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In Sickness and In Health: Donne's *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*

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Donne's *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, which originated in 1623 in an illness that might well have been fatal, records in considerable detail the onset and progress of the illness, the consultation of the physicians, and the patient's ultimate recovery. Written, by Bald's account, so soon after the fact that Donne was not yet able to leave his chamber, the *Devotions* would seem to be an occasion for relief and rejoicing.[1] Yet the mood of the concluding section is in fact remarkably anxious, doubtful, and uncertain, leading one to question both the permanence and the significance of that recovery.

As remarkable syntactically as they are psychologically, the last sentences of the *Devotions*, in which we would expect reconciliation, stability, and assurance, are in fact radically conditional. Although the avowed intention of the final sentence seems to be an expression of confidence in divine providence ("then thy long-lived, thy everlasting mercy, will visit me"), this affirmation is situated at the sentence's midpoint, and stated in the future tense, in a hope that "thy . . . mercy *will* visit me." Divine mercy, apparently dependent on a number of conditions, is depicted within a sentence that dramatically emphasizes the speaker's perilous state.

> Though the *rockes*, and the *sands*, the *heights*, and the *shallowes*, the *prosperitie*, and the *adversitie* of this *world* do diversly threaten mee, though mine owne *leakes* endanger mee, yet, 0 *God*, let mee never put my selfe *aboard* with *Hymeneus*, nor make *shipwracke of faith, and a good Conscience*; and then thy *long-livd*, thy *everlasting Mercy*, will visit me, though *that*, which I most earnestly pray against, should fall upon mee, a *relapse* into those *sinnes*, which I have *truely repented*, and thou hast *fully pardoned*.[2]

Whatever note of confidence we might find here is quickly overwhelmed in a sea of uncertainty. In the final sentence, as in his conclusion as a whole, Donne subverts our expectations: the opening phrases lead us to expect a periodic structure, a series of subordinate "though" clauses expressing the speaker's

peril followed by a main clause that depicts the divine rescue. But what follows is not an affirmative (in the form "though the sands do threaten me, God will save me") but rather a request—that God will lead the speaker to act in such a way that "thy everlasting mercy, will visit me." And to our further surprise, the sentence does not end there, with that merciful visitation, but goes on to imagine further disasters, indeed precisely those disasters against which Donne prays: "though *that*, which I most earnestly pray against, should fall upon mee." Although the final relative clause within the appositive phrase ends with the word "pardoned," balanced against "repented," the effect is scarcely affirmative, for both the repentance and the pardon are in the past, and the possibility of relapse in the future. This possibility provokes further anxiety in view of the emphasis of the 23rd Exposition—that relapsing into sin is especially repugnant to God. The possibility of mercy supposedly affirmed by this sentence is in fact glimpsed rather than experienced, hedged about by conditions before and behind. Donne here depicts divine mercy as in part dependent upon human action, even as he envisions, within his prayer, the possibility that God will not grant that prayer. In his very deliverance from illness, Donne finds no final healing, no rest.

What are we to make of such an ending? Is it a last failure of nerve, another instance of the existential fear that we find at the end of the "Hymne to God the Father":

> When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
> For I have more.
>
> I have a sinne of feare, that when I'have spunne
> My last thred, I shall perish on the shore.[3]

Such fear is, by Donne's own testimony, characteristic. But in the context of the whole work, the ending of the *Devotions*, I will argue, is not simply to be understood as a moment of existential doubt.

The *Devotions* focuses our attention as much on Donne's mental as his physical state, not only because of his long-standing and absorbing interest in his own psyche, but because he sees the sickness of the body as an image of the sickness of the soul, and indeed as the result of it, sickness having come into the world only through the sin of Adam and Eve.[4] But although Donne uses the occasion of his own sickness to meditate upon the human condition, to generalize upon mankind, his work is still intensely personal, filled with instances of the first person singular pronoun, infused with the energy of his own fears, hopes, and perceptions, as day by day he sees himself grow worse and then better. The structure of the work, both in its larger and smaller units, contributes to this intensity. For example, Donne writes in Meditation 6:

> I observe the *Phisician*, with the same diligence, as hee the *disease*; I see hee *feares*, and I feare with him; I overtake him, I overrun him in his feare, and I go the faster, because he makes his pace slow; I feare the more, because he disguises his fear, and I see with the more sharpnesse, because hee would not have me see it. He knowes that his *feare* shall not disorder the practise, and exercise of his Art, but he knows that my *fear* may disorder the effect, and working of his practise.

Donne is here watching himself, watching others watching him; he is aware of the potentially negative effects of such intense scrutiny, but all of his self-conscious intelligence cannot free him from his own self-conscious intelligence. Inhabiting his mind seems to be a little like inhabiting a hall of mirrors: "I know that he knows that I know that he knows"—*ad infinitum.* Donne creates this effect with a series of clauses of the same length and structure (isocolon and parison) within which he uses emphatic patterns of repetition: he begins a sequence of clauses with *I* (anaphora) and ends them with *him* (epistrophe); he laces the passage through and through with the central word *fear*. The increased rhythmic energy of these short repetititve phrases is further heightened by forces in a state of dynamic tension, the one attempting to balance and forestall the other, but in fact being overbalanced by it: "I feare the more, because he disguises his fear, and I see it with the more sharpnesse, because hee would not have me see it."[5] Even the subject-verb complexes that begin the clauses give us in small format the essence of Donne's anxiously watchful position: "I observe," "I see," "I fear," "I overtake," "I overrun," "I go [the faster]," "I fear," "I see." With its near perfect symmetry of "I observe," "I see," surrounding "I fear," and in the center the panic activity of "I overtake," "I overrun," "I go the faster," this passage vividly recreates Donne's frantic, self-perpetuating state, one in which fear is intensely active.

Not only the structure of individual sentences and paragraphs but also the formal structure of the *Devotions* contributes to this sense of the personal and the intense. While the work as a whole spans the movement from health to sickness and back again, Donne divides the *Devotions* formally on a different principle. It consists of twenty-three sections, each of them containing a meditation, an expostulation, and a prayer. The meditation discovers, explores, or develops a theme announced in the opening sentence; the expostulation addresses God directly, very often in protest or in a challenge to divine providence and the order of the universe; the prayer attempts to bring the soul again into harmony with the will of God. The first section, with its meditation on the condition of mankind, is initiated by the perception or the declaration of the speaker; the second, though often full of Biblical references and

instances, is more likely to express doubt or disagreement, to take issue with the situation expressed in the first; and the third, though often characterized by appeals, is in general more modest and conciliatory, less demanding than what precedes it. Taken as a whole, the structure is full of longing, of demands, of questions, of intense and exhausting perceptions. While the expostulation and the prayer both provide mechanisms for the release of tension, the cycle goes on, perpetually renewing, questioning, searching. This tripartite formal structure exists in a kind of counterpoint to the larger linear structure that traces the progress of Donne's illness into its depths and to his recovery.

Donne's *Devotions* then is both progressive and cyclical: progressive in that it records the onset of illness, its movement to a crisis and the patient's return to health, and cyclical in that its twenty-three sections consist of repeating parts—meditation, expostulation, and prayer—that suggest a rhythmic cycle. The work is cyclical also in its movement from health through sickness back to health and in its dealing repeatedly with several central tropes.[6]

Donne begins his *Devotions* with a moment so close to the inception of illness that we are aware chiefly of health receding: "Variable, and therfore miserable condition of Man; this minute I was well, and am ill, this minute" (Med. 1). Donne proceeds through the stages of his illness, and in the process takes us through the movement of his soul: the misery of man's uncertain state, his solitude, his fear, his anxious observation. Increasingly, in the latter part of the *Devotions*, physical symptoms either give way to spiritual concerns or are taken as emblematic of a spiritual state. The spots of fever (Med. 13) not only aid the physicians in their diagnosis but are also an image of the spots of sin; the applying of pigeons to draw out the vapors (Med. 12) and the purging (Med. 19 & 20) are clearly emblems for the expiation of Christ and the purging of sin from the soul. The patient's inability to sleep (Med. 15) leads to a discourse on the relation between sleep and death, and the three sections (Med. 16-18) devoted to the bells heard by the patient constitute a *memento mori* in the full sense: his state of illness is such that he lies close to death, and reminders of death, that of individuals and of the human race, are all around him. The patient's recovery leads to a rising from the bed obviously analogous to Christ's resurrection.

But balancing this evident forward movement of Donne's *Devotions* and crucial to its effect is a generally symmetrical structure that has generally gone unnoticed. The *Devotions* rises to its climax at its mid-point, in the *ars moriendi* of Meditation 12 and in Meditation 13, in which the illness makes itself known through spots. Thereafter one has the feeling of having crossed a decisive border; these days constitute both a medical and a spiritual crisis. Although death seems closer, health returns, and the mood becomes more

tranquil, until one arrives at the highly conditional, highly suspended concluding section.

This increased tranquility derives from the recognition, seen in Prayer 18, that death is not so much a future as a present state:

> Thou toldst me in the other *voice*, that I was *mortall*, and approaching to *death*; In this I may heare thee say, that I am *dead*, in an *irremediable*, in an *irrecoverable* state for bodily health . . . . Thou presentest mee *death* as the *cure* of my *disease*, not as the *exaltation* of it . . . . *I am dead*, I was *borne dead*, and from the first laying of these *mud-walls* in my *conception*, they have *moldred* away, and the whole course of *life* is but an *active death*. Whether this *voice instruct* mee, that I am a *dead man now*, or *remember* me, that I have been a *dead man* all this while, I humbly thanke thee for speaking in this *voice* to my *soule*.

Death then is not so much a future threat as a present reality, not to be feared but accepted. The mood here is remarkably like that in Act V of *Hamlet*: "If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come—the readiness is all" (5.2.220-22). When recovery comes, it does so precisely when it has lost some of the meaning earlier attributed to it: as in the case of *Hamlet*, it is just when the patient ceases to hope desperately for health that health returns.

This point may help to explain that puzzling feature of the *Devotions*: that the final section contains so little joy and so very little sense of security or relief at the return of health. After the tranquility of Sections 19-21, Section 23 is remarkably agitated, expressing fears—though immediately countered or repressed—that someone once pardoned and again relapsing is in a state so dire as to tempt God to show no mercy. Donne, having fallen ill and recovered, having fallen into sin and been forgiven, is if anything more fearful of falling than before, or to put it another way, as his faith and his experience of faith have increased, so has his fear.[7]

The reasons are several: the relapsing fever was epidemic in London in 1623, and though Donne himself did not relapse, there was ample reason for such a medical concern.[8] And there is Donne's native anxiety, expressed so often in his work. But what we have at the end of the *Devotions* is not simply medical prudence or even theological caution; it is a new ambivalence about health itself—a knowledge that if death come not now, yet it will come, that one lives under a sentence of death, and only by means of that death within sight of life:

> Whether this *voice instruct* mee, that I am a *dead man now*, or *remember* me that I have been a *dead man* all this while, I humbly thanke thee for speaking in this *voice* to my *soule*.

The real danger, in this refigured conclusion, is not of dying, for, though immediate death has been averted, death is an absolute certainty. The real danger, as one returns to the mundane affairs of everyday life, is of relapsing into sin.

If one examines the *Devotions* as a whole, then, it is clear that the conclusion of the work is not a sudden failure of nerve, an inability to accept good fortune, or a perverse turning of it into ill; it is rather a configuration that grows directly out of the last five sections. Once death has been accepted in the passing bell and the death knell, health returns, in the first instance spiritual health, resulting from man's proper understanding of his true state, but also bodily health. The precarious balance Donne strikes, not just by temperament, but on theological grounds, is articulated in the opening of Prayer 22:

> O eternall and most gracious *God*, the *God* of *securitie*, and the *enemie* of *securitie* too, who wouldest have us alwaies *sure* of thy *love*, and yet wouldest have us alwaies *doing something* for it, let mee alwaies so apprehend *thee*, as *present* with me, and yet to *follow* after thee, as though I had not apprehended thee.

In such a context as this, opposites are always present. Even the expectation of salvation is dangerous, for one must walk as circumspectly as though one had no such security.

Thus, while each of the individual sections comes full circle, stating a problem and resolving it, so too does the work as a whole, descending into illness and returning from it, but also moving from its opening articulation of the variable condition of man to its concluding, even more resounding, affirmation of that point. In seeking to purge the body of illness, the physicians have looked even more closely at the nature of that body, leading to Donne's exclamation in the opening of Meditation 22, "How *ruinous* a *farme* hath *man* taken, in taking *himselfe*?" Though Donne rises from his bed, like Lazarus from his tomb, it is the more apparent that that which rises can also fall: "I am readier to fall to the *Earth* now I am up, than I was when I lay in the bed" (Med. 21). And human nature is seen to be ruinous at its center. At the end, we are once again where we began, with the "variable, and therefore miserable condition of Man."

This cyclical aspect of the *Devotions* brings us again to the work's conclusion, which not only represents the outcome of the illness, but also

creates the point of symmetry with the opening. Donne too is back where he began, in a state of health, but given the "variable and therefore miserable condition of Man," such health may well be the forerunner of illness.

At the outset, I dwelt on the effect of the concluding sentences of the *Devotions*; I want now to look at those sentences within the context of Prayer 23, where they may appear less strange than at first. Throughout this section Donne asserts paradoxes by means of sentences that are both balanced and asymmetrical. For example, he balances the contradictory notions of infinity and incrementality against one another in constructions that look as if they will be of equal weight, but that rapidly shift toward asymmetry through the addition of further phrases and clauses:

> 0 eternall and most gracious *God*, who though thou beest *ever infinite*, yet *enlargest* thy selfe, by the *Number* of our prayers, and takest our *often petitions* to thee, to be an *addition* to thy *glory*, and thy *greatnesse*, as *ever* upon all occasions, so now, 0 my *God*, I come to thy *Majestie* with *two Prayers*, *two Supplications*.

Throughout the final prayer Donne sets before his readers divine faithfulness and human weakness, repeatedly placing himself within the divine care and asserting its sufficiency, yet in the next breath asserting his own tendency to waver. Faced with the theologically and emotionally powerful notions of divine infinitude and mercy, which typically are stated in the first unit of each sentence or pair of sentences, Donne is nevertheless drawn in the second unit or sentence to add further petitions—just in case that divine sufficiency should not anticipate all the possibilities that occur to Donne himself. Prayer 23 contains not one but two petitions—that God preserve the writer from relapsing and that, if he relapse, he may be pardoned. The divided self is expressed in a divided syntax: Donne is willing to trust God if God will now act: "I durst deliver my selfe over to thee this *Minute*, If this *Minute* thou wouldst accept my *dissolution*." But if God will not act, then Donne remains in the world in which the necessity of human actions brings uncertainty, along with the hope of divine rescue: "Thy holy *Apostle*, *Saint Paul*, was shipwrackd *thrice*; & yet *stil saved*."

The prose of Prayer 23 is fraught with concern, even anxiety. Yet the sentence quoted above, "I durst deliver my selfe over to thee this *Minute*, If this *Minute* thou wouldst accept my *dissolution*," with its use of anadiplosis, of mirroring in mid-sentence, also recalls the very opening lines of the *Devotions*—"Variable and therefore miserable condition of Man; this minute I was well, and am ill, this minute."[9] At the last Donne has returned to the first, to a confidence not in the individual or idiosyncratic and progressive, but to a sense of participation in the whole, and to the divine disposing of that whole, as he

says: "Since therefore thy *Correction* hath brought mee to such a *participation of the selfe* . . . to such an *intire possession* of thee, as that I durst deliver my selfe over to thee."

I noted earlier how in concluding Donne mingles past and present, placing repentance and pardon in the past and the possibility of relapsing in the future. This is an unsettling notion if one thinks of the *Devotions* as a work that presents the progress of the individual soul. But as I have argued, the *Devotions* is also significantly symmetrical and cyclical; it presents the illness not just of John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, but of all mankind; it presents a cycle that, until our final dissolution, is ongoing. And in that context, the final lines, though full of peril, are also full of comfort, for "even though that, which I most earnestly pray against, should fall upon mee," namely a relapse into sin, the pardon, the act of mercy, is already in the past: it is fully accomplished, for these are sins "which I have truely repented, and thou hast fully pardoned."

Although in the *Devotions*, as in "A Hymne to God the Father," Donne has "a sinne of feare,"[10] both poem and devotion end by asking God to enact in the future a promise already made. Both curiously mingle past act and future anticipation in a way that reflects the state of the Christian in this life. Suspended between hope and fear, between hope of God's mercy and fear of his own inadequacy, Donne is also, as he has defined these terms, suspended between godly hope and fear, a fear of which he need not be afraid, and a confidence in that which has already been accomplished. At the end of the *Devotions*, then, as at the end of "A Hymne to God the Father," Donne may truly say: "And, having done that, Thou haste done, I have no more."

One of the chief accomplishments of the *Devotions* is a figuring, or refiguring, of reality. The elements of Donne's experience—illness, sleeplessness, solitude—are givens, but the interpretations he places upon them are radically diverse, ranging from absolutely negative to positive. Experience is given, but its meaning is not absolute; it is rather conditional on the will of God and on human understanding of that will. In an instance of such refiguring, the treatment of fear in Section 6, Donne first shows us fear in human terms, focusing on his own panic, observing the physician's fear and sensing his own, in a succession of active verbs that keeps fear, his fear, at the center. But in the Expostulation, Donne shifts his emphasis from such destructive fear to the fear of God, that fear which is the beginning of wisdom, and prays at last: "so give me, *O Lord*, a *feare*, of which I may not be afraid" (Prayer 6). Although the word remains constant through the Meditation, Expostulation, and Prayer, its significance has been absolutely reversed.

That the understanding of experience and the diverse meanings attributed to it are not a matter of human interpretation but of divine intention is a point Donne makes in Prayer 3:

> As thou hast made these *feathers*, *thornes*, in the sharpnes of this sicknes, so, *Lord*, make these *thornes*, *feathers* againe, *feathers* of thy Dove, in the peace of Conscience, and in a holy recourse to thine *Arke*, to the Instruments of true comfort, in thy Institutions, and in the Ordinances of thy *Church*.

The event itself is less crucial than the divine motive in creating it, which is able to transform opposites into one another and to transform our reading of reality.

The same duality of vision is evident in Donne's depictions of his physical and spiritual state, as in Prayer 2 he demonstrates how, given the two points of reference of his existence, heavenly and earthly, a loss in one sphere is by definition a gain in the other. Donne addresses that God who

> cald me up, by casting me further downe, and clothd me with thy selfe, by stripping me of my selfe, and by dulling my bodily senses, to the meats, and eases of this world, and sharpned my spirituall senses, to the apprehension of thee . . . . My tast is not gone away, but gone up to sit at *Davids* table, *To taste, and see, that the Lord is good*: my stomach is not gone, but gone up, so far upwards toward the *Supper of the Lamb*, with thy *Saints* in *heaven*.

Donne's perspective is by definition divided, for he characteristically draws our attention to both the heavenly and the earthly aspects of an issue. As his earthly fortunes decline, his heavenly ones rise. The notion is a theological one, but the persuasiveness of this point depends on Donne's use of physical principles. Assuming a physical relationship between heaven and earth, as he leaves earth, he approaches heaven; as we diminish here, we prosper there. Thus every human experience is capable of two opposing interpretations, depending upon whether the interpreter's point of reference is the heavenly or the earthly realm. In taking this approach Donne of course partakes of a central tradition of medieval and Renaissance Christianity—that the things of this world are valueless when weighed against the things of heaven—but his use of the notion is particularly dramatic, for in his use of the principles of space and time, he insists on the conflation of the positive and the negative moment, of time and place, or rather of time and eternity, of point and infinity; as he writes in the concluding words of Prayer 13: "Onely be thou ever present to me, O my *God*, and this *bed-chamber* and thy bed-chamber shall be all one roome, and the closing of these bodily *eyes* here, and the opening of the *eyes* of my *Soule* there, all one Act." What is seen by other writers as an opposition, a tension, is represented by Donne both as an absolute antithesis and a simultaneous occurrence.

Donne does not assert the physical quality of the relationship between heaven and earth as literal truth but uses it as a richly suggestive figure. For him, all experience becomes a text, to be read figuratively. Thus too Donne's intense concentration on the details of his own illness assumes a larger dimension, for he is not simply John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, sick, as Anthony Raspa believes, first of the rheume and then of the epidemic relapsing fever.[11] He is man, and his progress into illness only justifies the diagnosis at the beginning of Meditation 14: "I would not make *Man* worse then hee is, Nor his Condition more miserable then it is. But could I though I would? As a Man cannot *flatter God* nor over prayse him, so a Man cannot *injure* Man, nor undervalue him." The anatomy of Donne's illness is the anatomy of mankind, sick of the mortal illness of sin of which physical malaise is both emblem and result. The intensity of Donne's passion, though his own state is its occasion, is for us all, for the concentric circles of reality which have as their center decay and ruin.

The rhetorical point to be made finally at the end of the *Devotions* is that sickness and health are not only opposites but notions whose values are radically dependent on their context. Physical illness in the *Devotions* is at first an image of the sickness of sin, but by the end of the work, the health of the body, formerly a cause for rejoicing, may be seen as that which separates the soul from its heavenly goal. The God whom Donne sees as both a circle and a straight line[12] provides the vision by which he understands that to be lowered here is to be raised in heaven, to see that what in human terms is a victory, a return to health, is in theological terms a postponement of the goal, and that fear of relapsing, contrary to our first impression of the mattter, may be taken as a sign of hope and of health.

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Notes

Earlier versions of this essay were presented at the Conference of the John Donne Society, Gulfport, Mississippi, February, 1989, and the Purdue Conference on Renaissance Prose, October, 1989. I am grateful to participants at both conferences for their questions and comments.

[1] R.C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 450-51.

[2] John Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, edited by Anthony Raspa (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975), Prayer 23. All further references are to this edition.

[3] John T. Shawcross, *The Complete Poetry of John Donne* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), p. 193, ll. 11-14. Although John Carey does not explicitly apply this

notion to the *Devotions*, his views on the nature and origin of Donne's anxieties are relevant to its conclusion. His comment on the "Holy Sonnets," in *John Donne: Life, Mind, and Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 57-58, is characteristic: ". . . the love poems display, in their obsession with woman's inconstancy, a profound anxiety about his own ability to attract or merit stable affection. [Donne's] fear of damnation and of exclusion from God's love in the 'Holy Sonnets' reflects the same anxiety, transposed to the religious sphere." See also Stanley Fish's argument in *Self-Consuming Artifacts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), Chapter 1.

[4] Jonathan Goldberg, "The Understanding of Sickness in Donne's *Devotions*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 24 (1971), 507-17, expounds the traditional connection between sin and sickness.

[5] Important to this forceful passage is its reversal of narrative order. The action of the second clause in each case precedes that of the first and was intended to forestall the first. Donne thus makes us feel the irony of an action which was intended to have one effect producing precisely the opposite effect, and being seen already to have produced that effect by the time we learn of the opposing intention.

[6] Those who have paid particular attention to the meditative structure of the *Devotions* are Janel M. Mueller, "The Exegesis of Experience: Dean Donne's *Devotions*, *JEGP* 1968 (67), 1-19 and Thomas Van Laan, "John Donne's *Devotions* and the *Jesuit Spiritual Exercises*," *Studies in Philology* 60 (1963), 191-202 (both drawing on the work of Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962]). I have profited also from the work of Joan Webber, *Contrary Music: The Prose Style of John Donne* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963) and *The Eloquent I* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968); Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Donne's Anniversaries and the Poetry of Praise* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973); David Novarr, *The Disinterred Muse: Donne's Texts and Contexts* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980); Dennis Quinn, "Donne's Work of Christian Eloquence," *JEGP* 27 (1960); and N.J.C. Andreasen, "Donne's *Devotions* and the Psychology of Assent," *Modern Philology* 63 (1965), 207-16. Andreasen and Webber note the repeating action of the *Devotions*; but David Novarr, in a review article, "The Two Hands of John Donne," *Modern Philology* 62 (1964), 142-54, points out that Webber "does not talk of the *Devotions* as a developed whole."

[7] Goldberg (pp. 512-13) points out the paradoxical treatment of sickness characteristic of Renaissance devotional literature. By contrast, Carey (p. 57) describes Protestantism as "a recipe for anguish," arguing that "justification by faith meant, in effect, justification by state of mind. Ceaseless, agonized introspection almost inevitably resulted—at least in those of intense and questing temper; for how could you resist looking at your mind to see if it was in the right state?"

[8] See the account by Anthony Raspa (pp. xiii-xviii).

[9] The figure at the opening of the *Devotions* is epanalepsis, the repetition at the end of the sentence of the word or phrase with which it begins; the occurrence of the phrase "this minute" at the end and the beginning of the *Devotions* might itself be seen as epanalepsis on a very large scale.

[10] Walton attributes this poem to the same period as the *Devotions*.

[11] See Raspa, pp. xiii-xviii.

[12] In Prayer 1.