Izaak Walton and John Donne

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In Fletcher, verses to Sir Robert Townsend, prefixed to *The Faithful Shepherdess*:

Yet according to my talent

A poor Shepherd I have sent.

8, 10.

G. C. MOORE SMITH.

SHEFFIELD.

IZAACK WALTON AND JOHN DONNE.

About three quarters through the first chapter of Walton's *Compleat Angler*, will be found a passage which in the first edition (1653) runs as follows:

'And since I have your promise to hear me with patience, I will take a liberty to look back upon an observation that hath been made by an ingenuous and learned man, who observes that God hath been pleased to allow those whom he himselfe hath appointed, to write his holy will in holy Writ, yet to express his will in such Metaphors as their former affections or practise had inclined them to; and he brings *Solomon* for an example, who before his conversion was remarkably amorous, and after by Gods appointment, writ that Love-Song betwixt God and his Church.'

The passage slightly expanded and modified appears in all later editions.

I cannot find that anyone has identified Walton's 'ingenuous (sc. 'ingenious') and learned man.'

In reading the admirable selection of passages from Donne's Sermons lately edited for the Clarendon Press by Mr L. Pearsall Smith, I came across this passage (pp. 24—26) from Donne's sermon preached before Queen Anne on Dec. 14th, 1617, and published as Sermon XVIII in Donne's *XXVI Sermons* (1660):

'As the Prophets and the other Secretaries of the Holy Ghost...do for the most part retain...some air of their former professions...ever inserting into their writings some phrases, some metaphors, some allusions, taken from that profession which they had exercised before...according to this Rule too, *Salomon*, whose disposition was amorous, and excessive in the love of women, when he turn'd to God, he departed not utterly from his old phrase and language, but...he conveyes all his loving approaches and applications to God, and all Gods gracious answers to his amorous soul, into songs, and Epithalamians.'

It can hardly be doubted after this that Walton's 'ingenuous and learned man' was Donne. It is to be noted however that Donne's sermon was not published till 1660. Had Walton access to it in MS.? Was he assisting John Donne the younger to prepare this 1660 volume for the press? Or had the elder Donne repeated this thought in some sermon which Walton had heard from his lips?

G. C. MOORE SMITH.

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