

*Absolutely necessary* Sir  
said Johnson *to keep the spirits clothed*;  
the poet under discussion should have *secured*  
*the consistency* of his system by keeping  
immateriality out of sight  
seducing readers to drop it from their thoughts.

But given, cautioned Macaulay, readers whose minds  
are so full of it there's no room left  
even for *the half-belief poems require*,  
*his peculiar art* — communicating  
his meaning circuitously through a long  
succession of associated ideas,

insinuating more than he expresses,  
oscillating between idealisms,  
taking his stand on most debatable ground —  
enabled him *to disguise as equivocation*  
*these incongruities he could not avoid*  
and thus make it through the puritan ascendancy.

To say nothing of violent pamphleteering,  
synthetic construction of a style in the speech of slaves,  
innocent self-belief, Hebraic/Hellenic  
division in sensibility, stubborn  
utopianism, political disillusion,  
a reluctant postponement of paradise.