

ENGLISH PULPIT ORATORY
FROM
ANDREWES TO TILLOTSON

A STUDY OF ITS LITERARY ASPECTS

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better preachers of the Commonwealth, among whom he had appeared at the outset of his preaching career, and almost certainly, though less demonstrably, to the contemporary pulpit orators of France, Bossuet, and Bourdaloue.

A good example of his manner is supplied by a sermon delivered before the University at Oxford in 1691. The thought, it will be noticed, is more philosophic than that usually found in South, and in this respect points interestingly to the contribution of "the Cambridge divines" to the pulpit oratory of their own and succeeding times. South is speaking of the scope of natural reason :

"Let a man carefully attend to the voice of his reason, and all the dictates of natural morality, so as by no means to do any thing contrary to them. For though reason is not to be relied upon, as a guide universally sufficient to direct us what to do, yet it is generally to be relied upon and obeyed, when it tells us what we are not to do. It is indeed but a weak and diminutive light, compared to revelation ; but it ought to be no disparagement to a star, that it is not a sun. Nevertheless, as weak and small as it is, it is a light always at hand, and though enclosed, as it were, in a dark lantern, may yet be of singular use to prevent many a foul step, and to keep us from many a dangerous fall. And every man brings such a degree of this light into the world with him, that though it cannot bring him to heaven, yet, if he be true to it, it will carry him a great way ; indeed so far, that if he follows it faithfully, I doubt not but he shall meet with another light, which shall carry him quite through. . . ."

The distinguished lineage of this last quotation—the scion of Senecan mediævalism tracing its descent through Cyprian from true classical prose, of Calvinistic as well as of non-party Anglicanism and of the Rationalists—compels us to regard South's achievement as of great importance. For, for the first time (ignoring for the moment the late date of this sermon, since many earlier sermons reveal the same characteristics) all the competing and, from different points of view, extravagant styles which had fascinated men

¹ Ed. cit., vol. ii, sermon xxiii, pp. 179 seq.

and absorbed their attention during the first sixty years of the century were successfully fused together, and the result was a plain, perspicuous and harmonious whole. In effecting this fusion South displayed remarkable common sense. A man of greater genius would have come to the task with greater bias ; but the cold almost impersonal way in which South registered the rhetorical weaknesses of his predecessors, and from time to time remodelled his own style, yet always in strict continuity, fitted him peculiarly for the task. All that a great technician could do he did ; but it remained for the finer and more sympathetic personality of Tillotson to invest with charm a manner excellently calculated to impress, but at times too truculently employed to convince or persuade.

Turning to the work of Isaac Barrow (1630-1677), mathematical scholar as well as divine, and, for five years previous to his death, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, we are confronted, as in the earlier instance of Donne, and to some, though to a lesser, extent in that of Taylor, with the spectacle of a preacher of a highly individual and also highly intellectual type, whose mental calibre separates him from other men in his age, and imparts to the products of his pen distinctive characteristics of an unusual order. If Taylor can only be named with these others with a kind of caveat, it is not because the latter's work is not individual or remarkable in a way, but because the beautiful artifices and serene expatiation of Taylor were undoubtedly the outcome of a less intense and also a less robust experience, which made up for what it lacked in variety by a devoted attention to elaboration and detail. Between the two remaining preachers a more equal comparison can be attempted. Both were virile, stirring men, who had seen more of actual life than usually fell to the lot of divines, even in that century of Army chaplaincies ; both were men of keen and subtle intellect, and compelled by this very fact to review the dogmas of the Christian Faith in the light of scientific knowledge ; both, as did most of their contemporaries, clearly regarded preaching as a branch of rhetoric, only they did so with a more intelligent discrimination and endeavoured to cultivate it with a backward glance to the great models of patristic oratory ; and both were endowed with unusual strength of imagination,

whether self-generated, or as is often the case with each, started off by the images of others, but so developed as to give a time-honoured illustration a topical effectiveness and a fresh lease of life. While these traits belong to Donne and Barrow in common, other equally important factors serve to contrast and separate them and their work. For one thing, as we have seen, Donne had a connection of a peculiar kind with the Anglo-Catholic divines; but although a member of the Royal Society, Barrow cannot be classed as a "Royal Society divine," meaning by that term a clerical member of that Society whose work exemplifies the stylistic ideals set out by Sprat in his 'History of the Royal-Society.' To a greater extent even than Donne Barrow may be said to stand apart from the party with which he was associated. Donne, moreover, by training and upbringing can hardly be described as English; there is a bizarre, foreign strain in him derived from continental Catholicism; Barrow is English of the English all through. This last fact accounts for much that is different in their approach to their themes. Donne, sensualist and voluptuary to the last, could find no refuge from his passionate cravings save in the arms of His God¹; Barrow, though his preaching throughout is characterised by strong personal devotion to the Saviour, could voice his reflections on God as follows: "Ὁ Θεὸς γεωμετρεῖ! Tu autem, Domine, quantus es Geometra!" The very rhetorical models which attracted them were significant less of their period than of themselves. Donne, it is true, was Senecan in company with Bacon and others of his contemporaries; but had he lived at any time in the century Augustine and Tertullian would have been bound to fascinate a man of his temperament: Barrow, at the very moment when men were out of sympathy with luxuriousness of style, turned in devoted discipleship to Chrysostom. The individualistic, self-analytical note of Augustine is clearly what interested Donne, and the style helped to elucidate the meaning; in the same way, what appealed to Barrow in Chrysostom was apparently the practical commonsense of the preacher expressed in flowing paragraphs with wealth of lively illustration. Other resem-

¹ Vid. "A Hymne to Christ, at the Authors last going into Germany"—
'Donne's Poetical Works,' Grierson's ed., 2 vols., Oxf., 1912, vol. i, p. 353, ll. 25-7.

blances and differences might be enumerated, but the big fact that emerges from such considerations is the sense of their dominating personalities setting a seal to the work which they undertook. Each deliberately chose to effect something different from what he saw being done around him, and in this respect Barrow stands in the greater isolation. Donne used 'metaphysical' preaching in an original way, and the results he achieved appear to us at times sublime and at others ludicrous. Barrow, while he never reached the heights attained by the earlier preacher—never quite pursued his Reason "to an *O altitudo!*"—was never entrapped by the ridiculous; his ideas are everywhere noble and his style dignified, and it was not for nothing that the elder Pitt committed whole passages from his works to memory or recommended him as a model for the imitation of his son. The difference between Donne and Barrow may be typified by the Gothic and the Romanesque in architecture, and the preferences men express for their sermons will be largely subjective. In the evolution of English prose as exemplified by the pulpit orators neither can be considered as exercising a vital influence; Andrewes at the beginning of the seventeenth century and Tillotson at the close provided the models to which men turned; between lay the dull, the plain, the philosophical, and the astonishingly learned, whose varied contributions we have been considering more or less in the work of South. But the two greatest English pulpit orators, and with them the gentle and gracious Taylor, cannot be claimed as torch-bearers in this race. From the first they appear invested with a kind of divinity, and stand apart.

For all his greatness and independence, however, Barrow's achievement is of considerable interest. His style represents the triumph of naturalness and plainness, yet it conveys to the reader the impression of listening to a great orator, who, however much he has thought out his positions and compelled his hearers also to think,¹ has so presented his material, with all the appropriate exposition and the most effective persuasion at his command, that his message is in danger of being overlooked in his manner, and the enjoy-

¹ Hughes, in the 'Introduction' to his edition of Barrow's 'Works,' Lon., 1830, vol. i, p. lxxiii, notes that Warburton used to declare that "in reading Barrow, he was obliged to think."

ment of his artistic presentation of being substituted for the conviction it was intended to convey. Taken apart, Barrow's sentences answer well enough to the standard of simplified prose set up by the Royal Society; but combined in paragraphs they recall the magniloquence of Isocrates or Chrysostom. The mathematician, the theologian, even the pastor, is swallowed up in the orator. Love of truth, metaphysical speculation, the commission to redeem souls—all are transformed into the noble periods of the most continuously and uniformly eloquent of English preachers. In this very excellence lay his fault and the explanation why he earned less praise from his contemporaries than he might seem to have merited. The oratory of Burke may have been sparsely regarded by a hungry 'House' in his own day; it is read by posterity; but the appeal of the pulpit must be to its own day: it is of no moment what its future may be if it fails then. And Barrow's oratory was not of a kind which could ever have hoped to succeed with ordinary congregations. His themes were too exhaustively treated, and the splendour of his eloquence was dazzling, but bound soon to be fatiguing. Any imitation of it would without doubt have proved bombastic. In the circumstances, therefore, it is no wonder that among their contemporaries the less vigorous and less spectacular Tillotson should have been preferred. Barrow may be described as the English Bossuet; but Voltaire, it is well known, preferred Bourdaloue.

Two facts connected with Barrow's sermons have already been referred to, namely, his exhaustiveness, which Charles II took occasion to rally him on, and his method of composition, by casting his matter into several main heads under which he arranged copious extracts from his commonplace-books.¹ Hughes, one of his nineteenth-century editors, has pointed out that—

"his favourite authors appear to have been Sophocles, Demosthenes, and Aristotle, among the Greek classics; Chrysostom among the Fathers; and Ovid among the Latin poets."²

At first sight the last-mentioned may appear a strange preference for such a man as Barrow, but a passage in his

¹ *Id. ante*, p. 61, and p. 84.

² *Id. cit.*, p. lxxxvii.

inaugural address on his appointment to the Humanity Lecture at Cambridge gives an interesting summary of his views on the relative merits of the Roman poets, and reveals the fact that he preferred Ovid to Vergil or Horace on account of the unaffected ease, propriety and uniformity of the former's style.¹ To all his favourite authors Barrow owed much, and his great eloquence was due in large measure to his habit of transcribing the finest passages of classical and ecclesiastical writers—especially of Demosthenes and Chrysostom—by means of which he fell into their stride. His manuscripts at Trinity College are many of them largely composed of such extracts. The influence of the classical moralists on his style is pronounced, and allusion or direct quotation is responsible to a considerable extent for his tone.

Only two of Barrow's sermons were prepared for the press in his lifetime—the enormously lengthy one preached in Easter week, 1671, at the Spital, "On the Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor," and one delivered at the Guildhall Chapel, on Good Friday, 1677, which he did not live to see published.

"There is a tradition" (Professor Wace writes of the former) "that it occupied three hours and a half in delivery; but since the Court of Aldermen desired the Preacher to print his sermon 'with what further he had prepared to deliver at that time'; and since the sermon as now printed occupies not more than ninety-four octavo pages, it is thought there may be some exaggeration in this tradition. The Preacher is said to have begun to be weary with standing so long; but it is not recorded that there was any weariness on the part of the audience."²

The importance of these two sermons lies in the fact that we have them in an unadulterated form, and not as in the

¹ *Vid.* passage quoted by Hughes, *ed. cit.*, p. lxxxviii, from the 'Pro Human. oratio,' published in the 'Opuscula.'

² *I.e.* in Napier's *ed.* of Barrow's 'Works,' Camb., 1859, vol. i, pp. 7 *seq.* It occupies 39 pp. in the folio *ed.* of 1700.

³ 'The Classic Preachers of the English Church' (St. James's Lectures, 1877) Lon., 1877—"Barrow," by H. Wace, M.A., p. 29. The *locus classicus* on Barrow's exhaustiveness and the length of time he occupied in preaching occurs at pp. 146-8 of Pope's 'The Life of . . . Seth [Ward], Lord Bishop of Salisbury . . . ' Lon., 1697, 8vo, though, as shown above, this account appears to be inaccurate in at least one particular.

collected edition issued by Tillotson between 1678 and 1687, from which the refined and over-scrupulous editor expunged many of the more virile expressions to be found in Barrow's MSS., erased numerous passages, and subdivided certain sermons so as to reduce them to shorter compass. During the late seventeenth and the following century Barrow's sermons as they appeared are truly described as "Tillotson's Barrow," and the early nineteenth-century editions¹ fall into line. Napier's edition of 1859,² however, is based upon the original MSS., and the precise nature of Tillotson's editorial attention is discussed in the introduction.³ Inexcusable as this tampering appears, Barrow, it must be confessed, was prone to resurrect, employ or coin unusual and often uncouth words, for which Tillotson, in the interests of securing a high level of polished English, substituted simpler but often less effective expressions. The importance of the latter's rearrangements has already been noted⁴ and represents the major charge against him as editor, for, apart from the omission of certain strange words, a close comparison between the text as "improved" by Tillotson and the restored text of Napier's edition does not result in two impressions being conveyed of Barrow's style. "Tillotson's Barrow" may be a little less the Barrow who not only himself stood to his gun but inspired others to defend from the attack of a corsair the ship on which he travelled to Constantinople, or was capable of overpowering a ferocious mastiff, but the general characteristics as exemplified by both texts are the same, and the alterations and omissions, though they have nothing to commend them, are the more venial, since they are less meretricious than might at first sight seem likely.

Barrow's great merits were beyond question his force, dignity, mobility, and the power to maintain or rather to reanimate attention while considering a topic from as large a number of angles as possible. This last ability he had seen exemplified in a superlative manner by Chrysostom, whose complete works he found time to read during his stay in Constantinople towards the end of the Commonwealth

¹ At the Clarendon Press, 1818, in 6 vols., 8vo, and again in 1830, 8 vols., 8vo, and Hughes' ed., Lon., 1830, 7 vols., 8vo.

² Pub. Camb.

³ Ed. cit., pp. xiv seq.

⁴ *Ante*, pp. 29-30.

period.¹ The rhetorical question followed by a reply set in a series is a well-known device of the Greek orators, and had been effectively employed by the Eastern Fathers; and this device Barrow was fond of and used to good purpose. One of the finest examples of this in his works is found in a sermon on the Incarnation, where the advantages of Christ's birth are set forth:

"Is the birth of a Prince ever by honest Subjects entertained and celebrated with joy? Behold a Prince born to all the World . . . Is Victory glorious and joyfull? See the invincible warrior is issued forth into the field, *conquering and to conquer*. . . . The *captain of our salvation* appeareth, triumphing in humility; the great blow is given; the Devil's pride and envy are abased. . . . Is the publishing of Peace acceptable? Behold eternal peace between heaven and earth, a general peace among men, a peace of conscience between man and himself, is now established and proclaimed: the illustrious Ambassadors, the noble hostage, the infallible pledge thereof is revealed; *Preaching peace to them that are far off, and to them that are near*. . . ."²

Or, if such an instance may seem too closely modelled on patristic originals, too 'Asiatic' in tone to be quite satisfying in an English context, the following may be quoted:

"Dost thou, fond mortal, fear to lose the favour of man, whose favour doth avail nothing to thy main interests, and cannot any-wise considerably benefit thee, (for in no respect dost thou depend on his will and providence,) but dost not fear being deprived of God's favour, upon which all thy good hangeth, wherein thy felicity consisteth, without which thou art incapable of any prosperity, of any security, of any joy or comfort?"

"Dost thou fear the displeasure of man, of poor impotent man, a sorry frail *worm*, whose *breath is in his nostrils*, (ready to fly away in every moment) . . . whilst thou darest not to offend the Eternal Almighty God? . . ."³

¹ *Vid.* "An Account of the Life of Dr. Isaac Barrow," by Abraham Hill, prefixed to 'The Works,' 3 vols. in two, Lon., 1700, fol., vol. i.

² 'Works,' 1700 ed., vol. ii, sermon xxiii, pp. 315 seq. References throughout are to this edition.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. iii, sermon xxiv, pp. 328 seq.

Unfortunately, considerations of space forbid lengthy quotations, and to give an adequate idea of Barrow's definitely cumulative style, lengthy quotations are almost a necessity. But enough has been quoted to show how, starting with obvious imitation of ancient models, Barrow succeeded in teaching English preaching a freer and nobler utterance. If such rhetoric as we have glanced at first melted the heart of Theodosius and swayed the multitude of Antioch, Barrow at least succeeded in naturalising it, and learned how best to turn it to effect in moving his countrymen.

This cumulative manner, the outward expression of his many-sided reflection on any subject, is very noticeable in Barrow's work. One of his finest passages occurs in the sermon entitled 'Of Industry in our particular Calling, as Scholars,' where the argument is sustained throughout a series of paragraphs held together by means of an unobtrusive pivotal clause—consisting of the words, "It is a calling"—which serves to introduce each fresh advantage of the scholar's lot¹; while an even more striking example of this usage is the solemn catalogue of consequents following upon the hypothesis of a future judgment, each introduced heavily with the word "that," which occurs in a sermon on the Creed.¹

At times the cumulation of subordinate clauses or of sentences similarly introduced resulted in extreme brevity, and an aphoristic manner of writing ensued. But these occasions, though characteristic, can hardly be claimed to exhibit Barrow's style at its best, and it is his more periodic manner, however simple its component parts may prove on analysis to be, that deserves attention. A quotation from a passage on Christ as the 'Great Exemplar' will serve to illustrate the lucidity of his style as well as his fine adherence to truth even when his theme quite obviously not only exercised his mind but kindled his emotions.

"Our Saviour's example is especially influential upon practice, in that it was, by an admirable temperament, more accommodated for imitation than any others have been.

¹ Ed. cit., vol. iii, sermon xxii, pp. 221-4.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii, sermon xxxii, pp. 422-3, the "that" clauses depending on the last sentence of p. 421. Another impressive reiteration occurs in the opening of the Passion-Sermon (delivered at the Guildhall Chapel), vol. i, sermon xxxii, p. 423.

That the perfect copie of his most holy life seems more easie to be transcribed, than the ruder draughts of other holy Men; for though it were written with an incomparable fairness, delicacy and evenness; not slurred with any foul blot, nor any where declining from exact straightness; yet were the lineaments thereof exceeding plain and simple; not by any gaudy flourishes, or impertinent intrigues rendered difficult, to studious imitation; so that even women and children, the weakest and meanest sort of people, as well as the most wise and ingenuous, might easily perceive its design, and with good success write after it. His was a gentle and a steady light, bright indeed, but not dazzling the eye; warm, but not scorching the face of the most intent beholder; No affected singularities, no supercilious necessities, no frivolous ostentations of seemingly high, but really fruitless performances; nothing that might deter a timorous, discourage a weak, or offend a scrupulous disciple, is observable in his practice: but on the contrary, his conversation was full of holiness and condescension, of meekness and sweetness, of openness and candid simplicity: apt to envite and allure all men to approach toward it, and with satisfaction to enjoy it."¹

Other significant features of Barrow's prose might be urged, as his judicious choice of language, which is evident from the most casual quotation, and the liveliness as well as aptness of his images. His tone, too, is worthy of remark, depending largely, as has been already hinted, on the note struck by the classical moralists. The passage just quoted is not a description of Christ as Andrewes or Donne or Taylor would have depicted Him, but something of the rational spirit of the Cambridge Platonists has influenced the description. He is not the Byzantine Man-God of the earlier passage quoted with its reminiscence of Chrysostom's own description,² but rather that "Word of God" Who became incarnate in Jesus, but Whose operations fascinated all the Cambridge Platonists as offering a reconciliation between Faith and Reason. Moreover, the appeal to the consent of the best minds among the

¹ Ed. cit., vol. iii, sermon iii, p. 31; the complete passage ends on p. 32 with the words, "holy integrity of his life."

² *Vid. ante*, p. 143.

Pagan writers is as explicit in Barrow as in any of the 'Platonic' divines,¹ and certain faint glimmerings of an interest in other religions as giving partial revelations of the true God are found in his sermons as they may be also in those of Tillotson.² Such interests are typical of a wider outlook than was possible to men of an earlier period—to Milton, for example, with his identification of heathen divinities with Satan and his crew—and an enlargement of outlook was bound to show itself ultimately in a greater freedom of style. But, before coming to the final attainment of a style that was outwardly polished and equable because expressive of the inward composure and temperateness of the author's mind, acting freely under the encouragement of an age in which ethical interests, treated with philosophic equanimity, had taken the place of passionate doctrinal excitements, it is necessary to glance for a little at the part played by the Royal Society in influencing the trend of Restoration style, particularly so far as the sermon was concerned.

The early emergence of a tolerably plain style in Wilkins' 'World in the Moone' has already been noticed, and it is interesting to find Sir Edmund Gosse claiming for the author the praise so long allotted to Tillotson, who "lived a generation later, and learned to write English from his study of the Bishop of Chester, whom he enthusiastically admired."³ That John Wilkins (1614-1672) was definitely the first to employ a uniformly natural diction and to set the example of a plain yet pleasingly varied style is beyond doubt, but his efforts, as the apparently similar efforts of Ussher (if we may trust to Parr's evidence⁴), which aimed so severe a blow at 'florid' preaching, were rendered largely negligible by the commotions of the times. It is not Tillotson's achievement which is of supreme importance, but rather the influence that Tillotson was able to exert, not that he wrote excellent prose, but that he succeeded in persuading his contemporaries that such prose was excellent, and, being such, to be imitated. The particular standard of preaching maintained by Wilkins during the Civil Wars

¹ *Vid. ed. cit.*, vol. ii, sermon viii, pp. 108-12.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii, sermon xi, p. 141; *ibid.*, vol. ii, sermon xii, p. 164.

³ 'A History of Eighteenth-Century Literature,' Lon., 1922, p. 76.

⁴ *Vid. ante*, pp. 229-31.

and Commonwealth, when he enjoyed the favour of the Parliamentary party, cannot now be judged, as no sermons of his remain from that period, but his declaration (previously quoted¹) in the 'Ecclesiastes' (1646) that "the principal Scope of a Divine Orator is to teach clearly, convince strongly, and persuade powerfully," which he follows up by dividing a sermon into three chief parts—"Explication, Confirmation, Application"—suggests a point of view nearly akin to Baxter's, and if his own sermons proved more fluent and better modulated, this must be attributed to chance rather than to design. What is important is that when Wilkins re-emerges in a position of influence, so far as style is concerned, it is in association with a group of men who were able to create a very strong bias in the direction of simplicity.

From 1645 onwards a group of distinguished scientists, including men like Wallis and Seth Ward, Savilian Professors at Oxford of Geometry and Astronomy respectively, largely owing to Wilkins' enthusiasm for scientific discussion and research, began to meet at Wadham College.² Afterwards the meetings were continued at Gresham College, London, and finally, in 1662, a charter was obtained from the King for the formation of the Royal Society. Thomas Sprat (1635-1713), in the second part of his 'History of the Royal-Society,' published in 1667, gives what he calls 'A Model of their Whole design,' or 'an account of their aims' as the modern phrase is. As might be expected, these aims were principally concerned with scientific research, but, as the members desired "to separate the knowledge of *Nature*, from the colours of *Rhetorick*, the devices of *Fancy*, or the delightful deceit of *Fables*," it was found necessary to draw up rules concerning, "their Manner of Discourse." Under this last heading Sprat tells us:

"They [i.e. the Members of the Royal Society] have therefore been most vigorous in putting in execution the

¹ *Ante*, p. 109.

² Sprat, 'The History of the Royal-Society of London, For the Improving of Natural Knowledge,' Lon., 1667, 4to, Part II, p. 55, gives the names of those who first met at Wadham: Dr. Seth Ward, Mr. Boyle, Dr. Wilkins, Sir Wm. Petty (the economist), Mr. Matthew Wren (later Secretary to Clarendon), Dr. Wallis, Dr. Goddard, Dr. Willis, Dr. Bathurst (President of Trinity College, Oxford), Dr. Christopher Wren, and Mr. Rook (the astronomer).

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 61-2.

freer, more many-sided life than that participated in by contemporary divines. There can be no question that he was the greatest of the Jacobean divines, but it is impossible to calculate the degree in which he excelled the others; for they, interesting and attractive as many of them were, wrote to known rules and conformed to recognised patterns, and did so either more or less successfully than one another; but the distinguishing feature of Donne's prose was contributed by the peculiar constitution of the man—at once ardently passionate and ardently intellectual—and accurately to assess this or to bring it within the range of comparison is clearly impossible.

Taylor's excellencies were of another order, and though his work owes its charm to undoubted manifestations of genius, yet it is genius brooding gently over the chaos of contemporary erudition and rhetoric, and inducing to suit peculiar ends a particular kind of order. Like his own lark he rose singing, and, having ascended, continued to sing with no diminution in the quality of his notes; but the notes, however skilfully he produced them, were those familiar to rhetorical education, and the themes which induced in him raptures were the commonplaces of contemporary preaching. He cannot therefore justly be compared with Donne, but remains a first-rate example of how a man of taste and discernment might improve upon, and render attractive what from the hands of others had come unnoticed.

Barrow, on the other hand, more than any preacher in the century, stands apart from it, and yet but for the century could not possibly have produced his sermons. Only an age immeasurably devoted to sermons could have tolerated Barrow's exhaustiveness, and Barrow confined to a shorter discourse would have been like an eagle in a cage. His style was one which demanded unrestricted liberty to develop and is directly referable to the habit of thought of the man. The length of his addresses is not due to love of expatiation, but resulted from the desire to speak of momentous matters in a manner at once adequate, dignified, and persuasive. Before Burke he is the one great orator produced by England. Nothing in the preaching amid which he had grown up or in that which surrounded him in his manhood can account for his eloquence; yet his

theological position is that asserted (in spite of all coteries and attacks) by the Anglican Church from Elizabethan days to his own, and his style, when minutely analysed, conforms readily to the reforming ideals of his time. His work, therefore, may be regarded as standing in direct relationship to both his predecessors and his contemporaries, while his style represents the application of good sense to the rhetorical presentation of moral and religious considerations.

Greater man and greater preacher than Tillotson as Barrow was, the fact must be faced that his style, although splendidly adapted for the oration or formal speech, could never have become a model for prose. Successfully wielded as it doubtless was in the hands of its creator, such a style, when imitated by lesser men, would have become either bombastic or tedious. It remained, therefore, to influence some of the greatest parliamentary orators of the next century, while Tillotson rose into eminence with his carefully phrased and beautifully modulated sermons, which became not only a model for preaching but were themselves prose compositions of remarkable excellence.

The praise accorded Tillotson was due largely to the attacks of the critics on other types of preaching, and the general agreement arrived at by those who discussed sermons and those who discussed style in a wider context. The earlier critics had been content to attack their theological rivals and to denounce their style as out of keeping with what they believed to be the sacred aim of pulpit-oratory. But the later critics of the post-Restoration period were concerned not only with the abuses which had taken possession of the sermon, but desired a reform of pulpit style as a step towards the simplification of style in general. Perverted and ill-applied rhetoric came to be condemned, not because particular preachers or their parties did not approve of its use, but as being inherently unsuitable to the sermon and offensive to cultivated taste. In this way the two strains of criticism—what may be described as hermetic criticism and literary criticism—combined, and the dramatists, the poets, and the essayists found an ally in the preacher, who had come to desire, quite as much as they, an elegance and unaffected ease of manner. The pulpit, consequently, which for long had been the last refuge of