollo and the Nine Muses, but the Queen would not commit herself to marriage without seeing her intended husband first.² Despite the machinations of his Huguenot agent Maisonfleur in London, Alençon simply would not come.³ The effect of the St. Bartholomew's Massacre was not to end the courtship but rather to strengthen the youngest prince's position. With one brother dying and the other in Poland Alençon's reputation as the moderate leader of the 'politiques' or even the Huguenots grew. While under virtual arrest at court his political position was sufficiently ambiguous for the negotiations with the Queen to continue more or less until 1575 or 1576.

Having won his freedom in September 1575 and made his peace with Henri III in May 1576, his ambitions turned elsewhere. Making use of the factionalism at his brother's court he deserted the Huguenots to fight against

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1. Smith to Burghley, Amboise 10 January 1572, CSP For., vol. xii, no. 28; Sutherland, *op. cit.*, p. 190; Walsingham to Burghley, 1 April 1573, Digges, *The Compleat Ambassador*, 1655, p. 343.
 2. Chambers, vol. i, pp. 162, 163.
 3. For Maisonfleur's mission and his use of *Amadis de Gaule* in his despatches, see Read, *Walsingham*, vol. i, pp. 246 - 51.

them in the sixth War of Religion during 1577. This ended with Alençon becoming a virtual prisoner once again in Paris, from where he escaped in the spring of 1578. He now saw that his main chance lay in the Netherlands. Like his rival John Casimir he needed a power-base and money; the way to get these was to involve himself in the Low Countries where Hapsburg and Valois, Protestant and Roman Catholic worked out their aspirations. His first move was to begin intriguing to get Orange to declare his support for him.

Initially Alençon was angry with the States General for their acceptance of the Archduke Matthias as their Governor, but by the spring of the new year of 1578 he was pressing them to agree to his engagement.¹ He got this largely because of Queen Elizabeth's procrastination and unwillingness to be directly involved. Alençon took advantage of this reluctance and saw that he must resume relations with England in the hope of getting financial support. The English could protest against his playing a part there but in the end he knew that they would have to come to terms with him. In July he entered Mons and in August was proclaimed 'Defender of the Liberties of the Low Countries' and agreed to fight against Don John of Austria. This was clearly the time for the English to revive the courtship with him if only as a means of finding out what his true intentions were in the Netherlands. His relations with his mother and brother in France and his apparent betrayal of the Huguenots confused and worried the English: was he the great hope for the Protestant cause, playing a dangerous game against the Guise as Paulet thought, or was he really being manipulated by the perpetrators of St. Bartholomew as Walsingham warned, about to side with Don John and even as Stafford suggested, to become the promoter of a Catholic league against England?²

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1. Davison to Burghley, Antwerp 30 October 1577, CSP For., vol. xiv, no. 389; Davison to Walsingham, Antwerp 4 November 1577, *ibid.*, no. 405; same to same, Antwerp 8 March 1578, *ibid.*, no. 676.
 2. Paulet to the Secretaries, Paris 15 April 1578, *ibid.*, no. 796; Paulet to the Queen, Paris 13 May 1578, *ibid.*, no. 864; Walsingham to Davison, 'In a petty progress' 11 May 1578, *ibid.*, no. 854; same to same, Greenwich 22 May 1578, *ibid.*, no. 902; Stafford to the Queen, Paris (26) May 1578, *ibid.*, no. 914.

These conflicting views were not dispelled by his arrival and actions in the Netherlands: 'so deep has been the French dissimulation these late years', Walsingham wrote that even he could not judge how honest Alençon was being with the States General.¹

Instead of using the more formal diplomacy embodied by Cobham and Walsingham's mission to the States of the late summer of 1578, the Queen relied on her courtship to control and restrain Alençon. She also used John Casimir of the Palatinate to offset the French influence and to promote more actively Protestant interests in the Netherlands. She appears to have made the first move to revive the marriage at the beginning of the summer of 1578, and Alençon responded by sending over a succession of envoys - Rambouillet, L'Aubespine, Bacqueville and Quissé - during July, August and September.² They had formally proposed marriage and the game of nearly a decade ago began all over again.³ The Queen still wanted to see her intended husband while Alençon wanted the political terms of the marriage settled before the couple met. In January 1579 he sent over his negotiator and close confidant Jean de Simier, who although successful in the difficult business of proxy-wooing, getting the Queen romantically interested in Alençon, denied he was empowered to arrange the interview the English wanted.

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1. Davison to Hatton, Antwerp 21 July 1578, CSP For., vol. xv, no. 104; Walsingham to Lincoln, (5 July?) 1578, *ibid.*, no. 68.
 2. Catherine de Medici to the Queen, (8) June 1578, *ibid.*, no. 8; Mendoza says that Rambouillet and L'Aubespine arrived at Norwich on August 16 in CSP Sp., vol. ii, p. 611; CSP For., vol. xv, no. 171 suggests that Rambouillet arrived alone on August 19. Bacqueville landed at Dover on July 25, was with the Queen on August 3 and left on September 7, CSP For., vol. xv, nos. 113, 141, 239; Mendoza says he dined with him, the Queen, Rambouillet and Mauvissière at Lord North's on September 2, *op.cit.*, p. 611. On August 14 Mendoza reported that Bacqueville had been well feasted with Quissé, *op. cit.*, p. 606. Quissé was in London with Bacqueville on July 29, returned to Alençon around August 8, CSP For., vol. xv, nos. 123, 155 and was back in England on August 25, CSP Sp., vol. ii, p. 612. Mauvissière himself says that he was graciously received by the Queen at Havering sometime between July 12 and 20, PRO 31/3/27 f. 214. See also below p. 138 n.3.
 3. My narrative of the negotiations of the next five years is mainly drawn from Read, *Walsingham*, vol. ii, ch. viii and his *Burghley*, ch. xii, xiv; J E Neale, *Queen Elizabeth*, 1934, ch. xv; Wernham, *Before the Armada*, ch. xxvi and Wallace T MacCaffrey, 'The Anjou Match and the Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy', in ed. Peter Clark, Alan G R Smith and Nicholas Tyacke, *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640, Essays in Politics and Society Presented to Joel Hurstfield*, Leicester 1979, pp. 59 - 75.

Privately he promised Alençon would come in person and his master eventually sufficiently relented to agree to settle the marriage contract at once as long as the Queen could revoke it if she did not like her husband when they met. This led to the first set of Council discussions about the contract during March and April 1579. At this stage the Council avoided giving a direct answer to the Queen as to whether they thought she ought to marry Alençon and dealt instead with such questions as his proposed income, his authority and coronation. At the end of March Simier put forward a draft for the French side of the contract and another two months were spent in arguing over it, while the Queen demanded the Council's opinions about the marriage itself in writing at the beginning of April. All of this was just the preliminary manoeuvring necessary before Alençon himself came over. Having run out of money and supplies he left the Netherlands for France in December 1578 and had rekindled English fears of a Spanish match for him by visiting Paris in March 1579 and being reconciled with his increasingly eccentric brother. It was from Paris again that he came to England for his private visit in August 1579. Lasting from the seventeenth until the twenty-ninth it coincided with Simier's revelation to the Queen of Leicester's marriage and Stubbs' and Sidney's tracts against the foreign match.

Despite the tense and hostile atmosphere the visit was a great success, the Queen pleased with the Duke and keener on the marriage. The Council began to sit again in October, sometimes for almost the whole day, but could not come to any fixed and united decision. Instead they chose to ask the Queen to say what she wanted first and to set out the advantages and disadvantages of the match. She did not like this since she felt her emotional desires were clear; at the beginning of November she told them she wanted to marry and on the twentieth appointed a new committee to consider the marriage, which excluded Leicester and Walsingham its chief opponents. With them out of the way, on the twenty-fourth formal articles were agreed upon which however allowed the Queen two months grace to win her people over to the idea of the

marriage. At the end of the year when Henri III offered the services of two of his courtiers to complete the contract, Simier and Sir Edward Stafford left for Paris with the articles.

Yet when Stafford returned to England in the New Year of 1580 he found the Queen, perhaps because of Simier's absence, cool about the whole affair and positively hostile to Henri's offer and the prospect of Alençon's return. Burghley tried to encourage her to work up some enthusiasm for it, but when Stafford went once again to France he took with him the very disappointing news of the Queen's wanting to drop the project, saying that she could not get popular approval for Alençon^{'s} practising his own religion. Her lack of interest had not changed in May when Alençon's secretary de Vray came to England and it looked as though the courtship might yet be revived; his mission was a failure and it seemed as if the whole idea might be abandoned.

While Elizabeth temporized for apparently domestic reasons, international affairs were changing very quickly and would force her to reconsider her attitude. Spain occupied Portugal; the seventh War of Religion, the 'Guerre des Am^houreux', broke out in France and threatened to drive Henri to the extreme pro-Spanish Catholics; the Jesuits launched their crusade against England; the Spanish again were active in Ireland and the pro-French d'Aubigny began to win increasing power in Scotland. At the same time during the summer the rebel Protestant states in the Low Countries started negotiating with Alençon for him to become their leader. The Queen did nothing to stop him from securing this power; instead she revived the courtship despatching Stafford to France again and getting Alençon to send Commissioners to conclude the marriage. Not surprisingly the Duke did nothing about this, being more concerned with settling his position with the rebels, which he did in September.

Little was done about the match for the rest of the year, but preparations began to be made for the Commissioners' embassy. In February 1581 Alençon's agent Marchemont came to England with the intention either of arranging a quick marriage with the Queen or of getting some money out of her. By this stage she was eager to talk about business and alliances but unwilling to consider marriage. The English were clearly seeking to win another Treaty of Blois, while the French still wanted a marriage as well as an alliance to tie Elizabeth down. The Commissioners came towards the end of April and soon after their arrival Alençon tried to pay a visit in person to win the Queen; he set out from Dieppe but was beaten back by contrary winds and retired ill from sea-sickness.

From a political point of view the Commissioners' arrival did not mark the beginning of a new stage of the courtship. Once again the English tried to avoid discussing the marriage and pressed for a new alliance which the Commissioners denied being able to arrange. The agreement signed on June 11 was only about the marriage treaty and allowed the Queen an escape-clause if she did not like Alençon in person again. A few days later the Commissioners left. Yet the Queen still needed an alliance with France against Spain which would avoid war itself, so with the departing envoys went Somers and on July 25 Walsingham. His mission was essentially to save the Queen from marriage and war and get France to join in underhand opposition to Spain. Ideally France could be encouraged to fight Spain openly with England uninvolved; Henri III could easily see this and counterbalanced this objective with the old threat of a Spanish marriage for his brother, sealed with an alliance. Walsingham's instructions were deliberately vague and the negotiations long and difficult. In the end French distrust of the English prevailed and Alençon was simply bought up, directly to be financed in the Netherlands by England. Marriage and war were avoided, but at a price. In September Walsingham returned and the affair began again in England.

With a first payment of £30,000 in August Alençon was able to seize Cambrai but had soon run out of money and resources. His obvious next move was to make his long-delayed second visit to England. For a time, after he had come in October, it looked as if the courtship had been revived and that Alençon had not just come to extract more money from the Queen. On November 22 there was an extraordinary betrothal scene in the Gallery at Whitehall before Leicester, Walsingham and the French ambassador. The Queen kissed Alençon, gave him a ring and promised to marry him. Almost at once she began to renege on this agreement, to create impossible conditions for its fulfilment so that Alençon could reject it without losing too much face, and to try to get rid of him. Unfortunately he was rather enjoying the court, liked the idea of marriage and was not keen to return to his duty in the Netherlands. Although pressure was applied to him through Ste. Aldegonde on the rebels' behalf he was now in a position to call the tune and the Queen had to part with £60,000 or £70,000 to encourage him to leave.

When he went in February 1582 amid tears and promises and with a large English escort of courtiers and noblemen he had undergone his final transformation back into the leader of the Protestant cause in the Low Countries. Henri III's offers of help had been fought off and Alençon was solely funded from England. He was triumphantly received as Duke of Brabant and in August made a Count of Holland. By then with the near fatal attack on Orange and his illness during March and April the courtship had been briefly revived once again and Alençon sent another £15,000 to keep him under control. Orange recovered and Elizabeth began to desert her lover seeing that he was not playing as important a rôle in the country's affairs as she had expected him to; now she was ready to countenance his operating with French support. For his part Alençon was beginning to feel that his dealings with his brother and England had got him nowhere in the past five years and that it was time to act for himself alone. In January 1583 he undertook the dangerous enterprise of Antwerp, trying to seize the town from his Dutch allies; he failed, fled

the country for France and never returned, dying in June 1584. Long since useless to the Queen the treacherous attempt at Antwerp killed off his few remaining hopes of marriage.

English foreign policy did not theoretically change between the first and second Alençon courtships; the Queen was still trying to safeguard England's position in relation to Hapsburg and Valois. The second courtship was undoubtedly more emotionally intense for a time than the first, although it is impossible to say exactly to what extent the Queen was in love with Alençon - perhaps she herself did not exactly know. A marriage seemed most certain during 1579 after Alençon's private visit; perhaps before the Commissioners came in 1581 it looked possible again; certainly towards the end of that year during Alençon's second visit it seemed very likely. But in all three instances the stress should fall on the appearance of the affair's progress, since its public image was such an important part of the whole performance. I think however that MacCaffrey is right about the crucial effect the opposition had on the Queen's plans in 1579, and that he is also correct in emphasising the significance of the Council's blocking power in defying the Queen's own wishes. Abandoning her plans for marriage she sought a French alliance; when she could not get this she turned to direct support for Alençon.¹ In the long run this too failed but the Queen's policy on the whole was triumphantly successful with respect to keeping England safely at peace with France and Spain. On the other hand the Protestant cause still demanded stronger English intervention in the Low Countries; having used John Casimir and Alençon to satisfy the Protestant conscience the Queen would next turn to Leicester.

Before discussing the effects of the second courtship on English life, I want to suggest that the two attempts at marriage had a great significance for international relations. From an English point of view the exchanges of ambassadors and commissioners with France produced an unparalleled body of diplomatic material. This was collected by Sir Julius Caesar's successor as

1. MacCaffrey, art. cit., esp. pp. 70, 75.

Master of the Rolls, Sir Dudley Digges, (1583-1639), and published posthumously in 1655, suggestively called The Compleat Ambassador. There is evidence that this collection of copies of despatches and instructions circulated in manuscript before it was printed.¹ In its published form the work divides simply into two periods of negotiations: from August 1570 until August 1573, (pp. 1-349) and from June until September 1581, (pp. 349-441). Walsingham and Smith's negotiations cover the first courtship much more fully than Walsingham's despatches do for the second. The important feature however is the weight attached in the book to ambassadors.

As international relations became more complicated new institutions had to be created to deal with the problems posed by an increase in the actual amount of diplomacy. In 1578 Henri III appointed Jerome de Gondy to a new office in which he served as a sort of master of ceremonies at the reception of ambassadors at the French court. He became in effect their means to the king, 'something of the confidant and something of the well informed spokesman'.² On the other hand the second half of the sixteenth century marks a low point in the maintenance of diplomatic relations through resident ambassadors, except for between allies,³ England was remarkable in having during the Alençon courtship both Spanish and French ambassadors, Mendoza and Mauvissière. Yet they were still not thought of as being responsible agents who could be used as instruments of foreign policy - hence the large number of additional missions and embassies necessary during the courtships. Clearly what was needed to make the transaction of international business more efficient, regular and less expensive was some sort of definition of what a resident ambassador was, and what his status and duties were. Remarkably between 1576 and 1582, towards the end of a period from 1498 to 1598 which produced only

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1. Read Walsingham, vol. i, p. 90 n. 3; to Read's list of copies can be added BL MS Add. 48046 and Bodleian MS Rawl. C 685 which has an illuminated title-page.
 2. See A J Loomie, 'The Conducteur des Ambassadeurs of Seventeenth Century France and Spain', *Revue Belge*, vol. liii, 1975, p. 354.
 3. Garrett Mattingly, Renaissance Diplomacy, 1955, p. 205, but see also De Lamar Jensen, 'French Diplomacy and the Wars of Religion', Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. v, no.2, 1974, pp. 23-46.

sixteen works on the subject, four books appeared which, provide 'something like a coherent literary tradition'.¹ Two were by Frenchmen, one by Tasso and the fourth by Alberico Gentili.

None of these makes any specific reference to the Alençon courtships, but the coincidence between them and the sudden theoretical interest is striking. Gentili's book De Legationibus Libri Tres, 1585, was occasioned by Mendoza's plotting against the Queen. As I shall show in the next chapter, Gentili was a member of Leicester's circle and dedicated his work to Sidney whose Old Arcadia makes constant allusions to ambassadors and the business of diplomacy. Jean Hotman who became Leicester's secretary, incorporated at Oxford on the same day as Gentili in 1581, also published in 1604 De La Charge et Dignité de l'Ambassadeur dedicating it to the Earl of Pembroke.* It would be an exaggeration to talk about a 'revolution' in Anglo-French diplomacy in the 1570's and 1580's but the Alençon courtships must have helped to make men more aware of the problems concerning the maintenance of international relations, and hastened the establishment of permanent, resident ambassadors.

The courtships also played an important part in English domestic life. For the purposes of this thesis the most interesting feature of the first courtship was Sir Thomas Smith's part in it since he was Gabriel Harvey's patron and Leicester's precursor as the figure behind an intellectual circle mainly concerned with political theory. Smith eagerly supported and promoted the Alençon match during 1571 and 1572, and had written a set of orations for and against the Queen's marriage as early as 1561.² These have been interpreted

1. Mattingly, *op. cit.*, pp. 212, 213.

2. Dewar, Sir Thomas Smith, p. 4. The Orations are printed without the short Preface in John Strype, Life of Sir Thomas Smith, new ed., Oxford 1820, Appendix III, pp. 184-259, 'E MSS D Richar. Gibbs, Eq. Aurat. et D Johan. Laughton', whom I have not identified. Both BL MSS Add. 48023 ff. 181-217 and 48047 ff. 96-135 have the Preface. There is another copy at Trinity College, Dublin MS 801, (E.1.7). Mary Dewar also refers to one belonging to the Earl of St. Germans at Port Eliot, Cornwall, (*op. cit.*, p. 213). Yet I cannot agree with her view, with the evidence of only five or six MSS, that it 'was one of the most widely copied tracts in Elizabethan England', (*ibid.*, p. 4).

as a direct and powerful contribution to Robert Dudley's suit to marry the Queen after Amy Robsart's death.¹ They consist mainly of a speech by Agamus or Wedspite, 'for the Queen's single life': two by Philoxenus or Lovealien, 'for the Queen's marrying' and one by Axenius or Homefriend, 'for the Queen's Majesty's marrying with an English Nobleman, rather than any foreign Prince'. Although Axenius has the last word, Philoxenus' speeches are also of considerable interest.

The tone and style of the piece is thoroughly humanist, clearly and elegantly argued with a modest show of learning and frequent light touches of humour. Later on we shall see Harvey trying to write dialogues in the same vein. Philoxenus' first speech is an attempted refutation of Agamus' arguments for the Queen's single life. It divides into three parts seeking to prove that she ought to marry to have children, that she ought to have a mate and that the two would bring great benefits to the country and help it avoid the possibility of a civil war over the succession. His second speech is much shorter and simply argues that it would be better for her to wed a foreigner than an Englishman. It would be convenient to show that Stubbs or Sidney drew on Axenius' speech against the Queen marrying a foreigner in their tracts, but it cannot be done largely because their works are specific and local as against Smith's general discussion. Instead the nearest we can come to allying the orations and the later events is through Sidney's use of Smith's transparently telling Greek name Philoxenus. For this is what the character who introduces Queen Helen to her lover Amphialus is called in the New Arcadia.² Philoxenus is the son of Timotheus, a suitor to the Queen in her country and a foreigner. She shows him

1. Ibid., pp. 84, 85.

2. New Arcadia, Bk. i, ch. ii, in Sidney, vol. i, pp. 66-74; page references in the text are to this edition.

a not unfavourable 'countenance... Though I must protest it was a verie false embassadour, if it delivered at all any affection', (p. 67). In the classic way of romance Philoxenus brings his friend Amphialus with him to further his courtship, but 'while he pleaded for an other, he wanne me for himselfe', as Helen confesses, (p. 69). She finally asks Amphialus for his picture, which he gives to her and then leaves the country out of loyalty to his friend. Philoxenus finds the Queen gazing on the picture, discovers her new love, catches up with his friend and is unintentionally killed by him. Although Helen is traditionally associated with Queen Elizabeth, all this has nothing to do with the Alençon courtship itself, but suggests that Sidney knew of Smith's discourse in favour of his uncle and may have correctly associated the ambassador with the negotiations with the foreign suitor.

It may seem facile to move from the world of romance to the 'real' world and to argue that the period of the Alençon courtship was one of, if not crisis, at least deep disturbance in English society and national life. The transference is the more easily accomplished because court life aspired to the condition of chivalric romance at this time and the country at large imitated it. I have mentioned in my Introduction some later writers who felt the period was an exceptionally remarkable one due to the pressures of the courtship and I shall discuss its most obvious products, Sidney's and Stubbs' tracts and the court entertainments it inspired. There is also plenty of contemporary evidence of the impact the second courtship had on the nation, exclusive of its effect on factional politics.

In the middle of April 1579 the French ambassador Mauvissière reported on the intense preparations being made in and outside London for the marriage; clothes and furniture, even houses were all being got ready. By the end of October he was describing how the Calvinists or puritans were writing at all hours against the marriage in 'livres billetz et affiches'.¹ Mendoza's

1. PRO 31/3/27 ff. 300, 406v., 407.

reports are similarly full of 'great preparations' and the making of 'new clothes and other things' as well as of instances of opposition to the match. Sermons were preached against a marriage to a foreign prince, after one of which during Lent 1579 the Queen suddenly left the Church in which she had been reproached, 'which was considered a great innovation', Mendoza naïvely says. He also wrote that the puritans were even preaching against the Queen as the head of the Church. At the end of September 1579 he refers to pasquins fixed to the Lord Mayor of London's door threatening the opposition of 40,000 men to the marriage. In May 1581 he cites English 'heretics' declaring that there would be a revolt if the Queen married.¹

For a time England became obsessed with Alençon. Even the aged Bishop Cox of Ely had written to the Queen against the match in April 1579 and Latin and English poems against it circulated later that year.² Describing the extravagant behaviour of French and English courtiers the anonymous author of 'A newyeres gift' which seems to belong to 1581 wrote:

The coart now swymmes in sylke, & Monsieur playes his part...³

In two manuscripts in the Bodleian the Queen is credited with the authorship of poems, 'when she was supposed to be in love with mountsyre' and upon his departure.⁴ A dance named after Alençon, 'Monsieur's Almaine', appears in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book and is attributed to Byrd in Lady Nevell's Book.

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1. CSP Sp., vol. ii, pp. 616, 662; 658, 659, 667; 701, vol. iii, p.112.
 2. See ed. F J Furnivall, Ballads from Manuscripts, 1873, vol. ii, p. 114. *Shrewsbury*
 3. Reproduced by L G Black, Studies in some Related Manuscript Poetic Miscellanies of the 1580s, University of Oxford D. Phil. 1971, vol. ii, p. 283.
 4. Bodleian MS Rawl. Poet. 85 f. 1; MS Ashm. 781 f. 142; Leicester Bradner has questioned the Queen's authorship of both of these poems; see his edition of The Poems of Queen Elizabeth I, Providence 1964, pp. xiii, 73, 75.

Sometime around 1580 Harvey describes Cambridge life referring first to Catherine de Medici:

The Queene mother at the beginning, or ende of everye conference:
many bargaines of Mounsieur: Shymeirs a noble gallant fellowe.¹

His picture of the University's interest and obsession is confirmed and amplified by the case of a graduate called John Morden of Peterhouse, who on 28 April 1581 attacked Alençon in his oration in the Logic School. He was at once summoned by the Beadle and based his defence to a Congregation of Doctors and Heads of Houses by saying his speech was an imitation of Cicero 'Contra Verrem et Catalinam'. This evidently did not convince them of his innocence for he was committed to prison and on April 29, the Vice-Chancellor Andrew Perne wrote to Burghley with the details of the case, excusing Morden as a man, 'of no Credite, or estimacion, any way, ...greatly trobled with melancoly...trobled in his witt greatly'.² It is no exaggeration on MacCaffrey's part to say of the opposition to the courtship that, 'All contemporary witnesses agree as to the extent and the intensity of feeling'.³ The affair reached classic status with the Queen's dubbing of Alençon as her frog, which probably is the origin of the nursery-rhyme 'A frog he would a-wooing go'.⁴

I began this chapter by pointing out the significant rôles both Leicester and Alençon play in accounts of the Queen and her reign. In the course of it I noted that the two men went in turn to serve the Queen in the Netherlands and that Leicester was the leader of the Protestant opposition to the Queen's marrying Alençon. I want finally to suggest that the two men were opposed but strikingly similar characters. Their rival emulation for the Queen's hand is

1. Letters, p. 62la.

2. BL MS Lansd. 33 f. 60; Morden's career does not seem to have been prejudiced by this episode since he proceeded MA in 1582.

3. MacCaffrey, 'The Anjou Match and the Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy', p. 70.

4. For frog imagery during the period of the courtship see for example, PRO 31/3/28 f. 8, CSP Sp., vol. iii, p. 95. On 'A frog he would a-wooing go', see ed. Iona and Peter Opie, The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes, Oxford 1951, pp. 177-81; the Opies note the entry of a ballad, 'A most Strange weddinge of the ffrogge and the mowse' to Edward White on 21 November 1580 in the Stationers' Register, (Arber, vol. ii, p. 382); unfortunately this topical work is lost.

clear; both were popularly disliked, even feared, and both have suffered from modern misrepresentations. Equally in their own time they were mysterious and unknown figures, of whose true identities and allegiances their contemporaries were unsure. Both, perhaps uniquely, were hated as secret Roman Catholics and violent Protestants at the same time. Yet their reputations as dangerous fools are belied by their substantial patronage of major writers and thinkers; in the next three chapters I intend to investigate their intellectual circles and public and private worlds, as well as their attitudes to each other. Out of this it will become clear that at least part of Leicester's fierce opposition to the Frenchman was the result of recognising aspects of himself in him, and that he was also quite prepared to take Alençon on as a rival and competitor on his own ground as a patron.

CHAPTER II

LEICESTER AND HIS WORLD.

Quam vellem servire illi, canit alter: & alter,
O meus huic Gnatus si famuletur ait.

Gabriel Harvey, Gratulationes Valdinenses,
1578, sig.El.

i. Attacks.

To provide a personal context for Leicester's literary patronage between 1578 and 1582 I shall outline his political and social position, his public and private life and above all through a study of his possessions and educational influence try to evoke the world in which he lived during the second Alençon courtship. Leicester remains a mysterious figure and it is hard to get a strong sense of his presence. His familiar image as an evil and vain power-seeker is mainly derived from the many attacks on him, but I believe a different picture can be painted of an intelligent and cultivated nobleman eager to present himself as a Renaissance Prince.

It is largely thanks to the courtship that we have the most interesting and informative contemporary account of Leicester and his world, The Copie of a Leter, Wryten by a Master of Arte of Cambridge, to his Friend in London, more familiarly known since 1641 as Leicester's Commonwealth. The traditional attribution of this attack to the Jesuit Robert Parsons has been discredited for some time and it is now generally accepted that it was written or rather compiled by Charles Arundel and other Catholic exiles in Paris, probably during the spring of 1584.¹ It was the work of men who had been forced abroad as a result of the Earl of Oxford's confessions over the Christmas of 1580 and the spring of 1581, provoked by the courtship.² Not surprisingly when a second edition of Leicester's Commonwealth was prepared in French for publication in 1585 the compilers left the main part of the work unaltered but added a substantial appendix which laid especial emphasis on the Earl's hostile and treacherous treatment of Alençon.³

1. Dwight C Peck, Leicester's Commonwealth (1584) A Critical Edition, University of Ohio Ph. D. 1972, pp. xii, xiii, xlv. *

2. On this whole incident see below ch. VIII, pt. ii.

3. Discours de la Vie Abominable, Ruses, Trahisons...desquelles a usé & use journellement le my Lorde de Lecestre..., 1585, esp. sigs. Q3- 5. There are two copies of this work in BL.

What Leicester was being accused of using against God, the Queen and 'la Republique Chrestienne' can be gathered from the title-page of this French edition: 'Ruses, Trahisons, Meurtres, Impostures, empoisonnements, paillardises, Atheismes, & autres tres iniques conversations'. The bulk of the book gives copious examples of all of these as well as of his ruthless empire-building, his base ancestry and his lust for power, placing strong emphasis on his several marriages. The main accusations against him in relation to Alençon in the English original are his personal antagonism to the courtship, his 'Preparatives to rebellion upon Monsieurs marriage' and his trying to kill Simier by poison, assassination and even piracy.¹ In the appendix to the French edition Leicester is accused again of whipping up opposition to the marriage and of using the threat of civil war while at the same time seeming to favour Alençon and his suit. Leicester is presented as being behind all the opposition to it:

Car il n'y avoit personnage d'honneur & de marque au païs, qui ne fust bien content & aise de cette si belle alliance, hormis seulement ce monstre avec ses complices.²

Further, when Alençon finally left England for the Low Countries in 1582 Leicester promised him all possible help in dealing with Orange, but instead of giving him this, they allege, he did nothing except to send Sidney to abuse Alençon to Orange and warn him not to trust him. Sidney did it:

bien soigneusement, suivant le commandement & instructions de son oncle, y adjoustant des propos assez contumelieux, & pleins d'injure pour deroger à la grande vertu, & honneur de son altesse...³

There is no corroboratory evidence for this last accusation.

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1. The Copie of a Leter, 1584, pp. 20, 21, 34, 44.
 2. Discours de la Vie, sig. Q4v.
 3. Ibid., sig. Q3v.

The success of Leicester's Commonwealth can be gauged from the number of manuscript copies of it which survive, from its imitators and from its being the main source for all subsequent attacks on Leicester and on his place in history. D C Peck has mentioned the 'more than sixty manuscript copies' of it which survive and has edited a short, bitter attack on the Earl, based on Leicester's Commonwealth, written soon after his death. This adds little to our knowledge of him, but the author indirectly alludes to Leicester's opposition to the marriage by twice using the phrase derived from John Stubbs' pamphlet - 'a gaping gulfe' - in connexion with Leicester's torments in hell.¹ More directly derived from Leicester's Commonwealth is Thomas Rogers' versified account, Leicester's Ghost, composed towards the beginning of the seventeenth century.² This aggressively hostile attitude to Leicester was institutionalised by Camden in his Annals and his account of the Earl, definitely influenced by Arundel's work, became widely accepted.³ Not even the three defences of Leicester which the publication of the Commonwealth provoked - by Sidney, by Alberico Gentili in his dedication to Sidney of his De Legationibus Libri Tres, 1585, and by an anonymous author in The Phoenix Nest anthology in 1593 - could counter its influence. Leicester has always needed defenders and apologists.

The chief cause of the hatred he inspired in his enemies was his power. For them he was out to make himself the leading man in England. When direct alliance with the Queen evaded him he built up that empire in politics and religion, the court and the country, the Universities and the Law which the enemies called 'Leicester's Commonwealth', and they freely refer to 'his partie' and 'his faction'.⁴ Political parties as we recognise them did not of course

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1. D C Peck, 'Another Version of the Leicester Epitaphium', NQ, vol. ccxxi, 1976, p. 227; '"News from Heaven and Hell": A Defamatory Narrative of the Earl of Leicester', ELR, vol. viii, 1978, pp. 141-58, esp. pp. 156, 157. *
 2. Ed. Franklin B Williams, Chicago 1972.
 3. See for example, Edmund Bohun, The Character of Queen Elizabeth, pp. 75-85. For an account of hostile views of Leicester and of his reputation see E M Tenison, Elizabethan England, vol. v, Leamington Spa 1936, pp. 139-69.
 4. The Copie of a Leter, pp. 52, 160.

exist at the time, but Leicester's followers as one modern historian has argued:

approximated more closely than most to the modern conception of a party, based on a politico-religious principle.¹

His faction stood for the Protestant cause of the unity of all reformed religion, including the Church of England, and so for direct intervention in the Low Countries, for active opposition to Spain and against the French marriage. It was to hold a Conference of Protestant princes at Schmalkalden in Germany during the summer of 1578, to which an English delegation probably chosen by Leicester was to be sent. These political positions could conveniently be called those of the Protestant Conscience of the new, post-reformation families, closely linked and allied, represented chiefly by Leicester, his brother Warwick, the Earl of Bedford, Lords North, Grey and Howard, Sir Thomas Bromley, Sir Francis Knollys, Sir Henry Sidney, Sir Christopher Hatton, Francis Walsingham and Thomas Wilson. They held power in all of the important areas of Elizabethan government.

Opposed to them were the older families which tended to have strong Roman Catholic sympathies and were pro-Spanish rather than pro-French. Among the numbers of this conservative, traditionalist group the leading figures were the Earls of Sussex, Lincoln and Oxford, Sir Nicholas Bacon and Sir James Crofts.² Where exactly Burghley stood is ambiguous; officially his job was to be independent, merely acting as the Queen's servant, but in practice he sided with Sussex's faction, identifying with it politically and socially. The various petty quarrels at court during this period reflect the antagonism of the two groups. Sussex argued fiercely with Leicester and North over the amount of plate

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1. Patrick Collinson, 'Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan, 1566 - 1577', BIHR, Special Supplement, no 5, 1960, p. xxix.
 2. My very simplified account of the two groups and their politics is based on Conyers Read, 'Walsingham and Burghley in Queen Elizabeth's Privy Council', EHR, vol. xxviii, 1913, pp. 34-58, S E Lehmberg, Sir Walter Mildmay and Tudor Government, Austin, Texas 1964, pp. 157-64, M B Pulman, The Elizabethan Privy Council in the Fifteen-Seventies, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1971, and S L Adams, The Protestant Cause: Religious Alliance with the West European Calvinist Communities as a Political Issue in England, 1585 - 1630, University of Oxford D. Phil. 1973, ch. i. *

on show at a dinner in August during the 1578 progress; the row was still causing resentment in November¹. Sidney and Oxford quarrelled over the use of a tennis court in the summer of 1579. In the New Year of 1580 Oxford challenged Leicester to a duel which the Queen forbade and to which Oxford never turned up.² Leicester and Sussex clashed again during 1581. Yet despite these minor eruptions which reflect the deeper tensions of the court it would be wrong to feel that both parties were impossibly hostile to each other. In Elizabethan, as in much English politics, principled opposition did not rule out reasonable co-operation or personal friendship.

ii. Favour and Disgrace.

Leicester's career at court constantly moved between extremes of favour and disgrace. His close relationship with the Queen, strengthened by their being about the same age, was liable to change with disturbing ease into bitter silence and coldness. It was almost as if they went from crisis to crisis. On the one side the Queen made him a Knight of the Garter and Privy Councillor in 1559, High Steward of Cambridge University in 1562, gave him Kenilworth in 1563, made him Baron Denbigh, Earl of Leicester and Chancellor of Oxford in 1564, was entertained at his Warwickshire Castle in 1575, was the object of his league for her protection in the 1580's and sent him to the Netherlands in 1585. On the other he felt her disfavour over his marriage to Amy Robsart, Mary, Queen of Scots' marriage to Darnley, over plans for the Queen's marriage in 1566-7, his conduct in Norfolk's rebellion and in the Low Countries, but also during the Alençon courtship. How real was the disfavour he provoked for his opposition to it? It coincided with his secret marriage to Lettice Knollys and he is usually said to have been in deep disgrace and exiled from court for these indiscretions.

I think this is an exaggeration and that, although he was apparently un-

1. CSP Sp., vol. ii, pp. 606, 607; Lodge, vol.ii, pp. 131, 132.
 2. PRO 31/3/28 ff. 24, 26, 26v.

popular with the Queen at this time, the extent of her personal anger has been, and was then, made to seem greater than it was. Above all Leicester's relationship with the Queen was a knowing one and a strong degree of collusion and play-acting must be admitted. His secret marriage as well as being, I feel a brilliant piece of tactical manoeuvring which allowed him to disclaim a personal interest in the opposition to the Alençon courtship, could not have been completely unknown and infuriating to the Queen. However, Leicester's disgrace was not totally manufactured and it is necessary to examine his position at court between 1578 and 1582, if only to show how much he was there and able to keep in touch with his intellectual circle.

Leicester's chief interest between 1578 and 1582 inevitably lay in the Alençon courtship, in the delicate balancing act of stopping the Queen from marrying the Frenchman without appearing to thwart her personal wishes, but also in encouraging her to use him in the Netherlands. His political position is neatly summed up in a pair of letters from the summer of 1578. In one Sussex argues that the Queen can only control Alençon by marrying him; in the other Leicester comments that the Queen can influence Alençon without marriage, but that he also sees how she objects to opposition to the match.¹ This helps to explain Leicester's contradictory attitudes to Alençon and to indicate why, given the involved state of international affairs at the time, he sought during the first half of 1578 to break out of them entirely and establish himself semi-independently in the Low Countries.

A fresh impetus for this came in January 1578 when the States General asked for his appointment and hasty despatch as leader of an English force.² The Queen however, wary both of direct involvement and giving Leicester too much power was reluctant to use him and turned to John Casimir. Leicester was also disappointed

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1. Sussex to Walsingham and Leicester to Walsingham, Bury 6 and 7 August 1578, CSP For., vol. xv, nos. 148, 149.
 2. CSP For., vol. xiv, no. 574. This had been suggested as early as 30 August 1577, urged by Orange at the beginning of September, but postponed by the States because of the approach of winter, *ibid.*, nos. 159, 293, 297, 325, 327, 329.

when Daniel Rogers was sent to negotiate with the States at the beginning of March. The Queen's reluctance to use the Earl in international diplomacy was apparent again soon after this when in May Walsingham and Cobham were chosen to negotiate with the States after they had begun to approach Alençon for help. Walsingham wrote that Leicester 'labours greatly to be employed in this journey, and is not without hope to obtain it.'¹ The appointment was not to be his and it seems that Leicester rather decided to give up the idea of service abroad for the moment. The failure of the Schmalkalden Conference of Protestant Princes in the summer of 1578 was another blow to his European aspirations. At the end of the year with the Queen too ill to manage affairs and Burghley away for a time recovering his health, it was left to Leicester to sort out Casimir's arguments with Orange. Instead of going himself this time he sent Daniel Rogers.²

An important reason behind Leicester's gradual loss of interest in foreign service must be sought in his decisive act of these years, and the revolution it caused in his relations with the Queen. Before going on her main summer progress in 1578 she visited him three times at Leicester House between February and April. At the end of a short progress in May she went to Wanstead where as I shall argue later she saw Sidney's entertainment the Lady of May. Within a fortnight of this visit at the beginning of June the Earl left for Buxton, partly to enjoy the medicinal waters there and partly to see Mary, Queen of Scots.³ Elizabeth began to miss her favourite and to be 'in continual and great melancholy' as Hatton wrote to Leicester:

she dreamithe of mariages that might seem injuryus to hir: makynge
my selfe to be ether the man or a patterne of the matter...but my L.
I am not the man that should sodenly mary.⁴

1. CSP For., vol. xiv, no. 854.

2. CSP For., vol. xv, no. 419.

3. CSP Sp., vol. ii, p. 602; see below ch. VII, pt. iv.

4. E M Tenison, Elizabethan England, vol. iii, pl. 28: the original is in Longleat, Dudley Papers, vol. ii, f. 177.

This ominous news did nothing to encourage Leicester to return to court. When he finally did so on July 19 it was on its progress and he stayed with it while it went round Suffolk and Norfolk.

Between the eighth and tenth of September, apparently disillusioned by the Queen's lack of firm action over the Low Countries and the cool reception given to Casimir's envoy Junius, he left the progress to go to Wanstead.¹ His real motive must have been the preparations for the formalisation of his marriage to Lettice Knollys. They had been allied since 1575 or 1576 having first met in 1562, but Leicester's choice of this particular moment to legitimise their relationship is intriguing.² It is made more so by the fact that the marriage took place on Sunday, September 21, just a day or two before the progress came to Wanstead and the Queen with it. In 'a litle Gallery' looking towards the garden at seven o'clock in the morning Humphrey Tindall married Leicester to Lettice Knollys in the presence of Essex, Warwick, Pembroke, Sir Francis Knollys and his son Richard.³ We do not know if when the Queen arrived she found her favourite changed. Probably not as she and the French ambassador were well feasted,⁴ and after the wedding Leicester did not hide himself away but was continually at court attending Privy Council meetings.

1. CSP For., vol. xv, no. 248.

2. The usual reason given for this second marriage - if in fact it was one - is that Sir Francis Knollys feared Leicester would repudiate his daughter as he had Douglas, Lady Sheffield before then. The story begins with The Copie of a Letter, p. 49, which says that Leicester and Lettice Knollys were first married at Kenilworth and then at Wanstead by Dr. Culpeper - which is incorrect. Camden, Annals, 1635, p. 191 follows this; Milton Waldman, Elizabeth and Leicester, p. 158 seriously questions the need for such a precaution. Elizabeth Jenkins, Elizabeth and Leicester, pp. 243-9 avoids the question and instead, on the evidence of the bride wearing a loose gown for the wedding, makes her pregnant at the time and lying-in after the birth of her unknown and unrecorded child in the New Year of 1579. Alan Kendall, Robert Dudley, pp. 177, 178 suggests the child was Lord Denbigh and the Earl forced into marriage by the Knollys family.

3. E M Tenison, Elizabethan England, vol. iii, p. 162; PRO SP 12/148 ff. 101v., 106, 107v., 110, 116. Tindall's signed deposition dated 18 February 1581 is in Longleat, Dudley Papers, vol. iii ff. 61, 61v. His part in the marriage is reprinted in W G Searle, History of the Queen's College Cambridge, pt. ii 1560-1662, Cambridge Antiquarian Society, vol. xiii, 1871, pp. 352-5.

4. Thomas Churchyard, A Discourse of the Queenes Majesties Entertainment in Suffolk and Norffolk, 1578, sig. H1, where it is also recorded that 'the whole Gard' were feasted on the Sunday and Monday before the Queen came.

With this his second or third marriage Leicester finally cut himself off from his aspirations towards the throne just when the Queen's interest in Alençon was reviving. It was at this time before Simier arrived at the end of November that the Queen rebuked a Lady of the Bed-Chamber for recommending Leicester as a husband, saying she would have nothing to do with a man she had raised up herself when she might have one of 'the greatest Princes of Christ-endome'.¹ The marriage changed features in Leicester's world other than just the private and domestic ones. There was the possibility, soon to be realised, of a son and heir to replace his nephew Sidney. At first there were difficulties and embarrassments with Burghley,² but the real problem was to be with the Queen. Leicester could no longer be accused of opposing the marriage out of personal ambition; but by appearing to keep his own marriage secret he left himself open for her anger when she would eventually find out about it.

Despite all this the circumstances surrounding Simier's revelation of the marriage to the Queen have been exaggerated. We have seen the Queen's suspicions about her courtiers' fidelity conveniently relayed to Leicester when he was at Buxton by Hatton. I shall argue later that Sidney's entertainment of May 1578 gave her warning of what the Earl felt about their long relationship. Quite simply it is hard to believe that Simier's announcement, made for whatever reason,³ came as a great surprise to her.

During the spring of 1579 Leicester had apparently been in favour of promoting the Alençon courtship; the French associated freely with him, dining at

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1. Camden, *op. cit.*, p. 200: the Lady was almost certainly the wife of John Astley, Master of the Queen's Jewel House.
 2. Read, *Burghley*, pp. 205, 206.
 3. Simier's motives can and have been variously interpreted. His disclosure may have been made in retaliation for the attacks on his life on the Thames and at Greenwich, or because of Leicester's opposition to the marriage, Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 242, Kendall, *op. cit.*, p. 181. It is also possible that it was done to hurry the Queen into granting Alençon a passport, Waldman, *op. cit.*, p. 159, Read, *Burghley*, p. 214. However the first of the attacks did not take place until the middle of July and the passport was not issued until August 6. It is safer to say the marriage was revealed 'for feare of Leycester' and leave it at that, as the authors of *The Copie of a Leter*, p. 49 do.

Wanstead on March 5.¹ It was to Wanstead again that the Queen went with Simier and Mauvissière from April 28 or 29 until May 2 to discuss the marriage. Although Leicester returned with the court to Whitehall, he was back at Wanstead from about May 10 until May 16.² Simier's revelation is usually said to have been made in July or August, but the evidence suggests it took place in June. For the first time in that year Leicester stopped regularly attending Council meetings after the one on June 5. It is also during this period between June 24 and 26 that the Queen visited Wanstead again. Mendoza thought this was to reassure a sulking and supposedly ill Leicester about Alençon's being granted a passport. This may have been so, but it seems likely that it was also to do with Leicester's marriage. Certainly by July 4 even Mary, Queen of Scots knew about it and the offence it had given her cousin.³

But how real was this? The Queen may well have felt anger at his urging the single life on her while secretly marrying himself, but was Leicester as most accounts say exiled to Greenwich and lucky to escape the Tower? Greville says that he had to 'like a wise man (under colour of taking physick) voluntarily become prisoner in his chamber',⁴ which is more consistent with retirement at Wanstead in June than semi-imprisonment at Greenwich in July. Anyway the court had moved to Greenwich on the second and Leicester attended Council meetings from the fifth when he recommended Hooker and Field to University posts. A letter from there to the Earl of Shrewsbury of July 11 apparently does not mention any disgrace; he even exchanged lands with the Queen on August 2. Leicester stayed on at Greenwich during Alençon's private visit and the only hint of difficulties during this time is given by Mendoza who on August 25 reported

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1. CSP Sp., vol. ii, pp. 658, 659; but p. 662 suggests Leicester was acting falsely and the French knew it. See also the accounts of Leicester's interviews with Mauvissière and his comments on his attitude in PRO 31/3/27 ff. 266, 266v.; 273-6v., 282v., 283, 289v., 290.
 2. Lodge, vol. ii, p. 153.
 3. CSP Sp. vol. ii, pp. 681, 682; *Lettres, Instructions et Mémoires de Marie, Reine d'Ecosse*, ed. A. Labanoff, London 1844, vol. v, p. 94.
 4. See for example, Camden, *op. cit.*, p. 205 and DNB; *Life of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Nowell Smith, Oxford 1907, p. 60.

that Leicester came recently to London and was in an emotionally wrought state after an interview with the Queen.¹ The degree of collusion between the two at this time can be judged by the way that within a day of Alençon's departure the Queen immediately took herself and the Council off to Wanstead. It is also worth remembering that Leicester never lost any of his offices for his act. In the light of all this evidence it appears that the extent of her surprise and Leicester's disgrace were deliberately exaggerated for political motives. The deception worked; the Papal Nuncio in Paris, for example, having first heard and reported that Leicester had been imprisoned soon learnt that he had merely been confined to his lodgings.²

Even so Leicester found himself out of favour at the end of the year, excluded from the new Council committee the Queen appointed to come to terms with Simier. Unwilling to 'be suspected a hinderer of that matter, which all the world desired, and were sutors for', as he said, he was prepared to exile himself from the court, uncertain about how he had offended. Yet as Mary, Queen of Scots recognised, the Queen's disfavour was aimed not so much at the Earl himself but against the 'puritan' party.³ The offence must have been caused by the popular opposition to the marriage, seemingly stirred up by Leicester, and especially aggravated by John Stubbs' Discoverie of a Gaping Gulfe, which the Queen had taken rather personally. So great was her anger that Mauvissière reportedly asked her on December 27 not to be too hard on Leicester and the other nobles opposed to her marriage. Presumably he feared she was driving them into an extreme position. Her coolness may be judged from the way she

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1. See below p.62 n.7; Lodge, vol.iii, pt.ii, p.41: HMC Hatfield, vol.ii, p.264; CSP Sp., vol.ii, p.693.
 2. Correspondance du Nonce en France Anselmo Dandino, 1578-1581, ed. I Cloulas, Rome and Paris 1970, pp.554, 555.
 3. Ed. T Wright, Queen Elizabeth and her Times, 1838, vol.ii, p.104; Labanoff, ed. cit., vol.v, p.117. I suspect that Leicester's undated letter to Hatton about his unwillingness to come to court after the Queen's public anger with him belongs to this period, but it might equally relate to his disfavour after the 1582 Netherlands expedition, Memorials of Sir Christopher Hatton, ed. Harris Nicolas, 1847, p.97.

'could not come forth to heare' the History which Leicester's players had prepared for performance at court on 28 December 1579.¹

In April 1580, still out of favour, his anger boiled over and he declared his implacable opposition to the French marriage. Two requests during May to leave the court for Wilton and Kenilworth were refused, but in July he was allowed to go to his country seat at Kenilworth.² His mood is described in Leicester's Commonwealth:

...he came thither from the Court a ful Mal-Content, & when it was thought moste certainlie throughout the Realm, that he would have taken armes soone after, yf the mariage of her Ma. wyth Monsieur had gone forward.³

Clearly they exaggerate a little, for he was back with the Queen at Oatlands attending a Council meeting on July 26. This was the last period of real excitement in Leicester's life during these years. After it he stayed regularly at court sitting in Parliament and on the Council, working against the arrival of the Jesuits and his former protégé, Campion, being involved with the reception and entertainment of the French Commissioners in 1581 and with Alençon's visit and departure for the Netherlands in 1582. By the autumn of 1580 the real as opposed to the apparent threat of marriage had been sufficiently removed for Leicester to be safe to say that he had always supported the French and the match. He was able to be on friendly enough terms with Alençon during the winter of 1581 to make Sussex quite jealous, and for them to quarrel in January 1582.⁴ Their arguments continued, inflamed by the Queen's criticisms of Leicester's self-glorifying conduct and poor treatment of Alençon in the Low Countries, which anticipate her accusations over his conduct in 1585 and later. By May it was reported that the Earl and Sussex were about to fight

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1. CSP Sp., vol. iii, p. 1; Revels Documents, p. 320; Jenkins, Elizabeth and Leicester, p. 251.
 2. CSP Sp., vol. iii, pp. 25, 26; CSP D. Add., vol. xxiii, p. 5; Lodge, vol. ii, p. 167.
 3. The Copie of a Leter, p. 20.
 4. CSP Sp., vol. iii, p. 261.

and only the Queen's intervention and railing at Leicester seem to have stopped this.¹ The Alençon courtship ended with the English nobility as divided as they had been when it began.

If the courtship was, as I have argued in the first chapter, a triumph for Elizabeth's foreign policy, and a success for the Protestant cause, Leicester won his own victory through legitimising his marriage. With that trump card played at a crucial moment just before the courtship proper, he cleared his way for organising the opposition to the Alençon match on a political rather than a personal basis and gave hope to the continuity of the Dudleys with the possibility of an heir:

yet ys ther nothing in the world next that favor (the Queen's) that
I wold not gyve to be in hope of leaving some children behind me,
being now ye last of our howse,

he had once written.² The courtship itself allowed him to strengthen and confirm his position as leader of the Protestant cause in England and by taking advantage of popular feeling against it to add to his power throughout the country. Yet with the main exception of the visits to Buxton during June and the first part of July 1578, to Kenilworth in October 1579, July 1580 and September 1582,³ and the Low Countries in February 1582, as well as the periodic retreats to Wanstead, Leicester was rarely away from the court and out of reach of London. The Queen's anger only really showed itself after Simier's revelation of his marriage in June 1579, in the autumn of the same year after the publication of Stubbs's tract and with his return from the Low Countries in 1582. He had every opportunity for keeping in touch with the court and with his household and his social and intellectual interests there.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 311; CSP For., vol. xviii, no. 18.

2. Conyers Read, 'A Letter from Robert, Earl of Leicester, To a Lady', *Huntington Library Bulletin*, vol. ix, 1936, p. 25; the letter appears to be to Douglas Sheffield and to have been written in 1573.

3. HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, vol. i, p. 297.

iii. Servants and Possessions.

Leicester undoubtedly thought of himself as a great man, and a great man was expected to have a large retinue of servants and employees - this was his most direct form of patronage. While much work has been done on Burghley's employees who may at times have numbered as many as one hundred and fifty, Leicester's household is still relatively unknown.¹ The chief interest attached to the subject lies in the question of whether there is any evidence for the usually accepted suppositions that both Spenser and Gabriel Harvey worked for the Earl, probably as secretaries. It is also necessary to show that the Earl's life-style was sufficiently sophisticated for it to be credible that he would encourage a precocious group of writers and intellectuals.

Leicester's religious position of promoting moderate puritanism within the Church was reflected in his literary and ecclesiastical patronage, but also in his choice of chaplains.² Among these were Thomas Cooper, William Chaderton and William Overton in the early part of his career, and in the later, John Knewstub and Humphrey Fenn who accompanied him to the Netherlands in 1585.³ During the period of the Alençon courtship he was served firstly by Humphrey Tindall, who officiated at the secret wedding to Lettice Knollys. He was a fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge and in July 1579, a year after the marriage, became by Burghley's influence Master of Queen's in succession to Chaderton. He was a friend of Gabriel Harvey on whose behalf he rode to London to speak with John Young during Harvey's troubles over his M.A. Tindall outlived Leicester to become Dean of Ely in 1591. On account of his involvement in the secret wedding it is clear he was a close and trusted servant of the Earl's. Another friend of Gabriel Harvey's, his former tutor John Still was also associated with the Earl as a chaplain at about this time.⁴

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1. Alan G R Smith, Servant of the Cecils, The Life of Sir Michael Hikes, 1977, p. 29 and see Richard C Barnett, Place, Profit and Power: A Study of the Servants of William Cecil, James Sprunt Studies in History and Political Science, vol. li, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 1969.
 2. On Leicester's religious position see Collinson, 'Letters of Thomas Wood', Rosenberg, esp. ch. vi, vii and below in connexion with the Shepheardes Calender.
 3. Collinson, op. cit., pp. xxi-iii, xxxix.
 4. Ibid., p. xxiii.

Robert Some, a fellow of Queen's when Chaderton was Master, succeeded Tindall as chaplain. In the dedication of a translation of a sermon of 1580 to William Killigrew, himself a 'servaunte' of Leicester's¹, Some says he gave 'my singular good Lorde and Master', Leicester, the original Latin version. When he dedicated a work to the Earl himself in 1582 he calls himself, 'Your Lordships most humble Chap.'² Some's religious views were moderate, even surviving his involvement in the Marprelate controversy. In this he was one of Whitgift's party, upholding the episcopacy, and was recommended by him for the Mastership of Peterhouse which he got in 1589. This transference of patronage to Leicester's former friend probably reveals a break with the Earl, with whom he was no longer associated.

Some was in turn followed as chaplain by Edward Edgeworth, again a Cambridge man, but associated with London as rector of St. Anne's Aldersgate Street almost continuously from 1579 until 1587. He was certainly in Leicester's service by 1585. Richard Madox, a fellow of All Souls, received leave of absence from his college at Leicester's request in 1582 to go on a fatal voyage, being described then by Henry Owtread as his 'honowres chapleyne'. John Walker who was also a chaplain on the same voyage may also have been employed by the Earl.³

It is essential to be clear as to the date of Arthur Atey's appointment as secretary since it bears on Spenser's and Harvey's supposed employment in that post. He was Principal of St. Alban Hall from 1569 until 1581 and public orator in succession to Tobie Matthew from 1572 until 1582: Leicester had recommended him for the post.⁴ Although he did not resign the oratorship until 9 April 1582 Rosenberg states that he was in Leicester's service by 9 September 1580. Earlier

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1. For Killigrew's alleged part in the attack instigated by Leicester against the Earl of Ormond, see The Copie of a Leter, p. 45.
 2. R Some, A Godly Sermon Preached in Latin at Cambridge, 1580, sig. A2; A Godly and Shorte Treatise of the Sacraments, 1582, sig. A4v. The dedication to Some's first sermon is dated 20 April 1580, (sig. A2v.) On May 10 Leicester wrote to Cambridge University requesting leave for Some to be absent from the next Commencement, no doubt to accompany him to Wilton or Kenilworth. The University replied that such absence could only be granted by the Queen; she agreed to this and for her licence, see M H Curtis, Oxford and Cambridge in Transition, Oxford 1959, pp. 26, 27.
 3. VCH Essex, vol. v, p. 224; An Elizabethan in 1582. The Diary of Richard Madox, Hakluyt Society, 2nd. ser., vol. cxlviii, 1977, pp. 26 n.3, 115 n.2.
 4. Bodleian MS Rawl. D. 837 f. 38.

than this, on 14 April 1579 in a lease from the Hospital of St. John the Baptist at Oxford he is described as the Earl's secretary and had certainly written letters to John Casimir on his master's behalf by June 14 of the same year.¹ The evidence of handwriting shows that virtually all of Leicester's correspondence which survives between 1578 and 1582 was written either by the Earl himself or by Atey, who often just wrote the letter's address or direction. He probably worked for him some time before he was officially employed and in about October 1582 was joined in the office by Jean Hotman.²

There is good evidence for the existence of another secretary at this time.³ In his diary for 31 July 1583 John Dee refers to one Lloyd as Leicester's secretary; he is again mentioned in Leicester's Commonwealth and accused of being involved in attempts to poison the Earl of Essex.⁴ Although a Jenkin Lloyd J.P. and later Sheriff of Cardigan in 1581 and 1590-91, who went to the Netherlands with the Earl, wrote on 2 August 1581 to him from Ruthin near Denbigh he was not a secretary.⁵

I believe rather that a Richard Lloyd held the post. He was the son of Richard Lloyd of Marrington, Shropshire, born in 1545 and admitted to Shrewsbury school in 1566 two years after Philip Sidney. In September 1576 he seems to have been in the Low Countries and at the beginning of 1579 the bearer of a message from Walsingham to Poulet in Paris. Much of Poulet's and his suc-

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1. Ed. A Clark, Register of the University of Oxford, vol. ii, pt. i, OHS, vol. x, 1887, p. 250; Rosenberg, p. 335 n. 27; ed. H E Salter, A Cartulary of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist. OHS, vol. lxxviii, 1915, p. 120.
 2. For example PRO SP 83/7/28 (CSP For., vol. xv, no. 41), Leicester to Walsingham, 24 June 1578, was written by Leicester, but Atey was responsible for the address; for the start of Hotman's working for the Earl, see F and J Hotman, Epistolae, ed J W van Meel, Amsterdam 1700, pp. 295ff.
 3. The endorsements on letters by Richard Paramore in BL MS Stowe 150 ff. 15-18 stating that he was Leicester's secretary are not contemporary with the letters themselves and cannot be corroborated.*
 4. The Private Diary of Dr. John Dee, ed. J O Halliwell, Camden Society, 1st ser., vol. xix, 1842, p. 21; The Copie of a Leter, p. 29.
 5. PRO SP 12/150/1; this may possibly be connected with the large church which Leicester began to build at Denbigh in c1578 but never finished, see Lawrence Butler, 'Leicester's Church, Denbigh: An Experiment in Puritan Worship', Journal of the British Archaeological Association, 3rd ser., vol. xxxvii, 1974, pp. 40-62. On Lloyd, see also S L Adams, 'The Gentry of North Wales and the Earl of Leicester's Expedition to the Netherlands, 1585-1586', Welsh History Review, vol. vii, 1974-5, p. 141.

cessor as ambassador, Cobham's correspondence appears to be in his hand.¹ However it was to Leicester that he wrote from Paris on 19 January 1580 requesting, at the end of a letter of political news, his leave to journey 'this springe tyme towardes Italye.' He seems not to have gone for he was still writing to the Earl with news from Paris in March, May and June: during April he had carried letters to England on Cobham's behalf.² The connexion with Leicester is reinforced by what Lloyd wrote to Arthur Atey from Paris on 26 October 1579 thanking the Earl's secretary for a letter which contained orders from:

...him whom I am so much bound to serve and honour...I desire to be employed upon all occasions wherein I may serve his lordship, and so I pray you signify.³

Lloyd went on to become tutor to William Stanley, son of Leicester's friend the fourth Earl of Derby, and then secretary to the Earl of Essex after he had married Lettice Knollys. Lloyd is frequently referred to as 'Floyd'; when he went with Leicester on his expedition to the Low Countries he is listed as 'Richard Floyd' and in the correspondence of the period he appears as 'Lloyd my secretar ye' and in company with Atey as 'Mr Fludde'.⁴ The absence of Harvey and Spenser's hand in any of Leicester's surviving correspondence and of the strong corroborative evidence which exists for the employment of his known secretaries, suggests that whatever work the two Cambridge friends did for the Earl was not purely secretarial. However among a secretary's tasks, in addition to writing letters and memoranda, would have been the duties of transmitting messages to Leicester reminding him of business and looking after his papers.⁵ Spenser and Harvey could have done these and left no trace of their work.

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1. E Calvert, Shrewsbury School, Regestum Scholarium 1562-1635, ^{Shrewsbury} (1892), p. 23; CSP For., vol. xiii, no. 1500; vol. xv, no. 548; vol. xvi, no. 314.
 2. BL MS Cott. Cal. E VII f. 110; *ibid.*, ff. 163, 164, 169, 178, 181, 198, 199; CSP For., vol. xvi, nos. 266, 273, 274.
 3. CSP For., vol. xvi, no. 74.
 4. James Greenstreet, 'Testimonies against the accepted Authorship of Shakespear's Plays', The Genealogist, NS, vol. viii, 1892, p. 144; Adams, art. cit., p. 136; R C Strong and Jan van Dorsten, Leicester's Triumph, Leiden 1964, p. 116; Correspondence of Robert Dudley, During his Government of the Low Countries, ed. John Bruce, Camden Society, 1st ser., vol. xxvii, 1844, pp. 26, 37.
 5. A G R Smith, Servant of the Cecils, p. 42.

The third most important member of the household was the High Steward Sir John Hubbard or Hibbott of Ipsley, Warwickshire. He combined this office with being Constable of Kenilworth and serving on the Council for Wales under Sir Henry Sidney. Sheriff of Herefordshire in 1574 and knighted in the same year, he was frequently given land or advowsons by Leicester in Warwickshire, where most of the Earl's property was, and in Worcestershire from 1580 until his death on 23 December 1583.¹ On 9 September 1580 he wrote to Atey from Denbigh wanting to know if Fulke Greville had been appointed to the Mastership of Game. Apparently he never got this office, but at the time Greville was in Wales as Clerk of the Council and Clerk of the Signet. Leicester had knighted Greville's father at Kenilworth in 1565 and Hubbard's letter is the first surviving direct link between the Earl and Sidney's friend.²

Further members of the household can be discovered from other sources. The most notorious men associated with Leicester were the two doctors, Roderigo Lopez and Giulio Borgarucci, known simply as Dr. Julio. The second of these really worked for the Queen, but Lopez is described in a letter from Richard Topcliffe to the Earl of Shrewsbury of 16 March 1580 as 'now' chief physician to Leicester. Exactly when he was appointed is unknown, but he may have succeeded a Dr. Culpeper, who was both a doctor and chaplain at some point, or more probably the Dr. Bayly who was with him at Buxton in 1578.³ Bayly and Culpeper are described in Leicester's Commonwealth as, 'both knowne Papistes a little while ago, but now juste of Galens religion'. Both John Dee and Thomas Allen are also associated with his evil practices by the author of the Commonwealth; there seems to be no other link known between Allen, a fellow of Gloucester Hall, in-

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1. VCH Warwick, vol. iii, p. 124; vol. vi, pp. 126, 186; VCH Worcester, vol. ii, pp. 363, 405.
 2. PRO SP 12/142/10; R A Rebholz, The Life of Fulke Greville, Oxford 1971, pp. 5, 21.
 3. Lodge, vol. ii, p. 164; The Copie of a Leter, p. 49; Memorials of Sir Christopher Hatton, p. 69; on Dr. Julio see Mariagrazia Bellorini, 'Un Medico Italiano Alla Corte di Elisabetta: Giulio Borgarucci', English Miscellany, vol. xix, 1968, pp. 251-71. Harvey knew another of his physicians, John Lea, Stern, p. 171 n. 66.

timate with Alasco in 1585, and Leicester.¹

His contacts with local government, so bitterly described in Leicester's Commonwealth were widespread and he was prepared to use his patronage over minor as well as major offices. In 1580, for example, Robert Boston was appointed Mayor's Clerk of Salisbury at his recommendation.² The patronage extended to overseas; like Walsingham he almost certainly employed his own agents for foreign affairs. In the Low Countries this was one of Davison's occupations until about March 1579 when he seems to have been succeeded by Thomas Hatton, who in turn was replaced by March 1581 by William Herle. Foreign service was one means of advancement and Leicester frequently wrote letters of recommendation for Englishmen going abroad: these survive for Henry Cavendish, Roger Williams and John Norris for the spring of 1578 alone.³

Although Leicester owned property throughout the kingdom, he only really used three houses, Kenilworth, Wanstead and Leicester House, formerly Exeter Inn by the Thames in London. Of these the last, the 'stately place' so tenderly recalled by Spenser in Prothalamion, was the most important for he kept his most interesting paintings and the bulk of his books there. He had acquired it by 1569 and according to Stowe 'new builded' it adding eastern and western blocks and a banqueting house. In 1588 there were twenty tenements attached to it and sixteen named chambers within.⁴ His hunting lodge at Wanstead was bought in 1578 from Robert, Lord Rich and mortgaged in 1580 to Thomas Skinner, a witness to the Earl's continual need to raise money for his expensive enthusiasms. Again he is supposed to have improved and enlarged the building but no picture of it survives. Its size can be compared to Leicester House by the fact that

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1. The Copie of a Leter, pp. 79, 80; this Dr. Bayly is not Walter Bayly, Professor of Physic at Oxford, but was of the same University and may have been involved in Alasco's 1583 visit, (*ibid.*, p. 29), but I have not been able to identify him exactly.
 2. The Copie of a Leter, pp. 60-3; VCH Wiltshire, vol. vi, p. 99.
 3. CSP For., vol. xiv, nos. 880, 913; CSP D. Add., vol. xviii, pp. 539, 541.
 4. C L Kingsford, 'Essex House, formerly Leicester House and Exeter Inn', Archaeologia, vol. lxxiii, 1922-3, pp. 1-54.

only six chambers are named in the 1588 inventory made there.¹ The Castle at Kenilworth is the best documented of Leicester's properties around this time, because of an inventory taken in June 1583, which may be connected with fears for the Steward Hubbard's life.²

These houses and their contents reveal Leicester to have been a man of considerable and original taste, a typical Renaissance prince and collector. He surrounded himself with magnificent and beautiful objects of European as well as of English provenance. At Kenilworth in 1583 there were over 150 pieces of tapestry, most of them over fifteen feet high, of familiar subjects such as Hercules or Sampson, Lady Fame or Flowers and Beasts, but also less common subjects such as the Story of Hippolitus, Demophon and Achilles and of Namaan the Assyrian. There was an enormous amount of embroidery for the many beds there, much of it covered with Leicester's arms and his device of the bear and ragged staff, but some of it, like, 'A Venice beddestede, withe iiij Armes carved like men and women, varnished and gilded verie faire', more exotic. Linen, chests, cabinets, carpets, chairs and stools were all decorated and enriched. Even some of the close stools were 'of Flaunders worke'. Household objects came in the most elaborate and extraordinary shapes. A salt is described as

shippe fashion, of the mother of pearle garnished with silver and diverse warlicke ensignes and ornamentes, with xvj peeces of ordinaunce, whereof ij on wheeles, two ancors in the fore parte and on the stearne the image of Dame Fortune standing on a globe with a flagge in hir hande.

A painted and gilt wooden carving of George and the Dragon might contain a knife-case in the horse's tail and a case for oyster knives in the dragon's breast. The very table-cloth itself might greet one with the unappetising story of Judith and Holofernes embroidered on it.³

1. VCH Essex, vol. vi, pp. 323, 324.

2. HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, vol. i, pp. 278-98.

3. Ibid., pp. 278, 279, 283, 292-5.

His many New Year's gifts to the Queen also reveal his exotic and fanciful taste. In 1578-9 for example he gave her:

a verey feyer juell of golde, being a clocke fully furnished with small diamondes pointed, and a pendaunte of golde, diamonds, and rubyes, very smale; and upon eche side a lozenge diamonde, and an apple of golde enamuled grene and russet.

The next year he presented two needles, one capped with a diamond and rubies, the other with a ruby and diamonds. And with them he gave a black velvet cap with a brooch on it covered with diamonds and fifty gold buttons which had ragged staffs and true-love knots made out of rubies and diamonds on them.¹

Leicester's possessions which have survived and can be identified as his show how pictorially rich the world in which he chose to live was. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there is a box dated 1579 which he owned. It is made out of steel, chased and embossed with a central cartouche of David and Bathsheba on the outside surrounded by sprays of flowers and foliage with birds and Leicester's crest on the inside. The Biblical couple are to be seen within a beautiful renaissance courtyard.² Plates of the designs of some of his armour show its delicate patterning and fine colours; the armour which belonged to him, now in the Tower of London shows that his appearance at court must have been as splendid as the many pictures of him suggest.³ About a dozen portrait types of him have been identified, witnessed in over thirty surviving paintings, of which the most notable and striking are by Hilliard at Penshurst, by unknown artists at Parham Park and in the National Portrait Gallery, two by or attributed to Steven van der Muelen and the lost full-length portrait in armour by Zuccaro.⁴ Similarly the printed books which the Earl owned bear witness in their bindings to his excellent but restrained taste. H M Nixon has said that although

1. Nichols, vol. ii, pp. 249, 289.

2. Victoria and Albert Museum no. M 665-1910; exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1900, see J Starkie Gardner, Exhibition of Chased and Embossed Steel and Iron Work of European Origin, 1900, p. 67 no. 11, pl. xxvii no. 1.

3. Viscount Dillon, An Almain Armourer's Album, 1905, pl. iii-vi.

4. R C Strong, National Portrait Gallery, Tudor and Jacobean Portraits, 1969, vol. i, pp. 195, 196, vol. ii, pl. 378-88.

he received some books as gifts:

it is also clear that he must have been an active book collector and that some of the fine bindings from his library which have survived were bound in the best London binderies of the day to his order.¹

Most of the books which can be identified as belonging to him are simply but elegantly bound with his device on the covers and some gilding and gold tooling.

Undoubtedly the most interesting objects which Leicester owned were his paintings. Our knowledge of them comes from several inventories of his possessions; none of them can be certainly identified with existing works. Altogether he probably possessed about two hundred and twenty pictures, making it the third largest collection in England at the time after the Royal and Lumley collections. Leicester's taste seems to have been less restricted than Lumley's, owning proportionally fewer portraits.² Most of these seem to have been kept at Wanstead and Kenilworth and show Leicester's political and social orientation quite clearly. At Kenilworth in 1583 there were portraits of the Earls of Pembroke and of the Countess, Elizabeth and Lettice Knollys and Sir Walter Mildmay, and of European Protestant leaders such as Frederick, Duke of Saxony, William of Orange, his wife, his sister and her husband and the Count Egmont. There were also portraits of less favourable people—Philip of Spain and his wife, the Emperor Charles, the Duke of Alva and Cardinal Granvelle.³ These may have been acquired or presented for diplomatic reasons. At Leicester House in 1588 the portraits were mainly of family and friends: Douglas, Lady Sheffield, Sir Francis Knollys, Walter Devereux, Philip Sidney, the Countess of Leicester with her son Lord Denbigh, Penelope Rich, Robert Sidney, John Casimir and the King of Portugal's sons which would have included the Pretender to the throne Don Antonio.⁴ At Wanstead at the same date the pictures were almost

1. H M Nixon, Sixteenth-Century Gold-Tooled Bookbindings in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York 1971, p. 152. The standard but by no means complete or correct work on the subject is William E Moss, Bindings from the Library of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Sonning-on-Thames 1934, (-39)

2. John Buxton, Elizabethan Taste, 1965, pp. 101, 102.

3. HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, vol. i, pp. 290, 291.

4. William J Thoms, 'Pictures of the Great Earl of Leicester', NQ, 3rd ser., vol. ii, 1862, pp. 224, 225.

entirely of foreigners, political allies and enemies: two of Alençon, Orange and his wife, the Duke and Duchess of Aerschott, Catherine de Medici, the Queens of Hungary and Portugal and even the Pope.¹

The pictures which really suggest Leicester's taste and the sophisticated world in which he lived were generally kept at Leicester House in London. They can be very roughly divided into four groups: Biblical or religious, classical, and allegorical paintings and various portraits. It seems remarkable that as a leading religious reformer he owned representations of 'Elijah taken up in the Fiery Charriot' and 'Susanna and the Elders', but even more so of the 'Calling of Matthew', 'St. John, the Baptist, preaching in the Wilderness', a 'St. John, beheaded', a 'Nativity' in a triptych and a 'Deposition', a 'Conversion of Saul' and even a 'Mary Magdalene'. Less unexpected for such a worldly man must have been 'Cupid and Venus', 'Diana and her Nymphs' and 'Diana and Actaeon'. There were 'Faith' and 'Charity', 'Occasion and Repentance' and allegories of 'An old man looking on his booke and a Ladye by him entysing him from it', (perhaps 'Wisdom and Beauty' or 'Age and Youth'), and 'A naked boy with a ded man's skull in his hand and an houre glasse under his arme', (perhaps a moralisation of youthful love). The portraits were mainly of women, including a Lady and a Bride from Venice, and with the pictures of the bathing Susanna and the naked Venus, Diana with her nymphs and Charity suggest that Leicester liked a certain type of semi-erotic painting.

It is impossible to say whether Leicester's taste was for predominantly Northern or Southern Renaissance art. Some pictures were undoubtedly acquired during his time in the Netherlands, and it has been suggested that Sidney, who was very interested in painting, may have collected examples for his uncle during his European tour.² It would be satisfying to think of Leicester as an enthusiast

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 225, 226.

2. Buxton, *op. cit.*, pp. 100, 101.

for the exciting mannerist art which modern critics find reflected in Sidney's works. It is however safer to see the fact that he owned certain pictures as evidence of an urge to surround himself with rich and interesting possessions reflecting his cultivated and expensive taste.

iv. The Oxford Connexion.

I have argued that Leicester's obsession with power and highly sophisticated art suggest he saw himself as a Renaissance prince, the brilliant ruler of his own commonwealth within the kingdom. To show the uses to which he put his power I shall briefly look at his influence as Chancellor of Oxford University. This will show how the men Leicester encouraged tended to move in common areas and maintain close contact with each other. It will provide a generalized model for his London circle and will indicate that instead of using his influence in the blatant way his enemies and critics said he did, he rather tended to keep at a distance from his Oxford circle and remain a respected figure in the background.

As Chancellor of Oxford Leicester had a general interest in the University, but two groups of men at St. John's and Christ Church form an admiring and closely related circle comparable to his London one. Of their many common interests the principal ones were liberal theology, international law, geography and exploration and the study of Machiavelli and Tacitus. Their chief link at Christ Church with the Earl was through Jean Hotman who became his secretary towards the end of 1582, but of course both Philip and Robert Sidney were educated there. At St. John's the brilliant defender of Aristotle, John Case was in close and grateful contact with him. Between the two colleges went Tobie Matthew, a fellow of Christ Church, then President of St. John's in 1572 and then Dean of his old college in 1576.

Leicester's patronage at St. John's is most famously witnessed by his support and encouragement of Edmund Campion, but he had a more general interest

in the College, partly through Richard Mulcaster,¹ head-master of its related school Merchant Taylors' and partly through his links with Sir William Cordell the College's Visitor. He had been Master of the Rolls since 1557 and appears to have been a good friend of the Earl's, staying with him at Kenilworth in 1572. As well as being a friend of Richard Hills, Merchant Taylors' School founder, Cordell was much respected by the Company whose Court of Assistants attended his funeral in 1581.² John Case came to St. John's in 1564 and gained his fellowship in 1572. In his Summa Veterum of 1584 he says that he had heard of Leicester's good opinion of him through his protégé the President of Magdalen, Laurence Humphrey, who contributed a preliminary poem to the book. In his Speculum Moraliū, 1585, the first book dedicated to him from the University Press Leicester had helped to found, Case thanks the Earl for two interviews, one in London and one in Oxford at the first of which he presented his work.³ Case's wide intellectual interests centred around Aristotle, but also included a treatise on music, the Apologia Musices, Oxford 1588, and much thought and generally hostile comment on Machiavelli.⁴

Case's closest friend was the Christ Church don and neo-Latin poet William Gager. Together they contributed verses and a Preface to Breton's The Pilgrimage to Paradise, Oxford 1592; Case contributed a poem to the 1593 edition of Gager's tragedy Meleager and Gager wrote verses on his friend.⁵ Gager was nephew and probably godson to Sir William Cordell, the Visitor of St. John's,⁶ whom Case

1. Rosenberg, pp. 293-5.

2. W H Stevenson and H E Salter, The Early History of St. John's College Oxford, OHS, NS, vol. i, 1939, p. 480; F W M Draper, Four Centuries of Merchant Taylors' School, Oxford 1962, p. 16; C M Clode, Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors, 1875, p. 406 n.l. For Cordell as an experimenter in English metre, see below ch. III, pt. v. His highly sophisticated marble tomb with Gager's epitaph on him at Long Melford in Suffolk suggests that Cordell's life needs more investigation.

3. Rosenberg, pp. 296, 297.

4. On Case see Charles B Schmitt's articles, 'John Case on Art and Nature', Annals of Science, vol. xxxiii, 1976, pp. 543-59 and 'John Case and Machiavelli', in ed. Sergio Bertelli and Gloria Ramakus, Essays Presented to Myron P Gilmore, Florence 1978, vol. i, pp. 231-40.

5. F S Boas, University Drama in the Tudor Age, Oxford 1914, pp. 177, 178; Gager's poems in BL MS Add. 22583 contain on f. 84 verses addressed to Case and on f. 86 two poems, 'In Peregrinantem Nicolai Brettoni'.

6. C F Tucker Brooke, 'The Life and Times of William Gager (1555-1622)', Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, vol. xcv, 1951, p. 401.

would also have known. Gager wrote poems on Cordell and the Queen and celebrated her visit to his house at Long Melford during the 1578 progress.¹ He also wrote plays for the occasions of Leicester's visits to the University in 1583 and 1585, epitaphs on his son Lord Denbigh and edited the Oxford memorial volume for his nephew Sidney. Harvey knew him and Richard Hakluyt, called them 'mie two Oxford frends' and had high hopes of their literary abilities.²

At Christ Church Gager knew the Dean Tobie Matthew and his great friend Richard Edes, addressing several poems to each of them.³ 'No two men were ever more intimate', Wood says of Edes and Matthew, and when Matthew went to be Dean of Durham Edes accompanied him and celebrated their journey north in a poem of 1584 called Iter Boreale.⁴ Like Gager Edes also contributed to the Oxford memorial volume to Sidney. Matthew owned manuscripts of Smith's De Republica Anglorum, Sidney's Psalms⁵ and twice appealed to Leicester, once over a Paul's Cross Sermon and once having been insulted by the Principal of Brasenose.⁶

Matthew's most intriguing friends because of their links with both Leicester and Sir Thomas Smith were the brothers Henry and Robert Dowe. Little is known about Henry except that he was at Christ Church under Matthew from 1576 until his premature death in 1578 and so might have taught Robert Sidney. This may have helped to establish links between Matthew and his elder brother Robert Dowe, who since 1575 had been a fellow of All Souls. His manuscript note-book in the Bodleian is full of Matthew's orations, letters and sermons.⁷ It is worth

1. BL MS Add. 22583 ff. 47v., 48, 54v., 55.

2. Rosenberg, pp. 137, 138 and n. 42; BL MS Add. 22583 ff. 82, 82v.; Marginalia, p. 233. 5-8.

3. BL MS Add. 22583 ff. 47, 49v., 50, 51, 52, 56, 62, 74.

4. Wood, vol. i, col. 749; Bodleian MS Rawl. B 223.

5. Buxton, pp. 176, 178; Matthew's copy of Smith's work is Cambridge, Trinity College MS 1504; he owned the ex-Houghton copy of the Psalms known as G1, (wrongly attributed by Sotheby's in their sale on 21 July 1980, lot 574 to Thomas Moffett); he also owned Sir John Harington's Tract on the Succession to the Crown, now at York Minster Library. It has been edited by Clements R Markham in 1880 and contains a unique and unrecorded text of AS 75.

6. Tobie Matthew to Leicester, 8 February 1576, Bodleian MS Top. Oxon. e 5 pp. 354-8, transcribed by Baker in CUL MS Mm 49 pp. 74-6; Leicester to the University, Woodstock 15 July 1580, OU Archives Register KK f. 315v.

7. Bodleian MS Top. Oxon. e 5; see below ch. III, pt. i on Robert Dowe and Sir Thomas Smith.

mentioning that the Doves were closely attached to the Merchant Taylors' Company. Henry was educated at the School - Mulcaster wrote an epitaph on his death -¹ and his father Robert was a Warden and prominent member of the Company for a long time. It was at his instigation that Stowe's pension was increased and maintained. As a member of the Company he gave money for building the new library at St. John's and for it to buy books on canon and civil law in 1596.² A further interesting connexion can be made through his All Souls son Robert's verses on the death of the St. John's College Visitor Sir William Cordell, which are copied in William Gager's collection of his own poems. Like so many of his contemporaries Robert Dove also contributed verses to the volume of elegies for Sidney which the University produced.³ Finally he was one of the four people to whom Richard Madox, also a fellow of All Souls, said good-bye when he left Oxford as Leicester's appointed chaplain on his voyage in 1582.⁴

More is known about Matthew's other great friend the dramatist Richard Edes. Along with the poet William Gager he contributed preliminary verses to the first two books of Alberico Gentili's Lectionum & Epistolarum quae ad Ius Civile Pertinent, 1583-4; another of Gager's poems to Gentili also survives. Edes' interest in Machiavelli is illustrated by his having owned the rare 1577 Latin edition of Innocent Gentillet's Contre-Machiavel now in the library of the Queen's College, Oxford.⁵ At Cambridge another important volume from his library contains, besides Talaueus' Rhetoric and the Italian translation of Tacitus' Agricola dedicated to Robert Sidney, three works connected with Scipio Gentili.

1. Wood, vol. ii, col. 95.

2. C M Clode, Early History of the Guild of Merchant Taylors, 1888, vol. ii, pp. 303, 304; J F Fuggles, A History of the Library of S. John's College, Oxford, from the Foundation of the College to 1660, University of Oxford B. Litt. 1975, pp. 42, 64.

3. BL MS Add. 22583 f. 78v.; Exequiae D. Philippi Sidnaei, Oxford 1587, sigs. Dlv. -2v.

4. The Diary of Richard Madox, p. 86; it is interesting to note that Madox's elder brother Thomas was Chief Usher of Merchant Taylors' School from 1570 to 1572 and was then appointed by the Company to another of their foundations, the Grammar School at Wolverhampton, ibid., p. 6. Madox knew and admired Tobie Matthew and may even have copied Hales' discourse on the succession, (Bodleian MS Tanner 79 ff, 24-8) for him, ibid., pp. 14 n.1, 80-2.

5. BL MS Add. 22583 f. 83v.; the shelf-mark of the Gentillet volume at Queen's is LL e 114.

One of these, his translation of part of Tasso's Solymeidos, 1584, has a presentation inscription from Scipio Gentili to Edes.¹ The Gentilis were a formidable pair of Protestant Italians soon assimilated into Oxford intellectual life through Leicester's patronage.² Three further examples of this will show firstly how Leicester directly promoted the career of a liberal theologian and secondly how contact with his circle at Oxford was almost bound to result in some acquaintance with the Earl or his nephew.

Writing from Christ Church to Leicester's secretary Atey on 28 March 1580 Tobie Matthew asked him to beg Antonio Corro to return to Oxford as soon as possible after the vacation.³ Corro came to England in the late 1560's and at once gained Leicester's support and protection as a Protestant preacher. Leicester probably got him the post of divinity lecturer in the Temple, helped him when his theology was thought to be suspect and was rewarded in 1575 by the dedication of Corro's Theological Dialogue which contained a defence of his orthodoxy. With Leicester's help again he moved on to Oxford, where the Chancellor tried to overcome Convocation's distrust of him and make it grant him a Doctorate of Divinity without charge and establish him as a Reader in the subject. Leicester failed in his immediate object, but by 1578 Corro was a lecturer at Merton and a catechist at three different halls.⁴ The Earl also seems to have promised him a prebendary. In November 1579 with ecclesiastical appointments being discussed Corro wrote to Atey asking him to remind Leicester of his promise and adding that he had a letter in his favour from the doctors of the University and that Tobie Matthew had been working to help him. Leicester's patronage was

1. CUL Bb* 9 10⁸; the other two works connected with Gentili in the volume are his In XXV Davidis Psalmos epicae Paraphrases, 1584, and his translation of Tasso's Plutonis Concilium, 1584.

2. On this see below ch. III, pt. ii.

3. PRO SP 12/136 f. 223.

4. M H Curtis, Oxford and Cambridge in Transition, pp. 212, 213; Rosenberg, pp. 135, 136, (Leicester's letter to the Vice-Chancellor and Convocation is in OU Archives Register KK f. 207v.)

not immediately successful since he did not receive the prebendary until March 1582.¹ Corro was soon in trouble again for his opinions. Early in 1583 at the end of a letter to Leicester's new secretary Jean Hotman, himself a Protestant exile, Corro asks him to greet Philip Sidney, Arthur Atey and Henry Savile, whose brother Thomas then also in Oxford sends his own greetings to Hotman. Corro finally asks Hotman to give Leicester 'has literas Italicas' and to commend him to the Oxford doctors before the Earl meets them.²

My second example of their assimilation of a like-minded friend has recently been studied. Stephen Parmenius a Hungarian Protestant, probably a Calvinist, left his native country in 1579 and was in England by the autumn of 1581 at the latest. He soon came to Oxford where he shared rooms in Christ Church with the great geographer Richard Hakluyt and became friends with Leicester's protégé Laurence Humphrey.³ It was probably through Hakluyt that Parmenius became known to William Camden in the spring of 1582. Camden acted almost as a centre for European scholarship, in touch with his 'very closest friends' Thomas Savile and Jean Hotman, being introduced to Alberico Gentili and keeping up contact with Gerard Mercator.⁴ In 1582 Parmenius celebrated his arrival in England with a paraphrase of the 104th Psalm, which he dedicated to Henry Unton whom he may have met on his travels in Padua. A presentation copy of this work, the Paeon given to Thomas Savile survives at Eton, probably as part of his elder brother Henry's bequest to the College as its Provost.⁵ Parmenius' other work De Navigatione, 1582, was written to celebrate Sir Humphrey Gilbert's voyage to the New World, on which the Hungarian accompanied him and from which he never returned. Moving in these circles it seems highly likely that Parmenius would have met both Leicester

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1. Corro's Spanish letter is in BL MS Cott. Galba C VI pt. ii f. 340, and is printed in Eduard Böhmer, Bibliotheca Wiffeniana, Spanish Reformers of Two Centuries, vol. iii, Strassburg 1904, p. 105 and discussed on p. 71; Paul J Hauben, Three Spanish Heretics and the Reformation, Geneva 1967, p. 67.
 2. F and J Hotman, Epistolae, p. 315.
 3. The New Found Land of Stephen Parmenius, ed. D B Quinn and N M Cheshire, Toronto 1972, pp. 5, 6, 8, 9.
 4. Ibid., pp. 12, 13.
 5. Ibid., pp. 16-18.

and Sidney.¹ Gilbert's expedition did not leave until the end of May or the beginning of June 1583, by which time Jean Hotman had been the Earl's secretary for over six months.

When Hotman himself first arrived in England early in 1581 he was able to contact Sidney directly through his father's friendship with him. He soon also became friendly with Richard Hakluyt and his close friend Edward Dyer. Hotman was known to Camden by the summer of 1581 and the two stayed regularly in touch.² When in London Hotman lodged at court in Leicester House, but an examination of the original letters addressed to him also shows he often stayed at 'Mr Fountain's' house in Blackfriars.³ This was the home of Robert le Maçon, Sieur de la Fontaine, one of the Ministers of the French Reformed Church in London from 1574 until 1611. He was a friend and strict critic of the work of the liberal Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge Pietro Baro.⁴ Harvey claimed Baro as a Cambridge friend, while Sidney remembered Maçon de la Fontaine in his will and perhaps had known him since 1577. Then the minister helped Duplessis-Mornay with his translation of *De l'Eglise*, also contributing a preliminary sonnet to it, and this work may have brought him to Sidney's attention.⁵ Baro held the same theological ground as Carro, appearing to be a 'proto-Arminian...a pioneer of the intellectual reaction against John Calvin'.⁶ Their English counterpart, like Carro associated with the Temple Church, was Richard Hooker, who began his career with Leicester's recommendation to act as deputy to the ill Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, Hugh Kingsmill.⁷ These examples show how readily the Chancellor

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 30; cf. p. 12, that it 'is almost certainly for want of evidence' that there are no known personal links between Hotman or the Gentilis and Parmenius.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 47; William Camden, *Epistolae*, 1691, p. 17.
 3. BN MS Fonds Dupuy 8586 ff. 239v., 244v., 251v., 257v.
 4. See Baro's letters to La Fontaine in ed. J H Hessels, *Epistolae et Tractatus Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Historiam Illustrantes*, Cambridge 1889, nos. 177-9.
 5. Harvey, vol. ii, p. 83; *Miscellaneous Prose*, p. 152 and p. 222 n. to 152. 17; see more generally F de Schickler, *Les Eglises du Refuge en Angleterre*, 1892, vol. i, ch. vi.
 6. Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal*, 1979, p. 151; on Baro see H C Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge*, Cambridge 1958, ch. xvii.
 7. Leicester to Tobie Matthew, the Vice Chancellor and Convocation, the Court 5 July 1579, Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS E 302 f. 183; in the same letter on f. 183v. Leicester requests a preacher's licence to be given to the extreme puritan John Field.

introduced men he favoured into the University and how easily Oxford men moved between their close-knit academic environment and Leicester House.

The academic community at Oxford during the 1570's and 1580's still made up a very small world. As Chancellor of the University Leicester was bound to dominate it:

...by his Chauncelorschip, is cancelled almost al hope of good in that Universitie: and by his protection, it is like soone to come to destruction...The heades and officers are put in & out at his onlie discretion: & the scholars places either solde, or disposed by his letters...the good & vertuous are kept out, and companions thrust in, fit to serve his L. afterward...

the scholar complains in Leicester's Commonwealth.¹ Yet the evidence, or rather absence of it, suggests that Leicester did not often use his position as Chancellor to plant second-rate favourites on the University. The instance of his forcing three successive Rectors on Lincoln College is a rare one.² Even when he did put pressure on Convocation it was generally on behalf of foreign Protestants like Gentili, Corro and Hotman whose abilities well justified his support. His men at the University kept in close contact and shared similar interests, which were conveyed to London through men like Camden and Hotman, who thrived in both places, and as their correspondence shows maintained friendships on an international scale. The evidence for Leicester's Oxford supporters is mainly private, that of familiar letters and wills rather than the public books and works of his London friends. In both cases proof of Leicester's active support and interest is on the whole lacking. He is there as a presence, not as an intimately engaged participant. The apt metaphor for his rôle must be that of being the patron of a circle: he is at its centre, but largely invisible, surrounded by men who knew each other and to whom some sort of order and cohesiveness is given by reference to their being circumscribed by him. They come within the confines of his Commonwealth.

1. The Copie of a Leter, pp. 77-80

2. V H H Green, The Commonwealth of Lincoln College 1427-1977, Oxford 1979, pp. 127-42.

Leicester's world was an exciting and stimulating one. It was an epitome of the Renaissance culture which we associate more generally with 'Elizabethan' England. By the late 1570's he was in a position to indulge his taste for gorgeous possessions and to patronize brilliant men. They ornamented his political power as the country's leading courtier and could be used to outshine any rival. Brought together by his patronage, in return they received a centre in London and a focus for their discussions, reflected glory and status from the Earl and a chance to advance their own careers at court. Like any powerful figure Leicester inevitably had many supporters, but also many enemies whose view of him has tended to prevail for far too long.

CHAPTER III

LEICESTER'S INTELLECTUAL CIRCLE.

i. Previous Circles.

If there was not exactly a tradition of English intellectual circles similar to Leicester's London one of the late 1570's and early 1580's, there were precedents for it. It could be argued that they were a distinctively humanist feature since they relied more on personal friendship for their formation than on royal patronage. However the first group of English Christian Humanists found patrons in Henry VIII, the Lady Margaret Beaufort and Queen Catherine of Aragon. They were essentially a metropolitan circle based in London, intimate with its merchants and especially associated with Doctors' Commons.¹ Their intellectual heirs could be found in both Oxford and Cambridge, but especially at that 'University within it selfe', St. John's College, Cambridge, where in the 1520's and later the politicians and writers who so dominated Elizabeth's England were educated.² It was possibly with what had been achieved at St. John's in mind that Matthew Parker endowed and fostered Corpus Christi College, from his election as Master in 1544 until his death in 1577. He clearly wanted Corpus to be a centre of humane learning and was especially concerned that its library should contain as many source materials for the study of British history as possible, besides a strong collection of classical texts.³

Daniel Rogers' gift of up to thirteen manuscripts to the library must be connected with this, even though they came independently of Parker's own bequest.⁴ Rogers who will emerge as a leading figure in this chapter had been born abroad and became a highly important international diplomat. During Queen Mary's reign like so many Englishmen he had gone abroad and come into contact with men in Zurich, Basle and Strasbourg, who lived together 'in collegio'.⁵ These exiles stayed

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1. See J K McConica, English Humanists and Reformation Politics, Oxford 1965, ch. iii.
 2. The phrase is Nashe's, vol. iii, p. 317; on the College and the links between its members at about the time of the Alençon courtship, see Johnstone Parr, 'Robert Greene and his Classmates at Cambridge', PMLA, vol. lxxvii, 1962, pp. 536-43.
 3. May McKisack, Medieval History in the Tudor Age, Oxford 1971, ch. ii.
 4. They are listed by M R James, A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge 1912, vol. i, p. xxvii.
 5. C H Garrett, The Marian Exiles, Cambridge 1938, pp. 9, 56, 199; the phrase 'in collegio' is Bullinger's about the students who lived in Froschauer's house.

closely together in self-governing communities, absorbed in religious and political thinking. Unable to master native languages they had to communicate with their hosts in Latin, so that they gained a good taste of that international Latin culture which flourished on the continent. Many of the names of the exiles are familiar:- Richard Cox, later Bishop of Ely, Edmund Grindal, John Day the printer, the Knollys family, Miles Coverdale of course, Sir Anthony Cooke and Sir John Cheke, John Aylmer, Thomas Becon and Francis Walsingham. One of the most interesting memorials to the Englishmen abroad was Laurence Humphrey's life of his fellow-exile John Jewel, which as well as containing his own poems on the Bishop's death included others on it by such notables as Thomas Wilson, Alexander Nowell, Thomas and Laurence Bodley, John Raynoldes, John Foxe, George Buchanan and Daniel Rogers, all of whom had spent time abroad during the 1550's for one or another reason.¹

Leicester knew many of the exiles and no doubt their collegiate life was a formative influence on his idea of an academy. Yet as Eleanor Rosenberg has argued it was not until the last decade of his life that he could afford to abandon the promotion of propaganda on the state's behalf and become 'an independent patron of great wealth and good will'.² By the late 1570's he had come under other and more immediately suggestive influences from France, than the Marian exiles. He could have learnt about the great French academies of Baïf, the King, and as I shall argue in the next chapter, of Alençon, from Valentine Dale the English ambassador in Paris 1573 until 1576.³ However Sir Thomas Smith could have told him more.

Smith was a diplomat and intellectual of European significance well acquainted with Leicester. His brilliant career began at the Queen's College, Cam-

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1. Joannis Juelli Vita & Mors, 1573, sigs. Mm3v.-Qq2v. The Bodleian copy of this work, (4^o M 25 Th), contains an autograph translation into Latin of John Foxe's poem in Greek on sig.Qq2v. by Daniel Rogers, with a note saying that this copy of the book was his own. ✕
 2. Rosenberg, p. 278.
 3. On Dale see below ch. IV, pt. iv.

bridge, but he was intimate with many of his contemporaries like Ascham, Cheke and Walter Haddon at other colleges. He lectured on natural philosophy and Greek, becoming university orator in 1533 and Regius Professor of Civil Law in 1540. By then he had been abroad to Paris and Padua to study. In 1548 he was knighted, became Secretary of State and went on an embassy to Brussels; in 1551 he was sent to Paris, returning there from 1562 until 1566 as resident ambassador and again in 1571 and 1572 to negotiate the first Alençon courtship.

Smith felt that he belonged to a European rather than to just an English culture. He had his two books De Recta & Emendata Linguae Graecae Pronuntiatione and De Recta & Emendata Linguae Anglicae Scriptione, Dialogus, published by his friend Robert Estienne at Paris in 1568 rather than at London. As ambassador in France he had ample opportunity to observe the intellectual and social life of the Court, to study its architecture and to send innumerable books - including works by Ronsard¹ - back to England. If in the sixteenth century a man's mind really can be judged by his library then Smith had an extraordinary mind and a very wide range of scholarly and practical interests. In 1562 he modestly told the Cardinal of Ferrara that he had 'been many years at home, passing his time hawking and hunting, and now and then reading a book as a philosopher', but the contents of his library suggest his reading was much less casual.² Two lists survive from 1566 and 1576, while many of the books themselves are still in the Queen's College, Cambridge.³ Among the more interesting works listed in 1566 are Commynes' Annales, Bede, Bembo's history of Venice, Paolo Jovio, most of Machiavelli in Italian, Plato in Latin and Greek, Politian, Pico della Mirandola, some Dürer and Dante, two copies of Petrarch, some Boccaccio and Aretino,

1. A L Prescott, French Poets and the English Renaissance, p. 83.

2. CSP For., vol. vii, no. 996.

3. The lists are contained in Cambridge, Queen's College MSS 83 and 89; see also the volume of inventories MS 49. The 1566 list is printed in John Strype, Life of Sir Thomas Smith, Appendix VI.

Du Bellay, Baif and Ramus. By 1576 there is more Ramus, Humphrey's Vita Juelli, five editions of Vitruvius, Lhuyd's Description of Britain and Bodin's Methodus.

Strype calls Smith 'one of the greatest scholars of his age...a man of general learning' and goes on to list his interests: he was 'a great Platonist... He understood physic well', he was 'well skilled' in chemistry, 'an excellent mathematician', 'an arithmetician', not 'a smatterer in astronomy', 'a great master' in politics, 'an excellent linguist...A great historian...An orator equal to the best...He had also a very good genius in architecture...He was a great judge of learning'.¹ Perhaps his main enthusiasms were politics and political theory, the law, economic theory and architecture. For at Hill Hall he built what is probably the first neo-classical house in England and lavishly decorated it with superb and important wall-paintings.² On the same estate in Essex, Theydon Mount, he had another residence called Mount Hall as well as a house in Saffron Walden close to John Harvey's home. Early on in Gabriel Harvey's career Sir Thomas Smith took an interest in the brilliant scholar guiding him towards his own study of the civil law.

Smith's patronage of Harvey was rare because he favoured institutions rather than individuals. On account of this it is hard to show that Smith encouraged an intellectual circle based on his three Essex homes, however plausible it is that he did so. Yet a little evidence can be produced to suggest that he did not spend the dozen or so years from his return to England in 1566 until his death in 1577 just hawking and hunting in the country. For almost everything that he wrote Smith chose the form of the dialogue and with it certain obvious associations. Twice in the introduction to the discourse on the Queen's marriage he remarks on this. Once he calls it 'a Disputacion muche like after

1. Ibid., pp. 159-66.

2. For a recent but unsympathetic study of Smith see Mary Dewar, Sir Thomas Smith. On Hill Hall see Richard Simpson, 'Sir Thomas Smith and the Wall Paintings at Hill Hall, Essex: Scholarly Theory and Design in the Sixteenth Century', Journal of the British Archaeological Association, vol. cxxx, 1977, pp. 1-20; Simpson makes the intriguing suggestion that the murals may have been by Lucas d'Heere the designer of the Valois Tapestries, ibid., pp. 17-19.

the olde sorte of Platoes Dialogues or Tullies' and once, more suggestively saying 'for me thinckes I am in Platoes Academie or Ciceroes Tusculane'.¹ This dialogue set at Mount Hall and involving his neighbour Francis Wyatt may have provided Harvey with the model he needed for the discourse on earthquakes in his letter to Spenser. That debate takes place 'in a Gentlemans house, here in Essex' and one of those present is 'an auncient learned common Lawyer' a graduate and fellow of a Cambridge college in Queen Mary's reign, who may be derived at a distance from the civilian Smith.²

Smith however was dead by 1580 and it seems more likely that Harvey is thinking of his friend and former pupil Arthur Capell's house at Rayne near Braintree than of Mount or Hill Hall. Manuscripts of Smith's major work De Republica Anglorum are not very rare, but a copy in the Bodleian belonged to Arthur Capell and as well as his signature carries two pithy and Harvey-like mottoes in Latin. E.K. in 'January' refers to his 'perfect copie in wryting' lent to him by Harvey with other of Smith's 'most grave and excellent wrytings'. A second manuscript copy of the book is at Cambridge and is in the distinctive binding of books from Tobie Matthew's library.³ As I have suggested Matthew had links with Leicester's circle and with Sidney⁴ but further connexions with Smith are suggested through the note-book of Robert Dowe the fellow of All Souls. For as well as containing many of Matthew's letters, orations and sermons it also preserves two of Smith's Latin lectures commending the civil law, a letter from him to Corro written at Hampton Court on 27 December 1575 and a copy of 'the Instructions for his 1566 mission to France about Calais'.⁵ Smith's presence in the note-book is not just fortuitous; Dowe clearly admired him and may have

1. BL MS Add. 48047, ff. 97, 98v.

2. Letters, pp. 613a, 618b.

3. Bodleian MS Rawl. D 96; Cambridge, Trinity College MS 1504, (see Bernard Quaritch's Catalogue of Manuscripts, 1893, no. 150). Other copies of the De Republica Anglorum are listed by Mary Dewar, 'A Question of Plagiarism: the 'Harrison Chapters' in Sir Thomas Smith's De Republica Anglorum', Historical Journal, vol. xxii, 1979, p. 923 n.9; to these should be added the manuscript sold at Sotheby's 20 February 1967.

4. See above ch. II, pt. iv.

5. Bodleian MS Top. Oxon. e 5.

met him through his other and older friend Matthew. Dowe's association with Smith is confirmed because of the additional fact that he owned 'Musarum Lachrimae' as it is simply listed in the inventory of his books taken after his death.¹ This of course is Harvey's memorial volume of Latin verse to his patron, Smithus.

If it is hard to prove that Smith encouraged his own academy then it is at least clear that there was a group of men - Harvey, Dowe, Capell and Matthew - who admired Smith and were interested in his work. What I want to propose is that Smith with his European intellectualism served as a model for the sort of academic atmosphere which Leicester went on to promote. Smith's main interests, law, history and politics, became with poetry perhaps replacing economics, those of the Earl's circle. The main link between the two groups besides Leicester and Smith's personal friendship is Harvey, and to a lesser extent Dowe, who suggested to Leicester the type of highly sophisticated patronage, the cultivation of intellect and the promotion of literature which a continental Renaissance Prince ought to encourage - the culture of which Smith had been a part. He died in August 1577 and Eleanor Rosenberg notices a change in 'the last decade' of Leicester's patronage, which must accordingly begin at about this very time.² Following what Smith stood for, and stimulated by his growing experience of Alençon's circle, Leicester saw he could patronize a group of men to promote his own interests and who could also produce a great, new national literature. It is possible to identify the group of men and to outline their concerns, showing a deliberate system of patronage on Leicester's behalf.

ii. Law.

'In Leicester's party the study of the law stood in high esteem', Geoffrey Shepherd has written and pointing out that Leicester House stood beside the Inns

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1. O U Archives, Chancellor's Court Inventories, vol. D-F, Hyp./B/12, Robert Dowe, f. 3; as well as Humphrey's Juelli Vita & Mors he also owned Smith's books on English and Greek pronunciation, ibid., f.2. This list of books will be referred to as Dowe, Inventory.
 2. Rosenberg, pp. 278, 279.

of Court has indicated the free interchange of ideas and talk about law and literature between the two places.¹ The study of law in the sixteenth century was not just part of any gentleman's education, it was also the path to power and importance in the worlds of government and diplomacy. To Leicester's party law was the key to national and international power and prestige. International relations were conducted according to the current doctrines of political theory and these could not be divorced from the law.

All this can be followed in Harvey and illustrated in Sidney who derived some of his knowledge of the subject from his civilian friends at Oxford. Under Sir Thomas Smith's direction Harvey chose to study the civil law and 'to be shortly novus Justinianus' for by learning about the law he will grow to 'a ripenes of judgment and discretion' and a better knowledge of the Roman Empire.² Harvey made the decision some time in the 1570's and spent the rest of his life, from winning the Trinity Hall fellowship in 1578, to getting his LL.B. in 1584, his Oxford D.C.L. in 1585 and so being able to practise in the Court of Arches, pursuing this course. He hoped it would lead to the sort of career in government and diplomacy which Smith had so successfully pursued. Even if it did not, Harvey's admiration for the law was enormous and he called it 'the master builder, the governor of the republic, protectress of remains, queen of arts, and the kingly and imperial profession'.³ The only one of the arts which was on a level with law was the art of war or of arms⁴ and Harvey never seriously turned his energies in that direction. Instead he followed his patron Smith into the civil law, his 'onli dout' being whether he ought to pursue the common law.⁵ By choosing to be a civilian he, as in so many other cases, went against the national current, showed his European outlook and allied himself to such fellow-civilians as Smith, Valentine Dale and Robert Dowe.⁶

1. Shepherd, pp. 30, 31.

2. Letter Book, f. 88v.

3. Stern, p. 164; this is Stern's paraphrase of the Latin cited in n. 41.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

5. Letter Book, ff. 88, 88v.

6. On the general reception of Roman law in England in the Renaissance, see W S Holdsworth, A History of English Law, 3rd ed., vol. iv, 1945, pp. 217-93.

From the point of view of the chief legal interest of Leicester's circle, international relations, a knowledge of civil law was essential - it would be pointless discussing the problems raised by the Netherlands on the basis of the common English law. It is not surprising then to witness the Earl, encouraging and patronising continental civilians, such as Alberico Gentili and Jean Hotman, or to see men like Pierre Pithou and Julius Caesar successfully gaining a B.C.L. and a D.C.L. respectively during his Chancellorship. The number of English civilians was sufficiently small for them to have probably known each other to some extent: the allied organisations of the Court of Arches and Doctors' Commons would have encouraged this. Harvey for example twice mentions the fellow of All Souls and advocate in the Court of Arches, William Aubrey, the grandfather of John.¹ On both occasions he admires the total control and mastery of his knowledge of the law. When he first mentions him he also writes that John Hammond has a similar ability.

Harvey certainly had a reason to know this John Hammond, for as well as succeeding him in his fellowship at Trinity Hall, they had both been deputed to go to the Protestant conference at Schmalkalden in 1578.² The same man was commissioned by Sidney to write an opinion concerning the imprisonment of Mary, Queen of Scots, and the activities of the Spanish ambassador Mendoza, in 1585 or earlier but before her trial and execution.³ The opinion was endorsed 'A Defense of the Roman Civill lawe, and of the Generall lawe of the world' and shows Sidney to have been interested in the application of civil law to contemporary issues in exactly the way one would have expected him to be. As I shall argue later in relation to the Old Arcadia Sidney's interest in these sorts

1. Marginalia, pp. 96. 2, 146. 18.

2. Stern, pp. 48, 49; Marginalia, p. 21 n. 1; that the 'Hammon' mentioned there was Hammond is confirmed by his entry in DNB.

3. BL MS Add. 48027, ff. 380-97v. The tract is endorsed 'This was written as I have heard by D.Hamond at the request of Sir Philipp Sidney' and 'Written before the going of the lordes and other her Majestys Commissioners to Fotheringhay', which was in 1586. Other examples of Hammond's opinions are in BL MSS Add. 48063, 48064, 48088 and Bodleian MS Rawl. D 1344.

of problems was by no means a new one. Alberico Gentili whose De Legationibus Libri Tres, 1585 and dedicated to Sidney, grew out of his involvement with Jean Hotman on the case of Mendoza's conspiracy is evidence of this. The dedication contains both praise and a defence of Leicester which follow on from the dedication of his earlier book De Jure Interpretibus Dialogi Sex, 1582, to him.

Although a conservative Gentili was probably the first systematic exponent of modern international law. He was patronised by both Leicester and Sidney, and acquainted with his friend Dyer, 'tuus ille Sophus Laelius' as he calls him.¹ Gentili dedicated the second book of his Lectioinum et Epistolarum, 1583-4, to Dyer and the fourth book to Leicester's secretary Arthur Atey, himself a civil lawyer. The first book is addressed to Thomas Heneage and mentions Harvey's friend William Aubrey's praise of the De Jure Interpretibus. Robert Dowe owned some of Gentili's works and one of the Italian's pupils, Anthony Sherley, was a friend of Sidney's, who went with him to the Low Countries and was with him at Zutphen.²

Law played an important part in Leicester's faction as an academic subject. The promotion of the Protestant cause relied upon its civil side, while an understanding of the common law was essential for maintaining the Earl's position within the country and for dominating its governmental institutions. Leicester's party had to understand the state and the way it worked if it was to be used to their best advantage. This is evident from the importance attached to Smith's De Republica Anglorum in the context of European political theorists. Further support for this view can be found in the undated dedication by Henry Finch of a manuscript of his Nomotechnia to Sidney.³ He only presented the parts of the work which became Books Two and Three in the revised English edition and they

1. Alberico Gentili, De Legationibus Libri Tres, 1585, sig. *4.

2. Dowe, Inventory, f. 3 as 'Gentilis Opera'; G H J van der Molen, Alberico Gentili and the Development of International Law, 2nd ed., Leiden 1968, p. 47.

3. Bodleian MS Rawl. E 43.

deal largely with the nature of the state, of property and of civil and criminal wrong-doing. As has been pointed out, the most original and important part of this is the first^{book}, which 'gives by far the best description of the king and his prerogative which had yet been written' and on which Blackstone based his more famous account.¹

iii. History.

As the law was the public means to national and even international fame, the study of history was essential to an understanding of the law; but it was also necessary 'in order to win public support for nationalist and Protestant policies'.² Historical analysis still played an important part in the civil lawyer's arguments and for the layman history could be used at once to justify the present state of the Church of England, to support the Crown, to inspire the Protestant cause, to warn men of the dangers exemplified in the past and to teach them the mutability of national and personal fortune. Of the many developments in the nature of historical thought which the Renaissance brought about perhaps the most interesting was the growing importance of scholarly antiquarianism. The physical manifestation of the past in the present came to have a strong and later on a compulsive hold on the English imagination from the second half of the sixteenth century. The twin concerns of Leicester's intellectual circle comprised this antiquarianism and a much broader interest in the political implications of history. These two strands come together in England's first two 'modern' historians and it has suggestively been said of them that, 'When Camden or Cotton turned to write history, it was historical work influenced by the intellectual legacy of the 1580s'.³

1. W S Holdsworth, A History of English Law, vol. v, p. 400.

2. Shepherd, p. 41; see also D R Kelley, Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship: Language, Law and History in the French Renaissance, New York 1970, and his 'History, English Law and the Renaissance', Past and Present, no. 65, 1974, pp. 24-51, and Christopher Brooks and Kevin Sharpe's 'Debate' over the same title and Kelley's 'A Rejoinder', ibid., no. 72, 1976, pp. 133-42, 143-6. The latest of many books on sixteenth century historiography is Arthur B Ferguson, Clio Unbound, Perception of the Social and Cultural Past in Renaissance England, Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, no. 2, Durham, N.C. 1979.

3. Kevin Sharpe, Sir Robert Cotton, p. 241.

One of the men that Camden turned to in writing his Britannia was the Marian exile and diplomat Daniel Rogers. When Camden took on the project of a history of Roman Britain which Ortelius initiated, passed on to Humphrey Lhuyd and then on his death to Rogers, he seems to have inherited his note-book on the subject. Rogers worked on the book from about 1572 until 1580; at the beginning of this period he started to write a series of Latin poems on English towns and completed a long one on Ireland, perhaps to complement his antiquarian work.¹ The note-book which eventually passed into Cotton's collection suggests a study in two parts: a history and a description of the province and studies in ancient coins and inscriptions, yet strangely enough not in geography or place names. Rogers twice promised Ortelius another work called 'Laws and Habits of the Ancient Britons' but that has disappeared completely.² He could see the sort of history which he wanted to write and in a limited way how to execute it using some new materials. A very busy man with interests in other areas it is not surprising that he never managed to complete it. Yet as an antiquary his manuscripts and collections were still being used in the next century by Brian Twyne in his history of Oxford University.³

In 1577 Abraham Ortelius visited England and almost certainly met Camden. They may have been introduced through John Dee, Emmanuel Meteren or Daniel Rogers - the two last being relations of the great geographer.⁴ It is highly likely that it was on this occasion that Ortelius handed the English part of his great project over to Camden, for he began to work seriously on the book in the summer of 1578, following the Queen's progress in East Anglia.⁵ A first draft was ready in 1579-80,⁶ in which year he 'made contact with' a group of Oxford men whom I have already associated with Sidney and Leicester and one of whose unifying interests lay in the study of Tacitus. F J Levy has listed and discussed its

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1. The note-book is BL MS Cott. Tit. F X; see F J Levy, 'Daniel Rogers as Antiquary', BHR, vol. xxvii, 1965, pp. 448, 453, 457, 461.
 2. Ibid., pp. 453-8.
 3. Brian Twyne, Antiquitatis Academiae Oxoniensis Apologia, Oxford 1608, sig. Eee2.
 4. F J Levy, 'The Making of Camden's Britannia', BHR, vol. xxvi, 1964, p. 87.
 5. A Ortelius, Epistulae, ed. J H Hessels, Cambridge 1887, no. 78.
 6. Levy, 'Camden's Britannia', p. 89.

members: Henry and Thomas Savile, Jean Hotman, Alberico Gentili and the less familiar Henry Cuffe, later secretary to the Earl of Essex. Sidney and Camden had these friends - and Dee and Rogers - in common, even if politically and socially they were far apart. Although it would be mistaken to see Camden as a member of the Leicester House circle, Sidney may well have helped him in a material way.¹

One attitude which these men had in common was their rejection of the myth that the Britons were descended from Brutus and the Trojans. Even though Polydore Vergil had discredited the story long ago, it was given new life by Humphrey Lhuyd whose Commentarioli Descriptionis Britannicae Fragmentum, Cologne 1572 and dedicated to Ortelius, was translated into English in 1573 as The Breviary of Britayne. Within a year or two of the Latin edition's appearance it was amusing both Sidney and Languet because of its happy acceptance of the myth.² Much of Camden's Britannia is taken up with solid research proving Lhuyd and ultimately Geoffrey of Monmouth to have been wrong. On the other hand Harvey, who like Spenser saw the fictitious British history in a different way, owned a copy of the English translation and perhaps in a fit of patriotism wrote of how he admired the book.³ Yet the most interesting response to Lhuyd's book came from Scotland and serves to introduce that distant but important member of Leicester's circle, the great humanist George Buchanan. While his friend Daniel Rogers dismissed Lhuyd's 'futile and trivial old wives' tales' his book had a greater and more ominous significance for Buchanan.⁴

As Hugh Trevor-Roper has shown, Buchanan's evident hatred of Lhuyd was inspired by the latter's contemptuous dismissal of all of Hector Boece's history

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1. Ibid., pp. 84-6. It is interesting that Henry Cuffe whose links with Sidney are otherwise circumstantial adduced mainly through Jean Hotman, should quote from Sidney in his work dating from 1600, The Differences of the Ages of Mans Life, 1607, p. 13.
 2. Osborn, pp. 140, 141, 146, 147.
 3. Marginalia, p. 164. 16, 17.
 4. George Buchanan, Opera Omnia, ed. T Ruddiman, Edinburgh 1715, vol. i, p. xx, quoted and translated by H R Trevor-Roper, 'George Buchanan and the Ancient Scottish Constitution', EHR Supplement no. 3, 1966, p. 26.

of Scotland before and during Roman times. Without Boece's forty and now legendary kings, 'the historical basis of the alleged ancient Scottish constitution' was destroyed, and with it the foundations both of Buchanan's own History and his position as the prime advocate and theorist of radical Protestantism.¹ The result was that his History which may have been more or less finished by 1573 was laid aside and left unpublished until Buchanan came into contact with Leicester's circle who encouraged him to resume work on it in order to supply more theoretical support for their own politics.² Buchanan's Rerum Scoticarum Historia first appeared at Edinburgh in 1582 and provided the 'fullest empirical grounding' for the 'populist ideology of revolution', the right of oppressed nations to oppose tyrants.³ It is a prime example of the political uses of history.

However this was a dangerous game to play and Buchanan's work provoked the scorn and anger of other historians and writers as much for its political position as for its wilful credulity. Camden turned dismissively to the second of these in his Britannia and elsewhere in private.⁴ In his Annals of 1615 he broadened his attack. Again Hugh Trevor-Roper has investigated the origins of this work and described how it was meant to supplement and correct De Thou's account of Mary, Queen of Scots' reign and how it was composed under pressure from both James I and De Thou himself.⁵ For De Thou had partly based his version of the King's mother's reign on Buchanan; her son did not like what he and all Europe read, and was anxious about what was to come. While James hated Buchanan for what he wrote about his mother, Camden hated him for his rhetorical and untruthful humanist style of history, with its moral simplifications - a style which Camden rejects and disparages.⁶ The other target for his scorn is Buchanan's political heir,

1. Ibid., pp. 27, 28.

2. Ibid., p. 35; Dowe owned both Buchanan's History and Camden's Britannia, Inventory, ff. 1, 3; Edmund Grindal gave Francis Mills a copy of the History on 20 January 1583, Trinity College, Cambridge, Grylls 7.215.

3. Skinner, vol. ii, pp. 339, 340.

4. Trevor-Roper, 'George Buchanan', p. 27 and n. 1.

5. H R Trevor-Roper, Queen Elizabeth's First Historian, William Camden and the Beginnings of English 'Civil History', Neale Lecture in English History, 1971.

6. Ibid., pp. 23, 24.

the Earl of Leicester, for he was 'the personification of all the policies and political attitudes which he disliked'. He hates the Earl as only one who has swallowed Leicester's Commonwealth whole can.¹ It is worth remembering that he dedicated his Britannia to Burghley who also first suggested the writing of the Annals.

As Trevor-Roper shows, Camden's new work was written in the style of 'civil history' propounded by Bodin and practised by De Thou. Yet as we shall see Bodin's Methodus only really began to be noticed in England in the 1580's, promoted by the author's being in this country and his friendship with Gabriel Harvey.² For above all the Methodus seems to have been an important book for the Leicester House circle. Harvey probably had a copy of it since he refers to it on at least one occasion; Dowe certainly owned one.³ Sidney commended it to his brother.⁴ So that Camden shares this interest with Leicester and his group but comes to use it against them. I think the same is true for another and equally potent influence on the historian, for his choice of title, historical method and general outlook in the Annals are highly reminiscent of Tacitus. If Camden was looking for a model on which to base his history of the Queen's reign he might well have turned to Tacitus' history of the first century A.D., perhaps even portraying Leicester as his Nero, Tiberius or Caligula.⁵ There is yet a further influence on Camden's account of the Earl - present also as we have seen in Leicester's Commonwealth - that of Machiavelli, who in Renaissance historiography and political theory could not be separated from Tacitus.

This alliance which sometimes simply became a confusion developed on account of several factors. Both historians were deeply concerned with the return of mon-

1. Ibid., pp. 28, 29; see also above ch. II, pt. i.

2. See below ch. IV, pt. v.

3. Stern, p. 166; Dowe, Inventory, f. 3.

4. Sidney, vol. iii, p. 130; for his rejection of its arguments in the Defence of Poetry, see Shepherd, p. 176, n. to p. 109/35ff.

5. Camden borrowed without comment a large part of the Agricola for his Britannia, Kenneth C Schellhase, Tacitus in Renaissance Political Thought, Chicago and London 1976, p. 104; Leicester owned two pictures of Nero's wife Poppea, HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, vol. i, p. 291.

archy to a republic and with it the fear of tyranny. Machiavelli saw in Tacitus an author strongly critical of monarchy and its dangers, but also a source of political instruction, teaching tyrants how to enforce and maintain their tyranny and their subjects how to survive their reign. Men seeking a knowledge of political science looked into both authors: commentators on Tacitus like Carlo Pasquali or Giovanni Botero produced in effect glosses on Machiavelli. In an age which hated and feared the Florentine, his Roman predecessor provided a safer but equally fascinating subject for study.¹

Anyone who read Bodin's Methodus, as Camden and Leicester's circle did, would be drawn to Tacitus since he is virtually Bodin's favourite historian, for whose impartiality and illustrations of the practice and principles of politics, he has an enormous admiration.² The fact of a revival of interest in Tacitus in the sixteenth century can hardly be doubted, but once again he is an author especially dear to Leicester House and to Camden. For if his subject is tyranny then the one group can apply his teachings to their interest in limited monarchy and active opposition to absolutism, as exemplified in the Netherlands, while the historian can consider Leicester as, at least, a potential tyrant. For Harvey who longed for a 'British Tacitus' only his predecessor Livy outshone him; as one might expect Dowe owned a copy of his works.³ Sidney recommended him both to his brother, for his 'wittie word' and to Edward Denny. Robert Sidney was the recipient of G M Manelli's translation of the Agricola into Italian of 1585, while his annotated copy of Lipsius' edition of the works of the same year survives in the British Library.⁴ Yet the main evidence for Leicester's circle's interest comes from their association with that group of Oxford Taciteans, the

1. The classic but dated work on the subject is Giuseppe Toffanin, Machiavelli e il "Tacitismo", Padua 1921; my account is based on Schellhase's more recent study, op. cit., ch. iv and v; see also the excellent essay by P Burke, 'Tacitism' in ed. T A Dorey, Tacitus, 1969, pp. 149-71.

2. Schellhase, op. cit., pp. 110-16.

3. Stern, pp. 151, 152; Dowe, Inventory, f. 1.

4. Sidney, vol. iii, p. 131; Osborn, p. 539; Robert Sidney's copy of Tacitus is BL C 142 e 13.

Saviles, Hotman and Gentili. It was of course the Saviles who in the 1590's translated Tacitus into English and wrote brief notes on his work and who with Bacon and Sir John Hayward formed a Tacitean circle around Leicester's political heir Essex.¹

There is however further evidence for Leicester House interest which leads on to another subject. Along with Muret the man who did most to promote the study of Tacitus in the second half of the sixteenth century was the great flemish scholar Justus Lipsius. Not only did he lecture publicly on the historian but he produced several editions of his works with invaluable commentaries, notes and textual scholarship. Spanning nearly a quarter of a century from 1574 until 1588 these made Tacitus more accessible and more easily understood than ever before, and his own books, especially the Politica reflect this interest. Lipsius was of course a friend, admirer and eventually an elegist of Sidney's and deeply involved in the fate of the Low Countries. When Leicester was at Leiden he went to hear Lipsius lecturing and entertained him afterwards; appropriately enough the subject of the lecture was the Agricola so Leicester heard both about his own country and the man who became a general.² From his interest in Tacitus and the fate of his own native land Lipsius developed a strong concern for tyranny. He did not take the radical Huguenot line of active opposition to it but instead evolved his own philosophy of 'constantia', of Christian Stoicism, to combat it.³ So that just as we should expect the Leicester House circle to be interested in tyranny, even if they held widely differing views on it, we could fairly expect them to be conscious of the sort of Senecan and stoic values put forward by their friend Lipsius. I shall argue for this in relation to the Old Arcadia later, but it is also worth noting that The Mutability Cantos were to contain 'The Legend of Constancie'.

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1. Schellhase, op. cit., pp. 157-63; I cannot of course agree with his conclusions about the relative lack of English interest in Tacitus before James I's reign.
 2. Dorsten, p. 117. *
 3. See J L Saunders, Justus Lipsius, The Philosophy of Renaissance Stoicism, New York 1955.

With Machiavelli - who may well have been a source for Lipsius' stoicism¹ - history and politics are united. In his thought there was the teaching of political science based on past experience for which men looked. His handling of such themes as tyranny and personal ambition made him an invaluable author for those who supported Leicester or for those who were against him. For the first twenty or so years of Elizabeth's reign Machiavelli was the unknown object of several fears, despite the fact that in the first half of the century he was read seriously and attentively. Around 1576 or 1577, largely due to events in France a new attitude to him emerges, of attacking him in public but also of reading him seriously in private.² Harvey is the obvious example of this, but both Sidney and Spenser tacitly draw on him in their works, while Alberico Gentili was the first man to defend Machiavelli against his new critics and especially against Innocent Gentillet.³ As with law we can see a group of men patronized by Leicester absorbed in the study of a distinctive kind of history, which compared to native chronicles was decidedly modern and European in outlook. Again its study was by no means purely academic but was useful from the point of view of maintaining the Earl's position in the country and justifying the Protestant cause.

iv. Protestant Politics.

a Theory.

There were three main issues which dominated the political thought of Leicester's circle during the period of the Alençon courtship. First, which I shall consider in detail last of all, the problem of the Queen's succession and the wisdom of marrying a foreign prince. Second the Protestant cause of interference in the Netherlands and so of the duties of foreign nations to peoples oppressed by tyranny. Finally the problem of what to do with Mary, Queen of

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1. Neal Wood, 'Some Common Aspects of the Thought of Seneca and Machiavelli', *RQ*, vol. xxi, 1968, pp. 11-23.
 2. Emile Gasquet, *Le Courant Machiavelien dans la Pensée et La Littérature Anglaises du XVIIe Siècle*, (1971), pp. 113, 185.
 3. *Ibid.*, pp. 343-69; D Panizza, 'Machiavelli e Alberico Gentili' in *Machiavellismo e anti-Machiavellici nel Cinquecento*, "IL Pensiero Politico", Anno 2, no. 3, Florence 1969, pp. 148-55.

Scots, of whether princes are subject to constitutional or natural law. For Leicester and his circle these matters raised theoretical arguments as well as promoting practical action. Yet more than anything else the French civil wars stimulated English thought on the subject of good and bad government; out of them came a massive and radical Huguenot literature directed against absolutism.¹

The Leicester House interest was not all of its own making and a further precedent existed in that Sir Thomas Smith had concerned himself with political theory. Half-a-dozen years before Bodin called for an investigation into the true nature of a commonwealth in the sixth chapter of his Methodus, Sir Thomas Smith while in France had provided one with his De Republica Anglorum.² Smith was probably also the author of the radical Discourse of the Commonweal, an earlier work which circulated in manuscript like the De Republica, but also like it was printed soon after Smith's death, the two tracts coming out significantly in 1581 and 1583.³ The De Republica is more a descriptive than a polemical work suggesting the boundaries of the subject - including that of whether rebellion is ever justified - rather than exhorting men to action. Instead the work's importance lay in the solid base it provided for future critics of government, including Milton who used it extensively, so that it has been claimed that Smith's life and work, 'links the radicalism of the reign of Edward VI with the radicalism of the Revolution'.⁴

There were much more extreme writers around than Smith. The 1570's produced a fine crop of books advocating limited monarchy, chief among which were Beza's De Jure Magistratum, Francis Hotman's Francogallia, the Réveille-Matin, the Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos and Buchanan's De Jure Regni apud Scotos and William

1. See J H M Salmon, The French Religious Wars in English Political Thought, Oxford 1959.

2. Shepherd, p. 174, n. to p. 108/23ff; Dewar, Sir Thomas Smith, p. 4.

3. Mary Dewar, 'The Authorship of the "Discourse of the Commonweal"', Economic History Review, 2nd ser., vol. xix, 1966, pp. 388-400.

4. Christopher Hill, Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution, p. 271.

of Orange's Apology of 1581. All more or less advocate the Calvinist or Huguenot position of the subject's right and even his duty to rebel against ungodly tyranny and argue for the promotion of popular sovereignty.¹ As such they largely endorse the Leicestrian policies of aiding the rebels in the Low Countries and taking a firm line against Mary, Queen of Scots. There is strong evidence that Leicester's faction knew or would have known these radical works. Francis Hotman's son Jean was Leicester's secretary and Sidney's friend. The Vindiciae was either the work of Du Plessis-Mornay, as seems most likely, or of Languet.² In either case the attachment of both men to the Leicester circle and to Sidney in particular hardly needs stressing; William of Orange's Apology was probably written by them together.³ Leicester's man at St. John's College, Oxford, John Case wrote a Rebellionis Vindiciae which Wood had seen in manuscript, and E.K. in his gloss to 'September' reveals Harvey was supposed to have written a Tyrannomastix. Robert Dowe owned a copy of the Vindiciae contra Tyrannos while John Hammond in his legal opinions cites the Francogallia and Réveille-Matin with an easy familiarity.⁴ This is hardly surprising since radical Huguenot works were clearly readily available in England.

If they were not actually printed here, many appeared with false Edinburgh imprints: the reason for this was especially interesting to the Leicester House circle. For Edinburgh still retained its reputation as the home of radical Calvinism even if the Huguenots in Europe had largely taken over its political tradition. The figurehead of the Scottish movement was George Buchanan, who combined polemical anti-monarchical constitutionalist writing, the De Jure Regni apud Scotos and De Maria Scotorum Regina, with more literary productions propounding similar views such as the drama Baptistes. Buchanan represented the living tradition of political heterodoxy and for this and for his influence with

1. This very simplified summary is based on Skinner, vol. ii, esp. ch. ix.

2. On the question of authorship see ibid., vol. ii, p. 305 n. 3.

3. Ibid., vol. ii, p. 338.

4. Wood, vol. i, col. 687; Dowe, Inventory, f. 3; Bodleian MS Rawl. D 1344 ff. 5v., 25v.; BL MS Add. 48027 f. 384v.

his pupil James VI he was courted by Leicester and his circle. This process has been well described by James E Phillips¹ and helps to explain the tumultuous publication of so many of his works at London during the late 1570's and early 1580's. The Baptistes was printed in London in four different issues in 1577 and 1578; the De Jure Regni was entered to Aggas there on 19 November 1580 and appeared in three separate issues with Edinburgh imprints in 1579 and 1580, while Aggas was also involved with the second and third editions of 1580 and 1581; Vautrollier printed Buchanan's versions of the Psalms in 1580 and 1583 and in the same year an edition of the Scottish history may have appeared in London.² All of this activity must be related to the visit Buchanan made to London in 1577.³ This must also have been the occasion on which he signed the portrait of himself and dated it 'August 1577' which Harvey added to his copy of De Maria Scotorum Regina. Sidney, another friend of Rogers' and of Thomas Randolph corresponded with the great Scotsman.⁴

The warm reception given within the Leicester House faction to the De Jure Regni⁵ can only have been equalled by their interest in Bodin's République. Diametrically opposed to the Huguenot position Bodin's absolutism still interested Sidney and his friends.⁶ Again there was a precedent for this with Sir Thomas Smith since he added a long passage which follows Bodin to his - if it is his - Discourse of the Commonweal, when he revised it in 1576.⁷ Equally the De Republica like La République attempts to define sovereignty. If there is no evidence for a similar work produced by Leicester's faction itself there is a book written by a man with tantalisingly strong links with it. Charles Merbury's A Briefe Discourse of Royall Monarchie, as of the best Common Weale, 1581, has been described as the first English work to draw almost entirely on

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1. James E Phillips, 'George Buchanan and the Sidney Circle', HLQ, vol. xii, 1948-9, pp. 23-55.
 2. STC 3969-77, 3983, 3984, 3992.
 3. CSP For., vol. xviii, no. 710.
 4. Stern, p. 205; ed. A I Cameron, The Warrender Papers, vol. i, Scottish Historical Society, 3rd ser., vol. xviii, 1931, p. 146.
 5. Phillips, art. cit., pp. 41-5.
 6. Skinner, vol. ii, pp. 284-301, see also below ch. IV, pt. v.
 7. Dewar, 'The Authorship of the "Discourse of the Commonweal"', pp. 398, 399.

La République and to contain 'a complete adaptation of Bodin's formulation of sovereignty'. The book was published by Vautrollier who was also responsible for several of the Buchanan editions of the same period, in the very year of Bodin's visit to England. Fears that Merbury's book might give offence are apparently reflected in the cancelled leaf containing Thomas Norton's approbation that the author's intention is 'to geve signification of his devotion, and duetyfulnesse to her Majestie, as to the best forme of Estate'.¹

Merbury took his B.A. from Oxford in 1570 having come under the influence of Leicester's protégé Laurence Humphrey, whom he mentions in the address 'To the Reader'. He also says that he was encouraged to publish the book by Henry Unton who contributes another address, in which he talks of his 'fast friendship of the Author (whome I have long, and much loved)'.² Unton was at Oxford slightly after his friend, gaining his B.A. from Oriel in 1575. Like Merbury he too had travelled in Italy and helped in the compilation of the second part of A Briefe Discourse, the Proverbi Vulgari, Raccolti in Diversi Luoghi d'Italia. The famous memorial picture of Unton's life shows he had been to Venice and Padua, while from a manuscript letter to Burghley's secretary Michael Hicks of Lincoln's Inn we know that Merbury was in Florence in September 1577 having left England in a great hurry.³ Sometime during the autumn of 1581 Merbury was attacked by pirates while at sea. From Clerkenwell he wrote to Burghley about it on November 19.⁴ The next we hear of this incident is from the Acts of the Privy Council when on 27 March 1582 the Council wrote to Cobham in France telling him to press Henri III to help Merbury, who carried the letter to Cobham himself:

for the recoverie of that which was taken from him, together with certaine other English merchantes by certaine Frenchmen in passing the seas the last sommer to serve the Duke of Anjou betwene Rye and Deepe.

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1. George L Mosse, 'The Influence of Jean Bodin's République on English Political Thought', Medievalia et Humanistica, vol. v, 1948, pp. 75, 76; the cancelled leaf, sig. G3 survives in the CUL copy Syn. 7 58 32.
 2. Briefe Discourse, sigs. *3, *4v.
 3. On the Unton picture see R C Strong, The Cult of Elizabeth, 1977, pp. 84-110; BL MS Lansd. 25 ff. 127, 128.
 4. CSP For., vol. xviii, no. 34; BL MS Lansd. 33 f. 205.

Cobham visited secretary Pinart and it emerges that Merbury was not just a merchant but as he is described in the Privy Council order, 'her Majesties servaunt'.¹ Merbury stayed in France; the last letter we have from him is to Hicks from Orleans, dated 27 August 1582 and finds him in a melancholy mood.² No doubt he made the original trip to France to help to bring Alençon over for his visit which began on 1 November 1581. Perhaps by then he had already become acquainted with Bodin who had arrived earlier in the year and been influenced by his political theories. What Merbury lost which was so important that the English were prepared to appeal personally to Henri III for its recovery, is a mystery.

More is known about his friend and encourager Unton who was related to Walsingham and belonged to the Leicester and Hatton groups. The Earl knighted him in the Netherlands in 1585 and sent him with Hatton's nephew and heir, William, to Walsingham in September 1586 with news of Sidney's condition after Zutphen.³ To a certain extent Unton and Hatton were seen as the inheritors of Sidney's rôle. They walked together at his funeral and took their honorary MA's from Oxford together in 1590.⁴ Robert Ashley dedicated his Latin translation of Du Bartas' Uranie to Unton in 1589, addressing him and Hatton as Castor and Pollux in the same way that Harvey had referred to Sidney and Dyer as the heavenly twins.⁵ In the previous year John Case of St. John's, had dedicated his Apologia Musices to them both. When Unton died in 1596 after a distinguished diplomatic career Oxford produced its third memorial volume of elegies which included poems by William Gager, John Case, Laurence Humphrey and Alberico Gentili and which is full of references to his friend Hatton, but also to Leicester, Walsingham, Sidney, Lord Grey and even to the Arcadia.⁶ It is reasonable to put Unton and his friend and follower of Bodin, Merbury, within Leicester's

1. APC, vol. xiii, p. 366; CSP For., vol. xvii, no. 696.

2. BL MS Lansd. 36 f. 196.

3. Strong, op. cit., pp. 90, 92; Correspondence of Robert Dudley, pp. 415, 416.

4. Ed. J G Nichols, The Unton Inventories, Berkshire Ashmolean Society, vol. i, 1841, pp. li, lii.

5. Sig. A3v.; Letters, p. 626a.

6. Funebria nobilissimi Equitis D H Untoni a musis Oxoniensibus Apparata, Oxford 1596, the references to Grey and the Arcadia are on sigs. Elv. and G4.*

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b Practice.

Having established Leicester's circle's theoretical interest in politics I shall later on demonstrate how their concerns are reflected in the Old Arcadia. For the moment I want to consider their politics put into action over the Alençon courtship by suggesting contexts for Sidney and Stubbs' tracts about it and by examining a poem by Sidney which has been held to relate to it. I shall reserve my discussion of Spenser's alleged treatment of the matter to a later chapter.

Sidney's and Stubbs's tracts go together, both belonging to the second half of 1579, both being inspired by the Leicester-Walsingham factions but handling the same subject in very different ways. While Sidney addresses himself to the Queen and her court, Stubbs aims his stringent pamphlet at the general reading public. Sidney's work is published in manuscript as befitted the courtier, Stubbs exposes himself to print.¹ Between them they produce the sort of polemical literature which we associate more with religious controversy than with political. Perhaps the idea that Stubbs owes something, or more precisely his tone, to the pamphlets of the French wars of Religion is not too far-fetched. Characteristically Sidney is very much less radical than Stubbs, arguing almost conservatively against any change in the Queen's position and status quo. Stressing the Queen's virtues and glory he tries to unite the divided court by arguing that the marriage would stir up trouble among Protestants as well as Roman Catholics; worst of all the marriage might provoke a dangerous contempt for the Queen among her subjects.

While offering this private and almost 'politique' advice Sidney was not acting on his own initiative but was carrying out others' intentions: 'you were

1. To Peter Beal's list of thirty-five MSS in the Index of English Literary Manuscripts, vol. i, 1450-1625, 1980, SiP. 181-214, two more may be added: BL MS Cott. Calig. E XII ff. 25-31 and MS Add. 48044 ff. 240-6v.

ordered to write as you did by those whom you were bound to obey', as Languet reassuringly told him.¹ This must refer to Leicester and his faction and although the evidence is slightly less clear-cut they must have been behind Stubbs' Discoverie. Lloyd E Berry has carefully described the writing, publication and suppression of Stubbs' book and his awful punishment, implicitly placing it within the context of other works supposedly written against the marriage;² however he neglects certain pieces of important evidence. These are contained in the French ambassador Mauvissière's despatches. He emphasises that although Stubbs was the author of the work he did not write it on his own: 'Il ce trouve que la chose vient de plus longue source que des petiz escrivains'. This coincides with what Stubbs' wife says in her petition to the Queen about her husband's 'compiling of a certain pamphlet'.³ Further Mauvissière reports that Leicester was prevented from going to France with him because of the Queen's anger when she discovered that the Gaping Gulf was written with the help of some of the Council. Even in prison those under sentence were assured by 'des premiers du royaume' that they would come to no harm and perhaps go free with honour.⁴ All this must point to Leicester and his faction. The choice as printer of Hugh Singleton, who had links with the Sidneys and produced the Shepheardes Calender as well as the Discoverie must work in the same direction. It is an interesting coincidence that Stubbs' closest friend and most frequent correspondent was his fellow-collegian the same Michael Hicks to whom Charles Merbury wrote from abroad. While Stubbs petitioned the Council, Hatton and Burghley for his release from prison, he is not known to have sought aid from Leicester the instigator of his troubles; small wonder then that he spent some of his time in prison producing metrical versions of eighteen of the first twenty-five Psalms.⁵

1. Pears, p. 187.

2. John Stubbs's Gaping Gulf with Letters and other Relevant Documents, ed. Lloyd E Berry, Charlottesville 1968, pp. xxvi-xl, xlvi-lvi.

3. PRO 31/3/27 ff. 397v., 399; Stubbs's Gaping Gulf, p. xxxvii.

4. PRO 31/3/27 ff. 408v., 410v.

5. BL MS Harl. 3230 ff. 80-2v.; they are dated 16 June 1580.

Sidney's Letter to the Queen and Stubbs' Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf scarcely call for much comment so unambiguous and clear are their style and intentions. This cannot be held to be the case with Sidney's most overtly political poem OA 66, 'As I my little flock on Ister bank...'. It has been interpreted as 'an allegorical treatment of the fate of England if Anjou should become king-consort ...a covert prophecy of the turmoil and tyranny that a French King would introduce into England'. More recently it has been argued that it is concerned with the popular demand for the Queen to wed - its setting in the Third Eclogues is significant - and with the distinction between marrying a native and a foreign prince.¹ Fogel argues that Sidney's belief in the desirability of a limited monarchy is implicit in his criticism of Man's interruption of the perfect government of animals and in his Machiavellian tactic of eliminating the strong and raising the weak. He notes the August setting of the poem which like that of 'Mother Hubbard's Tale' and the date on the title-page of Stubbs' tract relates it to the very month of Alençon's private visit in 1579. Finally he suggests that Sidney believes in aristocratic leadership against tyranny.²

As Ringler says, 'the general moral is clear - a powerful aristocracy is the best safeguard of the common people against tyranny'. The August setting by the Danube is specific because as Jean Robertson suggests Sidney is thinking of the time he spent with Languet at Vienna from August 1573 until August 1574.³ What prevents the poem from being 'about' Alençon - though it may well have been occasioned by him - is the fact that it has nothing to do with marriage, courtship, love or foreigners. The animals' mistake is to ask for a King; but the English already had a Queen and Sidney warns her in his Letter about taking a foreign husband because of his fickle character and the dangerous reactions that

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1. Ephim G Fogel, The Personal References in the Fiction and Poetry of Sir Philip Sidney, University of Ohio Ph. D. 1958, pp. 104, 110; John A Galm, Sidney's Arcadian Poems, Salzburg Studies in English Literature, Elizabethan and Renaissance Studies, vol. i, Salzburg 1973, pp. 222-4.
 2. Fogel, op. cit., pp. 110-22.
 3. Ringler, p. 413; Robertson, p. 463.

such a marriage would provoke among her subjects. In 'As I my little flock...' Sidney avoids the vulgarities and peril of being specific; he is putting forward his own cautious argument about the best way for the common people to protect themselves against tyranny. He is very careful to say this rather than to just simply declare his belief in limited sovereignty. His stance must reflect the sort of careful consideration which, as I have argued, was given to the new political theories of the 1570's at Leicester House.

v. Poetry.

Leicester House is most famous for its theoretical interest in poetry and for the poems which are associated with it. What actually was discussed there is not as important as that it was seriously discussed at all. In this respect poetry resembles political theory being seen as an important and interesting subject which had implications for Leicester and his fortunes. It could even be placed on a par with politics since although it may be the expression of an individual genius, it is the product of an international culture from which it cannot be divorced.

The obvious but contentious example of this is Ramism. Leicester's circle may have learnt about Ramus from the slightly mysterious Archdeacon Drant, who had praised him as a logician as early as 1572; it seems more likely however that their interest derived once again from Sir Thomas Smith who would have come across him in Paris in the 1560's and was conveyed through Gabriel Harvey.¹ At the same time, Languet knew Ramus himself, Sidney had met him and as early as 1576 was said to have loved him 'as a father when alive, but esteemed and revered him after death'.² As a victim of St. Bartholomew Ramus had the added attraction of being a Protestant martyr. Harvey was not only influenced by the first Englishman to advocate Ramist logic publicly, Laurence Chaderton, he was also

1. W S Howell, Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700, Princeton 1956, pp. 55, 56, 176, 177.

2. Buxton, p. 46, quoting Banosius.

'the first Englishman to interpret Ramistic rhetoric to his countrymen'.¹ Leicester's circle and Sidney's friends' interest in Ramism is well known and witnessed by works like Fraunce's Shepheardes Logike and Lawiers Logike and William Temple's Dialecticae Libri Duo. To what extent Sidney and Spenser's poetry was influenced by Ramus' teaching is still a matter of dispute.

Another less contentious interest of Leicester's circle of poets was in translations of the Psalms into verse and the writing of divine poetry.² For Sidney the Psalms are exactly this, 'a divine poem...a heavenly poesy' which is 'the poetical part of the Scripture'.³ Sidney acknowledges that he is borrowing this last epithet from the editors of what has been called 'the Protestant answer to the Vulgate', Emanuel Tremellius and Francis Junius' edition of the Bible. They may have given Sidney a copy of the third part of their Bible, dedicated to Casimir, and containing its divine poetry in 1577; shortly after this it began to appear in England.⁴ Interest in metrical versions of the Psalms was of course older than this. The extreme humanist distrust of poetry made an exception for these divinely-inspired works, while for Protestants metre made them easier to remember and to sing. In England Sir Thomas Smith had inevitably produced versions during his imprisonment in the Tower and many of Leicester's circle, Sidney himself, Stubbs and the Gentili brothers also worked on them.⁵ Abroad the German poet Melissus had produced a literary version of them in the vernacular as had Marot. His versions had been printed together with Beza's, accompanied by Claude Goudimel's musical settings in 1562. Sidney was to use this edition and one with Beza's Latin versions printed with Anthony Gilbie's

1. Howell, op. cit., pp. 179. 247.

2. See especially, Hallett Smith, 'English Metrical Psalms in the Sixteenth Century and their Literary Significance', HLQ, vol. ix, 1945-6, pp. 249-71, and Lily B Campbell, Divine Poetry and Drama in Sixteenth Century England, Cambridge 1959, esp. pt.ii, ch. vi.

3. Miscellaneous Prose, pp. 77, 80.

4. J A van Dorsten, 'Sidney and Franciscus Junius the Elder', HLQ, vol. xlii, 1978-9, pp. 7, 8; see below p.257 n.2.

5. Sir Thomas Smith, Literary and Linguistic Works, pt. i, Certaine Psalmes or Songues of David, ed. Bror Danielsson, Stockholm Studies in English, vol. xii, 1963; Buxton, pp. 152, 153: Leicester himself probably translated a Psalm while in the Tower in 1553-4, ed. Ruth Hughey, The Arundel Harington Manuscript of Tudor Poetry, Columbus, Ohio 1960, no. 290.

translations published at London in 1580.¹ He must also have been aware of Buchanan's versions printed at London in the same year.² In 1581 these re-appeared with Beza's versions printed at Morges in Switzerland. Closely related to this interest in the Psalms is the Leicester House enthusiasm for that divine poet Salluste du Bartas and their belief in the importance of the figure of the poet and what he stands for. The second of these comes out particularly strongly in the Shepherd's Calendar, where E. K. in his passage about Harvey in the gloss to 'September' also refers to 'his divine Anticosmopolita'. There is good evidence that Sidney translated La Semaine and that Spenser was heavily indebted to his works, especially to L'Uranie. For Harvey du Bartas was among the leading poets of modern times, a writer whom he could not praise sufficiently often.³

Du Bartas was a contemporary, an active and recognised example of what could be done in modern poetry and for us a leading example of the un-insular nature of English culture in the latter part of the sixteenth century. Yet he was a member of the generation which came after the real literary innovators, the poets of the Pléiade. Their European reputation was partially transmitted through the international culture of neo-Latin literature. Leicester's circle's knowledge of the poetical theories and practices of the Pléiade largely came through three men who moved with ease between France and Britain. George Buchanan had been in Paris in the 1550's and his friend Daniel Rogers was there in the next decade; both had close personal and poetic links with the Pléiade, which they passed on to their friends at Leicester House. Rogers for example attended literary meetings at Baïf's house and addressed poems to Ronsard.⁴ The third important source for the Sidney circle's knowledge of French intellectual life

1. Ringler, p. 505.

2. See above, pt. iv a.

3. Ringler, p. 339; L B Campbell, op. cit., pp. 86-91; Stern, pp. 127, 175, 234, 239; the best account of Du Bartas' reception in England is contained in A L Prescott, English Poets and the French Renaissance, ch. v.

4. Prescott, op. cit., pp. 91-3; see also Philip J Ford, 'George Buchanan's Court Poetry and the Pléiade', French Studies, vol. xxxiv, 1980, pp. 137-52, James E Phillips, art. cit., and his 'Daniel Rogers: A Neo-Latin Link between the Pléiade and Sidney's "Areopagus"', in Neo-Latin Poetry of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, Los Angeles 1965, pp. 5-28 and I D McFarlane, 'Pierre de Ronsard and the Neo-Latin Poetry of his Time' Res Publica Litterarum, vol. i, 1978, pp. 177-205.

at this time was the Anglophile German poet Paul Schede known as Melissus. His various collections of poetry at once demonstrate his friendship with Sidney, his admiration for the Pléiade poets and his constant wish to serve and glorify Queen Elizabeth.¹

Even if explicit references to the poets of the Pléiade are limited to a few remarks by Harvey in praise of Ronsard and of course Spenser's versions of du Bellay, there is every reason for the writers at Leicester House to have known of them and their works.² From Buchanan, Rogers, Melissus and Smith through Harvey they could have learnt about the intellectual and academic atmosphere of Paris in the past twenty or thirty years. With Alençon and his courtiers' visit they would have learnt about its current state. Whatever Sidney and Spenser borrowed from the Pléiade and du Bartas about the poet and his rôle, French influence may well have stimulated English interest in reformed versifying. The French academic experiments in writing vernacular verse in classical metres, advocated by Ramus, and in combining measured verse with music is well-attested and was perhaps one source for the Leicester House writers who took up this practice in the 1570's.³ Combining learning with high artifice it produced the sort of ver-

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1. The poems to Sidney are discussed in Dorsten, and printed in Appendix I nos. 2 and 6. The *Schediamatum Reliquiae*, Frankfurt 1575, contains poems to the Queen on pp. 5, 6, 151, a translation from Jodelle on p. 41 and poems to and translated from Ronsard on pp. 44, 76, 103, 112, 131, 174. The *Ode Pindarica*, Augsburg 1578, is dedicated to the Queen; the BL copy (11408 c 41), contains MS verses of 1582 addressed to George Gilpin. The second edition of the *Schediasmata Poetica*, 3 pts., Paris 1586, is dedicated to the Queen and contains numerous poems addressed to her and her courtiers, including to Leicester, pt. i, p. 159, to him and Sidney, pt. iii, p. 8 and to Sidney alone, p. 252, (these last two not printed by van Dorsten); the BL copy (237 g 15), was probably presented to the Queen, the CUL one (Y 10 48) was given to Walsingham. See also Melissus' letter to the Queen in BL MS Sloane 3299, f. 39; the letters to the Dousas in BL MS Burney 390, P de Nolhac, *Un Poète Rhenan Ami de la Pléiade*, Paul Melissus, *Bibliothèque Littéraire de la Renaissance*, NS, vol. xi, 1923, James E Phillips, 'Elizabeth I as a Latin Poet: An Epigram on Paul Melissus', *RN*, vol. xvi, 1963, pp. 289-98 and Eckart Schäfer, 'Die "Dornen" des Paul Melissus', *Humanistica Louvaniensia*, vol. xxii, 1973, pp. 217-55; a full modern study of Melissus is badly needed.
 2. Prescott, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-52, 95, 96.
 3. Yates, *French Academies*, ch. iii; but cf. Derek Attridge, *Well-Weighed Syllables*, *Elizabethan Verse in Classical Metres*, Cambridge 1974, pp. 121-4.

vernacular verse of which the dedicated humanist could approve. Furthermore, its respectability was increased by the belief that the Psalms were written in Hebrew quantitative verse; the metrical experiments of Beza and Buchanan in translating them clearly reflect this.

Writing vernacular quantitative verse was not of course an entirely new thing to do, for although Smith himself is not known to have written any poetry in this way, the origins of the movement to promote it in England go back to his Cambridge friends Cheke and Ascham and also to their fellow collegian Thomas Watson. Without knowing more about another Cambridge and St. John's man, Thomas Drant, it is impossible to connect accurately Ascham's advocacy in the 1540's with the experiments of the 1570's and later. Yet as we know that Drant worked for Grindal and addressed poems to Leicester and Sidney it is evident that the later interest in quantitative verse was a distinctive feature of the Earl's circle.¹ It is also possible that Sir William Cordell, one of whose poems in iambic hexameters with rhymed couplets survives, may have influenced the experimenters.² The objectives and performances of the reformed versifiers have been so well analysed by Derek Attridge that all I shall offer here are a few remarks on some authors from a chronological and factional point of view.

The earliest known recrudescence of interest in the possibilities of English verse in classical metres occurs in James Sandford's translations from Gucciardini, Houres of Recreation, 1576, of a poem by Jodelle. Significantly this did not appear in the first edition of the book, the Garden of Pleasure, 1573, but was reprinted in Davison's Poetical Rhapsody of 1602 as 'An Epigram to Sir Phillip Sydney'. While the first edition was dedicated to Leicester the second went to Hatton; but there is evidence that Sandford returned to Leicester's patronage

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1. Drant's Praesul, (1576), is dedicated to Grindal, but addresses Leicester as his patron and Maecenas on pp. 3, 43-5 and mentions Sidney on p. 47.
 2. Ed. Ruth Hughey, The Arundel Harington Manuscript, no. 172; on Cordell see also above ch. II, pt. iv.

after this and may even have been William Herbert's tutor.^{1*} John Grange includes hexameters lacking a quantitative basis in his Golden Aphroditis, 1577, and in the next year Thomas Blenerhasset tried to imitate Latin iambic verse with unrhymed accentual alexandrines in 'The Complaint of Cadwallader' in The Second Part of the Mirror for Magistrates. Again in his Revelation of The True Minerva of 1582 he showed his interest in this kind of writing by printing passages intended as hexameters and elegiacs; he also shows his poetical alliance with Leicester's circle through his borrowings from Spenser.²

Sidney worked on quantitative poems and his rules for them which appear in the Old Arcadia in the late 1570's, but what really initiated the flood of quantitative verse was the publication of the Spenser-Harvey Letters, with their careful discussion of the subject in 1580. These show that John Harvey had been given exercises in this fashion by his elder brother,³ and that Dyer as well as Sidney, Spenser and Harvey were interested in the possibilities of the form. Now while Greville's only attempt at it, Caelica VI, may belong to this period no quantitative verse from Dyer survives. Equally none is known to exist by the other person mentioned by Harvey as a mutual friend with Spenser, Daniel Rogers. This is probably simply because the verse has disappeared, for the editor of Dee's Diary in 1842 notes that there was 'a large commonplace-book in his handwriting' in the library of St. Martin's in the Fields. I have not been able to find out how it got to be there, its contents or its present whereabouts.⁴ If as seems more than likely Rogers tried his hand at quantitative verse the results

1. Attridge, op. cit., pp. 129, 130, 195, 196, 206; Rosenberg, pp. 163-6; Sandford also contributed verses to Drant's Praesul, pp. 85-7.

2. Attridge, op. cit., pp. 111, 130 n. 1.

3. There are more specimens of quantitative verse scattered throughout the works of the younger Harveys.

4. Diary of Dr. John Dee, p. 4 n. the MSS from St. Martin's were sold at Sotheby's on 1 July 1861, unfortunately they were not very fully described and Rogers' book may have been among the Albums: for example lot 23, said to be 'early XVIIc' - this lot went to J A Rose, (see the typescript in the Bodleian copy of the catalogue), but was not among his books sold by Sotheby's on 1 June 1891. On 3 June 1861 Sotheby's sold the printed books from St. Martin's; lot 820 consisted of three volumes of works by Goltzius, 'Presentation copies from Abraham Ortelius with two autograph inscriptions to Daniel Rogers with his autograph and manuscript notes'.

would probably have been found in this book. Later examples of the verse which do survive were generally associated with Sidney. Abraham Fraunce wrote much in this way; Bodleian MS Rawl. poet. 85 contains quantitative verse by James Reshoulde and Robert Mills as well as several of Sidney's poems. Thomas Campion's earliest quantitative production occurs in Newman's pirated edition of Astrophil and Stella. John Dickenson's Arisbas and The Shepheardes Complaint both contain quantitative verse and frequent allusions to Sidney. There are elegies in hexameters to Sidney in Davison's Poetical Rhapsody which along with other poems in the collection may be by Harvey.¹

It is generally agreed that the movement for reformed versifying was fated to be unsuccessful. From the immediate point of view of its centre Leicester House this may well have been so, but it provided the sort of impulse towards experimentation and the vehicle for taking vernacular poetry seriously which English verse needed. For Sidney and Spenser the decision to write in English may not have been an easy one, yet once taken, after the flirtation with classical metres, was adhered to. Just how much happened to poetry in the crucial years of the Alençon courtship can be judged from the extensive revisions Puttenham had to make in the later 1580's to his Arte of English Poesie to include the new fashions for the 'courtly trifles' of pattern poems, imprese and anagrams, and for the 'scholastical toyces' of quantitative verse, as well as for the poetic practice of Sidney and his friends.² It was also the Alençon courtship which stimulated Puttenham to write his only sustained piece of poetry the Partheniades.

Leicester was not a great patron of poets, but it was in his interest to be associated with a few, because his rivals favoured some; if there was such a thing as an 'opposition' literary circle then it centred around the Earl of

1. Stern, p. 52 n. 18.

2. George Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie, ed. G D Willcock and A Walker, Cambridge 1936, pp. xlvi-l.

Oxford and included such writers as Thomas Watson, Lyly and Peele.¹ With Gascoigne's death in 1577 Leicester may well have felt that he needed to encourage some more good writers to promote his fame and position. As well as being an accomplished poet and deviser of entertainments Gascoigne was interested in metrics and was much admired by Harvey who may well have hoped to become his successor as the Earl's poet. Gascoigne comes half way between the 'drab' and 'golden' ages, representing much of the best that had been achieved and suggesting what could be done in English literature. To E. K. he was 'the very chefe of our late rymers...for gifts of wit and naturall promptnesse appeare in hym abundantly'.² Leicester responded to what he promised through his links with Sidney, Spenser and Harvey.

vi. 'Areopagus'.

I have deliberately avoided referring to Leicester's intellectual circle in London by its more familiar title of the 'Areopagus' because it seems to me that Spenser and Harvey's references to it are intended as a joke.³ They are the only evidence that Leicester's circle ever had a name and have even suggested to some that the circle was a club with definite rules.⁴ While this is clearly going too far, the idea of the existence of an informal academy or a literary society gains credence not just from the internal evidence which I have outlined but also from some external evidence. In his 1579 poem to Sidney Daniel Rogers refers to his friend's companions Dyer and Greville saying that:

Cum quibus aut summo de iure, Deove, bonove
Disseris, his studiis dum vacas hora piis.

While van Dorsten is right to say that the 'arts' are not mentioned here, neither are they excluded from discussions of such "non-literary" subjects.⁵ This sort of intellectual exchange is further suggested in the settings of Bruno's Cena de

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1. G K Hunter, John Lyly, 1962, pp. 47, 48; see also W B Austin, 'Thomas Watson's Adaptation of an Epigram by Martial', RN, vol. xiii, 1960, pp. 134-40.
 2. Spenser, vol. vii, p. 111, gloss to 'November', l. 141.
 3. Letters, pp. 635b, 639b.
 4. The literature on the 'Areopagus' is conveniently summarised in Spenser, Prose, pp. 479, 480.
 5. Dorsten, Appendix I no. 4, 11, 175, 176 and p. 66.

le Ceneri, Bryskett's A Discourse of Civill Life and some of Harvey's published and unpublished pieces in the Letters and the Letter Book. While none of the last three refers to Leicester himself they indicate that the philosophical and moral concerns of Sidney, Spenser and Harvey were not as alien from those of the French academies as one might think. What Harvey knew of the Italian academies he admired.¹

In all of this Leicester remains a shadowy figure: there just is not enough evidence for his direct and positive patronage to make him into a Henri III or a Medici. He stubbornly remains the invisible centre of a distinct circle of men with well-defined interests, who come within the circumference of his influence and world. Yet whatever was the nature of his contact with those men, it was around him and his House in London that they chose to group themselves. If Harvey supplied the essential link for the idea of an intellectual circle between the Earl and Smith, Leicester's developing contact with Alençon introduced him at first hand to a Prince with his own academy. Leicester's antipathy for the Queen's suitor and yet his need to use him as a Protestant leader in the Netherlands undoubtedly stimulated his patronage and motivated him to match the Frenchman's. Leicester House's outstanding interest in law, history, Protestant politics and poetry and its distinctive approach to them indicate how committed the Earl was to his literary patronage.

1. Stern, p. 252 n. 12; Marginalia, p. 124. 17, 18.

CHAPTER IV

ALENCON

i. For and Against.

Leicester's younger rival Francis Hercules, Duke of Alençon was an unknown quantity to the English during the 1570's, and because of that generally feared and hated. Too young to have actually played a part in the St. Bartholomew massacre Alençon was guilty of being involved in it by implication, by being Catherine de Medici's son and Henri III's brother. What little Sidney knew of him made him argue that he was, 'as full of light ambition as is possible...he is carried away with every wind', and that his 'young men', his followers and favourites, 'think evil contentment a sufficient ground of any rebellion', and 'have defiled their hands in odious murders'. Stubbs, although he lacked any first-hand knowledge of the French court, is even more virulent, his attack being inspired by his extreme Protestantism. He outlines Alençon's political career and is especially keen to present him as a strong Catholic hater of Protestants, an untrustworthy and evil character whom God, far from blessing, 'curseth him in public and private, in town and field, even in his own soul and body to everlasting death', unless he repents and changes his ways. His abuse for 'This stinging stranger of France' with his 'poor party', this 'most unsure and slippery friend' comes with the freedom that only personal ignorance can supply.¹

Beyond his being the besotted Queen's frog, the English image of Alençon really derives from his part in Chapman's tragedy Bussy D'Ambois, written about twenty years after the courtship ended. There Alençon appears more familiarly as Monsieur, Bussy's treacherous patron, and is thoroughly wicked. Bussy wagers with him:

That you did never good, but to do ill;
But ill of all sorts, free and for itself...
That y'are for perjuries the very Prince
Of all intelligencers...

1. Miscellaneous Prose, p. 49; John Stubbs's Gaping Gulf, pp. 24, 47, 61, 62.

That your political head is the curs'd fount
Of all the violence, rapine, cruelty,
Tyranny and atheism flowing through the realm...
That you are utterly without a soul...¹

This is certainly fame of a kind and conforms to the characterization given in an epigram, probably of English origin, written after Alençon's flight from the Low Countries in 1583:

Flebile fecisti facinus, faelixque fuisses
faedi fragos fugiens, foedi frangosque fugans
flere facis flandros, faustum fera francia foedus
frangendo, fugiens fas, fugienda facis.

It requires a certain degree of evil reputation to have this sort of poetry written about one: Alençon had it in England.²

He was not so much better off in France. The great Huguenot poet and historian Agrippa d'Aubigné gives a fair taste of this contempt for Alençon in the first line of his sonnet:

François, honte de France, opprobre des François...

His poor relations with his brother and eagerness to succeed to the throne, his waging civil war in France and his treacherous behaviour in the Netherlands hardly made him a popular figure in his own country. Nor was he on firmer ground when it came to religion - he was by no means the ardent Catholic which those who opposed the marriage in England made him out to be. And in the eyes of his enemies he surrounded himself with appalling favourites, adventurers and fools, with men, as the Maréchal de Matignon told the great historian de Thou, 'sans religion et sans honneur'.³

Yet to outsiders at the French court he presented a rather different image:

...he has more grace and style than the others, and a very good understanding.
He is a very silent person, nor is it easy to know what he thinks.
It is said he dissimulates an immeasurable ambition, and has in his mind some daring enterprise.

Sir Thomas Smith as a supporter of the English match described him as 'a good

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1. George Chapman, Bussy D'Ambois, ed. Nicholas Brooke, 1964, pp. 85, 86; this exchange at the end of Act III is returned to in the first scene of The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois.
 2. Bodleian MS Ashm. 1473 p. 746; also in Corpus Christi College, Oxford, MS E 257 f. 55v.
 3. René Radouant, Guillaume du Vair, l'Homme et l'Orateur, (1907), p. 35 n.2.

fellow and a lusty prince'.¹ So much was wrong with France in the 1570's, with civil war, massacres, the government of foreigners, enormous economic problems, as well as an increasingly odd king, that it is hardly surprising that as early as 1574 Alençon was seen as the man to get the country out of its difficulties. Henri III was not alone in being relieved when his brother went to the Netherlands in the summer of 1578; Robert Garnier refers to the expedition in the dedication to his La Troade of 1579, hoping that healthy national involvement in a war abroad will unify France and discourage domestic strife and civil war.² If Alençon was France's last legitimate hope it is easier to understand, given his comparative youth and the political pressure that was on him to be a success, why his behaviour appeared to be so erratic. Perhaps the traditional image of him as a young and dangerous fool is wrong and instead of accepting it we should look at his intellectual patronage and associations to see if we can gain a more accurate picture of him. The 'young fool' Alençon needs reassessing as much as the 'old knave' Leicester.

ii. The Anti-Machiavellian.

The St. Bartholomew massacre was to harden and define English attitudes to the French in the 1570's and 1580's. The slaughter of Huguenots had repercussions throughout Europe and told the English all they needed to know about the French. Sidney could not write about Alençon without mentioning it and to Stubbs St. Bartholomew was an eloquent witness of how the French behave at a royal marriage:

It were well we learned that conscience of them, if not of conscience, at least by horror of those streams of French blood that was shed through such a marriage in Paris, assuring ourselves that, if they went up to the knuckles in French blood, they will up to the elbows in English blood.³

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1. A M F Robinson, 'Queen Elizabeth and the Valois Princes', EHR, vol. ii, 1887, p. 63; the first two opinions come from Michiel and Cavalli.
 2. See for example the tract in French, CSP For., vol. xii, no. 1647; Gillian Jondorf, Robert Garnier and the Themes of Political Tragedy in the Sixteenth Century, Cambridge 1969, p. 37.
 3. Miscellaneous Prose, p. 48; John Stubbs's Gaping Gulf, p. 40.

For Stubbs the massacre was not just an isolated incident, but the logical expression of the political philosophy of the French royal family, of Machiavellianism. Not only was Catherine de Medici an Italian and a Florentine, but her family had employed Machiavelli and he had dedicated The Prince to her father. She had brought his methods and policies to France so that Stubbs could write of, 'that most Christian court where Machiavelli is their New Testament and atheism is their religion'. Just as the Queen mother had corrupted the court with her fellow-countrymen, at Elizabeth's 'you may be sure a French husband will easily advance his Italianate Frenchmen to our English preferments'.¹ There can be no doubt that Stubbs sees Machiavelli as the evil genius of the French court, especially of the royal family, and the political theorist for those who favour the English match.

Up to a point, of course, he was right. Henri III and his mother were hated for allowing foreigners and their culture to dominate the court. It was popularly thought the King had been brought up by his mother on The Prince and the Discourses and that he would put their repulsive teachings into action from the throne.² However this view needs to be modified by a more rational understanding of Machiavelli's writings and from the English point of view an appreciation of Alençon's position as an opponent of the Italian predominance and as the hoped-for anti-Machiavel.

One of the effects of the massacre of St. Bartholomew was to create a convenient division in French politics and society between those who were implicated in it and those who were bitterly opposed to it and all such brutal and indiscriminate repression. This second group comprised not just the Huguenots, but also the 'politique' Catholics and nobles. They allied soon after the massacre against

1. Ibid., pp. 76, 89.

2. Skinner, vol. ii, pp. 307-9; for evidence as to whether the King knew Machiavelli's works, see Edmund H Dickerman, 'Henry III of France: Student of The Prince', BHR, vol. xl, 1978, pp. 281-8.

its supporters, being particularly hostile to the corrupting influence of Italians. When in 1574 Henri III became King they tried to stop the Queen mother from coming to power again by proclaiming Alençon as Regent and openly demanding the expulsion of foreigners. On his return from Poland Henri III not unnaturally placed his brother under arrest at court. Alençon managed to escape in September 1575 and joining the Huguenot-'politique' faction issued a Déclaration, which defined this alliance and while proclaiming his personal allegiance to his brother the King, called for the expulsion of foreigners and for equal protection for Roman Catholics and Huguenots. This last condition was fulfilled in May 1576 by the Peace of Monsieur.¹

Innocent Gentillet who was at Geneva by October 1576 was involved in the printing of this 1575 Déclaration. In the next year he published as a commentary on it a Briève Remonstrance...sur le faict de la Déclaration de Monseigneur, which was printed with a work written by him in 1574, a Remonstrance au Roy...Henri III, in which he first announced his intentions of dealing with the Machiavellians.² His great work the Discours Contre Machiavel accordingly appeared anonymously at Geneva in 1576 and was dedicated to Alençon. The importance of Gentillet's book lies not just in its serious attempt to refute the doctrines of Machiavelli, especially those put forward in the Discourses, but also for its part in the new political theories about sovereignty that were the direct result of the French Wars of Religion. Gentillet analyses tyranny according to the theories of the Bartolists and uses Machiavelli as a guide to the political state and government of France at the time. He finds that France is a tyranny not in theory but in practice so that it is justifiable to depose its rulers.³ In doing this the Discours joins such other radical protestant works as the Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos

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1. This narrative is largely taken from P D Stewart, Innocent Gentillet e la sua Polemica Antimachiavellica, Florence 1969, pp. 97, 98; for a definition of the 'politique' position, see Skinner, vol. ii, pp. 249-54 and F A Yates, The Valois Tapestries, 2nd ed., 1975, esp. pp. 32, 33.
 2. Stewart, op. cit., pp. 12, 13, 27; Salvo Mastellone, 'Aspetti dell'Antimachiavellismo in Francia: Gentillet e Languet', in Machiavellismo e anti-Machiavellici nel Cinquecento, pp. 57, 58.
 3. P D Stewart, op. cit., pp. 105-7.

which displays a similarly anti-Machiavellian outlook.

After St. Bartholomew, while the English generally attacked Machiavelli for his atheism, in France he was more usually condemned for his political influence.¹ This leads the Huguenot Gentillet into a nice paradox. Although the object of his attack is not Roman Catholicism itself, but the viciousness of its adherents, yet he also sees Machiavelli as a basically anti-religious force. His Catholic followers' use of him, irrespective of their actions, is therefore an unholy one. When it comes to the massacre itself he regards it as the work of the Machiavellians even though their author argues directly against such clumsy and unselective methods.² Gentillet's Discours is as much an attack against Italian influence and power in France as against Machiavelli. So much was this so that he was soon forced by the authorities at Geneva to publish a Déclaration ...pour satisfaire aux Plaintifs d'aucuns Italiens 1576. This was added to the second edition of the Discours in 1577, but instead of stopping the complaints of Italians, (and even in one case a physical assault), it only served to aggravate them, being utterly unapologetic for his anti-Italian attitude.³

The dedication of the Discours to Alençon is dated 1 March 1576. The 'Epistre' talks of the fifteen years and more of tyranny that have gripped France since the death of Henri II. Alençon is suggested as the protector of law and the public good against tyranny, the result of bad counsellors in the government. As the Prince and heir-apparent he has a duty to good and true religion, he must cleanse the country of its vices especially 'ensemble les estrangers qui les ont y apportez', who must be sent back to Italy with Machiavelli. Alençon is ideally suited for this task and will win great fame for doing it, because he is so utterly French, 'la voulant delivrer de la sanglante et barbare tyrannie des estrangers'.⁴ This

1. Emile Gasquet, Le Courant Machiavelien dans la Pensée et la Littérature Anglaises p. 164.

2. Stewart, op. cit., pp. 70, 92, 93; C E Rathé, 'Innocent Gentillet and the first "Anti-Machiavel"', BHR, vol. xxvii, 1965, p. 215.

3. Stewart op. cit., pp. 111-5.

4. Innocent Gentillet, Discours Contre Machiavel, ed. A D'Andrea and P D Stewart, Florence 1974, pp. 3-5.

theme is continued throughout two poems which were included in all the French editions, 'Souhait pour la France' at the end of the book and 'Complainte de la France à Monseigneur le Duc' at its beginning.¹ The first hopes that Alençon will not be swayed by flatterers, but only by God. The peace that has so long been desired can only be achieved by killing off the foreign influences in the government:

Qu'il estaigne aux champs & aux villes
 Les feux de nos guerres civiles:
 Et comme un Hercule Gaulois
 Coupe les testes de ce monstre,
 Qui encor aujourd'huy se monstre
 Ennemi juré de nos Loix.
 Qu'il enfume dans sa caverne
 Ce pillard Cacus qui gouverne...
 Fay donc un Hercule revivre
 Qui de tant de maux nous delivre.

The poem ends with a pitiful cry to him to live in France and to ^{be} 'Pere & Prince favorable' to her.

The second poem is more explicit, but hardly any better as poetry. It is addressed to:

Mon FRANCOIS, mon doux nourrisson,
 Mon Hercules, mon d'Alençon.

As the 'Souhait' played on his second name Hercules,² so the 'Complainte' is about how horrified Francis the great would now be if he could see the state of France, and on how he and Alençon share the same first name. France's wrongs will only end when Alençon restores peace and the only way to make this last is by granting religious equality. If he does take action it will not be disloyal to his brother:

Ne croy pas, FRANCOIS debonnaire,
 Ce que l'on te veut faire croire,
 Que contre l'estat de leur Prince
 Mes enfans facent entreprinse.

The poet sensibly calls for the unity of France by urging an attack against unspecified foreigners; but the references to the English and the Spanish make it

1. Reprinted in Stewart, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-44.

2. For this theme see Marc-René Jung, *Hercule dans la Littérature Française du XVIe Siècle*, Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, vol. lxxix, Geneva 1966, pp. 170-4.

clear that the Italians are meant:

Des Iberiens & Anglois
Ne m'ont peu vaincre les harnois:
Faut-il que mon sang me soit pire
Pour du tout ma vie destruire?

The poem finishes with a final appeal to Alençon to save France.

Gentillet's praises of Alençon were rewarded in August 1576 when the Prince made him a councillor of the moderate party in the Grenoble Parliament. He continued to play a prominent part in the politics of the Delphine and even met Catherine de Medici, who not surprisingly rather disliked him. So it appears to be quite untrue to say, as La Popelinière did in his L'Histoire des Histoires, 1599, that the author of the Discours, then still unknown, received:

qu'injures & menaces au lieu des honneurs & autres dignes salaires que meritoit un tant affectionné & laborieux travail.¹

This seems typical of the hostile and blindly prejudiced attitude that always seeks to condemn Alençon; it is refreshing with Gentillet to see him in a new light.

Alençon as a Huguenot or Protestant leader presents an interesting spectacle and helps to explain the widely differing response he met with in the Low Countries and in England not least from Leicester. Unfortunately the response was complicated by the fact that the Prince had been brought up and was still a practising Roman Catholic. The key questions for the English during the courtship revolved around his faith - was he a firm believer, did he want a Catholic wedding ceremony and should he be allowed to worship according to his religion once he was married? Again English prejudice hindered a just assessment of Alençon's position. Far from simply being a 'papist', a Roman pawn, his stance was a 'politique' one of moderate, tolerant Catholicism: his patronage of Gentillet is a clear expression of this. Equally suggestive is the association between Alençon's circle and the exiled English Catholics who produced Leicester's Commonwealth during the

1. Stewart, op. cit., pp. 2, 19, 20, 99.

winter of 1583 and 1584. On account of its authors' views on toleration, supported and influenced by the Duke's followers, Leicester's Commonwealth has justly been called a 'politique' work, critical of the Earl's religious extremism and factionalism.¹ The contrast between Alençon and Leicester turns full circle when the authors of the Commonwealth accuse Leicester of being Machiavellian. He is actually described as 'Siegnior Machavel my L. Councillor', he uses the 'Machavilian sleight...of driving men to attempt somewhat, wherby they may incur daunger or remaine in perpetual suspition or disgrace'; and more generally the Dudleys observe the 'setled rule of Machivel...That, where you have once done a great injurie, ther must you never forgive'. Sidney thought this was very crude and talks about the author of the Commonwealth 'when he plays the statist, wringing very unluckily some of Machiaval's axioms to serve his purpose'.²

The Queen's two suitors appear to be different sides of the same coin. In England Leicester leads the attack on Alençon as a Machiavellian; abroad the French Prince is held up by Gentillet and others as the one man who can stop the Italian's corrupting influence; while the English exiles who join Alençon's circle see Leicester as the chief Machiavellian threat to the country.

iii. The Familist.

One of the strengths of the 'politique' outlook was its lack of clear definition, which allowed one to move freely within different political and religious parties. When Stubbs and Sidney criticize Alençon for being inconstant and fickle they choose to ignore the philosophical basis of his conduct. There may however be a further significant factor involved in their distrust. It seems almost certain that Alençon like many members of his circle was a Familist. The history and actual beliefs of the heretical sect of the Family of Love remain obscure, but the essential character of the adherent's attitude to religion has been well described:

1. Ed. Dwight C Peck, Leicester's Commonwealth p. lxxviii.

2. The Copie of a Leter, pp. 103, 165, 195; Miscellaneous Prose, p. 132.✕

outward fidelity to whichever Church happened to be in power...the utter insignificance of the visible Church, of dogma and of ceremony... belief is in the enlightened, 'be-godded' man...tolerant and pacifist, sceptical of Church authority, secretive about his beliefs...¹

The sect which was partly feared as a political organization striving for religious peace and unity, could well accommodate a 'politique' with Huguenot sympathies such as Alençon.

When Alençon arrived in Antwerp in February 1582 the great Flemish scholar-publisher Christopher Plantin, who had issued propaganda on the Duke's behalf in the past, immediately asked to become his official printer. The request was granted and from 17 April 1582 until the 'furie française' of January 1583 Plantin held the position.² If not a member of the sect himself Plantin was certainly a strong supporter of it and employed or published the works of three poets who were also Familists or sympathisers and who dedicated books to Alençon.³ In his article on the subject Wallace Kirsop has argued for a Familist interpretation of the Colloquium Heptaplomeres of Jean Bodin another member of Alençon's circle, and has had his view of it partially corroborated by Frances Yates, who without mentioning the Family describes ideas about toleration and cabalism in the work which Familists would have found sympathetic.⁴ Kirsop concludes that:

...there is little doubt that Alençon's household was a favourable milieu for opinions of the kind held by the Familists...Alençon's political orientation was well in line with the syncretism and desire for religious reunion visible in many of the Academicians.⁵

There is also a little contemporary evidence for Alençon's association with the sect, since in the early 1580's a Dort minister saw his intervention in the Low Countries as a result of Familist influence.⁶

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1. Jan van Dorsten, 'Garter Knights and Familists', Journal of European Studies, vol. iv, 1974, p. 183; a useful list of writings on the subject appears in Jean Dietz Moss, 'Variations on a Theme: The Family of Love in Renaissance England', RQ, vol. xxxi, 1978, p. 186 n.3.
 2. Leon Voët, The Golden Compasses, Amsterdam 1969, vol. i, p. 96.
 3. On Plantin and Familism, see Voët, op. cit., pp. 21-30; the three poets whom I shall discuss later are Clovis Hesteau, Jean de la Jessée and Gui Le Fèvre de La Boderie; Wallace Kirsop, 'The Family of Love in France', Journal of Religious History, vol. iii, 1964-5, pp. 108-13.
 4. Ibid., p. 114; 'The Mystery of Jean Bodin', New York Review of Books, vol. xxiii, 14 October 1976, pp. 47-50, see also her remarks on Bodin and Le Fèvre de la Boderie in The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age, pp. 64-71.
 5. Kirsop, art. cit., p. 113.
 6. Van Dorsten, 'Garter Knights', p. 186; no source is given for this statement.

In England in the 1550's and 1560's Familism was largely a working-class phenomenon with particular strength in East Anglia and among the London Strangers' Churches. Towards the end of the next decade at about the time of its founder Henry Niclaes' death, there seems to have been a widespread revival of interest in it.¹ This so worried the authorities that they took the extreme and unprecedented step of trying to ban Familism with a proclamation dated 3 October 1580. By this the Family of Love became 'the only sect in Elizabethan England to be the exclusive subject of a suppressive royal proclamation'.² So that at the same time as the Familist, or sympathiser, Alençon was courting the Queen the sect with which he was associated became an object of grave concern to the Council and the government. And it appears, that the trio of Spenser, Sidney and Harvey were all aware of it. Spenser's first publication was translations for the Theatre of Voluptuous Worldlings, 1569, 'devised' by Jan van der Noodt who is known to have been a Familist. In 1579 Bishop John Young's notes on the sect, probably written some years before Spenser became his secretary and under the impression that the Familists were covert Catholics, were printed.³ In October of the same year Languet wrote to an obviously interested Sidney with the exciting news that Henry Niclaes had been captured.⁴ Harvey's knowledge of the Family is witnessed by the numerous references to H.N. in Pierces Supererogation, 1593, which are unfortunately rather obscure. One would certainly expect Harvey the lover of the intellectual avant-garde to take an interest in the revolutionary Family of Love.⁵

Again we see Alençon moving in a wider context, in a world which was both unknown and feared in England. If he was a Familist then his apparently self-contradictory religious and political positions become more comprehensible - in theory at least. Familism could, and no doubt did, cover a multitude of sins, but

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1. Julia G Ebel, 'The Family of Love: Sources of Its History in England', HLQ, vol. xxx, 1966-7, pp. 337-9.
 2. J W Martin, 'Elizabethan Familists and other Separatists in the Guildford Area', BIHR, vol. li, 1978, p. 90.
 3. They were published in William Wilkinson, A Confutation of Certain Articles Delivered unto the Familye of Love, 1579; see further below ch. VI, pt. iii.
 4. Hailes, no. lxxxii; in fact it was the Anabaptist Jan Willems who had been taken, see H de la Fontaine Verwey, 'The Family of Love', Quaerendo, vol. vi, 1976, pp. 260, 261.
 5. Harvey, vol. ii, pp. 169, 170, 176, 294; in the Index Grosart indicates that there other references on pp. 114, 117, 119, but I have been unable to find them.

judging by the men who associated themselves with it, it was a distinguished heresy. In addition to the great humanist Plantin, Justus Lipsius, Abraham Ortelius and Carolus Clusius all had Familist connexions: the new University at Leiden was a sympathetic home for it.¹

As with Machiavelli a further irony in the relationship between Alençon and Leicester exists. When the Earl was in the Low Countries in 1586 and 1587 he patronized an English printer at Leiden called Thomas Basson, who in return published broadsheets and placards on Leicester's behalf. When Basson died and a catalogue of his stock was made it emerged that he had a large accumulation of Familist books and it is now known that he was probably a member of the sect and their principal publisher.² Once again Leicester and Alençon, whose involvement with the Protestant Cause took them both to the Netherlands in the Queen's service, seem to move in similar areas and known or unknown to each other appear to be closely related.

iv. The Academician.

Wallace Kirsop noted the similarity between Alençon's position and the eirenical syncretism of the French academies. These institutions dominant at Henri III's court in the 1570's, with their interest in emblems and entertainments, in the moral and mystical effects of music, in the possibilities of vernacular verse in classical metres and their debates on moral, philosophical, political and literary subjects have been brilliantly described by Frances Yates.³ Their love of neo-platonism, their links with the Pléiade, Henri III's longing for a spiritual answer to France's temporal problems and his passive religious liberalism are among the many striking features of her book. In connexion with Pierre de la Primaudaye's L'Académie Française she conjectured a French Protestant academy with both 'politique' and Huguenot sympathies, very close links with the

1. Jan van Dorsten, The Radical Arts, 2nd ed., Leiden 1973, p. 29; *ibid.*, 'Garter Knights', p. 185.

2. Jan van Dorsten, Thomas Basson, 1553-1613, English Printer at Leiden, Leiden 1961, ch. iii and pp. 64-9.

3. Kirsop, 'The Family of Love in France', p. 113; F A Yates, The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century, Studies of the Warburg Institute, vol. xv, 1947; see also Robert J Sealy, 'The Palace Academy of Henry III', BHR, vol. xl, 1978, pp. 61-83.

King's Palace Academy and under the guidance and inspiration of his brother. La Primaudaye was, she says, a Gentleman of the Chamber to Alençon, and his book which consists of academic debates, perhaps reports of actual ones, first appeared in two parts in 1577 and 1578. She also notes the fact that the philosopher Jean Bodin was in Alençon's service at this time.¹

The possibility that Alençon had his own academy seems plausible but the evidence for its existence has never been fully explored. If the King and Henry of Navarre had academies, why should not Alençon? Charles IX had consulted him before deciding whether to give his support to Baïf and Courville's Academy. In return Baïf wholly dedicated his Jeux of 1572 and partly dedicated his Etrennes of 1574 to him.² He was certainly encouraged to found one by Clovis Hesteau, Seigneur de Nuysement a minor and not very distinguished poet, who on the title-page of his Oeuvres of 1578 and dedicated to Alençon describes himself as 'Secrétaire de la chambre du Roy, & de Monsieur'. The first poem in the book consists of 'Stances en faveur de l'Académie à Monsieur'. In them he distinguishes between the good and the bad Prince, but goes on to make some interesting claims and suggestions:

Ce qui a eslevé les grandes republiques,
Ce sont les beaux secrets que les academiques,
Prennent à la nature entrant dans son tresor.
Et si par voz vertus la clef nous est rendue,
De ses sacrez secrets en ceste age perdue,
Ne ferez vous pas naistre un second siecle d'or...

Ainsi donc, Monseigneur, si par l'academie,
Vous rengendrez Minerve & luy rendez la vie,
Qui pourra des mortels vostre loz meriter,
Un monarque icy bas jouïra de la gloire,
Mais gravant vostre nom sur l'autel de memoire,
Vous serez à jamais surnommé Juppiter.³

1. Yates, pp. 123-7.

2. Ibid., p. 21; Claude Le Jeune, Airs, (1608), ed. D P Walker and F Lesure, Rome 1951, vol. i, p. viii.

3. Oeuvres, sigs. A3, A3v.

Unfortunately Frances Yates' use of La Primaudaye as a witness of Alençon's academic interests seems not quite to have been borne out by subsequent research. In the only modern study of his life Karl-Heinz Drochner has shown that although La Primaudaye worked for Alençon in 1577 and had probably fought under him in the fifth war of religion, (1574-6), he had left him before April 1578, disgusted by the Prince's politics and his fellow courtiers. Furthermore he goes on to deny that La Primaudaye ever took part in the Palace Academy which he would only have known about by report. Drochner convincingly shows that in the dedication, which Frances Yates uses to link L'Académie Française with the Platonic background and interests of the Palace Academy, La Primaudaye is really only plagiarizing Amyot.¹ This certainly appears to be damning evidence against Alençon's academy and La Primaudaye's connexion with it, but I suspect that Drochner rather romanticizes his subject, making him 'unser Moralisten', disgusted by an Alençon who lives up to his stereotype of the evil and corrupt philistine.

For immediate purposes it is not over-whelmingly important to establish or to deny the neo-Platonism of the Académie. It is much more interesting to note that Alençon employed even if for only a short time a man like La Primaudaye, who could produce such a vast and learned compilation. The first part of it appeared in 1577, having been given letters patent for its publication by the King on May 14. Although on its title-page the author says that he is in Alençon's service, it is dedicated to Henri III as a result of the generosity he showed towards the author during the meeting of the Estates General at Blois in 1576. The dedication dated from La Barrée in February 1577 relates how La Primaudaye found himself:

...y avoit fort peu de temps avec quelques jeunes Gentils-hommes Angevins mes compagnons discoursans ensemble de l'institution en bonnes meurs, & du moyen de bien & heureusement vivre en tous estats & conditions.²

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1. Karl-Heinz Drochner, Darstellung einiger Grundzüge des Literarischen Werks von Pierre de la Primaudaye Inaugural-Dissertation, Berlin 1960, pp. 25-9, 41; the view that La Primaudaye only knew of the Palace Academy at second hand should be modified in the light of his contact with Henri III and his Academy at Blois in 1577, Sealy, art. cit., pp. 72-4.
 2. Académie Française, 1577, sig. *2v.

In the first chapter he further describes the four young men, - of which he is presumably meant to be one - how they served their 'Prince' in the fifth war of religion, had returned to the college run by an old and wise man where the discourses take place and are there visited by their fathers. Since the fathers know little Latin the sons agree to speak in French: it is significant that nearly all the literature associated with the academies is also in the vernacular. Interrupted by the brief return of civil war, the men go away to serve their 'Prince', whose true identity can hardly be in doubt. When peace comes the debates begin again.¹

In its final form the work extended to four books and over a thousand pages in the first full English translation of 1618. The title-page of this edition summarized its contents as follows:

1. Institutions of Manners and Callings of all Estates.
2. Concerning the Soule and Body of Man.
3. A notable description of the whole Worlde, &c.
4. Christian Philosophie, instructing the true and onely meanes to eternall life.

The book is of course encyclopaedic, not so much extending the knowledge of its time but bringing together what was thought and known.² It bears very little resemblance to a debate as we should understand it, but conforms rather to a series of short disquisitions - reminiscent of Peter Martyr's Loci Communes - on an enormous variety of subjects. There is no reference to Alençon in the whole work and no direct comment on current affairs. La Primaudaye's sympathies are definitely not those of the radical Huguenot writers: in the fifty-sixth chapter of the first book he rejects any idea of a limited monarchy and argues that subjects must obey their rulers even if they act as tyrants. There is nothing in it which can be directly associated with Alençon's circle, but the fact that La Primaudaye wrote a book in the form of academic debates while working for Alençon shows how Frances Yates' positing of a Protestant academy under him was a reasonable deduction.

1. Ibid., Sig. † 3-5.

2. G Castor, Pléiade Poetics: a Study in Sixteenth-Century Thought and Terminology, Cambridge 1964, p. 107 n.2.

If we want to get nearer to the intellectual world which flourished around him we must turn to a largely neglected author, Pierre Dampmartin. His date of birth appears to be unknown and the first certain fact about him given in the Dictionnaire de Biographie Française is that in 1572 he joined Alençon as his 'procureur général' in Languedoc. Before this at some point he had been sent to England by Jean d'Albret. In the late 1570's when he turns up in European diplomatic life, Cobham writing to Burghley describes him as once having been servant to the Lady Lennox - that is presumably Lady Margaret Douglas - and as being 'of small quality'. As Alençon's agent with the States General at Antwerp in 1578 he was suspected of being the author of 'a sclanderous and rashe invencion', of a 'booke presented in advancement of the frenche nacion and the contempninge of others'.¹

In his De la Conoissance et Merveilles du Monde et de l'Homme, 1585, he seems to be referring to Lady Margaret Douglas when in connexion with the Wars of the Roses he mentions that he heard about Henry VIII's treatment and execution of the Duke of Exeter, 'd'une grande Dame qui estoit lors à la Cour'.² The book was printed only once, in 1585, and dedicated to the King. In the licence of 22 January 1585 Dampmartin is still described as the dead Duke's 'Procureur General', but sometime later in the year he was appointed 'sénéchal de Montpellier', probably as a reward for the dedication. It was of course too late to present the book to his former employer, but he still mentions the 'longs & assidus services' which he performed on his behalf and emphasizes that in following 'les propos qui en furent tenus devant Monseigneur', he is the inspiration behind the work.³ An examination of its contents, especially of its setting will make this clear, and show that he had an academy.

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1. CSP For., vol. xv, no. 65; Kervyn de Lettenhove, Relations Politiques des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre, vol. x, Collection des Chroniques Belges Inédites, Brussels 1891, pp. 740, 741; I have not identified the book which Dampmartin is alleged to have written.
 2. De la Conoissance, f. 45v.
 3. Ibid., sig. a2.

Again, De la Connoissance is an encyclopaedic work and may owe its form to La Primaudaye. Like the Académie it is divided into four books which discuss firstly the goodness of the world, then its evils, then man considered from the material side, especially the anatomical, and lastly man's immaterial being, particularly his emotional and mental aspects. It is peppered with quatrains by Dampmartin which connect his work with that of the more famous Gui du Faur, Seigneur de Pibrac, who was also associated with Alençon's court. Another link with the Duke's courtiers is made by the preliminary verses of Jean de la Jessée addressed to the King.¹ The first book opens by describing how during the winter of Alençon's stay at Mons which lasted from July to December 1578, he liked to talk 'de choses graves & d'importance' with his best-informed courtiers. Sometimes they read ancient and modern history, the Duke especially enjoying the Politics of Aristotle and Plutarch's Lives. On the evening of the first discussion Alençon has been talking about Plato; in connexion with a point about his philosophy he turns to Dampmartin for his opinion.²

This is typical of Alençon's almost Socratic role throughout the discussions - prompting, questioning and keeping the argument going. When on the second night Dampmartin pauses in doubt as to whether to continue and talk about princes, the enlightened and liberal Alençon urges him on to say what he thinks.³ Shortly after this the Duke is allowed to give what amounts to a defence of his conduct by declaring that his programme, beginning with his presence in the Netherlands is:

de secourir ce peuple oppressé de la tyrannie des Espagnols, destourner le cours de noz guerres civiles, & estendre si je puis les bornes & frontieres de la France.

This conveniently sums up, in an admittedly idealized form, Alençon's Huguenot and 'politique' position.⁴ It is returned to later on at the beginning of the third book, when after Havrech and the Abbé de Marolles bring the already-known

1. Ibid., sigs. a5, a5v.

2. Ibid., f. 1.

3. Ibid., ff. 42, 42v.

4. Ibid., f. 43v.

news of the Union of Arras, which had been concluded on 6 January 1579, Alençon declares his opposition to violence and his being ready to return empty-handed to France.¹

Dampmartin's methods and intentions are fairly clear. The academic discussions are of course the book's subject, but by placing the discussions in a detailed historical background it gains a feeling of realism which La Primaudaye's work lacks. Perhaps Dampmartin records the actual debates of members of Alençon's circle. The impression that this may well be so is strengthened by the setting of the fourth book in which the Duke is missing. Yet it begins with a description of his day while he was in Alençon, where he had retired in February 1579 having spent January at Condé. He starts with some hard riding, then mass, council, dinner and discussion, followed by more discourse in his room, then council again in his study, a walk or pell-mell or card games then 'bons & graves discours' at supper and finally music or some other occupation in the evening.² The book's ending is very striking and reinforces the impression of Alençon as its soul and inspiration. For the last few pages are taken up with an account of his injury, illness and eventual death. Dampmartin stresses that his intellectual interests and his mind were, 'd'un naturel non tant soupçonneux que fin, curieux & enquerant' kind.³ No doubt this was added to protect the former employer, for whom Dampmartin expresses such affection as both man and Prince, from the charges of witchcraft and sorcery which were levelled at his brother. The very last praises in the book are addressed to Gui du Faur, Seigneur de Pibrac.

Dampmartin's other work evocative of the academic intellectualism at Alençon's court is Du Bonheur de la Cour et Vraye Félicité de l'Homme, Antwerp 1592, which reappeared in the next century as La Fortune de la Cour.⁴ Again he chose an his-

1. Ibid., f. 49.

2. Ibid., f. 84.

3. Ibid., f. 140.

4. It was first reprinted in 1642 and 'revuë & augmentée' by Neuville, the son of the third participant in the dialogue in 1644, sigs. ē4, ē4v. It appeared again at Liège in 1713 in a highly edited form by Charles Sorel in the Mémoires of Marguerite de Valois.

torical setting for his moral and political tract. The dialogue, which is largely between Bussy d'Amboise and another courtier named Neuville takes place at Alençon in the spring of 1578 while the Duke was at court in Paris. His hasty departure has worried his favourite, Bussy, and Neuville tries to cheer him up. As the book's title suggests, life at court is determined as much by luck as anything else and the speaker exhorts Bussy rather to place his trust in virtue. There is much praise in it of Alençon and an attempt to account for his bad reputation in the Netherlands, but also a non-committal section on the St. Bartholomew's day massacre. As in the De la Conoissance the last book- here the third - develops and enlarges on the historical background by the arrival of the Sieur de Fargis with the news that Alençon has been reconciled with his brother and his mother, which took place on 16 March 1579. Again the dialogue form then fades away and we are told of Bussy's death, (17/18 August 1579), and given a defence of him which argues that his end was unfortunate rather than his own fault. Dampmartin finally turns his attention to his employer, trying to justify his actions by giving an account of his courtship of the Queen - which he is in favour of, but which Neuville says should not be rushed - and of his subsequent activities in the Low Countries.

La Fortune de la Cour shows Dampmartin dramatizing the intellectual and political conflicts which beset Alençon's court. The Duke is angered when he asks one of Bussy's servants to whom the favourite's large suite of followers belongs - the servant so used to calling Bussy 'Monsieur' in imitation of Alençon tactlessly replies that they are 'Monsieur's'. Alençon and Bussy's unhappy relationship made a good framework from which to hang discussions and discourses.¹ Given the evidence of the debates in De La Conoissance, it seems highly likely that in this later work Dampmartin was still drawing on the intellectual exchanges which he associated with Alençon's court. It would be

1. Jean Jacquot in his edition of Chapman's Bussy D'Amboise, Paris 1960, pp. 1-lviii has suggested that Chapman used Du Bonheur de la Cour, as a source for the play; Nicholas Brooke in his edition of it, p.lix, finds this 'not very convincing'.

mistaken to separate the reports of these gatherings from the more famous ones held by Henri III at court and in Paris, so that it ought to be accepted that Alençon was the patron of a 'politique' academy, mainly concerned with philosophical and moral problems. In a similar but less formal way Leicester House served as a meeting place and intellectual home for Englishmen wishing to discuss and experiment in political, historical, legal and above all literary matters.

v. The Patron.

If there is good evidence for believing that Alençon maintained his own academy, then it would be reasonable to expect him, as Leicester was in England, to be the patron of a circle of writers, poets and musicians showing similar interests and moving freely within the cultured world of the French court. D P Walker has described this circle as 'a remarkable collection of Catholic and Protestant writers and musicians, several of whom were members of Baïf's Academy'. He lists seven men associated with Alençon's court, including several musicians, who clearly witness Alençon's love and patronage of music.¹ Estienne le Roy, 'the famous castrato' was his almoner; from 1575 his 'premier porte-manteau' was Pierre Dugué, 'a great music lover'; and Guillaume le Boullanger, Sieur de Vaumesnil, a lutenist and composer was his favoured cup-bearer. The great neo-Latin poet Jean Dorat had addressed verses to Alençon before Orlando di Lasso's Moduli quatuor (etc) ...vocem, 1577, in which he recalls the 'pacific, ethical effects of ancient music' - a phrase which immediately suggests the interests of the French academies. In 1582 a publisher had dedicated to the Duke musical settings of Pibrac's quatrains. Claude Lejeune was his master of music and was also in charge of the children of the Duke's music. Were it not that we know he was in Paris on 25 January 1582 before Alençon's grand departure from England, it would be irresistible to associate him with the elaborate entertainment which Alençon provided for the English court on New Year's day of 1582

1. D P Walker, 'The Prisca Theologia in France', JWCI, vol. xvii, 1954, p. 206 and n. 1.

and which is known to have contained some music.¹

Two other musicians can be further connected with Alençon. Balthasar de Beaujoyeulx, the violinist and 'maître de ballet' responsible for the 1581 Ballet Comique de la Reine, worked successively for Mary Stuart, Charles IX, Alençon and Henri III. In 1576 he was one of Alençon's 'valets de chambre'.² D P Walker mentioned the Sieur de Vaumesnil.. There were brothers named Vaumesnil alluded to in a sonnet satirizing the Duke for his poor entourage during his private visit to England in August 1579. The anonymous author says that 'les habiles doigts/ Des frères Vauménils font l'honneur de la danse'. One of Alençon's most important writers Gui Le Fèvre de La Boderie dedicated his translation of Ficino's Les Trois Livres de la Vie, 1581, 'A Monsieur de Vaumesnil Conseiller & maistre d' hostel' to the Duke. This Vaumesnil may also have been a doctor for in the dedication La Boderie tells how he lost his health because he worked so hard on the translation. He compares the body's harmony to musical harmony and later on says that as Hercules and Achilles learnt music from the centaur and doctor Chiron, so 'de present noz Princes pourroyent apprendre de vous à bien toucher le Luth'. There is nobody at the moment in France with a greater knowledge of music or who can play instruments as well as this second Apollo.³ Like his brother, Alençon was evidently passionately fond of music.

With one exception the remaining members of Alençon's court that I shall discuss were all writers. The exception is Bussy d'Amboise, who was governor of Anjou and, with Simier, his favourite courtier. He had transferred his loyalties from the King in 1574 and 'seems to have been known for personal courage, violent temper,

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1. C Le Jeune, Airs, pp. viii, ix, xvii; on Alençon's New Year's Day entertainment see below ch. VIII, pt. iv.
 2. On Beaujoyeulx and the Ballet Comique, see Yates, ch. xi, and Astraea, The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century, Harmondsworth 1977, pp. 149-72; Paris, BN MS Anciens Fonds Français 7856 f. 1238v.
 3. Pierre de l'Estoile, Journal pour le Règne de Henri III, ed. Louis-Raymond Lefevre, 2nd.ed., 1943, p. 220; Trois Livres de la Vie, sigs. a2, a7, a8, a8v., ãlv.

sexual intrigue and duelling'.¹ On the other hand we have seen Dampmartin make use of him in La Fortune de la Cour; he had also given him a small part in the first book of De la Conoissance, where it is Bussy, 'qui n'avoit pas moins d'esprit que de valeur', who makes Alençon get Dampmartin to continue his discourse.² The annalist L'Estoile also has something partially good to say of him: 'Il aimait les lettres, combien qu'il les pratiquât assez mal'. At the same time he reports that Bussy boasted the almost total control over Alençon which Dampmartin writes about at the end of his La Fortune. It is known that the Duke had very mixed feelings about his favourite, but it seems unlikely, as has often been suggested, that he was involved in his murder while he was in England during 1579. If Bussy himself seems a worthless character to us now, it is remarkable that, as well as these tributes from Dampmartin and L'Estoile, he inspired a pastoral elegy Lysis on his death and a lost volume of memorial verse published by Michel Théart.³

On account of his youth, his generous patronage and liberal politics Alençon attracted gifted young men into his service. One of the most famous of these was Guillaume du Vair. He entered his household in 1577 and by the next year was one of his masters of requests, following his father who had been Alençon's 'Procureur Général'. Although he quitted the court officially by August 1582 he seems to have been associated with the Duke for some time after.⁴ Apart from his later writings on Christian stoicism, du Vair became president of the parliament at Aix in 1595, keeper of the seal in 1615 and finally the Bishop of Lisieux in 1617. As with La Primaudaye it is hard to know why he left Alençon, but it is interesting that his period of service coincides almost exactly with that of the second courtship of the Queen. Perhaps it encouraged Alençon to increase his entourage and to promote his most able servants, to impress the Queen and her courtiers.

1. Chapman, Bussy D'Ambois, ed. N Brooke, p. lix; on the historical Bussy and the background to his life see Jacquot's edition, pp. xxii-lviii.

2. De la Conoissance, f. 24v.

3. L'Estoile, op. cit., p. 222; André Joubert, Louis de Clermont Sieur de Bussy D'Amboise, Angers 1885, p. 185.

4. René Radouant, Guillaume du Vair, pp. 32, 46 n. 2.

that he was of some consequence by his being addressed in one of Gui le Fèvre de la Boderie's poems in the fifth circle of La Galliade. He also presented a poem translated from the Greek, called Une Hymne de la Loi, to him and his brother praised him in his poem 'Ode en Faveur de la Galliade'.¹ La Boderie spent most of his life working either for the printer Christopher Plantin of Antwerp or for Alençon. With his brother he had worked in the printer's house on the Polyglot Bible from 1568.²

Le Fèvre de la Boderie was a formidable scholar with a particular interest in neo-Platonism and the esoteric. His earliest known dedication to Alençon is of the philosophical poem L'Encyclie des Secrets de L'Eternité, which Plantin printed in 1570. In return for this he won the Duke's patronage. On the title-page of his 1578 translation of Ficino's De la Religion Chrestienne he calls himself 'Secrétaire de Monseigneur...& son interprete aux langues peregrines'. In the same year he describes himself similarly in his translation of Ficino's Discours de l'Honneste Amour sur le Banquet de Platon. The book is dedicated to Marguérite of Navarre, and in his elegy to her La Boderie tells of how he owes his appointment with Alençon to her:

Auquel ia de long temps par une sainte envie
Mon service ay vouë, & ma Muse, & ma vie.

Ten years ago he entered Alençon's service:

Depuis je n'ay cessé ny de jour ny de nuit
Donnant lustre à mes vers, d'orner son nom qui luit
Ainsi que le Soleil.

Although Alençon has never made him feel 'combien liberalle est sa main' and 'que vault de servir un bon Maistre', now he hopes the Duke will fulfill the promise of a reward made to his sister. But whatever he decides to do La Boderie will go on celebrating Alençon on his lute to the four corners of the world.³

1. Ibid., p. 471 and n. 4.

2. Voët, Golden Compasses, vol. i, pp. 367, 376.

3. Discours de l'Honneste Amour, sigs. Bb6v.- 8.

The reward may have come quickly, for in the same year of 1578 he published a series of poems called La Galliade ou de la Révolution des Arts et Sciences. This celebration of the genius and expression of French culture was dedicated to Alençon and contains seventeen commendatory sonnets addressed to him. More poems appear in his last work directly connected with him, the Diverses Meslanges Poétiques of 1582. As well as supplying a summary of the poetry and songs which he wrote for Alençon, which praise him and remind him of his long service, the collection has another fifteen sonnets addressed to him.¹ These are of some interest for the picture they give of the Duke and his life which corroborates Dampmartin's. The first for example talks of him writing poetry and playing on the lute, of being accustomed 'mediter en serieuse estude' and finally of being like Caesar, 'A combattre de jour, et escrire de nuit'. The sixth suggests him as the future leader of an attack on the Turks, while in the tenth he announces himself ready to journey to England, calming the waves on the way, to help him win the 'Coronne en Angleterre'. The theme is continued in the next sonnet in which he offers to be his Orpheus; he returns to his earlier comparison and reminds the Duke that he is Caesar and that Caesar conquered the English: that he is also Hercules who captured an evil Druid who had left his native England to live in French woods.

Despite undoubtedly being a minor poet Le Fèvre de la Boderie was one of the leading neo-Platonic and esoteric thinkers of the French court; his translations made Ficino and Giorgio - whose L'Harmonie du Monde appeared in 1578 with his brother Nicholas' version of Pico della Mirandola's Heptapla - freely available. In Paris he met Ronsard and Baïf and must have come into contact with the academies. He belonged to a tradition of interest in the mystical and the occult which he inherited from his teacher Guillaume Postel.² Together they worked on the Antwerp Polyglot Bible in the 1560's and Postel, introduced to Plantin through Ortelius, had

1. Diverses Meslanges, sigs. ddl-3v., kk2-6v.

2. H de la Ferrière-Percy, Les La Boderie, 1857, p. 15; F Secret, L'Esotérisme de Guy le Fèvre de la Boderie, Etudes de Philologie et d'Histoire, vol x. Geneva 1969.

an interest in and links with the Familists. As late as 1579 he was still urging Ortelius to carry on his work of creating a new Christian age. Unfortunately it appears that from 1563 until his death in 1581 he was more or less confined to the monastery of St. Martin as a madman.¹ However this did not prevent him from dedicating one work, his Des Histoires Orientales, to the youthful Alençon in 1575 as a token of thanks for the Duke and his mother's kindness.²

Alençon's Plantin connexion is continued with another secretary and devoted servant of the Duke's, Nicholas Clement of Treles. He probably joined his court in 1580 or 1581.³ In 1582 he was with Alençon at Antwerp and was asked by Abraham Ortelius to translate the Latin verses which Plantin had published in 1578 to go with Philip Galle's engravings of Dutch leaders taken from pictures belonging to the Carmelites in Harlem. Clement sent his hastily translated verses to Ortelius on 9 December 1582 and Plantin published the resulting work, Les Vies et Alliances des Comtes de Hollande, in the New Year.⁴ The book was dedicated to Alençon whose portrait is the final one in it. Before this Clement had also dedicated the first section of his interesting collection of puns, anagrams and rebuses to Alençon. This was the Anagrammatographia and the accompanying French translation Anagrammes, was dedicated from Paris on 21 February 1582 to M de Laverne, who is described as 'Conseiller, Chambellan, & Capitaine des Gardes Françoises de Mon-seigneur'. As the date so soon after Alençon's departure from England suggests the poems were written during the years of the courtship and Clement says that the French versions were 'faits ainsi queles Latins en voiageant'. But although there are anagrams based on both Alençon's, ('Fulcies sic unus aras'), and Queen Elizabeth's, ('Ita res Angliae habe'), names, which were written at London,⁵ presumably in 1581, as

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1. William J Bouwsma, Concordia Mundi: The Career and Thought of Guillaume Postel, Cambridge, Mass. 1957, pp. 26-9.
 2. Des Histoires Orientales, sig. *2.
 3. Hubert Elie, 'Un Européen de la Seconde Moitié du XVIe Siècle: Nicolas Clément de Treles', Annales de l'Est, 5th ser., vol. xi, 1960, p. 153.
 4. Les Vies et Alliances, sig. L4v. When Plantin reprinted the book in 1586 the Alençon dedication and portrait were removed, Elie, art. cit., p. 125. Clement was in Antwerp by 1 July 1582 when he wrote an epigram 'Cosmographo incomparabilili' Abraham Ortelius for his Album Amicorum, ed. Jean Puraye, De Gulden Passer, vol. xlv, 1967, f. 51 and vol. xlvi, 1968, pp. 43, 44.
 5. Anagrammatographia, sigs. A3v., A4.

well as other poems on the internationally famous - Buchanan, Du Bartas, Ronsard, Melissus and Languet - disappointingly there are none addressed to Englishmen.

To get closer to the view of the courtship from within Alençon's circle one has to go to another slightly less obscure poet, Jean de la Jessée. The earliest known link between Alençon and this prolific author is the dedication of his political tract Sur les Presents Troubles de France to him in 1573. This was followed in the next year by a poem on him in a collection of epigrams on political leaders.¹ Another poem appears in a volume of French verses Les Odes-Satyres et Quelques Sonets, 1579,² and in the same year he rather inappropriately dedicated his collection of love poems and elegies La Grasinde to Alençon. He had probably made his point by now and become one of the Duke's 'Secrétaires de la Chambre', possibly accompanying his master as one of the two 'valets de chambre' on his visit to England in 1579.³ He returned there in 1581 and left with Alençon for the Low Countries in February 1582. At Antwerp he published his collection La Flandre à Monseigneur. Plus XIIIII Sonnetz Francoys, & quelques vers Latins, 1582. The first part of this contains an interesting plea to one, who appears to be Queen Elizabeth, to support her lover:

Deesse, mon desir, qui as la voix si belle,
Agraffe bien ta robe, emplume ton aisselle,
Ageance tes cheveux, & d'un voller hardy
Guinde toy jusqu'en Flandre: & scavante luy dy
La bonté, la grandeur, la force, l'assurance,
Et cent autres valeurs de FRANÇOYS filz de France.
Bref chante-les si bien, & t'esleve si fort,
Qu'elle choisisse en luy son Phare, & son support.⁴

Later on he makes it clear that he still looks forward to the English marriage and indirectly returns to this after sonnets to Alençon and Orange in the second part of the book, Calliope, which is dedicated with lavish praise to the Queen from Antwerp in the middle of May. Complementary pairs of poems follow on Elizabeth and Alençon.⁵

1. Epigrammaton ad Principes, et Magnates Galliae, permultosque alios insignes viros, pro Xeniiis: Libri Duo, Paris 1574, sig. B1.

2. Sig. B3.

3. Jules de Richy, Discours Veritable de l'Entreprise d'Anvers pour Justification du feu Monseigneur, (1640?), pp. 29, 30.

4. La Flandre, p. 7.

5. Ibid., pp. 27-9, 32.

As one might have expected Plantin printed this book and his last major one, the Premières Oeuvres, 1583, the only part of his collected works to appear. This shows that he was still in Antwerp on 20 December 1582 when he dedicated the book to Alençon.¹ Even after his death it was the courtship which stood out for Jean de la Jessée. In his memorial volume for Alençon the last address in the poem is to the Queen as a peacemaker:

Mais toy l'heur de ton Isle, Ô sage Royne Angloyse,
 Illustre Elisabet, donte-mal, chasse-noyse:
 Ne laisse je te pry d'aymer ce Prince accort,
 Divine est l'amitié qui vit aprez la mort...²

This mixture of romantic memory and political hopefulness is striking and an interesting testimony to the imaginative power of the courtship for Alençon's circle. It looked forward to the match as eagerly as Leicester's circle dreaded it.

Perhaps the most extraordinary work presented to Alençon which also touches on the courtship is by Gabriel Bounin, who early attached himself to the Duke and became his 'Conseiller, & Maistre des Requestes ordinaire de son Hostel', as the title-page to his Tragédie sur la Défaite et Occision de la Piaffe et de la Picquorée et Banissement de Mars, à l'Introduction de Paix, 1579, declares. This work which may rather belatedly celebrate the Peace of Monsieur of 1576 in a ridiculous allegorical drama is dedicated to Alençon from Paris on 23 May 1579. Bounin admits that it is 'plus facétieuse que tragique' but that it has diverted him from his legal studies and affairs and that although it is slight he knows how much Alençon likes receiving, 'tout ouvrage traitant de vertu'.³ Two interesting sonnets addressed to the Duke follow, one, 'Sur l'entreprise de son voiage en Angleterre', which he did not make until August of that year, and one to Queen Elizabeth. Paris and the whole of France weep at Monsieur's departure, for the Queen's almost divine beauty has pierced his heart in a way that no arrow from a French, Spanish or Turkish bow could.⁴

1. Sig.*6v.

2. Larmes et Regretz sur la Maladie et Trespas de Monseigneur, 1584, sig.Cl.

3. Tragédie sur la Défaite, sig.*2

4. Ibid., sigs.*2v., *3.

So far the men I have described have been decidedly^d minor writers and poets, largely forgotten and scarcely known about outside their own closely-connected circle. Their importance lies in demonstrating Alençon's attractions as a liberal patron and a potentially great man, who liked to surround himself in his academy with philosophers, poets and muscians. But he also employed and patronized a thinker of international significance, Jean Bodin. The book which assures him a place in any history of political thought is the République, which was first printed in 1576. He seems to have joined Alençon's service in 1571 as one of his Masters of Requests and to have worked almost continually for him until the Prince's death. La République was probably written during a period of disgrace which began in 1574 but was ended by his attendance in 1576 of the meeting of the Estates General at Blois at which La Primaudaye was also present. After this he withdrew to Laon where he practised law.¹ It is from Laon that he dates the dedication of his De la Denomonomanie des Sorciers, 1580, on 20 December 1580.

Bodin's great work does not belong to the radical Huguenot school of Gentillet and the Vindiciae but upheld absolutism and defined the nature of sovereignty fully and for the first time, arguing that its chief 'mark' was the giving of laws.² It is important that his visits to England, which we know quite a lot about, came within a few years of the publication of his book. He may have crossed with Alençon on his private visit in 1579. But he definitely arrived on 19 February 1581, before the main body of the marriage Commissioners, and stayed for about a year until February 1582 when he accompanied Alençon to Antwerp. His fame went before him, being described by Mendoza as Alençon's 'secretary...a great heretic, as is proved by the books he has written'. There is evidence that he strongly disapproved of the 'furie française' at Antwerp.³ Leaving the town, he returned once more by way of England to France and after Alençon's death retired to Laon again working on the Latin translation and revision of the République, which he may have begun in England and which appeared in 1586.⁴ The burden of Summerfield Baldwin's article about the visit to

1. Jean Bodin, The Six Bookes of a Commonweale, ed. K D McRae, Harvard 1962, pp. A8-A10.

2. Skinner, vol.ii, pp. 284 - 301.

3. CSP Sp., vol.iii, p.84; Summerfield Baldwin, 'Jean Bodin and the League', Catholic Historical Review, vol.xxiii, 1937, pp. 168, 169.

4. McRae, ed. cit., p.A10; Baldwin, art. cit., p. 163.

England is that it disillusioned Bodin of his hopes that religious toleration existed there and that Protestantism of all religions best suited and served the interests of civil order. Rather he felt that Protestant intolerance might well lead England into civil war. Like Alençon's other literary employees he clearly had great hopes of the marriage to the Queen, which would promote the 'politique', tolerant cause in Europe; he saw that this was the only means by which great things might be accomplished.

His disappointment with Elizabeth's evasive policy as well as his distrust of the Flemish and fears for Alençon's mission to him come through in the Duke of Nevers' Mémoires. He reports the Queen's sharp reply to Bodin's remark that he would not know what to say about the courtship in the lives of the famous he intended to write. Bodin seems to have made himself more unpopular in England by not only disagreeing with the execution of Campion in December 1581, but by announcing that disagreement.¹ Pierre Mathieu in his Histoire d'Henri IV says that Bodin 'se rendait odieux aux Anglais et indiscret aux Français pour sa curiosité'. He then goes on to tell a story about his having dinner with 'un seigneur du pays' and saying that he could not see why, just because she was born abroad, Mary, Queen of Scots could not succeed to the English throne; again he found himself squashed by his unnamed host.²

Yet he did have some friends in England and his visits served to draw attention to his work. Twice in La République Bodin refers to Valentine Dale, describing him on one of these occasions as 'an honourable gentleman and a man of good understanding', and tells of their meeting:

Being sent into England with an Ambassage, I heard Mendoza the spanish Ambassadour say, That it was a shamefull thing to see men & women sit together at holie sermons: to whome Doctor Dale Master of Requests answered pleasantly, That it was a more shamefull thing for Spaniards to thinke of satisfying their lusts even in holie places, the which was far from Englishmens minds.³

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1. Louis de Gonzague, Duc de Nevers, Mémoires, 1665, p. 555; McRae, ed. cit. p. A139, n. to p. 537 B2.
 2. Quoted in Henri Baudrillart, Bodin et son Temps, 1853, p. 129.
 3. McRae, ed. cit., pp. 96, 557, 558.

A fellow of All Souls, Valentine Dale had been the English ambassador resident in Paris from April 1573 until October 1576, during the crucial years when Baif's Academy was evolving into the Palace Academy. He watched this happening and knew about the philosophical debates which took place, and also reported frequently to Leicester on events in France. Sidney intended to stay with him in Paris early in the spring of 1575.¹

Although Harvey's copy of the République has not yet been found it should come as no surprise that he and Bodin appear to have been fast friends - at least in Harvey's eyes. He frequently refers to him with admiration in the marginalia, once in Sonnet 22 of the Four Letters, twice in other sonnets and once in Pierces Supererogation.² In his copy of Domenichi's Facetie he proudly noted that 'Doctor Baro the Frenchman told Monsieur Bodin that besides mie learning, I was all spirit'.³ Nashe of course takes a scornful view of Harvey's association with Bodin, attacking what Moore Smith deduced, that Harvey, 'claims more than once to have been in some way commended by Jean Bodin':

For M.Bodines commendation of him, it is no more but this, one complementarie Letter asketh another; & Gabriell first writing to him, and seeming to admire him and his workes, hee could doo no lesse in humanitie (beeing a Scholler) but returne him an answere in the like nature.⁴

In its way this may be true, but my point is not that Bodin respected Harvey, but that he was admired by Harvey and noticed by many others in England. Dee thought that meeting him in the Presence Chamber at Westminster on 23 February 1581 was a sufficiently important event to be noted in his highly selective diary.⁵ Dyer eagerly wrote to the English ambassador in Paris, Sir Amias Paulet, in 1577 for a copy of La République, but had to wait until the new

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1. Yates, pp. 32, 33; the letters to Leicester are in BL MS Cott. Calig. E VI ff. 203 - 79v. and 351 - 87, unfortunately the MS was badly damaged by fire; Osborn, p. 293.
 2. Harvey, vol. i, p. 252, vol. ii, pp. 23, 24, 83.
 3. Stern, p. 182 and n. 95 is wrong in reading Daro for Baro and so thinking Harvey is referring to the English ambassador to France, Valentine Dale, rather than the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Pietro Baro.
 4. Marginalia, pp. 284, 285; Nashe, vol. iii, p. 116.
 5. Diary of Dr John Dee, p. 10.

edition of 1579 came out before he got one.¹ He would almost certainly have wanted to meet the visiting Frenchman.

At the end of the Epistle to the Latin edition of La République, which had been written as early as 27 November 1584, Bodin says that he heard of one man at Cambridge trying to interpret the book for Englishmen. Moore Smith noted this and wondered whether it was in fact Harvey.² Given his equally revolutionary support and advocacy of Ramism and his serious interest in Machiavelli I find this highly likely. Bodin's popularity at Cambridge can be judged from the third of the letters in the Letter Book, written around 1580:

You can not stepp into a schollars studye but (ten to on) you shall litely finde open ether Bodine de Republica or Le Royes Exposition uppon Aristotles Politiques or sum other like Frenche or Italian Politique Discourses.³

It may also have been Harvey who introduced William Harrison, to whom he lent books, to Bodin's Methodus ad facilem Historiarum Cognitionem, which Sidney also mentions in the letter written to his brother in October 1580.⁴

Ramus provides another link between Harvey and Bodin, for it is now known for certain that Bodin was a Ramist and although he was highly critical of Machiavelli he still admired his work and was intellectually heavily indebted to him.⁵ With Sir Thomas Smith's De Republica Anglorum and Harvey's interest, a way was prepared for the reception of Bodin's ideas into this country. Yet the bulk of the work necessary for this was done by another author. George L Mosse has argued that it is not strange that the first translation of La République should only have come in 1606, because there was a book which

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1. R M Sargent, The Life and Lyrics of Sir Edward Dyer, Oxford 1968, p. 49. At the beginning of 1577 William Waad wrote to Burghley about his friendship with Bodin and promised to send him a copy of La République, CSP For., vol. xiii, no. 1244.
 2. Marginalia, p. 285.
 3. Letter Book, f. 42v.
 4. Leonard F Dean, 'Bodin's Methodus in England before 1625', SP, vol. xxxix, 1942, pp. 161, 162; Harvey's letter to Harrison in which he sends him a copy of Plutarch is in the Letter Book, ff. 89v., 90; see above ch. III, pt.iii.
 5. McRae, ed. cit., pp. A25 - A28; G Cardascia, 'Machiavelli et Jean Bodin', BHR, vol. iii, 1943, pp. 129 - 67.

covered in a less original way much of the same ground and helped to make Bodin's theories familiar and acceptable. This was La Primaudaye's French Academy which was first translated in part into English in 1586 and was frequently reissued after that. Mosse says that it:

contained the essence of Bodin's formulation...Here were all elements of Bodin...the perpetual nature of sovereignty; and the complete powers which a sovereign must possess, the most important of which was to give and make laws.¹

Is it just a coincidence that the two men connected with Alençon, who met at Blois in 1576, should have written books which relate to the same subject and that both of them should have played an important part in English intellectual life? Alençon surely deserves to be recognised as the patron of a household or circle of poets and musicians, philosophers and advanced political thinkers, which undoubtedly had a profound effect on the English court and its intellectual life. His familiar image as a dangerous buffoon, treacherously scheming his way onto the English throne and preparing for an English St Bartholomew is based on a hostile and insular view of him. His 'politique', Familist and anti-Machiavellian aspects suggest what a complex and exciting character he presented to his supporters and his reception in the Netherlands confirms the great hopes his contemporaries had of him.

vi. The Apotheosis

Although Alençon was extravagantly praised and mourned at his funeral in 1584 his real moment of transcendent glory had been over two years before when, in the first half of 1582 he made his entry into the Low Countries as Duke of Brabant supplanting Philip II as ruler. From Antwerp in February to Ghent in August he was magnificently received in a revitalized Burgundian style. Apart from the printed descriptions of these entries the chief monument to Alençon's rule in the Netherlands is the famous set of Valois tapestries now in the Uffizi in Florence. 'The world of the tapestries is a free world', they are 'a vision of what might have been'.² Glorifying Catherine de Medici and

1. George L Mosse, 'The Influence of Jean Bodin's République on English Political Thought', Medievalia et Humanistica, vol. v, 1948, pp. 74, 75.
 2. Frances Yates, The Valois Tapestries, pp. xvi, lll.

her festivals they are a plea from William of Orange to her and Henri III to support Alençon's rule in the Netherlands, to promote toleration and family unity, and to ensure peace and concord. Their meaning and significance have been so beautifully and movingly explored by Frances Yates that it is unnecessary to add to her account of them, except to say that to her evocation of the culture of Antwerp under Alençon can be added a beautiful prayer-book illuminated by Hans Bol, for the Duke's use in his new position.¹

If Leicester could never have seen the tapestries it is quite possible that his nephew Sidney did on his visit to Paris in 1584. Sidney would have been one of the few people who could have understood their message and been affected by their portrayal of his 'sweet enemy' Alençon. Certainly he might have felt that Alençon's world and what he stood for were not so entirely removed from his own or his uncle's positions as he might once have felt. Despite his youth Alençon was able to establish himself as a leading patron for writers and thinkers, a liberal alternative to his conservative brother - an ornament to French culture, not a disgrace to it. Seeing his rival court the Queen as he had once done, Leicester was bound to feel that his own patronage should expand and become more personal, orientated towards his own glory and causes and away from the state's. In the second part of this thesis I shall investigate the effect this had on three writers closely connected with the Earl and on the court entertainments of the period of the courtship in which he had an interest. Leicester's attitude to Alençon was complicated by the Protestant cause's need to use him in the Low Countries. But he also might have been aware of the similarities between himself and the Frenchman - political, social, intellectual and even emotional. The great difference between the two lay in Alençon's age, a sharp reminder to the English of how much he had achieved in such a short time.

1. Madeleine Huillet d'Istria, 'Le Livre de Prières de François de France, duc d'Anjou (Alençon) enluminé par Hans Bol, 1582', Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen, 1970, pp. 85-120.

PART TWO

CHAPTER V

GABRIEL HARVEY.

'Give me entrance and lett me alone. Give me footing, and I will find elbow room'.

Marginalia, p. 55.

Harvey's prominent position in my account of Leicester's literary patronage between 1578 and 1582 can be justified on two grounds. Firstly as I suggested above because he provides the link between Sir Thomas Smith's intellectual world and the Earl's; and secondly because there is a dense mass of evidence for his close contact with Leicester and his nephew Sidney as well as with Spenser which has never been accurately put together and analysed. I shall describe in this chapter how Harvey came into contact with the court and celebrated its visit to Audley End in 1578, how he came to write and publish his letters to and from Spenser, which give such a vivid impression of the literary concerns of Leicester's circle during the Alençon courtship, and finally show that Harvey continued to be associated with his patron long after his supposed disgrace in 1580. Harvey had enormous respect for Leicester and an overwhelming urge to serve him. In return the Earl almost unfailingly tried to find Harvey suitable work and was prepared to be the patron of the brilliant and unconventional don.

i. The Approach to Court,

Cromwell and Sir Thomas ~~Moore~~^{More} were two of Harvey's many heroes because they showed that men of humble birth could rise to positions of great power and become famous orators. These were Harvey's two main ambitions and his scholarship and learning were seen by him as the means to this worldly success. Living in Saffron Walden near to Sir Thomas Smith he was certain to know of the typically successful humanist. A closer link between the two would have been forged through ^{his} being at school with Smith's favourite nephew and later his secretary, John Wood.¹ But Smith was a busy man, out of the country for much of Harvey's early life, and his first patron was Sir Walter Mildmay.

1. Smithus, 1578, Sig. L4v. John Wood was in fact Sir Thomas Smith's sister's husband's brother.

Harvey had matriculated at Christ's Cambridge in June 1566 and was tutored by William Lewin and John Still; in 1569 Mildmay founded six exhibitions at the College, one of which Harvey seems to have won. On Smith's death Harvey dedicated his volume of memorial verses to Mildmay and sent him a letter with the book praising Smith.¹ Harvey turned to Smith when having gained his BA in 1570 he sought a fellowship at Pembroke Hall. Writing to him three years later he gratefully remembers how:

I trubblid your wurship with laboring to our Master about a fellowship; wherein the event did declare how mutch you praevailid with him.

He also discussed with him the possibility of a fellowship at Christ's which might have induced him to enter the Church, and was happy to reject that avenue.² Smith played some part in helping him with his difficulties over his MA in the spring of 1573 and later in the same year Harvey wrote to him for advice, having decided to study the civil law: in choosing to take up the law, as his former tutor William Lewin did, he was of course following Smith. His advice seems to have been detailed and also practical and Harvey wrote to thank him, being grateful that he 'had sutch a patron, or rather a father, to resort unto'.³ There can be no doubt about Smith's friendship and patronage of Harvey, nor about the young man's evident admiration for the cultured diplomat and his desire to emulate his successful career.

Once established at Pembroke Hall, the problems over his MA resolved largely through the influence of the non-resident John Young, Prebendary of Westminster, his academic career flourished. In October 1573, despite some opposition, he was appointed College Lecturer in Greek and in April 1574 he became University Praelector in Rhetoric, a post he held until 1576.⁴ He began to publish: Latin ^{pre}liminary verses to Gascoigne's Posies of 1575, and in the same year the Ode Natalitia celebrating Ramus as a brilliant thinker, teacher and Protestant martyr. The inaugural lectures for the three years as

1. Marginalia, pp. 221-3 and n. to p. 221.3.

2. Letter Book, ff. 87, 88v., 89.

3. Ibid., ff. 18, 87-9, 91v., 92.

4. Stern, pp. 25, 28.

Praelector produced the Rhetor and Ciceronianus both printed in 1577, while the Greek lectureship provided two orations, 'De Discenda Graeca Lingua' printed by Edward Grant at the end of his edition of Jean Crespin's Lexicon Graeco-Latinum in 1581.¹ Yet while he was mainly concerned with logic and rhetoric during his eight year fellowship at Pembroke, he did not neglect his chosen career of law which would lead him to diplomacy and politics: in 1574 for example he acquired Joannes Ramus' Oikonomia, seu Dispositio Regularum utriusque Juris.²

While Harvey was undoubtedly a brilliant scholar, with a critical interest in all knowledge he was not a literary genius and the chief asset of these years was meeting and probably tutoring Spenser. He entered Pembroke shortly before Harvey gained his fellowship, in May 1569, and it is tempting to think that Harvey saw Spenser's genius as another possible way of promoting his own career. At the end of the summer term of 1576 Spenser took his MA and Harvey's Praelectorship came to an end. In August Harvey was in York and as Moore Smith suggests may have accompanied Spenser on his way north.³ With his University duties over and his friend far away Harvey seems to have come down to London and probably through Sir Thomas Smith's connexions and his own prominent position at Cambridge got himself known at court. For in the Gratulationes Valdinenses published in September 1578 he prints two epigrams on the portraits of Leicester and Warwick, 'duobus abhinc annis Londini conscriptum', which would date them to the late summer or early autumn of

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1. The Gascoigne verses were identified by W B Austin in a letter to the TLS, 22 March 1947; he also identified 'Gabriel Harvey's "Lost" Ode on Ramus', MLN, vol. lxi, 1946, pp. 242-7; Harold S Wilson and Clarence A Forbes edited and translated Gabriel Harvey's 'Ciceronianus', University of Nebraska Studies, Studies in the Humanities, no. 4, November 1945, and Robert M Chandler produced Gabriel Harvey's 'Rhetor': A Translation and Critical Edition, University of Missouri-Columbia Ph.D. 1978; T W Baldwin first identified the contributions to the Crespin in his William Shakspeare's Small Latine & Lesse Greeke, Urbana 1944, vol. i, pp. 436, 437.
 2. Marginalia, p. 141.14.
 3. Ibid., p. 16.

1576.¹ Harvey does not call Leicester his patron but it is obvious from these two pieces of adroit flattery that Harvey had come into some sort of contact with him and had expectations of him.

Harvey's visit to London was probably related to the publication of his inaugural lectures. In London he would have found his former tutor William Lewin who earlier in the year had been appointed Judge of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and who wrote to Harvey on 15 December 1576, presumably some time after Harvey had left town, advising him to devote himself 'alicui quaestuosae Arti'.² Shortly after this on 4 January 1577 Harvey sent Lewin the Ciceronianus as a New Year's gift, with publication evidently in mind, for Lewin sent the manuscript on to the printer with an accompanying letter on February 11.³ So that Harvey may have spent part of the previous autumn revising the oration with Lewin's help. The book was entered in the Stationers' Register on March 20 and published in June: Harvey was away while it was being printed.⁴ Certainly he was in Saffron Walden in February 1577 because he read through his copy of Gasser's chronology then and on the twenty-fifth was at Pembroke Hall from where he dates his letter to Clerke in the Rhetor.⁵ So that when in his copy of Livy he notes that he discussed the first three books of the First Decade with Philip Sidney, 'paulo ante suam Legationem ad Imperatorem',⁶ - that is in March 1577 - I think he is referring to the same period towards the end of 1576, soon after Sidney had returned from Ireland, when he wrote the epigrams to Leicester and Warwick and not to the beginning of 1577 when he was not in London. This supplies further evidence of his desire to attach himself to Leicester and his circle; apparently by then

1. Gratulationes Valdinenses, sigs. F2, F2v; although I have found no evidence that the epigrams have also been 'a multis descriptum' as Harvey says they have been, I do not think he has falsified the date or place of their composition.

2. Marginalia, p. 220.

3. Wilson and Forbes, ed. cit., pp. 36-43, cf. pp. 12, 13.

4. Ibid., pp. 11, 105.

5. Marginalia, p. 109.28-30; Rhetor, sig.a3.

6. Stern, p. 150 and n. 7; his comment would seem to belong to his reading of the book in 1580 or 1590.

he was on intellectually close terms with Sidney. He may have achieved this through his own efforts or by way of Leicester: Sidney was briefly at Cambridge after his time at Oxford and it is possible that Harvey and Spenser got to know him then.¹

Harvey still wanted public and not purely academic recognition, but on 12 August 1577 he lost his patron Sir Thomas Smith. The funeral was held in Essex, and on the next day Harvey was in London at an inn where he began the series of elegies published in January 1578 as Smithus, vel Musarum Lachrymae. This was the occasion on which he met the two Italians who, seeing what he had written, presented him with two sets of encomiastic verses, which he printed in his later poetical work of 1578.² Again Harvey may have spent the early part of the autumn in London, concerned with the printing of his Rhetor, which was published in November. It was during August that he met George Buchanan, who had come to London to attend to the publication of some of his works. Harvey was certainly there on September 1 when he acquired a copy of Gascoigne's Posies of 1575 to which he had contributed; in the same month he reread one of his favourite books, Erasmus' Parabolae.³ Perhaps these two books were meant to console him over the loss of his benefactor and friend, but it was a bitter irony that George Gascoigne also died on October 7. By November 17 Harvey was back in Cambridge and wrote a poem celebrating the Queen's accession day which he also published later.⁴

Between 1578 and the summer of 1580 Harvey's life was frantically busy and exciting. The period coincides with Spenser's reappearance to work for John Young sometime during the spring of 1578 and his departure for Ireland in the summer of 1580 and I feel certain that Harvey was stimulated by and took advantage of his friend's return. In January 1578 as we have just seen the Smithus was published and some time after this plans began to be made to

1. For Sidney at Cambridge, see Wallace, pp. 105-7 and Buxton, p. 43.

2. Gratulationes Valdinenses, sigs. D2, D2v.

3. See above ch. III, pt. iv; Marginalia, pp. 165.5, 140.32.

4. Gratulationes Valdinenses, sig. B2.

send deputies to the conference of German Protestant Princes to be held at Schmalkalden on June 7. In his Astrological Discourse of 1583 Richard Harvey thanks John Aylmer, Bishop of London, for his 'singular curtesie' shown to his brother, 'when he should have travailed' to the Conference. This is the only source which suggests that Harvey was involved in this mission which never left since the Conference broke down before it started; the relevant State Papers list the deputies as Laurence Humphrey, John Still, John Hammond and Daniel Rogers - Harvey is not mentioned.¹ It seems likely that Aylmer's help which clearly came after Harvey had been suggested for the mission, was procured by another Cambridge man, the dedicatee of Rhetor, Bartholomew Clerke, who had gone to London as a lawyer and become Dean of the Arches. For Harvey's one known reference to Aylmer reports him calling Clerke 'delitium humani generis'.² If this is so, then Clerke's favour was a suitable recompense for Harvey's dedication of the Rhetor to him towards the end of the last year. Harvey knew the Cambridge civilian Hammond; he refers to Still, a fellow of Christ's from 1562 to 1572, as 'My oulde Tutor, and continuall frende';³ and he may have met Rogers through his contact with Leicester. Indeed I think it was through the Earl rather than as Moore Smith suggests through Still or Rogers that Harvey become involved.⁴ For in his 1579 letter to Leicester Harvey reminds him of his high opinion of Still, 'which did evydently appeare by makying choyce of him for the voyage to Smalcaldy', which implies that the Earl was behind the mission, selecting the deputies and their assistants.⁵

Harvey must have made a good impression on Leicester to be permitted to go to the Conference which was so dear to the Protestant Cause. Equally Leicester must be credited with recognising Harvey's outstanding abilities.

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1. Marginalia, p. 21 n.1; to Moore Smith's list of the principal relevant papers, add CSP For., vol. xviii, no. 522 dated 1 June 1578.
 2. Marginalia, p. 150.26, 27.
 3. Stern, p. 50.
 4. Marginalia, p. 21 n. 1.
 5. Longleat Dudley Papers, vol. ii, f. 202, transcribed in W R Gair, Literary Societies in England, pp. 208-10.

Further evidence of his success in promoting his career at court comes from later in the summer when the Queen made her second and final visit to Cambridge University. She stayed with Thomas Howard at Audley End where in 1571 she had been the guest of the Duke of Norfolk before his treacherous part in the Ridolfi plot was revealed. The University was summoned by its Chancellor, Burghley, to wait on the Queen on July 27 the day after her arrival, and to entertain her with a speech by the Public Orator, Richard Bridgewater, and with two questions in a disputation. 'The actors are such', the Vice-Chancellor Richard Howland assured Burghley, 'as I do not doubt but will greatly commend themselves, and delight the hearers'.¹ Harvey was given the considerable honour of opposing the questions, aided by John Palmer of St. John's and Henry Hawkins of Peterhouse: Samuel Fleming of King's proposed them, Giles Fletcher also of King's, a poet himself and father of Giles and Phineas, acted as moderator with Burghley's help, and Harvey's friend Thomas Byng, Master of Clare, determined the matter after more than three hours of dispute.²

Audley End provided Harvey with the opportunity of announcing and celebrating his close relations with the court in public; he could show on what intimate terms he was with it and with Leicester's patronage try to carry his political and diplomatic career further. Not only had most of the important courtiers been there but also the French ambassador.³ The natural way for Harvey to impress those who were present was through Latin poetry.

1. HMC Hatfield, vol. ii, p. 189.

2. Matthew Stokys' account of the University's part in the visit is contained in CUL MS Misc. Collect. 4, ff.126v. - 134v., which has been transcribed by William Cole in BL MS Add. 5845 ff. 222-6 and summarised in Nichols, vol. ii, pp. 111-4. There is no evidence for Stern's assumption, p. 40, that he won the disputation.

3. See above p. 20 n.2 ; Rambouillet and L'Aubespine were possibly also there, but Bacqueville and Quissé did not arrive until after the University's visit on July 30, CSP For., vol. xv, no. 123.

ii. The Gratulationes Valdinenses.

We have already seen Harvey including in the book which was published in September several poems unrelated to the royal visit - the epigrams on Leicester and Warwick's portraits, the accession day verses and the two Italians' poems. The Gratulationes Valdinenses show Harvey to have been a compiler, an economical user of his own and other people's work a habit which produces complicated results needing careful analysis. He included a Greek and twenty-eight Latin poems, all but one of which had already been printed, by native and continental Protestant writers significantly associated with Leicester.¹ The book took some time to reach its final form and different levels of work can be detected. It seems that Harvey originally gave copies of what he had written to the Queen and to Leicester and Burghley. For Harvey says that at first he only intended to write three books of which the third, dedicated to Burghley, survives in Harvey's manuscript, but omits the epigrams by Haddon and Bizari as well as Harvey's linking verses, which are present in the printed book.² The fourth book, dedicated to Oxford, Hatton and Sidney was not part of his original plan. Equally there are evident additions to the second book, three 'nova carmina' critical of Machiavelli and the Medici; yet the two dialogues at the end of Book Three which are also called 'nova carmina' (sig. G4), are present in the manuscript. The two-part Epilogue describing his meeting with the Queen, and concluding Book One was clearly written subsequent to the visit. However, I do not think that Harvey presented his compositions at Audley End itself as is generally assumed, but that they were largely put together after the event as Nashe suggests.³ Without further surviving manuscripts it is impossible to be sure of what was written when.

1. Stern, pp. 45, 46.

2. Gratulationes Valdinenses, sig. ¶12; BL MS Lansd. 120 ff. 179-87; in the printed book the additional epigrams are on sigs. Glv., G2.

3. Nashe, vol. i, p. 277, vol. iii, pp. 77, 78; my view contradicts Stern, p. 45.

Henry Bynneman who also printed the Rhetor, Ciceronianus, Smithus and later the Letters, entered the book in the Stationers' Register on 20 August 1578.¹ The separate title-pages to each of the four books are dated 'Mense Septembri', but the colophon says it was printed on September 1. It had to be done quickly for Harvey's intention was to present the complete work to the Queen while she was staying at Hadham Hall in Hertfordshire, the home of Henry Capell, whose son Arthur had matriculated as a fellow-commoner at Harvey's college Pembroke Hall in 1575. E.K. notes the presentation, which would have taken place on September 14, in his gloss on Hobbinol in the 'September' eclogue of the Shepheardes Calender. This deadline explains why the Errata leaf does not go beyond the first two books, for which it apologises, 'quod festinanti Typographo propemodum erat necesse'. The extra leaf survives in the British Library copy in which Harvey made further manuscript corrections, some of which also appear in his hand in the Pembroke College, Cambridge copy.² These corrections show Harvey's close involvement with the book's production. He may also have been responsible for the late insertion of two conjugate leaves, (sigs.D5 and D6), flattering his patron with Leicester's armorial bearings on the verso of one leaf and facing them Edward Grant's verses about them taken from his edition of Ascham's Apologia pro caena Dominica of 1577, which was dedicated to the Earl. The block of the arms was too large for the format of Harvey's book and has had to be folded in some copies. Usually the conjugate leaves come at the beginning of the book after sig.D4, but sometimes they are found at its end after sig.F2.³

1. Arber, vol. ii, p. 335.

2. BL C.60.h. 17 (2); Harvey wrote 'Immortalitatem' at the top of the title-page. The leaf is also present in the Queen's College, Cambridge copy, G.15.5 (4). The Pembroke copy shelf-mark is IC.II.141.

3. Rosenberg, p. 328 n. 13; R B McKerrow, Introduction to Bibliography, 3rd imp., Oxford 1948, p. 226. The conjugate leaves follow sig. D4 in the following copies: BL G.5946, (arms folded), 96.b.15 (9), (arms folded); Bodleian Gough Essex 11, Tanner 734, Corpus Christi College, Oxford 8.8 (2); CUL Syn. 7.60.154 (10), Queen's College, Cambridge IC.II.140 and 141, (arms folded) and the Folger copy. They follow sig.F2 in BL C.60.h. 17 (2). The CUL copy Syn.7.57.56 lacks these leaves and several others.

The first book begins by celebrating the Queen's arrival as Harvey experiences it: his description is interspersed with epigrams praising the Queen by other writers, (sigs. Al-Blw). Two poems of welcome are given to Audley End and Saffron Walden, (sigs. Blv., B2), which are followed by Harvey's accession day poem of 1577, (sigs. B2, B2v.). He then, (sig. B3), has a set of hexastichs written by him on July 30 at Walden where he must have gone soon after the disputation, while the Queen was still at Audley End. In a short prose preface to them Harvey says that the verses on the Queen's picture were written at the urging of the Master of Requests, Thomas Sackford. He was very interested in geography, helped Holinshed, William Harrison and the cartographer Saxton, evidently placing the Queen's picture referred to in the poem before the Description of England. Harvey probably met Sackford through Harrison, whom he knew while still a fellow of Pembroke, but he may have been introduced to him through the Withypoll family of Ipswich.¹

The Epilogue to the book which Nashe so mocked reports Harvey's encounter with the Queen in company with Sussex and Leicester, who presents him to her: she allows him to kiss her hand, (sig. B4). She goes off to talk to her Attorney General in Ireland, Thomas Snagg, but just as Harvey begins to speak to Leicester of his good fortune the Queen returns to the hall (sig. C1), leaving Harvey to a night of troubled dreams, ended by a visit to the house and a second kiss, (sig. C2). Why Harvey was presented to the Queen is made clear in the second part of the Epilogue, when she asks Leicester if Harvey is the man he has chosen to send to France and Italy. The Earl says he is and the Queen replies that he already looks like an Italian, (sig. C2v), a remark which after she has gone worries Harvey, for he dislikes the Italians, their vicious and dissembling ways and lacks their courtliness. Even so he looks forward to his trip to Italy, despite his

1. Letter Book, ff. 89v., 90; see also Marginalia, p. 114.19, 20 and on the Withypolls below pt. v.

ironic remarks about its peoples.¹ This incident and the fact that Harvey calls Leicester his lord on the title-page of Book Two and 'Dominum meum optimum' in his poem to him, (sig.E1), clearly show that he had found a successor to Sir Thomas Smith. The diplomatic career he wanted seemed about to begin, however we hear no more of it and must assume that for some unknown reason he never went abroad.

Harvey's opening poem to Leicester lavishly praises him and stresses how lucky he is to work for him. As in Book One he incorporates other writers' poems in his own, beginning with Pietro Bizari's written in the early 1560's encouraging the Queen to marry her favourite and become joint rulers, (sig. Elv). Later Harvey urges the Queen to wed and looks forward to her children, (sigs. E3, E3v.). While constantly wishing to praise Leicester, (sig. E4), his mood suddenly changes to a bitter attack on Machiavellism, which will be repulsed from England by the Queen and Leicester's white bear, (sigs. E4, E4v.). Harvey could hardly be more direct in his advice to the Queen to beware of her Medicean suitor and to turn to her favourite Earl. Conscious that he might have gone too far he ends the poem with throw-away lines, '...iocari/Si vacat, Ecce meos, O generose, iocos', but takes the theme up again in the next three poems, which savagely satirize both Machiavelli and his patrons, of the past and it is implied the present, the Medici, (sigs. E4v.-F2). In direct contrast the book ends with the two 1576 poems on the pictures of Leicester and his brother: the Queen is clearly being asked to look carefully on each and make her choice. T H Jameson has argued convincingly that the anti-Machiavellian satires were aimed against the French courtship, but he goes too far in suggesting that these poems, the dialogues at the end of Book Three and the Epilogue to Book One were prompted by a six week crisis following the visit to Audley End in which Leicester's faction's fortunes were upset by the French ambassadors.² The 'nova carmina'

1. T H Jameson, 'The "Machiavellianism" of Gabriel Harvey', PMLA, vol. lvi, 1941, p. 649.

2. Ibid., pp. 645-56, passim.

were general warnings rather than specific attacks on Bacqueville and Quissé whom Jameson wrongly says were witnesses to the supposed presentation of poems at Audley End; they must have been written some time during August, but there is no way of telling when. Book Two presents Leicester's first move against the Alençon courtship. His adoption of Harvey was rewarded by these anti-Medicean poems warning the Queen against her suitor's dangerous family and contrasting him with her English favourite. They are an excellent example of Leicester's being prepared to use his literary patronage for political ends.

The theme of Book Three is the peace which Burghley's wisdom and government have brought to the country. As Jameson suggests Harvey does not continue his satire into the book addressed 'to the deep and fox-like Burghley' even though there are touches of anti-Machiavellism in the final dialogues,¹ and the celebration of peace implicitly contrasts with continental unrest. Book Four is addressed to Oxford, Hatton and Sidney in order of rank, beginning with dialogues on Oxford's portrait and his arrival at Audley End, (sigs. H4, H4v.). Both play on his being a Vere while the first set of verses is identical with those which accompanied the University's gift of gloves to the Earl.² The main poem of this part celebrates with a fair degree of irony Oxford's reputation as a soldier and writer, (sigs. H4v.-I3). The section on Hatton revolves around his motto 'Foelix Infortunatus' and includes a poem on Alexander the Great's portrait, (sig.K2), which appears to be, from what Harvey says in his first Epilogue, (sig.Klv.), the work of an unnamed friend. Sidney, 'mihi multis nominibus longe charissimum', (sig.K3), is celebrated for his birth, learning and courtly behaviour. Harvey knows of his European travels and meetings with Estienne, Languet and Banosius and looks to him to promote Britain's international fame,

1. *Ibid.*, p. 654.

2. *CUL MS Misc. Collect.* 4, ff. 131, 131v., *BL MS Add.* 5845, f. 224.

(sigs.K3-K4). His next poem addressed to Sidney 'paulo ante discessum' announces Harvey's decision to follow other writers on the courtier using Sidney as his model; Sidney was meant to join Casimir in the Low Countries, but did not go because of the Queen's hostile attitude towards the Duke.¹ The section ends with Harvey's two poems on courtiers and ladies,² his brother Richard's summary of the book's contents and a poem commending his brother's work.

The Gratulationes Valdinenses were a great achievement for Harvey, an important assertion of his position as a leading member of the University and an aspirant member of the court. The book confirmed his status as a leading writer of neo-Latin poetry; it reminded the Queen and her courtiers of his important rôle at Audley End and announced it to the rest of the world; it showed his warm friendship for Sidney, his being in Leicester's service and through political satire demonstrated his willingness to advise the Queen and his support for the Earl's faction. Leicester dominates the work. Rightly his book comes second to the Queen's but he is presented as Harvey's patron in the Epilogue to her. Not only was he especially honoured with the late insertion of his arms in a large wood-cut, but the writers whose poems intersperse Harvey's were all sympathetic to him. As I have argued, the poems were largely written long before or shortly after the event, but not for it. Harvey was free to revise the work at any time during August before its publication in September: it is impossible to say at what stage the 'nova carmina' of Books One and Two were added, so that it is mistaken to see them as the hasty response to a sudden crisis in Leicester's fortunes.

iii. Moving into English.

In this light what actually happened at Audley End becomes of little importance, however brilliantly Nashe ridicules Harvey's behaviour over his meetings with the Queen and the ladies of the court. There was certainly

1. See below ch. VII, pt. i.

2. See George L Barnett, 'Gabriel Harvey's Castilio, sive Aulicus and De Aulica', SP, vol. xlii, 1945, pp. 146-63.

nothing in Harvey's conduct which alienated his patron, for on August 22 William Fulke, Master of Pembroke wrote to the fellows reporting Leicester's 'erdest request for the continuance of Mr. Harveys fellowship for one yeare', and his own agreement to this.¹ From this and his successful election to a fellowship at Trinity Hall on December 18 it is clear that Harvey was safeguarding his academic career and that Nashe's accusation that at this point he was summoned to court to be Leicester's secretary and then shortly afterwards dismissed is unlikely.² Nashe does not mention any immediate disgrace occasioned by the presentation of the Gratulationes Valdinenses to the Queen. She does not appear to have been offended by Harvey's implicit advice to marry Leicester; and the Earl does not seem to have been put out by the presentation of this advice less than a week before his own secret wedding ceremony took place with Lettice Knollys at Wanstead. Perhaps he found Harvey's poems a convenient blind for his activities.

Harvey was now in a position to establish himself in the civil law and start on the diplomatic career that had twice evaded him. He also began to feel that he might, with Spenser's help and assured of Leicester's patronage, become a public, literary figure. Spenser was now in the south again, working as the Bishop of Rochester's secretary, and as such sometime during or after the spring of 1578 gave Harvey Jerome Turler's The Traveiler.³ This could have been in connexion either with the Schmalkalden mission, or with the journey on Leicester's behalf to France and Italy. Harvey however did not read it until the last day of November about three weeks before he met Spenser in London on December 20, immediately after his election to the Trinity Hall fellowship. The two were obviously in high spirits after this event for Harvey agreed to read 'Howletglasse, with Skoggin, Skelton and Lazarillo' before 1 January 1579 or to forfeit his four volume

1. Letter Book, f.48.

2. Nashe, vol. iii, p. 79, cf. Stern, pp. 46, 47; both writers confuse the service at court with one in 1580, see below pt. vi.

3. Marginalia, p. 173.18, 19 and see below ch. VI, pt.i.

Lucian to Spenser; Harvey did not enjoy keeping his side of the bargain.¹ Spenser may by then have left Bishop Young's service and been staying in London, possibly working on the Shepheardes Calender and soon in 1579 to enter Leicester's household. Harvey was probably involved with the Calender at this time as E.K.'s prefatory letter is dated April 10. He was also busy with his own projects, writing a Latin epitaph on the Lord Chancellor Sir Nicholas Bacon who died on February 20.² He added to this short poems in which the tomb and the grave speak, perhaps hoping to compile another collection of memorial verse like the Smithus to which he compared his present performance unfavourably. Although renewed contact with Spenser and links with the Leicester House circle encouraged him to write in the vernacular, Latin poetry was still Harvey's main literary vehicle and there is strong evidence that he intended to publish more of it. He still had much to offer Leicester in the hope of furthering his career.

In the earthquake letter to Spenser dated 7 April 1580, he refers to his Anticosmopolita as being in exactly the same position as it was, 'fully a twelvemonth since in the Courte, at his laste attendaunce upon my Lorde there'.³ The lord is clearly Leicester to whom Harvey intended to dedicate the poem. For this purpose on 30 June 1579 Richard Day entered it in the Stationers' Register as 'Anticosmopolita or Britanniae Apologia'.⁴ It was undoubtedly a patriotic and nationalistic work, perhaps a first attempt at an epic celebrating England, the Queen's rule and almost inevitably, Leicester. It probably aspired beyond even this since E.K. in his gloss to 'September' in the Shepheardes Calender calls it 'divine'.⁵ Eleanor Rosenberg quoting from the letter written by Harvey to Sir Robert Cecil in 1598 suggests that the:

1. Ibid., p.23.

2. Ibid., pp. 223, 224.

3. Letters, p. 620b.

4. Arber, vol. ii, p.354. This is the first work entered to Day in the Register and if it had appeared would have been one of his earliest productions. For his father John's close connexions with the Earl, see Rosenberg, pp. 207-9. It is perhaps worth noting that John Day came from Dunwich in Suffolk and died at Saffron Walden in 1584.

5. Like Stern, p. 53 I am not sure if E.K. means 'that part of Philomusus' to belong to the Anticosmopolita, the Rameidos, or to be a separate work. 'Philomusus' was the pseudonym of Jakob Locher, poet-laureate to the Emperor Maximilian I.

sundry royal cantos (nigh as much in quantity as Ariosto) in celebration of her Majesty's most glorious government, some of them devised many years past at the instance...of Sir Philip Sidney, some since the renowned victory in '88...

are the Anticosmopolita. This sounds likely from the choice of subject. Yet I believe the cantos constitute a separate work started under Leicester House influence following Ariosto as Spenser was then doing in the Faerie Queene, and like him dividing the poem into cantos and experimenting with rime royal. In the letter to Cecil Harvey goes on to say that he did not mean to publish the cantos in the Queen's lifetime, but that now he intends to and, afraid of dying, has committed them to a friend.¹ If this was so, why did he make such efforts to publish the Anticosmopolita in 1579? Further, by saying that the poem is written in 'sundry royal cantos', Harvey implies that it is fittingly in rime royal, a verse-form which means that the poem was in English rather than Latin. Its titles point to the Anticosmopolita being written in Latin. While the reference in the Spenser-Harvey Letters, E.K.'s mention of it, its entry in the Stationers' Register, and Richard Harvey's allusion to 'my brothers Anticosmopolita' in the Astrological Discourse dedication of 1583 to Aylmer,² all suggest a properly finished work. Indeed Aylmer's interest in the poem for which Richard Harvey thanks him implies that the Bishop saw the poem as early as the first half of 1578 when he was helping Gabriel over the Schmalkalden mission.

Everything seemed ready for publication and yet it never appeared; since it was registered it is unlikely that Leicester vetoed it. Possibly he was persuaded by Sidney and Spenser that a national epic ought to be in English and he knew that finishing the cantos was beyond his reach at that time. Harvey's 'laste attendaunce' at court was probably in or before April 1579 and on the twenty-fourth of the month he once more appealed to his patron. Writing from Trinity Hall to his 'very especiall singular good Lorde' he apologizes for bothering

1. Rosenberg, p. 337 n. 32; Marginalia, pp. 73, 74; Stern, p. 51 follows Rosenberg's suggestion, see below ch. VI, pt. v.

2. Nashe, vol. v, p. 163.

Leicester again 'after my last letters' and asks him to request the Queen 'for the procuring of Doctor Byddles praebende at Litchfeylde'. Harvey is clearly rather embarrassed about having to ask for another favour, when he:

only in respect of sum hinderances thorough want of sufficient hability, cannot...undertake those Services, that otherwise have bene often purposid, and might shortely by any sutch help in sum reasonable sorte be performid.

He professes 'that this little body of myne carrieth a greate mynde towarde my good L.' and that he is willing 'to attempte, and indure any kynde of travayle, (ether at home, or abroad: by speaking, wrytng (sic), or doynge: on waye, or other)' on his behalf. Harvey feels that as a scholar he can do Leicester more good in some ways than some of his most courtly servants. Leicester's getting him the prebend or the Chancellorship would settle whether he would stay at home or travel abroad. Harvey is willing to wait a year to get his doctorate - presumably of divinity - and reiterates his devotion and service to his Lord.¹

This is a remarkable letter showing Harvey's bold and almost desperate plea for employment and his utter willingness to serve Leicester. The possibility of foreign travel has still not yet been excluded and in the same month in which he wrote this letter he acquired Lentulo's Italian Grammer as part of a deliberate effort in 1579 and 1580 to improve his French and Italian in the expectation of service abroad.² Once again Leicester may have prompted this, for Harvey did not get the prebend and nothing more is known about his part in it.³ The only explanation for Harvey's sudden interest in an ecclesiastical career must lie in his hoping that John Still would get the Bishopric; when he did not get it, perhaps Harvey lost interest in this avenue to success.

1. Gair, Literary Societies in England, pp. 208-10.

2. Stern, p. 224; he acquired a French-English volume of Images of the Old Testament, 1549, in 1580 and was given Pierre du Ploiche's school textbook in 1580 by the author, ibid., pp. 239, 210.

3. I have not been able to find out which was Dr Byddle's prebend, but William Wickham succeeded to one at about the right time in 1579; he went on to become Bishop in 1584 and employed Harvey's friend, Humphrey Tindall, and Leicester's chaplain as his Chancellor in 1586, John Le Neve, Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae, ed. T D Hardy, new ed., Oxford 1854, vol. i, p. 601.

Certainly the summer of 1579, with the revelation of his marriage and involvement with the opposition to the Alençon match was not the easiest of times for Leicester, and he may have temporarily neglected Harvey. He, however, had other exciting plans, for as well as probably being involved in the publication of the Shepheardes Calender at the end of the year, was also beginning that exchange of letters with Spenser which was to proclaim their broad intellectual interests and membership of Leicester's circle. To understand these Letters fully it is essential to get their relationship with the Letter Book clear. Since its contents are fragmentary and little-known I shall describe the relevant compositions in some detail and then try to make sense of Harvey's literary plans.

iv. The Letter Book,¹

Harvey began to use the Letter Book to transcribe correspondence with John Young in 1573 about his problems over his MA and the Greek Lectureship. At the end of the book are further letters almost all of which date from the Pembroke Hall period. Just before these is a detailed account of the attempted seduction of his sister by a young nobleman during the Christmas season of 1574-5. The nobleman has been identified as Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel,² who became a Catholic convert and took part in the entertainment the Four Foster Children of Desire with Sidney and Greville. Harvey probably wrote the account primarily to keep its outline clear in his mind, however he may also have been trying his hand at writing a complicated narrative of sexual intrigue in imitation of Gascoigne's Adventures of Master F.J.³ Between this experiment

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1. The only adequate account of BL MS Sloane 93 is J W Bennett's 'Spenser and Gabriel Harvey's Letter Book', MP, vol. xxix, 1931-2, pp. 163-86. Although I disagree with her on various points of interpretation and feel that there is still a great deal to be said about the book, lack of space has prevented me from discussing it in as much detail as I should have liked.
 2. G C Moore Smith, 'Gabriel Harvey's Letter-Book', NQ, 11th ser., vol. iii, 1911, p. 261.
 3. Margaret Schlauch, Antecedents of the English Novel, 1400-1600, Warsaw and London 1963, pp. 224-8 has high praise for Harvey's account and compares it favourably with Gascoigne's romance, but is unaware of Harvey's profound admiration for the poet.

and the first part of the book is a section of about thirty-five leaves mainly containing heavily revised and carelessly written literary compositions in which Harvey was working out ideas, some of which he used in his published letters with Spenser. The only items unrelated to these schemes are the copy on f. 48 of Fulke's letter asking the Pembroke fellows to extend Harvey's fellowship and on ff. 54-7 notes for the lectures he delivered as Praelector between 1574 and 1576. The anomalous and independent letter to Mistress Anne on f. 68v. accompanying the gift of a ring has no connexion with the other literary pieces: the lady turns up again in the Letters.

All the other pieces although dated at various times from 1573 onwards can be associated with the period from 1578 until 1580 when Harvey sought to bring them together in print. As I have argued this coincides with the time of renewed contact with Spenser, exciting experiments and ideas at Leicester House and reflects Harvey's wish to establish himself as a vernacular as well as a neo-Latin writer. Yet he is still unwilling to publish anything under his own name and resorts to elaborate ruses to hide his own responsibility for their appearance in print. All the pieces have separate publication plans brought together on f.48v. with a dedication to Dyer. In this he makes no mention of the first work in this section, the elegy on Leicester's chief poet Gascoigne. This is an independent work not immediately connected with the other pieces, although Harvey added fifteen verses to it condemning foreign fashions after he had written the first of the letters. These may have been a source for part of the 'Speculum Tuscanismi'. The elegy begins, (f.34v.), with conventional Latin eulogistic verses on his picture, which give way to two publication plans in English. The first proposes 'A neue Pamflett conteininge a fewe delicate poeticall devises of Mr. G.H.' written in Essex at the request and under the person of a gentleman friend; the original idea was that they were written in Pembroke Hall, but this was deleted presumably as being too revealing. The second plan suggests that the poems were published by a friend of the author's with a preface, soon after he had copied them out.

The Essex friend was Arthur Capell at whose ^{fathers} house in Hertfordshire in 1578 Harvey had presented the Gratulationes Valdinenses to the Queen.¹ The addition to the poem ends with the suggestion, (f.39v.) that it should be called 'A.C.'s memorandum'. Gascoigne died on 7 October 1577 within two months of Sir Thomas Smith's death and Harvey may have hoped to succeed him in Leicester's patronage. In heaven Gascoigne will meet the great English poets, but also Daniel and Bartholomew Withypoll, because 'their odd copesmate thou werte', (f.35); he had addressed his 'Councell' to Bartholomew in 1572. Harvey probably knew them through their younger brother Peter, his contemporary and a fellow of Trinity Hall from 1572 until about 1580. Harvey contributed preliminary verses to the Posies with him in 1575 and they disputed over a legal question.² Peter Withypoll may also have introduced him to a group of mainly lawyers in Ipswich whose poems appear in the Spenser-Harvey Letters.

Harvey may have abandoned the poem because of the appearance of George Whetstone's on the same subject, or because it became too personal and got out of hand: four leaves finishing its Preface and explaining the poem's form are missing. Connected with the Gascoigne elegy is the long Skeltonic poem 'The Schollars Looove', at the end of the additions to which there is a scheme for 'Certayne younge conceytes and poeticall devises, copied owt of a schollars paperbooke, and publisshed by a gentleman', (f.70): although very heavily revised the bulk of the poem from f.58 onwards looks as if it has been copied out from another source. The Gascoigne elegy might have been included in the 'poeticall devises' - the phrase is common to plans for both poems - and the gentleman may be Capell again. However, 'The Schollars Looove' is in the August 1580 publication scheme while the elegy is not. Further, Harvey has independent plans for the original poem on f.58. First he describes it as the 'very first English meeter that ever I made'. Then in a similar way but impersonally, 'the autor' writing it ex tempore in September 1573. Thirdly as

1. Bennett, art. cit., p. 182 n. 1.

2. Marginalia, p. 185.19-23 and n. to 91.24; see also G C Moore Smith, The Family of Withypoll, Walthamstow Antiquarian Society, Official Publication, no. 34, 1936, pp. 60-2.

by Sir Thomas More and never printed before; this is clearly an imitation of More's 'A mery Jest how a Sergeant would learne to playe the Frere', which was separately published in about 1575.¹ Finally it is the product of 'a few idles howers of a young Master of Art', which a day's correction would perfect.

The second and last of these suggest that Harvey connected the poem with his academic difficulties in the spring and autumn of 1573. The poem's subject of his stormy love for 'Ellena' confirms this, for he likes to portray himself as a scholar reconciling contraries, (f.6lv.), and being interested in all subjects, but not a narrow academic, (ff.65v.-66v.). He is also keen to write on the influence of the elements over the emotions, especially love, (ff.58-59, 6lv.-62v.), which allows him to discourse on fate and mutability. Among the criticisms made of Harvey in 1573, were that he was intellectually superior and unorthodox, especially in his love of paradox and attacks on Aristotle's natural philosophy, (ff.3v.-4v., 6-7). Harvey's poem attempts to answer these charges and is his first essay in parodying current Cambridge doctrines about the universe. He was proud of the poem for he refers to it in the Letters, (p.620b), in the same passage as the Anticosmopolita, saying that it 'is shrunk in the wetting', but also, evidently thinking of it as his earliest composition, that it 'is as true a Verse as ever was made, since the first Verse, that ever was made'. The phrase about its shrinking suggests some sort of revision around 1580, which is supported by the additions to the poem after the letter to Mistress Anne.

'The Schollars Looove' demonstrates Harvey's two main aims in compiling this section which were also the objects of the Letters: to publish his poems and to make some comment on Cambridge. The poem was meant to go with the second of the four letters in the book, which appears to date from the same period but in fact was written after the first letter and probably at about

1. R W Gibson, St Thomas More: A Preliminary Bibliography, New Haven and London, 1961, p. 93, STC 18091.

the same time that the poem was being revised. The second letter was written to replace the first one and a comparison of the two will make Harvey's intentions clear.

The letter was originally written to Immerito, Spenser's name for himself, but this has been deleted on f.38, Benevolo substituted and inserted twice in different forms on f.35v. Harvey is replying to being presented with a copy of his own poems which the friend has had published; they are his 'fine Verelayses', hastily put together at the request of a young gentleman. He will be embarrassed at Cambridge by their publication and so the friend must send 'the clippings of your thrishonorable mustachyoes' to hide his blushing, (f.36v.). These may add dignity to 'my Praesidentshipp when it cummes', but he will only give his obligation to repay the loan if his friend promises not to publish the letter. The Obligation is between himself and 'E.S.de' London', (f.37v.), while the Condition to it, (f.38), refers in its discussion of poetry and fame, in England and abroad to their meeting and talk last Easter term, (between May 6 and June 1), at Westminster. As the letter, which breaks off in mid-sentence, is dated to the summer of 1579, (f.37), this implies that the meeting was in that year.

Harvey was obviously dissatisfied with this fiction involving Spenser perhaps because the events it describes, especially the publication of the poems, were too transparently false. The change from Immerito to Benevolo was the first sign of this, but he went on to recast the whole letter placing it in the summer of 1573, before the Commencement dinner and disputations at which he as first in the ordo senioritatis would play a leading part. Harvey, (f.40), now wishes for the abilities of the ancients and his greatest contemporaries, but appeals to his unnamed correspondent 'to afforde me on tolerable oration, and twoe or three reasonable argumentes'. Complaining that the friend is his last hope he adds that he still has his familiar, which he associates with the translator Thomas Phaer, glossing it in the third person, 'he menith his paper booke'. Harvey revised this passage on f.44 to make the familiar teach him to

imitate women who look at pictures of the gods to ensure their children's beauty. This paragraph was revised again for the latest of the Letters, (p.626a), when discussing the author of 'Speculum Tuscanismi's' need for 'a good patterne' by Sidney or Dyer, he argues that English women would have more attractive children if they impressed beautiful pictures on their imaginations. The second paragraph on f.44 has Harvey finding that his practice of having 'lively counterfaytes' of philosophers, orators and poets is now 'over generall' and he must 'in hande with my familiar for a newe stratageme'.

In the original letter he appeals again to his friend to instruct him in the stoic virtues of putting 'a good surlye countenance on the matter', (f.40), and facing it out 'lustelye'. Almost all of the rest of the piece is taken over from the first letter with adjustments in accordance with the earlier date: the friend's hair will be used at the Commencement and for his regentship, not his presidentship, and no time or place are given for their last meeting, (f.40v.). Nothing so far has been published, (f.41), but Harvey warns his correspondent of a friend 'of ouers that publishethe abroade every childish ridiculous toye' and against issuing this letter or the obligation. Their publication with 'sum former matters' would seriously embarrass him and he enjoys secrecy, stressing, (f.41v.), the familiar style of his letter and defending himself against 'my good Masters of Cambridge'.

On the next page, (f.42), with two short additions to the letter's end Harvey has written a publication plan which has this letter and the Maid-Miller one, (ff.49v.-51), published 'amongst the reste', by the addressee of the Commencement letter. It was delivered to him at an Inn of Court and he has found both letters among 'oulde scatterid papers'.

The third letter follows on this (ff.42v., 43), and is based on one addressed to John Wood on f.101v. Here he is called both a lawyer and a courtier and the letter is about the way scholars want to appear as courtiers, to be active not contemplative philosophers. Harvey lists the fashionable

books they read, including Machiavelli and Bodin, but he says that as scholars bow to courtiers and lawyers over their knowledge of the world, so they must defer to scholars over political theory. As in the second letter the addressee is referred to as 'your Mastership', (ff.39v., 40), and the third ends by promising more news of 'mye commencement matters', which he had asked for, suggesting the two letters go together. Again it seems likely that this third one supplied material for the Spenser-Harvey Letters. In the penultimate of these Harvey has a similar passage (p.621a), about the popularity of French and Italian against the classics at Cambridge, where verbal brilliance is more important than intellectual, and where fashionable superficiality is more regarded than deep learning. As always Harvey is a careful quarrier of his own work, willing to revise and adapt it for his new compilation, the Letters.

The fourth and final letter is also the longest presenting the discourse on natural philosophy which Harvey had intended to write. It is the answer taken down by him 'at myne hostisses' of the company's answer to 'Your lastweekes letter, or rather bill of complaynte', (f.45). The first speaker begins by maintaining the treachery of the world through all ages, (f.45v.), arguing for the evil influence of fire on men and devils and the strife of the elements, (f.46). His speech is deliberately obscure and hard to follow, and the second speaker mocks him for this, (f.46v.). He argues carefully that the world's evils are not inherent but in men's minds and rejects what is evidently the correspondent's view that the physical pleasures must yield to intellectual ones, surprised that 'a gentleman, a courtier, an yuthe' could hold such a view. Physical delights rather are the true ones, intellectual the imaginary. The correspondent has a romantically favourable view of 'us students', (f.47). If he were to be one for only a week he would see how miserable their lot is. The speaker then heartily inveighs against academics and declares that the correspondent's great mistake is to place Reason above Appetite. This may have been allowable a thousand years ago but everything changes. As all flourishes and fades, so what is pleasant becomes hated. This is true for religious beliefs and skills: languages were the subject for a while, but now philosophy

and morals are, but their time will come. Some notes follow on f.47v. about the elements and rainbows.

The final piece after these letters which I wish to describe is like the fourth also a dialogue, presented (f.51lv.) as held 'in Cambridge betwene Master G H and his cumpanye at a Midsummer Comencement, together with certayne delicate sonnetts and epigrammes in Inglish verse'. The Commencement setting, pointing to 1573, and the impersonal publication plan suggest the piece's links with the second and third letters and 'The Schollars Looove'. Again in the presenter's short preface he calls himself as in the second and third letters 'my poore mastershipp', who wants to publish everything 'of this autors dooinge'. The first subject discussed is love and jealousy, but this is said to be 'no university peece of lerning'. On f.52 Harvey 'returns' to poetry and 'in his extemporall veyne of makinge', the vein of 'The Schollars Looove', offers his hexameters which with twenty lines removed at the beginning and nine added at the end as well as with a few minor verbal alterations, become the 'Speculum Tuscanismi' of the Letters, (pp. 625b, 626a). The manuscript poem laments the foreign effeminacy and luxury of the country, mourning the loss of 'owld Inglande', its heroes and national characteristics. It follows the theme of the Gascoigne poem's additions, (f.39) and attacks Italian and French manners and habits: 'Vanity above all; villanye next her'. In its desire for renewed English militarism it is reminiscent of the poem addressed to Oxford in Gratulationes Valdinenses, and the whole is suffused with the anti-Machiavellianism which Harvey exposed there.

The author goes on, (f.52v.), to present 'on other sonett utterid by Master H. in supper while'. The poem is a riddle concerning the true and apparent state of society at present, which the narrator explains contains in effect:

the argumente of his curragious and warlyke apostrophe to my lorde of Oxenforde in his fourth booke Gratulationum Valdinensium, and had for title nothing but this short exclamation in greate Romane letters:
O Providentia Dea.

Although the riddle could serve as a summary of the poem, the motto appears nowhere in the book. Yet despite the rather abrupt break in the narrative this whole incident seems to show that Harvey associated Oxford with the 'Speculum Tuscanismi', which he later denied, and that the earlier Latin apostrophe to him is ironic, which seemed likely, given Oxford's belonging to the faction opposed to Leicester and Sidney.

The discussion then continues with praise of Ulysses' speech, (Iliad. ii 204f.) on the dangers of mob rule and a reference to Mr H.'s 'methodicall abridgment' of Aristotle's Politics from which he quotes a sentence arguing the benefits of a single ruler. There is then a farewell, but as J W Bennett says the rest of the matter is part of the same dialogue.¹ It is a fragment of discourse on poetry, reminiscent of the literary concerns of the Letters, divided into two paragraphs. The first places English blank verse after 'hexameters, adonickes, and iambicks', and mentions several English poems written in this metre, including an unidentified one by 'Mach Morrice, an invective agaynst Simmias Rhodius'. This leads him on to inveigh against pattern-poems which have recently been revived by learned men.

The second paragraph on f.53 presents a letter that the writer, (whether Harvey as himself or under his guise as narrator is not clear), received from court from a friend, who 'since a certayn chaunce befallen unto him, a secrett not to be revealid, calleth himself Immerito'. The following quotation from the earliest of the Letters describes Immerito's 'familiaritye' with Sidney and Dyer, how he will not talk in so many words of Harvey's reputation with them, and that they have proclaimed in their Areopagus...here the quotation ends, but from the Letters we know that it is 'a generall surceasing and silence of balde Rymers', (p. 635b). The textual differences are again minor. The narrator goes on to say under the heading 'His Inglishe Iambica' that Spenser

1. Bennett, art. cit., p. 170.

translated 'Hy, & Catoni qui edi, in to these Hexameters'. The meaning of this, beyond the fact that Spenser was trying his hand at English verse in classical metres, is obscure. But Harvey is using allusion and quotation to encourage the reader's interest in the Letters in the same way that in them he stimulates the reader to find out more about the Shepheardes Calender. The remainder of the page, transcribed in part by Miss Bennett,¹ contains what appears to be an addition to 'Speculum Tuscanismi'. It refers to 'A great travelour/very well lernid': the traveller is significantly the subject of the nine new lines which appear in the Letters. The page also contains what are possibly notes for a preface to this composition, a 'Scholar's letter' written 'by Mr.G.H. to a cuntrye frend of his'. The friend's opinion would seem to be the point at issue and were it not that it has been deleted, we could be certain that it was about his opinion of 'this pregnant Dialogue'.

Harvey sought to unify his plans for a vernacular publication on f.48v., (see plate and transcription), in March 1580 with a trial dedication to Dyer. Harvey called him in a revision 'ower Onlye Inglishe Poett', which still later perhaps by then with Sidney and Spenser in mind he qualified by adding 'in a manner'. Benevolo is the proposer of the dedication and is identified in the margin as J.W. Originally he commended the edition of his friend's viirelays, but later he more actively proffers their dedication. Similarly its date is changed from 1 March 1580 to August 1 and with it the lists of what he meant to include. The viirelays, the Maid-Miller Letter and the Dialogue are common to both: the first letter, 'My Epistle to Imerito' becomes 'My Letter to Benevolo' in August and the Scholar's Love has joined it. The first letter was originally intended for Spenser, then for some reason for Benevolo, but he could not publish its annoyance at the viirelays' publication with the viirelays themselves, so it had to be rewritten as the second letter. Its occasion was the Commencement of 1573, so that the Dialogue and the Scholar's Love, and for some reason which its muddled form obscures the Maid-Miller Letter - already

1. Ibid., p. 170 n.1.

To the right worshipfull Gentleman,
 and famous Courtier,
 Master Edwarde Diar,
 in a manner ower Onlye Inglishe Poett.
 In honour of his rare Qualities,
 and noble Vertues ./

Quodvultdeus Quodvult Deus Benevolo commendith
 J.W. Volens Nolens praesentith the

Edition Dedication of his frendes

Verlayes : together wth certayne other
 And in steade of A Dedicatory Epistle,/ of his
 praesentith himselfe, and the uttermost Poeticall
 of his habilitie, to his good and value Devises:
 to his Worshippes ...andinge
 good worshippe favorable lykinge
 curtuous, and favorable likinge ./
 This first of Marche. 1580.
 August .

to his good worshippes

1.	2.
The Verlayes.	the Millers Letter.
3.	4.
The Dialogue	My Epistle to Imerito:

The Verlayes
 My Letter to Benevolo./
The Dialogue./
 The Schollers Loove.
The Dialogue The Millers Letter.
 The Dialogue.

associated with the second letter on f.42 - belong together. 'My Letter to Benevolo' clearly refers to the second letter with which the third is closely related and may even have included the fourth. With the exception of the wirelays which remain unidentified all the works have been made to appear to date from 1573 and to be published by another.

Between March and August 1580, (the exact dates are probably false), several things happened to make Harvey take the volume away from Immerito and give it to Benevolo. Firstly as J W Bennett pointed out,¹ the earthquake in April gave him a perfect and topical opportunity to write ironically about Cambridge views of natural philosophy and so abandon the artificial fourth letter. Secondly Spenser had already been used in the Letters and had either gone or was about to go to Ireland. The Letters appeared to provide a much more successful and substantial work than these plans, which must be why Harvey dropped the volume for Dyer. Yet not before he had passed the whole project off as Benevolo's in both March and August, and used passages from the second and third letters in the two latest of the Letters to Spenser of April 1580, and also mentioned the 'Schollars Loove' in the first of these two. The dedication connects Benevolo with J.W., while the third letter is derived from one to John Wood. Like the third letter the publication plan for the second with the Maid-Miller Letter demands a lawyer, which Wood of the New Inn and Middle Temple, Harvey's school-friend, his patron Smith's secretary and the addressee of verses in the Smithus was.² The Dialogue's presenter is also clearly meant to be Wood since as in the second and third letters he refers to himself as 'my poore mastershipp', (f.5lv.).

Wood may have repaid his friend for his literary interest. W Schricx has argued that the pamphlet The Copie of a Letter sent by a Learned Physician to his Friend is addressed to Harvey, who has borrowed from it in Pierces

1. Ibid., p. 181.

2. Ibid., p. 176. In the binding of the Trinity College, Cambridge volume which contains the Smithus, is the greeting of a letter written by Harvey in his formal italic hand: 'Harveius de municipio Waldinensi salutem dicit Johanni Woddo'. The volume's shelf-mark is VI.1.121.

Supererogation and the New Letter. The aim of the letter was to change Harvey's attitude towards Galenic medicine and try to interest him in Paracelsus; in this the author was to some extent successful.¹ The pamphlet has no title-page, consisting simply of sixteen leaves, but it is signed at the end: 'From my house at S. the 21. of this present March. 1586. Your loving Coosin and frend, student in Physicke. J.W.' According to the new STC John Wolfe with whom Harvey became closely involved was responsible for printing the tract. Harvey's interest in the theoretical medicine of Galen based on the humours was considerable, but Schrickx does not associate the author of the tract with Harvey's friend John Wood. If he did write the Copie and it was addressed from 'S.' that is from his home Stapleford Abbott, as both his friend and his cousin which he would have been as he claimed kindred with Sir Thomas Smith, then perhaps the fourth letter mocking Cambridge's attitude to natural philosophy was also written with the physician Wood in mind: the probability that Wood did not go to university adds to this likelihood.

The Letter Book is a remarkable if complicated document in which we can actually see a writer of the English Renaissance at work. If the Dyer volume had been published it would have been odd and deliberately confusing but designed to lead the reader on to the Letters. The elaborate deceptions about publication which Harvey practised in it show that his imagination was entirely responsible for the events it describes: it is mistaken on the evidence of the first letter to believe, as Dr Stern does, that there was a project to publish Harvey's poems which Spenser instigated.² Even if Harvey had done a lot of work on it the book would have done little for his reputation as a vernacular writer. Its exact relationship to the Letters would have puzzled contemporary readers, but both books would have ultimately whetted their appetite for the Shepheardes Calender. Harvey worked on the two

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1. W Schrickx, Shakespeare's Early Contemporaries, the Background of the Harvey-Nashe Polemic and Love's Labour's Lost, Antwerp 1956, pp. 128-35.
 2. Stern, pp. 59-61.

together at the same time, the one so intimately bound up with Leicester House, the other an essentially provincial compilation. Did he really intend to issue a second volume in 1580? He was still hoping to have a third one, the Anticosmopolita out later in the year according to the Letters, (p. 620b), but the Letters were all that appeared, marking a crucial moment in Harvey's literary career and his association with Leicester's circle. Like their abandoned partner, the Dyer volume, the Letters, evolution was not simple and while their contents are reasonably familiar their composition requires careful investigation. They have too often been accepted at face value as unrevised correspondence, while their chief literary technique of covert allusion and name-dropping, in the absence of a fully annotated edition, calls for some explication and comment. Their object is to advertize the exciting world of Leicester House in which Harvey and Spenser moved.

v. The Spenser-Harvey Letters.

Once again Harvey's publisher Henry Bynneman was responsible for the production of the Letters.¹ Although there are two separate title-pages for the three and the two letters, the signatures for the two parts run continuously. Only the Three Letters were registered on June 30, but this entry may have included the Two Letters as part of the same publication, or more probably it shows that Bynneman had not yet received them. Their title-page reveals that they are 'both touching the foresaid Artificiall Versifying, and certain other Particulars', which on the title-page for the Three Letters had been referred to as 'our English reformed Versifying', and that they were 'More lately delivered unto the Printer'. The wording of this second page in comparison with the first one would seem to show that they really were an addition. Further the anonymous address 'To the Curteous Buyer', dated June 19, refers only to the Three Letters as if the two later ones had

1. On Bynneman and his troubles earlier in the year, see H R Plomer, 'Henry Bynneman, Printer 1566-83', Library, NS, vol. ix, 1908, pp. 225-44.

not yet been received. If all the letters had been available from the beginning of the venture it would have been more convincing to add on letters of a later date rather than an earlier one, as if they had just been received.

This seems to show that the Two Letters were genuinely only available late in the printing of the work, and that rather than resetting the book Bynneman was content to print a new title-page intended to imitate closely that of the Three Letters. Given all this, the date of the work's publication must be advanced past June 19 when the printer only had the Three Letters and past June 30 when he was still apparently dealing only with the three which he registered, into July and the second half of the year. This coincides nicely with the period of the revision of the trial dedication in the Letter Book, and Harvey's decision not to publish the Dyer volume. As we have seen Spenser's departure by the beginning of August and the hostile reception of the Letters were behind these changes. These motives suggest that the Two Letters were received in July or August, probably before Spenser left, and that the whole work was published between July and September.

The original idea behind the Three Letters was to get Harvey's brilliant discourse on the earthquake and some of his English poems published. This must have been done with a certain degree of his knowledge and approval. Yet while the letters genuinely seem to have been sent between friends, it is only to be expected that parts of them have been edited for publication: this is very much the case with the most formal of them all, the earthquake letter. At the same time it is wrong to believe in their manifest integrity. They are intended to create an air of mystery centering about Leicester House and the Shepheardes Calender. The extent and complexity of the revisions which I shall describe strongly suggest that Harvey was intimately involved in their publication, which he denied.

This must cast doubt on the 'Welwiller of the two Authours', (p. 610), when he says that he acquired the letters at fourth or fifth hand from a

friend who 'had procured the copying of them oute, at Immeritos handes'.¹

This plural and the evident contradiction about where they came from indicate a publication ruse, with which Harvey later declared he had nothing to do. The writer says that Spenser's letter promises well of the author, 'in whome I knowe myselfe to be very good partes', but that there is no equal in manner or matter for Harvey's two. Their author has written, so the Wellwiller says he has been told by the friend, many of the same kind to courtiers about important matters. These 'Letters and Discourses' the Wellwiller would like to see in print, 'if it might be obtayned', which probably looks forward to the Dyer volume Harvey was preparing to issue later in the year. He then lavishly praises his two letters as the 'rarest, and finest Treaties' he has read, and thanks God for Harvey's using his talent so responsibly. He goes on to say that because the letters are so good he does not fear the authors' displeasure for publishing them without their knowing it. The epistle ends with the hope that the two authors will employ their talents to the benefit of God and the Church, which may again look towards the Shepheardes Calender.

I shall discuss the Letters in their correct chronological order, returning to Spenser's contributions in the next chapter. The question of internal revision complicates the subject. The earliest in the series is no.4, which has two sets of dates: one for the main letter, October 15, 16, (p.636a), and one for the enclosure, 5 October 1579, (p.638b). The problem of where the enclosure ends revolves around whether the final paragraph on p.638b concludes the letter or the enclosure.² On the whole this paragraph seems to belong to the enclosure and to go with the Latin verses, so constituting the earliest part of the correspondence. Harvey's letter no. 5 is dated 23 October 1579. Spenser's letter to Harvey, the first in the series as they were printed, is

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1. Stern, p. 63 plausibly suggests that the Wellwiller is Bynneman, (Nashe, vol. iii, p. 127 says it was delivered to the printer in Harvey's own hand), and the 'friend' was John Wood; however I think she attributes the publication too firmly to Spenser.
 2. The arguments are summarised in Spenser, Prose Works, pp. 249, 261, 262.

subscribed 'Quarto Nonas Aprilis 1580', that is April 2. The difficulty is that the same letter mentions the earthquake, (p. 611a), which did not take place until April 6. Two possibilities have been put forward:¹ either that the 'Nonas' is a mistake for 'Idus' so that the letter was written on April 10, or that the passage about the earthquake has been inserted to prepare the way for Harvey's long discourse in no. 2. This is dated April 7 and it would seem odd that Spenser should ask:

I thinke the Earthquake was also there wyth you (which I would gladly learne)...Sed quid vobis videtur magnis Philosophis?

when he presumably had already received Harvey's opinion on it. It seems more likely that the passage is a later interpolation and that the main part of the letter belongs to April 2. Harvey's final letter no. 3 is dated April 23 and presents no problems in this way.

The enclosure to no.1, dated from Leicester House, consists mainly of Spenser's Latin poem, written on the eve of his departure overseas and revealing his worries about love and fame. The poem shows much affection for Harvey and the final paragraph, (p. 638b), written as if in a great hurry is full of optimism, especially about 'his Honours service' and his work for 'my Lorde', who is clearly Leicester. He is to leave next week and wants Harvey's reply before then: this is his 'last Farewell' and he will not write again. He would have sent his 'English verses: or Rymes' but had no time, and as Sidney does, he wants news of Harvey. Letters to Spenser may always be sent through Mistress Kerk.

In his next letter which accompanied the enclosure Spenser thanks his friend for his letters and advice and says that to show how much he values it, 'I am now determind to alter mine owne former purpose, and to subscribe to your advizement', (p. 635a). This seems to have been to persuade him to publish his writings, especially the Shepheardes Calender but exactly to what he is referring is left deliberately vague. Harvey must now think of his own advancement, and

1. Ibid., pp. 263, 267.

act quickly for 'minds of Nobles varie, as their Estates' do, (p. 635b). Certainly Leicester's seemed to have during the summer of 1579 but again the specific Noble he is thinking of is not named. He wants some of Harvey's 'points and caveats' which he wrote in his former letters amplified and will not tell of his 'late beeing with hir Majestie'; if Spenser had an interview with the Queen it might have been in connexion with his journey abroad.¹ Spenser goes on to report about Sidney and Dyer's arcane-sounding 'Areopagus' in the passage which Harvey quoted in the Letter Book on f.53. Spenser speaks of it as if he was not involved: 'they have proclaimed in their...' but adds that he has been drawn to 'their faction'. He mentions Gosson's School of Abuse and Sidney's scorn of it despite its dedication to him, and his own risks in dedicating 'My Slomber, and the other Pamphlets, unto his honor. I meant them rather to Maister Dyer'. The Variorum editor thought that the 'honor' is Sidney, but it must be Leicester, for Sidney was not a nobleman:² this is the sort of confusion which the Letters were designed to provoke. Spenser is now more interested in Harvey's practice of versifying and the court is full of poets. The still uncertainly identified E.K. sends greetings; Harvey will find out how he is 'by hys paynefull and dutifull Verses', (p.636a).

The first part of the letter ends there, Spenser moves from Westminster to Mistress Kerk's, receives Harvey's letter of last week and sees that he continues his 'old exercise of Versifying', which he thought only went on in London and at court. Harvey had sent some verses with his letter which Spenser likes although they are faulty in parts, (p. 636b); even so Spenser will always follow him. Harvey will be able to see how far he has progressed when they meet in London. Spenser offers him some iambics and says that he will show his friend's work to Dyer and Sidney. He does not want his own shown to anyone except 'your verie entire friendes, Maister Preston, Maister Still, and the reste': Preston was to be one of Harvey's rivals for the oratorship, but the

1. Judson, p. 62 doubts that this actually implies a meeting with the Queen.

2. Spenser, Prose Works, p. 252.

name-dropping was an end in itself. The letter closes, (p.636a), with Spenser's explanation of the business of the enclosure and request for another letter from him, (p.636b), on top of the one which Harvey has just sent him containing 'but fewe Verses'. All the same he would much rather see his friend in person.

Harvey answered these two letters almost immediately, (p.639a). The authenticity of his reply is carefully suggested when he says that he has nothing to recompense him with but greetings 'and a running Coppie of the Verses enclosed', meaning a 'rapid' or 'hasty' one. The verses are those of Norton, Goldingham and Withypoll; Harvey blushes to see himself connected with such illustrious company with which the reader is somehow expected to be familiar. We know that he had mentioned Bartholomew and Daniel Withypoll in the Gascoigne elegy on f.35 of the Letter Book. Their brother Peter requested Harvey to translate 'M. Doctor Gouldingham's' paraphrase of Latin verses about 'the frailtie and mutabilitie of all things, saving onely Vertue'. The original Latin verses were written by Dr Norton for Thomas Sackford the Master of Requests and appear at the end of the letter, (pp. 642, 643). Peter Withypoll made the request on behalf of his father, who had translated Norton's original verses into English. Edmund Withypoll it emerges was an Ipswich merchant living from 1514 until May 1582, who asked Goldingham to paraphrase the original set of verses. William Goldingham must also have been a friend of Harvey's for he was an almost exact contemporary, a lawyer and a fellow of Trinity Hall from 1571 until 1581.¹ He was the brother of the Henry Goldingham who devised the masque shown to the Queen during her visit to Norwich on 21 August 1578, and contributed Greek and Latin verses himself at the end of Garter's account of the entertainments.² Robert Norton's verses appear only in the Spenser-Harvey Letters. It is highly likely that the Withypolls knew him for he was public preacher at Ipswich from 1576 until 1585. They would also most likely have known Thomas

1. Moore Smith, The Withypoll Family, pp. 40-54.

2. BL MS Add. 5524 f. 80v.; Bernard Garter, The Joyfull Receyving of the Queenes Majestie into Norwich, (1578), sigs. G3v., G4.

Sackford, the Master of Requests who asked Harvey to write the hexastichs at Audley End which appear in Gratulationes Valdinenses and who lived at Ipswich being M.P. for the town and county.

At the moment Harvey mysteriously says he is involved 'in certaine greate and serious affayres', (p. 639a), which he will not tell even him about until he himself knows more of them. These must be Cambridge rather than London and Leicester House matters or Spenser would know of them. The next passage is equally puzzling, but not intentionally so, for Harvey says that:

in lieu of many gentle Farewels, and goodly Godbewyes, at your departure:
gyve me once againe leave, to playe the Counsaylour,

and advises him above all to honour virtue. The poems he encloses will persuade him to do this. Here Harvey writes as if he still expected his friend to be going abroad and there is more in the letter to the same effect. The passage above suggests that this is a last farewell, a suspicion strengthened in its second half which deals exclusively with the subjects of love and travel, even referring to 'your speedy and hasty travell', (p. 641a). James Hewlett concentrating on this second half goes so far as to call the whole 'a travel letter',¹ and argues that Spenser's plans had not been entirely dropped. This is partly right, but it does not account for the change in purpose from the excited state of imminent departure in the enclosure to the leisurely concern with poetry and future meetings in Spenser's letter. The first half of Harvey's is largely concerned with versifying and the 'Areopagus', so cannot be called a travel letter. Instead it appears that Harvey has revised part of the letter which he sent to Spenser sometime between October 5 and 16, which the poet only got when he came to Mistress Kerk's. We know that the letter contained verses even though it was quite short. It would be unlike Harvey to waste good material, so that we can assume that no.5 is a blending of the old with a new letter.

1. James Hewlett, 'Interpreting a Spenser-Harvey Letter', PMLA, vol. xlii, 1927, p. 1063.

To return to the part which replies to Spenser's letter, (p. 639b): Harvey says that he will do this 'and then for thys time, Adieu', which does not lead us to expect the following discourse on love and travel. He has a deliberately obscure passage, probably about the Shepheardes Calender, advising him to publish it while he can and implying that Spenser must accept the poem's commendatory epistle as it is. He goes on to show his approval for 'Your new-founded' and imposing-sounding, 'Areopagus', for Spenser's iambics and for his unspecified but grand friends 'the twoo worthy Gentlemenne' who are clearly Sidney and Dyer. He will requite the poem when he has more time - another sign that his verses belong to a different letter. He disagrees that they are faultless, shows their metrical inconsistencies and that he realizes the limitations and problems of the form. He dismisses Drant, (p. 640b), whose Rules it turns out he has never seen, and the subject as a whole by saying that such weighty matters, 'in aliud tempus reservabimus, ociosum magis', which again suggests that Spenser is not just about to leave. He thanks him for his 'Latine Farewell', especially thinking of its heading calling him 'multis iamdiu nominibus clarissimum', and adds: 'I hope by that time I have been resident a yeare or twoo in Italy, I shall be better qualified in this kind'. As the Variorum edition points out, this cannot be taken literally; on the other hand there is no need to agree with the editor, that Harvey is thinking of Spenser's foreign journey.¹

The rest of the letter is concerned with love and travel, 'one of the praedominant humors that raigne in our common Youths'. Harvey begins by telling Spenser of the dangers of love and embarking on it. He uses the Renaissance commonplace 'Respice finem', (p. 641a) to make his point - a tag which Nashe, in its altered form 'funem' cannot resist using against the rope-maker's son.²

1. Spenser, Prose Works, p. 259; Stern, pp. 132, 176, 254 n. 16 speculates as to whether Harvey ever undertook the voyage.

2. See T W Baldwin, 'Respice Finem: Respice Funem', in ed. J G McManaway, G E Dawson, E E Willoughby, Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies, Washington 1948, pp. 141-55; Nashe, vol. i, p. 268. and

His opposition to love is striking. Equally so is his certainty, for which he is willing to stake all his books and writings, that Spenser will not go abroad either this week or the next, so that he will be able to perform Spenser's request, (p. 636b), of a farewell in person. This must be an interpolation in the original letter. Why if they were to have another meeting before he left give him such personal advice in a letter? Harvey knows that Spenser will use his journey for his own, his friends' and unable to resist another allusion to Leicester, 'My Lords Honor', (p. 641a). He is preparing him such a discourse out of Homer and Virgil that he will not need Turler's Traveiler, which as we have seen Spenser gave Harvey in 1578, or Zwinger's Methodus Apodemica, (p. 641b). Spenser will be a great traveller; but Harvey looks forward to talking about these things in person at more length and in more depth. The haste and shortness of this part of the letter remind us of Spenser's earlier reference to its brevity, (p. 636b).

The gap in the correspondence which follows covers the period of the publication of the Shepheardes Calender and Harvey's working on the Dyer volume, which may be the impressive-sounding but un-named, 'great important matter in hande' which Spenser thinks is what is stopping Harvey from replying to his (lost) letters, (p. 611a). Yet even if he is working at the law, Spenser complains, he could at least send some English or Latin poems. Writing at the beginning of April from Westminster, where the court had been since the previous Christmas, he says: 'Little newes is here stirred: but that olde greate matter still depending. His Honoure never better'. The interpolated passage about the earthquake follows on badly after this phrase. The 'matter' is the French marriage, while the nobleman was Leicester, who was reported by Mendoza on March 23 to be ill:¹ again the reader is deliberately left to work out what is being referred to for himself. He then abruptly goes on to talk about 'your late Englishe Hexameters', which he likes but can find fault with: 'I also

1. Judson, p. 64; CSP Sp., vol. iii, p. 18.

enure my Penne sometime in that kinde' and he gives, (p.611b), the tetrasticon and two lines, (quoted by no means fortuitously by E.K. in his gloss to 'May'). which Spenser translated 'ex tempore in bed, the last time we lay together in Westminster'.¹

Spenser wants either Harvey's rules for versifying, (p.612a), or him to follow his which Sidney gave him based on Drant's, so as not to weaken their cause by dissension. He tells him of Dyer's high praise for his 'Satyricall Verses' indicating his familiarity with the poet. Spenser will show him what he is capable of. This appears to be a repetition of what he had said earlier, (p. 611a) about the hexameters and his interest in verse. Were Harvey's hexameters and satirical verses the same - if they were, why does Spenser repeat his praise and his own intentions? In the third of the Four Letters Harvey quotes some hexameters of his own and says:

the verse is not unknown; & runneth in one of those unsatyricall satyres, which M.Spencer long since embraced with an overlooving Sonnet.

Even though Spenser's sonnet which appears at the end of the book is dated 18 July 1586, this does not stop Harvey's satires from belonging to the period of the Letters.² Among these satires 'Speculum Tuscanismi' and possibly some of the other hexameters in the supplement of verses to no. 3, the latest letter, must be included. This suggests they were not originally part of that letter.

Spenser announces that he too is about to issue a book 'in this kinde', that is in classical metres, called Epithalamion Thamesis. Referring to his 'laste Letters', (p.612b), he says that his Dreames and Dying Pellicane are soon to be printed now that they are finished and he is about to work on the Faerie Queene. He wants his friend to return this and in his letters to give his 'long expected Judgement' of it. The main part of the letter finishes in Latin with Spenser warning Harvey against not replying to his love's, ('Meum Corculum') letter. In a post-script he says, (p. 612a), that his Dreames are

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1. Spenser, Prose Works, p. 265 improbably suggests this was the meeting on 20 December 1578, when they exchanged books.
 2. Harvey, vol. i, pp. 211, 212; W B Austin, 'Spenser's Sonnet to Harvey', MLN, vol. lxii, 1947, pp. 22, 23; rather the phrase 'long since embraced' suggests that Spenser's sonnet is much later than the verses.

to be published singly as the gloss to them has grown as large as E.K.'s to the Shepheardes Calender thus promising yet another book which never in fact appeared; its pictures are also excellent. He is more careful than to send out his Stemmata Dudleiana with its 'sundry Apostrophes...addressed you knowe to whome', (p. 612b), the coy reference to Leicester and probably also to Sidney is typical of the intimate allusive tone of the Letters.

Harvey's earthquake letter, no. 2, the inspiration for the volume, was one of a number of works which appeared after the event.¹ There is no need to go deeply into its form and method since these have been very well analysed by Gerard Snare.² All that needs to be said is that Harvey is satirising traditional Cambridge views, by juxtaposing them with his own Ramist, logical exploration of the scientific causes for the event. The piece is set 'in a Gentlemans house, here in Essex', (p. 613a), where the company was playing at cards. The reader is given a couple more clues with which to work out the house's location: it is near to a small town, (p.613b) and within a quarter of an hour of 'a farre greater and goodlyer Towne.' The only other piece of circumstantial evidence which we are given is that there is present 'an auncient learned common Lawyer, that had been Graduate, and fellow of a Colledge in Cambridge, in Queene Maries dayes', (p.618b). The house in Essex is probably that of his friend Arthur Capell at Rayne near Braintree. The identity of the lawyer is tantalisingly not so easy to fix. None of Harvey's circle quite fits the description, but he may have had Sir Thomas Smith in mind for the dialogue.

At the end of his discourse Harvey asks of what interest all this is to Spenser, (p.620a), and in much of the rest of the letter laments the present state of learning and culture in England. Yet first in rather a difficult

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1. For an account of these see Spenser, Prose Works, pp. 477-9. Besides Harvey's letter Bynneman also printed material by Churchyard and a lost 'Admonycon concerninge the earthequake', entered on June 27, Arber, vol. ii, p. 372.
 2. Gerard Snare, 'Satire, Logic, and Rhetoric in Harvey's Earthquake Letter to Spenser', Tulane Studies in English, vol. xviii, 1970, pp. 17-33.

Latin passage (p. 620b), he reveals that his love does not want him to write any new books, complains that the printers do not think his works very profitable and also bids Spenser farewell. He goes on to talk of Spenser's works conveniently naming them to make them more vivid for his admirers: he will stop dreaming of the Dreames and the Dying Pellicane only when he sees them. His 'Magnificenza' will keep his readers in suspense for as long as his nine English 'Commoedies' and his Latin Stemmata Dudleiana. Harvey favours these two, especially if Spenser would spend a week revising them. He then discusses the state of his 'Schollers Looove' and Anticosmopolita, and asks rhetorically what news there is at Cambridge 'al this while', to introduce his new discussion of the state of the University. The letter is supposed to have been written on April 7; on the tenth Harvey returned to Cambridge for the Easter term to discover the vacancy for the Oratorship.¹ This adds an air of veracity to his account of being in the country earlier in the month. Yet it is clearly contrived to talk about news from Cambridge as he had been away from it in Essex and had just been talking about an extraordinary natural event there. Further he begins a new subject when he had just made his farewell, so that this part of the piece is an interpolation. It seems that the letter is made up of at least two separate compositions: the earthquake discourse and the account of Cambridge and both of these began life in the Letter Book. The literary gossip after the discourse may be a separate contribution or belong to the account.

This damns Cambridge's superficiality. Anything French or Italian is fashionable as much in politics as in literature, and for once Harvey is specific:

The Queene mother at the beginning, or ende of everye conference:
many bargaines of Mounsieur: Shymeirs a noble gallant fellowe. (p. 621a).

He condemns all this and provides a commentary on the Machiavellian taste and mood of the University. We can see in Harvey's criticisms a response to those made against him in 1573, so that he complains: 'every day freshe span newe

1. Marginalia, p. 35; Bridgewater's resignation on 25 October 1579 remained unknown for nearly six months, although it 'had been apparently expected for some time', ibid., p. 34.

Opinions: Heresie in Divinitie, in Philosophie, in Humanitie, in Manners', (p. 621a,b). These are the real wrongs with the University. Even the puritan Cartwright whom Leicester patronized is 'nighe forgotten' though he had only been exiled in 1577. The complaints of fickleness, shallowness and inverted values continue until he gives his harsh opinion 'of youre olde Controllers new behavior', (pp. 621b, 622a), and his professed but false friendliness towards Harvey. He undoubtedly meant Andrew Perne, Master of Peterhouse, with whom Spenser may have had dealings in 1574-5 when he was Vice-Chancellor: and this teasing refusal to name him was to lead him into much trouble. Harvey had first quarrelled with Perne at Smith's funeral: but the present animus was the result of his strongly opposing Harvey's candidature for the Oratorship. Since Harvey could only have learnt about this opposition at the earliest on the tenth, before he appealed to Burghley as Chancellor on the twelfth, we must assume again that this part of the letter is a later interpolation perhaps written in May when Perne's persuading of Bridgewater to continue as Orator had succeeded.¹

The letter ends largely in Latin with exclamations about poverty and learning, internal University disputes and the decline in general of the institution. Harvey pictures himself sitting back, watching and being amused by it all, (p. 622b), much in the same way as Spenser describes him in his sonnet 'Harvey, the happy above happiest men'. Once more he bids farewell and adds a tantalising postscript that the letter may only be 'shewed to the two odde Gentlemen you wot of', who are presumably Sidney and Dyer again.²

In the final letter of the series, no. 3, designed to show off his poetry Harvey returns to the question of versifying. He begins, (p. 623a), by answering Spenser's complaint at the opening of his last letter, (p. 611a), about not writing to give his views on the earthquake. If we accept that

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 30 n.1, 17, 32, 38.

2. Judson, p. 65.

Spenser's question about it is a later addition, then here again we can see Harvey toying with his texts. He also lightly dismisses his hexameters, again in a way which is untypical for him, the proudest of authors. He is however extremely pleased that the versifiers have Sidney and Dyer's support against the rhymers. After some discussion of their cause he rather abruptly offers to give him 'a Januarie gift in Aprill: and as it were shewe you a Christmas Gambowlde after Easter', (p.624b). Easter Day in that year was April 3; it looks odd, and his excuses emphasise this, to be sending a New Year's gift at such a late date. The verses, which do not call for much comment, are addressed to 'my old friend Maister George Bilchaunger', about whom - if this is his true name - nothing is known, and yet the reader who is in on the Leicester House circle is expected to be familiar with him.

Referring again to Spenser's last letter, no. 1, he responds to his tetrasticon by asking him to 'Imagin me to come into a goodly Kentishe Garden of your old Lords, or some other Noble man', (p. 625a), alluding to his service under Bishop Young without of course naming him.¹ He asks him to think of two lines from one of Petrarch's sonnets which E.K. happens also to quote in his gloss to 'April'. This is to stimulate (if that is possible) his imagination, which Rosalind once said had all the 'Intelligences' at his command and so called him 'Segnior Pegaso'.² The 'Encomium Lauri' is followed by the 'Speculum Tuscanismi'. It is introduced, (p. 625b), as a 'bolde Satyricall Libell lately devised at the instaunce of a certayne worshipfull Hartefordshyre Gentleman, of myne olde acquayntaunce', who is almost certainly meant to be Henry Capell. Its additional parts about the traveller, (p. 626a), while disclaiming that they are meant to be about anyone in particular, are surely personal satire, which from the Letter Book we know was directed against Oxford:

1. Marginalia, p. 23 n.1.

2. On Pegasus as a figure of the poet, see Mary Lascelles, 'The Rider on the Winged Horse', in Notions and Facts, Collected Criticism and Research, Oxford 1972, pp. 1-28.

None doe I name, but some doe I know, that a peece of a twelvemonth:
 Hath so perfited outly, and inly, both body, both soule,
 That none for sense, and senses, halfe matchable with them.

After it, using what he had written on f.44 of the Letter Book, Harvey suggests that the poet really needed some poem by Sidney or Dyer before him when writing this.

Having given these three examples of his poetical skill, Harvey then says that he has not time for poetry now that he is working on the law, (p. 626b). The one exception is a 'pleasurable, and Morall Politique Naturall mixte devise, to his most Honourable Lordshippe' of which he will say more in his next letter. It is safe to assume that this unknown work is addressed yet again to Leicester, but that it is not the already named and discussed Anticosmopolita. The verses by his younger undergraduate brother John which follow were set as a 'peece of hollydayes exercise' and it is tempting to assign them rather to the Christmas vacation with the verses to Bilchaunger than to the vacation before the Easter term. A further exercise, (p. 627a), draws on the same source in Petrarch as the end of 'your October' with which the reader is supposed to be familiar. He then set him to translate the emblems at the end of 'March' from what he archly describes as 'a certaine famous Booke, called the newe Shephardes Calender'. Harvey has something else written by his brother, (p. 627b), which he will not expose to Spenser's critical judgement, less sharp than only 'those same two incomparable and myraculous Gemini', who are of course meant to be recognised as Sidney and Dyer, Castor and Pollux as he referred to them earlier in the letter, (p. 626a). He thinks that it is probably nearly as good as its model the Epithalamion Thamesis. This is odd because Spenser in no. 1 had talked of his poem as if he were mentioning it for the first time and had kept it to himself. Yet here it is being studied by John Harvey for its mixture of 'Master Collinshead, and M.Hollinshead'.

Harvey is concerned as to whether there is any profit in it; he has learnt by bitter experience to work on subjects which will feed him, (p. 628a). He

supports this by a familiarly casual reference to Cuddie 'alias you know who', from the 'October' eclogue. Cuddie and Hobbinol cannot live by poetry even if Colin Clout can with his Dying Pelican, Calender and Dreames. He particularly likes these with their Italian and Greek lofty and hyperbolical style which the Romans could not manage. He goes on praising the Dreames until, (p. 628b), he remembers the Faerie Queene, which he now returns. It can be compared with Orlando Furioso, as his comedies can be with Ariosto's. As Spenser had said in one of his letters, which has not survived, it will emulate if not surpass the Italian epic. Harvey approves of the method of writing comedies since as he points out, this is how the great classical and Italian writers established themselves. All this is designed to whet the eager reader's appetite for these works. His famous poor opinion of the epic ends the paragraph and he decides to change the subject.

At some point, either in a lost letter or at a meeting, Spenser seems to have reproved Harvey for his secrecy; now Harvey responds, (p. 629), rather ironically from our point of view, with a poem to Mistress Anne, written for 'an honest Countrey Gentleman, sometimes a Scholler'. We have seen Harvey in the Letter Book on f.68v. addressing a poem to her as his own love: perhaps the description of the friend here is meant to suggest Arthur Capell to those in the know. In the poem Harvey abandons poetry for her. He describes it as written in a 'goodly yonkerly veine', (p. 629b) and ironically as a fine way to employ his time and talents. In a Latin passage (p. 630a), he reveals he has vowed to abandon love for the law and begs Spenser to abandon 'nugis, atque naeniis' of this kind. He not only then bids him farewell, but subscribes and dates the letter.

This makes the discourse in the rest of the letter about versifying once again seem like an addition to it, possibly related to the literary talk after the discourse on the earthquake in no. 2. The Latin paragraph at the end of this part, (p. 632a), promises an answer to Spenser's Rosalind's letter. In his final paragraph containing 'my ordinarie Post-scripte', (p. 632b), he says that Spenser

may 'communicate as much, or as little, as you list, of these Patcheries, and fragments, with the two Gentlemen' whom even the most inattentive reader ought to be able to identify as Sidney and Dyer. In describing his letters as 'Patcheries, and fragments' Harvey was not being modest: they are precisely that. The only other person to whom they may be shown, he adds as if we had known about him all the time, is Daniel Rogers, 'whose curtesies are also registred in my Marble booke. You know my meaning'.

Harvey's letter ends with that intimate, knowing and rather joky secrecy which characterises the work. The Letters deliberately raise the reader's expectations of Leicester House's lively atmosphere and literary productions: the Shepheardes Calender is frequently invoked, Sidney and Dyer's names are as frequently dropped and Leicester often alluded to. They are designed to sound impressive and imposing, to mystify the reader but also to give him just enough clues for him to be able to puzzle out sufficient of what is being discussed to keep his interest. The Three Letters displayed Harvey's intellectual and poetical abilities of which more would be seen in the Dyer volume. The Two Letters were added to make the book more substantial, but also because being about travel they celebrate Spenser's departure for Ireland in the summer of 1580, using material from his abortive trip to Italy on Leicester's behalf of late 1579. As Harvey admits, the letters are 'Patcheries, and fragments', heavily edited and reworked in the way the literary compositions of the Letter Book are. Despite his denials Harvey must have been the moving and organising spirit of the Letters.

Certainly he was the victim of the antagonism they aroused. First Lyly told the Earl of Oxford that the 'Speculum Tuscanismi' was directed against him: Oxford wisely disregarded Lyly, but the incident shows how strongly the enemies of Leicester House reacted to the provocation of the Letters.¹ Harvey's

1. Harvey denies the charge in Four Letters, vol. i, pp. 183, 184; Nashe refers to the business in Strange Newes, vol. i, pp. 295, 300, 315; Harvey gives a full account in his reply Pierces Supererogation, vol. ii, p. 122; Nashe returns to it in Have With You, vol. iii, p. 69.

real difficulties were caused by Sir James Croft's taking the passage against 'your olde Controller', (Letters, p. 621b), that is Andrew Perne, Vice-Chancellor while Spenser was waiting for his MA, as being directed against himself as Controller of the Queen's Household. Not surprisingly Perne also took exception to this passage and the University did not like the parody in the earthquake letter. For his impudence Harvey had to take refuge in the house of a nobleman for eight weeks; Croft found him out, had him put in the Fleet and was only released when he made 'his humble submission, and ample exposition of the ambiguous Text', with his 'Mecenas mediation'. This is Nashe's account in which the nobleman is clearly Leicester once again showing his loyal patronage.¹ Harvey's version was that the Letters were read out in the Privy Council and that following the advice of 'certaine honourable and divers worshipfull persons', who sound suspiciously like Leicester and Sidney, he explained his true intentions, wrote personally to Croft and apologized to the University.² He strenuously denied he was ever in the Fleet and that he was a willing party to the publication of the Letters - something which Nashe with his great respect for Spenser finds hard to believe.³ Harvey sought to explain the bitter tone of his reference to Perne and mocking of Cambridge by attributing both to his old enemy's opposition over the Oratorship. Again this shows that the penultimate letter of April 7 has been tampered with, since Harvey did not hear about the vacancy until April 10.⁴

Of the two accounts Harvey's is the more credible, although there may well be some truth in his having to lie low for a while: in either case it was Leicester who helped him in his difficulties. He returned to Cambridge and in

1. Nashe, vol. iii, pp. 78, 127; see also vol. i, pp. 297, 300 and Greene's Quip for an Upstart Courtier quoted in Spenser, Prose Works, p. 483; the identification of the nobleman as Leicester is supported by McKerrow in Nashe, vol. iv, p. 340 and Moore Smith, Marginalia, p. 32.

2. Harvey, vol. i, p. 180

3. Ibid., vol. i, pp. 178-80, 250, vol. ii, p. 87; Nashe, vol. i, pp. 296, 323, vol. iii, p. 35.

4. Harvey, vol. i, p. 179; Marginalia, p. 35.

the New Year of 1581 found that he was now sufficiently famous to be parodied in the comedy Pedantius but also to find that Perne had triumphed and he had been beaten to the post of Orator by Anthony Wingfield.¹

vi. The Aftermath.

In Colin Clout's Come Home Again Hobbinol talks of his time in court when, 'I my selfe was there,/To wait on Lobbin.' ² There can be no doubt that Harvey waited on Leicester but when and in what capacity is less certain. As we have seen the earliest link between the two is the poem written on Leicester's picture in the autumn of 1576 and printed in the Gratulationes Valdinenses. In that work the Earl appears as his patron and Harvey is about to go abroad. After Audley End Harvey still sought with his help a career in the Church or the law, leading to a diplomatic one. Yet 1579 and the first half of 1580 were largely spent in literary projects revolving around the Earl, in close contact with Sidney, Dyer and Rogers, and probably inspired by Spenser. It was Leicester who protected Harvey when he was in trouble over the Letters. It seems likely that during the autumn of 1580 after their publication and Spenser's departure for Ireland Harvey took over his friend's post with the Earl for a time. Nashe whose information was second-hand implies this saying that the employment did not last long and Harvey was soon sent back to the University, his place being taken by an Oxford man.³ This must be Atey, and yet Atey had already begun to work as secretary by the beginning of 1579, so that I think Nashe is muddling this occasion with what he understood as Harvey's hopes after Audley End. The contemporary play Pedantius however suggests that Harvey followed his favourite pupil to court, got on badly there, and on his returning to Cambridge had to retire to Saffron Walden because of his poor relations with the University.⁴ Its narrative sequence definitely indicates Harvey's employment being in 1580.

1. Marginalia, pp. 39-41.

2. ll. 735, 736.

3. Nashe, vol. iii, p. 79.

4. Marginalia, p. 40; see also above p. 145 n. 2.

It is impossible to say what exactly Harvey did in his post, but it seems likely that he was not happy in his work. For almost nothing is known about his activities in 1581 and 1582, which perhaps shows that he deliberately kept out of the public eye. In July 1582 he was rereading Cicero's letters to Atticus at Trinity Hall, and in August Foorth's Synopsis Politica and some-time during the year Guazzo's La Civil Conversatione.¹ He may have met Leicester and Sidney again and heard Bruno dispute in 1583 if he was in Oxford for their visit to the University with Prince Alasco.² Harvey stayed on at Trinity Hall until about the end of the decade, his best friend Spenser in Ireland and his burning desire to serve Leicester apparently cooled. Yet not altogether so, for there is evidence that Harvey was involved in Leicester's expedition to the Netherlands. William Upcott owned a folio manuscript compiled by Richard Brown, 'of sutch Provision as hath bin sent out of England' for Leicester's use from 10 October 1585 until 18 June 1586; it contained the signatures of Harvey and William Gorges.³ The latter was probably the uncle of the poet Sir Arthur, lived at Alderton in Northamptonshire and died in 1589. His brother Nicholas was employed as a messenger between the Queen and Leicester in the Low Countries.⁴ William is listed as being at Leiden at the beginning of 1586 and it is tantalizing to see a 'Harvey' in the lists of those who were present for the Hague entry on 6 January 1586.⁵ The lost account book was for the earliest part of the expedition: perhaps Harvey and Gorges were employed as responsible servants to oversee Brown's accounts.

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1. Ibid., pp. 134.18-22, 203.5; Stern, p. 217. The title-page of the Foorth notes that Harvey sent a copy of the book to J T Freigius on 30 September 1582.
 2. Stern, pp. 73, 74.
 3. Original Letters, Manuscripts, and State Papers Collected by William Upcott, 1836, p. 30; it was not included in the sale of his collection at Sotheby's on 22 June 1846, but lot 54 then comprised a similar account book for the period 11 December 1585 to 8 April 1587, which went to Rodd and I have not been able to trace. We know from the account 'The Father of a Fashion' Temple Bar, vol. xlvii, 1876, p. 98 that Upcott lost some of his manuscripts during his life-time.
 4. Raymond Gorges, The Story of a Family Through Eleven Centuries, Boston 1944, pp. 53, 54.
 5. Strong and van Dorsten, Leicester's Triumph, pp. 118, 119.

Harvey may even have gone over to the Netherlands - he certainly thought the expedition badly handled.¹ His response to Sidney's death was rapid and consisted of two elegies on him and a poem addressed to his uncle, printed with pride of place in the Cambridge memorial volume;² all three are really too formal to be personally informative. It is even more of a loss that Harvey did not write an elegy on Leicester's death in 1588, but Virginia Stern has plausibly suggested that a note in his copy of Frontinus, '1588. *Reformatio meae Reformationis, seu Annus Assuetudinis*', may refer to the death of his patron and his decision to leave Cambridge for London.³ It is a symbol of Harvey's deep regard for Leicester, whose unstinting patronage he enjoyed for well over a decade, that the Earl's death, like Sir Thomas Smith's, should have caused such a revolution in his life.

1. Stern, p. 162.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 79; the poems are reprinted in Appendix B.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

CHAPTER VI

SPENSER.

'... so I account him thrice-fortunate in having such a herauld of his vertues as Spenser; Curteous Lord, Curteous Spenser, I knowe not which hath perchast more fame, either he in deserving so well of so famous a scholler, or so famous a scholler in being so thankfull without hope of requitall to so famous a Lord.'

John Florio, Florios Second Frutes,
1591, sig. A3v.

i. From Young to Grey.

The exact circumstances under which Spenser came into contact with Leicester will probably always remain unknown. There are too many problems surrounding his biography for us to be able to arrive at any certain conclusions, and little likelihood of new material being discovered which might illuminate their relationship. The best we can hope for is that by a fresh examination of the evidence against the background of their lives, we may be able to understand better some of Spenser's works. This chapter will therefore be divided into two parts; first an examination of Spenser's career from 1578 until his arrival in Ireland in 1581, from two different perspectives, and then a study of those works which reflect, or are supposed to reflect, his relationship with Leicester during this crucial period.

Like Shakespeare, Spenser has a period of 'lost years', from about autumn 1574 until spring 1578, when we do not know what he was doing. However, by going to Merchant Taylors' School and then on to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, in 1569 he must have established some useful contacts. His talents were probably first recognized by the Bishop of London, Edmund Grindal and John Young, a fellow of Pembroke Hall, in their 1562 visitation of the school.¹ Young became Grindal's chaplain in 1564 and on his recommendation in 1567 Master of his college, an office his patron had himself held from 1558 until 1561. If Young was largely responsible for getting Spenser to Cambridge, it has been argued

1. Judson, pp. 17-19.

that once there, he was not intimate with him due to his habitual absence in London.¹ Of the people he would have known in the college, Gabriel Harvey, elected a fellow shortly after his arrival in the autumn of 1570 was to be the most important. There is also the possibility that while at Cambridge in the early 1570's Sidney met both Harvey and Spenser.

At Pembroke Spenser would also have known Humphrey Tindall, a fellow since 1567 and a loyal friend to Harvey in his troubles over his MA. He was one of Leicester's chaplains and officiated at his secret wedding to Lettice Knollys. Given these links, Spenser could have come into contact with Leicester at almost any time in the 1570's. His closest friend Harvey was in touch with Sidney and the Earl by 1576. Through his former tutor Spenser may have got the job of bringing despatches between Leicester, Sir Henry Sidney and the President of Munster in July 1577, stayed with Sidney and Lodowick Bryskett and seen the execution of Murrough O'Brien, but the evidence for this is not strong.² If he was employed by Leicester in 1577 it is strange to see him quitting his service for John Young's only to return to it within two years.

While Young paid little attention to Spenser at Cambridge, he ended the period of the 'lost years' by employing him as his secretary when he became Bishop of Rochester. Nominated by the Queen on 31 January 1578, he was elected by the Chapter on February 18, consecrated on March 16 and installed on April 1, moving to Bromley at about that time and possibly marrying.³ Spenser most

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1. A C Judson, A Biographical Sketch of John Young, Indiana University Studies, vol. xxi, no. 103, 1934, p.11. In a list dated 7 June 1577 Young is said to be 'continually resident' as Prebendary of Westminster, HMC Cecil, vol.xiii, p. 145. R J Bauckham, The Career and Thought of Dr. William Fulke (1537-1589), University of Cambridge Ph.D. 1973, pp.104, 105 n.1 gives details from college accounts of his non-residence.
 2. R Jenkins, 'Spenser and the Clerkship in Munster', PMLA, vol.xlvii, 1932, pp.109, 110; Judson, p.46.
 3. Judson, John Young, p.14.

likely joined his household after this, but there is no means of knowing exactly when, or what his duties as secretary were. Very few of Young's letters survive so that the workings of his household must remain obscure.¹ But he was by no means an uncultured man. His 1575 sermon before the Queen may have been to Spenser's taste with its emblematic allegory concerning the ape and the fox, the ass and the lion, and the bramble and the briar. He might also have enjoyed Young's anecdote about 'Durerus a famous Paynter in Germanie', and the Emperor Maximilian's attempts to draw.²

From the earliest of the Spenser-Harvey Letters we can be certain that by the beginning of October 1579 Spenser had left Young's service and was in Leicester's household about to go abroad. There seems to be no direct link between Young and Leicester, and no good reason for Spenser's transfer of allegiance, other than the lure of a more distinguished circle and greater material patronage. In following after these he would have had Harvey's precedent, and learnt of his experience in London. Arthur Atey's appointment as secretary early in 1579 and Spenser's joining of Leicester House at some time in 1578 or 1579 coincide. The duration of Spenser's close involvement with Leicester can be variously estimated. It could not have begun earlier than the spring of 1578, was an established fact by the autumn of the next year, but came to an end in the summer of 1580. It lasted less than two years; however, we can be sure it transformed his poetic and intellectual outlook bringing him into fruitful contact with Sidney and the Leicester House circle.

There has been a great deal of argument about the nature of his next employment, his service under Lord Grey in Ireland. Both Judson and Rosenberg

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1. BL MS Lansd. 28 ff.171, 172, Young to Burghley, Bromley 20 October 1579, is not in Spenser's hand and is probably the earliest extant letter written from Bromley, Judson, op. cit., p.15 n.62.
 2. A Sermon preached before the Queenes Majestie, the second of March.An. 1575, (1576), sigs. C2v.-3v. Spenser's literary debt to the sermon was first suggested by P W Long, 'Spenser and the Bishop of Rochester', PMLA, vol.xxxi, 1916, pp.727, 728. The anecdote about Dürer originates with Melancthon, see Moriz Thausing, Albert Dürer, His Life and Works, tr. F A Eaton, 1882, vol. ii, p.151. This may be a source for Alexander's lesson in drawing in Lyly's Campaspe Act III, scene iv.

accept that it does not signify any great break-down in the relationship between Leicester and Spenser.¹ The former was genuinely concerned with Irish affairs while for the latter being secretary to the Lord Deputy would have been a marked promotion from being secretary to a Bishop. Judson has also convincingly argued that it was probably not Leicester who procured Spenser the position but the Sidneys, which tends to make the dismissal theory all the more unlikely. The new post is a significant indication of how intimate Spenser's relationship with the Sidneys was. However much Spenser may have come to enjoy the Ovidian pose of the poet in exile his Irish experience was eventually a highly profitable one.²

Grey had first been considered for the post of deputy in 1571 and began to be reconsidered as Sir Henry Sidney's successor at least as early as the beginning of 1578. The matter then lapsed until the end of 1579. On 7 April 1580 Grey wrote to Leicester saying he had received a letter that evening telling him to be ready to leave for Ireland. Writing to Leicester again on May 12 he reports the Queen's gracious farewell. On June 29 the Privy Council wrote both to the Lord Justice of Ireland and Sir Henry Sidney that Grey had been appointed and told to be ready to embark at Bristol on July 18 with eight hundred men.³ Although this reveals Leicester's close interest in the appointment, Judson's theory that the Sidneys were behind it is very plausible.⁴

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1. Judson, p.71; Rosenberg, p.342; cf. Muriel Bradbrook's rather misleading 'No Room at the Top: Spenser's Pursuit of Fame', in Elizabethan Poetry, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, vol.ii, 1960, pp.90-109.
 2. R Tuve explores his and Grey's relations with the Bedfords in 'Spenserus', in ed. M MacLure and F W Watt, Essays Presented to A S P Woodhouse, Toronto 1964, pp.3-25.
 3. HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, vol.ii, p.78; CSP Ire., vol.ii, pp.194, 198, 216, 222. Copies of the Council's letter to the Lord Justice are in BL MS Stowe 160 ff.122, 122v. and MS Eg. 3048 ff.139, 139v.; both MSS contain several letters about Grey's Irish mission, but shed little new light on it.
 4. For Leicester's support of Grey, see CSP Sp., vol.iii, p.140, CSP Carew, vol. ii, no.476 and The Copie of a Leter, p.61. C A J Skeel, The Council in the Marches of Wales, 1904, p.113, says that early in 1580 Sidney visited Lord Grey at Wilton. As will be seen in relation to his son, Sir Henry was at Wilton then, but there is no evidence to show that Grey, whose seat was at Whaddon in Buckinghamshire, was also there then. The Wilton in Grey's title was in Herefordshire.

Spenser then, could have been employed by Grey from almost any date after the first week in April. Despite this Grey only began to prepare properly for the mission at the beginning of July. On the tenth he was in London negotiating with a citizen for the office of his General Victualler. On the fifteenth he received his final instructions from the Queen. Exactly a week later Geoffrey Fenton having asked Leicester on the tenth to recommend him for the office of Secretary in Ireland had arrived there.¹ Spenser may have gone over with Fenton or with the servants who were sent in advance of Grey and for whom the Privy Council ordered horses on July 5, or he may have sailed with Grey himself around the first of August only to arrive on the twelfth.² The exact date of his departure is not immediately important. It is more significant, having been generally ignored, that Raleigh and Sidney's friend Edward Denny were part of the same expedition. The two soldiers were serving 'by the appointment of the Lord Grey' and were ordered to be granted £100 each on July 11. On the fifteenth the Council told the City of London to raise 300 men, of whom two-thirds were for Raleigh and Denny who were to come to London.³

By the time he left for Ireland Spenser's circle of literary acquaintances, most of them gained and maintained through Leicester House, would have been formidable. Above all he benefited from his poetic experiments with Sidney and Harvey's sensible criticisms. His experience of the court was always to draw an ambiguous response from him, but his loyalty and gratefulness to Leicester were constant and deeply-rooted.

ii Leicester House.

So much can be gathered about Spenser at this time from the fairly reliable historical sources. I shall now examine his life in relation to Harvey's Letter Book and the Letters which they exchanged and later published.

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1. CSP Ire., vol.ii, pp.231, 234, 236; Long, art. cit., p.719 misinterprets both Grey's letter of May 12 and Fenton's of July 10.
 2. APC, vol.xii, pp.86, 87; Judson, p.72.
 3. APC, vol.xii, pp.96, 97, 99, 100. For Denny, see Osborn, Appendix Five.

As we have seen, between 1578 and 1580 Spenser worked successively for Young, Leicester and Grey. Some time after March or April 1578 as the Bishop's secretary he gave Harvey Turler's The Traveiler, which he had finished by November 30.¹ If Harvey read the book soon after receiving it, then at the end of November Spenser was still or until very recently Young's secretary. From Harvey's note in his copy of Till Eulenspiegel's Amerye Jeste now in the Bodleian we know the two men met in London on December 20.² Spenser might by then have moved permanently to the capital and Leicester's service, or might just have been there on Young's business. The fact that the dates of Harvey's reading The Traveiler and their London meeting are quite close to each other is interesting: he could have been given the book early in November and read it so he could say he had looked into it in time for the December meeting. Since its subject was travel, perhaps Spenser gave it because Harvey was about to go away. In this case the gift was probably made in the spring of 1578 when Harvey hoped he was going to the Schmalkalden Conference. This poses the problem of why he did not read it until the end of November, which could be explained by the cancellation of the English mission. Yet there was enough time before the delegation knew they would not go for him to have read it. Alternatively Spenser may have given it to Harvey in anticipation of the brilliant diplomatic career which seemed so imminent at Audley End in July and August. This seems equally possible, but friends do not always give each other books intended to be immediately relevant to their circumstances. The Traveiler does not really help to fix the dates of Spenser's employment with Young.

Whatever Spenser may have been doing in London on 20 December 1578, there is evidence from the cancelled first letter in Harvey's Letter Book, once addressed to Spenser, that they met 'last Ester terme' at Westminster.²⁰ Since

1. Marginalia, pp.173.18, 19, 174.4.

2. Stern, p.49.

3. Letter Book, f.38.

this letter appears to belong to the Summer of 1579, then the meeting, if it took place, occurred between May 6 and June 1. Where they met is the only clue to what Spenser's position was at that time: needless to say the evidence is not conclusive.

Leicester House was in the far east of the Liberties of the Duchy of Lancaster; the City of Westminster began at its western end, so when Spenser in the letter of October 15, 16 and its enclosure refers to Westminster and Leicester House, he is talking about two different places. The same letter makes it clear that Spenser lodged at Westminster, where the Court was.¹ He was still there at the beginning of April 1580 and it is reasonable to assume that he lodged there because working for Leicester it was convenient for the Court and his House. One would not expect a newly-arrived and unemployed man to live in the most fashionable part of the town; rather he would stay inside or outside the City in the east.

On the basis of this admittedly weak, circumstantial evidence of an Easter term meeting at Westminster I would be inclined to believe that by 1 June 1579, the end of the term at the latest, Spenser had left Young for Leicester. Furthermore, as we have seen Atey is first named as the Earl's secretary on 14 April 1579, a coincidence of dating which makes it tempting to suggest both men might have joined the household at the same time and that their work was connected in some way. The obvious period for this would be from the beginning of the new legal year, that is, from March 25, Lady Day, which we know to have been an occasion for changing employment.

This conjecture is supported by the first definite piece of evidence we have concerning Spenser in Leicester's service, his poem and note of

1. Spenser, Prose Works, p.261.

October 5 in the Letters. The tone of these suggests Spenser had worked for the Earl for some time. By then he had also begun to call himself 'Immerito', due, as Harvey says, to 'a certayn chaunce befallen unto him, a secrett not to be revealid'.¹ There is no way of determining exactly what this was meant to indicate - whether Spenser felt he was unworthy, or did not deserve to enjoy something or have to endure it. The pseudonym was maintained throughout the Letters, which at first suggests that its use was not confined to the end of 1579. But since Spenser and Harvey are both trying to hide their identities in them, they may only be using the name for convenience, it having by April 1580 lost its significance. I shall examine its single appearance in the Shepheardes Calender and possible connexion with 'Virgil's Gnat' later.

From the first letter two problems arise, concerning the journey he is about to undertake and his marriage. The prospect of the voyage overseas lasted at least from October 5 until 15 at the latest. Between those two dates something happened to dispose of any idea of it. James H. Hewlett suggested that this journey may have been connected with the one which Leicester was to have made at the end of 1579.² However as we have seen this was only being suggested in November, and it seems unlikely that Spenser's journey was to have been made for political reasons. The period during which it was cancelled was one when virtually nothing was happening about the Alençon marriage negotiations.³ The crucial passage of the poem, (ll.217-22), says Spenser will travel to win his fortune, rather than be compelled:

Officiis frustra deperdere vilibus Annos, (l.219)

It implies he performs a rather tedious job for his employer, on whose

1. Letter Book, f.53.

2. J H Hewlett, 'Interpreting a Spenser-Harvey Letter', PMLA, vol.xlii, 1927, p.1062; see also above ch.II, pt.ii.

3. Read, Walsingham, vol.ii, p.22.

behalf he is to go abroad. At the same time Leicester wants him to travel, which will allow him to escape his dull work and find his fortune. For some unknown reason the voyage was cancelled: that it was not, as it is often said to be, a secret one is clear from how much we know about it.

Unfortunately any interpretation of this unexplained incident is bound to be influenced by the equally perplexing subject of Spenser's marriage. As Douglas Hamer pointed out, in his Latin poem Spenser does not dismiss all love as being light, (1.145). But on the other hand as Hamer later observed, the discussion of love in the October letters is general. Harvey, who was bound to have known of it, would not have tried to dissuade his friend from marriage if he was about to wed.¹ The problem is further complicated by the discovery that an Edmund Spenser married Machabyas Childe in St. Margaret's Westminster on 27 October 1579. If the Spenser was the poet, why is there no mention or intimation of the event in the early Letters? If he did not marry then it is a remarkable coincidence that a man of the same name, dwelling in the right parish should have married at that very time.² Mark Eccles dismisses the first difficulty by referring to the heavily edited nature of the letters, but he does not specify of which parts he is thinking.

It is significant that Spenser makes no mention of doubts about love in the original letter of October 15, 16, just as all references to travel have gone; the two would appear to be related. In Harvey's reply of October 23 he discusses love and travel together. I have already shown that this passage is not part of the original letter, but belongs to an earlier lost one which Harvey sent before he knew that Spenser was not

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1. 'Spenser's Marriage', RES, vol.vii, 1931, pp.283, 284; ibid., 'Some Spenser Problems: ii. Spenser's First Marriage', NQ, vol.clxxx, 1941, p.184; Judson, p.63 ignores this difficulty.
 2. M Eccles, 'Elizabethan Edmund Spensers', MLQ, vol.v, 1944, pp.426, 427.

going to travel. This was his reply to Spenser's enclosure of October 5 containing his long Latin poem to Harvey. I would suggest that at the beginning of the month Spenser thought he was going away and so was uncertain about marriage. For some reason the journey was abandoned and he then felt able to marry, which he did on October 27.¹

The question of the abandoned voyage can be fitted into this. As we have seen, it was intended to fulfill a dual purpose: to make Spenser's fortune and to 'employ my time, my body, my minde, to his Honours service', (Letters, p.638b). Both of these intentions would seem to be fulfilled if by that time he had heard of the possibility of his being sent to Ireland and working for Leicester's friend Lord Grey. This appointment perhaps had the advantage that he could take his wife with him, something he might not have been able to do if he were to travel independently in France and Italy. Since it has been shown above that Walsingham was disposed to consider replacing Sir Henry Sidney by Lord Grey as early as November 6, it is possible that Spenser was told about the probability of his getting the post of secretary a few weeks before, causing him to remain for the time being in England and presumably in Leicester's service.

Spenser worked for the Earl from the spring of 1579 until the summer of 1580, for about sixteen months. Leicester may have worked him hard, but he had his best interests in mind. We can only wonder at what sort of a poet Spenser would have been if he had travelled in France and Italy, instead of going to Ireland. His patron was willing to release him from his service and the dangers of the European journey for the relative domestic and financial stability of Ireland. Given Spenser's response to that countryside we can see that Leicester judged rightly in letting the poet go and work for Lord Grey.

1. Ibid., where the legal difficulties of getting a licence are disposed of; see also E K Chambers, William Shakespeare, Oxford 1930, vol.ii, pp.43, 44.*

iii The Shepheardes Calender

If we know very little about Spenser's official work for Leicester at this time, there is much evidence within the Shepheardes Calender for his writings and literary plans. Spenser's small book is a crucial document in the story of his relations with Leicester and Sidney. Unfortunately the Calender poses more questions than it will answer. It has been so much discussed, from so many different points of view that it seems almost wilful to bring the subject up again. Yet it has been so casually and erroneously treated that it must be examined from the beginning again.

The traditional view of the Shepheardes Calender as a manifesto for the new poetry seems to me quite correct. Spenser reveals such a variety of metrical forms and such a rich knowledge of language that the reader must feel the poem has an element of the brilliant display about it. Its form and subject-matter both suggest how well-acquainted Spenser was with his literary antecedents but also how willing and able he was to adapt them for his own purposes. The book's central concern is with poetry and to see how deeply this was intended we should try to look at it as a physical object. Where did Spenser get the idea for a book in this unique shape? The answer must be from Sannazaro's Arcadia which during the sixteenth century had gradually been acquiring woodcuts, arguments and glosses. These culminated in the Venice edition of 1578 edited by Francesco Sansovino, which served as a model for Spenser's pastoral work. As well as a life, a glossary and an appendix of sentences and proverbs, each Prose was given a woodcut, argument and annotations and each Eclogue a cut and annotations. By 1578 Sannazaro's Arcadia had become the classic for Italian poetry which the Leicester House circle hoped the Shepheardes Calender would for English.*

Spenser's work was entered in the Stationers' Register to Hugh Singleton on 5 December 1579.¹ This does not really indicate very much beyond that at

1. Arber, vol.ii, p.362.

that time the 'book was in existence or at any rate seriously contemplated.¹ The generally accepted argument is that it would have been printed and published between then and the first of January.² Singleton was not a very reputable publisher, producing ballads and being in debt in 1577 and 1578. He was also in trouble earlier in 1579 for printing Stubbs' Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf, but had escaped the author's cruel punishment through aristocratic influence.³ This came from the Leicester faction and in particular from Walsingham. Singleton had been involved with the Dudleys over Lady Jane Grey and as a Marian exile at Strasbourg and Basle he would have met many future members of Leicester's party including Daniel Rogers.⁴ His loyalties remained with that group: in 1579 he dedicated Foxe's revised edition of his translation of Urbinus Regius, A Necessary Instruction of Christian Faith and Hope, to Sir Francis Knollys. Nevertheless despite his political orientation he remains an odd choice as printer of such a literary and finely illustrated work.

If it was in some state of readiness by December 5, the earliest time with which it can be connected is the April 10, appearing at the end of E.K.'s letter to Harvey. McLane's detailed study of the historical allegory of the poem is based on his theory that this is a false date, used to allow Spenser to comment on later political events, while presenting the work as if it had appeared before them. I shall seek to prove that much of McLane's widely accepted analysis is wrong, but it is worth noting that his theory about the false date is a weak one. Since the Elizabethans would have known

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1. McKerrow, Introduction to Bibliography, p.137; see also W W Greg, A Bibliography of the English printed Drama, vol.iv, 1959, pp.xcix, c.
 2. H J Byrom, 'Edmund Spenser's first Printer, Hugh Singleton', Library, 4th ser., vol.xiv, 1933-4, p.154; see also W L Edgerton, 'The Calendar Year in Sixteenth-Century Printing', JEGP, vol.lix, 1960, pp.439-49.
 3. Byrom, art. cit., pp.130, 137-44; my examination of the types and ornaments confirms that Singleton did indeed print Spenser's work.
 4. P E McLane, Spenser's Shepherdes Calender, A Study in Elizabethan Allegory, Notre Dame 1968, p.19; references in the text are to this edition; all quotations from the Calender are taken from Spenser, vol. vii.

exactly when the book appeared they could have penetrated the disguise more easily than we can.

There can be little doubt that the dedication was written after the Calender and the glosses had been compiled. Apart from his general discussion of Spenser's work E.K. refers directly to Tityrus in 'February', (Section 2), and quotes correctly from 'June', (Section 19). He tells us that he has added a gloss and his reasons for doing so, (Section 23). After that he refers to Spenser's Dreams, Legends and Court of Cupid as finished works, (Section 24) and then, (Section 25), tells the interesting lie that Spenser had 'already in the beginning dedicated it' to Sidney. In his post-script he encourages Harvey, 'to pluck out of the hateful darknesse, those so many excellent English poemes of yours, which lye hid, and bring them forth to eternall light.' This last remark fits in with what we know Harvey was planning to do during 1579 and 1580.

The problem of the poem's dedication is interesting. In the first part of his letter of October 15, 16 Spenser confesses to doubts about publishing a finished work which must be the Calender: firstly he fears 'over much cloying their noble eares' and 'Then also me seemeth the work too base for his excellent Lordship...', (Letters, p.635a). The Variorum is correct in saying that this refers to Leicester,¹ to whom Spenser at one time intended to dedicate the work. Further evidence for this is supplied in 'Immerito's' prefatory poem 'To his Book'. Ringler has pointed out that this refers to 'his honour' reading the work, which could only apply to an Earl, not to the 'worshipful' gentleman Philip Sidney.² The poem clearly reflects an early stage in the work's composition, certainly before October when he was hesitating in the Letters over the dedication.

1. Spenser, Prose Works, p.249.

2. W A Ringler, 'Spenser, Shakespeare, Honor, and Worship', RN, vol.xiv, 1961, p.160.

This still does not explain the date of the dedicatory epistle. For if Spenser failed to revise his little poem to accommodate the change in the dedication made after October 15, E.K. could easily have suitably altered the section about originally dedicating it to Sidney in his letter. It is quite possible that the description of Sidney as 'a special favourer and maintainer of all kind of learning', (Section 25), is part of an earlier dedication to Leicester, since great though Sidney's reputation was, his fame as a patron in England was only established after 1579.

The question which obviously suggests itself is why Spenser reassigned the dedication. Was it a result of his fall from Leicester's favour? His own explanation that he felt it to be too slight a work for the Earl is quite acceptable, but there may have been other reasons behind it. The change was made sometime after October 15 and may well reflect Spenser's knowledge or hope that he was going to leave Leicester for Grey. If so there would be little point in dedicating it to him and less in giving it to Grey, whom he may have never met. Rather, the dedication to Sidney is part of that commitment to poetry, which is the subject-matter of the poem. And if Judson is correct, that the Irish appointment was gained through the Sidneys, the Calender would be a suitable gift in return.

Spenser's doubts in the 1579 letter concerning the dedication imply a finished work under discussion. According to McLane, 'at least two thirds' of the Calender was written in the five months following July, with parts being added until early November.¹ That so much of it was composed then is unlikely because we know by the middle of October not only was the book 'finished', but also 'I am, of late, more in love wyth my Englishe Versifying, than with Ryming', (Letters, p.635b). My interpretation of the evidence implies an early date for the poem's composition, but that it did not reach its final form until late in 1579. Spenser probably had a collection of

1. McLane, op. cit., pp.326, 329.

poems ready by 10 April 1579, when as I have suggested he had been in Leicester's circle for less than a month. Although this must diminish Sidney's original influence on the poetry, I am unwilling to allow the dedication is falsely dated. It is too convenient an explanation, avoiding a lot of real difficulties.

The eight month delay before it was printed must still be accounted for. Singleton's troubles over Stubbs began in August but were soon settled. There is always the possibility that Spenser simply did not want to publish it on the Horatian principle of reticence. The opening of his 1579 letter to Harvey seems to endorse this attitude. But while Horace advises his author not to publish in the interests of the work's quality, Spenser's main doubt, despite Harvey's promptings, is that his writings may overwhelm his patron or seem too blatantly a present for some favour, (Letters, p.635a). From the same letter, as well as from the Calender itself, we know Spenser had written a considerable number of works. Since all these seem to have been completed by the end of 1579, there is every reason to assume he worked on them at the same time as on the Calender and that he was uncertain which to publish. In other words it need not appear to be suspicious that an author who is rapidly developing his powers should be cautious about committing himself to print. We should also expect him to make major and minor revisions to the poem during this period in the light of the close contact with Sidney at Leicester House.

The crux of the matter is whether there is anything in the Shepheardes Calender which must be associated with Leicester and his circle, and what within it can be put down to Sidney's influence. The most recent full-scale study of the poem's historical allegory by Paul E McLane argues throughout that it must be seen as part of a campaign originating from the Earl designed to promote his policies and views, especially his opposition to the Alençon marriage. His analysis has been generally accepted. From the point of view

of this thesis it is a very attractive reading, but unfortunately not really tenable. On the other hand much of McLane's interpretation of the non-political eclogues is convincing. In view of this I shall outline and accept or reject his arguments as is appropriate.

The first objection to McLane's or any overtly political interpretation is that by localizing the poem he diminishes its stature. Spenser specifically warns against this:

Loe I have made a Calender for every yeare... (p.120)

Further because there were other editions in 1581 and 1586 it is clear that it outlasted the anti-Alençon agitation of late 1579, which McLane constantly refers to as the work's background. He fails to recognise that the negotiations about the marriage had been going on with some intensity at least since the summer of 1578 when Quissé and Bacqueville arrived and that opposition to it had begun then, not least with Harvey's Gratulations. The only reference which McLane can find to Alençon himself in the Calender is in the 'June' eclogue when Colin complains against his rival Menalcas, (ll.102-4). As E.K. notes, Spenser got the name from Virgil, but McLane argues that it 'is of course a daringly close anagram for Alençon', (p.38). Not surprisingly he does not pursue the point very far, nor notes that Sidney uses the name for a politically innocuous shepherd in the Old Arcadia. For the rest he argues that Alençon is the implied villain of the fable of the Fox and the Kid in 'May', (pp.89, 186), but chiefly that Spenser is more concerned with showing his sorrow for the Queen's desertion of her country than with attacking the person of her suitor.

McLane is almost certainly right to identify Elizabeth with Rosalind, - and so to elucidate some passages in the Spenser-Harvey Letters, (pp.41-3), - Dido and Elisa. But if it is accepted that Spenser is mourning the death of her marriage to the nation, then there is nothing to say he could not have done this in 1578 rather than 1579. McLane is better on the ecclesiastical eclogues and most of his identifications can be accepted. Although their

circumstances are particular their religious lessons are general. It is reasonable to argue that they were written while Spenser was in Young's service and hardly surprising to find that many of the attitudes and men Spenser liked were also approved of by Leicester.¹ However McLane painfully forces his argument to make the fables of the three ecclesiastical eclogues 'extremely late' work, written at the end of October or the beginning of November, (p.329).

His interpretation of the fable of the Fox and the Kid in 'May' as representing the hold the covert Roman Catholic d'Aubigny gained over the young James in Scotland, (Chapter VI), is very attractive. But it stumbles on the unlikely tightness of the time-scheme necessary for its composition. The events supposed to be described took place in Scotland in October. It is possible that Spenser heard about them almost at once, but he could hardly then have been able to revise the poem, which as the Letters show existed in a finished state by the middle of the month, in order to incorporate the new matter. E.K. would then have had to write a suitable gloss to it. Spenser was busy in October with his voyage abroad, his marriage and his other literary projects, leaving little time in November to write the fable and suitably alter the eclogue as well. If Alençon then became the real object of the satire, what was 'May's' form before the autumn? McLane's interpretation leaves too many questions unanswered.

In the 'July' eclogue he interprets the incident of the eagle dropping the scallop on Algrind, (ll.215-28), as representing the Queen suspending Grindal, (p.156). This is almost certainly what Spenser meant it to refer to, but McLane is too eager to make all the fables in the ecclesiastical eclogues late work and revisions, (p.329). He argues that because Algrind has been 'long ypent', (l.216), the fable is a late addition, (p. 330). On

1. Cf. A Hume, 'Spenser, Puritanism, and the 'Maye' Eclogue', RES, NS, vol. xx, 1969, p.158: 'Whether the bulk of the Calender was written during 1578 under Young or in 1579 under Leicester, it was written with a thorough awareness of the policies of the earl's faction'.

the other hand he admits elsewhere, (p.157), that the fable could have been written at any time from the date of the beginning of Grindal's troubles in June 1577. He correctly notes Grindal was much admired in Leicester's circle, (p. 154), but he does not appear to be aware of the deep suspicion which puritans attached to the Earl's dealings with the Archbishop and to his own 'ungodly' life. Leicester was unfairly thought to be opposed to the prophesyings and, less doubtfully, to have persecuted Grindal for opposing the marriage of his physician Dr. Julio.¹ If Spenser was in Leicester's service when the passage was written one would expect him to treat the matter more delicately.

The last fable which McLane glosses is the one of the wolf in sheep's clothing in 'September'. He suggests this refers to two incidents. Firstly and as the minor one, the fable relates to the depredation of Chatham Hospital, which was in Young's diocese, (pp. 162, 163). This took place late in 1579 and McLane quotes from Young's letter of protest to Burghley written on October 20. How Spenser, living in London, would have known of all this and had time in November to incorporate it, is not explained and the point not pursued. Instead McLane feels certain that the fable's origins lie in the publication of an anti-Familist work which contained notes by Young exposing Henry Niclaes as a Roman Catholic. McLane says, (p.164), that Young's excited revelation can 'in large part' be explained by the anti-Catholic feeling aroused by the proposed Alençon marriage, and this accounts for the 'September' fable.

This is all very well and fits neatly into the Calender's being a Leicester House work, but McLane has not given a fair summary of the book in which Young's notes appear. It was William Wilkinson's, (not 'Wilkerson's') A Confutation of Certain Articles Delivered unto the Familie of Love. It was

1. See P Collinson, 'The Downfall of Archbishop Grindal and its Place in Elizabethan Political and Ecclesiastical History' in ed. Clark, Smith and Tyacke, The English Commonwealth 1547-1640, pp.39-57, esp. pp.43-5.

dedicated to the aged Bishop Cox of Ely, admittedly an opponent of the marriage, from Cambridge on 30 September 1579. Since it was not entered in the Stationers' Register we have no further terminus ab quo for its publication, but even if it came out at the beginning of October we are faced with the problem of Spenser having to write and revise with great rapidity in the midst of other matters. McLane argues, (p.166), that there are similarities between Wilkinson's dedication and the 'September' eclogue; but these are too vague to show a debt, consisting of references in both to wolves, foxes, sheep and the need for vigilant shepherds. Furthermore, contrary to what McLane asserts, Young is not praised on the title-page of Wilkinson's book and nowhere in the dedication honoured as an unmasker of false prophets or hidden Catholics. The truth is that Young's notes were probably written several years before Wilkinson's book came out, perhaps in 1575 or 1576.¹ McLane half admits this when he says, (p.163), that they were written 'somewhat earlier' than the book. Spenser may have seen the notes while he was the Bishop's secretary, but there would be no reason to write a poem about them then, when there was no known prospect of their being published.

It seems more reasonable to accept that the ecclesiastical eclogues, fables and all, belong to the period of Spenser's employment with Young in 1578. I have argued that the poems about the Queen could equally belong to that year. Spenser did not have to work for Leicester to make him the 'greate shepheard', Lobbin of the 'November' poem. And if he is Lobbin, it is striking that there is no hint of disgrace attached to his mourning, when McLane stresses how much out of favour he was during the second part of 1579.² Nor does he explain why if Elizabeth-Dido is 'dead', she died from drowning, nor why, beyond saying it is 'pastoral convention', she comes to life again.

1. Judson, *John Young*, p.20.

2. McLane, *Spenser's Shepheardes Calender*, p.58, is worried by the 'bitter blast', (l.119), which refers simply to Dido's death, rather than to any anger with Leicester. For a further criticism of McLane's interpretation of this eclogue, see P Cullen, *Spenser, Marvell, and Renaissance Pastoral*, Cambridge, Mass. 1970, p.92 n.29.

The political sentiments which McLane sees as relevant to Leicester in his relationship with the Queen in 1579 do not fit in with what the lament actually contains.

In the 'February' eclogue the facts again do not fit McLane's interpretation, (Chapter V), which is that the oak and the briar represent Leicester and Oxford. He is on the whole reliable about the two men's circumstances in 1579, although he takes Leicester's disgrace too far and says he was not allowed to attend Council meetings in July and August when we know he did so. If the husbandman is the Queen then it is odd that she should be astonished by the briar's complaint, (l.157), since she was responsible for Leicester's decline. There are several other points which cast doubt on this interpretation. The fable is about age and youth. In 1579 Leicester was still under fifty, while Oxford was nearly thirty. The description of the oak, (ll.102-114), is too unflattering to refer to Leicester even if Spenser wanted to paint a grim picture of what he had become. The briar boasts his colours are 'meete to clothe a mayden Queene', (l. 132). Oxford may have been very ambitious but it has never been suggested, married as he was to Ann Cecil, that he sought to marry the Queen; the line would apply more aptly to Alençon. Spenser makes it quite clear, (ll. 207-12), that the oak is to be associated with Roman Catholicism which has brought it to ruin; this can hardly apply to Leicester, although it could be maintained that the Catholic Oxford did seek to overthrow him. McLane does not explain who or what the axe is and why it is made to recoil at its own work, (ll. 204-6), nor why after the oak has been felled it is 'pitied of none', (l. 221), which again could hardly apply to Leicester. In what way Oxford then stood 'like a lord alone', (l. 222), is unexplained for his disgrace happened shortly after the poem was registered. The argument that the husbandman in the woodcut portrays a woman, (McLane, pl. 3) can be dismissed.

Cuddie in 'February', according to McLane, is intended to represent Dyer,

whose lyrics although undated echo the tone of the 'unhappy Heardmans boye', (pp. 265-79). This is how E.K. describes him; but if he is a heardsman's boy he cannot also be the oak, Leicester's boy, especially when in 1579 Dyer was thirty-six and even nearer to Leicester in age than Oxford. Cuddie appears again in 'August' where he recites Colin's sestina which I shall discuss later. In 'October' Piers exhorts him not to despair that his poetry is neglected, but rather to attempt a great work, even to celebrate Leicester as the Queen's favourite, in lines which are always taken to be more relevant to Spenser:

Advaunce the worthy whome shee loveth best,
That first the white beare to the stake did bring. (ll. 47, 48)

McLane writes well, (pp. 184-7), on why Bishop Piers would like to see the Earl the subject of a great poem, but he is less convincing in arguing that Dyer was being encouraged, although neglected by patrons, to write such a work. Nor does he attempt to explain how while he believes the eclogue was written 'probably' between July and November 1579, (p. 330), it could refer to Leicester as 'the worthy whome shee loveth best', when his argument throughout is that he was in disgrace then. Rather the remark would suggest the eclogue was written before the Alençon courtship began and Leicester was married.

It would be nice to think that the Calender can be closely associated with Leicester House: that Perigot in 'August' is Sidney, however bad his poetry is there, that Willye is Camden, (pp. 342-6), and that E.K. is Fulke Greville. This last would be a particularly useful identification were it not for the differences in their style and thought which have been found and for the probability that Greville was not in England during most of 1579.¹ Helena Shire has suggested the 'Chevisaunce' matching with 'the fayre floure Delice' in the 'April' eclogue looks forward to the French marriage. Further

1. H McLean, 'Fulke Greville and "E.K."', ELN, vol.i, 1963-4, pp.90-100; Ringler, p.xxx n.1.

that there is a covert allusion to the same matter in Spenser's wish that the Queen may, 'flourish long/In princely plight'. Both of these seem to me over-ingenious readings uncalled-for within the song's context.¹ The evidence seems however to show that the Calender was written during 1578 while Spenser was employed by Young, or even in parts before.

Of course it is much easier to criticize other writers' theories than it is to erect one's own. I do not propose to offer new interpretations of the various eclogues which apparently have political overtones. On the whole they cannot be seen as the products of Spenser's direct links with Leicester and his circle. The overtones may only be hinted at and neither require nor deserve elaborate exposition. Although Spenserian allegory is not constant and fixed, McLane clothes the Calender in too ill-fitting a garment for his explanation to be convincing. His view is one that eventually disintegrates the work, for it runs contrary to the attempts of writers to show that the Calender is a unified, complete and coherent poem. By his theory of piecemeal, occasional composition McLane denies it artistic unity giving it a tenuous and local political meaning. Spenser, even the early Spenser, is a greater writer than that and is certainly in control of his material, if not of his style.²

The question of the style of the Shepheardes Calender is vital to its historical position. We have seen how allusions to Leicester are incidental to the work. This is what makes Helena Shire's idea unlikely that Spenser was removed to Ireland for his 'most appalling indiscretion' in using Lettice as a pastoral name in 'March' and referring to Leicester's first marriage by

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1. Helena Shire, A Preface to Spenser, 1978, pp.138, 139.
 2. There are three main articles which argue in different and partly contradictory ways for the unity of the Calender. They all more or less agree that its subject is the poet and poetry. They are: M Parmenter, 'Spenser's Twelve Aeglogues Proportionable to the Twelve Monethes', ELH, vol. iii, 1936, pp.190-217; A C Hamilton, 'The Argument of Spenser's Shepheardes Calender', ELH, vol.xxiii, 1956, pp.171-82 and R A Durr, 'Spenser's Calendar of Christian Time', ELH, vol.xxiv, 1957, pp.269-95.

writing about 'an old ewe with a bandaged leg who broke her neck by a fall'.¹ If the Calender had been written while Spenser was in his household one would expect it to show the influence of the other poets with whom the Letters tell us he associated. Yet it does not reveal Sidney's influence beyond occasional lines such as:

Thou weake, I wanne: thou leane, I quite forlorne:
With mourning pyne I, you with pyning mourne. ('January', ll. 47, 48)

Sidney's presence might be felt in 'October', but not with absolute certainty. It is there without a doubt in 'August's' sestina. Yet this poses its own problems. Its fifty-seven lines are entirely unglossed by E.K. - a number twice as great as the next longest unglossed group in 'January'. There is one possible explanation for this, which is strikingly simple: that the sestina was added after Spenser had come into contact with Sidney and that E.K., when he wrote the glosses could not have seen it.²

From the point of view of literary influence I believe that Sidney generally tended to follow or imitate Spenser rather than show him the way as he did in the 'January' sestina. In OA 9 and 10 Sidney tried his hand at the sort of pastoral writing about love and the Church which Spenser had mastered.³ In 'As I my little flock on Ister bank', OA 66, he wrote an animal fable as good as, if not better than, any in the Calender and imitated its rustic language. It is impossible to say which of the two 'earliest examples of the pastoral elegy in English', the lament in 'November' or OA 75, 'Since that to death is gone the shepherd hie', was written first. But the absence of a gloss makes Sidney's influence behind the 'August' sestina irresistible. Equally I feel sure that it was Sidney who suggested the final form the Calender should take, imitating the woodcuts, arguments and annotations

1. Shire, *op. cit.*, pp.45, 47.

2. J Stillinger, 'A Note on the Printing of E.K.'s Glosses', Studies in Bibliography, vol.xiv, 1961, p.204; Spenser, vol.vii, p.349.

3. Cf. M A Rose, A Study of Sir Philip Sidney's Old Arcadia, University of Oxford B. Litt. 1963, p.134, that OA 10 'seems to be almost certainly an allegory of the Puritan and Anglican parties of the Elizabethan Church'.

of Sansovino's edition of the Arcadia. Spenser does not seem to have known Sannazaro's work, but by 1579 Sidney would have been familiar with it as a model for his writing.

Not mentioning that Spenser might have known Sidney from Cambridge days or through Harvey, and may have helped to get him his job in Ireland, Ringler seeks to minimise their friendship and indebtedness.¹ If they did not actually see much of each other, the close relations between their poems, the dedication of the Shepheardes Calender and its form all point to their profound mutual influence. Perhaps due to Harvey's close watch Spenser was never drawn to writing English verse in classical metres in the way Sidney was. For his part although he 'dare not allow' Spenser's language, his Defence of Poetry is suffused with comparable theories of poetry and parallels to the Shepheardes Calender. The Calender and the Defence belong to the same world of Leicester House. Spenser's Astrophell, his dedication of the Complaints and his allusion to Sidney in his sonnet to the Countess of Pembroke as he:

Who first my Muse did lift out of the flore,
To sing his sweet delights in lowlie laies,

are a sufficient testimony of his debt to the younger man. While W.L. in his commendatory sonnet to the Faerie Queene provides further evidence of their mutual esteem.

Spenser must have revised the poem before publication - that was one of the reasons for putting it aside for a while. We should expect Sidney to play a part in this which cannot be recovered. Most of these revisions can only be detected by an examination of the glosses. This shows that the verses in 'April' were rearranged with some alterations. E.K. glosses 'soote' in

1. Ringler, pp.xxxi-iv; see also the summary of previous arguments in Spenser, vol.vii, pp.487-90. Spenser and Sidney had - even if only later - a mutual friend in Lodowick Bryskett, see Victor Skretkowicz, 'Greville and Sidney: Biographical Addenda', NQ, vol.ccix, 1974, pp. 408, 409.

'September' when the word is not used and so points to an authorial deletion.¹ This last change occurs in signature K of the text which is particularly poorly printed, with several typographical variations from the rest of the work and on K3v. the famous lacuna for the dates of King Edgar. It is hard to say why this is so. Equally an examination of the watermarks of the Bodleian and British Library copies reveals that five different types of paper were used to print the book - a bibliographical point which demands much careful work before its significance can be properly appreciated. By examining the page depths of E.K.'s contributions it can be seen that matter was added to his discussion on ¶2v. of his author's choice of old words and his opinion of rhyme, both at a late stage in the printing. Again on B3v. something has almost certainly been added to the 'February' gloss. These last two revisions would only have been made as the book was passing through the press.

Unfortunately this still does not help us to identify E.K.² In some ways it would be helpful to know who he was, but in the end it does not really matter. If he was as seems most likely Edward Kirke, then his glosses are all that we know of him and our curiosity is satisfied. If he is Gabriel Harvey alone or working with Spenser or Kirke or all together, well and good. We know Harvey was involved with the work, that he was Spenser's closest and most important friend and so all the more likely to help and advise him in his first independent undertaking. It is hardly surprising that there are similarities between Harvey and E.K. One of the most striking and unnoticed of these is that they both use the same false etymology of elf and goblin for Guelph and Ghibelline.³ Harvey did this over a decade later than E.K. and it is impossible to tell whether he was borrowing from himself or E.K. The

1. Stillinger, *art. cit.* pp.204, 205. The gloss to 'bett' in 'July' may be residual or may refer to 'better' in l.230.

2. The controversy is dismissed in the rather pedestrian P S Cornelius' *E.K.'s Commentary on The Shepheardes Calender*, Salzburg Studies in English Literature, Elizabethan and Renaissance Studies, vol. xxxi, 1974, ch.i.

3. E.K.'s gloss to 'June' l.25; Harvey, vol.i, p.244, Sonnet X and cf. Sonnet XXII; see also James F Royster, 'E.K.'s *Elf* < *Guelph*, Goblin < *Ghibelline*', *MLN*, vol.xliii, 1928, pp.249-52.

evidence for borrowings within a small circle is bound to be inconclusive. The essential point is that the Shepheardes Calender came to be published through just such a small circle. Its origins lie in Spenser's period of service under John Young and perhaps even earlier, but it owes its appearance to Leicester House. At first intended for the Earl himself, circumstances made Spenser reassign it to Sidney. In all ways from its pictures and glosses to its metrical and formal experiments and its very issuing in print, it was a revolutionary book. Without Sidney's active support and encouragement it would never have appeared.

iv The Lost Works.

In their original forms Spenser's 'lost' works are gone for ever. Although it can be deduced that some of them were completed and ready to be 'set forth', he decided to leave them in manuscript circulation for the time being and instead to publish the Calender. There is no need to look for mysterious factors behind this decision. On the whole critics have argued that these works were reused by Spenser in his later poems.¹ Tracing these reworkings is a fine speculative matter but not immediately to the point. It is more relevant to this investigation to see whether any of the works can be associated with Leicester House, and if so whether they reveal anything about the Earl's patronage.

The Spenser-Harvey Letters, E.K.'s contributions to the Calender and the Preface to the 1591 Complaints are the main sources of information about the lost works, but reveal little more about them than their names. In the case of the Letters this is reassuring: the references have not been tampered with but are there to entice the reader to want more of Spenser's works. From them we learn most about the Epithalamion Thamesis. It is written in

1. H E Sandison, 'Spenser's "Lost" Works and their probable Relation to his Faerie Queene', PMLA, vol.xxv, 1910, pp.136, 137; Spenser, vol.viii, pp. 510-20.

English quantitative verse and indebted for its topography to 'Master Holinshed', (p.612a, b), that is to Harvey's friend Harrison's three chapters in the 1577 edition of the Chronicles. The phrase 'shortely... to sette forth' is sufficiently ambiguous at first for it to be by no means certain as to whether the poem has yet been written or not. The magnitude of the undertaking, 'I shewe... all the Countrey... all the Rivers', is made clear, it is a work 'beleeve me, of much labour', (p. 612a), and later Harvey uses it to convey an impression of great size, (p. 627b).¹

There are good reasons for not identifying it with the marriage of Thames and Medway in Book IV of the Faerie Queene.² On the other hand the title of Spenser's choreographical poem points generally to the joining of the Thames with many other rivers and not specifically with the Medway, although the two combine at Rochester. Spenser may have wanted to celebrate this union at the site of Bishop Young's Cathedral. However, when Morrel referred to the joining of the rivers in 'July', (ll. 79-84) Spenser made the tributary masculine and younger brother to the Thames and gave no hint of marriage. Not surprisingly Spenser looked into the topography of the county in which he lived while working for Young and made use of Lambarde's Perambulation of Kent, 1576, in writing the Shepheardes Calender.³ The Epithalamion seems to belong to Leicester House days and its form undeniably points to that period. Spenser announces it to Harvey as a 'token' of his 'speciall liking of Englishe Versifying', (p. 612a). Since in the earlier letter of 15 October 1579 Spenser had said how 'of late' he was 'more in love wyth my Englishe Versifying, than with Ryming', (p. 635b), his being about to

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1. OED s.v. 'set' 144e, f; see also A M Buchan, 'The Political Allegory of Book IV of The Faerie Queene', ELH, vol.xi, 1944, pp.239, 240.
 2. Spenser, vol. iv, pp.241, 242; see also J B Oruch, 'Spenser, Camden, and the Poetic Marriages of Rivers', SP, vol.lxiv, 1967, pp.606-24.
 3. See J W Bennett, 'St.Bridget, Queen Elizabeth, and Amadis de Gaul', ELH, vol. x, 1943, pp.26-34, esp. p.28, and also Spenser, vol.vii, pp.322, 328, 336.

'sette forth' an example of his skill at the beginning of April 1580 means that a lot of the work on the poem would have had to be done between those two dates if it was to be published. This suggests that on the contrary the project never got very far and was soon abandoned. The poem seems to have been planned under Sidney's influence while Spenser worked for Leicester and he may well have tried to bring the Earl into it.

It was to be a learned genealogical account. His Stemmata Dudleiana, which would honour Leicester would be the same, and as Sidney's Defence of Leicester would later do, seek to prove the nobility and worth of the Earl's ancestry. Spenser was cautious about the Stemmata, deliberately making it sound mysterious: there are 'sundry Apostrophes therein, addressed you knowe to whome' and he does not like 'so lightly to sende them abroade', (p.612b). This, like Harvey's later mention of the work, (p.620b) suggests it was finished but still in need of a week's labour for revision and polishing. Since by April 1580 Harvey had seen it, Spenser's caution about sending it abroad at that time must refer to its publication in print rather than in manuscript.¹

Spenser says that he will follow Harvey, but never outstrip him, (p.612b). The exact nature of the Latin work and to whom the apostrophes were directed can only be conjectured: certainly Sidney may well have been addressed in it, as Harvey had done so in the Gratulationes.² Harvey had advised a week's pollishing and trimming', saying that parts would have to be removed to make it fit for publication, (p.620b). They might have been the apostrophes. It has been suggested that material from the Stemmata was used in both the Faerie Queene and the Ruins of Time.³ The difficulty with this is that the

1. OED s.v. 'send', 19a; the earliest date given for this usage is 1681, but it seems to be quite a common one.

2. Wallace, p.228.

3. Spenser, Prose Works, p.268.

Stemmata was written in Latin and that for the English works Spenser is far more likely to have drawn on his general knowledge than the earlier Latin work. Even so, it would seem probable that the Stemmata would have been written in verse rather than prose.

W R Orwen has put forward the theory that Spenser was following Harvey by praising Leicester and urging him to marry the Queen as Harvey had done in the second book of the Gratulationes. Since the Earl's marriage was revealed in 1579 it follows that this passage (p.612b) must be an interpolation from an earlier letter. The poem was never published either because of his difficulties with Leicester, or the Earl's difficulties with the Queen, or because the researches into the Dudleys by the heralds Cooke and Glover in 1580 and 1581 contradicted each other.¹ This is a very plausible and attractive theory, but there are some problems attached to it. If the passage does come from an earlier letter then it would presumably come from one written before the news of Leicester's marriage came out in mid-1579, a period before any known correspondence between Spenser and Harvey. One would expect to find a mention of the revelation in the 1579 letters, but there is none. Instead the Latin quotation Spenser had used in 1579 about his following Harvey, (p.636b), is repeated in a shorter and altered form. Its repetition seems original and unrevised. On the other hand Spenser may have been following Harveyⁱⁿ advocating a royal marriage, but even if he had done so he would almost certainly have written the poem before he joined the Earl's household and before the knowledge of the secret marriage came out. In other words if he is doing what Orwen suggests, he wrote the Stemmata in 1578 and the beginning of 1579. Somehow this is unconvincing; a genealogical work would require a first-hand knowledge of the family and would no doubt be connected, as Cooke and Glover's researches were, with Leicester's marriage and the hoped-for birth of an heir.

1. W R Orwen, 'Spenser's "Stemmata Dudleiana"', NQ, vol. cxc, 1946, pp.9-11.

Orwen is certainly right to see a debt to Harvey's Latin poem, but the Stemmata, if written while in Leicester's circle, may possibly allude to the unpublished treatise in favour of absolutist monarchy written by Edmund Dudley, the Earl's grandfather called The Tree of Commonwealth. If Spenser had seen a manuscript copy it would suggest that the Stemmata was a political as well as a genealogical work. In Leicester's case the two forms were bound to be mixed. Again in this way he would be following Harvey and would still be doing so if he addressed the 'sundry Apostrophes' to courtiers of the Leicester or anti-Leicester factions, in general terms or about the Alençon marriage in particular. As we have seen, Harvey thought that it contained matter which needed to be taken out, ('trimming') as well as polishing, but he found Spenser's unwillingness to publish strange. Orwen's reasons for this reluctance are quite acceptable, especially when we remember Spenser's concern with other matters. I suspect that the Stemmata Dudleiana was the controversial work which McLane would like the Shepherdess Calender to be.

The lost 'Pageaunts' mentioned by E.K. in his gloss to 'June' have never been identified, but their possible connexion with some of Sir Thomas More's early poems has been noted.¹ In his 'Nine Pageants' More wrote a series of short verses related to Petrarch's Triumphs on the successive overthrow of Childhood, Manhood, Venus and Cupid and so on, ending with the Poet vanquishing Eternity. In the folio edition of 1557, where they were printed, Rastell says they were devised to go on 'a goodly hangyng of fyne paynted clothe'.² It is worth remembering that Spenser refers to Jove's 'pageaunts' in relation to the tapestries in the House of Busyrane, (III.xi.35), and that there are also hangings in the complementary Castle Joyeous, (III.i.34-8). Harvey's

1. Spenser, vol.ii, p.216.

2. Workes, 1557, sig. d2v; see Robert A Duffy, 'Thomas More's 'Nine Pageants'', Moreana, vol.xiii, no.50, 1976, pp.15-32.

'Schollars Looove', 'ffatherid uppon Sir Thomas More, and supposid to be on of his first youthfull exercises', shows that More's poetry was still held in esteem as a model in the 1570's.¹ Since Leicester owned a considerable number of tapestries and pictures it seems quite likely he commissioned Spenser to write a set of verses for them.

None of the other lost works can be satisfactorily connected with Leicester, apart from the nine English comedies, (pp. 620b, 628b), which if they were plays rather than poems might have been performed by the Earl's men. Yet when would Spenser have had time to write them, when we have already seen him busy with so many other affairs? Perhaps they date from the 'lost' years: they are tantalizing but utterly unknowable.² Similarly it is tempting to connect the 'English Poet' referred to in the 'October' Argument with the Defence of Poetry. No doubt it would have been a similar sort of theoretical work influenced by Spenser's contact with Sidney and Dyer, but we cannot be certain of anything about it apart from its title.³ There is one other work relevant to this period, consisting of "My Slomber, and the other Pamphlets', which are not to be dedicated to Leicester, because it is foolish to dedicate inappropriate works to patrons; rather, they are meant for Dyer, (Letters, p.635b). Most critics would identify the former work with the 'Sennight's Slumber' of the Complaints Preface if not also with 'my Dreames'.⁴

If the lost works were ever to reappear they would provide a wealth of new information and insight into Spenser's life and works. They would show how closely bound up he was for a short but vitally important time with

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1. Letter Book, f.58, see also his comments on More's poems, including the 'Pageants' in Marginalia, p.233.
 2. Despite this I cannot accept the argument based on a misunderstanding of the Letters that they were yet to be written, see A Gilbert, 'Were Spenser's Nine Comedies Lost?', MLN, vol.lxxiii, 1958, pp.241-3.
 3. Spenser, vol. vii, pp.377, 378.
 4. Spenser, Prose Works, pp.251, 252; Spenser, vol. viii, p.514, where the rejected dedication is wrongly assumed to be to Sidney.

Leicester and his faction. As it is, since we are unlikely ever to recover them we can only divine their nature and contents from their titles and the few comments we have on them. Like his former tutor Harvey, Spenser was a discreet and economical writer. He did not like to show the stages involved in a work's composition and he could cover his tracks brilliantly. It is only by careful analysis that we can discover what Spenser's literary projects were like and how they evolved. This is an essential task in trying to understand what his works are about and nowhere is it more necessary than with his Faerie Queene.

v The Faerie Queene

Few writers have considered the implications of the fact that Spenser did not begin the poem with its first line and carry on from there to its last. They seek to prove its unity by showing the inter-relation of the parts to the whole, by drawing parallels and anti-types and by charting narrative progressions between books. The most sophisticated proof is the numerological one, which argues for close and careful planning on a massive scale.¹ Some of this is convincing but a certain amount of the work's unity can be put down to its being the product of a single mind one of whose intentions was to write an encyclopaedic poem. Spenser undoubtedly wanted to unify the poem and was successful to a great extent in doing this. He was able to impose an astonishing degree of conformity and unity on his material. But if we want to get closer to the poem, we must be prepared to think about its origins and the different stages in its composition. Its distinct levels of writing need investigation as much as the 'Patches, and fragments' of the Letters.

Anyone who has begun to work on the composition of the Faerie Queene

1. See for example, R A Horton, The Unity of The Faerie Queene, Athens, Georgia 1978, James Nohrnberg, The Analogy of The Faerie Queene, Princeton 1976, and A D S Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, 1964.

soon realises why so few ever finish. Bearing this in mind I shall try to confine myself to what can be discovered about its early stages and what can be taken as reflecting Leicester and his patronage. Any account of the subject must begin with J W Bennett's The Evolution of the Faerie Queene.¹ Like much of her work this is a very dense and intricate book and it is unfortunate that the best and most substantial criticism of it should largely seek to undermine it. This is an article by W J B Owen at the end of which we can be certain of very few suppositions about the poem.² For immediate purposes the most important of Owen's findings is that there is no evidence that the part which Harvey saw in 1580 and refers to in the Letters was ever printed. Further, it is unlikely because it was not Ariostan that Harvey saw the Thopas continuation, which Owen agrees with Bennett must have been Spenser's beginning.³ Quite rightly he rejects the refusal to deal with the possibility that the first version of the poem has disappeared and argues that the well-rehearsed narrative discrepancy and revision arguments are circular. His conclusion that, 'the present version is, approximately, a primitive version itself', is pessimistic, but suggests an interesting approach by which we should see all of III and IV and parts of II and V as of a piece, being imitations of Ariosto.⁴

This view goes against the main trend of modern criticism, which has ignored it, believing instead that the poem is a perfectly integrated and completed whole - a seamless garment. I am aware that this disintegrating approach contradicts my argument about the unity of the Shepheardes Calender,

1. Chicago 1942.

2. W J B Owen, 'The Structure of The Faerie Queene', PMLA vol.lxxviii, 1953, pp.1079-1100.

3. Ibid., p.1082.

4. Ibid., pp.1086, 1091. The parts he suggests are II.iii and V.iii; to these I would certainly add the account of Satyrane in I.vi.20-9, which seems extraneous when the reader comes to III.vii. I am less confident about adding Britomart's adventures in V.iv-vii.

but the two poems are too different in form and background for their composition to be compared. Spenser originally began with the plan of writing a great deal of verse in the style of Ariosto; he eventually abandoned it, but reused the material when he decided to follow Virgil. This has the effect of making III and IV artificial books, which anyone who examines the stories contained in them must notice.

Owen would then simplify all theories about the poem's evolution by describing two or three phases; bouts of Ariostan followed by Virgilian writing and then an attempt to make the earlier work harmonize with the later. An immediate application of Owen's interpretation shows some of its implications. Since the Queen was addressed as 'una' at Audley End in 1578 it has been assumed that this prompted Spenser to create the allegory of Book I. That this cause and effect theory is too simple an explanation is confirmed when it is realised that the book was written after much had already been completed.¹ Owen is healthily sceptical about the use of internal dating being applied to whole episodes when it is only relevant to individual passages.² His account supplements two earlier articles which resolve difficulties over the Letter to Raleigh by convincingly demonstrating its relevance to be purely local and conjectural.³ Like the reviewers of J W Bennett's book he finds much with which to agree and to disagree in her work. To do it full justice would require another and very long thesis, so that in my discussion of the poem I shall not attempt to show how or why I differ from her, but shall use her ideas and theories only where they are immediately relevant to mine.

1. For Queen Elizabeth as Una at Audley End see D Norbrook, Panegyric of the Monarch and its Social Context under Elizabeth I and James I, University of Oxford D.Phil. 1978, p.67 n.2; M O'Connell, Mirror and Veil, The Historical Dimension of Spenser's Faerie Queene, Chapel Hill 1977, p.45 and L Rosinger, 'Spenser's Una and Queen Elizabeth', ELN, vol.vi, 1968-9, pp.12-17. Drant had used the name in 1576 in his Praesul.

2. Owen, art. cit., p.1094.

3. 'A Spenser Note', MLR vol.xliii, 1948, pp.239-41, and '"In these XII Books Severally Handled and Discoursed"', ELH, vol. xix, 1952, pp.165-72.

The Shepheardes Calender as a whole shows that by 1578 Spenser had decided in a quite self-conscious way to devote his life to poetry. The 'October' eclogue reveals that he was already thinking in terms of an heroic poem, even of a national epic celebrating Elizabeth or Leicester. No doubt the experiments in versification of the Earl's circle were related to this scheme. Sidney's Arcadia owes its inception to this period, as does Harvey's Latin Anticosmopolita and his poem

in sundry royal cantos (nigh as much in quantity as Ariosto) in celebration of her Majesty's most glorious government, some of them devised many years past at the instance of ... Sir Philip Sidney, some since the renowned victory in '88.¹

This was written in 1598, shortly after the publication of the whole of the Faerie Queene and the feeling that they were both begun at the same time is irresistible. The subject-matter, the verse-form and the bulk suggest this, but above all the association of the size with Ariosto does. For this must immediately remind us of Harvey's comments about Spenser's poem, as he saw it in 1580, in which he compares it to Italian comedies and Orlando Furioso.²

Whatever Harvey's criticisms actually mean, all we can be sure of is that by 1580 Spenser had written a poem, or part of it, called the Faerie Queene imitating Ariosto which he was prepared to show to a close friend. From this point onwards, with one possible exception which I shall discuss shortly, we are on our own and have only the poem as it was published from which to extract evidence about its early history.³

The best way to think about what sort of a poem Spenser had been and

1. Marginalia, p.73.

2. Letters, p.628b, on this passage see Bennett, Evolution, pp.15-18 and S.Thomas, '"Hobgoblin Runne Away with the Garland from Apollo"', MLN vol.lv, 1940, pp.418-22.

3. Owen, art. cit., p.1081 effectively dismisses any need for a discussion of Bryskett's reference in A Discourse of Civill Life, 1606.

was still writing in 1580 about the queen of the fairies is to look at a very important passage in what is now the first book. Despite his many differences elsewhere with J W Bennett Owen still finds it 'inevitable' that Spenser began at one stage with the imitation of Sir Thopas in I.ix.12-15.¹ The argument of her first chapter is that Spenser began with 'an attempt to continue Sir Thopas in such a way as to celebrate the chastity of the Faery Queen'. Unfortunately it cannot be accepted at face value. Despite Una's cheerful exclamation about the fairy queen being lucky to have found such a champion as Arthur, (I.ix.16), his own description of his dream, which may 'delude' or be 'true', (I.ix.14.5), is intended to make us feel uneasy about the queen's nature. Arthur feels certain that 'her love was to me bent', (ibid., l.3), and that time will make this apparent. Yet the misery she has caused him during the nine months of his search suggests that he will never find her and that she is not the beneficent queen of the rest of the poem, but like Keats' Lady 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci'. After all this was the nature usually assigned to the queen of the elves: Thomas of Erceldoune's early ballad about her is one of damnation.² Nor did she altogether lose her unpleasant connotations when used to compliment Elizabeth. At Woodstock in 1575 the fairy queen says she heard of Elizabeth's being there from 'a sorrowing knight in passion strange', which would apply perfectly to her lover.³ He actually appears as the 'owld' and 'Inchanted Knight' with 'the Damsell of the Queene of the Fayries' in a pair of speeches preserved by the Ferrers MS, which have been dated to the 1580's. Puttenham suggests her untouchable and hard heart in his poem forming the seventh section in the Parthenaides of 1578: in 'A ryddle of the Princesse Paragon' he describes Elizabeth as 'A fayrer wight than feirye Queene'.⁴ Spenser's innovation is to make Arthur

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1. Ibid., p.1082 n.13; for his other points of agreement and disagreement see p.1098 n.47.
 2. Ed. F J Child, Popular Ballads, New York 1956, vol. ii, pp.317-29.
 3. J W Cunliffe, 'The Queenes Majesties Entertainment at Woodstocke', PMLA, vol. xxvi, 1911, p.98.
 4. Nichols, vol.iii, pp.197-9; on the dating of these speeches, see R C Strong, Elizabethan Pageantry as Propaganda, University of London Ph.D. 1962, p.305; ed. F J Furnivall, Ballads from Manuscripts, pp.77-9.

the lover, although it is impossible to say whether the continuation of Sir Thopas was begun with him or Chaucer's knight in mind.

Arthur falls asleep again while he is pursuing the fleeing Florimell, (III.iv.54-61). The gloomy and mysterious background to this slumber is different from the gay and cheerful earlier one, but some of the circumstances are similar if only in conventional ways. We are told in both that he is weary, (I.ix.13.1; III.iv.53.5), the grassy ground in both is his 'couch' and helmet his pillow, (*ibid.*, 11.3, 4; 11.8, 9). The main difference between the two passages is that in the one he sleeps and dreams of the queen, while in the other he cannot sleep and compares her to Florimell:

Oft did he wish, that Lady faire mote bee
His Faery Queene, for whom he did complaine:
Or that his Faery Queene were such, as shee: (III.iv.54)

His six stanza complaint against Night seems eminently detachable as a formal poem. On the next day Arthur rides off in a filthy mood, (III. iv.61). Again there is nothing here which suggests that the incident has to relate to Arthur or that Spenser had always intended it to. This should be stressed because having thought of the fairy queen as a subject for his poem, Spenser would not then necessarily have felt that he had to include Arthur. For although he dreams prophetically several times in Malory, the fairy queen is not in the romance.

It is reasonable to assume that the Faerie Queene of 1580 would compliment Elizabeth, but equally reasonable, if we accept that these two dreams relate to an early idea of her, to assume that the references would not be entirely flattering. A monarch who is 'impossibly' perhaps even 'cruelly' loved would be an attractive symbol for Leicester and his circle at that time. The temptation to identify Arthur as a symbol for Leicester and his world is strong. It is hard to see how this early image of the Queen can relate to J W Bennett's argument concerning the continuation of the Arthur-Thopas story in III.vii., although it clearly revolves around lust and chastity. Unfortunately this hardly tells us anything that we did not already know and

provides little evidence for the development of Spenser's allegorical method and less about his relations with Leicester.

Another way into the poem's early history is through an unpublished note of Gabriel's Harvey's. This occurs in his copy of Eulenspiegel's A Merye Jeste of c. 1528, now in the Bodleian. Spenser gave him this on 20 November 1578 to read before the New Year. Harvey thought very little of the book preferring Skelton; but above a passage parts of which he also underlined thus, called 'how howleglas feared his host wt a dead woulfe' Harvey has written 'A great braggadocia'.¹ On account of the date of the exchange and his low opinion of the book, which would not encourage him to reread it, it is tempting to see this comment as being made at the end of 1578, a possibility which has some interesting implications. Spenser of course invented the name himself by giving an Italianate ending to the English word 'brag'. It should be noted that he is remarkably consistent in his spelling of it in the printed poem. Harvey's form of it is unique and probably early since by 1593 in Pierces Supererogation he twice spells the name in its conventional form.²

The identification of Braggadochio and Trompart with Alençon and Simier is long established and widely accepted.³ The possibility that Spenser had already developed a form of the word, used by his friend, at exactly the same time as the courtship must strengthen the link. The internal evidence put forward to support it is ambiguous, ^lhinging on the heraldic solecism of Braggadochio's shield described at V.iii.14. Upton saw it was wrong to have the sun on a gold background and it has recently been pointed out that the sun was one of Alençon's devices.⁴ Unfortunately it is far too common an

1. Bodleian 4^o Z 3 Art. Seld., sig.M3v.

2. Harvey, vol.ii, pp.216, 222.

3. Spenser, vol.ii, pp.206-8; Bennett, Evolution, p.51 does not dissent.

4. Spenser, vol.v, p.187; the extensive sun imagery used in the reception of Alençon in the Netherlands is noted and listed by Raymond B Waddington, The Mind's Empire, Myth and Form in George Chapman's Narrative Poems, Baltimore and London 1974, p.75 n.82.

emblem to be associated exclusively with him; the Queen herself made use of it.

We first meet the pair of mock villagers in a passage which is transparently an interpolation in the second book, drawn off from Spenser's store of Ariostan material. The third canto at once introduces and despatches the two, who come across an unidentified woman named only in the canto's Argument, but who resembles Diana. (The Arguments were added to the Ariostan material after it had been written to make it conform to the Virgilian plan). A reasonable suspicion that this episode is early work, or at least related to it, can be confirmed because of the similarity which exists between the first line of II.iii.25 and E.K.'s gloss to 'Many Graces' in the 'June' eclogue of the Calender which quotes from the lost Pageaunts. It by no means follows that Belphebe had been thought of before the Calender or that what is now II.iii. had been composed before then. But it is possible to argue tentatively that the episode dates from the period of the Alençon courtship and equally that no conclusions can safely be drawn from it.

As the story develops there is no need to relate it to the courtship, for although we are reminded of the earlier episode when Belphebe next appears, (III.v.27), she is firmly separated from Braggadochio, and we are introduced to her love for Timias. There is some continuity between the Belphebe of III and that of II, for she has the same resemblance to Diana in the later part, with her bow and quiver, (III.v.34), and her nymphs, (*ibid.*, 37), while in the next canto she is associated with the goddess herself, and Amoret is similarly linked with Venus. A continuity which is not observed is for Timias to talk of Belphebe being an angel sent 'from her bowre of blis', (III.v.35) after the events of the second book. It is still tempting to see this as being related to early work and the inclusion of Timias' highly wrought Sidneian lament, (III.v. 45-7), which comprises

a poem complete in itself, contributes to this. Scudamore has a comparable lament later in the same book, (xi.9-11).

It has recently been suggested that as sisters Amoret and Belphoebe are reflections of the Queen's dual rôle and divided love during the Alençon courtship. Ingeniously Busirane is connected etymologically with her suitor, (from the Latin 'rana' for a frog), who is trying to sacrifice Amoret to Cupid and so make her betray her being half-married to Scudamore who represents England and perhaps Leicester. With the changed world of the 1590's Amoret begins to be made to resemble Elizabeth Throckmorton more than the Queen.¹ This is an original idea, but hardly a convincing one, although the ambiguity of the Queen's person will be found again in the Four Foster Children of Desire tilt. The poem is sufficiently comprehensive for theories like this to be grafted on it, but there is nothing beyond the theory to support it.

Braggadochio makes a very brief appearance in III.viii where he is almost presented as if appearing for the first time, although he has Trompart with him, (11, 15). He at once loses the false Florimell to Sir Ferragut and flees, (18). His next role as Malbecco's helper, (x.23-43), brings him no nearer to Belphoebe. Instead he joins the argumentative group which is going to Satyrane's tournament for Florimell's girdle, (IV.iv.6). His part there is minor, although at the end he regains the false Florimell and disappears again, (v.26,27). We learn later that he has abandoned her, (IV.ix.20), but arrives at Florimell's second tournament with her and Artegal, (V.iii.10). The narrative continuity is similarly weak for Trompart who is mentioned here having last been heard of with Malbecco in III.x. Braggadochio's story ends with his punishment at Talus' hands, (V.iii.37). Although one of the most memorable characters in the

1. T H Cain, Praise in The Faerie Queene, Lincoln and London 1976, pp.102-6.

poem his rôle is both minor and unsatisfactory.¹ Spenser may have used him as one of his beginnings, but he lost interest in him and he becomes a character subservient to narrative convenience. He may or may not have been intended to allegorize Alençon but the evidence is not sufficiently conclusive for anything more than speculation. Spenser's decision to relate the Timias-Belpheobe story to Raleigh and Elizabeth at a later period shows that the historical allegory of the poem changed as time went on.²

Upton thought that the tournament of V.iii might have been derived from the 1581 entertainment the Four Foster Children. Although Ivan L Schulze has shown that both tilts in the poem employ the same conventions as actual court ones,³ the setting and action of both bear no relation to the historical one. Spenser uses his knowledge of the English court in a way totally different from Sidney. The nearest he comes to the jousts of the New Arcadia is in giving the pseudonyms to Britomart and Artegall of the 'Knight of the Hebene speare' and the Salvage knight', (IV.v.8).

My analysis of the Belpheobe-Braggadocchio episode in the light of Harvey's note suggests the sort of approach which I think might prove profitable. A careful study of the poem's narrative is a vital aspect of any consideration of what the experience of reading it is like. It would show, in relation to the Ariostan parts, that the poem is far closer in form to the Spenser Harvey Letters than has ever been thought: that the earlier sections are exactly as Harvey describes his letter, 'Patcheries, and fragments', (Letters, p.632b). The approach is at variance with much modern

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1. J L Liévsay, 'Braggadocchio: Spenser's legacy to the Character-Writers', MLQ, vol. ii, 1941, pp.475-85.
 2. H M English, 'Spenser's Accommodation of Allegory to History in the Story of Timias and Belpheobe', JEGP, vol.lix, 1960, pp.417-29; J R Brink, 'The Masque of the Nine Muses: Sir John Davies's Unpublished 'Epithalamion' and the 'Belpheobe-Ruby' Episode in The Faerie Queene', RES, NS, vol.xxiii, 1972, pp.445-7.
 3. Spenser, vol.v, p.302; I L Schulze, 'Reflections of Elizabethan Tournaments in The Faerie Queene 4.4 and 5.3', ELH, vol.v, 1938, pp.278-84.

criticism in denying both the Ariostan and formal allegorical explications.¹ While it may be impossible and ultimately fruitless to try to find the origins of the different narrative levels, at least they ought to be distinguished. This is essential if we are to understand the historical background to some of the narratives. J W Bennett's failure to do this with Britomart and Artegall has important implications for her Chapter VIII, 'Leicester's Place in Spenser's Plans'.

Throughout her book she rejects the traditional identification of Leicester with Arthur - however they may have been linked in the poem's earliest version - and even dissociates him from the events of Book V.² Instead she finds in the names of Artegall and Guyon compliments to the house of Dudley, both being the names of famous and legendary Earls of Warwick. Following Ariosto's honouring of the Estes the romance of Britomart and Artegall honours the Dudleys heraldically, but must be dated from individual borrowings to after 1585, when Leicester's fortunes were rising and it was tactful to celebrate his ancestry. However, the chronicles of II.x and III.iii come from an earlier period, associated with the lost Stemmata Dudleiana of about 1580 and had to be adapted after Leicester's death. Parts of these chronicles must be dated to after 1584. Although at times Guyon seems close to the Earl, J W Bennett denies that either he or Artegall 'represents' him or his brother Warwick. She then goes on to argue that Guyon may have replaced Sir Thopas in his devotion to the fairy queen and membership of the Order of Maidenhood.³

Most of this apart from the attempt to date the story to after 1585

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1. The Ariostan explanation for lack of narrative continuity is proposed by W J B Owen, 'Narrative Logic and Imitation in The Faerie Queene', Comparative Literature, vol.vii, 1955, pp.324-37.
 2. Bennett, Evolution, pp.84-6, 95-100.
 3. Ibid., pp.81, 85-93; for the parts which must be dated after 1584, see R.Gottfried, 'Spenser and The Historie of Cambria', MLN, vol.lxxii, 1957, pp.9-13.

is undeniably accurate. The two knights compliment the Dudleys in general, but by arguing for an overall late date of writing, J W Bennett is elsewhere forced to say that Britomart belongs to a second period of Ariostan imitation. On the contrary W J B Owen's view that she was one of Spenser's beginnings seems worth exploring.¹

Britomart first appears in III.i.4 to Arthur and an unregenerate and proudly angry Guyon, for whom the last book might never have existed. Neither of them knows who she is but an interesting authorial exclamation reveals both her name and that she seeks her lover whom she 'had seene in Venus looking glas', (*ibid.*, 8). She then loses Guyon and Arthur to gain Red Cross instead. The object of his quest is his love 'th'Errant Damzell' (24), and although we do not learn his name until a little later, (42), we can be sure that Spenser intended it to be him because Guyon had referred to his being involved in 'Th'adventure of the Errant damozell' (II.i.19). Clearly this is Red Cross before Book I. Britomart does not altogether lose Guyon for he is mistakenly named as her partner at III.ii.4 as if her lament were addressed to him. Indeed it is logical that it should be Guyon because the only previous mention made of Artegall is by Guyon, who names him and Sophy as members of the order of Maidenhood, (II.ix.6). The fact that, apart for one very late mention, (V.xi.53), Red Cross disappears as soon as Britomart's tale is told must also contribute to the strong feeling that at some point she accompanied Guyon and possibly then revealed her love for Artegall. This scheme had to be abandoned when Spenser wanted to have Guyon pursue Florimell. The uneven join between cantos iii and iv, which has Britomart and the knight part twice within five verses can also be taken as evidence of this.

The last verse of iii adds to the feeling that several levels of narrative are being welded together here. For it repeats that Britomart and

1. Owen, 'Structure of The Faerie Queene', p.1098 n.47; see also Joseph Candido, 'The Compositional History of Cantos ii and iii in Book III of The Faerie Queene', American Notes and Queries, vol. xvi, 1977, pp.50-2.

her nurse meet Red Cross and she tells of her love for Artegall, but does not mention that she has already met Arthur and Guyon. At the same time the narrative itself is unsatisfactory for it changes between verses, (III. ii.16,17) from being direct to indirect and maintains that style until the very end of the story, (iii.61). This suggests that Spenser began by meaning to tell the Britomart-Artegal story in its correct order and later decided to incorporate it as a piece of retrospective narrative. This account is interesting as an independent passage for a variety of reasons, for it shows a very different poem and world from those which we have seen. The most immediately striking fact about it is that it concerns Merlin, who is mentioned earlier in the poem on three occasions but always, as one would expect, in connexion with Arthur, (I.vii.36; ix.5; II.viii.20). It is not surprising that other passages in Britomart's two cantos point to an interest in the matter of Britain.

Merlin had shown the aptly named heroine her love there, (III.ii.17), so that she and her nurse have to travel out of Britain to find him in Fairy Land, (iii.26, 62). On the other hand although the action has to move away from Britain Merlin gives two examples of contemporary events there. Uther 'now' is fighting pagans, whom he had victoriously encountered at 'Cayr Verolame', (iii.52) and there is the 'Late dayes ensample' of Angela fighting with Uther 'before Menevia', (55, 56). Yet in the poem these connexions are never pursued even though a clear distinction is made between England or Britain and Fairy Land. Contemplation in the House of Holiness carefully tells Red Cross that he is not a fairy but English and stolen by the fairies, (I.x.60-6). This allows Spenser to transpose the St. George story. He avoids the problem of Arthur['] being British, which he is correctly said to be, (II.xi.30) and yet being involved with the fairy queen; no striking links are made between these three expatriates. To make things difficult at the very end of the poem Spenser mentions Sir Lamorack

'And all his brethren borne in Britaine land', (VI.xii.39), who unsuccessfully take on the Blattant Beast after Calidore and Sir Pelleas, but his intentions and sources are unclear. A final problem posed by Britomart's narrative is her report of Merlin's prophecy about a virgin queen destroying a castle in Belgium with her white rod. This anticipates the action of Book V, but as if to prevent our drawing any conclusions from the reference, Spenser has Merlin's prophetic fit come conveniently to an end immediately after it, (iii.49, 50).

From the first it would seem Spenser intended to write about Britomart and Artegall as lovers. He knew of the tradition of her being 'President of Britaine' and so inevitably associated with Queen Elizabeth.¹ Whether or not this is an early idea for the poem, its nationalistic bent is obvious and made more so by the chronicle histories of II.x and III.iii which are clearly of a piece. The passage in which Britomart in her next appearance after her fight with Marinell, finds that she is related to Paridell, (III.ix.33-51), must be associated with the histories. The founding of Britain is traced back to the fall of Troy and there is little in the episode which demands its being directly relevant to Britomart, beyond its link with the two earlier genealogical passages and being about Britain. The knights in the canto neither know her name nor who she is, and she disappears very easily with as it turns out, Satyrane, (x.1; xi.3). They are immediately separated, she following Ollyphant, (xi.4), who is derived from the Olifaunt of the original of the Sir Thopas story.²

This is as far as the early Britomart poem can be traced: when she meets Scudamore and rescues Amoret she is subsumed into Spenser's later development of the Ariostan poem. On the other hand it could be argued that

1. She is called this in H Lyte, Light of Britayne, 1588, cited in Spenser, vol.iii, p.339.

2. Bennett, op. cit., pp.18, 19.

Artegall's joust as the Salvage Knight with her, (IV.iv), their eventual meeting, (vi) and separation are part of this plan. What is certain is that the story is resolved in Book V, despite the existence of two different Artegalls,¹ where we at once hear the story of his upbringing, (i.5-11). Much later the prophecy which Merlin made to Britomart about a royal virgin stretching 'her white rod over Belgicke shore', (III.iii.49), begins to be realised when Lady Belge appeals indirectly to Mercila for help, (V.x.6). Spenser is dealing with two sets of narrative here: the Britomart-Artegall story and the Arthegall-Justice one. Perhaps this accounts for the clumsy double arrival of Talus with news of his master's captivity, (V.vi.3, 8). From our point of view the discrepancy in the Belge episode is that it is Arthur and not Arthegall who defeats Gerioneo. J W Bennett will not associate Leicester with it, which Strong and van Dorsten are all-too willing to do.² No judgement needs to be made as the episode is outside of Spenser's period of immediate contact with the Earl.

Much as one would like to endorse J W Bennett's intricate arguments, W J B Owen's view of the poem is far more realistic. Spenser has covered his tracks sufficiently well to make any obvious links with Leicester House in around 1580 almost invisible. He was working on a poem of the same title while he was involved with that circle, but it is beyond recovery. Yet by close attention to its narrative we can try to get some idea of its early form and direction. The Earl and his world are in and behind the Faerie Queene, but are too dimly present to be clearly made out.

^{The}
vi / Minor Poems.

Eleanor Rosenberg deals acutely with the problems which 'Virgil's Gnat'

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1. Ibid., p.43.
 2. Ibid., pp.190, 191; Strong and van Dorsten, Leicester's Triumph, pp.1-3; they have the support of an early annotator, Anon., 'MS Notes to Spenser's Faerie Queene', NQ, vol.ccii, 1957, pp.512, 513.

and 'Mother Hubbard's Tale' have suggested to other critics, refusing to see 'the causer of my care' as being offended by something in the poet's works.¹ Nor can she find any marks of the Earl's disfavour, as she sees the transition to Lord Grey as an honourable promotion. Although 'Mother Hubbard' belongs to the same kind of writing as Harvey's 'Speculum Tuscanismi' and his portrait of the good courtier at the end of Gratulationes Valdinenses, its allegory has been related as well to the political events of 1590-1 as to 1580-1.² The poem has frequently been divided into two halves; the first up to l.943, being a general satire, with the rest of the poem referring to political and historical events in a more specific way.

The division is a reasonable one, and as we should expect by now there are different levels of writing in it. The views of the Alençon allegorists must be invalidated because of their method. They fail to see that there is a fundamental difference between allegorizing current events and disguising what might happen in the future by allegory. This second approach which they apply to the latter part of the poem, allows them to interpret it as they like, since the events which Spenser is said to be allegorizing are purely conjectural. We cannot be sure how he imagined Simier and Alençon would behave if the marriage (and there is no mention of any sort of alliance with the lion), had taken place. On the other hand the poem can be interpreted to fit the events of 1590-1. The choice between the two possibilities is unavoidable. If we accept that the fox and the ape 'represent' Burghley and his son, the more direct and personal satire of ll.821-76 takes on a new force.

1. Rosenberg, pp.337-42.

2. Spenser, vol.viii, pp.568-80. To the discussion there two articles should be added: A C Judson, 'Mother Hubbard's Ape', MLN, vol. lxiii, 1948, pp.145-9, where he seeks to vindicate Greenlaw's interpretation, but concedes that two passages, ll.891-918 and 1137-1224 are later interpolations; and C E Mounts, 'The Raleigh-Essex Rivalry and Mother Hubberds Tale', MLN vol. lxv, 1950, pp.509-13 which convincingly confirms that ll.615-30 are late.

This passage occurs in the supposedly 'early' part of the poem, but there is evidence that as a whole it was taken to be about Burghley and Robert Cecil. The anonymous author of A Declaration of the True Causes... 1592, attacks the Chancellor and describes the tale as 'of the false fox and his crooked cubbes'.¹ The annotator of the copy of the 1617 edition of the Works, who may be Lady Raleigh, clearly identified the ape with Robert Cecil at the very start of the poem, (l.38) and underlined the 'old Scotch cap he wore', (l.209) to emphasise the Cecils' connexions with Scotland.² It would contradict Spenser's own words to say that all of the poem belongs to a late date and that none of it can be associated with his youthful days at Leicester House. The fox and the ape's second adventure in the Church belongs to the same world as that of the Calender, and Lewis compares the ape to Braggadochio, but the progress of the poem's action is puzzling.³ One would expect it to move from army to court to the Church if it were planned by the Spenser who was a Bishop's secretary. Perhaps the courtly final episode anticipates Book VI of the Faerie Queene; the lines 28-31 do, but they might equally be an ironic comment on it. It comes as a surprise to read that the soldier's life is 'the noblest mysterie', (l.221). Although the poem has recently been praised for its harmoniousness and unity,⁴ it is really too fragmented and short to be used reliably as evidence of Spenser's poetic development.

Rosenberg comes to a comparable conclusion about 'Virgil's Gnat'; 'it is too close a translation of the Culex to be of value as a biographical account'.⁵ She is almost certainly correct in this, but the poem cannot be dismissed so easily. Greenlaw's theory is that it shows Spenser unjustly

1. Spenser, vol.viii, p.581.

2. W Oakeshott, 'Carew Raleigh's Copy of Spenser', Library, 5th ser., vol. xxvi, 1971, pp.6, 7.

3. Spenser, vol.viii, p.356; Lewis, English Literature, p.367.

4. K J Atchity, 'Spenser's Mother Hubberds Tale: Three Themes of Order', PQ, vol.1ii, 1973, pp.161-72.

5. Rosenberg, p.340.

punished by Leicester for warning him of the Alençon marriage, with exile to Ireland.¹ Leicester hardly needed to be warned of the match and in the poem the snake attacks the shepherd because he deeply resents having his 'haunt' (ll.273,4) usurped by him. The shepherd's sorrow and monument are equally hard to associate with Leicester, while the allegory departs utterly from known circumstances when the shepherd kills the snake. The main part of the poem, (ll.337-616), is taken up with the gnat's extensive description of hell and its inhabitants, which can hardly be taken seriously as an account of Spenser's life in Ireland. The heart of the poem, which explains Spenser's interest in the imitation, must be the stanza which illustrates the meaning of all the exempla:

And all that vaunts in worldly vanitie
Shall fall through fortunes mutabilitie. (ll.559, 560)

The gnat says that the break is permanent, 'I now depart, returning to thee never', (l.634). Yet the same volume in which the poem was published also contained Spenser's memorial to Leicester in 'The Ruins of Time', where there is no hint of criticism of him. Similarly from the same year in which the Complaints came out, there is Florio's statement as to the happiness of their relationship, which heads this chapter. Although Leicester in the prefatory sonnet is 'the causer' he 'onely privie' is to 'my evill plight', which rather rules out any public disgrace. I would suggest that 'Virgil's Gnat' reflects the episode which caused Spenser, while he was in Leicester's service to call himself 'Immerito'. The name and Harvey's insistence that its cause is 'a secrett not to be revealid', accord perfectly with what we know of his plight from the poem. The opening phrases of the gnat's speech suggest

1. Spenser, vol.vii, p.543; the same objections which apply to Greenlaw's theory are relevant to the ingenious interpretation of C E Mounts, 'Spenser and the Countess of Leicester', ELH, vol.xix, 1952, pp.191-202. The lynch-pin of his argument is Spenser's use of the name Lettice in the 'March' eclogue and the offence that this would cause to the newly married Earl. He does not note Harvey's far greater and unpunished tactlessness in the Gratulationes.

this: 'what have I wretch deserv'd...', (l.329). The nature of the offence like so much else must remain obscure.

It is not easy to tie down Spenser's relationship with Leicester. He has a presence within and was a force behind his early work during a crucial period. His patronage brought him into close contact with Sidney and gave him a well-identified background from which to begin his public poetic career. It provided Spenser with time and the sort of material he liked to work on, but one of his main skills lay in disguising the origins of his work. There was no traumatic break-down in Leicester's relationship with his poet, who was content to spend nearly twenty years in government service in Ireland. Rather those writers who see him as sent there against his will for some literary indiscretion are as prejudiced as those who unfairly make Leicester the villain of the Elizabethan court and deny his rôle as a generous and benevolent patron.

CHAPTER VII

SIDNEY.

'I do acknowledge, I say, that my chiefest
honour is to be a Dudley'.

Defence of Leicester,
Miscellaneous Prose, p.134.

Sidney was born into Leicester's world but was not altogether free from the problems of social rank which at first troubled Harvey and Spenser. They sought to gain his attention and win his favour through their writings. Sidney's problem was knowing and finding out what his talents were and how best to employ them. Almost all of his works can be dated to the years of the Alençon courtship. In this chapter I shall show how he came to write them, the part Leicester had in their composition and how a detailed examination of the period contributes to our understanding of the man and his works.¹ Using his correspondence I shall pay special attention to what he was doing at this time and show that he had ample opportunity to be with his uncle and his circle. Too much weight has been given to Sidney's pastoral retirement and not enough stress has been placed on his active presence at court.

i. The Courtier

The success of Sidney's 1577 mission to promote a Protestant league in Western Europe can hardly be doubted. He was back in England by June 10,² his brilliant embassy universally praised and his own reputation nationally and internationally at its peak. It was sufficiently high for the Queen to become, if not jealous, at least cautious about allowing him more power and glory. He was still only twenty-two. An ambassador - and we shall see that Sidney was conscious of the rôle - can easily cease to represent his monarch and start promoting himself and his supporters. It was Daniel Rogers who was sent abroad on June 26 to continue the negotiations his friend had begun.³

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1. Dorothy Connell, Sir Philip Sidney, the Maker's Mind, Oxford 1977, suggests this approach but does not fully carry it out, see esp. ch. iv.
 2. Wallace, p. 182.
 3. Dorsten, p. 53; in his poem of 14 January 1579, ll. 141, 142, Daniel Rogers says that the Queen ordered Sidney to stay with her after his return, which is not borne out by Sidney's movements in the months immediately following, but is true for the following year.

The standard interpretation of Sidney's life over the next few years is that with this withdrawal of the Queen's favour he more or less deserted the court for Wilton where he began to write. This common view needs careful investigation.

The hopes and disappointments Leicester suffered recur with his nephew. Although his next official journey overseas was not to be until the beginning of 1582, he never felt that further service was ruled out. In October 1577 he expected to go back abroad, 'before many weeks have elapsed'.¹ Immediately prior to this he had been involved in the dispute with the Earl of Ormond, which resulted in the Discourse on Irish Affairs,² the first surviving example of his occasional writing and forensic rhetoric. Languet doubted how seriously to take his pupil's hopes of another European tour, perhaps aware that he was away from the court during most of the autumn, but not for the accession day tilt.³ Keeping him informed about international politics he constantly reasserted his and his friends' affection. His advice was to maintain a small force of men, partly to increase his influence and partly to strengthen his position in Germany. Sidney it appears had enemies, for the troops could be used to, 'throw obstacles in the way of the designs of those who seek your ill'. Languet suggested Casimir as the leader of this private force.⁴

From Wilton on December 16 Sidney asked his uncle's leave to be absent from court over Christmas because, 'Some ocasions, bothe of helthe and otherwise do make me mucche desyre it'. As well as duty he offers Leicester service and again requests his 'goodnes ' for 'the poore stranger musicien',

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1. To Languet, 10 October 1577, Sidney, vol. iii, p. 118; the court from where the letter was written ('In Aula Regia'), was then at Windsor. Pears, p. 122 misdates the letter to October 1.
 2. Miscellaneous Prose, p.4.
 3. Languet to Sidney, 28 November 1577, Pears, p. 130; College of Arms MS. M4 preliminary piece no. 2.
 4. Ibid., 26 December 1577, Pears, pp. 131, 132; Hailes, pp. 184, 185, (no. lxii).

who is clearly a foreigner.¹ This request presumably failed for he exchanged gifts with the Queen on New Year's Day and saw various continental friends in London over the winter, as well as presenting Walsingham with 'a faire case of dagges' in January.² Although Languet kept him well-informed about politics his main hope at the beginning of 1578 was for his friend to marry.³ Sidney remained silent and Languet commiserated with him over his bad luck, while urging him to write. He assumed Leicester would take his nephew on his projected expedition to the Low Countries, but warned him to act with caution, still seeing him as a leader of nations not of soldiers.⁴

Sidney broke his nearly five month long silence when he wrote to Languet from London on March 1. He probably replied to Languet's letters from Leicester House where the Queen was staying at the end of February and the beginning of March on her way from Hampton Court to Greenwich. If this was so then the sense of frustrated inactivity which goes through Sidney's letter becomes more poignant and understandable. He still lacks a means to service and is mentally stagnant:

And the use of the pen, as you may perceive, has plainly fallen from me; and my mind itself, if it was ever active in any thing, is now beginning, by reason of my indolent ease, imperceptibly to lose its strength, and to relax without any reluctance. For to what purpose should our thoughts be directed to various kinds of knowledge, unless room be afforded for putting it into practice, so that public advantage may be the result, which in a corrupt age we cannot hope for?

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1. To Leicester, 16 December 1577, Sidney, vol. iii, p. 119; on p. 396 Feuillerat expresses strong doubts that this letter is in fact addressed to Leicester, so modifying Wallace's interpretation, p. 197, of Sidney's acceptance of his uncle's marriage. D E Baughan, 'Sir Philip Sidney and the Matchmakers', *MLR* vol. xxxiii, 1938, p. 512 n. 2 rejects Feuillerat's doubts on the grounds of, 'estrangement between the Sussex and Dudley-Sidney families' and Sussex's not being involved with Sidney's presence at court. By virtue of his office this second objection can be dismissed, (on the Lord Chamberlain's duties see Chambers, vol. i, pp. 38-40). Baughan quotes from Naunton to emphasise the estrangement; but the anecdote from *Fragmenta Regalia* and the Sussex-Leicester relationship have been analysed by E M Tenison, *Elizabethan England*, vol. v, pp. 81, 82, to show that their mutual antipathy has been exaggerated. Collins, vol. i, p. 392 dates the letter 1582.
 2. Nichols, vol. ii, pp. 77, 78, 88; Wallace, p. 197. BL MS Add. 17520 f.14v.
 3. Languet to Sidney, 8 January 1578, Pears, pp. 133, 136.
 4. *Ibid.*, 15 February 1578, Hailes, pp. 188, 189, (no. lxiv); Pears, p. 137.

In this state he does not respond favourably to advice to marry, although he refers to an unidentified 'her, of whom I readily acknowledge how unworthy I am'.¹ This letter was sent by way of their mutual friend Casimir's councillor Beutterich. On the tenth Sidney wrote again from the Court, then at Greenwich, taking advantage of Daniel Rogers' new mission to the Low Countries. He saw the chances of Leicester's despatch growing slighter, 'our cause withering away' and was inclined to abandon Europe to occupy himself with 'some Indian project'.²

He seems to have given up hope of this European mission quite quickly and retired to Penshurst with the Earl of Pembroke during April, 'with diverse gentlemen and neighbors of the Countey, which came to visitt him'.³ Presumably he received Casimir's invitation to join him in Flanders elsewhere. On the same day that this was issued he wrote to his father about his position in England and how all his communications were known to his enemies. The letter ends enigmatically and without an address or signature:

Of my beinge sente to the Queen, being armed with good Accounts and perfitt Reasons for them, &c.⁴

This suggests that he already had left Penshurst towards the end of the month, an interpretation strengthened by his letter from court to Edward Waterhouse written on April 28, a day on which the Queen again visited Leicester House.⁵ If the letter to the Camerarii is correctly dated 1 May 1578, we know he was then at the Queen's Palace, when he says he has been talking to nobles and

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1. To Languet, 1 March 1578, Pears, pp. 144, 145; his suggestion that it was Penelope Devereux must be rejected since no match was planned with her at this time.
 2. *Ibid.*, 10 March 1578, Pears, p. 146. The rumour that he might still go continued until June, Wallace, p. 198 n. 5.
 3. HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, vol. i, p. 250.
 4. Casimir to Sidney, 25 April 1578, CSP For., vol. xiv, no. 820.5. To Henry Sidney, 25 April 1578, Sidney, vol. iii, p. 123.
 5. To Waterhouse, 28 April 1578, *ibid.* I suspect that Waterhouse was the bearer of the Queen's and the Privy Council's letters to Sir Henry Sidney of March 22, (CSP. Ire., vol. ii, p. 130); he did not reach Dublin until April 23, (hence Philip Sidney's letter) and was sent back to England by Sir Henry on or after May 1, Collins, vol. i, pp. 251-4.

the Queen herself about the brothers, this may have been quite a recent event.¹

On the next day from Frankfurt Languet answered the letters of March 1 and March 10 which arrived while he was in the middle of writing. He repeats his arguments against mere military leadership urging him to:

Make use then of that particle of the Divine Mind (as you beautifully express it) which you possess, for the preservation and not the destruction of men.

Although he says his remarks about marriage were in jest he still emphasizes the importance of having an heir, referring to what he proposed at Mainz. This was Sidney's marriage to a princess, either to Ursula, one of Casimir's six sisters or to one of Orange's seven.² Languet's measured tone contrasts well with Sidney's short, angry letter to Molyneux whom he suspected as the interceptor of his father's correspondence. He was still at court when he wrote on May 31 and in London on or just after the next day for the christening of Duplessis-Mornay's daughter. Its endorsement shows Sidney was wrong in his accusation, for the letter came to Molyneux by way of Burghley who may have used the same spy he employed against Sir Henry to intercept it.³

It is reasonable to interpret his hasty conclusion and threat of violence

1. To Joachim and Philip Camerarius, 1 May 1578, A P McMahon, 'Sir Philip Sidney's Letter to the Camerarii', *PMLA*, vol. lxii, 1947, pp. 83-95. McMahon does not mention that sometime in May Languet told the Camerarii that if they wanted to write to Sidney he would deal with their letters; presumably by then they had received Sidney's; Hubert Languet, *Ad J. Camerarium Patrem & J. Camerarium Filium Epistolae*, Groningen 1646, pp. 257, 258.
2. Languet to Sidney, 2 May 1578, Pears, pp. 147-9. Osborn, pp. 478, 479 follows Hailes in assuming that the Princess in question is Casimir's sister. Wallace, pp. 183-5, R Howell, *Sir Philip Sidney, The Shepherd Knight*, 1968, pp. 43-7 and D E Baughan, *art. cit.*, pp. 514-6 use a despatch by Mendoza, (CSP Sp., vol. ii, pp. 575, 576) to show that Sidney was to marry Orange's sister. Mona Wilson, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 1950, p. 86 suggests that there were two matches. I have failed to discover for certain which woman he was to marry. The Elector of Brandenburg who we know was courting the same Princess was John George, (1525-98), who was married for the third time on 6 October 1577; his bride was Elisabeth of Anhalt; see Languet to Sidney, 28 November 1577, Pears, p. 129. Sidney's rival was therefore considerably older than him.
3. To Molyneux, 31 May 1578, Sidney, vol. iii, pp. 124, 396, 397. *Mémoires de Madame de Mornay*, ed. M^{me}. de Witt, Société de l'Histoire de France, 1868, vol. i, p. 120.

as a sign of frustration. For despite the letter's 'earnest' tone it is full of 'ifs' and Sidney knows he is acting on a wide set of assumptions, only promising punishment for future misdeeds. Although he still had no employment he was not totally out of favour. When Stukeley's attempt to invade Ireland became clear he was summoned immediately to court by the Privy Council on June 5 and told to be ready to sail.¹ The hopeless invasion attempt failed and nothing came of it for Sidney. The Council order implies his absence from court, which he might have left immediately after writing to Molyneux, or more plausibly it may mean that he was not properly established and settled there. The episode would have provided him with a chance to serve directly in Ireland, in which he was interested on his own and his father's account. Perhaps he saw it as an alternative to the leadership of the Protestant cause, which then so eluded him.

Languet heard a distorted version of the objects of the mission which surprised him, but he still thought of it as a means to fame.² This chance of service was soon replaced by another and separate, non-military one. There is no evidence as to where Sidney was during July 1578; he may have accompanied the Queen on her progress which began on or about July 11. We have seen how as early as July 9 Leicester, then at Buxton wanted Sidney to join Casimir.³

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1. APC, vol. x, p. 240. On the organisation of men and other preparations to repel Stukeley see SP 63/60/69 and 61/2, APC, vol. x, pp. 236, 245, 251, 258 and Collins, vol. i, pp. 256-61. On Stukeley's mission itself see J B Black, The Reign of Elizabeth, 2nd ed., Oxford 1959, pp. 176, 177. Wallace, pp. 198, 199 follows Mendoza's misinterpretation in thinking that the men and ships were ultimately bound for the Netherlands. Rogers refers to the preparation of the fleet in ll.133, 134 of his poem to Sidney of 14 January 1578, Dorsten, p. 178.
 2. Languet to Sidney, 16 July 1578, Hailes, pp. 198, 199, (no. lxviii); Pears, pp. 150, 151. Languet to Sidney, 17 August 1578, Hailes, pp. 202, 203, (no. lxix); see also the letters of May 1578 and of 10 July from Languet to the Camerarii, Epistolae, pp. 258, 263. Like Mendoza, Languet thought Sidney was to be made Vice-Admiral and this, not being made cup-bearer to the Queen as Thomas Zouch, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Sir Philip Sidney, 2nd ed., York 1809, p. 11, hesitantly suggested, is the honour which Languet congratulates him on having received in his letter of July 16. Sidney had been made cup-bearer as early as 1576, Ringler, p. xxiv.
 3. Leicester to Hatton, 9 July 1578, Memorials of Sir Christopher Hatton, p. 69; see also above ch. II, pt. iv and below pt. iv.

A letter from Sir Henry Sidney shows that his son knew he was to go abroad before August 1 and that Sir Henry felt his departure was sufficiently important to leave Ireland to bid him farewell in London, 'abowt the latter Ende of this Moneth'.¹ Sidney rightly refused to take the Queen's crushing message to Casimir, but Leicester's letter, does not make it clear whether Sidney was with the progress when he, 'was to take his leave and receive his dispatch', or whether as Froude maintains he especially joined it.²

This is the only glimpse we get of Sidney during the whole progress which ended by September 25. He may have been at Audley End and met his friend Harvey. He was not present at Leicester's marriage at Wanstead, which was to so change his fortune. His father had come back to England by September 18 with the Earl of Clanrycard and made his way to London. On October 15 he had to hire a boat to go to Hampton Court to speak with his son. Molyneux had been sent ahead to find a room for Sir Henry.³ At first he could not get one even for the day time, for although the court was then at Richmond, it seems that Sussex was bent on preventing him from staying there.⁴

Before this trouble arose, Sidney had found time in September to write to Languet, probably for the first time since March, as his correspondent was quick to point out in his reply. Languet is still concerned about the expedition to Casimir and the doubtful worth of military fame. The letter reveals Sidney's weariness at that time with court life and his desire for, 'the privacy of secluded places'. This sounds as if having accompanied the Queen on her progress he was suffering from the effects of so much courtly

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1. Henry Sidney to Philip Sidney, 1 August 1578, Collins, vol. i, p. 392. Wallace quotes from a similar letter of the same date to Leicester on p. 200. H R Fox Bourne, *A Memoir of Sir Philip Sidney*, 1862, p. 206 implies that Sidney did not go because of his father's letter.
 2. Leicester to Walsingham, 7 August 1578, CSP For., vol. x., no. 149; J A Froude, *History of England*, new ed., 1893, vol. x, p. 459.
 3. Henry Sidney to the Queen, 18 September 1578, SP 63/62/11,12. HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, vol. i, p. 266.
 4. Lady Mary Sidney to Edward Molyneux, 11 October and 'Mondaye', 1578, Collins, vol. i, pp. 271, 272.

society. Languet sympathizes but reminds him of his talents;

Depone igitur istam animi remissionem, et patriae tuam operam et industriam requirenti ne denega.¹

Yet still action, beyond the annual accession day tilt would not come to Sidney, who celebrated his twenty-fourth birthday at the end of November. The mission which Mendoza reports him being sent on, to Paris to delay Simier's arrival never took place. On New Year's Day he again exchanged gifts with the Queen.²

Languet's October letter had prompted Sidney to write several more in reply, for which his friend thanked him when he wrote from Ghent just before he set off with Casimir to visit England and see his pupil for the last time.³ Sidney was involved with the visit which lasted until well into February; perhaps it cheered him up. But his new hopes could not have been greatly raised because he did not leave with his brother and Greville for the continent. In a later letter Languet reminds Sidney that he was then, 'high in favour and enjoying the esteem of all your countrymen', but also in an unmanly and affected court, where his abilities were wasted and might be lost. His status can be further judged by the Queen's reported remark to Casimir about him: 'Je l'estime le plus accompli gentilhomme de l'Europe'.⁴ A long silence then begins on Sidney's part against the unsettling noise of the French marriage negotiations and Simier's revelation of Leicester's marriage. By the end of the first week in April Languet is complaining that his letters are unanswered. Nor was he satisfied when he received Sidney's note that he had given a bond for money lent to Casimir to the Spanish merchant Cassiodorus.⁵ Languet solaced himself by fussing about the details

1. Languet to Sidney, 22 October 1578, Hailes, p. 207, (no. lxxi); Pears, p. 155; Hailes, pp. 210, 211.

2. College of Arms MS M4 preliminary piece no. 3; CSP Sp., vol. ii, p. 624; Wallace, p. 203; Nichols, vol. ii, pp. 260, 271.

3. Languet to Sidney, 13 January 1579, Hailes, p. 213, (no. lxxii).

4. *Ibid.*, 14 November 1579, Pears, p. 167. Languet to Wacker, 13 July 1579, cited by J A van Dorsten, 'Sidney and Languet', *HLQ* vol. xxix, 1965-6, p. 219.

5. Languet to Sidney, 7 April 1579, Hailes, p. 224, (no. lxxvi); *ibid.*, 20 April 1579, Hailes, p. 226, (no. lxxvii).

of Robert Sidney's continental tour and his own poor health.

This period about which we know nothing was dramatically ended by the tennis court quarrel and the renewed activities of Leicester's party during Alençon's private visit to England from August 17 until 29. Wallace interprets one of Mendoza's despatches to suggest a meeting of the party at the Earl of Pembroke's house on or about August 25 which proved to be the genesis of the Letter to the Queen.¹ Sidney was certainly in London then and the quarrel must have taken place before the twenty-eighth when he wrote a letter of commendation to Hatton justifying his treatment of Oxford.² The details of the quarrel, which was watched by the French commissioners and its background of Roman Catholic supporters against Protestant opponents of the marriage have been carefully investigated.³ It presumably took place at Greenwich where Sidney still was in October when he wrote to Buchanan, with a little irony that:

my man can schaw unto yow alsmuche as I of the materis concerning Monsier and purpois of his mariage, hactenus hesitamus.

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In the middle of the month the Earl of Clanrycard wrote quite unselfconsciously from Westminster to Sidney asking him to further his request for an interview with Sir Henry.⁵

Languet had at last heard from Sidney and Clusius about the quarrel which he rightly saw as a justifiable but unfortunate distraction:

You want another stage for your character, and I wish you had chosen it in this part of the world.

Writing from Antwerp he now sees his destiny in military action in the

1. Wallace, p. 213.

2. Sidney to Hatton, 28 August 1579, Sidney, vol. iii, p.128.

3. The main source for our knowledge about the quarrel is Greville's Life of Sidney, pp. 63-9; see also E M Tenison, Elizabethan England, vol. v, pp. 185, 186 and D C Peck, 'Raleigh, Sidney, Oxford, and the Catholics 1579', NQ, vol. ccxiii, 1978, pp. 427-31. Wallace, p. 269 notes that Oxford was ordered to accompany Don Antonio with Sidney on 10 September 1581.

4. To George Buchanan, October 1579, ed. A I Cameron, The Warrender Papers, p. 146.

5. Clanrycard to Henry and Philip Sidney, 16 October 1579, SP 63/69/65, 66.

Netherlands, and does not make very much of the quarrel.¹ Exactly a month later Languet wrote again having heard nothing more from Sidney and from this letter we learn that as Sidney had once thought the courtship was false, his cautious friend feared it might be a device by which factions were stirred up and become his undoing. On the other hand the visit at the beginning of the year had made him feel that Sidney was in a trance, (*somno*), an impression which his long silence helped to strengthen. He saw the quarrel as a possible turning-point, which would make Sidney finally commit himself to something. Doubts about whether it was worthy of Sidney to devote himself to soldiering are gone and he almost insists he should play an active part in the Netherlands.²

This surprising change on Languet's part reflects his growing admiration for Orange and La Noue and the increased possibility of direct English involvement in the Low Countries. It was also his response to his own fears about Sidney's position and fate in England. A week later with no new letter from Sidney on which to reassess his opinion, he again urges him to decide about service abroad and the possibility of exile.³ Sidney still managed to maintain his position at court, taking part in the annual accession day tilt. For some time after this we lose sight of him although he duly presented the Queen with a gift on New Year's Day and was in London on 16 January 1580.⁴ It should be noted that Leicester was out of favour from the autumn of 1579 until the spring of 1580 during more or less the same period in which Sidney was out of the public view. Sidney did not dismiss Languet's advice and wrote

1. Languet to Sidney, 14 October 1579, Pears, pp. 164, 165.

2. *Ibid.*, 14 November 1579, Hailes, p. 242, (no. lxxxii); Pears, p. 168. Languet gives an interesting account of the state of English reactions to Alençon in his letter of 29 October 1579 to Augustus, Duke of Saxony, *Epistolae Secretae*, Halle 1699, pt. i, pp. 799-801, (no. clxxiii).

3. Languet to Sidney, 21 November 1579, Hailes, p. 245, (no. lxxxiii).

4. College of Arms MS M4 preliminary piece no. 6. Based on the evidence of the order of names in Segar, Ringler correctly argued that Sidney took part in the tilt, but also incorrectly adduced that Raleigh and Russell were involved in it. Nichols, vol. ii, p. 290; Wallace, p. 222 n.1; Nichols, vol. ii, p. 334.

to Orange about his position. Languet still urged him to come even if only for a few months and reminded him that his supporters in England might well desert if he appeared too much in opposition to the Queen. He might finally be crushed, unwelcome throughout all Europe except in Germany. It would be better for him to go voluntarily into exile and have the chance to restore his honour and fame through soldiering.¹

Languet wrote frequently with advice during February and March 1580, but by then Sidney had gone down to Wilton, possibly with his father who was going on to Wales as Lord President. His time in the Wiltshire countryside is usually associated with the composition of the Old Arcadia. From Wilton he wrote a cheerful letter of commendation to Leicester's secretary Arthury Atey at court. He would have been in the country for the birth of Pembroke's son on April 8 and attended the christening at which he represented Leicester as godfather in May.² Languet thought he was still at court and soon heard of the birth of the nephew, all the time hoping that he would come over to him.³ Sidney's state of mind can be judged from his long letter to Edward Denny written from Wilton on May 22. Denny had asked him for advice about what he should learn and do in Ireland. The burden of Sidney's letter is that whatever knowledge he gains should be of practical use both to his inner self and to his external circumstances. Contrasted with this is the feeling suggested by its opening that Denny felt Sidney might as well have gone to Ireland as Grey. Sidney is magnanimous towards Grey and anticipates the advice of the rest of his letter when he says that, 'the unnoble constitution of our tyme, doth keepe us from fitte imployments', both as an axiom for the age and an example of what had happened to himself.⁴ The letter shows that despite being

1. Languet to Sidney, 30 January 1580, Pears, pp. 169, 170; Hailes, pp. 250, 251, (no. lxxxiv).

2. To Atey, 25 March 1580, Sidney, vol. iii, pp. 128, 129; the Queen was represented at the ten-day long ceremonies by Simon Bowyer, F B Young, Mary Sidney Countess of Pembroke, 1912, pp. 42-4.

3. Languet to Sidney, 2 April 1580, Pears, p. 180; ibid., 6 May 1580, Pears, pp. 181, 182.

4. To Denny, 22 May 1580, Osborn, pp. 537-40; see also J Buxton, 'An Elizabethan Reading-List; an Unpublished Letter from Sir Philip Sidney', TLS 24 March 1972, pp. 343, 344. In my opinion Buxton correctly rejects the idea that the ending of the letter contains a reference to Spenser.

absent from London when Spenser left, Sidney maintained close contact with the mission.

Sidney's father was reproved on the Queen's behalf by Walsingham for visiting Wilton on some occasions in the spring.¹ Languet's letters during the summer were full of European news but suggest that he knew nothing of Sidney's life then. Staying near Wilton he was at 'Clarinton' when he wrote to his uncle on August 2. He had just 'brought home' his sister who by then had recovered her health, possibly having been weakened by the birth of her son, though she seems also to have had some disease. 'Home' was presumably Wilton and Sidney is evidently writing from Clarendon Park, south-east of Salisbury, where there was the ruin of a royal palace and probably a lodge for the Pembrokes, who were Wardens and Keepers of the Park and Forest. He was kept from the court by a cold and the loss of his voice, but planned to return as soon as he was better in a few day's time. The court was then at Oatlands and it is likely that the Wilton household had been to show the Queen her new godson. Sidney writes of how he had asked Hatton to tell the Queen that 'necessity did even banishe me frome the place', in other words the court and that it is best either:

to waite, or constantly to holde the course of my poverty, for coming and going neither breedes deserte, nor wittnesseeth necessity.

This is not the only evidence we have of his troubles with money at this time and this letter addressed to Leicester may well have been intended to prompt him to lend or give some.²

The letter is an important one as it shows that Sidney was not banned from the court, and that if he kept away from it during 1580 he had his own reasons for doing so. In one of his last and longest letters, Languet shows

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1. Walsingham to Henry Sidney, 22 June 1580, Collins, vol. i, p. 274; HMC Laing, vol. i, p. 32, shows that he was at Wilton on May 24, perhaps for the christening of his grandson.
 2. To Leicester, 2 August 1580, Sidney, vol. iii, p. 129; VCH Wiltshire, vol. iv, p. 430; Wallace, p. 224.

that he understands some of the reasons for what he calls 'your long retirement'. His friends abroad thought he might have abdicated from his responsibilities and might never return to them. Languet seems to want to remind him, perhaps for the last time, of what he could yet achieve given his many talents and advantages and urges him not to reject the court. He still attributes the 'sort of cloud over your fortunes' to the autumn of 1579 and the bad reception of his advice over the Alençon courtship.¹ Sidney quickly replied and told Languet he had returned to court. He had explained the Leicester House background and wide dissemination of the Letter to the Queen and that it was not a personal attack on Alençon, whose visit Sidney looks forward to.²

Although he was in London when he wrote to his brother on October 18 from Leicester House, the court was then at Richmond. The letter well reflects the intellectual world which his uncle encouraged and is mainly concerned with history and philosophy. He protests about how hastily he is putting his thoughts down so that it is hard to recognise perfectly the gloomy mood which he says he is in. He talks of having, 'given over the delight in the world', and 'my melancholie times', but finishes with 'Lord how I have babled'. He still feels the lack of action and determined policy: 'how idlie wee looke on our Naighbours fyres', he writes, thinking now not of himself but of his country.³

He had written again to Languet probably shortly before this and on the day he received Sidney's letter wrote his last reply. Although he says it is a good thing that he has returned to the court, Languet betrays a weary sense of disillusion with it on Sidney's behalf:

Florem aetatis in nugis et otio aulae conterere erit tibi admodum grave. He still hopes that with Dyer's advice he will turn to something worthy

1. Languet to Sidney, 24 September 1580, Pears, pp. 182-5.

2. *Ibid.*, 22 October 1580, Pears, pp. 187, 188; Hailes, p. 285, (no. xcvi).

3. To Robert Sidney, 18 October 1580, Sidney, vol. iii, pp. 130-3.

of his father and his country, which he now feels is badly threatened. He foresees England as dissolving into civil war encouraged by its continental enemies and hints darkly at:

sophismata, quae omnem ingenuitatem et simplicitatem ex aulis orbis
Christiani profligaverunt,

and Spain now facing the threat of a united Turkey and Persia. Languet lived on until 1 October 1581, but no more letters from him to his pupil survive.¹

Sidney seems to have stayed at court for almost the whole of 1581 taking an active part in its life and entertainments, as well as assuming his new rôle as an M.P., while Leicester sat at the same time in the Lords. He gave the Queen a New Year's Day gift and took part in Arundel's tilt, the Callophiscus challenge which I shall discuss in the next chapter. During the same month Penelope Devereux was presented at court.² Sometime in the first part of February Sidney wrote a friendly letter of commendation to Jean Hotman who was soon to become Leicester's secretary. At the end of March again from the court still at Whitehall he wrote to Lady Kytson that he had seen Burghley about Sir Thomas Cornwallis' recusancy and done what he could on his behalf.³ * In the week before the French Commissioners arrived he wrote a short, sharp letter to Molyneux from Baynard's Castle warning him not to cross him over Fulke Greville's office of Clerk of the Signet to the Welsh Council. This may well have been his first letter to Molyneux since the threatening one of May 1578 and Molyneux's reply protesting his innocence seems full of ironic courtesy.⁴

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1. Languet to Sidney, 28 October 1580, Hailes, pp. 287, 288, (no. xcvi); Pears, pp. 190, 191; Hailes, p. ix.
 2. Ringler, p. 438; Wallace, p. 267 is wrong to say that he went to Oxford to see Gager's Meleager in 1581: he went in 1585, Chambers, vol. iii, p. 318.
 3. To Jean Hotman, 6, 10, 12 or 17 February 1581, Sidney, vol. iii, pp. 134, 401. Sidney had met Hotman by the autumn of 1582, Buxton, p. 156; see also his letters offering friendship and service to Sidney, BN MS Lat. 8586 ff.85v., 101. To Lady Kytson, 28 March 1581, Sidney, vol. iii, pp. 134, 135.
 4. To Molyneux, 10 April 1581, Sidney, vol. iii, p. 135; Molyneux to Sidney, 28 April 1581, Collins, vol. i, pp. 293, 294; Rebholz, Life of Greville, pp. 21-3.

Although Sidney served in the Parliament of 1581 which lasted from January 16 until March 18 there is little evidence as to how often he attended its sessions.¹ It seems unlikely that he played a direct part in the negotiations with the French ambassadors, which began about the end of April. His contribution to the Four Foster Children of Desire was far more spectacular and it must be assumed that he attended the official functions connected with the diplomatic mission. During September he was involved in escorting Don Antonio, the pretender to the Spanish throne, from the country. On the eighteenth or nineteenth Sidney joined him at Gravesend and stayed there while the Queen decided whether or not to support the claimant.² A week or so later they were still together at Dover and Sidney wrote to Hatton asking to be recalled to court, 'havinge divers busynesses of myne owne and my fathers', and knowing that he could help Don Antonio more by remembering him to the Queen than by going overseas with him. Sidney's letter was probably instrumental in allowing the ships to leave on the thirtieth.³

He probably went straight back to court after this, but left it again at Richmond on October 9 to go to London. His lack of money had been another reason for not wanting to delay by the coast. On the tenth he wrote to Burghley; he had gone to see him at Cecil House but discovered he had already left for Theobalds. The Queen was evidently pleased by the way Sidney had dealt with Don Antonio and she had hinted that he might look forward to something more definite than just the expectation of office. He appealed quite urgently to the Chancellor for, '100^{li} a yeere in impropriations' and, or a post.⁴ Shortly after this, having consulted his father, Sidney returned to court to help Edward Denny about a property.⁵ Alençon arrived in England at the beginning of November and Sidney's devising of a cipher at the Queen's command may well be connected with this last episode in the

1. Wallace, pp. 261-3.

2. CSP Sp., vol. iii, p. 178.

3. To Hatton, 26 September 1581, Sidney, vol. iii, pp. 135, 136; CSP Sp., vol. iii, p. 180; Wallace, p. 269.

4. To Burghley, 10 October 1581, Sidney, vol. iii, pp. 136, 137.

5. To Hatton,, 17 October 1581, ibid., p.137.

courtship. He uses the letter in which he presents the code to show his feelings towards the Queen with an elegant contrast, asking her, 'legibly to read my heart in the course of my life.' There seems to be no way of knowing why he was at Gravesend when he wrote this letter unless he was still there in connexion with the latest French embassy.¹ *

Within a few days he was back in London with the court at Baynard's Castle. From there he wrote to Hatton sending him, 'my booke readye drawen and prepared for her Majesties signature', which he requested the Vice-Chancellor quickly to procure for him, as his 'present case' is 'more pitied nowe' than it might be later. He had asked the advice of the Attorney General, John Popham, then involved in the interrogation and trial of Edmund Campion, who thought as most men did that little or nothing would come of the office. This encouraged him all the more to think that now he would get it, largely it appears through Hatton's support, for which he is suitably grateful. There is an element of secrecy about the business as if Sidney is trying to hide his application for the job, 'for beinge once knowen, it wilbe suerlie, crost'. He is desperate because of this, 'comber of debtes', so that if Hatton fails he will 'shamelesly once in my lief, bringe it her majestie my self.'²

One would dearly like to know what the office was and why as seems likely he did not finally get it. There was probably no connexion between it and Alençon's visit; Sidney may have felt a sense of urgency because the anniversary of the Queen's accession was growing nearer and she may have been more responsive to requests for honours at this time. Planning to involve himself in the accession day tilts from November 17 until 19 may have been

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1. To the Queen, 10 November 1581, Wallace, p. 270, modernized from Murdin's Burghley Papers. Both Feuillerat and C S Levy, 'A Supplementary Inventory of Sir Philip Sidney's Correspondence', MP, vol. lxvii, 1969, pp. 177-81 ignore this letter.
 2. To Hatton, 14 November 1581, Sidney, vol. iii, pp. 137, 138; Wallace, p. 271.

another means of forwarding his suit.¹ At about the same time it became clear that the Queen might well marry, he may have learnt his suit had been unsuccessful and retired to Wilton, in order among other reasons, to save money. From there he wrote on December 17 to greet his future father-in-law, Walsingham, clearly finding country life dull in comparison with the court at Christmas: further at the end of November he had confessed to being ill and depressed.² On the next day he was in Salisbury asking Hatton's advice about accepting the Queen's latest offer of 'the forfeiture of papistes goodes'. Already disappointed by her over the last office he is uncertain about this one.³ This turning towards Hatton for help and advice is interesting. When Sidney writes on December 26 to Leicester thanking him for his assistance and declining to come to court unprovided for the New Year, he adds as a postscript that he has been writing 'somthing largeli' to Hatton about his troubles.⁴ Three days later in another letter to his uncle he is uncertain what to reply to the Queen about her offer. He asks Leicester to consult with Hatton before pursuing the matter any further and explains firstly how he needs £3000 before it is worth bothering about and then that he is not too keen about living off others' deprivations. The whole business has already caused him trouble in which Sir John Hubberd has felt offended and now needs to be placated.⁵

Having refused to go to court for the New Year Sidney did not present the Queen with a gift nor witness Alençon's Whitehall entertainment. Wallace

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1. Bodleian MS Ashm. 845 f. 165 records that he tilted, while College of Arms MS M4 preliminary piece no.1, although listing his name says he did not; nor does he appear in the corrected list for the tilt in the same MS preliminary piece no. 5. Since at least four others withdrew from the tilt Sidney's change of mind need not be connected with Penelope Devereux's marriage at the beginning of the month.
 2. To Walsingham, 17 December 1581, Sidney, vol. iii, p. 139; Sebastiano Pardini to Sidney, 21 February 1582, CSP For., vol. xvii, no. 64; Wallace, p. 224, dates the letter to 1581, but the reference to Strozzi in it is the basis for Levy's reassigning it to 1582, *art. cit.*, p. 180 n. 23.
 3. To Hatton, 18 December 1581, Sidney, vol. iii, p. 139.
 4. To Leicester, 26 December 1581, *ibid.*, p.140; Wallace, p.272 dates the letter December 16.
 5. To Leicester, 28 December 1581, Sidney, vol.iii, pp.140, 141.

argues convincingly that he was contemplating marriage to Walsingham's daughter Frances during most of 1581 and that Sir Henry Sidney's will of 8 January 1582 is connected with this.¹ Perhaps he saw his way to marriage clear when his financial problems were relieved - that is if he had gained his office and £3000. Yet he was not able to avoid the court for long. Significantly while Alençon was still in England the Protestant Prince Casimir was installed as a knight of the Garter at Windsor on 13 January 1582, with Sidney as his proxy, the occasion on which he gained his knighthood.² Nor could he escape being part of the train with Leicester which accompanied Alençon on his departure from London on February 1 into the Low Countries.³

On his return it was hoped by the Dutch and some of the French that Sidney might now be lured to the Netherlands. Equally, for a time in the spring, the possibility of accompanying his father back to Ireland seemed to exist.⁴ There is no way of knowing where Sidney lived after his return from his brief continental excursion. When he told Molyneux to ask Burghley and Hatton to get him a place on the Welsh Council he was at Hereford, no doubt with his father. This scheme also came to nothing and having still failed to find an occupation his thoughts but not his actions turned to travel and exploration.⁵ He probably stayed at Wilton during the summer, for wishing to

1. Wallace, pp. 273-5.

2. BL MS Add. 37998 f.14. Casimir had been invested with the Garter in 1579. It is unfortunate that most authorities such as Wallace, p. 288, Buxton, p. 147, Osborn, pp. 508, 509 and DNB all place this event in 1583 and so delay Sidney's title for a year; Howell, Sir Philip Sidney, p. 92, however get the date right. Sidney's knighthood does not seem to have been officially recorded: neither W A Shaw, The Knights of England, 1906, (who says the Garter ceremony took place on January 8, vol. i, p. 27), nor A F Kinney, Titled Elizabethans, Hamden, Conn. 1973, lists it. Citing Wood, vol. i, col. 519 Wallace, p. 288 n.3 dates the knighthood as 9 January 1583. Wood says that Sidney and Peregrine Bertie were knighted on the same day, January 8, which is impossible since Bertie had taken his seat in the House of Lords as Willoughby on 16 January 1581. A C Hamilton, Sir Philip Sidney, A Study of his Life and Works, Cambridge 1977, p. 3 says he was knighted as Orange's proxy.

3. Wallace, pp. 277-9.

4. Ibid., p. 282.

5. To Molyneux, 23 July 1582, Sidney, vol.iii, p. 141; Henry Sidney was at Hereford on July 2 when he wrote to Burghley, PRO SP 12/144/45. Wallace, pp. 283-7.

give letters from his father to Burghley in November he 'came up' to the court at Oatlands, where he learnt of the death of Edward Wentworth, the Chancellor's son-in-law.¹ We do not know whether he returned to Wilton for a while or stayed on with the court when it moved to Windsor for Christmas. In 1583 with his marriage and gaining of office under Warwick the course of his life was changed and began a new and distinct phase.

The period of the Alençon courtship was a difficult time for Sidney. His high hopes after his Imperial mission were never fulfilled and along with the courtship itself he had to contend with a trying shortage of money. Denied the service at court he longed for, he was not eager to retire to the country and was constantly encouraged to play a part in international politics. Instead he was in London or with the court for most of 1578 and 1579. For the first part of 1580 he was away, mainly at Wilton engaged on the Old Arcadia. But he returned to the court in the autumn and stayed there until the Christmas of 1581. Then he went back to Wilton, where after the short expedition to the Low Countries he based himself for most of the new year. He was therefore able to keep directly in touch with Leicester House during the crucial period when the Shepheardes Calender was being put together, and to assist in devising the Four Foster Children of Desire. He may not have gone down to Wilton until the end of March 1580, but even so could have joined in the poetic experiments described in the March and April Spenser-Harvey Letters by post. Anyway, I feel they describe some events which happened before the spring of 1580. Far from being out of touch with Leicester's circle during this exciting time, Sidney had every opportunity to involve himself in its literary, political and intellectual activities.

ii. The Patron.

These bare outward circumstances only give a superficial image of

1. To Burghley, 14 November 1582, Sidney, vol. iii, p. 142.

Sidney during these years. They suggest when but now how he chose to write his poems and prose works. By looking at what other people thought of him a different picture will emerge and a sense of his inner life may develop. Before discussing what he wrote between 1577 and 1582 I shall try to show what was going on in his life at that time.

It was not until he returned to England in 1577 that Sidney began to be recognised and sought out in his own country as a patron of letters. The two earliest known dedications to him, both made in 1576 came from European centres of learning, Geneva and Frankfurt, and were the result of personal knowledge on the part of the dedicators, offered to him, 'as a young man interested in learning and religion'.¹ The first literary recognition which he won came prophetically during the 1577 embassy from Melissus, when they left each other, the one for England, and the other for Italy. In his poem the German calls him, 'Sydnee Musarum inclite cultibus', a line which is open to more interpretations than that by then Sidney was himself a poet.²

With this background it is not surprising that Harvey begins his set of poems addressed to Sidney:

Tene ego, te solum taceam, Praeclare Philippe,
Quemque aliae gentes, quemque ora externa loquuntur? (sig.K3)

Harvey is the first Englishman to celebrate Sidney personally in print and he did so at length in the final section of his Gratulationes Valdinenses of the summer of 1578.³ Although he mentions his ancestry, for Harvey it

1. Ringler, p. xxiii.

2. Although Dorsten, p. 51 calls it 'the earliest reference anywhere to Sidney as a poet' and denies Buxton's interpretation that it refers to his patronage, (*ibid.*, n. 1), he himself translates it 'O, Sidney, renowned for your study of the Muses', (p. 50). The text of the poem is given in full in Appendix I no. 2. Ringler, p. xxv merely says it is the earliest reference 'to his interest in poetry'. Osborn, p. 90 mentions but does not discuss either the poem or the meeting; Robertson, p. xviii n.1 finds the language here as with Harvey's Gratulationes too imprecise to be interpreted confidently.

3. I am ignoring the brief references to Sidney in Thomas Drant's Praesul, 1576, pp. 45, 47 as being parts of poems addressed to other men.

is Sidney's learning and mind which are most impressive. He knows of the two foreign dedications, but is also aware of the Languet friendship, and urges him towards a brilliant future, (sigs. K3, K3v). A second poem praising him as a courtier was written, 'paulo ante discessum', (sig. K4), referring to his proposed mission to Casimir.

Strictly speaking Harvey's address had been preceded by John Derrick whose dedication to his series of poems and woodcuts, The Image of Ireland, is dated from Dublin, 16 June 1578. The book did not actually appear until 1582 and reflects more on Derrick's service under Sir Henry Sidney than on any personal acquaintance with his son. Although he knew about 'your excellent Nature towards all laudable exercises' and the 'fame of your courtesie',¹ these are really too vague and indirect to tell us very much.

Far more informative is the long Latin poem Rogers addressed to his friend from Ghent on 14 January 1579, which I have already mentioned in the context of the 'Areopagus'. The poem's opening immediately associates Sidney with the court and his noble female relatives at it. Including the Queen, Rogers mentions nine women, (glancing at the Muses), whom Sidney or Dyer might celebrate, (11.53, 54). He presents Sidney primarily as an orator able to converse in Latin, Italian or French and stresses his elegant copiousness:

At quando ad nostras sese rapit impetus artes,
Ingenii currunt flumina quanta tui? (11.63, 64).²

Unfortunately he does not pursue this theme but goes on to show how through 'the nobility of your mind', ('genii nobilitate'), he has served Virtue, the Muses and the gods, (11.70-2). Recounting his life he emphasises his eloquence, (11.87-92), describes his continental tour and mentions the recently completed mission to the Emperor. Most interestingly he confirms the impression that Sidney spent most of 1578 at court by talking of his continually

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1. Sigs. a2v., a3v. Although dated 1581 on its title-page The Image of Ireland was entered in the Stationers' Register on 8 July 1582. Arber, vol. ii, p. 413, when John Day paid the Company 6d. to licence it.
 2. Dorsten, p. 63 again interprets the Latin to make the 'passion' '(poetic)', when the language is too loose and vague to bear this meaning for certain.

being in the Queen's company, (ll.141-8, 151, 152) and of his close links with Warwick, Leicester and his circle of friends. On the other hand when he mentions Lady Knollys, (l.39), he is unconscious of how her marriage to Leicester had changed Sidney's expectations. It is a pity that Rogers' poem neither transcends the convention in which he is writing, nor its occasion. He dwells heavily on the court and the possibilities for Sidney there, but in more senses than one he is writing from a distance.

In 1579 Sidney began to be closely associated with literature and religion as a patron and man of influence. Altogether five works were dedicated to him in England in that year; two Protestant religious ones, two from Gosson and Spenser's Calender. The publisher Stell dedicated George Gilpin's translation of Philip van Marnix's Beehive of the Romish Church in high style:

you are a mirrour among men, & your course of life so praiseworthy,
as that you may bee well thought a blossome of true Nobilitie: your
worshipful mind also being beautified & inriched with such rare
ornamentes, as that you among the rest, glister like a starre.

The emphasis on the quality of his mind is telling: although Stell had not met Sidney, Gilpin was Daniel Rogers' successor with the Merchant Adventurers and had carried letters between Sidney and Languet.¹ The choice of star-imagery is significant in view of the Castor and Pollux references in the Spenser-Harvey Letters.

Dyer and Sidney were often connected as friends in this early period. We have just seen Rogers do it in his Latin poem and Languet's letter of 27 February 1579 refers to his friendship with Dyer as being, 'like a precious gem added to my store.'² By the autumn of 1581 their friendship was unmistakable, and after Languet's death Dyer replaced him as Sidney's older friend and adviser. Clusius must have met Dyer with Sidney when he visited England, for he dedicated the third book of Nicholas Monardes' Simplicium

1. Sigs., *5, *5v.; Dorsten, p. 58.

2. Languet to Sidney, 27 February 1579, Pears, pp. 157-9.

Medicamentorum Historiae in his Latin translation to them both:

(libenter enim coniungo, quos indissolubili verae amicitiae nodo connexos esse scio).¹

Similarly and perhaps more exciting for its literary context Thomas Watson alludes to them both in a poem on his Hecatompethia:

Hic quoque seu subeas Sydnaei, sive Dyeri
Scrinia, qua Musis area bina patet.

Here Sidney is clearly recognised as a literary patron; but there is no way of knowing when this was written or published beyond the fact that the book was entered in the Stationers' Register on 31 March 1582.²

This is to anticipate. Presumably at the beginning of 1579 while he was in London, involved in the Casimir visit, Sidney gave Richard Robinson four angels for the dedication of his translation of Melancthon's Godly Prayers; the book was registered on 24 March 1579. I do not think that this tells us much about Sidney's religious faith. Robinson was a worthy hack-writer, always in need of money, who perhaps amused the Sidneys. Sir Henry gave him ten shillings for his copy of the book and with his son was according to Robinson, 'many tymes benevolent unto my pore study'. Apart from religious works Robinson was also interested in King Arthur and may have shared his hobby with Sidney and his circle of friends. When he dedicated his translation of Leland's Assertio Arturii to Lord Grey, Sir Henry Sidney and Mr Customer Smith in 1582 Sir Henry gave him 6s 8d for his copy.³

I have already discussed the problem of the dedication of the Shepheardes Calender, 'To the noble and virtuous Gentleman, most worthy of all titles both of learning and Chivalry'. Fame of another sort came with the

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1. Sig. A2; the dedication dated 22 September 1581 was written from Frankfurt and the book published at Antwerp in 1582.
 2. Sig. A2; Arber, vol.ii, p. 409.
 3. Ibid., p. 349; STC 17790.5; BL MS Royal 18 A lxvi f.5v, which is printed in George M Vogt, 'Richard Robinson's Eupolenia (1603)', SP, vol. xxi, 1924, pp. 629-48. I have not seen the dedication itself. Robinson was also responsible for The Auncient Order, Societie and Unitie laudable of Prince Arthure, 1583, STC 800.

publication in 1580 of the Spenser-Harvey Letters. They are the source for our knowledge that Sidney scorned Stephen Gosson, 'for hys labor' in dedicating The Schoole of Abuse to him, (p.635b). Gosson probably only learned of this when the Letters were printed.¹ In the dedication to the Schoole he promises Sidney further works and it seems that by then he had already prepared for him The Ephemerides of Phialo which was issued in October 1579. Neither dedication is particularly informative; this is hardly surprising as Gosson knew very little about Sidney or his interest in poetry. It is probable that A Defence of Poetry was written either directly in response to Gosson's dedication, or once Sidney had been prompted to reply after the reaction of other courtiers.²

The Letters paint a very different picture of Sidney and his world from that suggested by two foreign dedications of the first two years of the new decade. Although Lambert Daneau did not know Sidney personally, he was an ardent supporter of the Protestant cause. He dedicated works to Orange and Casimir as well as to Nicholas Bacon and his sons Anthony and Edward. It is interesting that he should offer him the Geographiae Poeticae rather than a work about theology which might have offended. The book is a description of Europe made out of Latin verse from classical and post-classical authors. John Buxton calls it 'tedious', but Zouch had a very high opinion of it, praising its taste and elegance. It may have stimulated Sidney in the geographical researches which he carried out for the New Arcadia. Daneau seems to know about his lack of public office:

Cui Pater est Prorex, cui gens est inclyta bello,
Munia qui tractat publica, Num latuit?
Legatum quem ipsi Reges stupere gravemque
Doctumque ante annos dicere, Num latuit?³

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1. Spenser, Prose Works, p. 251.
 2. Markets of Bawdrie: The Dramatic Criticism of Stephen Gosson, ed. A F Kinney, Salzburg Studies in English Literature, Elizabethan and Renaissance Studies, vol. iv, Salzburg 1974, pp. 43-51; cf. Miscellaneous Prose, p. 62.
 3. Buxton, pp. 58, 59; Zouch, Memoirs of Sir Philip Sidney, p. 308; Daneau, sig.¶ 3. The book is known with three different imprints: Geneva 1579 and 1580 and Lyons 1580. These are different issues rather than separate editions. On Daneau, see Olivier Fatib, Méthode et Théologie: Lambert Daneau et les Débuts de la Scolastique Reformée, Travaux d'Humanisme et de Renaissance, vol.cxlvii, Geneva 1976.

He almost certainly gained his information from Languet and probably is referring to his being hidden from international rather than domestic politics.

A more local knowledge of Sidney's circumstances was shown by Henri Estienne in his dedication of the histories of Herodian and Zosimus, Geneva 1581. It expresses the scholar-printer's fears about his wasting time and abilities at court. Afraid that his Homer may have slipped from his hands, he urges him to accept the historians as a protection against the sirens of the court, to whom those of his age and rank fall prey. He must fight whatever keeps him from his books and at least keep on reading historians. Estienne's choice of these two early chroniclers of the decline of the Roman Empire and the degeneracy of its court life is significant and was perhaps an ironical hint for Sidney.

Estienne was right about the dangers of frittering life away at court. When Nicholas Lichefield dedicated his translation of Luis Gutierrez de la Vega's De Re Militari to Sidney on 9 December 1581, he referred to him as one, 'most ready & advenferous in all exercises of feats of warre and chivalry'; certainly at this time Sidney knew more about chivalry than war. Lichefield while saying he does not know Sidney personally, also refers to 'your noble minde'.¹ Again in his book about soldiering William Blandy says his patron is able:

both to doe your selfe, and to move and perswade other to all worthy & laudable actions.²

What sort of moving and persuading Blandy is thinking of are not specified, but the phrase could refer to written as well as verbal exhortations.

Scipio Gentili shows a closer familiarity with his patron, ('domino suo longe observandissimo'), in the dedication of his Latin paraphrase of the Psalms dated 23 June 1581. He celebrates the fame of his family and Sidney's

1. Sigs. A2, A2v.

2. The Castle or Picture of Pollicy, 1581, sig. A2v.

own accomplishments in the sciences and liberal arts, in riding and the martial arts. Sidney can speak Italian like a native and loves the country, but more interestingly he talks of his judgement:

(quod licet in omnibus acerrimum videatur, in poesi tamen, quum ipsa plurimum delecteris, multo est acrius)

This is the sort of comment on Sidney which shows his intellectual liveliness and the enthusiasm for writing which he conveyed to others. It is genuinely illuminating as a document for anyone trying to understand his position as a patron in his own right.¹

iii. The Choice of Life,

The simple facts of these dedications tell us much about how others saw Sidney, but still more can be gathered from events during this period to help build up a picture of his life then.

It is a convenient simplification to see Sidney's career from the return to England after the Imperial mission until 1582 as divided between two possibilities, a public and political one or a private and literary one. The chronological outline of the first part of this chapter suggests how the two options can be seen as resolving themselves into a conflict between court and country, with the court more successful than has been thought before. With this comes the swelling tide of literary patronage and recognition; but also as a recent study of the background to the dedication by Francis Junius of his Hebrew grammar to Sidney has shown,² there is a merging of the literary and the political which suggests that writing and scholarship can achieve things in the world. What appeared at first sight a simple choice between two lives became, under the pressure of events during the Alençon courtship, a much more complicated affair in which writing far from being a way of avoiding the

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1. Paraphrasis aliquot Psalmorum Davidi, 1581, sigs. *2-3v. It is a pity that Ringler does not make full use of this dedication and Buxton omits it.
 2. Dorsten, 'Sidney and Franciscus Junius', pp. 1-13; I think his suggestion that Sidney himself may have helped to introduce the Protestant League Bible into England, (p.9), is unlikely and unsupported by any internal evidence from its different editions.

political world of action became the way into it.

Leicester was the decisive factor in this, and determined Sidney's course. He was heir not just to his fortune but his world. Later on Leicester is said to have taken his nephew to the Low Countries:

not only despising his youth for a Counsellor, but withall bearing
a hand over him as a forward young man.¹

This may have been so in the context of military operations, in which of course Sidney had never previously taken part; but until then the evidence for Leicester's employment of, interest in and connexion with his nephew is overwhelming.

The effect of his marriage in September 1578 must have been worrying; the birth of a new heir, Lord Denbigh, in the spring of 1581, shattering. Sidney expressed this as Camden reveals by bearing as his device:

SPERO, thus dashed through, to shew his hope
therein was dashed,

on the next tilt day. Since the child was probably born in March or May Sidney may have used this impresa in the Four Foster Children tilt of May 1581.² Denbigh did not die until 1584 so that Sidney had plenty of time to think about how he might lose his inheritance; for although he now had a rival and competitor his position was not yet actually in danger. Nevertheless it made him less secure than he had been and the obvious way to strengthen his position was through marriage. One set of schemes for wedding him to a foreign Princess had probably been abandoned by its promoter, Languet, before the spring of 1578.³ Seeing and perhaps helping in the preparation for Penelope Devereux's wedding and observing the girl herself may also have prompted Sidney. She

1. Greville, Life of Sidney, p. 29; cf. Miscellaneous Prose, p. 125 n.2.

2. Quoted by Ringler, p. 441; this does not conflict with the evidence of Goldwell's account that his followers wore the motto, 'Sic nos non nobis'. Sidney himself may not have worn this, or if he did for the entrance may have changed it for the tilt on the second day. The full significance of Sidney's motto can only be understood when it is remembered that Whetstone in Sir Philip Sidney, His Honorable Life, (1587), sig. B3 reports that he used the motto 'SPERO'.

3. See above, p.236 n.2.

most likely married Lord Rich on 1 November 1581. The earliest known reference to a connexion between Sidney and Frances Walsingham, his future wife, occurs in a letter of December 17.¹

Security of a kind could also be found through the Elizabethan hobby of genealogy. Sometime before or during 1580 at Sir Henry Sidney's request Robert Cooke drew up a family pedigree which with the help of four forged deeds extended the family's descent back from a Surrey yeoman of Edward I's reign to a chamberlain of Henry II's.² The pedigree does not support any claim to the throne, but gains its significance from the period of its invention. In 1580 Cooke also produced a fairly spurious pedigree for Leicester, which I have already mentioned in connexion with the Stemmata Dudleiana. It is too much of a coincidence that they should have both been devised probably in the same year, by the same man and for closely connected families. They must reflect Leicester's changed status and doubts over his future due to the Alençon courtship.

So just after a year from his return to England Sidney found himself uncertain about his inheritance; he could no longer rely on succeeding to his uncle's fortune or position. His own rank remained equally unsure. Received abroad as a prince and moving in the courtly world in England only

1. Ringler, pp. 441-3.

2. HMC De L'Isle and Dudley, vol. i, pp. vi, vii, 304. Earlier the same editor, C L Kingsford, had dated the forgery exactly to 1580 in, 'On Some Ancient Deeds and Seals belonging to Lord De L'Isle and Dudley', Archaeologia, vol. lxxv, 1913-14, p. 253. Miscellaneous Prose, p. 212 n. to 134. 15-17 fails to mention that the pedigree is forged and says it was drawn up by Sidney. Further the pedigree printed in Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica, vol. ii, 1876, pp. 161-7, to which the editor refers was taken from a later copy of the Longleat roll, owned by Alexander Nesbitt of Hatchford and printed there with 'restorations' made by T W King in 1841 from a contemporary transcript and other evidences in the College of Arms. It is therefore not an accurate guide to the forgeries in the Longleat roll. According to the Herald and Genealogist, vol. i, 1863, p. 77 Robert Cooke also compiled an illuminated pedigree with short biographical notices of Sir William, Henry and Philip Sidney in about 1584; this was owned by Lt.Col. Augustus Meyrick of Goodrich Court and exhibited at the Society of Antiquaries in 1863.

bearing the title of a gentleman was more than inconvenient. As we have seen he was the logical choice to act as Casimir's proxy at the Garter ceremony, but lacked the necessary knighthood. This aspect of Sidney's rank has been insufficiently brought out in relation to the tennis court quarrel. The clash at Greenwich in front of the French commissioners was not simply between supporters and opponents of the marriage, or Roman Catholics and Protestants, but between the ancient and ennobled and the comparatively new and undistinguished - the nobility against the gentry. Queen Elizabeth's resolution of the quarrel makes this clear. Greville tells how she:

lays before him the difference in degree between Earls, and Gentlemen; the respect inferiors ought to their superiors; and the necessity in Princes to maintain their own creations...

Sidney's friend shows himself deeply aware of the difference and continues:

...a Peer of this Realm, born great, greater by alliance, and superlative in the Princes favour...finding unrespectiveness in himself (though a great Lord) not respected by this Princely spirit...those glorious inequalities of Fortune in his Lordship were put to a kinde of pause, by a previous inequality of nature in this Gentleman...

Greville refers to Oxford's title fifteen times in six pages. Sidney's reply to the Queen is a perfect assertion of the Elizabethan gentry's rights and political position. The need to assert it shows his own lack of faith that he was secure within it.¹

Finally there was the possibility of abandoning England for Europe, Ireland or the New World. If the Queen would not employ him as an ambassador he could not be safely used as the English representative of the Protestant cause. So his eligibility as a husband for a Protestant princess declined and his chances of European service slowly vanished, especially after Languet's death in 1581. Equally with the Alençon courtship apparently about to succeed, the possibility of exile and Sidney's fear of it grew.² By the beginning of 1582 he was becoming desperate and reached out for the straws of helping and following his father in the government of Ireland - which he had visited in 1576 - and of Wales.³ Nothing came of either of these schemes,

1. Greville, Life of Sidney, pp. 63-9.

2. On the possibility of exile see Dorothy Connell, Sir Philip Sidney, pp. 93-6, 99-101.

3. Wallace, pp. 280-3.

nor unless it was some much needed financial profit as well as the dedication of Hakluyt's Divers Voyages touching the Discoverie of America in 1582, from his interest in the New World. He invested money in Frobisher's voyages, but did not actually pay it. Gilbert's exploration of America interested him for the possibilities it might offer himself, but also for what it might offer Roman Catholics.¹

Greville's Life provides a convenient summary of Sidney's career which shows how important Greville held the period of the Alençon courtship to be. The origins of his rather inappropriately named work have been recently examined,² but it has not yet been shown how he divides his biographical matter into three distinct sections each concerning a crucial incident in Sidney's career. In the middle of the fourth chapter Greville says he will, 'pass from the testimonie of brave mens words, to his own deeds' and begins to describe his 'first employment', the 1577 embassy, (p. 41). A few pages later he calls this, 'the first prize which did enfranchise this Master Spirit into the mysteries, and affairs of State', (p. 45). This ends the chapter and the fifth one begins to describe Sidney's attitude to the courtship and the tennis court quarrel with, 'The next doubtfull Stage hee had to act upon...' (p. 45). Similarly the concluding chapter of the biography, after the false start of the proposed voyage with Drake, recounts his exploits and death in the Netherlands and opens with, 'The next step which he intended into the world...', (p. 70). The sequence of the three episodes is plain; 'The first...the next...the next...'. For Greville the Alençon courtship - not for example the earlier educational tour of Europe, the focus of Osborn's account - is the central and crucial period of Sidney's life.

1. Ibid., pp. 195, 196, 285, 286.

2. M L Caldwell, 'Sources and Analogues of the Life of Sidney', SP, vol. lxxiv, 1977, pp. 279-300; see also H N MacLean, 'Bacon, Greville, History, and Biography', NQ, vol. cci, 1956, pp. 95-7 and N Farmer, 'Fulke Greville and Sir John Coke: An Exchange of Letters on a History Lecture and certain Latin Verses on Sir Philip Sidney', HLQ, vol. xxxiii, 1969-70, pp. 217-36, esp. p. 231 for Greville's debt to Bodin.

During this time he developed a symbolic imagination and more importantly discovered that he could realise it through writing. The causes behind this must lie within the stimulation he received intellectually from Leicester's circle and imaginatively from his pictures and objets d'art. Similarly the Alençon courtship while limiting what could be said and done politically, encouraged a more oblique response to the problems it posed for the courtier who found himself in opposition to the Queen. With its wholesale importation of French culture and manners to England, the courtship also stimulated an interest in the richly symbolic art and culture of the neighbouring court, which began to be imitated in England.

The effects of this can be easily demonstrated. Sidney's New Year gift for 1578, the first he is known to have presented, was a cambric smock with a 'sute of ruffs'. Next year he gave a white sarcenet waist-coat; in 1580, 'a cup of cristall with a cover'. His gift in 1581 was, 'a juell of golde, being a whippe, garnished with small diamondes in foure rowes and cordes of small seede pearle'. What he gave in 1582 - if anything - is not recorded, but in 1583 he presented a jewel like a castle, decorated with diamonds, 'being a pott to sett flowers in'. This is not his last recorded gift, which may have been in 1584 when he gave a pair of richly jewelled slippers, but it shows how much Sidney's ideas about what could be done with the annual ritual had changed.¹ It seems that the castle jewel might be a way of reminding the Queen of her rôle in the Four Foster Children tilt, while the whip presumably represents some degree of repentance and submission over the Alençon courtship.² It is very unfortunate that with the exception of the two imprese which I believe he used in the Foster Children tilt, none of the other half-dozen imprese Sidney devised can be dated.³ Since he only began

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1. Nichols, vol. ii, pp. 77, 78; 260; 301; 397; J L Nevinson, 'New Year's Gifts to Queen Elizabeth I, 1584', Costume, vol. ix, 1975, p. 29; PRO C 47/3/39 shows that he did not give one in 1577.
 2. Katherine Duncan-Jones, Sidney's Pictorial Imagination, University of Oxford B. Litt. 1964, pp. 72, 141, 142; Ringler, p. 440.
 3. These are described and discussed by Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'Sidney's Personal Imprese', JWCI vol. xxxiii, 1970, pp. 321-4 and in relation to NA in her Pictorial Imagination, chapter II.

to be involved in court life and chivalry after his return to England these imprese almost certainly date from 1578; their connexions with the New Arcadia confirm this. Although Sidney's principal debt to the emblematisers is to Ruscelli and ultimately to Giovio,¹ I would suggest that his interest in their potential came from France, where they were widely used and discussed in court circles, especially in the academies. We shall see Alençon using one in the 1582 New Year tilt. Equally it is very unlikely that Spenser, England's first emblem writer should not have discussed the theory and practice of imprese with Sidney. In this light Abraham Fraunce's gift of a book of emblems to Sidney before he went to the Low Countries in 1582 is entirely natural and takes on a deeper significance.²

It has been necessary to pay such close attention to Sidney's life between 1578 and 1582 because if we are to understand the works which he wrote in those years we must be aware of what was happening to him then. Free from the formal demands of the theatre and lacking Shakespeare's impersonality, Sidney left a lot of himself behind in what he wrote. He was an immature writer both from the point of view of his age, but also because he had not perfectly learnt to distance himself from his material and disguise it. Although his works are not limited to the moment in which they were produced their origins can definitely be found within it and the context of Sidney's life at this time.

iv. The Lady of May,

In my discussion of his writings I shall show they are both imaginatively

1. Ibid., p.73.

2. On the MS (Bodleian MS Rawl. D 345) which contains a treatise on Ramist logic and 40 of Giovio's imprese see G C Moore Smith's edition of Fraunce's Victoria, Bang's Materialen, vol. xiv, 1906, pp. xxvi-xxxi and Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'Two Elizabethan Versions of Giovio's Treatise on Imprese', ES, vol. lii, 1971, pp. 119-22. Both writers reject the suggestion that the book relates to either of Sidney's departures of 1585, a view which has recently been endorsed by C Kenyon, The Literary Career of Abraham Fraunce, University of Oxford B. Litt. 1973, pp. 9, 10. She also dates the MSS of Fraunce's works to 1583-5, (p. 7), which is why I have not discussed his dedications to Sidney.

and historically rooted in this period and trace how he transformed the political and courtly life with which he was so familiar into art and at the same time used his art to examine and interpret that life. In a sense all of Sidney's works are occasional ones, but the best of them effortlessly transcend their occasion.

The Lady of May which is generally taken to be Sidney's first imaginative literary composition is also the hardest to interpret correctly. Difficulties arise from the problems of its date and text. The evidence for when the entertainment was performed is contradictory, the choice being between the Queen's May visits to Wanstead in 1578 and 1579. There are good reasons for believing that Leicester was present on both occasions, but we also know from his letter of July 9 written at Buxton, that earlier in 1578 the Queen went there and he was not able to receive her in person. I think that this letter refers to an unrecorded visit during June or the beginning of July when Leicester was in the north.¹ This may explain the relationship between the letter and Rhombus' additional speech in the Helmingham Hall manuscript, (Hm).

Marie Axton refers to the 'recovery of the original epilogue', which was 'suppressed' in 1598.² Its first editors seem to agree with this view:

in 1598 this "epilogue" was dropped, not simply because the allusions were dated, private, and slightly damaging to the name of Leicester but mainly because Rombus' speech is an anticlimax.²

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1. It is quite possible for the Queen to have gone to Wanstead when Leicester was away and for no record of her visit to have survived. This is how Helen Cooper, Pastoral, 1977, p. 150, interprets the letter to Hatton. On May 23 she seems to have been at Sir Nicholas Bacon's house at Gorhambury near St. Alban's while the Privy Council met at Greenwich, (APC, vol. x, p. 232). Chambers in his court calendar does not mention the visit and the only source for our knowledge of it is Rymer's Foedera, vol. xv, 1713, p. 787; in 1565 the Queen visited Sir Thomas Smith's house at Ankerwick when both he and his wife were away, HMC Pepys, vol. i, p. 67.
 2. Marie Axton, 'The Tudor Mask and Elizabethan Court Drama', p. 37 in ed. M Axton and R Williams, English Drama: Forms and Development, Essays in Honour of M C Bradbrook, Cambridge 1977.
 3. R Kimbrough and P Murphy, 'The Helmingham Hall Manuscript of Sidney's The Lady of May: A Commentary and Transcription', Renaissance Drama, NS, vol. i, 1968, p. 107.

I think however that Katherine Duncan-Jones' analysis of the texts, which essentially produces a literary account of the piece in 1598 and a record of the performance in Hm is more convenient as an initial theory.¹ She suggests that Sidney 'repudiated' the epilogue, which was rapidly devised to go with the presentation of the agate necklace. But the speech and necklace are too important from the point of view of the piece's meaning for their delivery to have been casual or left to the last moment. If Sidney disliked the speech he might easily have rewritten it or included a simple reference to the gift. Further, Hm which pays particular attention to the assigning of speeches with headings even when the text makes them clear, does not provide one for Rombus' final speech.

The Lady of May represents the end of Leicester's worship of the Queen. It is hard to interpret not just because of Rombus' language, and the scribe's carelessness. The Earl's presence is indicated by the Lady, who says she kneels not just, 'because a certain gentleman hereby seeks to do you all the honour he can in this house', (Misc. Prose, 24.17,18). When Dorcas praises the shepherd's life of contemplation as fit for courtiers and templers, (28.16), it might have been meant to suggest Leicester through his close links with the Inner Temple. Rombus in his final speech says, 'that in this our city we have a certain neighbour, they call him Master Robert of Wanstead', which in the court-country context may simply be humorous. He is an honest man who loves learning and is generous to the local inhabitants, but as the schoolmaster also says he is 'foulyly commaculated' with Romanism. He has found his beads with which 'after his pater noster he semper suits "and Elizabeth"' and is now surrendering them to the Queen. If she accepts the gift he will never try to recover it for he is now freed from his slavery. Rombus ends by asking the Queen 'to love me much better than you were wont', (31.22-32.6).

Rombus is taking his own line in the last speech; he is still offended

1. Miscellaneous Prose, pp. 17-20. All page and line references in the text are to this edition.

by being silenced by the Lady and angry with all the participants for not deferring to him before he had resolved the conflict.¹ By surrendering the beads on Leicester's behalf he is not as Marie Axton says disabling 'himself by renouncing all jurisdiction in the country',² since we know that he did not do this. He is rather abandoning the right to court and worship the Queen. The life of the beadsman is rejected and the argument of the Lady of May is taken a step further, suggesting that the speech is a later addition. Rombus himself may not have been part of the show's original conception. He has a false entrance, failing to part the fray, (22.19-22) and then is introduced by Lalus to 'Tell the whole case', (23.6). Later however the Lady says that, 'as old father Lalus directed me, I will tell you my fortune', (24.27, 28). Just before this Rombus has had an argument with the May Lady which is similar to the short one he has with her towards the end of the piece, (29.32-30.7). In the middle he has two speeches intended to amplify those of Dorcas and Rixus, but with which, except for one brief sentence, (28.4-6), they do not connect and ignore. Rombus is a brilliant comic invention, but not an essential character in the piece and his part may well have been devised as a foil to its pastoral elegance. He grows out of and replaces Lalus, who sounds as if he will be important to the action - he is 'one of the substantiallest shepherds,' (22.25) - but whose part becomes impossible to develop through his dismissal of love.

Sidney uses the apparently simple form of the opposition between shepherds and foresters to produce a highly complicated debate about the court. The Suitor introduces her daughter's lovers as if there were nothing to choose between them, (21.19,20); she does not ask the Queen specifically to make the choice, but to 'redress' the conflict, (21.22).³ It is left to the Lady to suggest that the Queen is to judge between, 'the many deserts and many faults of Therion, or the very small deserts and no faults of

1. Kimbrough and Murphy's interpretation of this last speech, art. cit., pp. 106, 107 is inaccurate.

2. Axton, art. cit., pp. 37, 38.

3. The punctuation of this difficult passage in Miscellaneous Prose seems wrong, but its correct pointing is not obvious.

of Espilus', (25.11, 12). Therion lives up to his name which means wild beast or animal, by being a venison-thief, and angry, violent and insulting. Since all deer belong to the Queen he is only their keeper for her.¹ Espilus is mild, a careful shepherd but also a poet who 'records my name in doleful verses', (25.10). Therion challenges Espilus to sing and to:

Show how thou canst deserve so brave desire, (25.19)

Espilus as we should expect sings as if he had the advantage of the Muses' inspiration, (25.24) and admits that he is a vowed slave to the Lady, (25.33), willing to give his all for her grace, (26.10). Therion is willing to lose the deer for her. They are not his, yet while he can take them, 'you I cannot hold', (26.14); if he gets her he will save his freedom and have all the wealth he wants, (26.15, 16).

The debate now passes into the hands of the old shepherd Dorcas and young forester Rixus: the principal opposition suggested so far is between the passive and the active. The two new characters interpret the song as a simple debate about the best singer and most preferable life, (26.24, 25). Like Lalus, Dorcas is essentially hostile towards the Lady for her proud beauty, which Rixus is not. They suggest a convenient distinction between 'a wild fool' and 'a sheepish dolt', (27.8, 9), or according to Dorcas, 'a thievish prowler' and one 'as quiet as a lamb', (27.19,20). Rombus ends their apparent sinking into abuse and Dorcas once again starts the argument which has reached its crucial stage. He begins with a semi-formal praise of the shepherd's life, emphasising the sheep's obedience and the shepherd's goodness, where the works of nature, or in Hm God, are watched and enjoyed. It is free from 'violent oppression' and servile flattery, (28.17, 18), from which, it is implied, courtiers suffer. They also complain of, 'the greatness of their mistress' estate, which dazzled their eyes and yet burned their hearts', and of her beauty, cruelty and wit, (28.20-3), which must remind us of the Queen, whose name it is which echoes in the vallies. In their profitless

1. Axton, art. cit., p. 40,

courting 'young courtiers' become 'old shepherds', (28.26).

Rixus also concedes 'some goodness' in the life, (28.32), but Rombus exposes the false logic of the argument. Rixus now claims that the forester not only has the shepherd's quietness but has his body strengthened and mind raised by his activity. This is a typically Sidneian refusal to see an absolute difference between action and contemplation. Rixus points out the perfect commonwealth of straight-growing trees and stresses that they are living and developing. The foresters' hopes and ideals can be realised, while those who pursue one 'she' never get her, and have now come to see they never will. Even when they got near to her, she was preparing to go further away. As the Lady says, 'in judging me, you judge more than me in it', (30.12); there is more than just her future at stake. The Queen judges that Espilus 'did the better deserve her', (30.13, 14) and the song is his.¹ The shepherd tells how Silvanus:

At length obtained the point of his desire, (30.23)
 desire which Therion had earlier challenged Espilus to show he deserved. He wants no more because his goddess now sees 'my blessed being'. He then tells of how Pan comforted himself against Hercules' punishment, during his attempted seduction of Omphale, by admitting the greatness of his attacker. Espilus sums up on each lover's behalf stressing Sylvanus' joy in standing before his love; the one represents Platonic love fulfilled, the other passion thwarted.

The presence of both the Queen and Leicester prevents a simple equation

1. My reasons for rejecting S K Orgel's ingenious interpretation, 'Sidney's Experiment in Pastoral; The Lady of May'. JWC vol. xxvi, 1963, pp. 198-203, and the assigning of the final song to Espilus and to Therion by both Ringler and Miscellaneous Prose will become clear. Equally Helen Cooper's view that Therion and Espilus represent Leicester and Hatton in their courtship of the Queen, Pastoral, pp. 149, 150, is based on very slight circumstantial evidence, thinner etymological evidence and offering no explanation for the Hm ending must also be rejected. Penny Pickett's 'Sidney's use of Phaedrus in The Lady of May', SEL, vol. xvi, 1976, pp. 33-50, offers a philosophical reading denying a topical interpretation, although she suggests, p. 48 n. 35 a Rombus-Ramus connexion.

of the two with the Lady and Therion: as in Spenser, the characters are only 'like' their prototypes. Nevertheless the piece seems to revolve around the figure of the Queen and her suitors, presenting her with two different attitudes to herself romantically and politically; the stormy and passionate love of Therion or the quiet submissive desire of Espilus. The Dorcas-Rixus debate tells how young courtiers suffer for their love of the Queen and grow into old shepherds like Dorcas. Foresters do not suffer the same agonies of desire as courtiers or shepherds, because they act on and obtain their loves through the trees' living example. Both want the Lady of May's love, but the Queen's choice of Espilus while "correct", shows her prudence. The pastoral world is good and obedient, the sylvan one independent and 'hurtless' but one in which the 'crookedly bent' trees do 'enviously trouble', (29.18-21). Marie Axton interprets this as the Queen choosing a passive part of England's government and shows how Leicester was identified and saw himself as a forester.¹ In the symbolic drama the Queen rejects his courtship in favour of the passive love perhaps of Burghley's faction, but more probably of the English people - the sheep.

As at Kenilworth the Queen was given an actual choice and might have accepted the Earl, for the song as well as being ironic in that Espilus makes Silvanus' behaviour that of a shepherd and Pan's that of a forester, could also have been sung by either character. Sidney's entertainment succeeded in getting a firm decision out of Elizabeth. His ability to write allegory based on symbolism and metaphor is, if not effortless, at least highly accomplished. Apart from the letter to Hatton the evidence supplied by this sort of presentation of choice points to 1578 as the year in which the show was put on. By 1579 Sidney would have been bound to allude, even if obliquely to Alençon representing a third option for the Queen. In 1578

1. Axton, art. cit., pp. 39-41.

the forester does not get what he wants and becomes a beadsman:¹ after the unexpected and unrecorded visit Leicester prays:

that the goodman Robert, she last hard of there were founde at his
beades, with all his Aves in his sollytarye walke.

I think this means that he hopes she found suitable evidence of his continued devotion, even though he was not there. In Rombus' epilogue good Master Robert is passing beyond being a beadsman, renouncing his contemplative worship of the Queen. Some knowledge of this epilogue may be reflected by a poem in Dowland's Second Booke of Songs or Ayres, 1600, which is addressed to Hugh Holland. Using the first two lines of Sidney's 'O sweet woods, the delight of solitariness', (OA 34), it is spoken by one who has:

From Fame's desire, from love's delight retired,
In these sad groves an hermit's life I led;

The woods are said to be those at Wanstead, which have become 'Love's child-bed, nursery and tomb'.² The poem may allude to Leicester's renunciation of the Queen after the royal visit, even though it was written after Wanstead had probably changed hands several times.

The epilogue represents a shift of world away from the Lady of May's, from the metaphorically symbolic to a dangerously and very nearly personal allegory. This can only make sense if we envisage it as belonging to a later stage in Leicester's relationship with the Queen. As she rejected him in the entertainment, his worship of her, but not his devotion, have gone and he was now free to marry again. My explanation for this second stage in Leicester's relationship with the Queen is that Hm represents a version of the entertainment preparing for the Earl's marriage. I believe that 1598 relates what the Queen saw at Wanstead. After she had made her choice she was given the necklace of beads, symbolizing Leicester's renunciation of his worship, and with it a text of the entertainment from which Hm derives. Its lack of a prefix for Rombus' last speech, which was never actually delivered could

1. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

2. Ed E H Fellowes, English Madrigal Verse 1588-1632, 3rd ed., rev. and enl. F W Sternfeld and David Greer, Oxford 1967, pp 470, 471.

be a sign of this. The status of Hm must remain equivocal, despite its colloquialisms suggesting its closeness to performance, since its scribe was 'appallingly inaccurate' and his text for the Old Arcadia was at least at one remove from anything written by Sidney.¹ It is possible that he has corrupted what was originally an acceptable literary account at one stage given to the Queen. Despite its original May connexion the obvious occasion for the presentation of the necklace and Hm's source would be the Queen's putative second visit to Wanstead in June or early July 1578 when Leicester was in the north.

By the spring of 1578 Sidney had produced his first literary work, firmly rooted in Leicester's world and answering to a specific occasion. Although the performance was private it is based on a public conception of love and politics. It suggests exactly that fascinating mixture of the public and the private we shall find in the Old Arcadia. Sidney had made his début as a poet and pastoral writer. He uses a simple verse form for all of the songs, one which he draws on a great deal in the Old Arcadia. Each poem however, is in some way an experiment. The first is a good example of correlative verse; the second is the earliest example in English of the singing match, while the third as well as being heavily ironic, could be assigned to either singer. A feature of Sidney's distinctive style is his love of experiment. I shall go on to examine how his growing interest in literary forms and political and philosophical ideas are reflected in the works of the Alençon courtship period. They show a mixture of the public and the private which reflects their origins in Leicester House.

v. The Old Arcadia.

So much has been written about the Arcadias and their poems that I shall limit my discussion of them to a few specific points. I shall chiefly examine the Old Arcadia from the point of view of its composition and how it

1. Miscellaneous Prose, p. 19; Robertson, p. liii; all page and line references in the text are to this edition.

reflects Leicester's intellectual circle in which Sidney moved after his return from the continent in 1577. Because of difficulties over its text and its belonging to a later period than that of his contact with Spenser and Harvey, I shall not discuss the New Arcadia, but shall try to show how a Defence of Poetry can be read as a political tract and how in Astrophil and Stella Sidney unites the public and the private.

a. The Old Arcadia, ~~Text~~,

I must admit from the beginning I have not been able to find any new ways of dating Sidney's poems or even of determining in what order he wrote them. Of the many possible chronological groupings of types of poems, none is satisfactory; however some evidence about the composition of the Old Arcadia can be drawn from the order in which the poems occur. Ringler's arguments about the relative dating of the poems seem to me as far as the subject can be taken at the moment.¹ I have failed even to construct a coherent story out of the Philisides-Mira poems, (OA 9, 24, 31, 62, 66, 73, 74; OP 5 and AS v),² and do not feel they can be taken as an abandoned attempt at writing a series of poems about love. Equally because of Ringler's arguments about composition I am not convinced by Rudenstine's view of the Certain Sonnets as a similar early attempt at 'a lyric sequence'.³ Nor have I any new views about the date or status of the 1593 alterations to the Old Arcadia.⁴

1. Ringler, pp. 423, 424 on Certain Sonnets, p. 402 on OA 31 and p. 365 on the Old Arcadia generally.
2. If we accept Peter Beal's findings about the Ottley manuscript, AT 19 should be added to this group, 'Poems by Sir Philip Sidney: the Ottley Manuscript', Library, 5th ser., vol. xxxiii, 1978, p. 287.
3. N L Rudenstine, Sidney's Poetic Development, Cambridge, Mass. 1967, p. 117; while he does not press for the unity of the sequence there, he does so in his Appendix I, pp. 277-83. The textual evidence, (Ringler, p. 424), that no manuscript or print contains all the poems must dispose of any idea of the unity of Certain Sonnets and this itself makes Rudenstine's association of OA 38, 51 and 52, 55 with a 'minor strain' which develops into Certain Sonnets, ibid., p. 119, unhelpful.
4. On these see Ringler, pp. 377, 378; W L Godshalk, 'Sidney's Revision of the Arcadia, Books III-V', PQ, vol. xliii, 1964, pp. 171-84; Joan Rees, 'Fulke Greville and the Revisions of Arcadia', RES, NS, vol. xvii, 1966, pp. 54-7; P Lindenbaum, 'Sidney's Arcadia: the Endings of the three Versions', HLQ, vol. xxxiv, 1970-1, pp. 205-18, esp. p. 209 n.1, and Robertson, pp.lix-lxii.

Instead what seems to me fundamentally important to any view of the Old Arcadia and Sidney's attitude to it, as well as to his life between 1578 and 1582 is the question of minor revisions to the work performed before it became the New Arcadia. If it is possible to discuss this complicated issue it is because of W A Ringler's and Jean Robertson's work, and although I shall criticize their respective editions, I recognize that little scholarly progress could have been made without them.

One of the historical reasons for the present unsatisfactory state of the text of the Old Arcadia is that of its uniqueness as a prose text of this period. Much work has been done on the printed transmission of poems and plays, much on the poetical manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but an editor of the Old Arcadia is alone in a field where there appear to be no comparable texts which might suggest how he should proceed. I shall argue that because of this Jean Robertson has relied too heavily on Ringler's work and methods. Since his edition of the poems has been universally accepted this seems to be a reasonable editorial decision, but there is a fundamental difference in that while he has produced a text of independent poems, Jean Robertson was working on a continuous prose narrative interspersed with poems. The methods and conclusions good for one task should not be assumed to be good for a different one.

The first problem an editor faces is the one of the manuscripts. If we are to recover an accurate text of what Sidney wrote, then using the evidence of the manuscripts which survive we must try to reconstruct what the archetype looked like. Discovering the nature of T is very important, but this can hardly be done when the description^s of its descendants are so poor. A lot of work needs to be done on these manuscripts to find out what their scribes were copying and how they worked: the descriptions of the two editors are unfortunately inadequate. Not enough attention has been paid to the manuscripts' physical appearance, to changes of hands, of paper and watermarks,

to catchwords, foliation and orthography, to the presentation of prose and poetry and especially to the beginnings and endings of acts and eclogues. Only by studying these features can an editor hope to find out the nature of the scribe's copy and, as Shakespearean bibliography shows, this is the key to informed textual criticism.

Having said this on the basis of the available evidence I want to question the idea that Sidney worked more or less continuously on the text of the Old Arcadia from late 1577 until early 1582 and produced four separate versions of it involving both major and minor revisions.¹ I shall mainly be concerned with the latter, which provide a constant accompaniment of variants at the foot of each page of Jean Robertson's text. For I find it unlikely that Sidney altered his book with the kind of consistent attention to detail which the variants suggest, both from the point of view of his character and circumstances during this period, but also in view of his other literary habits.

Jean Robertson says of the lost archetype T that Sidney, 'made alterations, especially in the poems...fairly continuously', (p.lxiii), on the other hand, following Ringler, she knows that 'scribal intervention is a constant source of corruption' in a text like the Old Arcadia, (p.lxvi). In one of the few scholarly reviews of her edition F B Williams correctly noted the inconsistent selection of variants and their inaccurate reproduction,² despite the stated general principles that 'variants...peculiar to one Old Arcadia manuscript' would not be given, and a 'refusal to record the numerous errors and omissions made by one, or sometimes two, scribes', (p.lxvii). If the status of the variants is questioned, what they reveal about the book's composition must be reconsidered. The editor's attitude to this is briefly stated in an unsatisfactory paragraph on pp. lxviii, lxix. There she argues that it would have been attractive, but without a holograph impossible, to

1. These dates are derived from Ringler, pp. 365, 370.

2. RQ, vol. xxvii, 1974, pp. 239, 240.

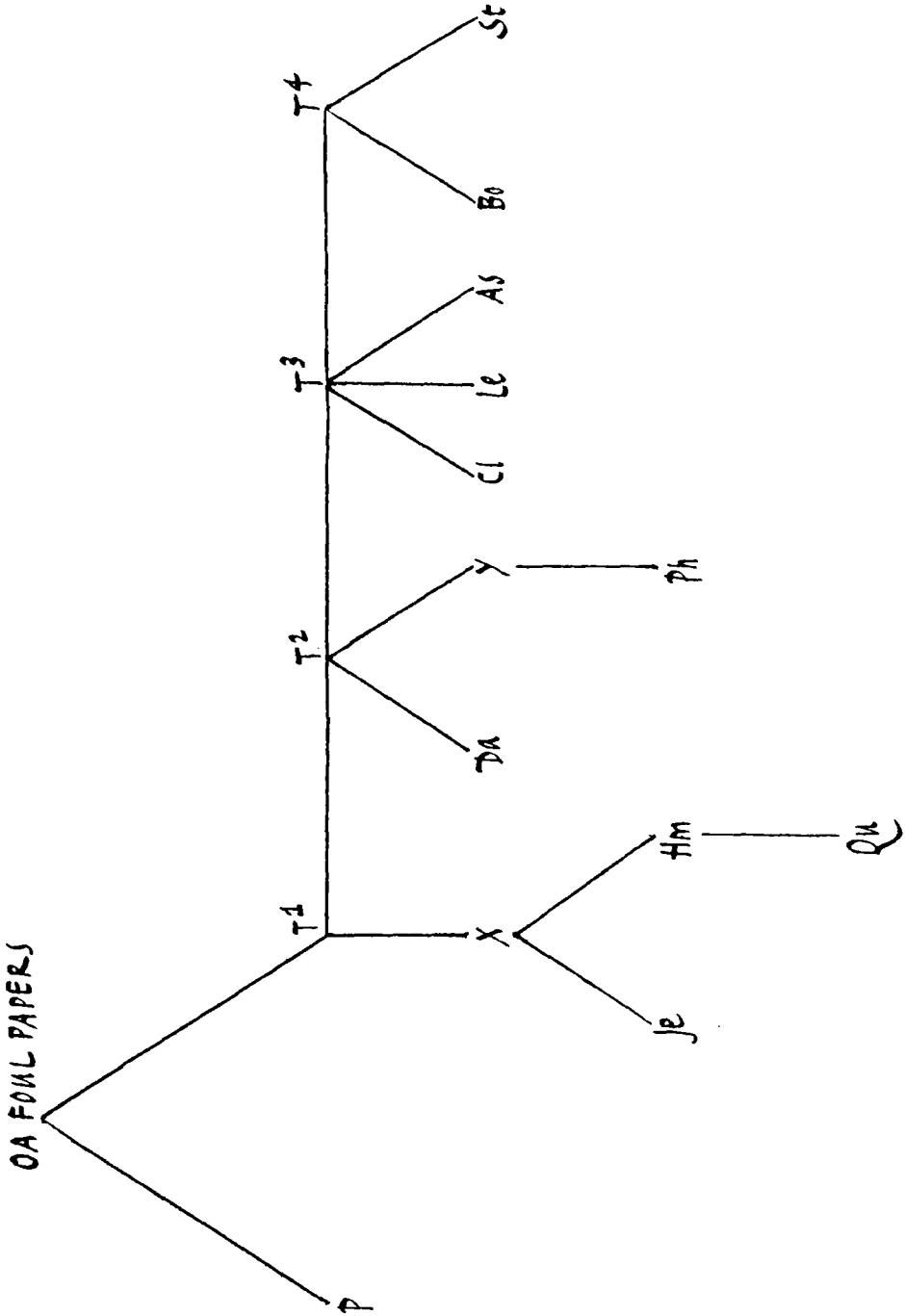
list only authorial variants; she admits the variants she does print often 'have little effect on the meaning', but says with the help of the Commentary it should be possible to distinguish 'genuine authorial variants from those resulting simply from scribal indifference, carelessness, or interference'.

Even if we had Sidney's holograph as well as all the copies of it, we should still not be able to determine which variants were authorial and which scribal, because the holograph could only represent one state of the text at a particular moment. Variants deriving from Sidney could still be introduced in a transcript of the holograph which he then revised, but which might appear simply to be scribal in origin. As it is, we have no holograph and even with Jean Robertson's excellent Commentary it is extremely difficult to distinguish authorial from scribal variants with any certainty. Ringler states, (p. 369), that Sidney's transcript of his foul papers, T, was 'a single original' from which he worked and in which he successively revised his text four times. Again I am not concerned with the major revisions which could have been made by adding or removing leaves from T, or by major crossings out and additions in its margin - according to this theory T⁵ must have been quite a well-organized and legible manuscript. What I find unconvincing about this whole account is the assumption that Sidney was a methodical and regular reviser of his own work. Even if a fraction of the listed Old Arcadia variants are authorial, T⁵ must have been such a mess as to make it undecipherable.

A simple example should illustrate this: at 401.28 two variants are recorded from descendants of T^{1,3} - 'compendious talker/gallant speaker/copious talker', the last being the copy text. All are feasible readings, but ones which would have made T progressively harder to read. If we follow Jean Robertson's textual stemma on p. lxiv, (see diagram), the problem changes its aspect. The T¹ reading is preserved in Hm and presumably in its direct descendant Qu, but not in Je. At first this suggests that Hm's is a scribal error exclusive to Hm, Qu, while on the other hand Cl, As' 'gallant

PLATE II

Diagram showing probable relationships of Old Arcadia manuscripts according to Robertson, p.lvi.



speaker' represents Sidney's second thoughts and 'copious talker' his rejection of them and return to what he had originally written. There would then have been at least two deletions for this phrase in T. Unfortunately without the conjectural manuscript X a further possibility must be considered in which X is copied from T¹, Je transcribed from it, and then X revised at some other time to give the Hm, Qu tradition. In other words - and I do not want to press the reading of 40l.28 too far - without T, X and Y we cannot be sure that Sidney's revisions were made in as neat and logical order as Jean Robertson would suggest. There is no guarantee that preparing a work for limited, private circulation Sidney did not, say, revise a line or two in X, while T³ was being copied.

X and Y appear to be important here because T was taken for a single manuscript. It seems very much more likely to me that it was more than one, which Sidney worked on at different times and revised sporadically: contamination would inevitably follow. Jean Robertson seems to be aware of this when she discusses A's unrevised reading at 176.10, (p.lxvi). She calls it 'disturbing' and uses it to illustrate the general principle: 'Many of the agreements in error or omissions are random, cutting across the groupings of the manuscripts'. She also admits to a degree of contamination between Cl, As, (p.liv) and St, Bo, (p.lv). Again I am not questioning the groupings, which are largely based on Ringler's analysis of the poems, rather I remain unconvinced that pure scribal error and not authorial or other contamination is always behind the 'cutting across' of groups of variants.

Some instances will bring out my point. On the first page of the narrative Basilius is said to have sufficient skill, or in Bo, Ph virtue to govern Arcadia. The variant is interesting and significant, but occurs in

manuscripts of groups T² and T⁴ which are supposedly unconnected. At 117.25 Gynecia suffers a 'right' conflict between love and jealousy, but in Bo, Cl, Je it is 'great' so that the variant occurs in one manuscript of each group T^{1,3,4}; unlike the first example at 4.21 we cannot explain a reading here by way of the lost Y. The clowns who make Pyrocles and Philoclea flee to the lodge at 123.31 are 'an unruly sort' in most manuscripts, but in As, Je a 'company'. And at 227.33 the copy text reads 'present', Bo differs with 'instant', but As, Ph, Je all read 'time'. All of these instances of cutting across groups involve substantial alterations of words which appear to be deliberate and not the result of a simple or common misreading of T.¹

My argument appears to take a pessimistic view of the stability of the text of the Old Arcadia. Jean Robertson does not admit the degree of contamination which exists between the manuscripts and produces a conveniently oversimplified picture of the work's development. It is not that Sidney wrote it, let copies be made, revised it and let more copies be made from a single source, but that he did not regard T as his ultimate authority, which was to be his master-text including all revisions and changes. T was not in effect one manuscript but several and was copied more often than we think and Sidney revised the texture of his book haphazardly, a change here, a change there - as he himself says, 'triflingly handled'. The proof for the existence of more than one T archetype manuscript can be found in the manuscripts containing poems which are unrecorded in any of their substantive variants against any known tradition. There are at least five of these and although they only

1. More examples can be found at: 16.16 Bo Hm; 17.25,26 Bo Da etc; 172.10 As Da; 188.5 Bo Ph; 196.22 As Hm; 202.27 Cl Da Hm and 400.37 As Ph Hm.

contain poems, suggest further authorial revision.¹ Of the best of these, Sir John Harington's, (Hn), Ringler says it was 'probably carefully transcribed from his own manuscript of the Old Arcadia, which must have been a very good text but is not identifiable with any of the nine extant manuscripts', (p. 553). The poem in Eg came from a manuscript 'possibly similar' to As, (p. 555), which should relate it to 13. Ha and Hy contain two and four poems preserving substantive and unique variants, (pp. 556, 557). Ma and Fl both descend from T through the same lost intermediary, (pp. 560, 561). The recently discovered Ottley manuscript represents an independent text deriving from an unrecorded state of T made at the same time as Cl, Le, As.²

The whole argument can, I believe, be taken a stage further. Ringler describes Sidney as 'an extremely rapid writer who composed easily and revised as his pen travelled', (p. lxiii), at the same time he can talk about 'continued and extensive revisions of the Arcadia, and his repeated reworkings of a poem like OA 62', (p. lx). There is more truth in this than is immediately apparent. Sidney works on his verse extremely carefully trying to get it as near-perfect as possible. What he does to his prose is

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1. I am sceptical about the claims made by J P Cutts, 'More Manuscript Versions of Poems by Sidney', EIN, vol. ix, 1971-2, pp. 3-12. There is a slight possibility that lot 1433 of pt. xi of the Heber sale, 10 February 1835, 'A Treasure (sic) made by Sir Phillip Sydney, Knyght, of certeyn accidents in Arcadia, made in the year 1580, is not Ph, although like Ph it was imperfect at the end. Ph was no. 1171 in Thorpe's 1836 catalogue, which I have not seen, but bears no mark of being from Heber's library.
 2. See Beal, 'Poems by Sir Philip Sidney', pp. 284-95, but also Jean Robertson, 'A Note on 'Poems by Sir Philip Sidney: the Ottley Manuscript'', Library, 6th ser., vol. ii, 1980, pp. 202-5. The relation between the Ottley manuscript and Le still needs more investigation. They are the most important of the poetical MSS with a high proportion of poems in common. Ottley has only two poems which Le omits, OA 28 and 77. Beal does not comment on the significance of Ottley containing as a distinct group in its third bifolium all of Sidney's poems in classical metres except four. These are the late one line OP 2; the interestingly misplaced OA 74 and the only poems in which quantitative and stress patterns coincide OA 32 and CS 5, (Ringler, pp. 393, 403). CS 5 is probably very early, (*ibid.*, p. 423). Ottley probably represents an anthology of work in progress during perhaps 1579, although the presence of the Nota to OA 11 suggests a later date of 1581 or 1582, (cf. Ringler, p. 370).

done at the time of the writing, (as the manuscript of the Defence of Leicester shows) or later on a grand scale. He himself describes the two different attitudes in the Old Arcadia. Explaining the pastoral recreations of the Arcadians Sidney tells how one of the shepherds:

should write up the substance of that they said; whose pen, having more leisure than their tongues, might perchance polish a little the rudeness of an unthought-on song. (56.16-18)

We should contrast this with the habits of the two distraught Princesses as letter-writers:

Many blots had the tears of these sweet ladies made in their letters, which many times they had altered, many times torn, and written anew, ever thinking something either wanted or were too much, or would offend, or (which was worst) would breed denial. (398.7-10)

Sidney's treatment of prose and poetry is the same. His revisions of his prose are major and decisive ones: the rejection of the long discussion on classical metres at the end of the first eclogues; the revisions for 1593 and the radical transformation into the New Arcadia. Ringler's classification of the manuscripts is based on the organisation of the poems and with the single exception of the discussion, not on prose variants.

Again I return to these variants because they give a misleading idea of how Sidney worked, what his attitude to the book was and what he was doing between 1577 and 1582. With great honesty Jean Robertson admits in the paragraph I have already discussed that they 'have little effect on the meaning', (p. lxix). Anyone who has read the substantive variants which are not necessarily scribal - that is the ones which make some sort of sense and which are not obviously the result of a graphical misreading - must agree with this. If anything they reveal someone at work on the prose-style aiming for neatness rather than brilliance and occasionally altering a word or phrase but never radically affecting our understanding of the book. I find it hard to believe Sidney did all of this after he had written the Old Arcadia for his sister and perhaps looked over his foul-papers again. As I have argued, when he revises prose he does it on a

significant scale and the evidence shows that having written the narrative he turned his attention to the refining of the poems. It somehow seems uncharacteristic that he should bother so much with the texture of the prose, when we know that either before or after writing the New Arcadia he prepared major revisions to the story which show a considerable degree of dissatisfaction with the overall direction of the narrative.

I would like very tentatively to suggest that Sidney was an unmethodical reviser, allowed his secretary or scribes considerable freedom with his prose, and that this may help to account for the contamination which I believe is a marked feature of the manuscripts. If such an attitude seems incompatible with an author's vanity or interest in his own work, we have only to think of Scott's facility for rapid composition which he expected to be corrected and to a certain extent revised by Ballantyne and his transcriber.¹

b. The Old Arcadia: Ideas and Background,

In this light it is important to emphasise that the Old Arcadia existed in a stable form by the end of 1580. Ringler and Robertson agree that while it was begun shortly after Sidney's return to England in June 1577 the bulk of the work was written at Wilton from March to August 1580.² Neither of them stresses how short a period of time this is for the composition of such a large work. We must imagine Sidney working very rapidly, getting down on paper as quickly as he could what he had conceived and only half-conceived. The Letter to his sister suggests this '...loose sheets of paper...sent unto you as fast as they were done,' (p. 3). Equally, however much we admire this first version we ought to recognize that as the 1593 revisions show, the earlier text is not as fully developed a piece of writing as we might wish to think. It should not come as a surprise that there are ideas and themes in the Old Arcadia, which are only briefly mentioned and soon passed over. As

1. See Mary Lascelles, 'Scott and the Art of Revision', in Notions and Facts, pp. 213-29.

2. Ringler, p. 365; Robertson, pp. xv, xvi.

Jean Robertson has recently put it: 'The truth is that Sidney put into his fiction whatever was interesting him at the time of writing.'¹

I want to discuss these ideas and themes and show how they relate to the intellectual interests of the Leicester circle, paying particular attention to Sidney's choice of vocabulary and use of language. This may appear a rather old-fashioned approach but it does avoid what could be called the vulgarity of the search for personal allegory. This has in any case always been found more applicable to the New Arcadia than to the Old.² Even the finding of models for characters is a dubious business. Rudenstine sees Euarchus as a Languet figure, while Hamilton, partly on the basis of his age calculated from the New Arcadia, sees him as deriving from Sir Henry Sidney.³ I see no reason for associating Leicester, Alençon, Queen Elizabeth or any literary or political figure with characters in the Old Arcadia. The more modern way of looking at the genesis of the ideas behind the work is through an examination of the Languet correspondence for this period. Rudenstine is the chief and Dorothy Connell the secondary exponent of this method. Both write about retirement and relate its treatment in the letters directly to the Old Arcadia. Rudenstine takes this too far and tends to see Languet behind any conflict between youth and age, stressing the immediate connexion too hard. Richard Helgerson criticizes this and suggests that:

What we find is rather a fictional exploration of certain fundamental tensions with just enough personal coloring so that its first audience might easily have recognized the tensions as those generated by Sidney's own life.⁴

1. RQ, vol. xxxiii, 1980, p. 128.

2. It was rejected by W D Briggs, 'Political Ideas in Sidney's "Arcadia"', SP, vol. xxviii, 1931, pp. 139, 140, but maintained by J H Hanford and S R Watson, 'Personal Allegory in the Arcadia', MP, vol. xxxii, 1934-5, pp. 1-10. The most extensive exercise in the allegorical interpretation is Ephim G Fogel, The Personal References in the Fiction and Poetry of Sir Philip Sidney.

3. Rudenstine, op.cit., p. 43; Hamilton, Sir Philip Sidney, p. 41; Rudenstine has A W Osborn's support, Sidney en France, 1932, p. 26; F Brie, Sidneys Arcadia, Strassburg 1918, p. 75 n.1 proposes Orange as the prototype.

4. Richard Helgerson, The Elizabethan Prodigals, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1976, p. 135; see also Jean Robertson's review of Rudenstine's book, RES, NS, vol. xix, 1968, pp. 307-10. Richard C McCoy, Rebellion in Arcadia, 1979, p. 55 compares Pyrocles in love with Sidney's unstated malaise in the 1580 letters to Languet.

This is a more precise and realistic view of the letters and Old Arcadia, one which goes some way towards explaining the relationship between Sidney's life and art.

While a lot of work has been done on the literary sources of the Old Arcadia, its intellectual background has yet to be fully explored. In a few suggestive pages Franco Marengo discusses the relevance and importance of Calvin, Viret, La Primaudaye, Mornay, Du Bartas and Aubigné to Sidney's work, but does not really go into specific debts.¹ In some ways this is understandable, but a pity: although Sidney was an eclectic writer it is possible from time to time to see him drawing on other writers' ideas and concerns. Mark Rose perhaps understates the matter when he says that the Old Arcadia 'contains some miscellaneous material'.² A typical example of this is Musidorus' and Pyrocles' discussion of memory in the last act, (pp. 372, 373), the one expounding the Aristotelian view, the other the Platonic.³

We know from the Spenser-Harvey Letters that the Leicester House circle was interested in the art of memory. In the same way the potent influences of Ramus and Machiavelli have been sought in Sidney's thought. More tangible is the interest in symbols and imprese. These are much more common and significant in the New Arcadia, but Sidney is beginning to use them in the Old and van Dorsten has identified AS 13 as one of Sidney's 'impresa-poems'.⁴ Cleophila has such a device when we first see her, (p. 27); Pamela devised 'a picture of her own estate', (p. 37); Dicus has 'a painted table' of Cupid

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1. F Marengo, Arcadia Puritana, l'uso delle Tradizioni, Bari 1968, pp. 112-9; Andrew D Weiner follows this approach in Sir Philip Sidney and the Poetics of Protestantism, Minneapolis 1978.
 2. M A Rose, A Study of Sir Philip Sidney's Old Arcadia, p. 134.
 3. See Jean Robertson's note, p. 479; Forrest G Robinson, The Shape of Things Known: Sidney's Apology in its Philosophical Tradition, Cambridge, Mass. 1972, esp. pp. 119-22 and 126-8 comments on Sidney and Dee on memory; see also Defence of Poetry, 82.11-16, van Dorsten's note on the passage, Miscellaneous Prose, pp. 192, 193 and his article, 'The Arts of Memory and Poetry', ES, vol. xlviii, 1967, pp. 419-25, esp. pp. 422-4.
 4. Van Dorsten, art. cit., p. 421.

on his breast, (p. 64) and Dorus gives Pamela an impresa proper to pass on to Mopsa, (p. 108). All of these except for Dicus' are jewels but only the last has a motto, which as the variants on p. 37 say 'is as it were the life of an impresa'. This appears to be an authorial revision since the early manuscripts call Pamela's jewel an impresa, even though it has not got a motto, while Bo, St more correctly call it 'a picture'. It is tempting to think Sidney himself made the change because of what he learned in Leicester's circle: the earliest OED citation for the word is 1589.

The material which most closely links the Old Arcadia with Sidney's uncle's world is the writing of English verse in classical metres. I have already discussed this as a broad movement which unites Sidney with Spenser and Harvey, and only want to talk about it for the general part it plays in revealing Sidney's technical interest in poetry in the Old Arcadia. All the poems in quantitative metres are sung by the Princes, Philoclea and Philisides: Pamela and her parents, Dametas' family and the shepherds do not perform in these aristocratic measures. The poems occur basically in two groups following each other in the eclogues only: OA 11-13 in the first and 31-4 in the second. The only other example is OA 74 in the fourth eclogues which is meant to be the poem Philisides sent Mira before he left Samothea. It seems to follow on naturally enough from OA 73 in which Philisides tells how he first saw Mira in a dream. However, while OA 74 fits the context arranged for it, the obvious links with the Mira-Philisides poems are weak, especially as neither character is mentioned in it. I suspect it should rather be associated with Philisides' other poem in classical metre OA 31, which again contains no reference to Mira, and that Sidney may have transferred it from the second to the fourth eclogues at some stage to complement OA 73.

My purpose in arguing for the unsatisfactory positioning of OA 74 in the fourth eclogues should be fairly obvious. If it can be shown that all the poems in quantitative metres occur in the first and second eclogues together, then we can get some sense of how the Old Arcadia was put together. There is

a similar feeling of Sidney organising his material in a deliberate way with his disposition of the sonnets. With the one curious exception of OA 65 all the sonnets occur outside the pastorals, and with only four exceptions all eighteen are in Books Two and Three - twelve of these are in Three alone. Kalstone sees a stylistic significance in this and says that the sonnets which open Book III, 'represent a more adventurous view of the possibilities of the sonnet than one finds in the poems of the earlier books',¹ because of the great variety of metrical styles Sidney uses. Rudenstine has indicated the anomalous nature of a connected group of poems in Book Three, which he says 'have something of the spirit of the Certain Sonnets'. Basilius' OA 38, 52, 55 and Musidorus' OA 51 do not fit happily into their contexts.² To point out these three organising principles for the earlier part of the work is not to say that Sidney wrote the book in the order in which we have it, but is meant to suggest how he unified miscellaneous material.

Sidney's choice of poems for the Old Arcadia must be related to this, because it allowed him to include and discuss not just poetry, but art in general. The experimental and innovative qualities of the poems hardly need stressing, but his vocabulary is still relatively unexplored. Again and again one finds that the Old Arcadia contains the earliest known use of a word connected with art or literature. Obvious examples of this cited by OED itself are: 44.2 pastorals; 57.33 couplets; 81.15 sapphics; 165.2 phaleuciads and lyra; 169.6 stanzas; 181.8 octave; 207.7 madrigal; 284.9 sestina; 331.3 crown. Some terms OED cites as occurring first in the Defence of Poetry when they are anticipated in the Old Arcadia: 80.28 elision; 127.8 table-talk; 259.26 pastoral and 341.9 elegiacs. Some are earlier than citations from Puttenham's Art of English Poesy: 30.16 decorum; 57.32 cadence; 89.18 trocheus. Some simply antedate OED's earliest citation, which I give in

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1. D Kalstone, Sidney's Poetry: Contexts and Interpretations, Cambridge, Mass. 1965, p. 94.
 2. Rudenstine, op. cit., p. 119; L G Black, Poetic Miscellanies of the 1580s, vol. i, p. 251 has noted that two of these, OA 38 and 51 get into contemporary miscellanies.

brackets after the appropriate sense: 12.9 architecture (3.1611); 12.27 refiner of invention (3. 1586); 79.21 elegiac (1. 1586); 80.31 apostrophe (1. 1611); 89.16 semibreve (1.1594); 155.36 discourses (5.1581); 158.29 epitomise (ib. 1624) and so on. Again this is not to say Sidney invented these words but merely to point out that his use of technical terms was ahead of his time and that the Old Arcadia's form was an ideal one for incorporating what must have struck people outside his circle as unfamiliar material.

Equally it allowed him to work into it ideas and themes which had practical implications. The obvious example of this is the connexion which can be established between Philanax's speech to Basilius and Sidney's own Letter to the Queen. This has been fairly fully analysed,¹ and I shall not discuss it, but I would suggest that the political and legal themes of the Old Arcadia have been neglected and the significance of stoicism to Sidney ignored. Despite Philanax's praise of Basilius' thirty-year reign as one in which:

your neighbours have found you so hurtlessly strong that they thought it better to rest in your friendship than make new trial of your enmity, (p. 7)

there are signs that Arcadia's position is not as secure as it sounds. Cleophila reveals that the Trojans are their 'ancient enemies' and the Persians the ones they fear at present, (p. 130). When Euarchus is thinking what to do about the country:

He saw the Asiatics of the one side, the Latins of the other, gaping for any occasion to devour Greece, which was no way to be prevented but by their (the Greek states') united strength... (pp. 358, 359)

There is a strong temptation here to identify England with Arcadia in danger from France and Spain; one feels the Elizabethans would have known what Sidney was writing about. Similarly the description of the Arcadians' confused state before Euarchus' arrival, ('the coming Prince'), must remind us of English agitation about Alençon's visit. The passage, (p. 320), is too long to quote as a whole but brings out how divided society is without a monarch once in personal control over all: again to 'Neighbours' invasions', 'civil

1. See Robertson's note p. 419 to 6.36-8.32 and D Connell, Sir Philip Sidney, pp. 105-10.

dissension' is added. Ungoverned rumour and 'diversified thoughts' promote division among the great, the gentlemen, the soldiers and the 'needy sort', producing a 'tumult' anti-monarchical and either pro-senatorial or democratic. These revolutionary doctrines were Sidney says, 'a matter more in imagination than practice', (p. 321), and the 'active' rather than 'discoursing' men busily canvas the various principal characters to succeed Basilius.

As with most of his political passages Sidney's own position is very carefully left undefined and he avoids betraying his views too obviously. Clearly he is not simply equating Alençon with Euarchus but describing a state of society which he does not like. He does not like the 'tumult' or the factionalism, but these arise partly because 'public matters had ever been privately governed', and the whole episode is 'a notable example how great dissolutions monarchal governments are subject unto'. Sidney is anyway thinking as most Protestants would as much of the Low Countries as of Alençon and England. We feel this is especially so when Timautus begins 'exclaiming against Philanax that now he showed who it was that would betray his country to strangers', (p. 354). McCoy quite rightly associates Euarchus with the activities of a Protestant league,¹ and we notice that 'king Euarchus', (p. 355), is to come with a small retinue, (p. 354), first said to be of only twenty companions and so too small 'to enter into any forcible attempt', (p. 351) and later pointedly referred to as 'the small company you have heard of', (p. 359). He correctly waits for a safe conduct and is asked by Philanax to 'protect a people which all have with one voice called for thy goodness', (p. 360). The point is made absolutely clear that he is to be 'the elected protector of this dukedom', (p. 361) and he acknowledges his position of 'protector' as being bestowed by 'free election' and so beyond the claim of any of his 'natural successors', (p. 365). It also allows the princes not to know at first the identity of the nobleman who is to judge them, (p. 375) and glances at

1. McCoy, *Rebellion in Arcadia*, p. 120; E Z Cohen, 'The Old Arcadia: A Treatise in Moderation', *Revue Belge*, vol. xlvi, 1968, p. 763.

pamela's being under the age for governing the country, (p. 379). Euarchus is scrupulous in 'using to himself no other name but protector', (p. 381). Sidney carefully describes his welcome endorsing both the hereditary and elective principles of monarchy. It is as if he:

had been born of the princely blood of Arcadia, or that long and well acquainted proof had engrafted him in their community (p. 364)

Sidney is drawing in this episode on his own experience of negotiations in the Low Countries for an English-backed force under Leicester or Casimir in 1577. It is also derived from the constitutional theories which lay behind the proposed missions to the Netherlands which both he and his uncle longed for from 1577 until 1579. He is writing about how and when a foreign prince can take part in the affairs of a country whose own political and social stability is threatened.

The politics of revolt were of practical as well as theoretical interest to Leicester's circle. Sidney gives a good example of the sort of rebellion of which he disapproves in the rebellious 'tumult' - again the word is carefully chosen - of the second book, (p. 126). The drunken Phagonians object to Basilius' absence as a sign of contempt for his people who, they argue, constitute the state:

what were the shows of his estate if their arms maintained him not?
Who could call him duke if he had not a people? (p. 127)

They need no longer 'fear foreign enemies' as Basilius had betrayed Arcadia in his love for Cleophila, and feel no qualms about deposing him in favour of a popular democracy:

Since the country was theirs and that the government was an adherent to the country... 'Let us deliver...ourselves from the want of a prince. Let us be the first to do that which all the rest think.'

The feeling of betrayal to a foreigner may perhaps remind us again of Alençon, but Sidney clearly condemns this sort of disorganized revolt. However, it provides Cleophila with an opportunity to act as Leicester would like to in the Netherlands, to stop the chaos.¹ Her speech is a perfect statement of the

1. Ibid., pp. 760-3.

politics of Protestant interference; it is entirely new for 'a stranger' to give 'public counsel' to the native inhabitants of a country and that:

a private person, as I am, should possess the regal throne. But the strangeness of your action makes that used for virtue which your violent necessity imposeth...a stranger may with reason instruct such subjects that neglect due points of subjection. (p. 129)

This conveniently anticipates Euarchus' arrival in Arcadia and although we know Cleophila is ultimately responsible for the revolt, we must admire his firm stand. Our reaction must be entirely different when Musidorus offers or threatens to bring an army to Arcadia to force Basilius into giving Pyrocles his daughter, (p. 173).

As we might expect Sidney is not consistent in his use of political theory in the Old Arcadia; he is much more concerned with looking at individual instances of it in action. He may have opposed the Alençon marriage and supported the Protestant cause in the Low Countries, but he was still totally against factional and chaotic revolt. He seems to believe in strong, royal, or popularly elected rule and the duty of outsiders to maintain order in foreign countries. Euarchus expresses the first part of this when he argues for:

the prince's person being in all monarchal governments the very knot¹ of the people's welfare and light of all their doings, to which they are not only in conscience but in necessity bound to be loyal. (p. 383)

I have already discussed his belief in the need for a strong aristocracy which he expresses in OA 66 in connexion with works written against the Alençon courtship. Eventually it is impossible to say where Sidney stood in the world of Protestant radicalism - he is too elusive for that. However, we can see him taking an active interest in the Old Arcadia in political theory and statecraft.

Considering his 1577 mission and his hopes about the Netherlands, it is hardly surprising he should be interested in international law and politics. Again his vocabulary shows this and again reveals frequent ante-datings of OED's earliest citations. Its earliest quotation for the phrase 'manning

1. This may supply the correct reading for the difficult crux in the Letter to the Queen, 53.6; the similarity of the contexts is interesting.

frontiers', (628) is 1633; the good 'constitution' of the state, (7.26) is first cited in a non-specific sense in 1601 and in the political one in 1611; 'magistracy', (66.29), (OED 2), is first recorded in 1577 and not again until 1697 - it should be compared with OED's sense 1 of c. 1585 used at 385.16; 'truce-time', (76.32), as a combination is not in OED; Sidney uses the phrase 'matters of state', (96.13), (OED s.v. 'state' 32), before the first citation of 1582; 'mutinous', (123.26) is first cited in 1578, while 'mutinies', (131. 29), (OED 1b), is cited from 1581; OED lists no occurrence of 'arbitrage' (154.12) between 1480 and 1682; Sidney talks of 'military discipline', (202.20, 21), when OED's earliest citation is from 1585; he supplies the earliest citation for 'monarchal', (320.5 and 383.13), and finally Jean Robertson points out what difficulties the scribes had with the unfamiliar 'despota', (385.1).

There are several words which suggest Sidney's distinctive interests were ahead of his time and which help to open up the world of Arcadia. When Philanax is thinking what to do with Euarchus, he decides it would be 'unjust and against the law of nations not well to receive' him, (p. 351). The phrase occurs again when at their trial the princes learn that if they have broken 'the laws of nations, by the laws of nations' they will be punished, (p. 385). When Euarchus is delivering his judgement he twice invokes the 'law of nations', arguing that the princes can be tried by it, (p. 404). OED's earliest citation of the phrase, (s.v. 'law' 4c), is from Hall in 1548, its next from Hooker in 1594. Sidney is thinking of the principle of international law, 'under which nations are regarded as individual members of a common polity, bound by a common law of agreement or custom', (OED). This helps to explain the astonishing parenthetical remark Euarchus makes: '(all mankind being as it were coinhabiters or world citizens together)', (p. 404). World-citizenship nowadays has rather comic overtones, but in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to those who believed in the spiritual unity of all Protestants it was an essential idea. If one believes in the law of nations then one is bound to believe that 'the law of hospitality' (130.6) exists - a phrase not

to be found in Spenser, Shakespeare or Jonson's poems, but which occurs again in the Defence of Poetry, (p. 116) - that there is a 'right of hospitality', (390.20), and even that there are 'laws of love', (196.15), but this is more by the way. In Sidney's time one of the principal uses of international law was in connexion with ambassadors and the making of treaties. From his own experience Sidney knew about both and uses the word 'ambassade' several times in both diplomatic and non-diplomatic senses, (57.8; 218.4; 345.9 and 364.7).

Another question with which international law was concerned in the sixteenth century was that of what is now known as the conflict of laws. Under what set of principles are the offenders in the last book to be judged? Euarchus says he will punish and restore order according to 'the general laws of nature, especially of Greece, and particularly of Arcadia', (p. 365). This, with its appeal to natural law, is more general than we should expect. Earlier Philanax had told Euarchus that the Arcadians:

lay themselves open to you...They only reserve the right to Basilius' blood, the manner to the ancient prescribing of their laws...The particularities, both of their statutes and demands, you shall presently after understand. (p. 361).

Euarchus shows a fuller grasp of the problem he faces when he argues they must be 'by your laws judged'; he 'must be tied to the laws of Greece and municipal statutes of his dukedom' (p. 404). This is in direct contrast to judging them either by international law, the exact opposite of 'municipal statutes', or 'by a free discourse of reason and skill of philosophy', which sounds rather like the doctrine of natural law. Euarchus rejects this because it allows 'every man a scope of his own interpretation' and upholds the supremacy of laws which are 'the bonds of all human society', (p. 403) and 'fold us within assured bounds, which once broken, man's nature infinitely rangeth', (p. 404). Euarchus acts according to these principles, it having been established at the beginning of the trial:

the laws of Arcadia bearing that what was appointed by the magistrates in the nonage of the prince could not afterwards be repealed. (p. 381)

Gynecia is to be buried alive to accomplish 'the Arcadian statutes', (p. 383); Pyrocles' seduction of Philoclea is 'punished by all the Grecian laws' with being thrown from a tower, (p. 405) and finally Euarchus passes sentence on the Princes 'in the behalf of justice, and by the force of Arcadia laws', (p. 408).

This emphasis on the legality of what is being done is very striking: Sidney is careful to show that Euarchus as a foreign protector must still submit himself to Arcadian law and that the trial is constitutional. The Princes argue forcibly against this. Their main defence, which Musidorus puts forward, is that Pamela is 'the just inheritrix of this country... your only princess', who should be in power to see justice done, (p. 378). Pamela insists on her constitutional position in her letter to the Arcadians, that as sovereign she cannot be judged, nor Musidorus, because he has become such a part of herself, (pp. 397, 398). However both are wrong about her position, because she is still in her minority and subject to a protector, (p. 379).

The Princes' main and most interesting defence becomes clear when they ask:

by what authority they could judge of them, since they were not only foreigners, and so not born under their laws, but absolute princes, and therefore not to be touched by laws. (p. 385)

The answer is briefly that strangers are subject to native Arcadian law and there is no certainty they are princes, but 'private men, since they were neither by magistracy nor alliance to the princely blood to claim anything in that region'. In his judgement Euarchus elaborates a complicated doctrine of how and when princes can be tried: although difficult, the argument is worth summarising. He begins, (p. 403), by talking of the 'sacred name' of 'princes absolute', 'to which any violence seems to be an impiety'. If laws are to be upheld rulers must be 'held in an untouched admiration'. He goes on to deny Pyrocles' and Musidorus' 'principality' in Arcadia, because a prince is only a prince 'to his own subjects', which the Arcadians unless they have confessed subjection 'by a secret consent' are not. It is true,

(p. 404), princes have by the law of nations been 'especially regarded' and 'exempted from injuries'. However, the princes having broken that law cannot now invoke it. A prince, especially one acting as a private person, can only hope for 'courtesy' if he does 'acts of hostility without denouncing war, if he break his oath of amity', or the 'law of arms'. The cousins did exactly this, becoming 'private men': they cannot now decide to become princes again. Perhaps the significant thing is that Euarchus had already put forward this view in essence when he told Philanax that he knew 'all men (and so princes, which be but men)', (p. 362).

Sidney puts all this in not because he is seeking verisimilitude, or even credibility, but because Leicester's circle was interested in theories of limited monarchy. Sidney's reported answer to the Queen in the tennis court quarrel has recently been interpreted as an attempt to show that the sovereign is subject to common law.¹ It has been known for some time that the princes' trial glances obliquely at the problem of Mary, Queen of Scots,² and that Sidney is exploring the same sort of ground Buchanan does in the *De Jure Regni apud Scotos* of 1578. His commissioning of the civilian John Hammond to give an opinion on Mary and the ambassador Mendoza is further evidence of his active concern with current political problems.³ Once again, we can see him including interesting miscellaneous material closely related to the radical Protestant concerns of Leicester's world.

Elizabeth and Mary were of course cousins and suggest the additional problem of the law and kinship. Even when Euarchus has found out whom he has really condemned, he maintains his belief in the 'sacred rightfulness' of 'never-changing justice'; 'It is immortal, and immortally ought to be preserved'. He tells his son and nephew: 'I prefer you much before my life,

1. McCoy, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

2. W D Briggs, 'Political Ideas in Sidney's *Arcadia*', p. 160.

3. On this see above ch. III 'pt. ii.

but I prefer justice as far before you', (p. 411). He goes on to draw an austere general principle: 'A father to have executed his only son will leave a sufficient example for a greater crime than this', (p. 413). His whole behaviour is meant to suggest a cold, classical stoicism and it in fact reminds us of the scene in Julius Caesar, (IV.i), where Lepidus agrees to his brother's death and Mark Antony to his nephew's.

In the last part of this section I want to look at aspects of stoicism in the Old Arcadia, especially in the light of Roger Baynes' The Praise of Solitariness. Jean Robertson mentions this work in connexion with the debate between Pyrocles and Musidorus at the beginning of the first book, (p. 420). She notes it was dedicated by Baynes to 'my approved frēnde' Edward Dyer and that he might have shown the book, which was printed in 1577 to Sidney. Baynes presents the work as a paraphrase or even a translation, (sigs. A2v., A3), but its distinctively English form and style do not give this impression. Shortly after his work appeared Baynes left for Rheims and eventually became Cardinal Allen's secretary. Apart from a later dialogue The Baynes of Aquisgrave, 1617 but written earlier, and preliminary verses for George Turbeville no other writing by him exists,¹ and nothing about his pre-Roman life is known.

Southern finds the later work the better of the two,² and does not really do justice to the Praise of Solitariness, which is a highly accomplished piece. The author reveals a wide knowledge of classical philosophy, especially of Pythagoras' doctrines, Plato, Plotinus and Seneca. Given this background Ficino is conspicuous by his absence. The book is an essay in Christian stoicism revolving around the problems of the nature of virtue, (pp. 7-49), and of whether a life of virtue can be lived in solitariness or society,

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1. A C Southern, English Recusant Prose, (1950), p. 53. The two Turbeville books Baynes contributed to are the Booke of Faulconrie, 1575 and Tragical Tales, 1587, of which there was a lost edition of 1576, (see Malone's note in his copy Bodleian Mal. 358).
 2. A C Southern, op. cit., p. 324.

(pp. 1-7, 49-86). Classical and Christian ideas are freely mixed: there is a passage on virtuous pagans including Seneca, who led 'holy and just' lives as part of God's gifts to man, (pp. 33, 34). Christ is mentioned with the Apostles as an example of virtue living in society, (p. 72), but He also lived in the wilderness, as did St John the Baptist, (p. 83). Not surprisingly there is no simple answer to the choice of the two lives. In the end we are given a definition of three types of solitude, of time, place and mind, and a suggestion from Eudoxus that 'daily hereafter' they meet to 'gather beste fruite, out of the holesome rules and preceptes of Philosophye' especially ones which tend 'to the staye' of the emotions, (p. 86).

Sidney would have found the idea of this philosophical discussion group, meeting in a gondola in Venice, attractive but there was more in Baynes' book to interest him. The idea of withdrawal is relevant not just to the princes, but to Basilius himself.¹ He decides to retire to 'a solitary place' to keep out of fortune's way 'by this loneliness', (p. 6) and then goes into 'the solitary place of the two lodges' and begins 'this solitary life', (p. 9). The princes arrive 'after that this strange solitariness had possessed Basilius', (p. 11). As always with Sidney the verbal texture of repetition is significant; at the end of the book Philanax is still referring to his master's 'solitary life', (p. 387). When Lysippus in Baynes' dialogue argues that the wise man will not 'live in the voide and desolate places of the earth, there playing the Philosopher in the open wilderness...', (p. 4), we are strongly reminded of Basilius as much by the tone as by what is said. Later on Eudoxus highly praises the practice of husbandry in solitariness and we are reminded of the pastoral setting of Arcadia, (Baynes, pp. 73-7). His entire characterisation of what he calls 'a singular life' is a good ironic gloss on the world Sidney creates:

A life that is the mother of Philosophie, the helper of Poetrie, the

1. On this subject see Janette Dillon, Shakespeare and a Cult of Solitude, University of Oxford D. Phil., 1977, however it contains no discussion of either Baynes' book, the Old Arcadia or Ratcliffe's speech about the 'desolate' knight in the Four Foster Children.

reveler of Prophesie, yea the onely maintainer of all devotion and holinesse:
And a life to make shorte, that of all other lives is most Angelicall.
(p.84)

He had earlier referred to Epaminondas' setting 'forth his Solitarie leysure, with musicall harmony', (p. 81) and described how the solitary man:

goeth out with a cheereful heart, directing his course into some pleasant wood, full of rest, and full of quietnesse, where with joy and gladnesse, he consumeth the morning. (p.54)

Again this could serve as an ironic comment on Musidorus' song 'O sweet woods, the delight of solitariness', (OA 34). Ringler, (p. 404) shows the poem 'is inappropriate to the Second Eclogues' and out of place there: this is another striking instance of Sidney including miscellaneous material which he had to hand.

There are several other features of Baynes' book which may have appealed to Sidney from the point of view both of his own life and writing. The definition of virtue which Lysippus finally puts forward is the standard humanist one of which Languet would have approved. It 'is a good qualitie of the minde, gotten by use and exercise', (p. 47); 'the prayse of Vertue consisteth in Action', (p. 48). Sidney talks for example of Euarchus' 'daily offering of most virtuous actions', (p. 361), of his belief that the gods gave him 'those inward gifts...to be beneficial and not idle', (p. 362) and even while Philanax is urging him to accept the protectorship, he is 'already inclined to enter into any virtuous action', (p. 364). The solitary man, Lysippus argues, has no scope for this kind of action and so cannot be virtuous, (p. 48). Musidorus tells Pyrocles that solitariness is 'the sly enemy that doth most separate a man from well doing', (p. 14) and counters his friend's defence of the state with a 'praise of honourable action'. (p. 16). He condemns the sort of contemplation his friend longs for in isolation as 'but a glorious title to idleness'. Baynes quotes from Seneca about the need to 'drive away the humor of slothfulnesse, which is onely nourished and maintayned by solitarinesse', (p. 69).

Sidney would also have responded to the discussion of reason and desire

which is similar to the extended treatment of the theme in the Old Arcadia, the specific poems about it AS 71 and CS 6 and its handling in the closely related Four Foster Children. Eudoxus talks about the dual strength of mind and nature:

The one consisting in desire, which draweth a man both hither & thither, wherunto nature is alwayes most enclining: The other consisting in reason, which techeth & explaneth what ought to be done, and what to be avoided.
(p. 7)

Tales elaborates on this dualism arguing that man can only be happy in as far as he lives according to reason. Previously he has discussed Plato's and Pythagoras' division of the mind into Reason and Tranquility, and Desire and Wrath, (pp. 24, 25). In doing this he introduces the strain of stoicism which Baynes draws largely from Seneca and in which Sidney is clearly interested.

Baynes is concerned with society and its foundations as much as with death. He sees its origins as divinely appointed, (p. 56), and argues there can be no goodness among a people without it: 'the sacred knot of friendship it selfe' comes from it, (p. 6). It is one of the features of man's life which distinguishes him from beasts, (pp. 5, 24-7), for without it man 'brutishly' led an 'uncivile kind of life', (p. 5). As well as making man a settled creature with a home, it gave him marriage, where before:

there was neyther societie nor friendship maynteyned, no man living in the boundes of lawfull matrimony, no man certaine of his owne children, nor any law to distinguish the good from the evill mainteyned among them...

Again one feels Sidney would have responded to this. Euarchus talks of:

marriage being the most holy conjunction that falls to mankind, out of which all families, and so consequently all societies, do proceed, which not only by community of goods but community of children is to knit the minds in a most perfect union... (p. 383).

when he is about to condemn Gynecia.

By then she has herself become a fine emblem of the stoic acceptance of death, which she asks Euarchus to hasten, (pp. 381, 382). This is in marked contrast to her earlier wish for it, which was overwhelmed with horror:

She feared death, and yet desired death...she had no other comfort but in death, which yet she had in horror when she thought of. (pp. 367, 368)

By the time of her speech to Euarchus she no longer fears death and accepts it as an honourable way out of her shameful position. Eudoxus in Baynes' dialogue cites Seneca, who teaches man must reconcile himself to and think on death, (p. 53). Tales says virtue allows a man to suffer any adversity and that it is a true sign of virtue when man is able:

voluntarily to suffer the sharpest punishment of Death, chiefly, if either Reputation or Reason shall so require the same: shewing thereby, a contempt of Life whiche others embrace, and a love of Death whiche most men doe feare. (p. 38).

This is a standard stoic doctrine,¹ which Sidney makes use of in his story of more or less virtuous pagans. The obvious place to look for it in the Old Arcadia is in Pyrocles' speech about suicide in Book Four. There he argues with Philoclea that death is 'imagined far more terrible than it is', (p. 295); that what he is about to do is motivated by judgement not passion, (p. 296), that he has no fear of death and has 'long learned to set bodily pain in the second form of my being', and that dishonour 'is to be abhorred; and that not for fear, but of a true election', (p. 297). Musidorus has a comparable speech addressed to Pyrocles which stresses that they acted on their virtue and the heavens are not to be blamed for their fate, (pp. 371, 372). It is supported by the only song in the last book, (OA 77) which rejects the fear of death and upholds 'the bliss of peacefull mind'. The opposite of the stoic acceptance of death is described by Philanax at the beginning of the first book when he compares ^{Basiliss'} ~~was~~ attempts to avoid the oracle's predictions to being 'like one that should kill himself for fear of death', (p. 7).

Both Baynes and Sidney suggest the state of 'peacefull mind' is reached through the stoic virtue of constancy. Tales asks whether the man who:

by the government of his reason, is made abstinent, constant without feare, without perturbation, and without lust, is he not happie? (p. 25)

1. See Cicero, De Finibus, III. xviii. 60.

Sidney was interested in constancy even before his friend Lipsius' book about it had been published. Euarchus dislikes the Arcadians' fickleness: he does not like the eagerness with which they took to him, 'for it is but one ground of inconstancy soon to take or soon to leave.' (p. 363). When he has to go through them, 'a man might read a constant determination in his eyes', (p. 364). In her new-found stoicism Gynecia even impresses her enemies, 'so goodly a virtue is a resolute constancy', (p. 384). Finally, Euarchus tells his son and nephew: 'if there be anything left in you of princely virtue, show it in constant suffering', (p. 412). This itself reminds us of Philanax's last piece of stoic advice to Basilius. Having argued that man must follow wisdom and virtue as his only destinies, putting all his hope and trust in them, (p. 7), he concludes, 'whether your time call you to live or die, do both like a prince', (p. 8).

I am not arguing Sidney used Baynes' book as a source for the Old Arcadia, or even that it told him anything he did not already know. I am merely suggesting that if, as seems probable through Dyer, he saw The Praise of Solitariness he would have liked and responded to much of what he found there, despite its 'wrangling whether virtus be the chief or the only good, whether the contemplative or the active life do excell', (Defence of Poetry, p. 93). It may have helped him to organise some of his own thoughts; I hope it helps us to understand some of the themes and ideas which he discusses. Once again it shows Sidney's eclectic nature, his practice of using what material was to hand and of including whatever interested him at the time. Baynes' book would also have suggested the organizing principles of debate about constancy and solitariness which help to give the Old Arcadia its formally and intellectually coherent shape. Perhaps it also reminded him, despite its setting in a Venetian gondola, of the sort of discussion which he associated with Leicester House by the Thames.

vi. Other works.

A chronology of Sidney's works shows how astonishingly busy he was after

his return to England in the summer of 1577. By the autumn he had written the Discourse on Irish Affairs; the Lady of May was prepared for the spring of 1578; there is a gap until the winter of 1579, which produced the Letter to the Queen. He was probably mainly occupied then with the poetry which we know he was writing continuously from 1577 until 1581 and which went into the Old Arcadia and the Certain Sonnets. Immediately after the Letter came the comparatively long period in the first part of 1580 spent on the Old Arcadia. After that he tinkered with the poems in the romance during 1581 and 1582, perhaps until the summer of that year when he wrote Astrophil and Stella, (Ringler, pp. 439, 440).

Somewhere in all this there has to be a place for the Defence of Poetry. Van Dorsten makes a fairly radical move in assigning it to the winter of 1579-80, (Miscellaneous Prose, p. 62), since this means it was written before the Old Arcadia. This seems unlikely when the view that the New Arcadia was begun as a revision of the Old according to the principles of the Defence is quite common.¹ His own famous admission of 'an inky tribute' yielded to his thoughts suggests he felt he could call himself the author of a single work, presumably the Old Arcadia. Ringler as usual seems to be right when he suggests that the discussion of the relative merits of measured and rhyming verse was cancelled in the earliest group of Old Arcadia manuscripts, because of what Sidney wrote on the same subject in the Defence, (Ringler, p. 389). However, he goes too far in dating it precisely as being written shortly before or after Astrophil and Stella, (p. xlix) and I feel it is more likely to belong as a whole to a period stretching from the autumn of 1580 until 1582, with the most intense period of the Alençon courtship strongly present in it.

The Defence of Poetry is Sidney's most sophisticated work and although it ostensibly deals with poetry as the Old Arcadia does with love, like the romance it has interesting under-currents which have been generally noted but also unexplored. It can be read as a political tract like the letter

1. For example Forrest G Robinson, Shape of Things Known, p. 150.

addressed to the Queen, at once warning and reproaching her. It is also of course a personal justification of the worth and dignity of the career which Sidney saw himself as being forced into after his return to England. Writing is not a retreat from the world; poetry changes it in ways which the politician, the lawyer, the historian or the philosopher can never hope to. His arguments have a personal as well as an universal implication. Milton must have had them in mind when he wrote the Areopagitica.

The personal and combative tone of the Defence is obvious from its opening: it is not going to attract the pacifist aesthete. Soldiers, Pugliano is made to argue, are 'the noblest estate of mankind', (p. 73), and poetry itself 'is the companion of camps.' (p. 105). The idea that 'before poets did soften us, we were full of courage, given to martial exercises', (p. 101) can be dismissed. With the decline of poetry there is a 'danger of civil war among the Muses', (p. 74). It has declined because of its lack of patronage and not being held in honour in England. Sidney stresses the strength of royal favour it once enjoyed, (p. 110) and that it flourished in England 'even in those times when the trumpet of Mars did sound loudest'. As Shepherd suggests, Sidney is thinking of the hundred years' war against France, which he had previously referred to, (p. 84), placing Poitiers and Agincourt with Marathon and Pharsalia as battles which had shaped the world.¹ England is now beset by 'an overfaint quietness', 'idle', (pp. 110, 111). (cf. 'our soft peace', AS 8.4), and Sidney, denied the nobility of a soldier, 'in these my not old years and idlest times', (p. 73), has become a poet.

While the soldier's 'martial exercises' are 'the pillars of manlike liberty', (p. 101), the poet is 'monarch' of all sciences, (p. 91), and man himself, despite his faults has 'a presence full of majesty and beauty', (p. 94). The poet particularly hates tyrants for whom he devises new torments in hell,

1. Shepherd, n. to 131/30 and p. 25, cf. Greville, Life of Sidney, ch. viii-x.

(p. 90), and writes tragedies which make 'kings fear to be tyrants, and tyrants manifest their tyrannical humours', (p. 96), which will eventually return upon themselves. All this is meant to suggest obliquely the dangers of the Alençon courtship to England and reflects Sidney's own frustrated position. The two examples he gives, (pp. 93, 94) of the power and use of 'poetical invention' confirm this. In the first he recounts Menenius Agrippa's tale of the 'mutinous conspiracy' the body made against the belly, which he used to reconcile the Romans to their senate. This commonplace story coincides with Sidney's own views on popular revolt,¹ and represents one side of the problems caused by the courtship. The other is given by the story of Nathan and David, which reminds us of Pugliano's definition of a horse as a 'courtier without flattery', (p. 73). Nathan is the true courtier-friend who makes David 'see his own filthiness' of forsaking God and confirming adultery with murder. Shepherd compares Nathan's rôle to the one Sidney chose in the Letter to the Queen.² While the Queen has obviously not yet behaved quite like David, adultery and murder suggest the Italianate world of the French court.

The Queen must also be implicated in the Digression Sidney introduces. England has been allowed to grow 'so hard a stepmother to poets' and offers poetry 'a hard welcome', (p. 110). This is partly the result of the peaceful times, but also caused by lack of royal favour. And as poetry and the martial arts are neglected in England, so its fortune declines. Sidney's argument, with which he reproaches the Queen, stresses the need for a national epic which will restore both poetry and the country to their rightful positions. This explains the constant references to Virgil and the Aeneid. The epic celebrates the individual's exemplary morality and also the creation of Roman empires by Aeneas and Augustus. The instance of Albinus and the Sortes Virgilianae, (p. 76), shows that poetry and national destiny are intertwined.

Sidney argues for the heroic, moral epic which is a better teacher than

1. Baynes, Praise of Solitariness, p. 57 (misnumbered p. 67) refers to the story.

2. Shepherd, p. 77.

history or philosophy, but which has yet to be written. Whatever we may think of him, Aeneas is the type of hero poets and nations need. He is 'so excellent a man every way,' (p. 79), 'a virtuous man in all fortunes', (p. 86), and someone in whom is 'each thing to be followed', (p. 88). But there are two outstanding passages which suggest how deeply Sidney feels the need for a national epic which would revitalize England. In the first of these he rhetorically asks about filial piety and imperial destiny:

Who readeth Aeneas carrying old Anchises on his back, that wisheth not it were his fortune to perform so excellent an act? (p. 92)

This is the highest inspiration poetry can give. The second passage, (p. 98), in essence summarizes the action of the Aeneid which should be 'worn in the tablet of your memory'. The summary emphasizes the unified action of the poem, its single movement from the ruin of Troy to the founding of Rome, the creation of empire and national greatness. But above all it is the personal conduct of Aeneas that Sidney likes to stress. He is the model, the pattern of a good man and ruler, 'in his inward self and...in his outward government'. By implicit contrast Sidney points out what the Queen's rule could achieve.

Obviously there is more to Sidney's argument than just these sidelong glances at the Queen, but it is typical of his literary methods to include them. As in the Old Arcadia they provide a recognisable background against which the reader sees the primary action or argument presented. This brings us back to the relationship Helgerson saw between the Old Arcadia and the Languet Letters. The most powerful example of Sidney's 'fictional exploration of certain fundamental tensions' provoked by his own life, is of course Astrophil and Stella. As Ringler, quoting Lamb correctly observes, (p. 440), one of the poem's 'main attractions' is that '"an historical thread runs through them"'.¹ We are meant to recognize much in the sequence that points to Sidney's own life and circumstances and yet we must always remember that Astrophil is not Sidney, but only like him. This formula, reminiscent of the

1. See the excellent discussion of Astrophil and Stella in J G Nichols, The Poetry of Sir Philip Sidney, Liverpool 1974, ch. ii, esp. pp. 77-9.

way Spenser's allegory works, applies as much to events as to people. The most convenient example of this is AS 41 describing a tilt in front of the French. We know Sidney jousted before them on several occasions, but we should not try to take this knowledge further and seek to identify any one precise tilt being described here. The same is equally true for the less overtly historical AS 53. Although AS 65 describes Sidney's own arms it does not necessarily follow that we can use AS 21 and 23 as reliable guides to what he felt his position was at court. Ringler ties down AS 30 to the summer of 1582, but Sidney is deliberately evasive; he wants to give an impression of contemporary international politics, not an accurate report on events at any one single moment.

Basing his argument on AS 30 Richard C McCoy says that in the sequence Sidney specifically renounces political concerns and that 'the politics here are exclusively sexual.'¹ This sounds very good but is a little too neat, for Sidney would not have felt that the two areas were so different. His use of military and political language to describe Astrophil's relationship with Stella, in for example AS 12, 29, 36, 39 and ii, remind us that this is the same soldierly author at work who had written the Defence of Poetry. He is still interested in monarchy - as in AS 107 - and continues from the Old Arcadia to be concerned with tyrants and tyranny, (see AS 2, 20, 42, 46, 47, v and viii), and rebels and rebellion, (see AS 5 and v). Yet he has very little new to say about these subjects which merely provide the imagery of the poems. Astrophil is now adept in the ideas which Sidney had explored in his romance. Once again Astrophil's world is like, but not the same as Sidney's.

This creates a particular problem with the difficult penultimate sonnet of the sequence. AS 107 suggests a settled resolution to free himself from Stella, belied by AS 108, which is a return to the obsessed Astrophil of the earlier sonnets. Wishing for his release from his 'Princesse' Stella, with

1. McCoy, Rebellion in Arcadia, pp. 70-2.

her 'soveraigne part', he asks her to be like 'a Queene' sending a servant off to do her duty. With his 'wit' free he can do his work. It will not be depreciated as the product of his love, which would reflect badly on her. Since the work is 'what thy owne will attends', Stella seems to favour 'this great cause, which needs both use and art'. By calling it 'this' Astrophil implies that Stella knows what he is talking about in exactly the way I have argued Sidney mixes public and private concerns. Presumably his close friends knew what the 'cause' was and although Ringler, (p. 490), thinks it refers to 'public service in general' for Astrophil, I am more inclined to believe Sidney is thinking here of the public service he had proposed in the Defence of Poetry of writing a national epic.

The fifth song of Astrophil and Stella which has two verses concerned with rebellion, (ll.61-72), really belongs according to Ringler, (p. 484), to the Philisides-Mira group and the Old Arcadia. I began this chapter by admitting I could not extract a coherent story from the poems associated with it. Others have seen and are able to see personal allegory in them. There is no doubt who Philisides is meant to suggest: the dispute arises chiefly over his friend Coredens and their shared love for Mira and to a lesser extent the related loves of Strephon and Klaius for Urania. Dyer, Wotton, Greville and Bryskett have all been considered as prototypes for Coredens, (Robertson, pp. 461, 462), while Mira has been associated with Penelope Devereux, the Countess of Pembroke and the Queen herself.¹ Once again I feel Sidney is deliberately being evasive and we are meant to recognize his poetic creations as being like his friends but not go any further and look for

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1. Mira's identification with the Queen was suggested by K T Rowe, 'The Love of Sir Philip Sidney for the Countess of Pembroke', Papers of the Michigan Academy, vol. xxv, 1939, pp. 579-95 and has recently been endorsed by John A Galm, Sidney's Arcadian Poems, Salzburg Studies in English Literature, Elizabethan and Renaissance Studies, vol. i, Salzburg 1973, p. 213. I do not intend to deal with or summarize the biographical interpretations put forward by Ephim G Fogel, The Personal References in the Fiction and Poetry of Sir Philip Sidney, pp. 135-96, which despite being very ingenious and fully worked out are based on insufficient evidence and rely too heavily on his own speculation.

individual portraits.

Sidney continues to fascinate us because unlike so many of his contemporaries he was a public figure in his life and became even more so after his death. We know a lot about him and he was not shy about displaying himself and his ideas at court. Leicester encouraged him to do this, and Sidney intends the reader to recognize his world in what he wrote.

CHAPTER VIII

LEICESTER, THE COURT AND ITS ENTERTAINMENTS.

'For Euarchus did wisely consider the people to be naturally taken with exterior shows far more than with inward consideration of the material points; and therefore in this new entry into so entangled a matter he would leave nothing which might be either an armour or ornament unto him; and in these pompous ceremonies he well knew a secret of government much to consist'.

Old Arcadia, Robertson, p.375.

i. Pompous Ceremonies.

Like Euarchus Leicester knew the value of pageantry and spectacle. political power had to be seen as well as felt by the people, the court and the Queen. To achieve the desired effects he spent money lavishly employing the best writers then available. Sidney, Gascoigne, Mulcaster and perhaps Churchyard all worked for him either writing whole shows or just single speeches. In this chapter I shall very briefly outline his earlier interest in entertainments and then go on to discuss his part in court life between 1578 and 1582.

The first entertainments with which Dudley can be associated are the Inner Temple revels of 1561-2. His rôle in these odd celebrations which accompanied the first performance of Gorboduc has been fairly fully explored.¹ Significantly, given the Four Foster Children entertainment, the festivities included a masque about Beauty and Desire, which has recently been attributed to the author of Romeus and Juliet.² The theme of beauty and desire itself was not new and had been used by Henry VIII in 1522, but Leicester clearly found it a convenient way of referring to his relationship with the Queen and made it his own. Sidney was also fascinated by it and it is a curious chance that the only poem that survives in his handwriting should be the trifling CS 6, 'Sleepe Babie mine, Desire, nurse Beautie singeth'.³

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1. Mainly by Marie Axton, 'Robert Dudley and the Inner Temple Revels', Historical Journal, vol.xiii, 1970, pp.365-78 and in 'The Tudor Mask and Elizabethan Court Drama', pp.33, 34.
 2. D S Bland, 'Arthur Broke's Masque of Beauty and Desire: A Reconstruction', Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama, vol.xix, 1976, pp.49-55.
 3. P J Croft, Autograph Poetry in the English Language, 1973, vol.i, no.14.

It supplies the subject of the Four Foster Children of Desire, but it is also part of other entertainments which Leicester inspired. It let him comment on the Queen's marriage, in the same way that Juno and Diana allowed the problem to be analysed behind a convenient curtain of allegory. The Queen knew that the debate between the two goddesses which Leicester put on at supper on 6 March 1565 was aimed at her. Jupiter chose in favour of Juno and of marriage.¹

At Kenilworth in 1575 Gascoigne devised a 'shew' about the rival claims of Juno and Diana for the nymph Zabeta. With Mercury's help Diana and so chastity prevailed, but Iris urged the Queen to follow Juno and marry. For one reason or another this was not performed. Instead, a week later Gascoigne as Silvanus told the departing Queen of Zabeta's transformations of various personifications into trees. She turned one of these, Deep Desire, into a holly bush, which sang two songs lamenting the Queen's departure and begging her to stay. Silvanus finally asked her either to stay and live at Kenilworth or to restore Desire, 'to his prystinate estate'.² This particular fiction was not continued in the Woodstock entertainment later in the summer, but Laurence Humphrey in his oration there referred to the 'Spectacula Kenelworthae' and praised Leicester.³

Kenilworth marked the apogee of Leicester's use of entertainments to influence the Queen. Perhaps as has been suggested he went too far and something went very wrong during the royal visit.⁴ He never produced another set of festivities on such a scale. But he did not give up using public occasions

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1. Chambers, vol.i, p.161 n.3; Norbrook, Panegyric of the Monarch and its Social Context, p.46 says that Leicester was not urging his own suit, but favouring a French match against Cecil's Hapsburg alliance.
 2. The Complete Works of George Gascoigne, ed. J W Cunliffe, vol.ii, Cambridge 1910, pp.106-31.
 3. Rosenberg, p.131 n.25.
 4. D M Bevington, Tudor Drama and Politics, Cambridge, Mass. 1968, p.9; Kendall, Robert Dudley, pp.161-3; Jean Wilson, Entertainments for Elizabeth I, Woodbridge and Totowa, N.J. 1980, p.22. ed.

to convey private intentions. Sidney's Lady of May shows him doing this. At the same time he was in an excellent position to understand and interpret the courtly shows presented to the Queen. What he saw and heard at Norwich during the royal progress in the summer of 1578 must have pleased him. The town's close connexion with the Low Countries was brought out and the minister of the Strangers' Church emphasized the Queen's position as 'nourse of Christ his church' and promptly told her:

the verie calamatie of Godly men, and teares of the afflicted, the teares, I say, of faithfull Christians have throughly moved thee to defende and protect the miserable and dispersed members of Christ...¹

This was the sort of language the supporters of the Protestant cause liked to hear. Although he must have approved of the speeches and devices put on by the town council and by Churchyard and Garter, Leicester cannot be held responsible for them. They belong to the world of civic pageantry and panegyric and their allegories are general and public. Elizabeth is presented as the Virgin Queen, not endangered by marriage and free to exercise her own choice. There is nothing in them to suggest the Alençon match and the difficulties it provoked at court. It would be increasingly hard to entertain the court without touching on the French marriage.

Just before Casimir visited England there was a double mask at Richmond for Alençon's agent Simier on 11 January 1579. Six elaborately dressed knights and six Amazons accompanied by music presented speeches - translated into Italian and written out by Petruccio Ubaldini - to the Queen. They fought at the barriers and the men overcome by the Amazons surrendered to them.² William Tresham and one of the Knollys brothers took part in the device; both were later to appear in the Four Foster Children.³ Amazons

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1. Bernard Garter, The Joyfull Receyving of the Queenes Majestie into Norwich, (1578), sig.Dl.
 2. Revels Documents, pp. 286, 287, 290, 301; CSP Sp., vol.ii, p. 630.
 3. Revels Documents, p.294; the one belonged to a Roman Catholic, the other to a leading Protestant family.

were common characters in entertainments and while the Queen was apparently never referred to as one in her life-time,¹ this small device may have been meant to warn Simier of the dangers of courting such a Queen. If so it may have been put on by either Leicester's or Sussex's faction and been based on the conceit of Alençon's second name, Hercules, and so have alluded to his period of captivity under Omphale.

Casimir's visit to England in January and February 1579 was the occasion for Sidney and Languet's last meeting. The Protestant prince, who felt he was losing his grip on things in the Netherlands, found in Leicester a host who was prepared to entertain him with gifts, hunting, dinners, bear-baiting and a visit to Oxford. Although there were tilts and barriers on February 1 and 2 and Casimir was presented with the Garter and well-received by the University no details of the entertainments put on for him have survived. But it is interesting to see Leicester promoting the visit and publicising the presence of the Prince only a few months before Alençon came over.

ii. The Callophiscus Challenge.

The real factionalism caused by the proposed marriage was revealed in a tilt which took place just before the crisis of the Alençon courtship in the spring of 1581. Although it was not 'about' the courtship itself, the Callophiscus challenge involved many of the same knights who later took part in the Four Foster Children of Desire. It also contains material which will help in the interpretation of the later entertainment, since the challenge revolved around the politics of the supporters of the marriage, the 'opposition' to this thesis' subjects. Leicester was not directly involved in the challenge, but Oxford was and it is essential to get his rôle clear to understand how the debate over the proposed marriage continued

1. C T Wright, 'The Amazons in Elizabethan Literature', SP, vol.xxxvii, 1940, p.449.

in the court's entertainments.

I have already touched on Burghley's troublesome son-in-law in connexion with Harvey and Sidney, but an account of his career during this period will make his position at court and in its politics comprehensible. When he returned from his extensive continental tour in 1576 Oxford took two decisive steps. Largely under the influence of Charles Arundel he joined a notable group of Catholic courtiers by converting to their religion and at more or less the same time broke off relations with his wife. His conversion was in part a feature of his political discontent and to a certain degree set him apart from his more simply pious co-religionists, especially from Henry Howard. In June 1577 he offered his services to Mauvissière as the leader of a pro-French revolt against the Queen; the ambassador wisely declined his offer.¹ Perhaps this provided a motive for his refusal to dance before the French envoys during the summer of 1578, but it is more likely that he would not perform because of his anger with the Queen over her treatment of Sussex, the leader of the pro-Spanish crypto-Catholics.² Certainly at this time Oxford was still publicly a hero, as Harvey's poems to him in Gratulationes Valdinenses show.

On 3 March 1579 after Sussex's men had presented a play, and instead of a 'mores maske', Oxford appeared in a device before Simier and Mauvissière, Last summer's arguments seemed forgotten. Jewels were presented to the Queen and 'there were comedies and many inventions', one of which Mauvissière describes:

une belle comédie qui se conclust par ung mariage puis vint une Navre du bout d'une grande salle ou estoient le comte d'Auxford et le comte de Succex et trois ou quatre jeunes seigneurs qui vindrent faire ung naufrage au mitan de la salle & sortirent de la avec ung ballet bien concerté et prindrent ladicte royne, qui, comme il est croyable devoit estre de la partie puis luy firent des présens fort riches de la reste de leur naufrage & à quelques dames, et le tout n'estoit en conclusion

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1. J A Bossy, 'English Catholics and the French Marriage 1577-81', Recusant History, vol.v, 1959-60, pp.2,3.
 2. CSP Sp., vol.ii, p.607; B M Ward, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, 1928, p.163.

que parolles d'amour & de mariage pour faire de belles alliances affin de vivre la reste de ceste vie en plaisir et repos.

Anthony Munday is clearly referring to this same show when the hero of his romance Zelauto remembers from his visit to the English court:

a brave and comely Shippe, brought in before her Majestie, wherin were certaine of her noble Lordes, and this Ship was made with a gallant devise, that in her presence it ran upon a Rock, & was dispoyled. This credit was the very bravest devise that ever I sawe, and woorthy of innumerable commendations.¹

It rather sounds as if Munday may have devised the show, which was performed after the uncomic sounding Murderous Michael. It obviously looks forward to Alençon's private visit and suggests his marriage to the Queen, despite the opposition of the rock, which may only have been used because of its availability after the production of Warwick's men's play The Knight of the Burning Rock on March 1. Oxford's companions in the piece were Philip Howard, Earl of Surrey, his half-brother Lord Thomas Howard and Lord Windsor. All of these as well as being supporters of the marriage were either Catholics or had strong Catholic connexions. Just over a month after this show Surrey, Oxford and Windsor were mentioned as proposed hostages for the French during the courtship negotiations.²

The next major event in Oxford's life was the tennis court quarrel with Sidney during Alençon's private visit in August 1579. However this did not stop the two from taking part in that year's accession day tilt.³ Revenge for the Leicester faction was soon on its way. Sometime between October and March 1580 Harvey began to satirise him in his Letter Book and in the first part of the new year that future femme fatale Anne Vavasour came to court and was made a Gentlewoman of the Bedchamber.⁴ Sometime around

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1. Revels Documents, p.308; it could have been a morris mask or a moors' mask - since it was a private production there are no charges for it in the Accounts. Lodge, vol.ii, p.146; CSP Sp., vol.ii, p.655, PRO 31/3/27 ff.283, 283v,; Zelauto, 1580 p. 35.
 2. CSP Sp., vol.ii, p.662.
 3. College of Arms MS M4 preliminary piece no.6, which lists Oxford, Windsor and Sidney as the first three tilters.
 4. E K Chambers, Sir Henry Lee, Oxford 1936, p.151.

June Oxford got her pregnant and shortly after took his revenge on Harvey for the publication of the Letters with their attack on him in 'Speculum Tuscanismi'. Things seemed to be going very well for the Earl who was then in Greville's phrase 'superlative in the Prince's favour'; he probably took part in the 1580 accession day tilt for which Henry Howard paid.¹ This would have virtually been his last friendly link with the Catholic circle he had joined, since towards Christmas he betrayed them all to the Queen. His motives for doing this are not altogether clear. Leicester may have persuaded him to abandon his friends and accuse Mauvissière of his part in the June 1577 plot in order to retaliate against the ambassador's revelation of his marriage in 1579. Equally Leicester would have encouraged him to confirm his party's fears and accusations that Sussex's pro-marriage circle was dominated by Catholics.² The effect of his revelations was to send his former friends into hiding with the Spanish ambassador. It was soon realized that although they were Roman Catholics the three men Oxford betrayed were loyal to the Queen and of course supported her in the then-favoured Alençon courtship. Instead of being punished, they were simply placed under guard; Henry Howard with the Lord Chancellor Sir Thomas Bromley, Charles Arundel with Hatton and Robert Southwell with Walsingham.³

At this stage the Queen gained little from Oxford's revelations beyond the fact of his former treacherous disloyalty, but she did not yet punish him. In the new year he found himself according to Mauvissière:

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1. Greville, Life of Sidney, p.63; PRO 31/3/28 f.203, the relevant part is printed in J H Pollen and W MacMahon, The Ven. Philip Howard Earl of Arundel, Catholic Record Society, vol.xxi, 1919, pp.28, 29.
 2. Bossy, 'English Catholics and the French Marriage', p.8; Ward's explanation, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, p.210 that he was motivated by patriotism in the face of his pro-Spanish colleagues' disloyalty and treason must be rejected; Peck, 'Raleigh, Sidney, Oxford, and the Catholics', p.428.
 3. CSP Sp., vol.iii, p.246; PRO 31/3/28 f.218, printed in Pollen and MacMahon, op. cit., p.29; there is much confusion among writers as to where and with whom they were lodged.

ayant perdu le crédit et l'honneur estant habandonné de tous ses amys
et de toutes les dames pour en avoir encores voulu toucher quelques
uns en cecy des plus favorables à monseigneur.¹

If Leicester had seduced him from his friends he did not now come to his help, when those friends began to retaliate for their betrayal. The first move in their campaign was the challenge Philip Howard, having succeeded to the title of Arundel, issued as Callophiscus, the 'beautiful-natured' knight, on 6 January 1581. He was not yet a Catholic, only formally converting in 1583, but Henry Howard was his uncle and Charles Arundel his second cousin once removed. Arundel's printed challenge has survived.² From several manuscripts and one much later print the tilt can be followed in detail.

Callophiscus' challenge 'Proclaimed by the sound of Trumpet, and a Herald' was delivered on Twelfth Night when the Children of Paul's entertained the Queen with Pompey. The tilt was meant to take place on the fifteenth but at 'her Majesties pleasure... for divers considerations' it was put off until Sunday the twenty-second. The challenge began by describing Callophiscus' captivity in love, glancing at his friends' detention:

...being brought by the greatest perfection in an other to the smallest liberty in himselfe, having the foundation of his choice so firme as it cannot decaye, and finding the place of his imprisonment so stronge as he cannot escape...

He then sets out six propositions on all or any of which he will fight; that his mistress is the most beautiful in all Creation; that like the clouds and the sun none can 'abide the beames of his Mistresse looke'; and that her 'perfections' deprive more men of their liberty and hearts than any other woman. After these three he restates his challenge: his cause is so just, and his mistress will win so many men away from their loves that he

1. PRO 31/3/28 f.218, Pollen and MacMahon, *op. cit.*, pp.29, 30.

2. It was entered ten days after it was issued by John Charlewood on 16 January 1581, Arber, vol.ii, p.387; the unique broadside is in the Folger: STC 4368a = STC 13868.5 reproduced in University Microfilms Reel 738.

will need to fight with only one assistant. Continuing with his articles he stresses his devotion to his lady. He:

4. ...for his faith will yeelde to none, and for his loyalty dooth thinke himselfe aboue all... (He is) most woorthy to be accepted into favor with his Mistresse, or to receive grace... 5... (His) good will and affection... is for impression so deepe, for continuaunce so lasting, and for passion so extreame, as it is impossible for any other to carry so perfect loove...

What others find most bitter to perform for love he enjoys, but he scarcely expects much opposition. It hardly needs to be explained why the challenge is based around the question of loyalty to the Queen.

The next set of evidence from the Lansdowne manuscripts consists of four speeches by different knights.¹ In their correct order they supply a fairly coherent narrative of the events before the tilt. On January 15, the day on which it was originally to have been fought the White Knight rechallenged Callophiscus, maintaining he was 'a mere straunger' and his mistress 'altogether unknowne'; since there are already enough knights and ladies at court he will not admire him, nor 'worship an unknowne saint'. His deliberate obtuseness in not recognising the Queen in Callophiscus' mistress allows him to say that he will defend 'that peereles Princess that Phenix and Paragon of the world whome with all devocion I doe serve love honor and obey'. By rechallenging a challenge the White Knight has broken a rule of chivalry and the Red Knight in answering it, before his preoccupied friend Callophiscus has heard it, points this out. He will meet the White Knight to show that he and his companion honour 'hir roiall and matchlesse excellencie... more then thowe doest and serve better then thowe canst'. The next speech comes from the Blue Knight's assistant, who is unimpressed both by the White Knight's professions of loyalty and his

1. BL MS Lansd. 99 ff.259f., printed in ed. E K Chambers and W W Greg, "Dramatic Records from the Lansdowne Manuscripts", Malone Society Collections, vol.i, pt.ii, 1908, pp.181-7; F Brie, Sidneys Arcadia, p.295 compares them to challenges in Book III of the New Arcadia.

'disorderlie' challenge. He also has a low opinion of Callophissus who he says has inadequately praised the Queen. He therefore sets up his own challenge for two o'clock on Candlemas or February 2 at Westminster.¹ He specifies five conditions for it, including the bringing of a jewel worth £100 as a pledge and his using an emblem of a laurel wreath and a scientific instrument by which he is to be recognised. Finally the Knight of the Sun Tree attacks Callophissus' loyalty and praises the White Knight 'albeit to me he be unknowen' and only wishes he had chosen 'a fitter daie' for the tilt. Nevertheless he will join the White Knight in his quarrel with the Red.

Although these challenges suggest several tilts - Callophissus against all, the Blue Knight against all, and the Red Knight against the White and the Sun Tree Knights - I think that only one tilt took place on January 22 and is relevant here. These speeches were some of the devices in the 'meane season' noted in the Revels Accounts, designed to entertain between the challenge and the postponed tilt.² Lists of participants exist for it revealing Arundel was assisted by Sir William Drury, Oxford got the prize and Sir James Perrot appeared as the frozen knight, a rôle he assumed again in the Four Foster Children, and that he 'cum unwares'.³ From these

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1. For Candlemas as a traditional day of revels, see Chambers, vol. i, pp.20, 213; I have already mentioned tilts and barriers presented for Casimir on 1, 2 February 1579.
 2. Chambers, vol.i, p.97 n.13; the Revels Documents refer to the Master's attendance at only 'ij severall triumphes' between 1 November 1580 and 8 February 1581, p.337, which must be for the Callophissus and accession day tilts.
 3. College of Arms MS M4 preliminary piece no. 11 and f. 22 supply scored and unscored tilt cheques. Burghley's memorandum, HMC Hatfield, vol. xiii, p.199 mentions Oxford, Windsor and fourteen other unnamed defenders; Nichols, vol.ii, pp.334, 335 from Segar includes Robert Knollys as a defender, whom the College of Arms MSS omit, to give seventeen defenders in all. Drury was presumably the son of Sir William and Lady Elizabeth, who had been a maid of honour with Oxford's wife Ann Cecil, Ward, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, p.227 n.1; Marshall W S Swan, 'The Sweet Speech and Spenser's (?) Axiochus', ELH, vol.xi, 1944, p.168 mistakes son for father who had died in 1579.

challenges and lists it is clear the Red Knight was Drury and the Blue Knight may have been Oxford's nephew Windsor or perhaps Sidney. The speeches from the tilt have also survived, one in the Ditchley manuscript, which is closely associated with Sir Henry Lee and one in the translation of Plato's Axiochus attributed to 'Edw. Spenser.'

The second of these appeared in 1592 and both its parts, the dialogue and the space-filling 'Sweet Speech' have been convincingly attributed to Anthony Munday, like Oxford a recanted Catholic convert.¹ A page delivered the speech to the Queen who stood watching at a window as Oxford, who had been sitting under a gilded bay tree and by an orange-embroidered tent, mounted his horse to begin tilting. The speech uses the same conceit of the commonwealth and individuals being represented by trees as Gascoigne had used at Kenilworth in 1575.² Disliking the various faults of the other inhabitants of the Grove where he lives, the Knight leaves it for 'the plaine Champion', (sig. Dlv.) no happier there tormented day and night, he travels and finds a tree of outstanding brilliance. A pilgrim or hermit tells him it is 'the Tree of the Sunne', (sig. D2), which is unique and always stands alone eclipsing 'all other Plants': Cupid 'is ever drawing, but dares not shoote' at it, and it has a multitude of exceptional qualities,

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1. The arguments over attribution are summarised in ed. David V Erdman and Ephim G Fogel, Evidence for Authorship, Ithaca, New York 1966, pp.424-7; see also C T Wright, 'Young Anthony Mundy Again', SP, vol.lvi, 1959, pp. 150-68. The speech can be conveniently read in W A Jackson, The Carl H Pforzheimer Library: English Literature, 1475-1700, New York, 1940, vol. iii, plates between pp. 996 and 997. All of these writers ignore the strong circumstantial evidence supplied by Munday's interest at this time in triumphs, witnessed by his romance Zelauto. Apart from the device of the ship I have already mentioned above, he refers to a show involving Apollo and the Muses, (p. 35) and gives a long account with speeches of an entertainment in which a Lady defeats a Hungarian knight and forces him after the fight to accept the Queen as superior to his Lady Polinarda, (pp. 35-47). I have not identified this tournament but feel it may be related to George Whetstone's comedy Promos and Cassandra 1578, which has a maid called Polina in it and is set in Hungary. Polinarda is the name of a heroine in Amadis de Gaul. In Zelauto Munday also includes lavish praise of a noble Lord, his master, and the Queen printing poems addressed to each 'before I departed out of' England, pp. 48-51. The master, who would not leave with Zelauto, is clearly based on Oxford, to whom the romance is dedicated.
 2. Works of Gascoigne, vol. ii, pp. 125, 126.

all of which are reminiscent of the Queen. The Knight kisses the ground before it, (sig.D3) but unable to look at it he rests under its shadow, enjoying days 'spent in vertuous delights' and nights of 'golden Dreames'. He admires it so much that he determines to be its one knight 'eyther to lyve or die for the defence thereof'. He then falls asleep and dreams, (sig. D3v), that some people are '(und)ermining the Tree' and threaten 'him by violence, whom they could not match in vertue'. Placing his trust in the tree the Knight is pleased 'to have his trueth tryed wyth hys valoure' in a challenge of arms and wakes up. The page finishes (sig.D4) by repeating his master's 'constant loyaltie'. The print also adds that the crowd tore the tree and tent to pieces after the Knight had broken the staves which stood by them.

The allegory here is fairly obvious.¹ Oxford tells how, disillusioned by his fellow courtiers he joins the Catholic converts in the open meadow, becoming a prey to both the wind and the sun, perhaps the Spanish and the French. Abandoning this he submits to the Queen, but soon finds himself attacked by his former co-religionists and now must defend and maintain his loyalty to the Queen. Perhaps the 'great concourse of people' who suffered when the scaffolds collapsed² were not convinced of his sincere submission and so attacked his tree and tent.

The second surviving speech was made at the end of the tilt by Arundel's page; it was addressed to the Queen and accompanied the gift of a pair of compasses, 'to testefye his exedinge love & thanckfulnes'. They will allow her 'cominge... rightly to measure both himself & his meaninge' while his 'imprease', which is not actually given, also figures out his service. Finally he asks her to present the prize to the best of his opponents.³

1. My interpretation differs slightly from M W S Swan, art. cit., p.169.

2. R Holinshed, Chronicles, 1587, vol.i, p.1315.

3. BL MS Add. 41499A f.6; this is badly damaged, but there is a transcript in part B ff.30-lv. of the same MS. Strong, Elizabethan Pageantry as Propaganda, p.101 attributes the writing of the entertainment to Lee, but while he may have devised this speech for Arundel, Oxford's speech does not relate to it.

The fact that it went to Oxford shows that to some extent he had been pardoned by the Queen. But just as he was recovering from one disgrace another loomed up. For on 21 March 1581 Anne Vavasour gave birth to his child; on the next day she was sent to the Tower and he followed soon after.¹ Since those whom Oxford had accused in December 1580 were relatives and friends of the Vavasours and Anne's mother's family, the Knyvets, the Catholics had a good reason to renew their attacks against Oxford and the Queen reason to listen to them again. Charles Arundel's counter-charges seem to belong to the spring of 1581: in March Philip Howard was restored to the blood and in May took part in the Four Foster Children.² It was not until the summer of 1583 that the Queen would see Oxford again and he was involved in fights with the Knyvets and Vavasours from March 1582 until January 1585.³ Lyly's Endymion has been interpreted as an allegorical defence of Oxford against the slanders of Anne Vavasour, (Tellus), who in turn ensnared her jailer Lee, (Corsites).⁴ In the long run the whole affair came to rebound against Leicester because the Catholics Oxford betrayed soon went into exile in Paris, where during the spring of 1584 under Charles Arundel's direction they compiled Leicester's Commonwealth.⁵

The Callophiscus challenge shows how a knowledge of private circumstances is essential for an understanding of public occasion. Oxford was explaining and justifying his political and religious transformations to try to win back the Queen's favour. Leicester could not avoid being implicated in this plea since he had encouraged him to betray his Catholic friends. The different

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1. Chambers, Sir Henry Lee, p.156; Peck, 'Raleigh, Sidney, Oxford, and the Catholics', p.431.
 2. J W Bennett, 'Oxford and Endimion', PMLA, vol.lviii, 1942, p.355; Peck, art. cit., p.428; the charges are in PRO SP 12/151/42-57; Pollen and MacMahon, Ven. Philip Howard Earl of Arundel, pp.24,25.
 3. Bennett, art. cit., p.358.
 4. Ibid., pp.354-69; Hunter, John Lyly, pp.188, 189 is sceptical about this interpretation, which has generally been ignored and fairly convincingly questioned by D Bevington, Tudor Drama and Politics, pp.178-84.
 5. The Catholic Exiles who wrote against the Earl are fully discussed in the Introduction to Peck, Leicester's Commonwealth.

challenges highlight the divisions within the court at this time and illustrate how deeply the Alençon courtship affected it. Leicester was eventually mistaken in getting involved with someone as fundamentally unreliable as Oxford.

iii. The Four Foster Children of Desire.

The key entertainment with which Leicester can be associated during this period of the Alençon courtship is the tilt known as the Four Foster Children of Desire. Despite the absence of an adequate account of it the spectacle was the most important and exciting of the Queen's reign, marking the replacement of the old romantic type of drama by the modern French courtly show. The fullest treatment of the background to what the French marriage Commissioners saw on 15 and 16 May 1581 is an unpublished thesis by A L Blankenship whose findings deserve extensive rehearsal and analysis.¹ Essentially his argument is that a first set of entertainments under Sussex's direction had to be abandoned because of Leicester's objections and that Burghley subsequently, 'approved a general plan which he then divided between' Lyly and Sidney, ironically giving the Challengers' speeches to Sidney and the Defenders' to Lyly, who also contributed significantly to the entertainment's general devising.²

Owing to the magnificence and the expense of the Commissioners' reception there is a mass of evidence concerning their visit, some of it hard to interpret. The huge embassy of about five hundred Frenchmen had assembled

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1. Alan Lee Blankenship, The Fortresse of Perfect Beauty: An Attribution to John Lyly, An Historical Reconstruction, and a Critical Edition, University of Colorado Ph.D. 1978. The only other independent studies of it are: Ivan L Schulze, 'The Final Protest against the Elizabeth-Alençon Marriage Proposal', MLN, vol. lvi, 1943, pp. 54-7 and Norman Council, 'O Dea Certe: The Allegory of The Fortress of Perfect Beauty' HQ, vol. xxxix, 1975-6, pp. 329-42. All of these are based on Goldwell's description alone.
 2. Blankenship., op. cit., pp. 53-60, 66, 84, 85, 96.

at Calais by March 27 and estimated that they would be ready to embark in a day or two at the latest; as it was they did not land in England until April 16, nor make their way to London until April 20.¹ By then preparations were fairly well advanced, the accounts for their entertainments, organised by Sussex being for work done between March 18 and April 1:²

at the Commaundement of the Lord Chamberleyne for setting downe of paterns for maskes and making up of some of the same for the Receaving of the ffrench Comissioners with the provision of certeyne stuffe properties and making of modell[s] for A mownte and for the edifying of A greate parte of the said mounte.

John Rose a regularly employed property-maker was responsible for building this model of a mount but was also paid for taking it away again, 'because it was not used'. He was to receive 46s 8d for the model, which was probably on quite a large scale. The other interesting payments in this bill apart from the ones for 'paterns' which were coloured plans on paper, are for the Master of the Revels: for attending the proclaiming of the challenge and the two days of the triumph with his men; for boat-hire for himself and his men, 'at diverse tymes during the laste workes of the Revells unto the lord Chamberleyne and the lord of Leicester for showing of paterns'; for a woman's elaborate head-dress and for a pair of ostrich feathers to be used in the mask as wings. Connected with all this is William Bowl's bill for deliveries of silk and tassels on March 27 and 28.³

The first problem connected with these accounts, that of Tylney's expense of boat-hire - 10s in a fortnight - can be explained if we accept the journeys as revealing, 'some great problem', due to the disagreements of

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1. (Pinart ? to Walsingham?), Calais 27 March 1581, CSP For., vol. xvii, no. 100; Journal of Sir Francis Walsingham, ed. C.T.Martin, Camden Society, vol. civ, 1871, pt. iii, p. 41.
 2. These are printed in Revels Documents, pp. 340, 341. My understanding of the Accounts has been greatly aided by Albert Feuillerat's, Le Bureau des Menus-Plaisirs, (Office of the Revels), et la Mise en Scène à la Cour D'Elizabeth, Louvain 1910, and by Morton Paterson, 'The Stagecraft of the Revels Office during the Reign of Elizabeth', in ed. C T Prouty, Studies in the Elizabethan Theatre, n.p. 1961, pp. 1-52.
 3. Revels Documents, p. 344.

the two factions under Sussex and Leicester.¹ Certainly Leicester's involvement in an area which was strictly Sussex's is unique. It is less clear as to which challenge and tilt the payments refer. No chivalric shows are known to have taken place during the last fortnight of March; the accounts do not cover the period of the Callophissus challenge - a one day event anyway - and are too early even for the Commissioners' arrival. The preparations for this show were considerable: all but three of the twenty tailors and officers employed for it worked twelve days out of the fourteen or so. Its total cost of £38 15s was substantial.²

The main difficulty however is in deciding why the mask was abandoned. Blankenship suggests it was because Oxford, who he says was the courtier of the Sussex party as Sidney was Leicester's, was about to be disgraced through Anne Vavasour's confinement. He also thinks Oxford may have organised this mask presumably acting as Sussex's artistic adviser.³ This is unlikely because, as we have seen, Oxford was sent to the Tower on March 22 a few days after the work began. Rather, what happened I believe is that this mask was not given up so much as 'begonne & lefte unfynished' as the Accounts say in a yearly summary.⁴ One sign of this is the way that some of the work and purchases were used in the later triumph which did take place.

Meanwhile because of the size of the embassy a special banqueting house had been begun on March 26, Easter Day, right in the middle of the

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1. Blankenship, *op. cit.*, p. 58; he estimates 10s as representing about twenty trips, but from another official's expenses in 1578 - the most detailed accounts available - it appears that the cost of going admittedly as far as Richmond was 5s for the return journey and 2s 6d for a single trip, *Revels Documents*, p. 298. I think that Blankenship underestimates the expense of official transport.
 2. *Revels Documents*, p. 341; Paterson, *art. cit.*, pp. 9, 10 says that ten tailors working for twelve days and four painters for five 'might be taken as the average time required for the preparation of a single show'. The cost of boat-hire for the mask of May 1559 to which he is referring was only 2s 4d, *Revels Documents*, p. 101.
 3. Blankenship, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 28.
 4. *Revels Documents*, p. 342.

preparations for the first mask. The house was built in Whitehall and was finished on April 18 costing about £1,745.¹ The only comparable banqueting house made of, 'plastered lath walls covered with a canvas roof supported by poles' and garnished with flowers and plants, was made for Montmorency's visit to England in 1572 and only cost about £230.²

On April 1 the day on which the first set of accounts ends a new scheme was begun by the drawing up of a budget of nearly £620 for an entertainment with an estimate of what 'monnie is to be allowed in prest', that is in advance. This is found in the Lansdowne MSS in a group of papers relating to Burghley's part in the visit, and although not actually in his handwriting must be connected with him.³ Equally Burghley must be associated with a proposed calendar of entertainments dated April 10, which he has partly endorsed. Since it actually took the Commissioners a week from their arrival to have a first audience with the Queen and in this plan a first audience is scheduled for April 16, he must have been expecting them to arrive fairly soon around the tenth. Further, since the new mask would take more than the average fortnight to prepare because of its magnificence, it would be set for the twenty-fourth or fifth, exactly a week after the banqueting house would have been finished. This would all have gone according to plan if the Commissioners had come around April 10, but for some unknown reason, as we have seen, they did not land until April 16. By then the machinery of spectacle was under way and on that very day the challenge for the tilt was

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1. Ed. H M Colvin, The History of the King's Works, vol. iii, pt. 1, 1975, p. 91. On this banqueting house which was more or less on the site of Inigo Jones', see Holinshed, Chronicles, vol. i, p. 1315, which may have been based on the fuller account in BL MS Harl. 293 f. 217. This is printed with much additional information in M H Cox and G T Forrest, The Parish of St Margaret, Westminster, pt. ii, Survey of London, vol. xiii, 1930, pp. 116-8 and Per. Palme, Triumph of Peace, 1957, pp. 114, 115.
 2. Paterson, art. cit., p. 12 and n. 5.
 3. BL MS Lansd. 31 f. 116, printed in Revels Documents, p. 345; Blankenship op. cit., pp. 53, 54. As Lord Treasurer Lord Burghley had an official interest in the Revels especially in their expenditure and was quite willing to play a part in their management, cf. Chambers, vol. i, pp. 80-5.

issued, showing that by then it had reached a fairly finished form. The tilt was thereby scheduled for April 24 as it was in Burghley's plan of April 10. The result of this was confusion: the tilt should have happened on what became the day of the Commissioners' first interview and was postponed for a week until the next Monday.¹

Burghley now had to produce a second proposed calendar which survives in his hand and which must have been devised within a week of the April 10 plan. This estimates that the Commissioners will arrive on April 16 and supplies a programme for every day until May 3. The triumphs have been correctly put forward to April 30 and May Day, and a new engagement included, a dinner by Burghley on the first day of the tilt - a choice of dates which Blankenship finds significant.² However the basic shape of dinners with the Queen and Leicester before the tilt and with her again and Sussex after it is retained. Again for some unknown reason this plan was not kept to. Although the French reached London on April 20 a day earlier than was intended they did not have their first audience with the Queen until April 24 instead of the proposed April 22.³ There is unfortunately no surviving evidence as to what the French did between arriving in London and the first audience, a period which of course included St George's Day. Then they would have watched what Burghley calls in his April 10 plan, 'the solemnities of the Feast' which consisted of the Queen going 'in procession about the Court with the Knights of the Garter and the Chapel in their copes.'⁴

I do not intend to deal with the negotiations about the marriage, which due to the Queen's deliberate procrastination and the divisions within the

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1. CSP For., vol. xvii, no. 120. The tilt's postponements are all derived from Henry Goldwell's Briefe Declaration, (1581), sig. A5.
 2. CSP For., vol. xvii, no. 152; no. 153 is a copy corrected by Burghley. That it is a plan for the future and not a record of the past events is apparent from the expectant phrases 'to confer' and 'to dine'; Blankenship, op. cit., p. 54.
 3. Journal of Sir Francis Walsingham, p. 41.
 4. Chambers, vol. i, p. 20.

Privy Council's negotiating committee went on until June.¹ The Queen first received the French in the new banqueting house itself and held her dinner there on the next day, April 25. After dinner there was dancing for about three hours and the Queen led the Commissioners and some of her courtiers into her private chambers in the main palace. There they saw a large painting of Henry VIII - probably Holbein's - which she showed, Mauvissière reports, to remind them of Anglo-French friendship in the past.² No festivities are recorded for Wednesday April 26, but on Thursday Leicester held a dinner, 'What shewe ther was', Randolph will not even bother to tell Hundsdon, but 'ther wanted nothyng that myght be had'. It was Leicester again who took the younger noblemen hunting in Waltham Forest on Saturday April 29.³ Burghley's enormously elaborate and expensive dinner which involved over eighty attendants including the young Francis Bacon as an interpreter took place on the following Sunday. There is no record of an entertainment between the bear and bull-baiting on May 1 and the supper given by Sussex on May 4. After the sport on May Day the Commissioners returned from the Paris Garden and in the Long Gallery at Whitehall which was full of pictures and maps heard music for three lutes; the Queen played the spinett more privately in her own room.⁴

For unknown reasons the triumphs which we last heard of as due to take place on Sunday April 30 and May 1 were again at some point postponed until Monday May 8 and then again until May 15 when they were finally begun. Apart from the Revels Accounts there are two main sources for the triumph, known as 'The Four Foster Children of Desire' or 'The Fortress of Perfect Beauty'.

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1. The course of the negotiations is summarised by Read, Walsingham, vol. ii, pp. 47-9 and Burghley, pp. 256-61.
 2. Cal. of Border Papers, vol. i, p. 67; PRO 31/3/28 f. 284. On the portrait see R C Strong, Holbein and Henry VIII, 1967; Mauvissière's report ante-dates Strong's earliest certain reference to the picture of 1613, *ibid.*, p. 31. The reception and dinner are described in some detail in Abraham de Wicquefort, L'Ambassadeur et ses Fonctions, Dernière ed., Cologne 1715, vol. i, pp. 253, 254.
 3. Cal. of Border Papers, vol. i, p. 67, cf. Wicquefort, *op. cit.* vol. i, p. 254.
 4. The accounts for Burghley's dinner are preserved in BL MS Lansd. 31 ff. 181-21; PRO 31/3/28 f. 305.

These are Henry Goldwell's Briefe Declaration of the Shews and a contemporary French account in a letter.¹ From them I shall try to reconstruct what happened in the entertainment, then discuss what it signified and finally try to determine who was responsible for it.

I have not been able to learn anything about Henry Goldwell himself who 'Collected, gathered, penned & published' his work as its title-page says. But he may have been related to a John Goldwell of Queen's College Cambridge and Gray's Inn who in 1580 dedicated his unpublished account of Justices of the Peace to Leicester's close friend Roger, Lord North.² The dedication of the Briefe Declaration is more promising. His 'approved patrone' was Rowland Brasebridge Mayor of High Wycombe in 1575 and an alderman in 1578 and 1579. On December 6 in the same year as the tilt the inhabitants and clothiers of the town petitioned Burghley to have Brasebridge removed from the office of aulnager for Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire.³ Both this Dedication, (sigs. A2, A2v.), and the Conclusion, (sig.C2v.) have borrowed heavily from the address to the 'Gentlemen Readers' of Austen Saker's novel Narbonus. The Laberynth of Libertie. It was published in 1580⁴ and contains a Dedication to one of the participants in the Four Foster Children, Sir Thomas Perrott. This seems simply to be a coincidence. Unfortunately as with Goldwell, Austen Saker's identity remains a mystery beyond what he tells us on the title-page of his book, that he was 'of New Inn'. This later became part of the

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1. Nallot's letter is in BN MS Dupuy 33 ff. 77-81; a ballad called 'the Entertainement of the Ffrenchemen' which might have contained some details of the show was entered by Roger Warde on 1 October 1581, Arber, vol. ii, p. 401 but has not survived.
 2. Harvard Law School MS 81; the dedication is dated 6 December 1580 and in the same month North passed the book to William Lambarde who failed to have it printed because it contained too little original material.
 3. Ed. R W Greaves, The First Ledger Book of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire Record Society, vol. xi, 1956, pp. 95-7; BL MS Lansd. 32 ff.4v., 5; on the office of aulnager see Penry Williams, The Tudor Regime, Oxford 1979, pp. 149, 156, 157.
 4. It was entered on 8 March 1580 to Richard Jones with the stipulation that he bring the whole impression into Stationers' Hall 'in case it be disliked', Arber, vol. ii, p. 366. On Narbonus and its debt to Euphues see René Pruvost, Matteo Bandello and Elizabethan Fiction, Bibliothèque de la Revue de Littérature Comparée, vol. cxiii, Paris 1937, pp. 279-85.

Middle Temple, but there is no trace of him in its registers.

Goldwell's Declaration was presumably printed soon after the events it describes and again in a modified form in Holinshed.¹ In the Dedication he says he took the task of writing about the show because nobody else had and he wanted to save it from oblivion. He presents his pamphlet as 'a newse or noveltie' and is sure that because of Brasebridge's 'knowledge in approved Martial Chivalrie' in youth and age, in England as a courtier and abroad as a soldier, none is more worthy to receive it than he, who could not be in London to see it (sigs.A2, A2v.). Goldwell does not say he will give a full report of the show but more 'a collection' of the courtiers' 'names, speeches, and chiefest inventions', which he has gathered 'so nere as I could', (sig.A2). Again he admits he will leave out some of the inventions of the first day's entry 'for brevities sake', but says he will include as many speeches as there were, 'or at the least as I could come by', (sig.Blv). Robert Waldegrave who printed the account has been so closely associated with the Marprelate press that his political and religious views do not need any examination. The book comes from the heart of the Protestant cause and I feel certain that Leicester encouraged its publication.

The second source for the entertainment is the copy of a letter in the Bibliothèque Nationale, from one named Nallot probably to a M. Noques. It was written from London on 19 May 1581, that is on the Friday following the tilt.²

1. It was entered to Robert Waldegrave on 1 July 1581, Arber, vol. ii, p. 396. Greg, Bibliography, vol. iii, no. 77, pp. 156, 157; my examination of the three extant copies of the original edition revealed four minor internal textual variants. Holinshed, Chronicles, vol. i, pp. 1315-21; Goldwell's Dedication and Conclusion were omitted and two quotations from Abraham Hartwell's Latin poem Regina Literata, written for the Queen's Cambridge visit in 1564 have been introduced.
2. A paraphrase of the letter is printed in F von Raumer's History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Illustrated by Original Documents, 1835, vol. ii, pp. 431-4, in English and in a slightly fuller form in the German edition Briefe aus Paris zur Erläuterung der Geschichte des Sechzehnten und Siebzehnten Jahrhunderts, Leipzig 1831, vol. ii, pp. 500-4. In both editions of Raumer's work the tilt is located at Hampton Court and from the English edition Chambers hesitantly placed it there on May 6 and 7, vol. i, p. 144 and n. 4. He did this on account of Raumer's misidentification of 'Huisthasle'. In Nallot's letter Greville appears as 'Forqueville' and Sidney, who may have been using his Philisides pseudonym, as 'de Bindelisses'.

The letter mainly supplied details of the entries of the tilters, along with their retinues, concentrating on their costumes and adding several important details which Goldwell omits. It is particularly interesting from our point of view that Nallot supplies no interpretation or gloss to the show, remaining silent about its allegorical form and meaning. I suspect that he did not understand English which may be why he does not even refer to any of the speeches which were made.

The challenge for the tilt was given by a boy on Sunday April 16 as the Queen left the royal Chapel at Whitehall. He was dressed in red and white 'as a Martial messenger of Desires fostered Children', (Goldwell, sig. A3v.), giving the first indication of the important rôle colour-symbolism was to play in the show. He tells how the four Foster Children of Desire are at hand ready to stake their claim, 'by right of inheritaunce' and 'in the name of Justice,' to the Fortress of Beauty, which 'built by nature is seated in this Realme', and that the Queen must no longer 'exclude vertuous DESIRE from perfect BEAUTIE'. All will be well if she yields now, but if her beauty keeps company with 'disdainfull pride' and 'refusing crueltie', then the Foster Children will maintain their claim by besieging the Fortress and are prepared to meet with opposition from the Court. If at the tilt and with sword and lance the Children are overcome, then they will yield to the Queen as her slaves for ever, (sigs. A3v. - 5).

The conceits employed here were not new. There was an extensive mediaeval tradition of allegorical sieges of ladies and an obvious association, such as at Bristol in 1574, of the monarch with a castle or a fortress. The siege was often led by Desire whose companions were armed with comfits or rose-water.¹ I have mentioned Desire in connexion with Leicester and the Queen, but it should also be noted that the Desire described in the tilt

1. R S Loomis, 'The Allegorical Siege in the Art of the Middle Ages', *JM. American Journal of Archaeology*, NS, vol. xxiii, 1919, pp. 255-69; Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry, 1558-1642*, 1971, p. 46; C R Baskervill, 'Some Evidence for Early Romantic Plays in England', *MP*, vol. xiv, 1916-17, pp. 473-5.

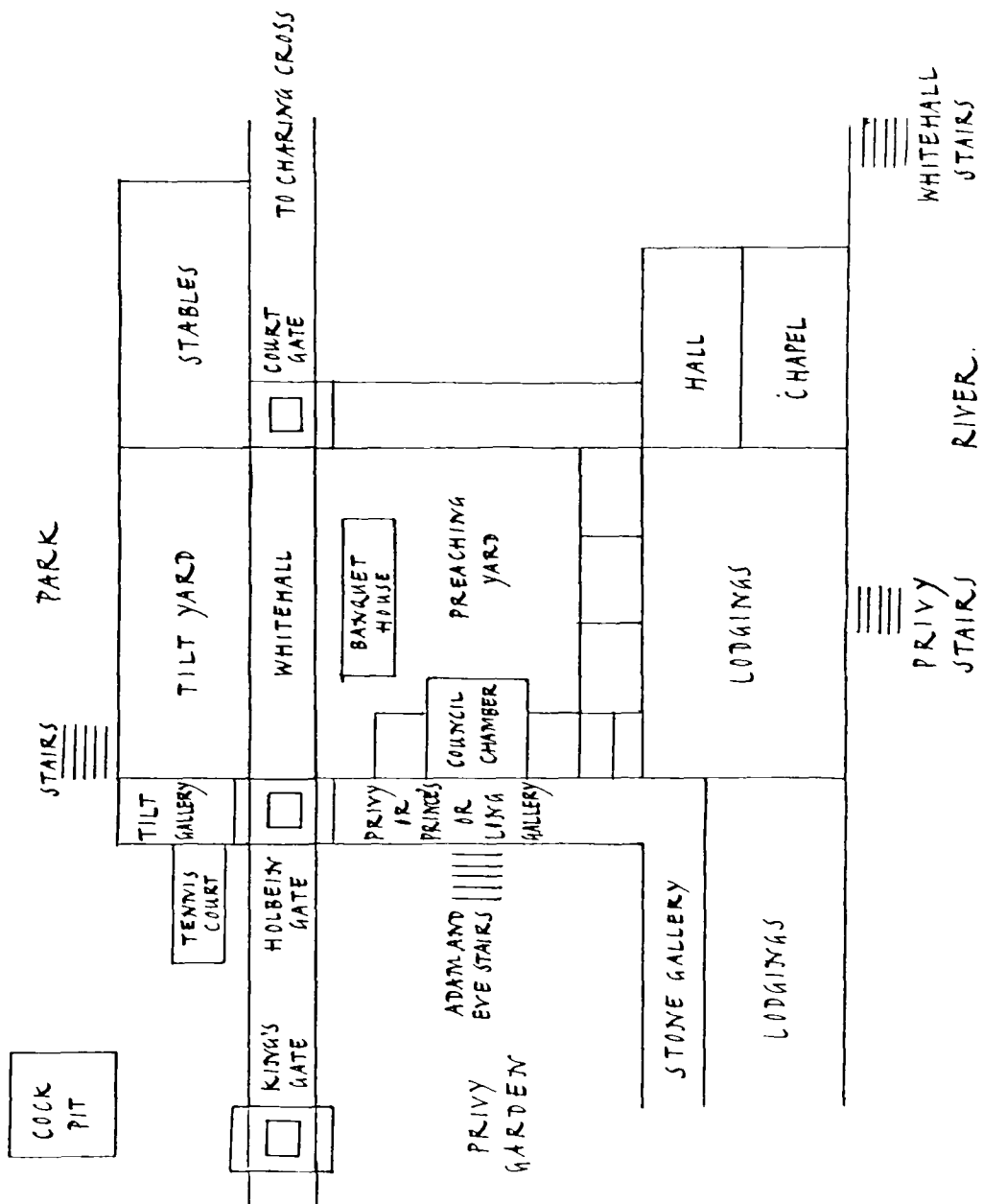
- infantile longing or craving rather than sensual or lustful desire - was one about which Sidney wrote, frequently associating it with Beauty and young children.¹ If some of the material used in the entertainment was traditional or part of the common currency of the romantic comedy of the time its arrangement was strikingly modern, employing both political and neo-Platonic allegory. While the Defenders' speeches and shows were based on the old romantic drama the style and allegory of the entertainment imitated the sophisticated festivals of the French court.

To understand the mechanics of the entertainment fully it is necessary to describe its setting. As one approached the Whitehall Palace from Charing Cross one would face the Holbein Gate. To its right and extending beyond it outside of the Palace was the tilt-yard, an oblong area with the stables at one end and the tiltyard Gallery at its Palace end. Beyond the Gallery was the tennis-court and to its right the Cockpit which was more or less in St James' Park. There was an ornamental staircase from which the speeches were made connecting the Park with the Gallery where the Queen and the Court sat. The Gallery which began in the west by the Park, probably ran the length of the Palace down to the Privy Stairs in the east by the river. Its first section was the Tilt-yard Gallery and it seems reasonable to identify this or its immediate continuation with the Shield Gallery; if it was the continuation, then it must have been on the other side of the Holbein Gate which led into the private apartments, where it was also known as the Privy or Prince's Gallery. About half way down these was the Privy Staircase which led into the Privy Garden behind the apartments. In front of them was the Preaching Yard. Again if one were standing facing the Holbein Gate, to one's left there would be the Palace Gate and then the banqueting house with the Preaching Yard behind it. As I have said the temporary structure of 1581 was built on the same ground as Inigo Jones' later construction.

1. See for example CS 6, 10, OP 4 11.201-4 and OA p. 378.29.

PLATE III

Plan, not to scale, showing the relative position of buildings at Whitehall, c.1581.



From her Gallery overlooking the Yard the Queen sat surrounded by her courtiers and with the Dauphin and Mauvissière, (Nallot, f. 81). She would have been directly opposite the stables and coach-house out of which the tilters and their cars came. The Office of Works was paid for repairing 'an old bridge over against the Tiltyard' and for gravelling it and the road between the 'Masgaite' and Whitehall Gate, that is presumably a gate in the Mews and the Palace Gate, and for the transport of the 'pagins'.¹ Scaffolds for seating had been erected directly beneath her and down the length of the sides of the Yard, (Nallot, f. 77). The tilt was designed to last for two days; the Foster Children were to assault the Fortress, the Defenders to come in and tilt against them until darkness, when the Foster Children were to retire almost defeated; on the second day they were to accept defeat and after the tourney and barriers submit to the Queen.

The proceedings started with the entrance of forty mounted courtiers who having gone round the tilt sat down on the scaffolds. Then came eight heralds with trumpeters and after them the four marshals and judges of the tilt with more gentlemen, (Nallot, f. 77). The entertainment itself began with the Earl of Arundel's entry followed by Windsor, then Sidney and Greville. Each came in mounted and wearing armour, followed by pages, trumpeters, servants, footmen and so on. Well over two hundred men were involved in this first entry each dressed in the distinctive colours of his master, many with feathers and caparisoned horses. Goldwell records two of their devices; Windsor's yeomen had 'the Unicorne of silver plate on their sleeves' and Sidney's followers silver scrowls, like scarfs around necks and under their arms with the motto, 'Sic nos non nobis' written on both

1. This description and plan are based on Per Palme, Triumph of Peace, M H Cox and G T Forrest, The Parish of St Margaret, Westminster, pts. ii and iii, Survey of London, vols. xiv, 1931; see also John Harris, 'A Prospect of Whitehall by Inigo Jones', Burlington Magazine, vol. cix, 1967, pp. 89, 90. The Office of Works payments are in F P Wilson and R F Hill, 'Dramatic Records in the Declared Accounts of the Office of Works 1560-1640', Malone Society Collections, vol. x, 1975, p. 10.

sides, (sigs. A6v., A7).¹

They came in with what Goldwell calls a 'Rowling trench' made of canvas stretched on wood and painted to look like earth. It went on wheels and could go in any direction; on top were two wooden canons with two men to fire them and an ensign bearer; inside were musicians and singers, (Goldwell, sig. A5v.; Nallot, f. 77). I think that this rolling trench was based on the 'mount' which was prepared in the first plan for the Commissioners' entertainment and then taken away again. At one point Goldwell gives it the alternative title of a 'Mounthe of earth', (sig. A8v.). The mount is mentioned several times in the Revels Accounts along with other properties which I shall argue were used with it on different occasions in the show.² It seems that while the Foster Children went round the tilt passing the Queen 'as though they would behold the Fortresse of Beauty' the trench began to be manoeuvred into position before her, (Goldwell, sig. A7v.).

Before anything else happened the boy who had delivered the first challenge made another speech telling the Queen that what she saw was the result of her own intransigence. Now the Foster Children, he said, have come, few in number but aided by the heavens who have sent 'their invisible Instrument' and the earth which has risen up against her. The boy offered her one last chance to yield before the alarm of the attack, (sigs. A7v.- 8v.) The rolling trench was moved as near the Queen 'as might be', music played and

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1. On Sidney's device dissociating himself from the forces of Desire, see Council, 'O Dea Certe: The Allegory of The Fortress of Perfect Beauty', pp. 332-4 and his references. Oxford's unicorn may simply be a personal badge expressing his devotion to the Queen; for Elizabeth as a unicorn, see E C Wilson, England's Eliza, Cambridge, Mass. 1939, pp. 223, 224.
 2. Revels Documents, pp. 340, 345, 346; these accounts are confusing because the properties, (Mount with castle, dragon and tree), which are listed for the advance of money in April 1581, ibid., p. 345, occur also in the Lansd. MSS and again in the charges for the year following, 1 November 1581, (Table II). The last two also share an artificial lion and horse. I can only suggest that Table II contains charges for the previous year which still had not been paid.

a boy sang a sonnet accompanied by a cornet urging the Fortress to yield and saying that its designer had built it for 'just Desires, true children'. There was no response, so another boy sang a second sonnet, the alarm to the Foster Children calling them to the fight. Their assault began and the canon shot off 'sweet poulder' and 'sweete water', eau de vie and fireworks. It was accompanied by music, 'prettie scaling ladders' and men throwing flowers (Goldwell, sigs. A8v.-B1; Nallot, f. 77). All this went on until the Defenders came in.

So far the action has been quite easy to follow because the allegory was public, but the twenty-two Defenders drew on private allegories, what Goldwell calls 'mistical' inventions, (sig. Blv.), as well as on public ones. Goldwell preserves three sets of speeches and Nallot describes several entrances which are harder to interpret. Again the Defenders came in with a mass of richly-clothed attendants. Equally there seems to have been one general entry followed by a succession of individual devices. At the end of one or the other of these Lee made his entry as 'unknowen' broke six staves and went out again.

No device is recorded for the first defender Henry Grey who was to be knighted in 1587 and created first Lord Grey of Groby in 1603; his kinship with Lord Grey of Wilton places him firmly in Leicester's faction and may have given him pride of place among the Defenders.¹ Sir Thomas Perrott and Anthony Cooke presented their device next. Perrott served in Ireland with Lord Grey eventually becoming Lord Deputy. Quarrelling with Raleigh in February 1580 for an unknown reason, having his father mentioned in Leicester's Commonwealth and marrying Dorothy Devereux in 1583, show his allegiance to the Protestant anti-marriage side. Cooke was a cousin of Burghley's and Nicholas Bacon's, the grandson of a zealous Protestant and Marian exile, and to be knighted later by Essex at Cadiz.² Their speech

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1. Cf. Blankenship, The Fortresse of Perfect Beauty, pp. 62, 63; it should be noted that he was married to a Windsor.
 2. Ibid., p. 62; E Edwards, The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh, 1868, vol. i, pp. 50, 51; The Copie of a Leter, p. 62.

was delivered by a page dressed as an angel and is the longest in the show. It begins, (sig. B2), by telling the story of the Frozen Knight, whose identity Perrott took, as we have seen, in the Callophiscus challenge. Turning away from icy Despair the Frozen Knight is made to look at the Sun by Desire. Even though he cannot gaze at it without blinking he begins to melt with delight. While looking at it he sees the Sun is besieged and appeals to Jove against this overturning of the divine order, (sig. B2v). The Knight then dies, his soul goes to the Elisian Fields and proclaims that the Sun is being attacked. The gods hear his cries and to stop the 'tumultes' which might have begun among the ghosts in the shades of hell, and 'to revenge the pride which began to growe on the earth' summon the angel whose speech this is. They tell it to summon Adam and Eve to put matters right on Earth, for they will do anything for 'that earthly, and yet...moste heavenly Sunne'. Having been driven from their Desire in Eden, they will now be driven to it; although they will come near to the sun they will not be scorched by it,¹ they will be humble and yet fervent servants, (sig. B3), for the Sun 'delighteth' most in its most deeply loyal servants.

The Angel then presents Perrott and Cooke to the Sun-Queen as Adam and Eve and addresses the Challengers. He attacks them for destroying 'a common blessing for a private benefite'; without the Sun there will be no shadow 'where the weary take breath, the disquiet rest, and all comferte', and there will be no 'glistering and gladsome beames'. This conceit is reminiscent of Oxford's speech as the knight of the Sun Tree in the Callophiscus challenge. The Angel calls upon the Challengers to desist and allow men the Sun's democratic light: 'content your selves with the sunnes indifferent succour...claime no prerogative where the sunne grauntes no priviledge'. He then goes on to give two instances of revolt against authority which are meant to parallel the present attack: the Giants' against the gods, and (sig. B3v.) Phaeton in his chariot

1. I accept Blankenship's emendation of 'yet shall not searche' to '...
 sarche', (sig. B2v.).

appropriately coming too near the sun. There are opponents for the Challengers, not as vain as they are, who are content to enjoy the 'impregnable' sun, not assault it, to enjoy its light, not eclipse it, to submit to the unconquerable, not conquer 'that which maketh all men Captives'. The Angel then throws down the gauntlet on behalf of the Defenders' loyalty as a challenge by Adam and Eve 'to win the benefite' of Beauty and to defend her. If they succeed and the Sun looks favourably upon them, (sig. B4), they hope to be restored to Paradise. Perrott and Cooke represent a new Eve who will not be tempted by a snake and a new Adam who will not be 'beguiled' by a woman; they can triumph over their traditional enemies by being 'in the Garden' of the Queen's 'Graces'. They will look at but not taste the forbidden fruit and there will be no dispute over the blame for the fall, which the Queen is absolutely to determine between them, after they have jousted together.

For the moment I wish to avoid the crucial question of the allegorical meaning of the Foster Children and merely note that they are suitors to the Queen. As a side-note says, (sig. B2v.), by the Sun the Queen is meant; she is also the Fortress and Beauty itself. In this device to the Queen's Platonic identity of Beauty is added, 'a Christian identity both as the judge of and as a new and perfect type of Adam and Eve'; like Christ she is also to judge their guilt anew.¹ The Angel's speech invokes myths of Elizabeth's England being Paradise, of the nature of majesty as the Sun and of the pride of those who rebel against her. The Queen has the support of our first ancestors and of Jupiter the sun-god. It is worth noting that along the Gallery from where the Queen sat a staircase which led from the Privy Garden to the Privy Gallery was known as the Adam and Eve staircase after what was described in 1639 as 'a defaced old picture at length being Adam and Eve, intire figures, being little less than the life'.²

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1. Council, 'O Dea Certe: The Allegory of The Fortress of Perfect Beauty', pp. 337, 338.
 2. Cox and Norman, The Parish of St Margaret, Westminster, pt. ii, pp. 99, 100 n.*.

This set of associations must provide the key to the meaning of the car which Nallot describes. He tells, (f.79) how a sort of ruined tower was rolled forward by machinery, at the top of which within a triangle made of three basinets or helmets was a golden lantern burning with a bright light. Out of a hole in the tower came a large snake which wanted to climb some trees laden with several sorts of fruits. Behind the tower were six well disguised eagles with feathers of various colours in whose bodies were players of old trumpets who made fine and harmonious music.

At first sight this is very puzzling, but the Revels Accounts help to identify the car when its payments for the Mount, Dragon with fireworks, the Castle with 'falling sydes' on the Mount and the tree are noted.¹ This is the rolling trench making its second appearance with a ruined tower, a dragon or snake and a tree on it. Although Nallot does not mention Adam and Eve all these symbols must be connected with them. The tower which has been ruined after the attack of the Foster Children is the Fortress of Perfect Beauty with the golden light of the Sun at its top - this is the Queen. The snake and the tree belong to the Adam and Eve allegory; the fruits the snake tries to eat are the fruits of the commonwealth some of which Perrott and Cooke, 'both in like armour beset, with apples and fruite', (sig. B2v.), are wearing. The eagles are royal birds able to fly at the sun and look at it - unlike the Frozen Knight - without blinking. The eagle partakes of the nature of the sun and in its traditional fight with the snake represents in Christian symbolism the victory of the powers of light over darkness, of Christ over Satan.²

This is a fascinating example of Elizabethan allegory which successfully complements the Angel's speech. It illustrates different levels of symbolism and illuminates several areas of meaning at once. The show's deviser moves

1. Revels Documents, pp. 345, 346.

2. Rudolf Wittkower, 'Eagle and Serpent, A Study in the Migration of Symbols', JWCI, vol. ii, 1938-9, pp. 293-325, esp. pp. 313, 314. For Adam as the type of the Just World Ruler and the Emperor in 'a Christ-like redemptive rôle', see F A Yates, Astrea, p. 8. *A*

effortlessly between Christian and pagan worlds, he asserts his belief in divinely-appointed order and recognises the Queen's private and public nature, her human and god-like identity. The Foster Children want her for themselves when she should really belong to all.

Goldwell supplies the details of Radcliffe's device, which Nallot does not seem to mention. I am not quite sure who this Thomas Radcliffe was; he was not the third Earl of Sussex, a Commissioner for the marriage, then in his mid-fifties and unwell. A man of his name jousted in the accession day tilts of 1577, 1581 and 1583-5 as well as in Alençon's 1582 tilt. Perhaps the same man was carrying letters from Ireland to Walsingham in August 1579 and he may be the Mr Radcliffe with whom Walsingham lodged on 31 July 1576.¹ Radcliffe appears as the Desolate, Solitary or Forsaken Knight and Council correctly suggests that his allegory is based on unknown biographical details.² However, his conceit must also be connected with a lost play performed at Whitehall on 17 February 1577 called The Historie of the Solitarie Knight. The Revels Accounts say it was acted by Lord Howard's men, while the Privy Council Acts attribute it to the Lord Chamberlain's, that is to Sussex's men. This attribution has generally been rejected on the grounds that Howard often acted as Sussex's deputy.³

I have already discussed solitariness in connexion with the Old Arcadia, but from the page's speech it is clear that Radcliffe's withdrawal is not the result of a stoic choice, but of being crossed by Fortune, (sig.B4v.). Due to his

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1. College of Arms MS M4: preliminary pieces nos. 2 and 5; Nichols, vol. ii, p. 336; CSP Ire., vol. iv, p. 181; Journal of Sir Francis Walsingham, p. 26. Blankenship, op.cit., p. 63 seems to confuse him with the Earl and to make him the son of a Sir Humphrey Radcliffe whom I cannot trace; presumably he means Sir Henry and so he is the Earl again.
 2. Council, art. cit., p. 338.
 3. M S Steele, Plays and Masques at Court During the Reigns of Elizabeth, James and Charles, New Haven 1926, pp. 63, 64; E K Chambers, 'The Elizabethan Lords Chamberlain', Malone Society Collections, vol. i, pt. i, 1907, pp. 33, 34, 37; Chambers, vol. ii, p. 134; Revels Documents, pp. 275, 276 list payments for armour, two glass phials and bread used in the mask. On the play's romance origins, see Lee Monroe Ellison, The Early Romantic Drama at the English Court, Chicago 1917, pp. 71-5. University of Ph.D.

actions' lack of success he abandons the world and finds a 'solitarie seate' in a cave on a cliff by the sea. There was some sort of physical accompaniment to the speech since money was allowed for a 'hermytage & hermytt'; these may have been yet another feature on or in the mount.¹ There the Knight lived on moss moistened by continual tears giving himself:

to continuall meditation, separating his mind from his body, his thought from his hart, yea devorcing him self from himself, in so much that with his strange diet & new conceites, he became so enchanted, that neither the remembrance of others, nor a thought touching himselfe could enter into his minde. (sigs. B4v., B5).

After a long time spent in this life, one day at twilight he sees men who have either been shipwrecked or thrown over-board by pirates. From the bosom of one of them who lies dead and was obviously their master, he pulls 'a scrowle containing a claime, a challenge, nay a conquest of BEAWTIE' which awakens him from his melancholy dreams. Addressing Beauty he is amazed that any should try to win her, when she is desired by all but will never be conquered by Desire. As the eagle looks at the sun and wants to build its nest there, so her Challengers 'vewing the brightnesse of BEAWTIE are incensed to conquer it by DESIRE'. This analogy is quite apt, for it is the test of the eagle's true offspring that it can look at the sun without blinking.²

The Solitary Knight determines to join the Defenders to make their number 'whole', (sig. B5v.); 'many were famous but none more faithful'. If he goes he knows he will be 'infortunate' but he would prefer this than to be disloyal. He enlists the help of the shipwrecked men arguing that his courage is no less than their master's but his affection very much greater. Hewing a shield out of the rock, he covers it with moss and in some way this is 'A double signe of his desire', for nothing apparently manifests beauty so well as Pythagoras' walnut, 'a tender ryne and a hard shell'. The page offered the Queen the shield as 'the ensigne of your fame...the instrument of his fortune'.

1. Revels Documents, p. 345.

2. Wirttkower, art. cit., p. 315 n.3 citing 3 Henry VI, II.i.91.

Since he is being freed from the bondage of his care to the freedom of the court, the allegory must relate to royal disfavour. The world of the speech is that of romance, similar to the opening of the New Arcadia,¹ while the Knight's solitary madness and redemption could be compared to Timias' separation from Belphebe in the Faerie Queene Book IV. It is not clear whether the dead master and shipwrecked men were the Challengers or were simply carrying the challenge; the way they join the Solitary Knight 'desirous to see the event for the which they had suffered such adventures', (sig. B5v.) is surprisingly easy. The page's uncertainty whether they were shipwrecked or cast overboard by pirates makes the obvious connexion with Oxford's shipwreck device of March 1579 tenuous. If it is related to it then the master's death must allude to Oxford's disgrace and separation from those who would like to see the Queen married to Alençon.

Goldwell goes straight on to describe Mercury's speech on behalf of the Knollys brothers, but Nallot (f.79), follows Perrott and Cooke's device with the entry of two Irish youths with long gold hair riding horses without saddles. Strictly speaking Goldwell is correct in keeping to the order in which the Defenders first entered the tilt-yard, but although I cannot certainly identify the two Irish Knights I think they connect with Radcliffe's device. For on the day after Howard's men had presented the Historie of the Solitarie Knight, Warwick's men acted another lost play called The Irisshe Knyght.² We have already seen that Warwick's men also put on the Knight of the Burning Rock a couple of days before Oxford's shipwreck device of March 1579. Irishmen had appeared in masks in 1550-1 and 1557 and as servants they had a part in the 1584 accession day tilt. There is a portrait of Thomas Lee by Marcus Gheeraerts the younger dated 1594 but attired as an 'Hybernus Miles'

1. Brie, Sidneys Arcadia, p.294.

2. Revels Documents, p.270; cf. Chambers, vol.ii, p.381 n.6. On the play see Ellison, op. cit., pp.69, 70.

according to Boissard's Habitus Variarum Orbis Gentium, Antwerp 1581, in the Tate Gallery.¹

Sir Francis Knollys and his four sons were among the leading courtiers and tilters of the period, but they were also out of favour at this time because of their father's open opposition to the French marriage and their sister's clandestine wedding to Leicester.² Their page appears as Mercury and refers to the Foster Children, 'foure of fancies fellows', as deserving some fame for trying to win the golden fleece without Medea's help, (sig. B6). He alludes as Perrott and Cooke's Angel had to the Giants' attack on Jupiter's fort and parallels his emblematic use of Phaeton with that of Icarus who flew too close to the Sun. Beauty is continually on the watch, cannot be taken by force and is too high up to be won by storming over her walls. The rock on which she is built is too solid to be undermined; she cannot be starved out when she is the source of all nourishment, (sig. B6v.); although she needs Love, Beauty alone can feed Desire. Desire most deserves to win Beauty but would die if it won her, so if Beauty yielded she could never pride herself on being desired again. Desire must eternally long for Beauty who must not submit and become its prisoner.

Unlike the Angel and page, Mercury argues that because Beauty 'sits above al reach' she needs no help; her 'heavenly looks...can dazell all mens eyes'. Nevertheless her servants ought to come and show willing because it might amuse Beauty to watch their conflict with the Foster Children. Mercury now reveals the identities of the four brothers which reflect those of the Challengers. For they are the four legitimate sons of Despair, dry-nursed by Desire, who were 'fostered with favourable countenance', (sig. B7) and 'fedde

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1. Sydney Anglo, Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy, Oxford 1969, pp.302, 340 n.3; 'Journey through England and Scotland made by Lupold von Wedel in the Years 1584 and 1585', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, NS, vol.ix, 1895, pp.258, 259.
 2. Council, 'O Dea Certe, The Allegory of The Fortress of Perfect Beauty' p.339.

with sweet fancies', but are now 'given_ over to grieve &...disgraced by disdain'. The Challengers we remember were the Foster Children of Desire, dry-nursed by Despair and were 'long haples, now hopeful', (sig. A4). The Knollys brothers' bid for royal favour is quite clear.

The next speech Goldwell offers is the final one of the day from the Angel who originally uttered the challenge. However Nallot describes several other devices from the first day which deserve comment, even if like the Irish youths their allegories cannot be explained. Among the knights who came in he writes of one with 'devises en forme des chiquietes (slashings) d'or & dazur', (f. 79); two knights with mirrors and armour imitating water, (f. 79v.); and two 'antics' knights. Then a triumphal car with the Fates holding a large gold chain at the end of which was a knight in armour, (f. 80), clearly an image of the dangerously captivating power of love. After what Nallot calls the eighteenth and last knight came six cornet players, dressed in long garments with wide sleeves, false beards and high hats, (f. 81). Yet after them came another highly bejewelled knight in snake-coloured armour, with a man next to him dressed as a doctor who had a steel shield with a woman's face painted on it. The knight was meant to be in love with her and when he looked at the portrait, 'le docteur luy donnoit confort & luy prometoit par mymes sans parler Jouissance'. Again this is an emblem of the enticing nature of love and because these shows seem to betray its evil power, it is tempting to identify the doctor with the enchanter for whom money was allowed in April.¹ Lee's would have been the final entry 'as unknowen', (Goldwell, sig. B2).

With these private and mystical allegories over and the tilt run, the Foster Children's boy concluded the first day's entertainment. Night has come and so the sport has to end, (sig. B7v.). The Foster Children have to admit

1. Revels Documents, p. 345; this leaves the money to be allowed for savages unaccounted for.

the excellency of the Queen's Defenders and their own 'unablenes'; however Desire cannot give up and will continue on the next day and so they wish the Queen good-night.

The second day's entertainment was much shorter and simpler. The Foster Children came in on a chariot,¹ 'as men forewearyed & half overcome', (sig.B8); with them sat a lady emblemizing Desire at whom they looked. The car was drawn by four horses representing the Knights in their different colours and carried a consort of musicians within it 'who plaied still very doleful musicke'. The scene would have been reminiscent of Petrarch's Triumphs. As the car passed by the Queen's Gallery a Herald declared that the Foster Children were involuntarily drawn back for a second day's fighting by Desire, (sig.B8v.). They have lost almost all hope of gaining the Castle and simply want the Queen to watch them at work against the Defenders. Unless Desire's chariot, had brought them they could not have got there but their 'last comfort' is that they would sooner have their souls leave their bodies than Desire their souls. With enemies such as Disdain, Despair and the Knollys Brothers' version of Desire, (sig.C1), they only want to die or be overthrown before the Queen.

The Defenders then came in and fought at the tourney and barriers like Greeks and Trojans, (and so for Helen), with each knight trying to win the golden fleece again. The Defenders may have come in the small coaches pulled by asses clothed in white satin and sewn up to look like their own skin, described by Nallot, (f. 8lv.). By evening the Foster Children sent a boy to the Queen with their submission, (sig.Clv.). They have been forced to 'acknowledge this Fortresse to be reserved for the eye of the whole worlde' and realise their error in trying to win it for themselves alone. They are especially conscious that 'they have degenerated from their Fosterer in making violence accompany Desire'. For Desire 'received his beginning and

1. Money was provided for a 'Charryott' in the April 1581 plan, Revels Documents, p. 345.

nourishment of this Fortresse' and should only have desired its 'florishing'. The 'least determination of vertue' has overcome 'strongest Desire' and the Foster Children submit as Beauty's slaves for ever. They present the Queen with an olive branch as an emblem of her 'Triumphant peace' and their 'peace-able servitude', (sig. C2). Finally they ask her to give 'some token' to the best of the knights and wish rather elegantly:

That while this realm is thus fortified and beautified: Desire may be your cheefest adversarie.

Such was the show the Commissioners saw and they may well have found it as puzzling as we do. Like them we can hardly understand the Defenders' devices which were private and which could only make sense against a full knowledge of all the court's entertainments and masks. Since their shows and speeches clearly continued and developed from one presentation to the next this one glimpse into them is bound to be mystifying. In relation to the marriage question and the political use of spectacle it is more important to establish who or what the Foster Children of Desire are meant to represent. There can be no question as to what they want of the Fortress and what it embodies.

Commentators have either been equally certain about what the Foster Children's assault means - 'eine deutliche Allegorie der französischen Bewerbung um Elisabeth', Brie calls it - or they have felt it too obscure to be interpreted and passed over it in silence.¹ Council argues that

To the degree that the allegory of the tilt has a political purpose, it describes the queen as being beyond the reach of Anjou's suit for marriage, and thereby displays the queen's apparent decision against the match.

He then notes that in contemporary eyes the entertainment marked the end of

1. Brie, *Sidneys Arcadia*, p. 291; Strong, *Cult of Elizabeth*, p. 60; *Miscellaneous Prose*, p. 14; Wallace, pp. 264-6; Howell, *Sir Philip Sidney*, pp. 85-8; E K Chambers, 'The Court' in *Shakespeare's England*, Oxford 1917, vol. i, p. 94 icily dismisses it as 'elaborate foolery'; cf. the summary of other views in Council, *art. cit.*, p. 334 n. 21 and Blankenship's surprisingly feeble opinion, *The Fortresse of Perfect Beauty*, p. 95 that it is 'open to speculation' about how it relates to the courtship.

of the negotiations and concludes that the Foster Children,

identified themselves as the type of all such inevitably unsuccessful efforts to win the queen, a type with which the French commissioners - and every Englishman in the crowd - can easily identify Anjou.

This accords well with Marie Axton's view of the entertainment in the light of Leicester's continued use of the Desire motif, as showing 'that that fortress had been proof against more than twenty years of determined assault.'¹ This seems a much more precise and acceptable interpretation than one which offensively identifies the Commissioners or Alençon himself with the Foster Children.

The challenge revolves around the questions of private desire and the general good: should the Queen of both celestial or divine beauty and natural or human beauty supply 'a common blessing' or 'a private benefite', (sig.B3) ? The Challengers propose the Queen as being Natural Beauty and so Desire's by Justice and inheritance, (sig.A4), while the Defenders exalt her as Heavenly Beauty and the Sun and so inaccessible.² Some of the Defenders' shows may well have represented Desire's knights who had failed to win Beauty and like the Foster Children become her slaves and bondsmen. The Solitary Knight for example seems to be freed from his private love-sickness to that service of the Queen which is perfect freedom.

If Desire has and will always fail to win the Queen from her public duty, then the tilt's political allegory ceases to be merely factional and becomes national: the English failed in the past and now the French will. Blankenship heavily emphasises this aspect of the show by examining the political positions of those who took part in it. He demonstrates that not just the Challengers but also the Defenders were carefully divided between Leicester's protestant anti-marriage faction and the crypto-Catholic pro-marriage group headed by

1. Council, art. cit., pp. 330, 331, 334; Axton, 'Robert Dudley and the Inner Temple Revels', p. 372.

2. Council, art. cit., pp. 329, 330, 336.

Sussex.¹ This division is very striking and leads Blankenship on to suggest that the entertainment was meant 'to obscure factionalism', that private desire, or 'political faction if you will', is to end at court and there was now to be 'a universal striving toward a general good'.² This is an attractive idea from the eirenicist viewpoint of English nationalism and is reminiscent of the doctrines and ideas embodied in the Valois Tapestries, but it would also represent the failure of the pro-marriage lobby. It is a weak point in his argument, for Burghley, who according to Blankenship organised the entertainment, was in favour of the courtship and the Queen marrying. Blankenship repeatedly argues for Burghley's independent central position between Leicester and Sussex's parties, constantly trying to unify the two groups, bringing them into harmony; but although in theory this should have been his position, in practice it was not.

With this view in mind Blankenship seeks to minimise the piece's political overtones. From being about the rival and conflicting claims of private desire and general good it becomes an analysis of the rôle of the courtier and the true relationship of private desire and perfect beauty. In the end the Queen favours all her courtiers rather than any in particular and the entertainment becomes an 'abstract allegory concerning true propriety'.³ I feel that Blankenship guides his interpretation in this direction because it conforms to his idea of Lyly's plays and as we have seen, he thinks that Lyly wrote the Defenders' speeches and had a large share in the entertainment's devising.⁴

1. Blankenship, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-3; Sidney whose dissociation from Desire's cause has already been noted, p. 329 n.1, and Greville were obviously for Leicester; Arundel and Windsor for Sussex. Once this is recognised Council's Appendix on the Chatsworth portrait of the Twelfth Earl of Arundel, (*art. cit.*, pp. 341, 342), in which he argues for it as an emblem of Protestant allegiance and service becomes tendentious and unnecessary. Of the Defenders Moore and Tresham were recusants and Meautys related to Windsor; Denny was Sidney's friend and Digby, Alexander, Ward and Skipwith all went to the Low Countries with Leicester.

2. Blankenship, *op. cit.*, pp. 94, 95.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-4, 53, 59, 106.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 94, 95.

Yet again we are faced with the problem of the Foster Children's defeat, a possibility in the show's action from the initial challenge, but emphasised on its second day: Desire loses as both political factions had in the past and Alençon would in the future. The question becomes one of reconciling this inescapable fact with the involvement in the tilt of those who would like to see Desire triumph. At its end the Foster Children lay especial stress on how wrong they were to use violence and force to win Beauty, (sig. Clv.), but this does not fundamentally detract from Desire's longing for the Queen.

A resolution to the problem must come from her. The Commissioners have to be entertained so a show must be devised - a particularly difficult task to perform satisfactorily when such devices were officially organised by the pro-marriage faction. Both sides must cooperate in its devising and performance, but perhaps they leave its resolution undecided. The entertainment shows how Desire has failed in the past because the Queen's duty had come before her own private life; this was undeniably true and both sides would have to assent to it. The implication that Alençon will fail is still there but this could easily have been changed and the show turned into his triumph. Instead the Queen has at last made up her mind and the pro-marriage faction have regretfully to acknowledge that she will not marry. They are not humiliated by apparently having to urge the Queen not to marry but are simply recording the fact of her decision. The difficulty she experienced in reaching it may well account for the successive postponements from week to week.¹

This proposed solution does not necessarily conflict with Blankenship's interesting arguments about the show's authorship. Sidney has always been a strong candidate as the writer of the Challengers' speeches and the two

1. Cf. Council, *art. cit.*, pp. 330, 334. The exact nature of the Queen's decision is elusive; I cannot be as certain as Council is, especially on the basis of his weak evidence, that it was simply not to marry.

sonnets; Blankenship agrees with this attribution and sees it as an ironical move on Burghley's part to dissipate factionalism.¹ I strongly suspect that it was Sidney rather than Lyly who helped to determine the show's over-all form. Desire was Leicester's allegory and Sidney's own recurrent fascination. Sidney was probably responsible for organising the use of symbolic colours and I am certain that he was behind the painting and gilding of the forty-six shields which carried 'Impresseis'.²

In contrast to the Arcadianism of the Challengers' speeches the Defenders' euphuism was noted long ago. In his thesis Blankenship explores the connexions between Lyly, and Oxford and Burghley arguing that he had a 'relatively close working relationship' with the latter, to whom he was related. He suggests that Lyly was also involved in the Callophiscus challenge and that the boys used in it and the Four Foster Children to deliver the speeches came from the company of actors set up in 1580 in Blackfriars Convent by Ferrar and Hunnis, who were later taken over by Oxford and probably performed Lyly's early plays.³ More speculatively he connects Lyly with the lost Cupid and Psyche of 1581-2 and Loyalty and Beauty of 1578 which may have provided the initial conceit for the entertainment.⁴ He invokes both verbal parallels and similarities of form and style between the show and Lyly's extant plays.⁵ On the whole I find this quite convincing, but I am less happy about his attempt to connect Goldwell's patron Brasebridge with Lyly. The evidence he supplies of Brasebridge being surrounded by property owned by Oxford and Windsor, and Lyly's connexion with the area in becoming MP for Aylesbury is tenuous.⁶ Without knowing more about Goldwell himself it is impossible to

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1. E G Fogel, "A Possible Addition to the Sidney Canon", MLN, vol. lxxv, 1960, pp. 389-94; Ringler, pp. 518, 519, Blankenship, op. cit., p. 66.
 2. Sidney's interest in costume is examined in Chapter III of K Duncan-Jones, Pictorial Imagination; Revels Documents, p. 346, this is the first time imprese are mentioned by name.
 3. Lyly, Euphues, ed. M W Croll and H Clemons, 1916, p. li n.4; Hunter, John Lyly, p. 117 is silent as to the authorship question; Blankenship, op. cit., pp. 66-80, cf. Hunter, op. cit., pp. 45-7, 61-74.
 4. Blankenship, op. cit., p. 104.
 5. Ibid., pp. 81-4, 97-101.
 6. Ibid., pp. 112-15, cf. Hunter, op. cit., pp. 78-80.

to explain exactly the origins of his pamphlet and its very selective contents. However it is more than likely that it was produced with the support and approval of Leicester's faction.

Finally I want to mention two later sets of references to the tilt. Sidney drew extensively on his experience of it and other court entertainments when describing the knights, their jousting and especially their costumes in the New Arcadia.¹ His own part in the show is recalled at the end of a manuscript miscellany chiefly associated with Donne. There, an unknown poet supplies Ovidian love poems written by Sidney to Penelope Rich, and from her to him, after he has been sent abroad. He is made to reproach her and to refer to the time:

When great Avergne & Arthur Cossay came
With other Peeres of France of Princely name
To great Elisabeth; to grace the French
I amongst others fram'd a rowlinge trench
& undertooke inkindled by Loves fier
The names of Foster children to desire
Where what wee did thine Ey can answer best
Since all my strength by seeing thee was blest
Else had it not withstoode The furious course
Of haughty Legh deemed matchelesse for his force
The day was gracious and abhord the night
Onely because it did debarre thy sight...

There follow 'Notes of the Cronicle History' which as well as explaining the occasion referred to and identifying Auvergne as the Dauphin and so on, show clearly that the poem was not based on any first hand experience but on Holinshed's Chronicles.²

The Four Foster Children of Desire was a revolutionary entertainment and marks a watershed in English literary history. This is a large claim to make for an event so badly documented, but from the point of view of showing 'drab' literature turning into 'golden' it is justified. The devices of allegory and speeches of the Challengers show a careful attempt to imitate the neo-platonic ideas of the entertainments of the French court. The Four

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1. Brie, Sidneys Arcadia, pp. 291-4; K Duncan-Jones, op. cit., pp. 121, 128, 134, 148, 168: she deals largely with Sidney's symbolic use of colour.
 2. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. f. 9 pp. 225, 226, 231, 232; the MS is known to Donne scholars as P.

Foster Children is the last English romantic court entertainment to employ the traditional elements of mount, castle, cave and so on.¹ But it does so in a strikingly new way endowing them with the sort of platonic allegory we rightly associate with the continental Renaissance.² It is also worth noting that after the Four Foster Children, with one or two exceptions such as the Misfortunes of Arthur, 1588, and the Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, 1582, the old sort of romantic comedy dies out to be replaced by the 'modern' comedies of Lyly, Greene and Shakespeare and their imitators in the 1590's. I strongly believe that Leicester and his faction, especially Sidney, were behind the entertainment's form and consciously decided to show the Commissioners that English court culture was as sophisticated as French. Leicester's circle, the opponents of the marriage, wanted to emulate and surpass the French in their own manner and in doing so helped publicly to inaugurate the 'golden' age of English literature.

iv. Alençon's New Year's Day Tilt,

Given its expense, elaborateness and meaning it is hardly strange that the Four Foster Children was the only entertainment put on for the Commissioners. Its message was conclusive. During their stay there were several rumours that Alençon was about to, or actually had, come to England. In fact towards the end of May he set sail from France but was beaten back to Evreux by 1 June 1581.³ His attempted visit, which was intended to conclude the negotiations, never took place and when he finally came towards the beginning of November it was too late and his stay was simply a private one. Its aim was still apparently to win the Queen but his real motive as Mendoza well knew was to extract money from her to finance his military and political

1. L M Ellison, Early Romantic Drama, p. 23.

2. Cf. Yates, Valois Tapestries, p. 92, that it, 'was an entertainment distinctly in the French taste, an example of those modern evolutions of the exercises of chivalry into court masques which had also been developing in England'. For its neo-platonism see Council, art. cit., pp. 329-31.

3. Blankenship, op. cit., pp. 43, 44.

aspirations.¹ Again I shall not attempt to deal with the fresh set of negotiations which took place and which were delicately guided between marriage and the balance of power in the Low Countries.

Despite Alençon's distinguished companions on this visit, who included Philippe de Marnix, Ste. Aldegonde, the Dauphin and Gui de Coligny, Sieur du Val,² the only entertainment provided by the English in their honour was an especially grand accession day tilt. This lasted for three days, was held as usual at Westminster and involved many of the same courtiers who had taken part in the May entertainment.³ The Revels Accounts for 1 November 1581 until 31 October 1582 refer to five plays, two masks, one set of barriers and 'diverse Devises shewed before' the Queen. For this period we have evidence for plays, whose titles are not known, by the Children of Paul's on December 26, by the Children of the Chapel on December 31 and 27 February 1582 and for 'certen feates of activitie', probably acrobatics, by Lord Strange's Servants on December 28.⁴ It has been suggested that on one or other of their presentations the Children of the Chapel may have performed Peele's Arraignment of Paris, but this can be rejected in favour of a later date nearer to 1584.⁵

The barriers referred to were those put on for New Year's Day 1582. Our main source of information about them is in the Mémoires of the Duc de Nevers, whose task seems to have been that of keeping an eye on Alençon for Henri III. Segar also gives a list of the participants.⁶ There were seven

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1. CSP Sp., vol. iii, p. 185.
 2. Walsingham to Villiers, Richmond 10 November 1581, CSP For., vol. xvii, no. 386; HMC Hatfield, vol. xiii, p. 201.
 3. Its sources are listed by R Strong, Cult of Elizabeth, p. 206.
 4. Revels Documents, Table II; Chambers, vol. iv, p. 158.
 5. Life and Works of George Peele, ed. C T Prouty, New Haven and London, vol. iii, pp. 10 and n. 17, 12. 1951,
 6. Louis de Gonzague, Duc de Nevers, Mémoires, 1665, pp. 555-7; Nichols, vol. ii, p. 336. Yates, Valois Tapestries, p. 93, suggests that the Barriers tapestry may refer to this entertainment.

Challengers - Alençon, the Dauphin, the Earls of Sussex and Leicester, Jacques de Harlay, sieur de Chanvallon and Claude de Beauvillier, Comte de St. Aignon - and forty-five Defenders, four of whom were French. They included the Lords Thomas Howard, Windsor, Sheffield and Darcy, Fulke Greville and several Windsors and Knollys. The mixture of Roman Catholics in favour of the marriage and opponents to it, under the two leading Earls, is strongly reminiscent of the Four Foster Children. As we have seen Sidney was deliberately absent from the court at this time.

Nevers' account begins with Alençon's entry 'sur un chariot fait en forme de rocher',¹ led by Love and Fate, (Le Destin), and bound by large golden chains. As he was drawn towards the Queen the goddesses sang alternate verses of a song praising the semi-divine, conquering Queen, but warning her at the same time against proud chastity. They offer her Alençon who adores Elizabeth and whom she can free from his bondage of love:

Rendez à cet Héros sa chere liberté,
Ou faites qu'oubliant ce voeu de chasteté,
Hymen serre vos cœurs d'un lien plus extrême.

The show ended with another example of the liberating power of royal love. Knights confined by a magician's enchantment in a castle were freed after the assaults of several other knights had failed to release them:

par le moyen d'un plus excellent & magnanime Prince, & le plus constant en amour qui fut jamais; & par la plus chaste, vertueuse & heroïque Princesse qui fut au monde (entendant mondit Seigneur & sa Majesté).

The royal pair opened a passage into the castle, extinguished a bright lamp and dispersed the charm.

Elements of this - the knight in golden chains and the enchanted knights - are reminiscent of the devices Nallot describes in his letter about the Four Foster Children. I am sure this is quite intentional and that this entertainment, presumably put on in French, was Alençon's response or even answer to it.

1. Nevers, Mémoires, pp.556, 557.

I have argued that the conception and Challengers' part in the earlier show were meant to be an imitation of the French style of entertainment. The knights in Alençon's tilt may allude to the Defenders' devices in it, and I very tentatively suggest that the French were here taking their revenge and imitating or parodying English romantic court spectacle. Without a fuller text of the show this must remain a suggestion.

Nevers also reports the combat lasted until 1 a.m., two or three thousand people watched it, presumably from the scaffolds erected around the tilt-yard for the earlier show and Alençon gave the Queen a 'navire tout de pierreries'. He adds that 'pour quelques raisons' Alençon changed his device of 'Et debellare superbos' to 'Serviet aeternum dulcis quem torquet Eliza', which was found to be more apt. His first choice of motto had been used by Alva's successor in the Low Countries, Requesens: Languet had written to tell Sidney of this in December 1573 and Sidney had used the Virgilian tag in one of Rombus' speeches in the Lady of May.¹

Alençon's final gesture was in vain; by the end of the month he set off for Dover accompanied by the Queen on a short progress. His destination was the Netherlands where he was to assume his new title and rôle of Duke of Brabant. Accompanied by a hundred gentlemen including Leicester and Sidney for the Protestant cause and Windsor and Norfolk's son for the Sussex faction, with three hundred servants, he landed around 9 February 1582 at Flushing and made his way to Antwerp, which he reached on February 19 and then went on to Bruges in July and Ghent in August.² The English party left him by

1. Miscellaneous Prose, p. 23.16 and n. on p. 178.

2. The departure is described in Nichols, vol. ii, pp. 343-7; Aubrey's account received from Sir John Denham amusingly outlines Sylvanus Scory's part in it, Brief Lives, ed. A. Clark, Oxford 1898, vol. ii, pp. 217, 218; Alençon's reception in the Low Countries lies outside of the scope of this chapter, but for a bibliography of the accounts of the shows put on for his entries, see John Landwehr, Splendid Ceremonies, Nieuwkoop and Leiden 1971, nos. 38-46. Much useful material is contained in no. 38a, an edition of the Antwerp entry with an Introduction by H. M. C. Purkis, Amsterdam (1970), one of the series Renaissance Triumphs, ed. Margaret McGowan; see also of course Yates, Valois Tapestries.

the end of February.¹ What mixed feelings they had can only be imagined; what Leicester and Sidney so much longed for, the direct English involvement in the Netherlands, the prime tenet of the Protestant cause, had eluded them again. The French marriage had been avoided, but their victory over Alençon was a dubious one. The Queen as usual had triumphed and Leicester's faction was now to decline in power while its literary patrimony was to flourish.

1. Wallace, p. 278 n.3.

CONCLUSION

I began this thesis simply wishing to understand the entertainment The Four Foster Children of Desire. I came to realize that its 'meaning' lay as much in the historical context of its setting as in its text. The way to approach it lay through an examination of the Duke of Alençon's courtship of the Queen. But the entertainment's immediate attraction was not its historical significance but the fact of Sidney's taking part in it. And any consideration of what Sidney was doing at this time was bound to involve an inquiry into the nature of his supposed friendship and literary relations with Edmund Spenser and his enigmatic friend Gabriel Harvey. The Spenser-Harvey Letters are clearly the key document for anyone undertaking such an inquiry, and they pointed firmly towards the Earl of Leicester, the chief opponent of any marriage to the French Duke. So, while at the centre of the subject stood the Four Foster Children, and nearby and closely related Sidney, Spenser and Gabriel Harvey, on either side of them loomed Leicester and Alençon as rival unknowns.

The Earl, it appeared, had generally been as little taken seriously as the Duke. Here were two men, who were both suitors to the Queen and were both viciously libelled and slandered, most of all by each other's faction. Both lost the Queen and went on disastrous missions to the Low Countries. When they looked at each other, what did they see? Alençon was a young Prince and Leicester a middle-aged Earl: they were controversial figures, but neither of them as foolish or worthless as has often been made out. Like his brother the King, Alençon maintained his own academy dominated by musicians, poets, political and philosophical thinkers, where extremely liberal religious views were tolerated and promoted. Leicester had always been a patron of letters; in the 1560's and 1570's he had played his part in Elizabeth's deliberate delegation of political and religious propaganda to her chief servants. It seems too much of a coincidence that just as Leicester came into first-hand contact with the academic world of the French Renaissance

through Alençon, we should suddenly find him relinquishing his official duties and promoting himself as the independent patron of a circle of writers and thinkers who created the 'golden' literature of Elizabeth's reign. He had always had the intellect and sophistication, the power and love of ornament to encourage such a circle but now with the 'the coming prince' he was stimulated to action to show that England's was not a provincial culture. The best place to prove this was in the 1581 entertainment put on in front of the French Commissioners for the marriage. I believe that Gabriel Harvey, who inherited his cosmopolitan European outlook from Sir Thomas Smith, played an important part in all this, not least by being the friend of both Sidney and Spenser.

While the French liked to institutionalize their academies with official charters and to publish the speeches and debates they produced, no such records survive for Leicester's circle. Since it was not a secret organization, or a formal club, as most writers on the 'Areopagus' have suggested, its exact circumstances are hard to define. Equally its actual 'members' in London, Oxford and Cambridge cannot strictly speaking be listed. On account of this I have tried to find out as much as I can about those men such as Dowe, Baynes and Merbury whom I associate with it. My emphasis on biography and exact chronological accounts of the lives of Harvey, Spenser, Sidney and Leicester himself developed because of the disturbing inadequacy of the standard reference works for this period. Until we are able to see the Elizabethans as individuals moving from day to day in a highly complex world, I feel that we shall go on making mistaken historical assumptions about their lives and works. Although the lack of evidence seems at times daunting in comparison with the huge number of diaries, letters and periodical publications which survive for later periods, enough material exists to allow one to gain a detailed picture of a very short time in Elizabeth's reign. I feel our understanding of Shakespeare could be increased by a careful examination of the 1590's and 1600's - the sort of

thing G B Harrison may have had in mind with his Elizabethan and Jacobean Journals.

For the moment, by examining Leicester's activities during this crucial time and by establishing what interested his circle, I have tried to show how these affected the literary productions of his faction. Again I feel it is essential to question the orthodox view of the origins of these works and to see what a minute examination of their different stages of composition will show. It seems to me especially important to think about the Old Arcadia, the Faerie Queene and the Spenser-Harvey Letters not as the creations of a single literary impulse but as texts requiring the sort of careful analysis which shows how they were put together by conscious literary artists from different materials, at different speeds and at different times, to produce unified wholes. They reflect the exciting and constantly changing intellectual and political world in which they were produced. Behind all of them is, if not Leicester himself, then a figure or an image of him - he is a presence which their authors like to allude to, someone who supplies a context for their work and interests.

When more research has been done and our knowledge of the Elizabethan world extended and organized, I believe that Leicester will emerge as a great man and a discriminating and loyal patron. Despite my own researches I still do not feel I have done justice to Leicester himself. He remains a shadowy figure, the patron at the same time of the extreme puritans and the most advanced liberals. His own character and presence are as obscure and opaque as his hastily scribbled and often illegible handwriting. I have tried to illuminate his life in relation to Alençon, the representative of what he might have been and might have done. We still need to see him as he saw himself, to recognize him as a European prince, not perhaps as great as Lorenzo de' Medici or Philip II, leaving no Florence or Escorial behind him, but as a leader of the Protestant cause, a patron for the poets Sidney and Spenser, a second 'father' for Gabriel Harvey and the moving spirit behind the splendid Four Foster Children of Desire.

List of Works Cited or Referred to

I have tried to make this list as complete as possible. However it omits some standard reference works and certain books mentioned in passing. Details of books and articles are given in as full a form as seemed reasonable, while entries for English books printed before 1640 are based on details derived from STC with some modifications especially of capitalization; some items which might prove hard to find have been given new STC numbers. For the manuscripts I have added some indication of what item or items I have referred to in them.

The plan of this list is as follows:

I. Primary Sources

- a. Manuscripts
- b. Books
- c. Individual copies of some books referred to

II. Secondary Sources

- a. Books
- b. Articles
- c. Theses
- d. Sotheby's book sale catalogues
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