

Figures Cited in the Commentary, and Index of Other Poems and Works of Donne Cited in the Commentary.

Beyond the excellence of their scholarly achievement, the editors have distinguished themselves in other ways. Their textual history and critical commentary are clearly written and cogently presented. The textual history is less a narrative and more a drama, which unfolds as a scholarly adventure. It is a compelling account, not unlike a detective story at certain crucial moments when the editors recount the investigation of calligraphy, penstrokes, the physical makeup of gatherings, wrinkles in the paper of some artifacts, and the like. The critical commentary identifies, synopsisizes, synthesizes, and affords cross-referencing of interpretations so that users may perceive the chain of causation or association that bears on the engagement of particular topics. All things considered, the editors merit our utmost acclaim, and Indiana University Press has earned our deep gratitude and admiration for its commitment to this ongoing project.

Jan Ross, ed. *The Works of Thomas Traherne: Volume I*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer. 2005. xxiv + 571 pp. + 5 illus. \$145.00. Review by JACOB BLEVINS, MCNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY.

Jan Ross has edited the first volume of what promises to be a complete and definitive multivolume edition of the poetry and prose of Thomas Traherne. Since Bertram Dobell's initial discovery and publication of Traherne's poetry in 1903, followed by his publication of the *Centuries of Meditations* in 1908, critical interest in Traherne has gained momentum; this growing critical corpus was greatly facilitated by Gladys I. Wade's biography of Traherne (*Thomas Traherne* [Princeton, 1944]) and H. M. Margoliouth's two volume scholarly edition of Traherne's work (*Centuries, Poems and Thanksgivings*, 2 vols. [Oxford, 1958]). However, considering the subsequent discovery of a substantial body of new Traherne work, as well as new critical insights into the originally discovered texts, it is long past due for a new, comprehensive scholarly edition of Traherne to materialize.

To the credit of Ross and D. S. Brewer, this volume (the first of an eight-volume edition, scheduled to be completed in 2017) is comprised of the most recently discovered Traherne texts found at Lambeth Palace. Volume

One contains the four treatises (and one fragment) found in Lambeth MS 1360, discovered by Jeremy Maule in 1997. These works have to this point been generally unavailable to most students and scholars of Traherne, and considering much of Traherne's other work is available in other places, it makes sense to put these texts out first.

The first of the four treatises, *Inducements to Retirednes*, addresses the necessity of the individual to retire to the simplicities of life in order to better understand divinity. For readers of Traherne, there is much familiar in *Inducements*: the glorification of happiness, the stripping away of worldly distraction, an emphasis on "infinity" and "eternity," and the function of an "Inward Ey" (5). This essay to some degree helps explain the withdrawn nature of his better known *Centuries* and the seemingly isolated world of Traherne's meditational style. As new works of Traherne have come to light, scholars have generally drifted to the position that Traherne was not just an isolated, hermetic writer and thinker but rather one who was squarely part of his religious, political, and social contexts. *Inducements* serves to reconcile the paradox of Traherne's persona being both within and outside mainstream social life by offering an explanation of how one who is part of society *needs* to retire from worldly concerns in order to obtain that state of divine felicity. Upon reading *Inducements*, *Centuries* appears to represent Traherne taking his own advice.

A Sober View illustrates explicitly Traherne's interest in contemporary controversies and the kind of formal religious debates that the retired life advocated in *Inducements* perhaps hoped to illuminate. Addressing three seventeenth-century theological works by William Twisse, Samuel Hoard, and Henry Hammond, Traherne explores particularly the theme of predestination. Again, this work has value in itself, but it should especially shed light on previous critical discussions about Traherne's portrayal of predestination, Pelagian doctrine, and the elect.

While *Inducements* and *A Sober View* are works that address specific issues or debates, *Seeds of Eternity or The Nature of the Soul* and *The Kingdom of God* (the longest of the four works) show Traherne's propensity for large, meditative theological explorations into the nature of God, the physical and spiritual worlds, and the soul. However, more so than in the *Centuries* these works illustrate Traherne's appreciation of and reliance on source material, including the works of Theophilus Gale, Ralph Cudworth, Ovid, scripture, and much

more. One might say that *Seeds of Eternity* and *The Kingdom of God* are a cross between the meditational mode of the *Centuries* and the didactic mode of *Christian Ethicks*. Still, as in all four works in this volume, the well-known images of fountains, the estates, wisdom, harmony, excellency, Adam, childhood, felicity, and joy are intact. The ecstatic joy depicted in a poem in *The Kingdom of God* epitomizes much of Traherne's work:

Who made it first? Whence did this Lovly Thing
 Arise? O from what fountain did it Spring!
 Joy! Tis the only object of Desires!
 Each Creature in all Worlds to that aspires!
 No Tygre is so fierce, nor Wolf so rude,
 But Joy doth melt as soon as it is viewd.
 Joy is the Recompence and Crown of Lov;
 There is one Law in Heaven and earth above,
 That by one Inclination all should be
 Led and attracted to felicitie.

And this felicitie is made by Joy. (471-72)

The volume concludes with a "false start" to *The Kingdom of God* and a fragment on "Love" (Appendices 1 and 2).

There is, arguably, nothing altogether new in what Traherne gives us in these four works; for better or worse, the themes themselves and the uneven quality of the writing are distinctly "Traherne." However, the sheer volume of this material will prove immensely useful for students and scholars of Traherne, seventeenth-century prose, and seventeenth-century theology. To have available for the first time such a massive amount of text written by a canonical writer is both significant and exciting.

Ross provides a thorough, yet relatively brief, introduction to this volume. After a concise general preface that describes the discovery of several Traherne manuscripts since Dobell and announces the eight-volume edition to come, Ross in the Introduction gives an overview of the four treatises included, an explanation of the various scripts in the manuscript, the issues and problems regarding the dating of these works, an evaluation of the "purpose" of these treatises (specifically, with regards to their being meant to be published rather than circulated privately), Traherne's use of sources, and finally a description of general editorial principles. Ross tries faithfully to represent the original text in terms of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, and she includes textual

emendations, notes, and marginal glosses found in the manuscript. She also includes a glossary of unusual words and usages at the end of the volume. Ross seems to cover all her editorial bases without ever “intruding” on the text.

This does appear to be the first volume of a fine edition of Traherne’s work, but still there are a couple of regrettable observations. Ross states in her preface that the final published volume (Volume 8) will consist entirely of critical commentary, and the individual volumes will be “limited to textual notes, biblical references, and immediately essential commentary” (x). While this may be an unavoidable decision, it would be useful to have *some* critical commentary along the way, but this may ultimately prove to be a testament to the comprehensiveness of Volume 8. Also, this reader would have liked a breakdown of the seven volumes of text to come. Neither the introduction nor the publisher’s website state what we might expect in Volume 2, 3, 4, and so on. In addition, Ross states that Traherne’s various notebooks would *not* be included in this edition, stating that those notebooks are “primarily extracts from other writers and are not, therefore, Traherne’s ‘works’” (x). While I, of course, cannot argue with Ross’s reasoning here, the notebooks are to date unpublished, and they *are* quite important for those critics interested in Traherne’s use of sources; there are many parallels between what is found in the notebooks and what is found in Traherne’s own texts. It seems regrettable that an eight-volume edition that includes everything else would not include the notebooks as well. These, however, are small quibbles about an overall fine volume. Ross’s work here is solid, its importance to seventeenth-century studies undeniable. This is a major editorial task and so far, in Volume I, Ross has risen to the occasion.

Margaret P. Hannay, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan, eds. *Selected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert Countess of Pembroke*. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005. xviii + 296 pp. + 7 black & white plates. \$24.00. Review by RICHARD TODD, UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN.

This shortened version of a full edition that first appeared in 1998 has been attractively produced as the first in a series of Medieval and Renaissance