

Adams, Robert, Ikon: John Milton and the Modern Critics (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, N.Y.) 1955

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p. 61 The image of Milton as a scrupulous corrector of the press grew out of Dr. Bentley's efforts to emend the text and has flourished with varying degrees of fervor ever since.

p. 62 A measure of the deepening concern with detail is the fact that whereas Bentley in 1732 recognized four differences between the first edition and the second and was rebuked in 1924 for his inadvertency by Mr. J. W. Mackail, who claimed to recognize ^{thirty} ~~thirty~~-three, Mr. Fletcher - boldly discounting dust on the type, bent rules, imperfectly ~~an~~ inked commas, and the like - estimates the number of variations as something like nine hundred.

p. 66 Nobody has yet tried to argue that the "he-hee" distinction was systematically applied to the two poems which Milton composed after Paradise Lost; and the reason is perfectly clear, for Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes could not be more random in their use of the "emphatic" forms. They do not entirely refrain from "hee" and similar spellings; such a volta-face might be evidence that Milton changed them. But the late poems are not evidence that Milton changed his principles; they merely make obvious that he had never had any. They scatter "hee's" in sparse clusters, without any apparent relevance to the matter of emphasis, wherever the compositor of the moment happened to forget about correcting the copyist of the moment in a matter which neither considered of the least importance.

p. 67 Miss Darbishire goes so far as to argue that some of the minor changes and variations in spelling and capitalization which are to be observed within the first edition itself were made by Milton's direction and represent significant alterations.⁸

8. Helen Darbishire, ed., Poetical Works of John Milton, I (Oxford, 1952), Introduction, xff., Appendices I, II, 309ff.