suggest that the question cannot be answered by taking the Eclogue in isolation, especially from the Sixth Eclogue, and apart from Virgil's whole development. To support my way of looking at the problem would require an analysis of the Georgics, in which Virgil's problem, of how to advance from didactic to epic, becomes acute and is answered symbolically by the story of Aristaeus. Even the Aeneid did not remove Virgil's hesitations and doubts about the whole epic enterprise. When he began it, he wrote to Augustus (Macrob.Sat.1.24.10): 'tanta incohata res est, ut paene vitio mentis tantum opus ingressus mihi videar', and on his death-bed, he wanted to burn it.

In conclusion, I would like to notice two examples in the Tenth Eclogue where Virgil uses in a metaphorical or symbolical sense images that in earlier Eclogues he had used literally. This shows a habit of allegorical thought.

First, in the Sixth Eclogue, Virgil speaks of the shepherd as literally engaged in producing fat sheep, and contrasts this with producing slender lissom verse: 'pastorem, Tityre, pinguis/pascere oportet ovis,
deductum dicere carmen'. Sheep and song, ovis and carmen, are contrasted. But in the Tenth Eclogue the sheep tended by the shepherd stand for the poetic production of the poet: (16) 'stant et oves circum (nostri nec paenitet illas, nec te paeniteat pecoris, divine poeta') (notice here Virgil's playful and surprising inversion of 'nostri...illas', where we should expect 'nec illarum nos paenitet', parallel to 'nec te paeniteat').

Again, in the Second Eclogue, Corydon is made by Virgil to contrast the weaving of baskets from withies, a utilitarian occupation, with thinking and poetizing about love:

> 'quin tu aliquid saltem potius, quorum indiget usus,
> viminibus mollique paras detexere iunco?'

But in the Tenth Eclogue the weaving of a basket is a figure for the composition by a pastoral poet of a poem.

> 'Haec sat erit divae, vestrum cecinisse poetam,
> dum sedet et gracili fiscellam texit hibisco'.

The 'fiscella' is here the poem that Virgil has just completed for Gallus. This habit of imagery in the poem induces inevitably in its last line a double meaning:

> 'ite domum saturae, venit Hesperus, ite capellae.'

The 'capellae' are the collection of Eclogues; they are full-fed, have had put into them all that Virgil could put into this form. The sun sets on them, but for Virgil 'tomorrow to fresh fields and pastures new'.

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VIRGIL AND THE CHRISTIAN LATIN POETS

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By Christian Latin poetry, I ought first to explain, I mean the poetry of Christian content written during the late Latin period, principally the fourth and fifth centuries. With the sixth century this poetry, broadly speaking, may be said to come to an end, to be succeeded subsequently by medieval poetry. I do not propose to, nor am I able to, discuss the latter.

Between the death of Juvenal in the early second century and the emergence of

Claudian towards the end of the fourth no great name had arisen in Latin pagan poetry. It was during this century that Christian Latin poetry, somewhat belatedly, began to develop. The delay in its development was due not so much to Christian disapproval of poetry in itself as to the decadent state of pagan letters: contemporary poetry was regarded as the toy and plaything of grammarians and rhetoricians and, as such, unsuitable for the conveyance of serious thought. Nevertheless, the urge to produce a Christian poetry that might compete with pagan was felt early in the fourth century and this gave rise to a new and flourishing period of Latin poetry. The fundamental basis of this poetry was the combination of Christian with the traditional pagan elements. That Christian poetry should suddenly emerge as something entirely new, untouched by the poetry of paganism, was in itself improbable; it was made not only improbable, but virtually impossible, by the principal literary influence of the time, the scholastic education.

A primary element in this education was an intensive study of the classical Latin poets, above all of Virgil. These poets were read and re-read, scrutinized, interpreted, and committed to memory. Men of culture could not fail to be impregnated with their works and their poetical tastes moulded according to classical tradition. The Church Fathers, as we might suppose, shrank from these pagan influences and viewed them with some distaste. But the great masters were too much for them. They had become part of their being and could not be shrugged off at will. To Tertullian, Jerome, Augustine, and others Virgil was a vivid presence all their lives. Quotations from him and other pagan writers abound in patristic works. Certainly, Virgil continued to enjoy the highest reputation and esteem. The fourth *Eclogue* was commonly regarded as a Messianic prophecy and Constantine went so far as to give this view his official sanction. The poet was indeed the *anima naturaliter Christiana* to whom Dante refers.

If Virgil exercised a powerful influence on the Christian prose writers, the indebtedness of the poets was bound to be wide indeed. The first to compose on any scale, with the exception, perhaps, of the unrepresentative Commodian, seems to have been the Spanish priest, Juvencus, who wrote about 330. His aim was to produce a Christian epic adorned with terrene embellishments, and the result was four books of hexameters, entitled *Euangelia* and embodying the Gospel narrative, mainly according to St. Matthew. This poet has often been criticized for a timorous anxiety to adhere closely at the same time to the language of Virgil and to the text of the Gospel. The criticism is, I think, exaggerated. The contribution of Juvencus was that of a pioneer and had value. In his day the work was highly esteemed, and by none more than by Juvencus himself; to us his adaptation of pagan to Christian seems dull and pedantic.

Juvencus had not solved the problem of building on pagan tradition a new poetry of Christian sentiment and inspiration. Ambrose, later in the century, showed in his hymns what could be achieved by simplicity of language and metre and a tempered use of the past; but his hymns were for purely liturgical, not literary ends, and he had little immediate following. Minor works appeared in the course of the century, but it was not till towards its end that there appeared a figure of outstanding ability in the Spanish layman, Prudentius, commonly regarded as the greatest of the Christian Latin poets. Prudentius aimed at creating a Christian poetry which would both have artistic equality with the pagan and also provide a vehicle for genuine Christian feeling. No mere imitator, he utilized the traditional poetic language with skill and imagination, freed himself from the shackles of the hexameter by the employment of a variety of metres, and in the literary hymn, the allegorical epic, and the martyr ballad, originated new literary genres. Contemporary with Prudentius is

the second most able Christian poet, Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, a favourite pupil of Ausonius, by whom Paulinus' dereliction of the Muses was keenly regretted. The author of numerous poems in different metres, Paulinus is best known for those addressed to Felix, the patron saint of Nola, which show considerable freshness and a warm humanity.

In the succeeding century poets continued to write on Christian themes with varying degrees of skill and success: their work, though it includes some hymns, is mostly of epic or didactic character. Among them are these: Marius Victor, (according to Gennadius) a rhetor of Marseilles, composed a free version of Genesis with much philosophic discussion; Sedulius, in his _Carmen paschale_, described in five books various biblical episodes; Dracontius, a barrister of Carthage under the Vandals, wrote three books _De laudibus dei_; on the threshold of the Middle Ages, Alcimus Avitus, Bishop of Vienne, produced a biblical epic in five books with allegorical explanations; and finally, towards the end of the sixth century, Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers, was the author of numerous poems on both secular and religious themes. All these works, apart from the poems of Fortunatus are composed in hexameters.

All are heavily indebted to Virgil, as well as to Ovid, Horace, Lucretius and other classical poets. Where the range of classical and other sources is so wide and the product is so often an amalgam of several, it may not be wise to concentrate on one individual model. The poets were steeped in the classical writers and tracing the various strands of their influence in any given work or passage is something beyond the power of man. A further vital influence, I need not say, was the Bible, another the vast field of patristic literature. Yet the position of Virgil is unique: no poet was so much read, admired, and imitated as he, and the borrowing is so frequent and so obvious, that no apology seems necessary for his individual consideration. In exploiting their classical models, the Christian poets, like their pagan predecessors, felt few qualms: these models, _mendacia_ though they might represent, were regarded as a common treasury upon which they could draw at will and the same currency could be utilized over and over again. There were, moreover, Christian centos, notably of Proba, who displayed a diabolical ingenuity, if we may properly apply the phrase to so pious a woman, in relating episodes of the Old and New Testament solely in Virgilian lines and half-lines. And the composer of the cento _De ecclesia_ received from an admiring public, though not from the Church, the title _Maro iunior_. No poet but Virgil was put to such use at this time and here we see the strongest evidence of the amazing esteem in which he was held.

That the works of the highly educated should abound in reminiscences of Virgil is not surprising: more significant is their appearance in the performances of ruder folk. They include the Christian poet, Commodian, who wrote a series of instructional poems, it may be, as early as the third century, in language and verse that are equally uncouth. Yet, amid this welter of vulgarisms and horrific versification, there peep out here and there echoes of Virgil, for the most part correctly applied.

Heavy as is their debt to Virgil, the poets are sparing in direct allusions to him. Juvencus (_Praef_.10 ff.) speaks of the _dulcedo Maronis_ and his undying glory, but goes on to refer darkly to the _mendacia_ of ancient epic as contrasted with his own, whose veracity may save him from the fires to come. Commodian (_Apol_. 583 f.) tells us that Virgil, Cicero, and Terence are indeed read, but have nothing to say about life. The more sensitive, notably Prudentius, are significantly silent: it was a delicate relationship, upon which it was unnecessary to dwell.

For all their many borrowings, there were certain features of the _Aeneid_ which it was clearly impossible for the Christian poets to pursue. An essential feature

of Virgil's epic is the prominent role accorded to the gods. These, I need not say, must go out of the window, *penates* and all. They receive short shrift from Prudentius in his work *Against Symmachus*. Here I must express my indebtedness to Christian Schwen's work, *Vergil bei Prudentius* (1937), a most valuable contribution, from which I have not hesitated to draw here and elsewhere. Schwen shows how Prudentius not only ridicules the gods and the powers ascribed to them, but does so with a satirical exploitation of Virgil's own description: for example, (*Symm*.1.86 ff.) he sneers at Mercury's alleged role of ψυχοπομπός, and even apparent ability to raise the dead, with obvious reference to the Mercury passage in *Aeneid* 4 (239 ff.); and the grave passage in *Aeneid* 6 (777 ff.) describing the founding of Rome by Romulus, son of Mars, with the approval of Jupiter, is openly derided (*Peri*.10.411 ff.); likewise, the *Phrygii penates* (*Aen*.3.148; *Peri*.2.448). Bitter scorn, too, is cast on the union of Venus and Anchises (*Symm*. 1.166 ff.); the worship of Augustus is denounced as infamous (*Symm*.1.245 ff.); and the power of *Fatum*, the mainstay of the *Aeneid*, is roundly ridiculed (*Symm*.2.409; cf. 471, 486). Paulinus of Nola (if he be the author of *Carmen* 32) similarly denounces the gods and, by implication, Virgil himself (*c*. 32.55 f.): in reference to Juno he writes 'quam Vergilius notat auctor eorum/dicendo *et soror et coniunx*', a quotation, here openly, and unusually, acknowledged, from *Aeneid* 1. 47. These attacks on the ancient gods, it may be observed, were not merely rhetorical; paganism, though indeed tottering, had not yet disappeared, and there were those who still clung fondly to traditional beliefs and felt uneasy about forsaking the gods of old.

With the gods, it was obvious, pagan mythology too must go. As Paulinus writes in a poem addressed to the reproachful Ausonius (*c*. 10.21 f.): 'negant Camenis nec patent Apollini/dicata Christo pectora'. In the adaptation of pagan poetry to Christian ideas here would seem to lie a most difficult problem: were not the gods and the myths an intrinsic element in that poetry? The Christians did not, however, allow this to disturb them unduly. A magnificent substitute from which to draw they found in the limitless resources of the Old Testament; the Bible could indeed be a primary source of inspiration. Nor did they abandon pagan mythology in its entirety; to some extent they were able to come to terms with it. Characteristic of their work is the widespread application to Christian concepts of certain designations and epithets which figure in pagan mythology; for example, the terms *Tartarus* and *Avernus* are commonly applied to Hell, likewise *Acheron* and *Styx*: thus Dracontius (3.642) speaks of 'dominum uenientem in Tartara Christum' (a verse-ending found also in Paulinus and others). Sometimes these terms appear alongside the orthodox Christian term: for example, in a passage of Prudentius (*Ham*.958-62), *Tartarus*, *gehenna* and *Avernus* all jostle cosily together. Conversely, *Olympus* is used of the Christian Heaven, and *Elysium* is the reward of the just. Such terms had no doubt become literary clichés and were regarded as mere poetical ornamentation. Yet many an eyebrow has been raised at their boldness, particularly in the frequent reference to the Deity as *Tonans*. At times, indeed, these poets appear to have felt twinges of unease and found dubious shifts to salve them. Comparetti disapprovingly calls attention to the expedient of substituting for the traditional invocation of the Muse a 'Domine, labia mea aperies'; and the last point of horror is reached, he feels, when they seek inspiration of the God who had induced eloquence in Balaam's ass (as does Orientius, 1.27 ff.).

A similar attitude is displayed by these poets in their ready appropriation of poetical phrases or verses used of pagan mythology. Thus Paulinus (*c*. 4.1) and others echo the words of Virgil, but slightly altered, in addressing the Almighty: 'omnipotens genitor, rerum cui summa potestas' (cf. *Aen*.10.100, 668); indeed, the omnipotence of God is not uncommonly expressed in Virgilian language.

Yet care had to be exercised: in Paulinus' exploitation of Aen.1.254 'hominum sator atque deorum' the word deorum has to go, but reappears in the nominative singular, 'deus ut cunctorum hominum sator' (c. 19.307). Prudentius adapts the designation of Aeneas nate dea (Aen.1.582, 615, etc.) in addressing Christ with the words 'Iesu/nate deo' (Apoth.418). Sedulius (c. 2.63) invokes the Virgin Mary with the words, necessarily modified, with which Aeneas invokes Anchises (Aen.5.80): 'salue, sancta parens'. On somewhat similar lines Prudentius (Apoth. 394) transfers Virgil's words regarding the site of Aeneas' city (Aen.3.393) to Christ himself: 'requies o certa laborum' (otherwise Drac.1.559 'mors mundanorum requies uel certa laborum', where Arevalo's conjecture meta for certa is doomed from the start). And Paulinus (c. 14.79 f.) writes unashamedly 'amor omnia Christi/ uincit'.

We may now turn to some examples of Christian work in the epic style and observe Virgilian influence in operation. Poets saw in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, a rich source of epic material, and a favourite subjects was Genesis: there are, for example, several accounts of Paradise and its inmates, Adam and Eve; both Dracontius (1.180) and Avitus (1.193) begin their description with the Virgilian verse-beginning est locus (Aen.3.163); here the Georgics could be of help and were exploited by Marius Victor. An instructive instance of an epic account heavily influenced by the Virgilian manner is Avitus' description (5.371-721) of the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea (Exod.13.18-14 fin.). The Exodus narrative, which occupies about thirty-five verses, is expanded by Avitus to some three hundred and fifty lines. In his account, which is mostly clear and well expressed, Virgilian turns and motifs are employed, the arrival of day and of night is clearly announced in poetic language, and transitions and resumptions in the narration are indicated by such Virgilian formulae as ergo ubi, protinus, haec inter, ecce, hinc subitus, and the conclusion of a speech by talibus and uix haec perdixerat.

Avitus regards the Israelites and the Egyptians as two opposing armies. In the Bible the Israelites are indeed represented as an organized host (armati), but not as the heavily armed warriors whom Avitus depicts in epic detail. It is characteristic that he should start off (5.371): 'primo conspicuus fulgebat in ordine ductor', i.e. Moses, just as Virgil begins his catalogue of Italian warring tribes in Aeneid 7.647 'primus init bellum (Mezentius)'. In the evening appears the pillar of fire in all its brilliance: 'obstipuere uiri' (412), much as in Aeneid 9.123 (cf. 2.120, etc.) upon seeing the heavenly portent and the transformation of the ships 'obstipuere animi Rutulis'. Meanwhile the Egyptians are enraged by the flight of the Israelites and one of them makes a long speech of a rhetorical character (472-96). In describing (477-9) the dislocation of the country's economy by the departure of the gens famula, both in thought and in language the speaker is inspired not by Exodus, but by Virgil's account (Aen.4.86-9) of the suspension of activities in Carthage occasioned by the lovemaking of Dido and Aeneas.

Various other examples of Virgilian language, motifs, or technique follow: for instance, (502-25) the long description of the Egyptian armour comparable with that of the Italian armour in Aeneid 7.624-40; the approach of the Egyptian host seen as a cloud of dust (530) like that of Turnus' army in Aeneid 9.33 (cf.8.593); the dismay of the Israelites and their despairing exclamation (547-8) 'o terque quaterque beati,/Aegyptus quos morte tulit', which corresponds to that of Aeneas in Aeneid 1.94-6: 'o terque quaterque beati,/quis ante ora patrum Troiae sub montibus altis/contigit oppetere'; and (672) the final utterance of the chastened Pharaoh, as the waters envelop him, 'non haec humanis cedit uictoria bellis', in which he is assisted by the words of Iapyx in Aeneid 12.427 (cf. 2.777 f., 5.56) 'non haec humanis opibus, non arte magistra/proueniunt'. The book ends with some rhetorical moralizing alien to the manner of Virgil, and an allegorical

interpretation of the episode, the purging of sin by the waters of baptism.

A more original work than that of Avitus is the bizarre poem of Prudentius, the *Psychomachia*, the battle of the soul, the first Latin allegorical epic. This poem, though much criticized in modern times - Puech finds it insupportable and terms it a 'serious parody of the Virgilian epic', attained immense popularity in the Middle Ages and had far-reaching influence on medieval poetry art and sculpture. The action consists of a series of fights between the Virtues and the Vices, each of which ends with the crushing defeat of the particular Vice engaged. In between the fights the combatants deliver speeches of varying length, and the poem ends with the final victory of the Virtues and the building of a temple in which Christ may dwell. The work is deeply indebted to Virgilian technique, motifs, and language almost throughout. The personifications go through all the motions and postures of the heroes of the *Aeneid*; they strut, preen themselves, and taunt on similar lines; and their speeches are followed by the Virgilian *dixerat* or *haec ubi dicta dedit*; in that which is beyond belief (497) recourse is had to Virgil's cautionary clause *si credere dignum est* (*Georg*. 3.391, *Aen*. 6.173).

The poet begins with an invocation of Christ that corresponds to Virgil's invocation of the Muse in *Aeneid* 1.8-11. The first line 'Christe, graues hominum semper miserate labores' is but a slight modification, censured by Puech and praised by Professor Rapisarda, of *Aeneid* 6.56 'Phoebe, grauis Troiae semper miserate labores'. In the succeeding fights Virgilian motifs and language are freely drawn upon. They are drawn upon too in the speeches: for example, as Schwen in his full discussion shows, when Reason stems the advance of the conquering Avarice, the latter gives vent to her disappointment in a monologue which has close affinities with the two monologues of the frustrated Juno in *Aeneid* 1 and 7: the opening lines (511 f.) reveal the similarity at once - 'uincimur, heu, segnes nec nostra potentia perfert/uim solitam'; in *Aeneid* 1.37 Juno exclaims 'mene incepto desistere uictam' and again in 7.310 'uincor ab Aenea'. Like Juno, Avarice has recourse to treachery: (551 ff.) she assumes the form of a Virtue, Thrift, just as in similar language Allecto in *Aeneid* 7.415 transforms herself into an old woman. But Thrift has, of course, a special significance, for Avarice may pass for Thrift in real life.

In this poem Prudentius' debt to Virgil is undoubtedly great. Yet there is much that is anything but Virgilian. The work as a whole lacks unity, the fights are unreal, and the personifications, as they move mechanically in their prescribed roles, have little individual interest. In the exercise of their prowess the Virtues display a savagery that is as un-Christian as it is unladylike and the poet describes the horrid carnage they effect with all the relish of a Seneca or Lucan. The speeches are wordy and full of theology and preaching. Amid the Virgilian surroundings biblical touches appear here and there: (99 f.) Chastity dips her polluted blade in the waters of Jordan; and (163) the trusty squire of Patience is not *fidus Achates* but Job. The final scene, the building of the temple by the victorious Virtues, while it may owe one or two touches to *Aeneid* 1, draws largely upon the description of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21. And here this amazing performance comes to an end. Its immense popularity in the Middle Ages may be ascribed to its combination of allegory, moralizing, and Christianization of Virgil. For most moderns Prudentius deploys his indubitable talent more successfully elsewhere.

So much for epic. In general it may be said that both in epic and in other poetical forms Virgil's influence lies for the most part in technique, language, and literary motifs. The essential spirit of Virgil is less prominent; it was something beyond the capacity of most to reproduce. Yet in the basic motive of

the *Aeneid* there is one poet who passionately echoes the deep convictions of his predecessor. The conception of the founding of the Roman state by divine will and of its development into a great empire for the just ordering of the world was adopted in a modified form by Prudentius, and given all the weight of a religious belief. In his relationship to Virgil Prudentius occupies among the Christian poets a unique position. Like others he was deeply indebted to Virgil in those matters to which I have referred, but none other is so impregnated with Virgil's passionate faith in the holy and eternal nature of Rome's mission in the world. Prudentius was intensely patriotic and shared with conservative pagans such as Symmachus all their love for Rome and her splendid past; for him, as for Virgil, she is *pulcherrima Roma* (*Peri*.11.231; *Georg*.2.534), whose immortality is assured. But she is now a Christian Rome, and it is the accomplishment of the Christian Rome that Prudentius celebrates in his polemical work *Against Symmachus* and in the second martyr-hymn. All this is admirably discussed by Friedrich Klingner in his *Römische Geisteswelt*. He shows how Prudentius found something comparable between his own time and that of Virgil: the latter represented the foundation of the Empire and the climax of Roman achievement in the secular sense; Prudentius' own day represented the victory of Christianity under Theodosius and the imperial condemnation of paganism. Virgil saw in Roman history the gradual development of a divine mission to give order and good government to the world; Prudentius went further - he saw in it the divine purpose of preparing the world for the advent of Christ and the ultimate triumph of Christianity in his own day. The last stage in the process foreshadowed by Virgil has now been reached and he exclaims characteristically in *Apotheosis* 446 f. 'iam purpura supplex/sternitur Aeneadae rectoris ad atria Christi'; the descendant of Aeneas is, of course, Theodosius. Rome is now head of the eternal heavenly empire and the words of Virgil I am about to quote have a meaning undreamt of by him: in the *Contra Symmachum* Prudentius describes how Theodosius won his bloodless victories over the enemies of Christianity and (1.539 f.) 'taught Quirinus' realm how to have power for everlasting in a supremacy that is from Heaven' (Thomson); he then adds in words used by Virgil of Jupiter (*Aen*.1.278 f.) 'denique nec metas statuit nec tempora ponit:/imperium sine fine docet'. This modernization of Virgil, the weaving of the Virgilian conception of Rome into a Christian texture, is the creation of Prudentius. No other poet develops such a theme. Paulinus of Nola has a deep regard for Rome and (*c*.13.29 f.) refers to her changed role: Nola, he says, is second only to Rome herself, 'quae prius imperio tantum et uictricibus armis,/nunc et apostolicis terrarum est prima sepulchris'; but this is as far as he goes.

In this discussion of the wider influences of Virgil's work I should make a brief mention of the Christianized eclogue. Apart from a comic cento composed in the form of a Virgilian eclogue, the only example we find in this period is a short poem *De mortibus boum*, written about 395 by the rhetor Endelechius, not indeed in hexameters, but in asclepiads. Bucolus, who has lost his herds from cattle-plague learns from Tityrus that his animals have been immune, and that the reason for this is the sign of the cross marked on the foreheads of his oxen; he then listens to a sketchy exposition of Christianity from Tityrus, and, being assured by the latter that simple faith is the new religion's only requirement, eagerly agrees to adopt it; Aegon, who is present, follows suit. In this poem motifs have been taken from Virgil's first *Eclogue* and from *Georgics* 3; two of the three names are Virgilian, and so is the pattern of the dialogue.

Virgil's influence, as is inevitable, is most clearly seen in works of epic type. In those of dogmatic and theological content it is bound to be less prominent, though here too it is always liable to be present, mostly in single passages involving action or description as well as in occasional moralizing. In general, it is naturally the hexameter works, not the lyrical, which are most susceptible. A very susceptible type of passage is the biblical. It is reasonable

that Paradise should be described in phraseology culled from Virgil's account of Elysium: thus Dracontius (3.752 f.) prays, felicitously enough: 'inter odoratos flores et amoena uirecta/in nemus aeternum ueniam sedesque beatas'. Schwen discusses two relevant passages of Prudentius. In Apoth.650-63 the poet depicts Christ's stilling the storm in language comparable to Virgil's narration of the storm and its stilling by Neptune in Aeneid 1.52-143 and in phraseology otherwise Virgilian; in his treatment he shows freedom and skill, utilizing Virgilian language and motifs according as they occur to him and serve his purpose; it is a good example of spontaneous reminiscence as opposed to slavish and direct imitation. With the aid of Virgilian technique he can also lend interest and life to a biblical original: in Hamartigenia 409-23 his catalogue of the armed forces that range themselves with the devil is based on Joshua 11.1-5, but whereas the biblical text is content with a long string of names accompanied by the relevant geographical details, Prudentius separates the names and characterizes each particular people with some detail of armour or fighting method in accordance with the technique of the catalogue in Aeneid 7.641-817.

While Virgilian influence is most conspicuous in hexameter works, it may also occur in lyric. A notable instance is found in Prudentius' hymn in honour of the birthday of Christ (Cath.11). Salvatore showed quite recently, though he is not the first to have done so, that this owes some of its inspiration - and it is happy - to the fourth Eclogue. Here, you will remember, Virgil speaks of the return of the Virgin, the birth of the divine child, and the new age of gold. These themes Prudentius transfers to his hymn. It is a good example of the poet's sympathy, unobtrusively shown, with his predecessor. Prudentius has more affinity with the spirit of Virgil than has any of the other poets One could cite other examples of felicitous passages of Virgilian inspiration, but any sort of classification is elusive, and time is short.

A feature of the work of the Christian poets is their practice of contamination, the amalgamation of two or more sources in a single passage. A passage, not discussed by Schwen, which provides a good example, is Prudentius, Cath.9.11-13: the words, which form part of a famous hymn, run '(deus) ipse fons et clausula/omnium quae sunt, fuerunt, quaeque post futura sunt./ipse iussit, et creata, dixit ipse, et facta sunt'. Here we find, first, an echo of the nymph Cyrene's picture of Proteus in the fourth Georgic (392 f.), 'nouit namque omnia uates,/quae sint, quae fuerint, quae mox uentura trahantur', and, secondly, an echo of Psalm 148.5 'ipse dixit, et facta sunt: ipse mandauit, et creata sunt'. A quaint example of this practice occurs in Dracontius, Satisf.37 f.: 'errauit per prata uagus mala gramina pastus,/et qui homo bos fuerat de boue factus homo est'. Who is this who ranges the meadows fed on rank grasses? It is Nebuchadnezzar, and he feeds on rank grasses for no better reason than that the serpent does so in Aeneid 2.471 'coluber mala gramina pastus'. Now the correspondence between the king's fortunes and those of Io evoked in the poet's mind a line from Ovid's Heroides, 14.86: 'cum bos ex homine est, ex boue facta dea'; this he adapts with some skill, but the general result is patchwork. In Paul.Nol.c.27.158 f. 'uox turturis altae/in nostra tellure sonat' we see a clear representation of Cant.2.12 'uox turturis audita est in terra nostra' with the addition of the somewhat unexpected epithet altae. Hartel in his list of non-biblical models here notes Ecl.1.58 'nec gemere aeria cessabit turtur ab ulmo'. The similarity is not very obvious. Can it be that aeria is the source of altae?

A further feature of the exploitation of Virgil is the tendency to echo in a figurative sense expressions and sentences whose application in the original is literal. An obvious example is the figurative use of the word error and the like. Thus language used of the Trojans' wanderings over the seas may be applied to those of sinful or heretical men; they are referred to as erroribus or fluctibus

acti, aequore toto iactati, and so on. Here we may note Sedul.c.5.421, where the poet reflects the biblical (Matth.28.19) baptizantes (sc. omnes gentes) in the words 'omnesque in fonte lauari', which he has clearly borrowed from Ecl.3.97 'omnis (capellas) in fonte lauabo'. An interesting example of this practice occurs in Paul.Nol. c. 21.70 f., where the poet alludes in symbolical language to the maiden, Eunomia, whom Christ has appointed to be his heavenly bride (cf. Matth.9.15) and has bathed with the unguent of his name: 'tincta comas animae et mentis caput uncta pudicum/spirat eo sacros sponsi caelestis odores'. Paulinus has imparted a mystic beauty to the description of Venus in Aeneid 1.403 f. 'ambrosiaeque comae diuinum uertice odorem/spirauere'.

In their imitation of Virgilian expressions, sentences, or passages, the poets show varying degrees of servility or freedom. A line or phrase may be preserved in its entirety without any modification, or it may be subjected to all sorts of dismemberment and alteration of language, metre, construction, and sense. When Dracontius thus addresses God (2.32 f.): 'sanctus ubique tuus complectitur omnia, princeps,/spiritus inmensam penetrans per saecula molem', we can sense an unmistakable echo of Aeneid 6.726 f. 'spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus/mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet', but the verbal resemblance is dim. On the other hand, in Paul.Nol. c. 26.83 f. 'humanis opibus sperare salutem/nulla salus' the poet has utilized the phraseology of Virgil's line (Aen.2.354) 'una salus uictis nullam sperare salutem' to clothe an entirely different thought. A neat enough exploitation of a Virgilian rhetorical framework is found in a Sedulius passage (c.2.6-8) where the poet compares the guilt of Eve with the perfidy of the serpent: 'heu, noxia coniux!/noxia tu coniux magis an draco perfidus ille?/perfidus ille draco, sed tu quoque noxia coniux'. You will remember the passage in the Eclogues (8.47-50) where the cruelty of Medea, who slew her children, is weighed against the wickedness of Amor, who taught her: 'saeuus Amor docuit natorum sanguine matrem/commaculare manus: crudelis tu quoque, mater./crudelis mater magis an puer improbus ille?/improbus ille puer: crudelis tu quoque, mater'. Sometimes, words of Virgil may be clearly echoed by an imitator and yet be battered out of construction and meaning into something quite new. A well-known line of Virgil, not discussed by Schwen, is the reproach of Anchises in Aeneid 6.806: 'et dubitamus adhuc uirtutem extendere factis?' There is but a faint glimmer of this in the words of Prudentius (Symm.1.587-90): 'et dubitamus adhuc Romam tibi, Christe, dicatam/in leges transisse tuas...terrenum(que) extendere regnum?' Here the construction and meaning of dubitamus is entirely altered: it is now used, not with the infinitive to mean 'hesitate', but with the accusative and infinitive to mean 'doubt', and the character of the sentence is transformed; the belated appearance and different use of extendere further emphasize the remoteness from the original. All this indicates the futility of attempts to alter a text in order to effect conformity with a model.

In their numerous imitations the poets naturally meet with varying success according to their innate abilities or the favour of fortune; their echoes may be felicitous, they may be supportable, they may be awkward, or positively vicious. It is sometimes the case that a poet may purloin a phrase or expression which in its original surroundings enjoyed a happy relationship with its neighbours, but which the skill of the purloining poet is insufficient to harmonize with its new setting (Löfstedt has an illuminating article on the subject in Eranos 47, 1949, 148 ff.). In reviewing his sinful past (3.567 ff.) Dracontius finds himself unable to enumerate his crimes even if 'ora tot exurgant, quot dentes ossibus albent', and to subsequent echoes in other poets. At ossibus Glaeser held up his hands in horror and immediately conjectured oribus, and I am sorry to see that Professor Courcelle in an article in the R.E.L. (33, 1955, 257) adopts this corruption without comment. It is seldom that we find in these poets an echo that is ungrammatical or meaningless. I have elsewhere (C.Q. 9, 1959, 71 f.) called attention to an apparent

instance in the accomplished Paulinus, viz.c.16.222 f. Felix, after a long absence, has reappeared, and his incredulous friends, who have abandoned hope of his life 'uerane te facies? aiunt, tune ille beatus/redderis?' In the question uerane te facies the accusative te has no construction: its presence is due to Aeneid 3.310 'uerane te facies, uerus mihi nuntius adfers?', where te is the object of adfers. It may be that the poet had but a hazy memory of the original and vaguely supposed the ellipse of some such verb as rogo. Commodian has something even stranger to offer. In Apol.174 he refers to the devil insinuating himself into the ignorant 'per latices animae', words which look suspiciously like a barbarous reflection of Aeneid 10.601 'tum latebras animae pectus mucrone recludit'; in a corresponding passage (1.26) of the anonymous Carmen aduersus Marcionem, which has very close kinship with Commodian, the Virgilian phrase is correctly echoed. The more sophisticated lexica rise to the occasion and duly record a word latex, formed from lateo, and found in Commodian.

As I have indicated, a Virgilian passage can sometimes throw light on a passage that has been influenced by it. An unusual example occurs in Prudentius (Cath.3.75), where reference is made to a favourite theme of the Fathers, the chastity of the bee: '(apis) nexilis inscia conubii' The passage is discussed by G. Meyer (Philol.93, 1939, 401 f.), who calls attention to the striking usage of the epithet nexilis but finds aid in the cognate passage, Georg.4.198 f. 'neque concubitu indulgent nec corpora segnes/in Venerem soluunt aut fetus nixibus edunt'. He puts forward the interesting view that nexilis was suggested to Prudentius by the alternative (but unsuitable) lection nexibus (for nixibus), which he thinks the poet read in his Virgil manuscript (conubii corresponding to Virgil's concubitu); he may well be right.

An inevitable question arises: to what extent were these poets conscious of their imitations? In the wider sphere of epic technique those concerned were no doubt consciously following in the steps of the master. Again, Prudentius, as we have seen, has Virgil very close to his mind when he is proclaiming the Christian Rome; he is in all awareness building on the Virgilian conception. Moreover, both he and Paulinus of Nola deliberately use the words of Virgil - Paulinus, indeed, mentions him by name - in their satirical depiction of the pagan gods. With regard to the longer passages based on Virgil, in many the poets must have been well aware of their imitation; in others the haphazard appearance of the borrowings suggests that echoes both of motifs and of language are the result of spontaneous and unconscious, or at least semi-conscious reminiscence.

A vast proportion of their imitations, however, consists of brief echoes of phrases, expressions, or indeed whole sentences, and they were doubtless to a large extent utilized without conscious borrowing. Many of them had come to be part of the poetic vocabulary. Virtually all poets after Virgil, from the epic poets to Martial and Juvenal, contain echoes of his work, and these in turn they passed on to others and so ensured their further employment. The Christian poets were so familiar with the works not only of Virgil and the other classical poets but also of their imitators, that their minds could not fail to be filled with all sorts of Virgilian and other turns and their pens to use them, as occasion arose. It is interesting to read that the author of the cento De ecclesia spontaneously improvised the last six lines, which involve a dozen unrelated scraps of Virgil, in response to his audience's rapturous calls of 'Maro iunior'. As I have suggested, the constructionless half-line of Paulinus, 'uerane te facies', may well be due to the poet's use of a half-forgotten original. And the phrase ossibus albent was no doubt floating about in the foggy brain of Dracontius and its component members, owing to their frequent association in poetical works, regarded by him as Siamese twins, and consequently incapable of separate existence. Many of these echoes seem to us comic and amusing. That the poets and their readers saw nothing comic in them is due partly to a different attitude,

partly to the unconscious nature of their borrowings.

There are, of course, innumerable passages, where we cannot be sure whether we have an association with Virgil or not. At Commod._Instr_.1.5.5 'initium (= _initio_) caelum, terram deus et mare fecit' Martin refers to _Aen_.6.724 'principio caelum ac terram camposque liquentis/...spiritus intus alit', and there is indeed some resemblance. He does not, however, indicate the real source, Gen.1.1 'in principio creauit deus caelum et terram'. The famous line of Virgil may have afforded some subsidiary support but little more. (Why did the poet alter _principio_? Because the acrostic required an initial _i_.)

I have tried to give some idea - and it is, I fear, very sketchy - of the way in which Christian poetry was influenced by Virgil in the fourth, fifth, and earlier sixth, centuries. Towards the latter part of this period, and indeed earlier, conditions for literary activity had become increasingly difficult as the result of the barbarian incursions, and the decay of poetry was inevitable. The last of these poets may be said to be Fortunatus. His numerous poems, both secular and Christian, are clearly under classical influence. Yet in some of the Christian poems, such as the famous Passion hymn, _Vexilla regis prodeunt_, this influence has receded and there are signs of a new outlook in poetry. Fortunatus is the precursor of the medieval spirit and the new types of religious poetry that were to appear.

Was the influence of Virgil and the classical poets detrimental to Christian poetry? Did the subjection to this powerful element deprive the work of vitality and spontaneous expression? As I earlier remarked, in the literary circumstances the poetry could hardly fail to originate in the form it did, and in the hands of the better poets the classical influence was tamed and turned to fruitful account. In their exposition of Christian sentiment these poets could, and frequently did, express themselves in terms of their own, and echoes of the masters may be occasional only. The poets naturally vary considerably as well in the extent as in the manner of their borrowings, both according to their abilities and the type of composition involved. A Juvencus, indeed, is unlikely to stir the spirit, but many have been moved by the works of Prudentius; and Paulinus' accounts of the doings at Nola have freshness and charm.

Yet criticism of Christian poetry there will always be. Comparetti writes scathingly of the contrast between the matter and the form. In a much quoted sentence he goes so far as to declare that this not infrequently borders on the grotesque and ridiculous to anyone not blinded by the fervour of religious faith. The judgement is harsh. To the best Christian poetry it is certainly unjust. Moreover, it was not for critics of the twentieth century that this poetry was written but for readers in the early period of Christianity. It was the work of men belonging to an age when literary attitudes and taste were something entirely different from our own. This was, after all, a period of transition, and it is to the credit of the Christian writers that they gave Latin poetry a new force after a long space of languor and stagnation.

Nevertheless, it may be just to say that Christianity never found its truest poetical expression as long as its utterances were subject to the influences of old. Its poetry was couched in a language that was purely literary and artificial; its metrical forms a mystery to the many; and the savour of classical echoes the enjoyment of the few. It was inevitable that at some time the Christian spirit should find a more natural outlet in a different form of verse and of language; and it was no coincidence that its development took place in a time when Roman civilization was completely transformed. But this belongs to another age and another epoch.

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THE GEORGICS IN AFTER TIMES

by L. P. Wilkinson, M.A.

(Resumé of a paper read to the Society on 21st January 1967, which is intended, in revised form, to be the final chapter of a book on the *Georgics*.)

Within three years of its appearance the *Georgics* became one of the first contemporary poems to be read in school, and throughout the remainder of classical antiquity it shared in the extraordinary reverence paid to all Virgil's work. It continued to be read through the thousand years of the Dark and Middle Ages. If we bear in mind that the relative lengths of the *Bucolics*, *Georgics* and *Aeneid* are as2:5:20, the *Georgics* is cited as frequently as the other works by grammarians and metrists such as Aldhelm. It also played an integral part in the strange conception of the 'Rota Virgilii', in which the Virgilian corpus was regarded as embodying a hierarchy of triads grounded in the nature of things; not only of plain, middle and grand styles of writing, but of stages of social evolution (pastoral, agricultural, martial), of kinds of life (contemplative, sensual, active) of social ranks (shepherd, farmer, soldier), of locales (pasture, ploughland, castle or town), of animals (sheep, cow, horse), of trees (beech, fruit trees, laurel or oak), of implements (crook, plough, sword).

But if we scrutinise the literature more closely, we find that the echoes from the *Georgics* are proportionally fewer, especially after the Carolingian period. Curtius has insisted that the influence of the *Bucolics* in later times was hardly less than that of the *Aeneid*; but the *Georgics* recedes into the background. In the later Middle Ages the *Bucolics* receded too. Dante refers four times to the *Pollio*, not certainly to any other Eclogue; and he has only two or three references to the *Georgics* as against a hundred to the *Aeneid*. Chaucer seems to have known only the epic.

Nor have we from these thousand years, so far as I know, any poem of georgic subject matter. The nearest approach is the *Hortulus* of Walafrid Strabo, a work of the early ninth century. This owes its conception, its verse-technique, and a number of words and phrases to the *Georgics*, and its monastic author cultivated his garden *ipse manu*. But Virgil notoriously renounced the theme of gardens; and in any case this is not an organic poem like the *Georgics*, but consists, after an introduction, of twenty-seven short poems on the *uses* of various plants, mainly vegetables. Ulterior significance comes in only at the end, where the lily and rose are treated as symbols of faith and martyrdom, leading up to a doxology to the Virgin. This is not to disparage it. It is a charming work, worthy of the de luxe Eton-edited edition produced last year by the Hunt Botanical Library of Pittsburgh.

In spite of the fact that the monasteries owned often huge agricultural estates, the evidence suggests that, except in some early Benedictine and again in some early Cistercian houses, monks rarely worked on the land themselves. The poets whose Christian and Secular poems are described in the three large volumes of the lamented Dr. Raby are unlikely to have been close to the soil.

There were odd things in the *Georgics* that interested Christians from early times. The doctrine of divine immanence seemed to be presaged by the *deum namque ire per omnes* passage as well as by the corresponding passage in *Aeneid* VI. But more remarkable is their appropriation of Virgil's idealised bees. These had the especial merit of propagating their species without sexual intercourse, and thus providing a paradigm for the Virgin Mary. There was a ceremony performed on Easter Eve in some places for a thousand years, the Blessing of the Candles. It included an oration in praise of candles and of the materials that composed them