

cient justification. In the appended passage there is no melodrama, only a sad finish to this reversal in Bradford's understanding of the "necessity" of 1624. Bradford now believes that, like Adam in response to the "fair pretenses" of Eve, he "gave way" to human corruption, the pretense of a divinely-ordained necessity, and as a result the Pilgrims lost (uncoiled) their Eden-like Pauline communal ideal.

A more progressive reading of events is also recorded in *Of Plymouth Plantation*, but often unwittingly and against the grain of Bradford's feelings. Bradford's manifest awareness and imitation of print media, which Anderson cogently highlights, certainly comprise part of the story that needed to be told. Yet there is another story, as well, concerning the productive narrative tension between an author's intention and execution, conscious design and unconscious product, that also underlies much of this colonial history. Read with this other story in mind, Anderson's rich book has much to offer. Concerning its number of highly speculative interpretations, each reader will personally decide what to attribute to Bradford's resourcefulness and what to Anderson's creativity. Either way, *William Bradford's Books* is engaging. Anderson comes well prepared to conduct his exploration *Of Plymouth Plantation*, and on the whole he succeeds wonderfully in imparting new insights concerning its surprising intertextual resonance.

Daniel Patterson, ed. *Edward Taylor's Gods Determinations and Preparatory Meditations: A Critical Edition*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2003. xvi + 583 pp. \$65.00. Review by WILLIAM J. SCHEICK, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN.

Edward Taylor (1642?-1729), the Cambridge-educated Restoration émigré, still remains a mystery. At the top of the list of puzzles is the seeming inconsistency between his conservative Calvinistic ministry and his Renaissance-faceted verse meditations, especially the poems written between 1682 and 1692. The often peculiar manner and matter of Taylor's metaphysical poetry have long resisted close scrutiny. Few critics have ventured detailed

readings of his multi-layered texts, and some have simply doubted that there is any rhyme or reason for what happens in these poems. Unlike George Herbert's work, to which the self-exiled poet sometimes alludes, Taylor's meditations have never had their day.

A good motive to attempt to surpass Donald Stanford's 1960 transcription of Taylor's verse manuscripts would be to foster a more reliable close encounter with *Preparatory Meditations*. For now, at least, that would be a highly speculative and unlikely aim. An adequate default claim would be that we simply ought to have the best edition available for whatever scholarly use the poems might be put in the future. Daniel Patterson offers another rationale for a new edition—to show that the poetry “is much more smoothly polished than previous editions have suggested” (41). But this point is hobbled by the editor's requisite “yes . . . but” admission that “there is some truth to the charge [of crudity], but not nearly as much as has been thought.” While Patterson's revisions occasionally enhance the smoothness of certain lines, there are other instances, often buried in the emendations, of editorial transcriptions indicative of even more poetic coarseness.

Taylor apparently reveled in a self-portrait of poetic incompetence, a point established in his “Prologue.” There he asks whether a crumb-of-dust poet can be relevant in the resplendent divine scheme of things when, at his best, all he can do is “hand a Pen whose moisture doth guild ore / Eternall Glory with a glorious glore.” “Glore” is the word to consider. Stanford glosses the term as a Scottish form of “glory,” a claim undercut by his failure to observe any other instances of Taylor borrowing from the same or any other Scottish dialect. Patterson, who draws on and expands Stanford's glossary, repeats his predecessor's reading of the word as “glory” while omitting any reference to its putative Scottish origins.

But the disagreeably-sounding word will not budge. It is “glore,” not “glory.” It conveys exactly the poet's situation. Taylor represents himself as disabled by sin-engendered ineptitude, which results in the utterance of an unattractive word when futilely trying to celebrate divine glory. The best he can do is get it half right,

the “glore” part of “glory” without (alas) the voice-lifting, aesthetically-pleasing feminine ending.

There is even more to Taylor’s game here. “Glore” may playfully represent the pitiful best of a poet besotted by his fallen condition, but it also remains as potentially redeemable as does the sinner. Only divine intervention is needed, the hand of the Master Artist who can change the position of a poet’s word or a poet’s soul and hence engender their latent capacities. “Glore,” in other words, could be redemptively repositioned so that its silent final “e” would suddenly resound. This potentiality inheres in the representative fallen state of the word because in pre-standardized English “glory” may alternatively be spelled “glorie” and even “glore.” So “glore” does not mean “glory,” but is instead a partial word designed to underscore the need for a divine positioning of the poet in a better place in the redemptive rhyme scheme. Then the poet’s words would meet the obligation to celebrate “Eternall Glory.” Taylor, in short, consciously practiced a Puritan decorum of imperfection—an awareness of various biblical injunctions pertaining to artistic representation and, as well, of the fallen self’s incompetence when undertaking any creative act, particularly in relation to the deity.

What matters, finally, is less a rationale for a new edition of the poems than the outcome of the transcription. Without the manuscript in hand, most readers (including me) will have to judge the success of Patterson’s edition based on internal evidence drawn from the poems. In this regard the most helpful tool the editor provides is an appended 23-page directory of the variations between his and Stanford’s edition. This list, however, must be used cautiously.

First, the variant catalog is not reliable concerning all the differences in punctuation and capitalization between the two editions. Without editorial explanation, sometimes differences in capitalization are noted (e. g., *Gods Determinations*, line 2030; “Meditation 2.6,” line 45), while most often they are not recorded. Consider “Meditation 2.20,” for which there are nearly as many unannounced as there are reported differences between the two editions. Punctuation is more consistently reported, but is by no

means complete. And in the middle of the entry for “Meditation 2.140” we are told: “At this point this list ceases to report most variants in punctuation.”

Second, the variant inventory must be checked against the emendations register. Patterson properly warns, “In many cases, a reading that [Stanford’s] *Poems* reports as the manuscript reading agrees with an *emended* reading” in the present edition. These many changes include such dubious new transcriptions as “Enleckerd” in “Meditation 2.58” and “Macri’dalls” in “Meditation 2.65,” both wisely revised to Stanford’s version. Another unlikely transcription, “paint” in “Meditation 1.39,” fails to make the variant list, but can be detected in the emendations log, where it is sensibly altered to read “plaint,” which is also Stanford’s reading.

This later observation points to a third issue concerning the variant record. Unfortunately, entire poems have somehow dropped from it. For the first series of 49 meditations, for example, there is no listing for poems 3, 5, 6, 15, 21, 22, 28, and 38. While Patterson’s transcription of punctuation can be controversial, its impact on Taylor’s meaning is minimal. However, an uncataloged substantial change such as occurs in line 39 of “Meditation 1.38” is another matter. So to appreciate all of the differences between the two editions, readers will need to have a copy of Stanford’s volume in hand.

Although single-word variants number considerably less than the entries for punctuation in the new edition, these significant differences serve as a measure of the value of Patterson’s edition. Based on my assessments of the internal logic of select poems, Patterson provides a number of improved readings. “Coy” for “Clay” in “Meditation 1.23,” “stall’s” for “stale’s” in “Meditation 1.40,” “waftings” for “Castings” in “Meditation 1.48,” “beares” for “grows” in “Meditation 2.16,” “Stowd” for “stand” in “Meditation 2.20,” “interest” for “merit” in “Meditation 2.32,” “Coine” for “Gaine” in “Meditation 2.42,” “paled” for “Opaled” in “Meditation 2.63,” “wormeaten” for “worm eat on” in “Meditation 2.69,” “Adorn” for “are in” in “Meditation 2.90,” “heate” for “heart” in “Meditation 2.82”—each of these substitutions relates well to other imagery in

their respective poems. These valuable changes improve the overall sense of their poems.

As is to be expected, there are instances where even close attention to the poems does not resolve which variant is preferable. “Mould” for “would” in “Meditation 2.17,” “Hit” for “Hint” in “Meditation 1.38,” “brings” for “kings” in “Meditation 2.72,” “plight” for “night” in “Meditation 2.77,” and “tenses” for “senses” in “Meditation 2.118” are typical of this class of unassessable changes. In this group both variants are supported by the internal evidence, and so the verdict concerning them remains open.

It is good to be able to report that only two unemended single-word variants strike me as mistaken. The word “mandle” in “Meditation 2.101” is possibly an archaic form, but if so it would then be an anomaly in Taylor’s verse, in which the preferred word “mantle” occurs on thirteen other occasions. It is more likely than not that the word is “mantle” in “Meditation 2.101.” More problematic is Patterson’s reading of “flip” for Stanford’s “slip” in “Meditation 2.109.” The sense of the pertinent lines is clear: “Thy hand Let take my heart its Captive prey / In Chains of Grace that it ne’r slip from thee.” “Slip,” not “flip,” is the more obvious choice in light of the references in the lines to hand and chain. The handwritten long “s” apparently snagged the editor.

A project like this one is a very difficult, painstaking undertaking. It is doubtful that any such venture can be snag-free. Although the flaws in the emendation and variant lists impede scholarly facilitation, they amount to an inconvenience. This new, handsome edition of Taylor’s poems is effectively a gift, especially since it highlights a number of whole-word variants that ideally enables us to better appreciate Taylor’s poetic achievement.

Neil Forsyth. *The Satanic Epic*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003. x + 382 pp. \$22.95. Review by JAMES EGAN, UNIVERSITY OF AKRON.

Forsyth notes at the outset that *The Satanic Epic* should not be considered a sequel to his earlier work, *The Old Enemy: Satan and*