2. SOCIAL MILIEU

The sixteenth Century world as described above was a relatively small world. It was definite in its outline and details. The spiritual and physical universes were two parts of the same one world-picture. They were inter-related, inter-connected, and interfused. Man was the connecting link between the spiritual and physical spheres and partook the qualities of both. By virtue of his special position in the world order he was the cardinal constituent part.

A sense of nearness and familiarity brought about a closeness and immediacy between the man and the world in the 16th century unknown to the 20th century man. His daily existence was tuned to the system of his environment which was the creation of the Almighty. It was unimaginable to be at odds with it. Man's imaginings and intellectual notions mirrored the order of the world-system. It was logical that the like notions would govern the theories and productions of art.  

1. Vide ante PP. 1-44
2. Vide ante PP. 1-10
The relation of poetic theory and poetical writing and their relation with the philosophical thinking and world system have been illustrated in the preceding sections. Humanism in some of its intellectual aspects squared with the principles of the intellectual systems premised on the notions of the world-picture, and reinforced the same concepts of poetical composition.

The close links between society and literature is one of the truisms of criticism. Art reflects the social mores and enshrines social aspirations; the more so in the 16th century England it must have been the case when parallelism of relationships of terms of one system on the one hand, and another set of terms of the other system on the other hand was conceived to be the logical rule.

Naturally, the verse of the Miscellanies and the theory that directed the composition of such verse may be supposed to reflect, and was the product of, 16th century social milieu. The nature of such verse demanded learning and skill for its production; only persons of learning

3. Ibid.
4. Peterson, PP. 24-38.
and knowledge of art could write such verse and appreciate the skill and 'artifice' of such verse. Not less important than this was the fact that the composition of such type of verse was a social accomplishment and thought to be a social grace among higher gentry. Where else such a society could be found in Tudor England than in the court or courtly circles?

With the Tudors a new age had begun. The old medieval concept of kingship when the supreme head was one among the equals was no longer current. A new set-up of kingship, court and society had grown up. A strong, stable, despotic, and nationalist monarchy had been established after the interneone political struggle.

Henry VIII's troubles with the Pope, breach with Rome and the subsequent Protestant following cut England off the Catholic Europe and threw the country on its own. This situation and the factor of political rivalry between England and the continental countries intensified patriotic

5. cf. Peterson, P. 6. "The eloquent verse cultivates embellishment and mannerisms as social graces".

sentiments of the English—with far-reaching effects for literature. Especially, national self-consciousness expressed itself in the growth and improvement of the mother-tongue which 'waxed strong with many Englishmen'.

This national self-consciousness was the most powerful psychological current of the time. England's realisation of backwardness, by coming into contact with civilized Europe on the ascension of the Tudor kings when England got a breathing from the civil war, began to be counter balanced by the spur of strong desire born of increasing national self-consciousness to catch up in every field of arts and science with the continental nations.

National consciousness had been coming up, long before the 16th century, since late medieval times. It began gaining ground through the contemplation of problems affecting the national community; and, the concomitant willingness to entertain practical solutions presupposed

at least a centralised government. 8 The period of disillusionment and turmoil following the Black Death and the earlier stages of the Hundred years' war threw up problems which motivated the citizens to think in terms of common interest. The nature of the problems turned the attention of the politically alert Englishmen towards the royal court and its related institutions because there lay the manispring of government which had the means to chalk out solutions and which could look to the interests of all. 9

The peculiar uniformity of economic interests, which in England gathered about the wool trade, tended to bind town and country together in common endeavour and accustomed both landlords and merchants to seek protection of a central government, itself fiscally dependent on the staple trade. A "wool-consciousness", 10 as Eileen Power called, it, thus sharpened the sense of community in English affairs and at the same time emphasised the need for common action in external relationships. Foreign

8. Ferguson, op. cit. P. 5
9. Ibid. PP. 5-6
10. Ibid. P. 6
competition constituted in itself a powerful stimulus to national consciousness. Distrust of foreign influences at court, antipapal sentiments, and jealousy of merchants and craftsmen did perhaps more than common endeavour to clarify national feelings. When foreign frictions blazed into actual war, popular patriotism lent a deceptively brilliant colour to a still imperfect sense of national interests. And, with the opening of the Hundred Years' War, military service became, as never before, clearly the king's service, service by indenture having largely replaced the feudal levy as a means of raising armies.

Englishmen could not have felt so keenly the community of interests that held them together during the 14th century had it not been increasingly possible for them to communicate in a common-tongue i.e. English. Certainly a general acceptance of the national language was a pre-requisite for the discussion of common problems

11. Ibid.
13. Ferguson, P. 6
by all. And the fact is that the rising national consciousness ran parallel to the ever more general use of English from the days when Henry III issued proclamations in English as well as in French to the time when Henry V may be said to have abandoned the use of French for all official purposes.  

Latin continued to be the language of the intellectuals, and French, though, to a decreasing extent, the language of polite exchange between members of the aristocracy. Yet both groups shared the prevailing sense of Englishry. That very generation which witnessed Chaucer's decisive handling of English as a literary language looked with equal respect on John Gower's ponderous out-porings, set forth as readily in French and Latin as in English. His 'O gentle Angleterre, a toi J, e cris" would have sounded no more sincere to his contemporaries if it had been said in English. It is, however, instructive to watch him more through his long and terribly productive career ever closer to the national language.  

14. Ferguson, P. 6  
15. Ibid.  
The twin impulses of Renaissance and
Reformation reinforced the increasing self-consciousness
of the nation and, correspondingly, greater consciousness
for the national language. Renaissance meant a ripening
intellectual climate leading to the self-awareness of
the individual man and the community; the Reformation
gave an edge, an aggressiveness, to the country's sense
of itself, since its leaders were taking it along an
independent course contrary to traditional Europe.¹⁷
The prime discoverers of the English past and present,
the chroniclers and topographers, the antiquarians,
surveyors and map-makers were a strongly Protestant lot.
One might have expected them, students and lovers of the
past, to have been Catholics. But they were not. The
Protestants were looking back into the past for support on
the new unchartered course; the course itself appealed
to the spirit of national independence and elicited hidden
resources of national pride.¹⁸

With the coming of Reformation and the greater
emphasis on individual responsibility in religious life,

¹⁷. A.L. Rowse: "The England of Elizabeth" Chapter II
(The Elizabethan Discovery of England) P.21

¹⁸. Ibid.
a new feature in the educational programme appeared, namely, the need for an educated flock, a provision which furthered the use of the vernacular. Educationists, too, were recognising the importance of a sound grounding in the elements of the English language, not merely as a part of religious education, nor indeed simply as an essential precursor to the grammar school course, but also as part of the wider movement which sought to elevate the English language as a medium of literary expression. 19

Although the speaking and writing of Latin predominated, it is important to note that in the teaching of Latin grammar the use of English was not only a necessary expedient but also something recognised by masters to be of positive educational value, though English as a separate subject never appeared on a school timetable. 20 Both Elyot in his Castell of Health (1541) and Ascham in his Toxophilus (1545) did find bound to apologise for and defend their use of English as a

Kenneth Charlton : Education in Renaissance England. P. 120
20. Berdan op. cit. P. 330
literary medium, yet the general trend was towards a recognition of the possibilities of the vernacular. 21

For Mulcaster, nearly 40 years later, there was no doubt and certainly no need of Apology: 'I do not think that any language be it whatsoever is better able to utter all argument, either with more pith or greater plainness than our English tongue is ... I, love Rome but London better; I favour Italy but England more, I honour the Latin but I worship the English (Elementarie PP. 269 & 274) 22

The movement which produced the vernacular translations of the Bible as a necessary part of the Reformation further contributed to the discussion about the status of the vernacular languages. The growing feeling of national pride which prompted Mulcaster, for instance, to see the use of the vernacular was yet another way of indicating England's emancipation from Papal subservience. 23


22. Kenneth Charlton op. cit. PP. 120-121

23. Ibid.
National feeling, economic forces connected with the wool trade, new political circumstances consequent upon the effects of the civil war and assumption of power by the Tudors made the king the centre of power and interest. New political and economic changes entailed a different concept of kingship and a different role for the king in domestic affairs. Similarly changed relations with the continental nations forced revision of the old concepts of international relationships. Most important was the need of new set of king's servants who could help him in upholding the power newly assumed, and in discharging the duties and responsibilities under the new role.

By the time Henry VII assumed power the old feudal aristocracy had not only been reduced in numbers by the Wars of the Roses, but also considerably weakened. In the reign of Henry VIII the new nobility with bourgeoisie origins had almost fully replaced the old feudal nobility.

Even before the Wars of Roses changes in the manorial system due to the commercialisation of land had
began. The origins of the break-up of the manor go back to the 14th century. Throughout the 15th century there was a steady increase in sheep-farming, and at the same time a tendency in many parts of England for the peasants to consolidate their holdings. The lord of the manor might enclose his demesne land, or he might lease out to farmer land taken from the estate. The latter helped to increase the tendency towards competitive, instead of customary rents. The tenants who were lease-holders could be dispossessed of their holdings at the expiry of the lease. Their lands were readily purchased by the rising class of merchants who animated the commercial spirit further snatched the common lands, raised rents and emboldened by their success and wealth laid hands at the manor farms of the old, weakened feudal nobility.

24. cf. L.C. Knights: Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson
   Chapter I (The Inherited Economic Order Under Elizabeth) PP. 15-16

25. "In the Tudor period when woollen industry had become the staple industry of the kingdom the formation of the great sheep-farms and the snatching of the commons, with consequent eviction, depopulation and unemployment took place. Govt. interference is a fair index of the size of the harm done to the population made homeless"

   L.C. Knights op. cit. p. 98.

26. G.K. Hunter op. cit. P. 17
The tompost reaches of this rising merchant class by purchasing lands from the out-going aristocracy established themselves as new nobility. This new aristocracy much favoured by the Tudors vastly gained by the confiscation of the monastic lands in Henry VIII's reign, and by applying the capitalist methods became by the time of Elizabeth an established aristocracy of wealth and culture. The Cecils, the Sidneys, Herberts, the Cavendishes, the Russells, the Knollies, the Burleighs were of this class.

However, all the courtiers were not confined to this class. All the officers of the state appointed by the king, should be counted among the courtiers during the years in which they held office beneath the crown. The normal courtier may be defined as "a man who came to court to make his fortune, who gave good service, and such companionship as the king would accept". The king was the sun and his courtiers, of necessity, revolved around him.

29. Ibid.
Obviously the courtiers were of various grades. There were the peers, both from the old and the new stock, who belonged to the most intimate circles - privy councilors. From amongst these the innermost centre of the Court was represented in the regions by the Lord lieutenants and in the counties by their deputy-lieutenants. The unruly western and northern regions of the kingdom were mostly put under the governance of the king's relatives and close confidants. The nobles holding sway over the southern and channel counties were the people next in importance. These rulers were placed in the garrisons overlooking the counties along the southern and eastern coasts. 30

The magnates ruled at the centre, in the privy council with its offshoots in Wales and the North. Gentry ruled the country as a whole. They were chiefly concerned with regard to public order, the economy and social betterment. 31 England being a country lined with rivers, with London its centre, there was the net-work of its excellent communications with its own hinterland not only the numerous water ways linking it up round the costs with the Thomas estuary and to the continent.

but also the great North Road and Watling Street carrying animals and people both north and south. There were filaments innumerable that connected it with all other towns strung out along the nation-wide web. The host of commercials, administrative, governmental and personal activities connected with the vast and throbbing network were carried on by the gentry.

Clearly large ruling class of gentry existed. The class was really large and its tentacless well-dispersed: hence its tremendous hold in English society, such that it could fight a civil war within itself, and

32. "England being a country lined with rivers with London its centre there was the network of its excellent communications with its own hinter land—not only the numerous water-ways linking it up round the costs with the Thames Estuary and so the continent but also the great North Road and the Watling Street carrying animals and people both north & south. There were filaments innumerable that connected it with all other towns strung out along the nation-wide web" Rowse, op. cit. PP. 64-65.
yet could come out on top with the restoration.33

33. Even before the third and fourth quarters of the 16th century when large additions to the number of gentlemen class were made, indications exist that in Henry VIII's reign the number could be considerable. Henry VIII's out-burst in rage when he heard of Ann's infidelity that more than one hundred courtiers were to be executed is a case in point.

A.L. Rowse: The England of Elizabeth Chapter VI. (Social Classes) P. 229 & cf. Patricia Thompson: Sir Thomas Wyatt and His Background P. 36. Mo less noteworthy is the observation of Sir Thomas Hoby's in the course of his travels through France, Germany and Italy when he notes that he encountered at least 14 fellow Englishmen and another 13 elsewhere in Italy; and that there were some 16 of student age at Padua alone (during Marian exile 1544-45) in addition a considerable number he had left at strausbourgh (A.L. Rowse: The Elizabetan Renaissance P. 24). Moreover tradition existed whereby young springs of noble families were brought up in another noble's household with a view to educating young men to serve the state (Rowse op. cit. P. 97). Wolsey's household was a veritable school of affairs, 'a nursery for the court' in which a good many of the king's servants, Pace, Gardiner, Cromwell among them, acquired the first rediments of political and administrative expertise. (Kenneth Charlton op. cit. P. 66). In Elizabeth's time it was Burleigh's house which served as a seminerly for the sons of noblemen. (Ibid).

Such a number of prospective Govt-servents undergoing training at once abroad and at home must be taken as supporting a large courtier-administrator class in the king's service.

Besides engaging themselves in commercial, economic, educative and social betterment - public charity, poor relief, aid to employment etc. the gentry, below the peers (who were at the inner nerve-centre of Govt., acted as sheriffs, commissioners of peace, serjeants, managers of the big households (of peers) in the country-side. (A.L. Rowse: The England of Elizabeth Chapter VI.
This ruling class of new aristocrats and gentlemen coincidently as well as by necessity came under the immediate influence of humanist ideas and ideals which were being inculcated and propagated by the great English humanists like Colet, Linacre, Grocyn, More, Fox, Fisher, Latimer and the mighty figure of Erasmus. The humanist and renaissance influences from other sources, and their teachings were readily welcomed because they seemed to respond to the new culture of the new nobility.  

34. G.K. Hunter, op. cit. P. 17
An account of the hierarchial structure of Tudor Society in the 16th century will illustrate the character, duties and needs of different classes. 

Tudor Society in the 16th century as in the hierarchial structure had king at the top, them, Prince, followed by dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, barons, baronets, knights, esquires, gentlemen. 

Below gentlemen ranked citizens and burgesses in the cities/towns, and yeomen in the country side. The last sort of people, Harrison defines as day-labourers, poor husbandmen, and some retailers, which have no free land copy-holders; and, artificiers as tailors, shoe-makers, carpenters, brickmakers, masons etc. Of these two-thirds were found in agriculture—the main-stay of population, and in the service of the gentry. But to quote Harrison ... 'last sort of people ... have neither voice nor authority in the commonwealth, but are to be ruled and not to rule others', (Quoted A.L. Rowse: The England of Elizabeth Chapter VI).

Dukes & Marquises though not always directly of royal blood were related to the king. Earls, viscounts, barons, and knights had been created from the upper-reaches of the powerful new bourgeois class and were much favoured by the Tudor monarchs. Mostly earls and viscounts were included among the peers along with older aristocracy of dukes and marquises (Ibid.) They were privy councillors, lord lieutenants—(in Wells and the North), the lord-deputies in important counties: channel counties, south and east and along the wcoast) diplomats, President of the council of the West, Secretary of state, holding several key posts as mayor of London, marshal of Calais, Lord Chief justice, 

(Continued)
Neither the chivalric nor the scholastic culture of the old time was suitable for the new men of affairs. The Tudor rulers like all the renaissance monarchs, looked to the classical times for models of kinship etc. Humanism with its emphasis on secular and practical outlook and its concern for the civic, moral and aesthetic problems provided the philosophy needed.  

Lord marshall, Master of the Horse. There were also key-posts with burdensome responsibilities of managing and running the King's sprawling household. There were also within this circle marshals like marshal of Calais sergeants like that of King's celler etc. etc. (Patriciaal Thompson op. cit. Chapters I & II)

It is important to note that the nobility and Knighthood were not a lightly straightened caste. There was a complex gradation from the duke down to the smallest Knight, and many variations within the grades. To take the example of the Knights - among the Knights there was a section at the top, who by reason of birth and wealth, service or standing, were more nearly allied to the peerage. Such persons were those who belonged to the inner official ring and were eligible for the highest offices: they really belonged to the nobility; they lived on a footing equal with them. Within the nobility there was the obvious disjunction between the old families and the new. After all they lived in the same way, they intermarried; they came very shortly to share the same social outlook; they both belonged to the nobility which was one not two. A.L. Rowse: The England of Elizabeth, Chapter VI Social Classes.

The social theories of Starkey and Moryson, two courtiers of Henry VIII's, trained in Italy in the humanist philosophy may be taken as typical testifying to the needs of the new monarch. The social theories of these two men sprang out of the new political situation that arose with new system of Tudor monarchy and were definitely prompted by the problems such as enclosures, the new economy, and dissolution of the monastries. In essence these theories exemplify an anglicisation of humanist ideals of Italy - the cradle of the new philosophy. They are concerned with ideas about the nature of nobility and their connexion with the education and virtue of the new aristocracy who were to govern the realm. This necessitated, on the one hand, a rejection of the chivalric education which erstwhile had been considered appropriate for the ruling class, and on the other, a secularisation of knowledge with its corollary, the justification of the vita-activa as the educated man's vocation.  

36. Kenneth Charlton, op. cit. P. 75

37. Ibid.
The fact that the literature supporting such a trend was voluminous is proof of the importance the new era attached to the new kind of education. It offered a redefinition of nobility. It pointed out that mere nobility of birth was not of much value. It was to be supplemented by "vertue and conning." Whereas the medieval texts concentrated on an education expressed in terms of an ideal prince and emphasised the institutional basis of his power, those of the new texts widened their scope to include the education of those who rule and show a greater concern for the practical problems of government. In the Tudor shift from military to civil service what actually happened was that the Knight became the gentleman and the term nobility tended to be replaced by gentility and civility.

Castiglione provided the classic discussion of behaviour appropriate to the upper class, in 'Cortegiano.' Whilst Sir Thomas Elyot's Governor served as a model.

38. Ibid P. 76
39. Ibid PP. 76-77
University of Illinois (Studies in Language & Literature Vol. 14 Nos. 1-2)
exposition of studies for those who were to serve the prince. Together these two books provide the pattern of the scholar-gentleman who decorated the courts of the new renaissance monarchs.

In Castiglione emphasis is still on chivalry which provided the core-matter; but chivalry as could be expected in the new age, was of the social rather than of the martial kind. His courtier was an accomplished man able to hold his own in the gallant company of the court. He was skilled in both the sensual and the Platonic senses, had a flair for the fine arts especially, poetry and music. Riding, swimming, archery, boxing, fowling and such exercises he practised for his bodily culture. Ancient authors provided him with philosophic and ethical principles. As a legacy from Petrarch and Alberti, underlying his whole life as courtier, soldier, diplomat, there is a basic and constant effort of the will towards goodness. After knowing about politics and philosophy from

41. Kenneth Charlton op. cit. PP. 82-83
   cf. A.L. Rowse: The Elizabethan Renaissance P. 55
   cf. J.H. Whitefield: The Book of the Courtier
   Introduction PP. VIII-IX. (J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd. London
   cf. Buxton op. cit. P.7
ancient authors, the courtier wished to know theology because every Christian must be grounded in its doctrine. He had faith in his dealings as a condottiere, and a consistent effort to humanise the trade of war: humanity is a keynote of his character. And to cap all, the courtier must learn to do whatever he did with a grace; it was 'a grace to everything, without the which all his other properties and good conditions were of littleworth'. As versatility was the mark of the courtier he must do whatever he did without the appearance of strain or excessive preparation to avoid affectation. He must have the quality of the amateur who realises that himself is the task on which he is engaged it should not look so to others. His manner, that is to say, must suggest an elegant disdain, sprezzatura, effortlessness: he will neither overestimate his present performance nor allow it to appear his principal concern. Refined delicacy unbanitas, galanterie are the words most appropriate to Castiglione's courtier.
Elyot's concern was with a more sober character, and he considered the sphere in which the subject moved as important as the subject himself. Elyot is more concrete, more ethical and more social-minded. He is less philosophical and universal than Castiglione, more rooted in the realities of a particular time and place. Despite the brilliance of More and the fructifying influence of Erasmus, it was Elyot who, in 1530's became the truly effective apostle of humanism in England. However serious the purposes of earlier humanists may have been, these earlier humanists spoke for the most part to each other in Latin. It was Elyot who set out deliberately to bring the new studies to the broad literate group of laymen who bore the responsibility of the Government. He explains that he writes 'to the intent that men which will be studious about the weal public may find the thing there-to expedient compendiously written. And for as much as the present book treateth of the education of them that hereafter may be deemed worthy to be governors of the country.

42. Kenneth Charlton op. cit. P. 83
   cf. J.M. Berdan op. cit. pp. 304-351
   cf. Ferguson op. cit. PP. 145, 158-9,169-171,191-194
   cf. Barolary : The Mirror of Good Mannerse (1523)
   quoted by Charluhe K. op. cit. P. 79.
public... I have therefore named it the Governor!

Duty, responsibility, obligation, these are the key concepts.

It is worth noticing just how practical Elyot's purposes were. He was always striving to reconcile the old and the new, the abstract and the concrete, the ideal and the actual. He sought to draw upon all that was best in both the classical and the Christian traditions, and in his scheme of education for the "governor" he tried to combine all that was still relevant in the traditional chivalric training with the newer learning. Above all, he was concerned with the application of 'wisdom' in the governance of the "wealpublic"—not just any "weal-public" but that of England. The purpose of the education he prescribed for the gentry was to make it possible for them to be of use to their country.

Far from exciting, suffering in all but the utilitarian tests by comparison with Cortegiano, Elyot's Governor remains a landmark in the history of "applied" humanism in England. It was typical and very influential.
as is indicated by the other texts which used his as a model. The characteristic feature of the books on the education of the courtier or gentleman is the emphasis on the prior claim of the public good. It was inherited from the Middle Ages, and, it is interesting to note that it survived throughout the 16th century, and it only decayed when the 17th century was well-advanced. The state was an organism (an extension of the family or the guild-brotherhood), and it was the duty of each part to serve the purpose of the whole. At its centre was the political body divinely ordained in a form analogous to the natural body, each part having its appointed function to perform for the good of the whole organism.

From this premise radiated a number of important implications. Private interests must be subordinated to those of the community. Indeed, if the moral attitude of the individual man is what it should be, if he is moved by Christian charity and a true sense of duty, his interest will never conflict with those of the community. Only if

42. Kenneth Charlton op. cit. P. 84
43. Ferguson A.B. op. cit. Chapter XIII (The Commonweal & the Sense of Change PP. 363-397
he is moved by pride, avarice, or any other of the vicious drives inherent in his corrupted nature will he pursue his private interests to the detriment of the common-wealth.

It is noteworthy how complete is the antithesis it offers to the doctrine of laissez faire, with its underlying principle that 'Man's self-love is God's providence. In fact the notion of public service was a legacy from the past because, like its prototype, the Tudor commonwealth was a profoundly conservative ideal. The analogy of the body politic was itself conservative enough with full confidence that it will block further argument. Richard Morison asks the rhetorical question, what will happen if the foot says "I will wear a cap like the head"?

In the context of the early Tudor period the commonwealth was stated deliberately, explicitly, at times passionately, in conservative terms. It was fundamentally a protest against the spirit of private

44. Ibid
45. Ibid P. 366
enterprise which was in fact undermining the traditional social relationships, and a warning against the dangers of sedition arising out of the resulting social mobility as well as the political unrest of the period.46

When the concept of public service, of putting the good of the country above the private good, was considered so important, the courtier, by virtue of his position in the commonwealth, his sense of responsibility and duty was the person to serve in the cause of improvement of the mother tongue because the country was in such a need.46b Hoby in the preface to his translation of the Cortegiano wishes that every man might 'store the tongue according to his knowledge and delight above other men in some piece of learning, that we alone of the world may not be still counted barbarous in our tongue, as in time out of mind we have been in our manners. And so shall we perchance become as famous in England as the learned men of other nations have been and presently are

46. Ibid.
46. Vide infra PP. 79-81. The Literary Background.
and presently are." And in Cortegiano itself whose influence in England began in Henry VIII's reign, Castiglione insists that it was the duty of a gentleman not to allow the mothertongue to suffer by decay.

William Thomas, an Italianate Welshman, in the service of the Earl of Northumberland who went to Italy (1545) to equip himself (like several others) in the arts of culture and civilized life and wrote a History of Italy (1549) advocated to the courtiers the study of Latin 'to draw the worthy things of the same into their own tongue'. He was an out-and-out modernist: 'whereas both the Greek and the Latin require long time and study, the Italian is in short space and easily obtained'. He applied these views to the circumstances of his own

47. J.H. Whetefield op. cit. P. 5 (Thomas Hoby's Epistle Dedicatory to the Book of the Courtier addressed To The Right Honourable The Lord Henry Hastings, Sonne and Heire Apparent To The Noble Earl of Huntington).


50. Ibid.
country and ardently advocated the use of English in education. As a matter of fact 'working for the cause of the mothertongue', on the part of the learned courtiers, gentlemen, was a recurrent notion during the Tudor Age although. Such was the urgency felt to improve the mother tongue. And the Miscellanies are a veritable proof of such a situation, where-in the writers (courtier-poets) are praised chiefly for their contributions to the English language. Tottel explains that he published his anthology 'to the honour of the English tongue, and for the profit of the studious of English eloquence' and to show 'that our tongue is able in that kind (the works of Latines, Italians and other) to do as praise-worthy as the rest...'.

51 In the Paradise of Dainty Devices (1576) interest in Latin borrowings as a means to augment the English language is obvious. As the diction of the collection is relatively simple a corresponding emphasis is evident on the employment of figures of speech to enhance the rhetorical qualities of the language. 52

52. Peterson, Lyric from Wyatt to Donne P. 127
yong Gentilmen, in commendation of the Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions (1578) asserts that it is 'deckt with daynties, is devised by 'worthy wights' (honourable men of learning and weight) who have 'fraught' it 'By studies toyle with phrases fine'. By the time of the next two miscellanies 'Britton's Bowre of Delites' (1591) & The Phoenix West (1593), although the mother tongue had acquired sufficient capacity and refinement to be capable of undertaking great tasks, the vogue to serve the mother tongue on the part of courtiers, scholars continues. References to the language in the Prefaces of these collections, in terms that demonstrate interest in the refinement of the vernacular are as common as in the early miscellanies. R. Jones in the preface to the 'Bowere' says that he is presenting to the Gentlemen Readers with the sundry fine devices, and rare conceits in English verse which are 'witty, pleasant, and commendable worthy to be appreciated by learned men'. Like the 'Bowere' The Phoenix West according to its title-page


was written by 'Noble men, worthy knights, gallant Gentlemen, Master of Arts and brave scholars'. Its prominent feature is the large number of sonnets whereby the poets chose to demonstrate the linguistic and metrical virtuosity. In *England's Helicon* (1600) and *Davison's Poetical Rhapsody* (1602) greater interest is evidenced in the skill of metrical and stanzaic variety and of various types of poems in the lyric form. And it hardly needs mentioning to those familiar with the terms of 16th century criticism that the 'wit' of the poets, referred to in both of the respective "addresses" of the two collections "to the Readers", apart from its meaning indicating the intellectual stature of the writers also meant "the greater dexterity in the use of figures", which implied, obviously, refinement and improvement.

The concern for the mother tongue, the means whereby the courtier poets became articulate was demonstrated mostly in poems whose theme was love. It was natural

56. Edited by Bullen P. 4 *The Poetical Rhapsody* cf. Rubel op. cit. P. IX.
for the courtier-poets to choose love as a peg to hang the woof and web of verbal and rhetorical schemes through which 'eloquence' - the accredited discipline to make language an instrument of literary expression — could be achieved. The more so because the reiteration of the same subject-matter offered greater scope for verbal and rhetorical exercises. Love as theme of the court poems is platitudinous. It was the traditional theme of the lyric. Its importance demands that its consideration should be gone into greater detail. It was the prop that supported the social life of the court. 'In no other epoch did the ideal of civilisation amalgamate to such a degree with that of love. The theory of courtly love tends to embrace all that appertains to the noble life. Honour was the central motif of this code, and 'public service' its field of endeavour. The knight and his lady, that is to say, the hero who serves for love had been the primary and invariable motif of medieval lyric. As always the life of aristocracy tends to become an all-round game. All the

56b Vide Infra PP. 63-68
57. Huizinga, J. The Waning of the Middle Ages P. 109
elaborated forms of love played their part as social
decoration of life, as well as a frame-work of living
passion.58 Love was the source of the ideals of courage,
honour, fidelity.59 Ovid's heroes are ready to endure
hardship or perform most difficult feats in order to win
their ladies' love or get into their presence. According
to Ovid, 'All good things come from love. The man is
enobled, made valiant and generous. The lady is made affable
and gentle. Love taught devotion and fidelity, because,
'No one can be bound by a double love!' Love imparted
regard for the feelings of others: "what the lover takes
from the beloved against her will has no relish". "Love
is always wont to shun the abode of avarice". It cherishes
youth for 'A man can love only when he has reached full
manhood'. It presumes secrecy and reserve because 'Love
seldom lasts after it has been divulged'. 'Probity alone
made lover worthy of love'. Selflessness is the hall-mark
of the lover: 'A true lover believed nothing good out what
he thought would please his beloved: 'Love could refuse

58. Huizinga, J. op. cit. P. 80
59. The following paragraph is a summary from L.E. Pearson's
Elizabethan Love Conventions. Appendix PP. 313-314
(George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1966)
nothing to love. Love freed the lover from lewdness:
'He is not wont to love who is tormented by lewdness'.

However love had to be formalized because the formalization of love was the supreme realization of the aspiration to the life beautiful. More than in pride and in strength (as with knight) beauty is found in love. To formalize love, was, moreover, a social necessity, a need that was the more imperious as life is more ferocious. Love had to be elevated to the height of a rite. The overflowing violence of passion demands it. Only by constructing a system of 'forms and rules for the vehement emotions could the menace of barbarity, so much abhorrent to the civilization-conscious people, be escaped.'

"The garden of delights of the Romance of the Rose," as Huizinga tells, "is inaccessible except to the elect, regenerated by love. He who wants to enter must be free from all hatred, felony, villainy, avarice, envy, sadness, hypocrisy, poverty, old age". In highly formalized form of love - Platonic love inculcated 'magnificence', considered to be the supreme virtue of a renaissance prince.

60b. Ibid
61. M.C. Bradbrook, op. cit. P. 24
The prince's or the nobleman's natural response to beauty was a first step in the development of magnificence, calling out all his best qualities. Magnificence could be utilized for the development of self-knowledge, self-control, and the four imperial virtues. Hence the cultivation of the arts and clear embodiment of the heavenly idea of Beauty in the most persuasive terms became the Prince's or nobleman's duty. The importance and practice of love in the Tudor court was indeed great. Writing of verses embodying themes of love was one of the several ways (an important ways of course) of paying tribute to a discipline which was the prop and support of the fabric of civilized life. Love is the predominant theme in almost all the miscellanies. The connection, and popularity of Tottel's Miscellany and the poetical miscellanies that followed, with the court and courtly circles can be easily assumed.

By the time of the Tudors although feudalism was dead politically, the young nobles, disturbed over the decadence of the medieval institution, sought to restore
it in whatever manner possible. The romances of chivalry were again immensely popular, and all the courtly practices were frantically pursued in order to renew the old glamour. So a new life was given to the order of knighthood, and a deliberate attempt was made to formulate its duties. Since love was considered the greatest of all experiences of educative value, both scholars and the nobility stressed its importance in the life of youth. For the courtier, it was a part of the business of life, as serious indeed, as his conduct as a gentleman because love taught grace of conduct, and the courtier was to possess just that: a perfect balance of the graces and accomplishments which together produced such an artistic effect as to delight the eye of all who beheld him. Like the knights of old, the young Tudor courtiers would set out to find adventure. Travel in foreign lands became not only a fashion but almost a passion. Italy shone for them like a lode star. Where else could they learn so well the true preparation for court life? They began imitating her habits and fashions, and that imitation came to co-
every phase of English life. So, the new courtier grew up and shone at the court of the Tudors. Of course, there was a less romantic side in the return to ancient practices. The founder of the Tudor dynasty had adopted every means to make sure his right to the throne. Nothing could be more effective than to link himself in every possible way to a venerable past. His followers newly sprung from bourgeois background, were just as quick to see the advantages of such a procedure, and they, in turn, sought to unite themselves with the old families whose unwritten feudal usages and practices were still greater then those of the new law. Thus they acquired large landholdings on which they sought to found their rights, and assumed their new responsibilities by connecting themselves in every way possible with the old system they had replaced, even going so far as to forge pedigrees. The decayed institution of chivalry was revived, largely to deceive another generation into a belief of its own continuity with the unbroken past. But the new chivalry

62. cf. Kenneth Charlton op. cit. PP. 75-76
   cf. A.L. Rowse: The Elizabethan Renaissance
   Chapt. I. = Renaissance Impulse PP. 3-29
soon proved a means of gratifying the renaissance love of pageantry. For the tourney, as in France, was enthusiastically restored to popular favour. It gave the courtiers a chance to distinguish themselves in the eyes of their ladies, to shine in the glory of their sovereign, and it enabled them to gratify a taste for luxurious dress armour. With the revival of the knightly code came the glamour of the prancing horse and the lance, and courtly reverence for women—all the shine and glitter of the Middle Ages which not even the learning of the ancient world could dispel.

Adulteration is inherent in the code of love, suited to the need of Tudor sovereigns who were very anxious to uphold the authority of the crown. Henry VIII made himself a statue of idolatory, and at his court adulation was so universal as hardly to excite comment. Veneration for the crown caused every one, from heighest to the lowest, to assume this attitude of flattery. He prescribed that no one might speak to the Prince same in adoration, and kneeling. Later, Elizabeth, who bowed to the king like

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63. Pearson, L.E. *Elizabethan Love Conventions*  
Chapter II PP. 79–83
one of his own subjects, caused all her court to fall on their knees before her. She lived on adulation. Her whole life became one courtship, when gallantry became the keynote, and love the god of earthly attainment. Deeds of valour were mainly to win such love, and the lover had to consecrate his life to his lady.

Henry VIII who had the wish to rival the continental princes, and had the means to achieve his objective, created one of the most brilliant courts in Europe. And his daughter, Elizabeth, kept up the pitch of courtly life as created by her father, up to the end of her days. The love of dazzle and brilliance was fostered partly because it served to enhance the majesty of the crown and the court which was politically important for the Tudor kings, and, partly because, it was closely associated with the Renaissance impulse of show and appreciation of physical beauty. As stated by Berdan; "The loveliness of line

64. cf. Berdan op. cit. Chapter I. PP. 41-47

65. The narration here (about the effect of the renaissance impulse Chaf led to gorgeousness in life-styles) is an adaptation from Berdan's PP. 6-12, The Early Tudor Poetry.
of a perfect column and the smooth ripple of muscle beneath the skin filled the men of the Renaissance Age with delight. A gorgeous lavishness became characteristic of the period. The whole life, political as well as religious, private and public was toned to the pitch of gorgeousness. It may even look fantastic to the 20th century taste. But the literary writing to be rightly interpreted especially by the modern grey mind must be read with the understanding that in the thought of author and contemporary audience there was this elaborate richness of daily life. The impulse was indeed infectious. As social conditions after the transition from medieval to renaissance period became more stable, the house was regarded as a home rather than as a fortress and was adorned with loving care. Graceful festoons draped the windows and the chimneys flowered in fantasy. The same impulse found expression in the trivialities of every day life. As in house-furnishing and table decoration, the fault lay in a lack of restraint so the temptation of the renaissance artists was for multiplicity of detail and overornamentation.
How the impulse manifested itself in personal gratification is seen in the lavish style of Cardinal Wolsey's life. Probably the extreme example is found in the country seat at Hampton Court of the great servant of the king. Everything is on a large scale. There were two hundred and eight guest rooms, each with a basin and an ewer of silver, some gilt and some parcel gilt, and some two great pots of silver in like manner, and one pot at the least with wine and beer, a bowl or goblet, and a silver pot to drink beer in; a silver candle-stick or two, with both white lights and yellow lights of three sizes of wax. In the list chair follows chair, carved and gilded, with cushions of embroideries and tapestry. The walls were hung with tapestries. And to acquire a sufficient number the agents ransacked Europe.

For this love of display there is another explanation beside that of personal gratification: the necessity of appeal to be visual to bring home to the people the importance of any event, in an age when comparatively few people could read. This can be stated as the logical reason for coronation processions, ambassadorial receptions,
masques etc. The extent to which any circumstance affected the nation was signified by the outward splendour accompanying it. The magnificence of Wolsey's establishment was a political measure. The crosses and pillars borne before him were the visible expression of the power of a servant of the king. The forms and ceremonies attendant upon the arrival of the Cardinal's hat expressed to the multitude the importance of the new dignity. A more daring illustration is provided by the long account of the celebration of the French alliance in 1527 as given by the Italian Secretary Spinelli. Politically, it was an event of major importance, the union of France and England against the conquering arm of Spain.

The description is characterised by picturesque-ness. This royal exhibition was nothing short of being phantasmagorical; with tournaments, tilts, jousts, dancing of the princess and her maids of honour, masks, sumptuous feastings; everything conducted ceremoniously; and the mind-boggling gorgeous background. Events of such type, though on smaller scale, were not uncommon at the court and in the courtly circles and may be said to be a part of
the usual way of life. 'Inclination, political necessity and wealth combined to make life splendid,' Wolsey and other dignitaries followed their master. Each kept his state, had scores of retainers at his expense. Colourful and costly dresses on which was invested much of their wealth added to the spectacle. The ornateness and artifice of the lyrical verse written at the time in the court and courtly circles which is included in the poetical miscellanies was a fitting accompaniment to the life style of the king and the courtiers. Love of rhetoric was natural to the people who believed in embellishment for reasons political, social and temperamental.

The courtier, however, was not only the creature of courtly fashions and etiquettes. He was a composite product of the 16th century culture. That culture was constituted of two main systems of morality, Renaissance and Reformation. These systems apparently are fundamentally irreconcilable, one a system of renunciation, of abasement

66. Ibid. P. 12
67. Ibid. P. 14
of the individual; the other a system of expansion, of perfection of the individual. It is easy to see, of course, which formed the real basis of renaissance ethics. And yet Christian ethics cannot be left out of the account. Its significance in the Renaissance is obvious when we read in Bacon and Milton that the reformation, with its appeal to ancient authority brought about the classical renaissance. This view, says Douglas Bush, is much nearer the truth than that of modern historians who consider the renaissance essentially irreligious.

The church had been and still was part of English society. The important point to note is that in the church establishment the gentry were the favourite sons, and estates were inherited from one generation to the next. The landed classes furnished the church's maintenance, and the nobility and gentry put their younger sons and needy relations into the bishoprics and other

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cf. A.L. Rowse: *England of Elizabeth* P. 31


benefices. This regular operation of family interest was but one remove from the law of inheritance of secular landed estates. Religion made an integral part of the character and business of the gentry.

It is difficult for us to conceive of the dominance of religion. The church was almost one-half of society; or if not a half, it was society as a whole, regarded, at least, in relation to end and intention, in one aspect - the non-temporal. But it was intertwined with the temporal; because it springs out of the temporal, is conditioned at every point by it, given its character by it - for the religious organisation of a people but expresses its social and economic character. Religion, being very important to society, and because of its political implications the supervision of all classes in matters religious, was thought necessary. It was close and was so thorough, it would be intolerable to us; astonishing in its detail, the moral disciplining of the people.

Perhaps, it was only tolerable to them because there were


72. Ibid.
larger loop-holes through which to escape. People were watched by their neighbours in country parish or town-alley, from the cradle to the grave. The church courts provided the machinery through which this moral discipline was enforced. 73

It is impossible to over-estimate the influence of the church's routine of prayer and good works upon that society: the effect upon imagination and conduct of the liturgy with its piercing and affecting phrases, repeated Sunday by Sunday.

For the people of the 16th century these things in their day provided a system of belief; making a whole world of experience within which to live, giving satisfaction to the inmost impulses of the heart, setting a guide to conduct in all concerns of life, instructing in duty to God, to one's neighbour and oneself, offering such consolation as nothing else in grief, in sickness, and in the hour of death. 77

77. Ibid. P. 34
The necessity of Christian religion for the courtier or gentleman continued to receive emphasis. Humanism itself along with the philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome was deeply influenced, especially, north of the Alps, by Christianity. Ascham, Humphrey, Mulcaster, Cleland, Peacham, with all their humanism were careful either to endorse their precepts as perfectly compatible with true religion, or to give a place to religion in the content of education, or among the duties of a gentleman. Hence education in England was given a religious as well as moral foundation and aim.

77. "The world of Urbino in the times of its most illustrious Duke Federigo Montefeltro, says Vespasiano, the biographer, referred to in the Cortegiano, was managed no otherwise than a religious house: here was no gambling and no blasphemy, but all spoke with the greatest modesty. The first work on which Federigo lavished care, in the rich library which he built up in Urbino, was that illuminated Bible (now one of the glories of the Vatican) which comes as chief of all, in the list of rich bindings, to be followed by the Doctors of the Church, both Greek and Latin, and only then (here the significant order is worth noting) by authors of antiquity. Vespasiano said of Frederick that 'having knowledge of philosophy he wished to know theology, since every Christian must be grounded in this". (Vespasiano) quoted by J.H. Whitefield, Introduction to the Book of the Courtier P. VII.

80. Ruth Kelso op. cit. PP. 136-137
cf. Kenneth Charlton PP. 59-60
Morals and virtues, always allied to religion, too, were considered as important a concern for the courtier or gentleman as religion. Here again Cortegiano of Castiglione set the example. 81

Indeed, acquisition of goodness or virtues for the gentleman, was a necessity. 84 A belief in the necessity of education in the period was based on the premise that it led to the development of virtues. In the renaissance it was admitted that nature as the force which produces

81. "As Cicero had set out to form the perfect orator, so it is said, Castiglione attempted to form the perfect courtier. Cortegiano is the first attempt in the vernacular to cull the social wisdom of the ancient for the benefit of the 'elite Castiglione brought an essentially moderate temperament to the task, a belief in the golden mean; the aurea mediocritas of Horace lent attraction by grace - grace always the hallmark of the "Courtier"... And I reckon him only a true moral philosopher that will be good, and to that he needeth but few other precepts than that will of his. Underlying Castiglione's whole life as courtier, soldier diplomat there was a basic and constant effort of the will towards goodness the element which is reflected in the pages of 'Cortegiano!'" J.H. Whitefield, op. cit. P. XIII - XIV.

and preserves all things, had planted in man an instinct toward the perfection peculiar to him which was virtue; that as a further aid to the acquiring of virtue nature had also planted reason in man to serve in place of instinct which guides the lower animals. Virtues being themselves not in man by nature, though not against nature, and being to a certain extent within the power of every man to acquire demanded conscious effort to cultivate. It is not unusual, therefore, to find in all treatises on the education of gentlemen or courtiers reference about inculcation of goodness or virtues. 85

It is worth noting that the English theory of education for the gentleman was drawn chiefly from the ancients, whose ideals of philosopher-kings and orator-citizens looked primarily to the wider relationships of life; and, from the scholars of northern Europe who took a tremendously serious view of life and man's responsibilities, and was saved from the narrowness and in completeness of the later puritanic ideal by the sweet reasonableness and completeness of classical ideals, and the light grace of the

85. Ibid.
Poems related to virtuous living found in the poetical collections, thus, have a long history behind them. Topics on 'the good life' and related matters, wise saws and proverbs, moral poems were the common places of Chaucer and Lydgate and the XVth century lyric. The wit of the humanists gave to the floating didacticisms and moralities epigrammatic, proverbial, gnomic and colloquial turn. The epigrams of Heywood, Epigrammatica (1520) of More and the Adagia of Erasmus - a collection from the classics which was bought as a handy vademecum belong to the greatbroadstream of ethical and moral thought are some of the examples. St. Werburg (1513) in comic guise reminds the readers of their 'religious duties'. Coverdale's Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songs (1539) as the title indicates are in didactic vein. Stephen Hawes Example of Virtue (1530), Barclay's Mirror of Good Manners (1526) illustrate moral thought. Even enormous comic and satiric literature not distantly is related to the same edifying current of the time. With the humanism classical writers like Martial and Horace were brought to light who found

86. Kelso op. cit. P. 119
much favour in the 16th century England.  

The factor of goodness, morals and virtue
so much emphasised in the period and which sets so much
space in the treatises on education for the courtiers,
governors, gentlemen and nobles can only be ignored at
the cost of full view of the character of the age.
Religion and religious ethics were cardinal features of
the gentleman's character. 'Avoidance of affectation',
'prudence', goodness and uprightness', 'temperance',
'avoidance of falsehood and vanity', appreciation of good
deeds etc, were among the courtier's spiritual and mental
qualifications, as Cartiglione\textsuperscript{87} pointed out. The poems
in 'plain' style, \textit{(that form one of the two divisions)}
in the poetical collections which traditionally treat of

\textsuperscript{87} J. M. Berdan : \textit{Early Tudor Poetry} \textit{PP}. 256-257.

\textsuperscript{88} L. E. Pearson : \textit{Elizabethan Love Conventions}  
appendix \textit{PP}. 326-327.
the themes dealing with Christian religion, Christian doctrine, moral commonplace and 'the good life' are related to the religious, moral and ethical aspect, of the 16th century courtier-gentleman's character which was in no way, less important than the ornamental side which is so much fascinating to the students of the Tudor period.

89. Peterson, op. cit. PP. 9-24

89b. Vide ante p PP. 71-72