

Once Milton's works had become part of the general consciousness writers were likely to quote his words or use his ideas without acknowledgement and possibly quite unaware of what they were doing. When Simon Patrick quoted nearly a page of the second edition of *Eikonoklastes*, slightly altered, in his 1669 *Continuation of the friendly debate* (which the Library does not have) he did not name Milton, but was well aware of whose work he was using. His opponent, Samuel Parker, did not recognise the passage and it was some previous owner of Turnbull's second copy of the 1649 first edition who did.⁷ This is an early example. By the time of the Popish Plot and the arguments on passive obedience which followed it in the early 1680s, many Whig writers could have been doing what Patrick did. Some made extensive use of Milton's arguments and authorities,⁸ but it was only because writers like Roger L'Estrange identified the borrowings that many readers of the time would have learnt that the ideas they encountered in the 1680s were those expressed in the 1650s by that 'regicide' Milton. This diffusion of Milton's ideas is one factor creating uncertainty as to where a Milton collection stops and a general collection of English political and general literature begins.

If there is difficulty with the influence of the prose works, there is greater difficulty with the poetry. Dryden was obviously well-acquainted with *Paradise lost* at least and one would assume that this must have influenced his poetry. His identifiable references to Milton's poetry are all qualified and the influence of Milton is almost completely absorbed and transmuted in his poetry. In the eighteenth century there were various factors which created at various times a 'boom' in what the reading public thought of as 'Miltonic' verse. John Philips in *The splendid shilling* and James Thomson in *The Seasons* both began fashions for Miltonic verse and Thomson in particular had a major influence on his contemporaries. When R. D. Havens listed eighteenth century works which were probably or possibly influenced by Milton the result was a survey of a large proportion of minor eighteenth century verse, with a good proportion of the major poets as well.⁹ Should all of *these* be included in a Milton collection? We cannot be guided by Turnbull's buying, for he was buying general English literature several years before he began his Milton collection and the many editions of Thomson's works could have been bought as part of his interest in Scottish literature. Some minor poets are represented by poems with a very explicit Milton association and these may have been bought as imitations, like *The village curate* of James Hurdis which opens with the first three lines of *Paradise lost*, but even here we cannot be certain.

By the end of the eighteenth century it would probably be true to say that every significant poet writing in English was influenced by