

THE ENGLISH WORKS OF
GEORGE HERBERT

IN SIX VOLUMES

IV



THE BRITISH MUSEUM

BRITISH MUSEUM

MONUMENTS AND REMAINS

OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND



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MONUMENTS AND REMAINS
OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND

*Monument of the Herbert family in the parish church at Mont-
gomery, Wales.*

THE ENGLISH WORKS OF

George Herbert

EDITED BY GEORGE HERBERT PALMER

VOLUME FOUR
CAMBRIDGE POEMS



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IV
MEDITATION

PREFACE

HERE are grouped the most serious studies of Herbert's Cambridge days, studies of the natures of God and man, and of the possible relations between the two. A similar set, though longer and of profounder import, was written at Bemerton, and appears later as Group IX. The poems of these two Groups have an abstract and impersonal character distinguishing them from the rest of the work of this singularly personal writer. In them Herbert's favorite pronoun, *I*, rarely appears; though of course these, no less than the others, study the approaches of God and the individual soul.

The arrangement is as follows: After a few verses reproducing something of the sententious wisdom of **THE CHURCH-PORCH** comes the compact poem on **MAN**, a favorite with R. W. Emerson and with all readers who love penetrative thought and daring phrase. **THE WORLD** depicts the construction of Man as clumsily managed by himself. To it succeed discussions of **SINNE**, **FAITH**, and **REDEMPTION**, themes seldom absent from Herbert's mind. And then comes a series of

what is almost as frequent with him, reflections on human changeableness; the whole naturally concluding with some young man's verse about DEATH and the life beyond.

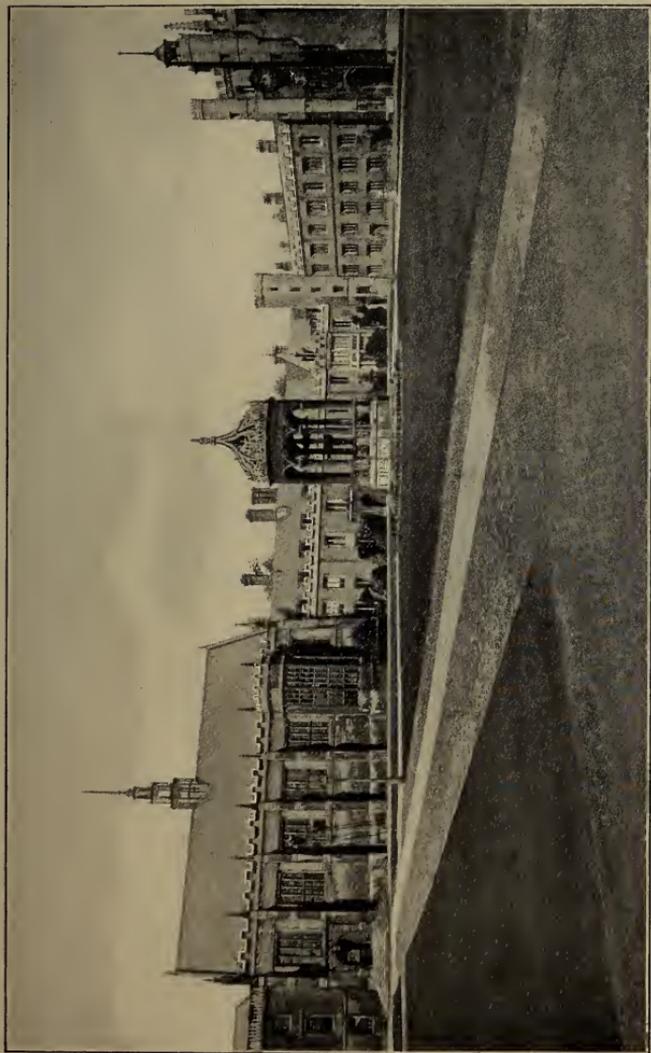


Court of Trinity College, Cambridge, where Herbert was in residence, 1610-1627.

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F. Frith & Co., Photo.

MEDITATION

INTRODUCTORY:

“That which worketh strongly on the imagination we call a charm, and that which requires some difficulty to resolve we call a knot:” G. Ryley. — This poem was translated into Latin in 1678 by William Dillingham with the title, *Gryphi*.

DATE:

Found in W. Similar in style to THE CHURCH-PORCH.

SUBJECT:

Gain and loss are not to be had where we in our folly expect them.

NOTES:

1. Proverbs vi, 22.
3. *Rod* = the riding-stick, with which the rider guides his horse and defends himself. To direct life as if one were poor insures both success and security.
5. Proverbs xi, 24. On alms-giving, see THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 59, l. 373-384. Cf. JACULA PRUDENTUM: *Giving much to the poor doth enrich a man's store.*
8. The Psalmist says (Psalm cxxxix, 12) that with God's blessing the night shineth as the day. Herbert states the converse: deprived of God's blessing, the day darkens as the night.

CHARMS AND KNOTS

Who reade a chapter when they rise,
Shall ne're be troubled with ill eyes.

A poore man's rod, when thou dost ride,
Is both a weapon and a guide.

Who shuts his hand, hath lost his gold; 5
Who opens it, hath it twice told.

Who goes to bed and doth not pray,
Maketh two nights to ev'ry day.

9. In *THE COUNTRY PARSON*, XXXVII, Herbert discusses the rights and wrongs involved in speaking of the faults of others.
10. Proverbs x, 18. *He that throws a stone at another hits himself*: *THE COUNTRY PARSON*, XXVIII.
14. The powder ignores that out of which it is made. To perfume ourselves and stake our success in glory or love on accessory splendor is to make noble matters wait on ignoble.
15. No loss can come through deducting the parson's tithes from the income. Cf. *THE CHURCH-PORCH*, III, 59, l. 386, and Proverbs iii, 9, 10. A writer in *Notes and Queries*, IV, i, 305, thinks that besides the manifest meaning there are other intricacies here, and that Herbert is engaging in his customary play. He writes: "The cipher or circle is a character signifying ten; the figure placed before it, whether 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5, simply denotes the number of tens; thus 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, one ten, two tens, three tens, four tens, five tens; so that if you take one from ten the 0 is left, signifying 10 still."
16. One of the two cases in Herbert where *still* may have our sense of *notwithstanding*.
18. Cf. *THE CHURCH-PORCH*, III, 17, l. 25.

Who by aspersions throw a stone
At th' head of others, hit their own. 10

Who looks on ground with humble eyes,
Findes himself there, and seeks to rise.

When th' hair is sweet through pride or lust,
The powder doth forget the dust.

Take one from ten, and what remains? 15
Ten still, if sermons go for gains.

In shallow waters heav'n doth show;
But who drinks on, to hell may go.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique. The system of rhyming used in each stanza is also unique (except in ii and viii), thus conveying a feeling of complexity suitable to the subject.

SUBJECT:

Man as *everything and more*. Psalm cxxxix, 14. The same thought is developed in PROVIDENCE, V, 79, l. 9-28.

NOTES:

1. Similar opening to AFFLICTION, IV. 43. — On *heard* Dr. Grosart has the amusing note: "Probably in some sermon by one of his curates."
 2. The thought appears again in THE WORLD, IV, 21, l. 1.
- 5-6. May mean that for the purpose of sustaining man all else is properly destroyed, e. g. animals, vegetables, fruits. Or, better perhaps as linking with the following lines, that compared with this creature all other things must be conceived as undeveloped and chaotic.

MAN

MY God, I heard this day
That none doth build a stately habitation
But he that means to dwell therein.
What house more stately hath there been,
Or can be, then is Man? To whose creation
All things are in decay. 6

7. The doctrine here announced was common during the Middle Ages. Mayor, in his *Life of Ferrar*, p. 240, cites many passages, e. g. : Propter hoc homo dicitur minor mundus, quia omnes creaturae mundi quodammodo inveniuntur in eo: Aquinas, *Summa*, 1, qu. 91, art. 1, § 4. Est autem praeter tres quos narravimus quartus alius mundus, in quo et ea omnia inveniuntur quae sunt in reliquis; hic ipse est homo, qui et propterea, ut Catholici dicunt doctores, in evangelio omnis creaturae appellatione censetur: Joann. Pic. Mirandul. *Praef. in Heptap.* 8. Cf. also *THE PULLEY*, V, 149, l. 4. Donne's verses to Lord Herbert of Cherbury begin, "Man is a lump where all beasts kneaded be."
8. The reading of W. has suggested that *no* of B. and ed. 1633 is a misprint for *mo*, at that time a common form for *more*. That man is more than everything would then be confirmed by instances of tree, beast, and bird. But on the whole, I believe that B. represents a later stage of Herbert's thought than W., and that he altered *more* to *no* deliberately. Man does not attain the fruitfulness he should possess. In the next line it is hinted that he also fails in his appropriate superiority to the beast. Elsewhere Herbert laments that man falls short of the fruitful tree: *EMPLOYMENT*, III, 105, l. 21; and *AFFLICTION*, IV, 141, l. 57.

- 10-11. The emphatic words are *we* and *us*; the thought being, — Though we possess all that the beast has, we, and we only, overtop him in possession of speech. And if it seems that the parrot, too, is capable of speech, it must be remembered that he can merely imitate what is set him, and is thus indebted to man for his words.
18. That the moon greatly influences human affairs, as it evidently does the tides, has been widely believed. Because excited and quiescent periods of nervous disease are thought to attend its phases, insanity is called lunacy. That it is unlucky to see the new moon over the left shoulder, or to cut the hair on a waning moon; that the child conceived in the first quarter of the moon will be a boy, in the last a girl; that it is well to begin all undertakings at the new moon, — these and many other popular superstitions express the *private amicitie* which is thought to obtain between the moon and man. The several parts of man have also special correspondences. When the moon is moving through the zodiacal sign of the Fish, it peculiarly affects the human feet. Cf. Chaucer's *Treatise of the Astrolabe*, I, § 21.
21. *Dismount* = bring down to earth.
23. A similar turn of thought is in *THE PRIESTHOOD*, IV, 171, l. 19-24. In *THE COUNTRY PARSON*, XXIII, Herbert recommends the Parson *to know what herbs may be used in stead of drugs of the same nature*,

Nothing hath got so farre
But Man hath caught and kept it as his prey. 20
His eyes dismount the highest starre.
He is in little all the sphere.
Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they
Finde their acquaintance there.

For us the windes do blow, 25
The earth doth rest, heav'n move, and fountains
flow.
Nothing we see but means our good,
As our *delight*, or as our *treasure*;
The whole is either our cupboard of *food*
Or cabinet of *pleasure*. 30

and to make the garden the shop. For home-bred medicines are both more easie for the Parson's purse, and more familiar for all men's bodyes. G. Ryley writes: "A salve or medicine made of herbs and applied to any sore, if proper to it, has particles in it of the same figure with those of the flesh to which it is applied; and these adhering to those are converted into the same substance with the flesh, and so make up the breaches which occasioned the sore."

26. The four elements are here intended. Herbert accepts the Ptolemaic astronomy, with the earth at the centre. So *THE TEMPER*, IV, 109, l. 14.
29. So *PROVIDENCE*, V, 83, l. 49.
33. Music, i. e. of the birds.
- 34-36. Things show their kinship (l. 24) and helpfulness to our bodies through waiting on us here; to our minds, through their purpose and origin.
39. S. T. Coleridge suggested that *distinguished* might mean "marked with an island." Dr. Willmott offers a better interpretation drawn from Genesis i, 9-10: "The 'waters distinguished' are the waters separated from the dry land, which then appears and becomes the habitation of man. The 'waters united' [cf. *PROVIDENCE*, V, 91, l. 114] are the gathering together of the waters, which God called seas. Below, they are our fountains to drink, above, they are our meat, because 'the husbandman waiteth for the early and the latter rain.' Both are our cleanliness."

The starres have us to bed;
 Night draws the curtain, which the sunne with-
 draws;
 Musick and light attend our head.
 All things unto our *flesh* are kinde
 In their *descent* and *being*; to our *minde* 35
 In their *ascent* and *cause*.

Each thing is full of dutie:
 Waters united are our navigation;
 Distinguished, our habitation;
 Below, our drink; above, our meat; 40
 Both are our cleanlinesse. Hath one such beautie?
 Then how are all things neat?

42. Then how subtly complete is all! So THE FAMILIE, V, 185, l. 8.

43. So Donne, Holy Sonnets, XII, 1: "Why are we by all creatures waited on?" And Giles Fletcher, Christ's Triumph after Death, stanza xxvi:

"Gaze but upon the house where Man embow'rs;
 With flow'rs and rushes paved is his way,
 Where all the Creatures are his Servitours;
 The windes do sweep his chambers every day,
 And clouds do wash his rooms; the seeling gay
 Starred aloft, the gilded knobs embrace;
 If such a house God to another gave,
 How shine those glittering courts he for himself will have?"

48. *Thy hands both made us, and also made us Lords of all thy creatures; giving us one world in ourselves, and another to serve us:* THE COUNTRY PARSON'S PRAYER BEFORE SERMON.

More servants wait on Man
Then he'l take notice of; in ev'ry path 44
He treads down that which doth befriend him
When sicknesse makes him pale and wan.
Oh mightie love! Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him.

Since then, my God, thou hast
So brave a Palace built, O dwell in it, 50
That it may dwell with thee at last!
Till then afford us so much wit
That as the world serves us we may serve thee,
And both thy servants be.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

The lords of life are, Love, Wisdom, Law, Grace, and Glory. Fortune, Pleasure, Sin, and Death have but momentary power.

NOTES:

1. *Love*=divine love. Cf. LOVE, III, 83, l. 1, and MAN, IV, 11, l. 4 and 5.
5. The fool says there is no God, fancying that our foundation and preservation are due to fortune. But such defacement of our *stately house* is brushed away by Wisdom.
6. *Pleasure* seeks to build the world over for her purposes.
7. *Balcones*. Since about 1825 the accent has been drawn back to the first syllable. So Tennyson, *Mariana in the South*, l. 88, and Shelley, *Cenci*, IV. l. 3, 47. But Cowper, *John Gilpin*, l. 142, still accents like Herbert, on the second syllable.

THE WORLD

Love built a stately house; where *Fortune* came,
And spinning phansies she was heard to say
That her fine cobwebs did support the frame,
Whereas they were supported by the same.
But *Wisdom*e quickly swept them all away. 5

Then *Pleasure* came, who liking not the fashion,
Began to make *Balcones*, *Terraces*,
Till she had weakned all by alteration;
But rev'rend *laws* and many a *proclamation*
Reformed all at length with menaces. 10

11. The sycamore — perhaps through a false etymology — was often confused with the fig-tree; and this in Greek opinion was early identified with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis iii, 3-7) which tempted Adam and Eve to sin. With fig leaves they tried to shield themselves.
13. *Working and winding*. The same combination in JORDAN, III, 93, l. 13; BUSINESSSE, V, 139, l. 9; CONFESSION, VI, 19, l. 8. A vine or tree getting a lodgment in the foundations of a house, and then increasing in size, presses against the walls and timbers and throws them out of position.
14. *Sommers* (Fr. *sommiers*), the principal beams or girders of a house. So Wotton's Remains, p. 11: "Oak may be better trusted for summers, girding or binding beams, as they term them."
15. *Shor'd*=propped, supported. — *These*=the walls. — *That*=the sycamore.

Then enter'd *Sinne*, and with that *Sycamore*,
Whose leaves first sheltred man from drought
and dew,
Working and winding slyly evermore, 13
The inward walls and Sommers cleft and tore;
But *Grace* shor'd these, and cut that as it grew.

Then *Sinne* combin'd with *Death* in a firm band
To rase the building to the very floore;
Which they effected, none could them withstand.
But *Love* and *Grace* took *Glorie* by the hand
And built a braver *Palace* then before. 20

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

The hideousness of sin.

NOTES:

6. Than to allow us to see a sin, l. 1.

10. *Perspective* = a combination of glasses which, like our kaleidoscope, by an illusion give order and wholeness to objects in themselves detached and fragmentary. In a letter (1650) to Davenant, prefixed to his poem *Gondibert*, Hobbes describes the instrument: "You have seen a curious kind of perspective where he that looks through a short hollow pipe upon a picture containing divers figures sees none of those that are there painted, but some one person made up of their parts, conveyed to the eye by the artificial cutting of a glass." So Shakespeare, *Richard II*, ii, 2:

"Like perspectives, which, rightly gazed upon,
Show nothing but confusion; eyed awry,
Distinguish form."

The meaning is: A man in his senses (l. 8) cannot look straight at sin. It is chaotic and lacks being (l. 5). Death itself we view only as a picture in a dream. So sin can be seen but indirectly and where there is some good (l. 3), i. e. in devils, where our sins are personified and given unity.

SINNE

O THAT I could a sinne once see!
We paint the devil foul, yet he
Hath some good in him, all agree.
Sinne is flat opposite to th' Almighty, seeing
It wants the good of *vertue* and of *being*. 5

But God more care of us hath had:
If apparitions make us sad,
By sight of sinne we should grow mad.
Yet as in sleep we see foul death and live;
So devils are our sinnes in perspective. 10

INTRODUCTORY:

'A sonnet equally admirable for the weight, number, and expression of the thoughts, and for the simple dignity of the language:''' S. T. Coleridge, *Biog. Lit.* XIX.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Of seventeen sonnets, six — like this — are in the Shakespearian form.

SUBJECT:

The abundant dissuasions from sin. Cf. *THE CHURCH-PORCH*, III, 67, l. 450, and R. W. Emerson's *Grace*. In the first quatrain our protections are chiefly those which arise from human guardianship; in the second, from divine appointment; and in the third, from the social sanction.

NOTES:

3. *They* = the schoolmasters, after having taught us the nature of law.
5. *Dogging*. The word occurs again in *THE CHURCH MILITANT*, VI, 139, l. 260.
6. *Sorted* = every variety of.
9. Not only are pains awarded to sin, but joy to righteousness.
11. *Our shame*, i. e. the disgrace which sin causes.
13. Isaiah v, 1 and 2.

SINNE

LORD, with what care hast thou begirt us round!

Parents first season us; then schoolmasters
Deliver us to laws; they send us bound
To rules of reason, holy messengers,
Pulpits and Sundayes, sorrow dogging sinne, 5

Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,
Fine nets and strategems to catch us in.
Bibles laid open, millions of surprises,
Blessings beforehand, eyes of gratefulness,
The sound of glorie ringing in our eares; 10

Without, our shame; within, our consciences;
Angels and grace, eternall hopes and fears.
Yet all these fences and their whole aray
One cunning bosome-sinne blows quite away.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Used also in THE REPRISALL, IV, 89.

SUBJECT:

The substance of things hoped for. Hebrews xi, 1.

NOTES:

6. The feast of the body and blood of Christ. John vi, 55.
8. The *welcome guest* forms the subject of LOVE, IV, 197.
9. Cf. AN OFFERING, IV, 191, l. 19. Possibly he is here thinking of the snake root, "a most certaine and present remedy against the venome of the rattle-snake: — 'As soon as any is bitten by that creature, they take of this herbe and chew it in their mouthes and swallow downe the juice thereof, and also apply of the herbe to the wound or bitten place, which instantly cureth them:'" Parkinson, *Theatr. Botan.*, quoted by Dr. Grosart. The allusion to protection against the snake is rendered probable by l. 11. The serpent of Genesis iii, 15, has "bruised his heel."
12. *Well neare* = well nigh.
20. *His glorie* = the glory of the Second Adam, Romans v, 12-21.

FAITH

LORD, how couldst thou so much appease
Thy wrath for sinne, as when man's sight was
dimme

And could see little, to regard his ease
And bring by Faith all things to him ?

Hungrie I was and had no meat. 5
I did conceit a most delicious feast;
I had it straight, and did as truly eat
As ever did a welcome guest.

There is a rare outlandish root 9
Which, when I could not get, I thought it here;
That apprehension cur'd so well my foot
That I can walk to heav'n well neare.

I owed thousands and much more.
I did beleve that I did nothing owe
And liv'd accordingly; my creditor 15
Belêeves so too, and lets me go.

Faith makes me any thing, or all
That I beleve is in the sacred storie.
And where sinne placeth me in Adam's fall,
Faith sets me higher in his glorie. 20

21. *Lower*, i. e. in contrast with the *higher* of the previous line, and perhaps with suggestion of a time later than that of Adam.
27. The meaning of this is expanded in the next stanza. Cf. also PRAISE, III, 95, l. 11, and THE TEMPER, IV, 113, l. 13.
32. *Uneven nature*, i. e. the inequalities of nature which divide the peasant from the scholar.
34. As the rising sun imparts to objects whatever visibility they possess, so is it the coming of Christ which has brought life and immortality to light.
38. The strange expression *pricking the eie* occurs again in FRAILTIE, IV, 155, l. 16.
44. The resurrection of the body.

If I go lower in the book,
 What can be lower then the common manger?
 Faith puts me there with him who sweetly took
 Our flesh and frailtie, death and danger.

If blisse had lien in art or strength, 25
 None but the wise or strong had gained it,
 Where now by Faith all arms are of a length;
 One size doth all conditions fit.

A peasant may beleeve as much 29
 As a great Clerk, and reach the highest stature.
 Thus dost thou make proud knowledge bend
 and crouch
 While grace fills up uneven nature.

When creatures had no reall light
 Inherent in them, thou didst make the sunne
 Impute a lustre and allow them bright, 35
 And in this shew what Christ hath done.

That which before was darkned clean
 With bushie groves, pricking the looker's eie,
 Vanisht away when Faith did change the scene;
 And then appear'd a glorious skie. 40

What though my bodie runne to dust?
 Faith cleaves unto it, counting evr'y grain
 With an exact and most particular trust,
 Reserving all for flesh again.

INTRODUCTORY :

In W. this poem is entitled THE PASSION.

DATE :

Found in W.

METRE :

Of seventeen sonnets, eleven — like this — depart in the third quatrain from the Shakespearian form.

SUBJECT :

Seeking for a new habitation, I found that he who must give it had already given it at his own cost.

NOTES :

3. What is the suit? Is it a petition to be released from the Law, and come under Grace according to the two covenants? Galatians iv. 24. Or is it a request for one of the many mansions in Paradise? Luke xxiii, 43. The figure of the tenant is again employed in LOVE UNKNOWN, V, 179, l. 4.

REDEMPTION

HAVING been tenant long to a rich Lord,
Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,
And make a suit unto him to afford
A new small-rented lease and cancell th' old.
In heaven at his manour I him sought. 5
They told me there that he was lately gone
About some land which he had dearly bought
Long since on earth, to take possession.
I straight return'd, and knowing his great birth,
Sought him accordingly in great resorts, 10
In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts.
At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth
Of theeves and murderers ; there I him espied,
Who straight, *Your suit is granted*, said, and died.

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem seems like a reminiscence of Donne's *The Will*, especially of its second stanza. In one of the songs in the third Book of Sidney's *Arcadia* the beasts in similar fashion bring their special gifts to Jove. The dangers of division again appear in *CHURCH-RENTS AND SCHISMES*, V, 105.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Spiritual forces, attempting to control brutal ones, need harmony among themselves. The course of the quaint allegory is as follows: The united Virtues dominated the Evil Passions (the beasts) while guided by Humility. But when Pride awoke and bade each claim worldly splendor (the peacock's train) *as proper to his place*, the Evil Passions would have conquered them thus divided, had not Humility by her tears destroyed the lustre of what they desired and brought them once more to unity.

NOTES:

2. *Azure*. The color blue regularly signifies wisdom. See note on *THE BAG*, V, 157, l. 15. Holy beings are again placed *in several ranks* in *ALL ANGELS AND SAINTS*, III, 163, l. 1.

HUMILITIE

I SAW the Vertues sitting hand in hand
 In sev'rall ranks upon an azure throne,
 Where all the beasts and fowls by their command
 Presented tokens of submission.
 Humilitie, who sat the lowest there 5
 To execute their call,
 When by the beasts the presents tendred were,
 Gave them about to all.

The angrie Lion did present his paw, 9
 Which by consent was giv'n to Mansuetude.
 The fearfull Hare her eares, which by their law
 Humilitie did reach to Fortitude.
 The jealous Turkie brought his corall-chain;
 That went to Temperance.
 On Justice was bestow'd the Foxes brain, 15
 Kill'd in the way by chance.

3. *Beasts* = the passions (THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 45, l. 264). Each passion is fitted to make a contribution of real worth to some virtue, if accepted with humility.
10. *Mansuetude* = gentleness. Cf. THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 53, l. 335.
11. *Their law* = the law of supplementation.
13. By the *corall-chain* is intended the red flesh which hangs by the turkey's bill. As indicating jealousy it is put in charge of self-restraint.
16. Accident baffles wit.
18. *He* = the peacock, who would not humble himself by bringing it.
20. Each virtue felt itself supplemented by pride.
23. If they had possessed the fox's brain, l. 16.
25. *Humilitie, who held the plume*, see l. 8. Though it properly belonged to her, she is the only one ready to abandon it.
29. *Joyntly bandying* = according to Dr. Willmott, contending together. But the connection would seem to call for the very opposite meaning, something like composing differences, making *bandying* equivalent to *banding together* (Fr. *se bander*), as, indeed, it is spelled in B. Herbert uses the word again, possibly with this same meaning, in THE ANSWER, IV, 147, l. 3. Shakespeare has it in Romeo and Juliet, iii, 1: "The prince expressly hath forbidden bandying in Verona Streets."

At length the Crow bringing the Peacock's plume,
 (For he would not,) as they beheld the grace
 Of that brave gift, each one began to fume,
 And challenge it as proper to his place, 20
 Till they fell out; which when the beasts espied,
 They leapt upon the throne;
 And if the Fox had liv'd to rule their side,
 They had depos'd each one.

Humilitie, who held the plume, at this 25
 Did weep so fast that the tears trickling down
 Spoil'd all the train; then saying, *Here it is*
 For which ye wrangle, made them turn their
 frown
 Against the beasts. So joyntly bandying,
 They drive them soon away, 30
 And then amerc'd them double gifts to bring
 At the next Session-day.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique. The rhyming system — as in PRAYER, III, 183 — changes in the final stanza.

SUBJECT:

The gifts of God, expressive of himself and designed to draw us to Him, are met by no answering gift.

NOTES:

7. *Cabinets* have already been mentioned twice: To ALL ANGELS AND SAINTS, III, 163, l. 14, and MAN, IV, 15, l. 30.
18. "This may be by way of miraculous contrast with the ordinary effect of dust blown into the eyes; but it may refer to the blowing of powders, sugar of lead, sugar, etc., into the eyes of horses and dogs, when their eyes are dimmed by a film or partial opacity:" A. B. Grosart. The same figure appears in LOVE, III, 85, l. 24, and in FRAILTIE, IV, 155, l. 15.

UNGRATEFULNESSE

LORD, with what bountie and rare clemencie
 Hast thou redeem'd us from the grave!
 If thou hadst let us runne,
 Gladly had man ador'd the sunne,
 And thought his god most brave; 5
 Where now we shall be better gods then he.

Thou hast but two rare cabinets full of treasure,
 The *Trinitie* and *Incarnation*.
 Thou hast unlockt them both,
 And made them jewels to betroth 10
 The work of thy creation
 Unto thy self in everlasting pleasure.

The statelier cabinet is the *Trinitie*,
 Whose sparkling light accesse denies.
 Therefore thou dost not show 15
 This fully to us till death blow
 The dust into our eyes;
 For by that powder thou wilt make us see.

19. Spring is called *a box where sweets compacted lie*, in VERTUE, VI, 97, l. 10.
23. *This box* = the Incarnation, i. e. Christ's body; cf. l. 28.
26. Proverbs xxiii, 26.
29. Cf. CONFESSIO, VI, 19, l. 2-5.
30. The Trinitie and the Incarnation are given for a mere heart.

But all thy sweets are packt up in the other,
Thy mercies thither flock and flow; 20
That as the first affrights,
This may allure us with delights,
Because this box we know,
For we have all of us just such another.

But man is close, reserv'd, and dark to thee. 25
When thou demandest but a heart,
He cavils instantly.
In his poore cabinet of bone
Sinnes have their box apart,
Defrauding thee, who gavest two for one. 30

INTRODUCTORY :

Four other poems with this title are given, IV, 135, VI, 29, 31, 33. This poem may be regarded as a preliminary sketch for the great AFFLICTION of IV, 135.

DATE :

Found in W.

METRE :

Used also in ASSURANCE, V, 225.

SUBJECT :

Support in affliction. In the first stanza, Noah's Ark, with its seeming instability guarded by God, is taken as a type of the Christian, whose disturbed yet steadfast existence is then described.

NOTES :

2. *Planted*, Genesis ii, 8.
7. So stanzas iii and iv of AFFLICTION, IV, 135. The rhyme occurs again in CHURCH-MUSICK, III, 199, l. 1.
12. As we at first tasted of thy joys, so now dost thou of our griefs.

AFFLICTION

MY God, I read this day
That planted Paradise was not so firm
As was and is thy floting Ark; whose stay
And anchor thou art onely, to confirm
And strengthen it in ev'ry age, 5
When waves do rise and tempests rage.

At first we liv'd in pleasure,
Thine own delights thou didst to us impart.
When we grew wanton, thou didst use dis-
pleasure
To make us thine; yet that we might not part,
As we at first did board with thee, 11
Now thou wouldst taste our miserie.

15. Is the emphasis on *our*, and does the line mean that joys are for angels, griefs for us? Or should we emphasize *relief* and mean that certain messengers of God have brought us joy; but that when deliverance from sin is needed, grief comes? Line 14 hints at the latter; line 19, and perhaps PRAISE, V, 47, l. 21, at the former.
17. The *bait* of pleasure appears again in THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 15, l. 4. Cf. AFFLICTION, IV, 135, l. 4-7.
21. Cf. the *daintie bowre made in the tree* of MISERIE, IV, 51, l. 55.
22. *Store*=luxuriance; cf. PROVIDENCE, V, 89, l. 95.
24. The bow, an object ordinarily threatening, appears in bright colors after a storm as a thing of delight. It is here suggested by the *Ark* (l. 3). The rainbow is again mentioned in THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 51, l. 317; PEACE, IV, 173, l. 7; THE BAG, V, 157, l. 14.

There is but joy and grief;
If either will convert us, we are thine.
Some Angels us'd the first; if our relief 15
Take up the second, then thy double line
And sev'rall baits in either kinde
Furnish thy table to thy minde.

Affliction then is ours. 19
We are the trees whom shaking fastens more,
While blustering windes destroy the wanton
bowres,
And ruffle all their curious knots and store.
My God, so temper joy and wo
That thy bright beams may tame thy bow.

INTRODUCTORY:

In W. this poem is entitled THE PUBLICAN. It has been imitated by Vaughan in his Misery.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Obstinate blindness the chief mark of man's wretched condition.

NOTES:

6. Cf. 1 Corinthians xv, 32.
16. The Psalmist knew that God was about his bed (Psalm cxxxix, 3). Not so the man of to-day.
18. There is not even a moth-hole to be looked through, says the sinner.

MISERIE

LORD, let the Angels praise thy name.
 Man is a foolish thing, a foolish thing,
 Folly and Sinne play all his game.
 His house still burns, and yet he still doth sing,
 Man is but grasse, 5
 He knows it, fill the glasse.

How canst thou brook his foolishnesse?
 Why he'l not lose a cup of drink for thee.
 Bid him but temper his excesse, 9
 Not he; he knows where he can better be,
 As he will swear,
 Then to serve thee in fear.

What strange pollutions doth he wed,
 And make his own! As if none knew but he.
 No man shall beat into his head 15
 That thou within his curtains drawn canst see.
 They are of cloth,
 Where never yet came moth.

22. In *THE CHURCH-PORCH*, III, 21, l. 66, he speaks of the time when *griefts make us tame*.
28. The mention in l. 26 of the covenant of baptism suggests the figure of the dove to indicate the work of the Holy Spirit. Besides this use of the dove as a sign of the Holy Spirit, Herbert also employs it as the bird of Venus; *THE INVITATION*, V, 51, l. 26.
33. Cf. *WHITSUNDAY*, III, 159, l. 14.
35. *Infection* here = a plague-spotted thing; not the plague itself, as in *THE CHURCH-PORCH*, III, 43, l. 249. The plague was at this time so constant and serious a menace as to be ever present in men's minds. The plague of 1603 carried off 30,000 persons; that of 1625 as many; that of 1636 somewhat less.

The best of men, turn but thy hand
For one poore minute, stumble at a pinne. 20

They would not have their actions scann'd,
Nor any sorrow tell them that they sinne,
 Though it be small,
And measure not their fall. 24

They quarrell thee, and would give over
The bargain made to serve thee; but thy love
 Holds them unto it and doth cover
Their follies with the wing of thy milde Dove,
 Not suff'ring those
Who would, to be thy foes. 30

My God, Man cannot praise thy name.
Thou art all brightnesse, perfect puritie;
 The sunne holds down his head for shame,
Dead with eclipses, when we speak of thee. ·
 How shall infection 35
Presume on thy perfection?

As dirtie hands foul all they touch,
And those things most which are most pure and
 fine,
 So our clay hearts, ev'n when we crouch
To sing thy praises, make them lesse divine. 40
 Yet either this
Or none thy portion is.

43-48. The miserable utterances of this stanza are supposed to be quoted from a despairing and reckless man.

51. *Pull'st the rug* = drawest up the bed-clothes.

52. *Starres* = golden glorious things. So *THE CHURCH-PORCH*, III, 35, l. 171, and *AFFLICTION*, IV, 135, l. 11.

55. *Bowre* in Herbert, as in Milton, is a green shelter that is natural, not artificial. See *AFFLICTION*, IV, 45, l. 21.

55-60. Cf. *PROVIDENCE*, V, 79, l. 9-12.

Man cannot serve thee; let him go,
And serve the swine. There, there is his delight.

He doth not like this vertue, no; 45
Give him his dirt to wallow in all night.

These Preachers make
His head to shoot and ake.

Oh foolish man! Where are thine eyes?
How hast thou lost them in a croud of cares? 50

Thou pull'st the rug and wilt not rise,
No, not to purchase the whole pack of starres.

There let them shine,
Thou must go sleep or dine.

The bird that sees a daintie bowre 55
Made in the tree where she was wont to sit,

Wonders and sings, but not his power
Who made the arbour; this exceeds her wit.

But Man doth know
The spring whence all things flow: 60

62. *Winks* = shuts its eyes. So THE COLLAR, V, 213, l. 26; Acts xvii, 30.
67. *Treasure*: so in THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 15, l. 2.
68. We ordinarily employ *shop* in the sense of a place of manufacture or sale. In the two places where Herbert uses it—here and in THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 31, l. 141—he gives it the meaning of a place of assemblage: as Shakespeare in Cymbeline, v, 5, speaks of his lady as a “shop of all the qualities that man loves woman for.” So Donne, Refusal to Allow, l. 34, calls Frenchmen “shops of fashion.”
69. *Posie*: this word sometimes means a bunch of flowers, a bouquet, as in LIFE, VI, 81, l. 1; and sometimes, as here, a sentiment, a motto. Cf. THE POSIE, V, 29.
77. *Shelf*, — his own means of destruction. See THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 27, l. 120. We still speak of a shelving shore.

And yet, as though he knew it not,
His knowledge winks and lets his humours reigne.

They make his life a constant blot,
And all the bloud of God to run in vain.

Ah wretch! What verse 65
Can thy strange wayes rehearse?

Indeed at first Man was a treasure,
A box of jewels, shop of rarities,

A ring whose posie was, *My pleasure.*
He was a garden in a Paradise. 70

Glorie and grace
Did crown his heart and face.

But sinne hath fool'd him. Now he is
A lump of flesh, without a foot or wing

To raise him to the glimpse of blisse; 75
A sick toss'd vessel, dashing on each thing;

Nay, his own shelf;
My God, I mean my self.

INTRODUCTORY:

I praise God that I am not to learn patience now I stand in such need of it, and that I have practiced Mortification and endeavored to die daily (1 Corinthians xv, 31) that I might live eternally: Walton's Life. We still employ the word in connection with wounds, in the sense of decay.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Death in life. In the needs of our five ages—infancy, childhood, youth, manhood, age—are prefigured the needs of death, viz. a shroud, a grave, a bell, a coffin, and a bier. Cf. Southwell: Upon the Image of Death.

NOTES:

2. *Sweets*, as usually with Herbert, for the smell. See CHARMS AND KNOTS, IV, 9, l. 13.
3. *Breath, death*. This rhyme is kept in every stanza, enforcing the great antithesis and correspondence on which the whole poem turns.
4. This line is borrowed from Donne's *Elegy on the Lord Chancellor*, l. 1: "Sorrow, who to this house scarce knew the way."
5. *Clouts*=pieces of cloth. Jeremiah xxxviii, 11.

MORTIFICATION

How soon doth man decay!
When clothes are taken from a chest of sweets
To swaddle infants, whose young breath
Scarce knows the way,
Those clouts are little winding sheets 5
Which do consigne and send them unto death.

When boyes go first to bed,
They step into their voluntarie graves,
Sleep binde them fast; onely their breath
Makes them not dead. 10
Successive nights, like rolling waves,
Convey them quickly who are bound for death.

When youth is frank and free,
And calls for musick while his veins do swell,
All day exchanging mirth and breath 15
In companie,
That musick summons to the knell
Which shall befriend him at the house of death.

8. Cf. Donne, *Obsequies of Lord Harrington*, l. 17:

“Labourers have
Such rest in bed that their last churchyard grave,
Subject to change, will scarce be a type of this.”

21. Our panting powers, pressed by the world, welcome the restrictions of home.
22. Training himself to attend only to what directly concerns him and his. Perhaps, too, there is a suggestion that in the home the offending eye — cf. *THE DISCHARGE*, V, 187, l. 3-5 — can most easily be plucked out. Matthew xviii, 9. Vaughan repeats the expression in his *Miserie*:

“I school my eyes and strictly dwell
Within the circle of my cell.”

24. *Attends* = awaits. Cf. *JACULA PRUDENTUM*: *Good is to be sought out and evil attended.*
26. *Marking* = observing, looking toward.
27. *All* = all his powers.

When man grows staid and wise,
 Getting a house and home where he may move 20
 Within the circle of his breath,
 Schooling his eyes,
 That dumbe inclosure maketh love
 Unto the coffin that attends his death.

When age grows low and weak, 25
 Marking his grave, and thawing ev'ry yeare,
 Till all do melt and drown his breath
 When he would speak,
 A chair or litter shows the biere 29
 Which shall convey him to the house of death.

Man ere he is aware
 Hath put together a solemnitie,
 And drest his herse while he has breath
 As yet to spare.
 Yet Lord, instruct us so to die 35
 That all these dyings may be life in death.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Grim death grows fair through Christ's accepting it.

NOTES:

3. The groans of the last sickness.
5. When we thought thus of thee, we were considering merely how we should appear a certain number of years after our death.
9. *This side* = the earthly side.
11. Souls leaving this world are fledglings who have abandoned their bodily shells. Cf. PROVIDENCE, V, 85, l. 64.

DEATH

DEATH, thou wast once an uncouth hideous thing,
Nothing but bones,
The sad effect of sadder grones;
Thy mouth was open but thou couldst not sing.

For we consider'd thee as at some six 5
Or ten yeares hence,
After the losse of life and sense,
Flesh being turn'd to dust, and bones to sticks.

We lookt on this side of thee, shooting short;
Where we did finde 10
The shells of fledg souls left behinde,
Dry dust, which sheds no tears but may extort.

12. *Extort tears* through grief and possibly through dust in the eyes, as in DOOMS-DAY, IV, 63, l. 3 and 4. Herbert hates dust, and his eyes seem to have been peculiarly sensitive. Cf. LOVE, III, 85, l. 24; FAITH, IV, 31, l. 38; UNGRATEFULNESSE, IV, 39, l. 16, 17; FRAILTIE, IV, 155, l. 16.
- 13-16. For the thought, cf. TIME, VI, 101, l. 13-18.
14. Cf. CHURCH-RENTS AND SCHISMES, V, 107, l. 13.
18. In contrast to l. 6.
22. Our bodily *half*.
24. *Down or dust*, corresponding with *die as sleep*, l. 21.

But since our Saviour's death did put some bloud
 Into thy face,
 Thou art grown fair and full of grace, 15
Much in request, much sought for as a good.

For we do now behold thee gay and glad,
 As at dooms-day;
 When souls shall wear their new aray,
And all thy bones with beautie shall be clad.

Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust 21
 Half that we have
 Unto an honest faithfull grave,
Making our pillows either down or dust.

INTRODUCTORY:

The common subject of sculpture over one of the western doors of a Cathedral is the rising from the dead, each *member jogging the other*. This Herbert must often have seen.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Gather quickly, O Lord, our members from the dust.

NOTES:

6. Cf. MAN, IV, 13, l. 16.
12. The tarantula spider, common in the Mediterranean coast-lands, gets its name from Tarentum in Italy. Its bite was supposed to be deadly, the most probable escape being violent action, to which the frenzied sufferer was already predisposed. Music was employed and a wild dance induced, a dance recalled in the modern tarentella. As a peculiar music heals this sting, so must the last trump give the only notes which can heal the sting of death.
15. Oblige the graves to give up at once what they possess, or they may refuse altogether.

DOOMS-DAY

COME away,
Make no delay.
Summon all the dust to rise,
Till it stirre and rubbe the eyes,
While this member jogs the other, 5
Each one whispring, *Live you brother?*

Come away,
Make this the day.
Dust, alas, no musick feels
But thy trumpet, then it kneels; 10
As peculiar notes and strains
Cure Tarantulaes raging pains.

Come away,
O make no stay!
Let the graves make their confession, 15
Lest at length they plead possession.
Fleashes stubbornnesse may have
Read that lesson to the grave.

- 21-24. The body after death, turning to dust, is driven about by the wind, or turning to gases (cf. *CONTENT*, IV, 151, l. 22), becomes a poison to the living. So the dead may be said to *stray* or be scattered.
28. *Parcel'd out*=divided out, as in *LOVE*, III, 83, l. 3. Vaughan has enlarged this in his *Burial*:

"Thus crumm'd I stray
In blasts,
Or exhalations and wasts,
Beyond all eyes."

29. *Consort*=concert. So *EASTER*, III, 153, l. 13, and *EMPLOYMENT*, IV, 145, l. 23.

Come away,
Thy flock doth stray. 20
Some to windes their bodie lend,
And in them may drown a friend;
Some in noisome vapours grow
To a plague and publick wo.

Come away, 25
Help our decay.
Man is out of order hurl'd,
Parcel'd out to all the world.
Lord, thy broken consort raise,
And the musick shall be praise. 30

INTRODUCTORY:

Imitated by Vaughan in *The Throne*.

DATE:

Found in *W*.

METRE:

Unique, but differs only in rhyming system from the *DISCHARGE*, V, 187.

SUBJECT:

Safety is to be found not in my worth, but in thy love.

NOTES:

5. The special record of each man's life. Revelation xx, 12.
7. *Heare* was in 1674 printed *here*.
13. Luke xxii, 20. Instead of the *peculiar book* of l. 5.

JUDGEMENT

ALMIGHTIE Judge, how shall poore wretches brook
Thy dreadfull look,
Able a heart of iron to appall,
When thou shalt call
For ev'ry man's peculiar book? 5

What others mean to do, I know not well;
Yet I heare tell,
That some will turn thee to some leaves therein
So void of sinne
That they in merit shall excell. 10

But I resolve, when thou shalt call for mine,
That to decline,
And thrust a Testament into thy hand;
Let that be scann'd. 14
There thou shalt finde my faults are thine.

INTRODUCTORY:

Echo-songs were common in the poetry before Herbert. Sidney has one in Book II of the *Arcadia*. Lord Herbert of Cherbury has four.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Mortality has echoes of immortality.

NOTES:

5. *Leaves*=falling, perishing things. But the echo declares that certain leaves are abiding. Are these the holy leaves of Scripture?
11. Revelation xxii, 2. Perhaps a play on holly, an evergreen.
13. Returning to the question of l. 1.

HEAVEN

O WHO will show me those delights on high ?

Echo. *I.*

Thou Echo, thou art mortall, all men know.

Echo. *No.* 4

Wert thou not born among the trees and leaves ?

Echo. *Leaves.*

And are there any leaves that still abide ?

Echo. *Bide.*

What leaves are they ? Impart the matter wholly.

Echo. *Holy.* 10

Are holy leaves the Echo then of blisse ?

Echo. *Yes.*

Then tell me, what is that supreme delight ?

Echo. *Light.*

Light to the minde; what shall the will enjoy ? 15

Echo. *Joy.*

But are there cares and businesse with the pleasure ?

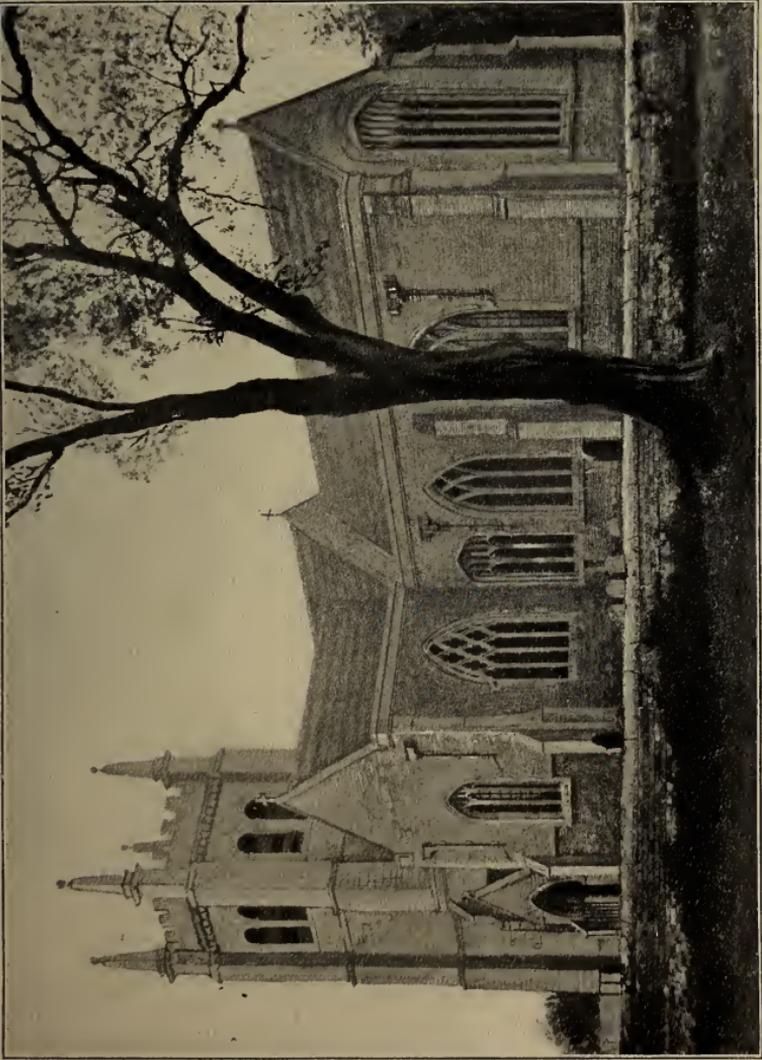
Echo. *Leisure.*

Light, joy, and leisure; but shall they persever ?

Echo. *Ever.* 20



*Exterior of Leighton Church, Huntingdonshire, rebuilt by Herbert
and Ferrar. See Vol. I, p. 35.*



V

THE INNER LIFE

PREFACE

IN the poems to which I have ventured to give the title of THE INNER LIFE we for the first time meet the poetic modes most characteristic of Herbert, modes which I have examined in the third Introductory Essay. Other poets before Herbert had written reflective verse, sagaciously instructing or meditating on the perplexing intricacy of divine and human things. Southwell, Raleigh, Donne, were Herbert's predecessors in such holy anatomy. Southwell largely and other men in single poems had celebrated the institutions of the Church, though conceiving them in no such personal way as Herbert. But the religious love-lyric, which begins with this Group and fills all the remainder except Group VIII, was developed by Herbert. Not that the type did not already exist in the Latin poetry of the Mediaeval Church. Poets, too, of France and Germany had again and again put tender communings with God into their vernacular speech. In England translations of the Psalms were common, and Hymns — the average pious utterance of a multitude — were just coming into use. Nothing altogether new ever appears on earth. The most original writer creates his novelty out of what already exists. Yet by bringing tendencies to full

expression he still genuinely produces. So Herbert produced a new species of English poetry, a species so common since his time and through his influence that we now forget that a Herbert was required for its production.

The character of this new poetry, having been already and fully discussed, need here be only summarized. Herbert's immediate predecessors had developed the love-lyric to an exquisite and often artificial perfection. As the mediaeval painter found a set subject in the Madonna and Child, and to a subject not his own gave his personal stamp through small refinements of treatment, so did the Elizabethan and Jacobean poet find in the languishing lover a subject set to his hand. That the poets themselves did sometimes veritably languish, no one will doubt. But whether instructed by experience or engaged in exploiting a theme, they one and all bring before us the exalted lady with a heart colder than is nowadays customary, a heart which when once engaged is easily alienated, and of whose slightest favor the miserable lover knows himself to be perpetually unworthy. Through long sequences of lyrics — sonnets commonly, less frequently verse of looser structure — every stage is worked out in the slow approach of the undeserving to the exalted one. To us moderns, who feel but slightly the impulse to imaginative construction, such detailed exhibits of all the possible phases of longing, hope, and despair appear strange

when presented by serious and middle-aged men. The intellectual fashions of one age are hard for another to comprehend.

To Herbert these fashions were matters of course. From them he was able to detach himself only sufficiently to condemn the objects loved, but not to change the methods of representing love itself. A literary artist through and through, rejoicing in refinements, feeling no antagonism between cool study and vivid emotion, ever ready to note whatever shade of feeling a situation demanded and to develop it from germs of his own, Herbert brings over into the religious field the heart-searchings, the sighs, and the self-accusations which hitherto had belonged to secular love. Yet he is no trifler. Over-intellectualism is always his danger. He merely undertakes to treat as literary material the dealings of God and his own heart; and in this new field of love he follows the beautiful shimmering methods which Shakespeare had taught him in his devotion to the lovely youth, or Spenser in his service of the nameless lady. During the interval, too, which parts the second Stuart from Elizabeth, the national temper had changed and grown profoundly introspective and grave. Herbert is contrasted with Breton and Campion as Browning with Burns.

Grouped together here, then, — so far as these can be parted from the similarly minded verses of preceding sections, — are all the poems which

Herbert wrote at Cambridge in which his changing moods of mind are studied and heightened for the purpose of reflecting vicissitudes in his love of God. Beginning with a few glad notes, he quickly perceives in *THE THANKSGIVING* and *THE REPRISELL* how incompetent he is at his best to make gifts worthy of Him whom he adores. In *THE SINNER*, *DENIALL*, and *CHURCH-LOCK AND KEY*, he acknowledges that the failure of God to smile upon him is due to radical faults in himself; faults which in *NATURE* and *REPENTANCE* seem to connect themselves with specific acts of wrong-doing which in the Bemerton days the third stanza of *THE PILGRIMAGE* recalls. The poems which follow are akin to these in their lamentations of instability. At the close I have hung that *wreathed garland* which he hopes may even in his *crooked, winding wayes* express his tender reverence.

THE INNER LIFE

INTRODUCTORY:

Aubrey, writing of Herbert's Church at Bemerton, says: "In the chancel are many apt sentences of Scripture. At his wife's seat, 'My life is hid with Christ in God.'" As this poem occurs in W., the verse is shown to have been a favorite with Herbert before he became a priest.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

The two tendencies of life. Accordingly both the *words and thoughts* of the poem are *double*. Outwardly it shows a straight form and significance; but hidden within is another of deeper import which *obliquely bends* from start to finish.

NOTES:

2-4. Sir T. Browne, *Vulgar Errors*, Bk. VI, ch. v, discusses these two motions of the sun in the Ptolemaic astronomy as "that from East to West, whereby it makes the day [so *diurnall*, l. 3], and likewise from West to East, whereby the year is computed."

OUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST IN
GOD

(COLOSSIANS III, 3)

MY words and thoughts do both expresse this
notion,
That *Life* hath with the sun a double motion;
The first *Is* straight, and our diurnall friend,
The other *Hid*, and doth obliquely bend.
One life is wrapt *In* flesh, and tends to earth; 5
The other winds towards *Him* whose happie birth
Taught me to live here so *That* still one eye
Should aim and shoot at that which *Is* on high,
Quitting with daily labour all *My* pleasure,
To gain at harvest an eternall *Treasure*. 10

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

God wakes us each morning not to the world but to himself.

NOTES:

4. *Make a match* = come to an agreement.
8. The thought is repeated from *MAN*, IV, 13, l. 7.
10. *So*, i. e. as in l. 2. Psalm viii, 4.
13. "Herbert has been saying how marvellous it is that the Creator should care for the homage of each single creature, as He clearly does from the pains He spends upon it; whereas it is man who ought to devote himself to the Creator. Instead, however, of doing so, man attends to God's world with as much care as if it were his own. In the last verse the poet decides that it is possible so to study the world as not to miss God:" H. C. Beeching.
20. The ending is the same as that of *THE PEARL*, IV, 179.

MATTENS

I CANNOT ope mine eyes
 But thou art ready there to catch
 My morning-soul and sacrifice;
 Then we must needs for that day make a match.

My God, what is a heart? 5
 Silver, or gold, or precious stone,
 Or starre, or rainbow, or a part
 Of all these things, or all of them in one?

My God, what is a heart, 9
 That thou shouldst it so eye and woove,
 Powring upon it all thy art,
 As if that thou hadst nothing els to do?

Indeed man's whole estate
 Amounts (and richly) to serve thee. 14
 He did not heav'n and earth create,
 Yet studies them, not him by whom they be.

Teach me thy love to know,
 That this new light, which now I see,
 May both the work and workman
 show.
 Then by a sunne-beam I will climbe to thee. 20

DATE:

Found in W. An early poem both in style and matter, looking to the future. His plan, however, of being a poet is already completely formed (l. 39-47). Cf., too, l. 23.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

The mode of thanksgiving appropriate to the Christian is to vie with his Master, and still to acknowledge himself surpassed.

NOTES:

4. *Preventest*=goest before, as in Psalm xxi, 3.
6. In 1679 *doore* was misprinted *gore*, and the error has been reproduced in most subsequent editions.
7. *Flouted*. Cf. HOME, VI, 87, l. 46.—*Boxed*=struck with the fist, as in THE SACRIFICE, III, 135, l. 129.
8. 'T is but to repeat what thou hast suffered.
9. The whole line is the subject of *was*. Matthew xxvii, 46. Again in THE SACRIFICE, III, 143, l. 213.
11. *Skipping*=neglecting, as W. reads.
14. *Posie* does not here mean a motto, as in the poem of that title, V, 29, but a bunch of flowers, as in ALL ANGELS AND SAINTS, III, 165, l. 25, possibly with a suggestion, too, of Aaron's rod.

THE THANKSGIVING

OH King of grief! (A title strange, yet true,
To thee of all kings onely due.)

Oh King of wounds! How shall I grieve for thee,
Who in all grief preventest me?

Shall I weep bloud? Why thou hast wept such
store 5

That all thy body was one doore.

Shall I be scourged, flouted, boxed, sold?

'T is but to tell the tale is told.

My God, my God, why dost thou part from me?

Was such a grief as cannot be. 10

Shall I then sing, skipping thy dolefull storie,
And side with thy triumphant glorie?

Shall thy strokes be my stroking? Thorns, my
flower?

Thy rod, my posie? Crosse, my bower?

- 15-19. Since in these outward matters I am precluded from rivalry, I will try to rival thy love.
20. *By*=by means of. Proverbs xix, 17.
23. It is improbable that this was written after his marriage (1629).
- 25-26. Dr. Grosart thinks these lines refer to Lord Edward Herbert of Cherbury, George Herbert's eldest brother, and one of the founders of English Deism. But the reference is improbable, for (1) Edward Herbert was never the *bosom friend* of his brother George, being ten years older than he, and always separated from him in residence after George's eleventh year. (2) There is no other hint either in THE TEMPLE OF THE COUNTRY PARSON of aversion to the teaching of the *De Veritate*. (3) It is far from certain that these lines were written after 1624, the date of the publication of the *De Veritate*. Since this poem is included in *W.*, it must have been written before Herbert took orders. Its style is Herbert's earliest, when he was under the strong influence of Donne.
27. *One half of me*, i. e. the bosom friend.
29. See l. 49. In 1674, and since, *thy* is misprinted *my*.
31. The *predestination* may refer to the ministry of Jesus, those three years in which he was about his Father's business. So Herbert hopes that by the end of three years he may do many good deeds.
33. Public-spirited men then gave money as naturally for building roads as for building hospitals.

But how then shall I imitate thee and 15
 Copie thy fair, though bloudie hand?
Surely I will revenge me on thy love,
 And trie who shall victorious prove.
If thou dost give me wealth, I will restore
 All back unto thee by the poore. 20
If thou dost give me honour, men shall see
 The honour doth belong to thee.
I will not marry; or, if she be mine,
 She and her children shall be thine.
My bosome friend if he blaspheme thy name,
 I will tear thence his love and fame. 26
One half of me being gone, the rest I give
 Unto some Chappell, die or live.
As for thy passion — But of that anon,
 When with the other I have done. 30
For thy predestination I'll contrive
 That three yeares hence, if I survive,
I'll build a spittle, or mend common wayes,
 But mend mine own without delays.

37. I will so detach myself from the world that it shall not be noticed that I am still alive.
39. "The Sunday before his death he rose suddenly from his bed or couch, called for one of his instruments, took it into his hand, and said: *My God, my God, my music shall find Thee, and every string shall have his attribute to sing :*" Walton's Life.
40. *His*=its. The lute of Herbert's time had a multitude of strings, never less than sixteen, sometimes as many as thirty.
44. *Here*, in this book of mine, contrasted with *thy book* of l. 45.
47. *Thy art of love*, not Ovid's. Dr. Grosart writes: "I punctuate thee (:) not (,) as usually, because having so turned back God's love on him, he cries in accord with l. 18, his trying who will victorious prove (Genesis xxxii, 28): *O my deare Saviour, Victorie!* But the cry is premature; there comes the Passion, and on it the cry of the Conquered: *Alas, my God, I know not what.*"

Then I will use the works of thy creation 35
 As if I us'd them but for fashion.
The world and I will quarrell, and the yeare
 Shall not perceive that I am here.
My musick shall finde thee, and ev'ry string
 Shall have his attribute to sing, 40
That all together may accord in thee,
 And prove one God, one harmonie.
It thou shalt give me wit, it shall appeare;
 If thou hast giv'n it me, 't is here. 44
Nay, I will reade thy book and never move
 Till I have found therein thy love,
Thy art of love, which I'le turn back on thee:
 O my deare Saviour, Victorie!
Then for thy passion — I will do for that —
 Alas, my God, I know not what. 50

INTRODUCTORY:

Called in W. THE SECOND THANKSGIVING. A Reprisal is an attempt to return in kind what has been received, whether of good or ill.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Used also in FAITH, IV, 29.

SUBJECT:

By conquering him whom thou dost conquer — myself — I share thy victory. Cf. THE HOLDFAST, V, 17, and one of the doubtful poems, LOVE, VI, 147.

NOTES:

1. *It*, i. e. rivalling thee, which in the previous poem I dreamed was possible.
- 3-8. If I should offer thee my life, I should merely give what is already forfeited by sin. If I were innocent, disentangled from sin, I might have something to present. But now I am able to give thee my life only because thou hast first given me thine.
13. Cf. CONFESSION, VI, 19.
11. Must even my tears for sin have been already shed by thee?
15. A similar play of phrase, though in a widely different connection, occurs at the close of a letter from Herbert to R. Naunton, 1620: *Deus faveat tibi, et concedat ut terrestres tui honores cum coelestibus certent et superentur!*

THE REPRISALL

I HAVE consider'd it, and finde
There is no dealing with thy mighty passion;
For though I die for thee, I am behinde.
My sinnes deserve the condemnation.

O make me innocent, that I 5
May give a disentangled state and free.
And yet thy wounds still my attempts defie,
For by thy death I die for thee.

Ah, was it not enough that thou
By thy eternall glorie didst outgo me? 10
Couldst thou not grief's sad conquests me allow,
But in all vict'ries overthrow me?

Yet by confession will I come
Into the conquest. Though I can do nought
Against thee, in thee I will overcome 15
The man who once against thee fought.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Of seventeen sonnets, eleven — like this — depart in the third quatrain from the Shakespearian form.

SUBJECT:

Sin as an erroneous reckoning of values.

NOTES:

1. How I tremble.
3. Dividing myself as time is divided, at least a seventh should be thine.
5. *Pil'd* = accumulated, heaped up, as in MARIE MAGDALENE, V, 151, l. 11.
8. Reversing the arrangement of nature, heaven becomes a hardly palpable point.
9. Aristotle, and perhaps Pythagoras before him, recognized, in addition to the four elements, — earth, water, air, fire, — a fifth, ether, subtler than all the others. It fills the interstellar spaces; it is the medium of physical motion; and as the connecting link between body and soul, it is the basis of life itself. Hence it comes to signify essence in general, the central principle, the precious part of anything; and as the ground of all being, it is sought after by the Alchemists.
14. Exodus xxiv, 12. Cf. SEPULCHRE, V, 155, l. 17.

THE SINNER

LORD, how I am all ague when I seek
What I have treasur'd in my memorie!
Since if my soul make even with the week,
Each seventh note by right is due to thee.
I finde there quarries of pil'd vanities, 5
But shreds of holinesse, that dare not venture
To shew their face, since crosse to thy decrees.
There the circumference earth is, heav'n the
centre.
In so much dregs the quintessence is small;
The spirit and good extract of my heart 10
Comes to about the many hundredth part.
Yet Lord restore thine image, heare my call;
And though my hard heart scarce to thee can
grone,
Remember that thou once didst write in stone.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

The silent God.

NOTES:

6. *Bent thoughts*. My thoughts refused to be fixed on the subject of my prayer. So THE METHOD, V, 197, l. 15.
- 8-9. These were the employments of his brothers, — soldiers and courtiers, — and his own thoughts went out after them.
14. Psalm ci, 2. LONGING, VI, 43, l. 42.

DENIAL

WHEN my devotions could not pierce
Thy silent eares,
Then was my heart broken, as was my verse.
My breast was full of fears
And disorder. 5

My bent thoughts, like a brittle bow,
Did flie asunder.
Each took his way: some would to pleasures go,
Some to the warres and thunder
Of alarms. 10

As good go any where, they say,
As to benumme
Both knees and heart in crying night and day,
Come, come, my God, O come!
But no hearing. 15

26. *Tune my breast.* The phrase is used again in **THE TEMPER**, IV, 113, l. 23, and in the **CHURCH MILITANT**, VI, 125, l. 76.
27. *No time*=not at all, as in **GRIEVE NOT**, VI, 17, l. 28.
30. Cf. l. 3. Each preceding stanza has ended in discord. The plan of a final unrhymed line for each stanza is adopted nowhere else, except in the refrains of **PRAISE**, III, 95, and **THE SACRIFICE**, III, 123.

O that thou shouldst give dust a tongue
 To crie to thee,
And then not heare it crying! All day long
 My heart was in my knee,
 But no hearing. 20

Therefore my soul lay out of sight,
 Untun'd, unstrung.
My feeble spirit, unable to look right,
 Like a nipt blossome hung
 Discontented. 25

O cheer and tune my heartlesse breast,
 Deferre no time.
That so thy favours granting my request,
 They and my minde may chime,
 And mend my ryme. 30

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem is entitled PRAYER in W. For the thought of it, compare THE METHOD, V, 197. The lock and key (here sin and prayer) are mentioned also in THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 31, l. 144.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Our inaccessibility to God mistaken for God's inaccessibility to us.

NOTES:

5. *Cold hands* always find the fire at fault and needing mending. Cf. JACULA PRUDENTUM: *He that is warm thinks all so.*
11. *Sinnes* are like stones in a stream, — here, the stream of God's merciful blood, — which by obstructing the current give it occasion to assert itself the more.

CHURCH-LOCK AND KEY

I KNOW it is my sinne which locks thine eares
 And bindes thy hands,
 Out-crying my requests, drowning my tears,
 Or else the chilnesse of my faint demands.

But as cold hands are angrie with the fire 5
 And mend it still,
 So I do lay the want of my desire
 Not on my sinnes or coldnesse, but thy will.

Yet heare, O God, onely for his bloud's sake
 Which pleads for me; 10
 For though sinnes plead too, yet like stones they
 make
 His bloud's sweet current much more loud to
 be.

DATE:

Found in W. This poem may refer to one of those many occasions when Herbert inclined to abandon his plans for the priesthood and become an elegant man of the world. He understood that such a course would disintegrate his powers in the way described in the second stanza. His mother steadied him. For Walton's account of the struggle, see note introductory to AFFLICTION, IV, 134.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Nature alien to God.

NOTES:

2. *Travell*, i. e. run away. On *fight*, or *travell*, see note on AFFLICTION, IV, 139, l. 37.
6. 2 Corinthians x. 4.
7. *This venome*=rebellion, l. 1.
9. *Bubbles*=high rebellious thoughts, blown up by pride. Cf. EVEN-SONG, V, 59, l. 14, and VANITIE, IV, 153, l. 18.
10. *By kinde*=according to the nature of bubbles. So in A TRUE HYMNE, V, 27, l. 15.
- 7-12. This verse gives a vivid picture of an acid falling on a solid substance and turning it into gas.
14. Jeremiah xxxi, 33. Cf. VANITIE, V, 135, l. 24.
16. Ezekiel xxxvi, 26. The life, or cohesion, of the stone is gone. The thought of these last three lines is worked out at length in SEPULCHRE, V, 155.

NATURE

FULL of rebellion, I would die,
Or fight, or travell, or denie
That thou hast ought to do with me.
 O tame my heart!
 It is thy highest art 5
To captivate strong holds to thee.

If thou shalt let this venome lurk
And in suggestions fume and work,
My soul will turn to bubbles straight,
 And thence by kinde 10
 Vanish into a winde,
Making thy workmanship deceit.

O smooth my rugged heart, and there
Engrave thy rev'rend law and fear!
Or make a new one, since the old 15
 Is saplesse grown,
 And a much fitter stone
To hide my dust then thee to hold.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

The sin of man as rooted in his frailty. The thought of this poem is more elaborately developed in THE FLOWER, VI, 65.

NOTES:

1. Psalm xxv, 11.
3. *Quick* in a double sense, i. e. living and rapidly perishing. Ed. 1633 reads *momentany*, though B. and W. both read *momentarie*. Shakespeare uses *momentany* in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i, 1, and Burton in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, in his *Democritus to the Reader*.
8. Each day allows us but a glance around, for, reckoned in terms of pleasure, we are active during only two or three hours of it. But man's age (contrasted with the *Angel's age* of PRAYER, III, 181, l. 1) is only long and large when reckoned in sorrows, which have an ancient lineage.

REPENTANCE

LORD, I confesse my sinne is great;
 Great is my sinne. Oh! gently treat
 With thy quick flow'r, thy momentanie bloom,
 Whose life still pressing
 Is one undressing, 5
 A steadie aiming at a tombe.

Man's age is two houres' work, or three.
 Each day doth round about us see.
 Thus are we to delights ; but we are all
 To sorrows old, 10
 If life be told
 From what life feeleth, Adam's fall.

O let thy height of mercie then
 Compassionate short-breathed men! 14
 Cut me not off for my most foul transgression.
 I do confesse
 My foolishnesse;
 My God, accept of my confession.

19. Jeremiah ix, 15.
22. *Stay*, i. e. delay.
27. Psalm cix, 18.
32. Psalm li, 8.

Sweeten at length this bitter bowl
Which thou hast pour'd into my soul. 20
Thy wormwood turn to health, windes to fair
weather;

For if thou stay,
I and this day,
As we did rise, we die together.

When thou for sinne rebukest man, 25
Forthwith he waxeth wo and wan.
Bitternesse fills our bowels; all our hearts
Pine and decay,
And drop away,
And carrie with them th' other parts. 30

But thou wilt sinne and grief destroy,
That so the broken bones may joy,
And tune together in a well-set song,
Full of his praises
Who dead men raises. 35
Fractures well cur'd make us more strong.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

My treatment of my friend, and my treatment of God. The same subject as UNGRATEFULNESSE, IV, 39, but considered personally, instead of theologically.

NOTES:

14. We should more naturally write *thee* than *thou*.
16. *Pretendeth to*=seeketh, stretcheth after. Cf. JORDAN, III, 93, l. 16.
19. The identical rhyme well emphasizes the contrasted actions.

UNKINDNESSE

LORD, make me coy and tender to offend.
 In friendship, first I think if that agree
 Which I intend
 Unto my friend's intent and end.
 I would not use a friend as I use Thee. 5

If any touch my friend, or his good name,
 It is my honour and my love to free
 His blasted fame
 From the least spot or thought of blame.
 I could not use a friend as I use Thee. 10

My friend may spit upon my curious floore.
 Would he have gold? I lend it instantly;
 But let the poore,
 And thou within them, starve at doore.
 I cannot use a friend as I use Thee. 15

When that my friend pretendeth to a place,
 I quit my interest and leave it free.
 But when thy grace
 Sues for my heart, I thee displace,
 Nor would I use a friend as I use Thee. 20

Yet can a friend what thou hast done fulfill?
 O write in brasse, *My God upon a tree*
 His bloud did spill
 Onely to purchase my good-will;
 Yet use I not my foes as I use thee. 25

INTRODUCTORY:

Vaughan imitates this poem in his *Love and Discipline*.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Used also in *VERTUE*, VI, 95. Here each stanza has the same central rhyme.

SUBJECT:

Inert helplessness craving aid. *Job* xiv, 7-9.

NOTES:

1. *Stock*=the stem or trunk of anything which grows (cf. *Isaiah* xl, 24). Failing to be helped by human care, this requires divine aid in sun, dew, freedom from disturbance at the root, at the heart, or else transplantation. (But see, also, *SIGHS AND GRONES*, VI, 37, l. 9.)
10. *Dove*, i. e. thy Spirit, as in *GRIEVE NOT*, VI, 15, l. 1.
11. *Grasse*. Can Herbert have intended this word to take the place of the *grace* which appears in the third line of all the other stanzas except the last? The thought is clear: if the dew comes unasked, shall not thy Spirit when called?
13. The *mole* is mentioned again in *CONFESSION*, VI, 21, l. 14.

DATE:

Found in W., and there entitled THE CHRISTIAN TEMPER.

METRE:

Unique. This is Herbert's nearest approach to Tennyson's In Memoriam metre, which in its complete form was used by his brother, Lord Herbert, in A Ditty and in An Ode on a Question Whether Love Should Continue Forever.

SUBJECT:

The subject of this and the following poem may well be summed up in Wordsworth's line from the Ode to Duty: "I long for a repose that ever is the same." With these two poems may be classed THE FLOWER, VI, 65.

NOTES:

4. *That*=my heart.
5. *Stands to*=abides fixed, according to.
7. *Race*=raze, as in THE SACRIFICE, III, 129, l. 66, but spelled with the soft letter for the sake of rhyme. So Sidney, Sonnet XXXVI: "My forces razed, thy banners raised within." Herbert plays with the word differently in THE DAWNING, VI, 93, l. 12.
9. *Chair of grace*=throne of majesty.
14. *Heaven move*. So in MAN, IV, 15, l. 26.
16. *Standing*=constant, l. 5.

THE TEMPER

It cannot be. Where is that mightie joy
Which just now took up all my heart?
Lord, if thou must needs use thy dart,
Save that and me, or sin for both destroy.

The grosser world stands to thy word and art;
But thy diviner world of grace 6
Thou suddenly dost raise and race,
And ev'ry day a new Creatour art.

O fix thy chair of grace, that all my powers
May also fix their reverence; 10
For when thou dost depart from hence,
They grow unruly and sit in thy bowers.

Scatter, or binde them all to bend to thee.
Though elements change and heaven move,
Let not thy higher Court remove, 15
But keep a standing Majestie in me.

INTRODUCTORY:

In W. the title of this and the following poem is
THE CHRISTIAN TEMPER.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique, but differing only in rhyming system from
EVEN-SONG, VI, 151.

SUBJECT:

Moods.

NOTES:

5. *Fourtie* is a common round number. There are about fifty cases of it in the Old Testament, and a dozen more in the New. In a letter of 1619 Herbert writes: *I have forty businesses in my hands*. Crashaw in his poem *Against Irresolution* tells how Christ "Breaks thro' all ten heavens to our embrace;" but he probably has in mind the ten spheres of Ptolemaic astronomy.

THE TEMPER

How should I praise thee, Lord! How should
my rymes
Gladly engrave thy love in steel,
If what my soul doth feel sometimes,
My soul might ever feel! 4

Although there were some fourtie heav'ns, or more,
Sometimes I peere above them all;
Sometimes I hardly reach a score,
Sometimes to hell I fall.

O rack me not to such a vast extent,
Those distances belong to thee. 10
The world's too little for thy tent,
A grave too big for me.

13. "The allusion is to the refusal of nobles and gentlemen to *meet* any but their peers in combat. 'Wilt thou,' says Herbert, — and the conceit is made here curious and complicated in thought by the reference to stretching as by racking, — 'wilt thou stretch a crumb of dust so that being made more thy equal thou mayst contend with him:'" A. B. Grosart. — Perhaps more light is thrown on the phrase by its use in a varied form in PRAISE, III, 95, l. 11, and FAITH, IV, 31, l. 27. While this stanza treats of stretching, the next begs for contraction.
14. *Crumme of dust*. Cf. LONGING, VI, 43, l. 41.
18. *Nestle*. Cf. LONGING, VI, 45, l. 54.
23. *Tuning*. Cf. CHURCH MILITANT, VI, 125, l. 76.
26. *There*=in a place made by thy hands.

Wilt thou meet arms with man, that thou dost
stretch

A crumme of dust from heav'n to hell?
Will great God measure with a wretch? 15
Shall he thy stature spell?

O let me, when thy roof my soul hath hid,
O let me roost and nestle there;
Then of a sinner thou art rid,
And I of hope and fear. 20

Yet take thy way, for sure thy way is best,
Stretch or contract me thy poore debter.
This is but tuning of my breast,
To make the musick better.

Whether I flie with angels, fall with dust, 25
Thy hands made both, and I am there.
Thy power and love, my love and trust,
Make one place ev'ry where.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Used also in LOVE UNKNOWN, V, 179, and in GRIEF, VI, 83. The first stanza of JUSTICE, VI, 13, is partially inwoven. The effect of inweaving here is increased by Herbert's avoiding too exact a repetition. Another variety of "link-verse" is employed in SINNES ROUND, V, 143. Giles Fletcher has inwoven the last stanza of Christ's Victorie in similar fashion:

"Impotent words, weak lines, that strive in vain —
 In vain, alas, to tell so heavenly sight!
 So heavenly sight as none can greater feigne,
 Feigne what he can, that seems of greatest might.
 Might any yet compare with Infinite?
 Infinite sure those joyes, my words but light;
 Light is the palace where she dwells, O blessed wight!"

Vaughan in his Wreath and his Lovesick has clumsy imitations.

SUBJECT:

One cannot detach a topic for God's praise, so involved in one another are the grounds of our gratitude.

NOTES:

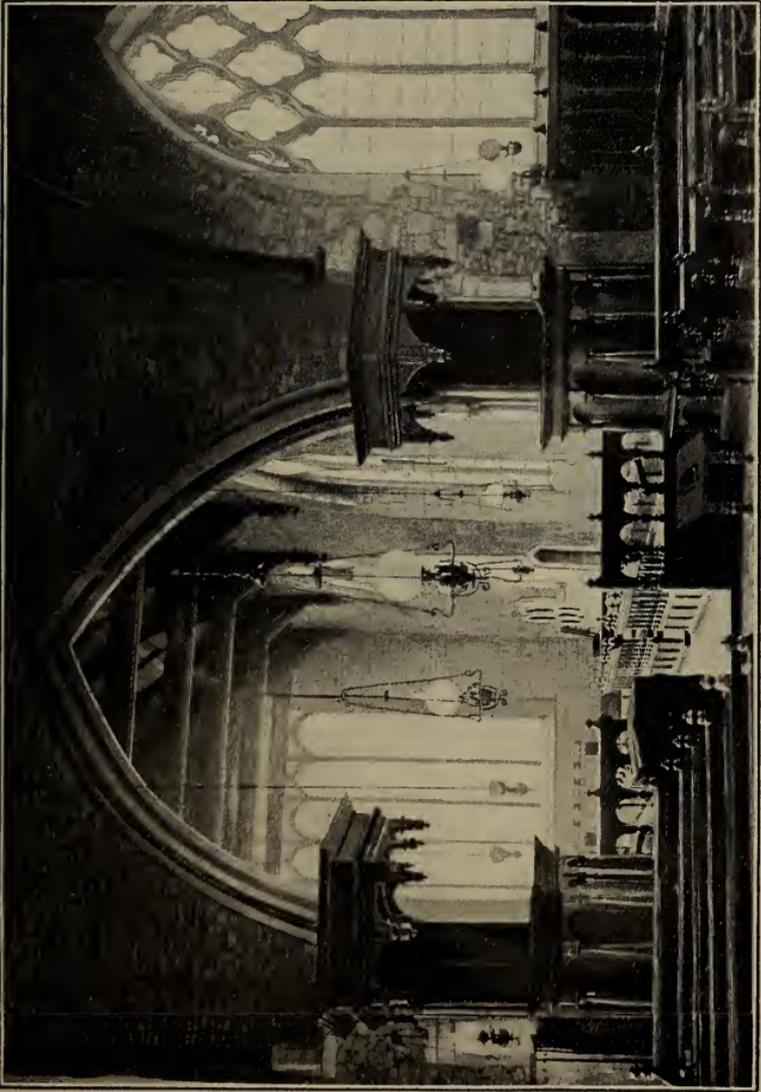
3. Psalm cxxxix, 3.
5. Cf. OUR LIFE IS HID, IV, 79, l. 3.
7. The same rhyme in CONSTANCIE, V, 121, l. 18.
10. *Like*=like Thy ways.

A WREATH

A WREATHED garland of deserved praise,
Of praise deserved, unto thee I give,
I give to thee who knowest all my wayes,
My crooked winding wayes, wherein I live.
Wherein I die, not live; for life is straight, 5
Straight as a line, and ever tends to thee,
To thee, who art more farre above deceit
Then deceit seems above simplicitie.
Give me simplicitie, that I may live; 9
So live and like, that I may know, thy wayes,
Know them and practise them. Then shall I give
For this poore wreath, give thee a crown of
praise.



Interior of Leighton Church, showing the two pulpits built, by Herbert's orders, of equal height and dignity.



VI

THE CRISIS

PREFACE

A NEW period in the life of Herbert now begins, a period marked by a change of residence and covering approximately the years 1626-30. During these years the opposing forces of his nature came into open conflict and brought him distress of mind and of body.

By birth, temperament, and many circumstances of his life, Herbert was impelled to a life of fashion, enjoyment, and irresponsible self-culture. "He took content in beauty, wit, musick and pleasant conversation." He knew the ways of learning, honor, and pleasure. Easily he answered to the calls of *honour, riches, and fair eyes*. Coming of a noble family, Walton says, "he kept himself at too great a distance with all his inferiours, and his cloaths seemd to prove that he put too great a value on his parts and Parentage." His early biographer, Oley, despairs of describing "that person of his, which afforded so unusual a contesation of elegancies and singularities to the beholder." His eldest brother, Edward, after years of romantic adventure on the Continent, was appointed ambassador to the French Court. His favorite brother, Henry, was Master of the Revels at the English Court. Three other brothers were

in the public service. Several powerful noblemen besides his great kinsman, the Earl of Pembroke, were his patrons. He was often at Court or with his uncle, the Earl of Danby. He indulged "a genteel humour for cloaths and Court-like company, and seldom look'd towards Cambridge unless the King were there, but then he never fail'd." In short, the favor of the great, the glitter of society, *the quick returns of courtesie and wit*, and all elegancies of speech, dress, and living, were congenial to him. On one side of his nature Herbert was a brilliant man of the world, a richly endowed child of the Renaissance.

Such a temperament inevitably induced secular ambition. After a time a bookish life became repulsive ; for Herbert felt his powers, hated stagnation, and delighted in intellectual activity. In 1617, when he was well under way with his divinity studies, he turned aside to seek the Oratorship. This office he held for eight years. But he sought also to become an assistant Secretary of State. The Oratorship was the natural stepping-stone. Of the two preceding Orators, Sir Robert Naunton became Secretary of State, and Sir Francis Nethersole Secretary to the Queen of Bohemia. Sir Robert Creighton, who followed Herbert, became a Bishop. Both predecessor and successor at Bemerton became Bishops. But in 1625 Herbert's political hopes approached an end; for in that year the king died, and within the

following year the whole group of nobles, Lord Bacon included, to whom Herbert had looked for support. A year later came the saddest death of all, that of his mother. Herbert immediately resigned the Oratorship, and seriously faced the problems which a disorganized life had induced.

Up to about 1627 he had blindly drifted — under the guidance of what Walton styles “his natural elegance of behaviour, tongue, and pen” — toward social eminence. The liking for stately pleasures and fashionable distinction had ever a strong, and hitherto a controlling, influence over him. But the changed conditions brought about by the death of his friends set free another force which he had always felt as profounder and more really authoritative, the force of religion, — religion to be exercised in the service of the Church. From childhood Herbert knew himself to be a dedicated soul, and inwardly, even in his most dilatory waywardness, he approved the dedication. Side by side with his fashionable tastes he had a veritable genius for religion. His feeble frame precluded his entering the army or any hardy profession. Oley says that “he was dedicated to serve God in his sanctuary before he was born.” In *THE GLANCE* he himself tells how in *the midst of youth* he had felt *God’s gracious eye look on him*. At Westminster School questions of religious controversy had engaged him. In a letter of 1617 he speaks of *now setting foot into Divinity, to lay the platform of my future*

life, and thus of obeying that spirit which hath guided me hitherto, and of atchieving my holy ends. In a letter of 1622 to his mother he fears sickness as something which has made him *unable to perform those offices for which I came into the world and must yet be kept in it.* Of the poems printed in the first five Groups, a majority must have been written during these very years of courtly aspiration. Such incongruities were not exceptional in men of the later Renaissance, nor is there the least reason to doubt that underneath all his *gaynesses* he truly loved God. His God — a poet's God — was highly personal, individual even; but only in union with Him could Herbert find peace. His very wealth of nature made him feel the more keenly the weight of chance desires. Beauty and order were in his Platonic soul. He did not wish to be his own master, but rather through divine obedience to escape from personal caprice.

Early, too, in his boyhood, through his consecration to the priesthood by his pious and masterful mother, he had formed an inseparable association between being holy and becoming a priest. Whether this association was wise, we need not ask. It controlled Herbert's life, and hence is important to understand. Catholics sometimes speak of the call "to become a religious;" by which phrase they intend not merely becoming heavenly minded, but becoming a monk or nun. The two aims are in their thought indistinguishable. I have known

Protestant young persons who thought they must withhold their hearts from God until they should be willing to become missionaries, or to meet some other external standard which in a more or less arbitrary way had become connected in their minds with holiness. Entering the priesthood was Herbert's test, and in his instinctive thought it was fully identified with allegiance to God. In terms of it allegiance and faithlessness were estimated. While he always professedly maintained this ultimate purpose, whenever he felt responsibility irksome and was inclined to drift with the fashionable tide, he found excuses for delaying the great act. And when he experienced the emptiness of living by the day and longed for the eternal, the call to the priesthood became once more imperative. Little can be understood in the verse or life of Herbert unless we bear in mind that in his consciousness there was complete identification of submission to God and acceptance of the priesthood.

Such, then, are the opposing forces, long at work, whose fierce and open conflict at a crisis period Herbert here records. The love of elegant pleasure, whose issue is secular ambition, contends with the love of God, whose embodiment is the priesthood. Both are alike unforced and genuine passions. Rightly or wrongly they are regarded by Herbert as fundamentally incompatible. He never doubts which of the two must ultimately win, but

at any particular moment he dreads the final decision. *My soul doth love thee, yet it loves delay.* The man is double-minded. In such a struggle, without regard to whether we approve the assumed antithesis, we must see that there is magnificent poetic material. Such Herbert found it. As an artist, in whom feeling is not falsified by representation, he watched every stage of the contest and recorded it with poignant splendor. Peculiar and possibly distorted emotions which sprang up in a single mind under special conditions of time, family, and belief, he fashioned into pictures of such universal and perpetual beauty that men of alien ideals have for three centuries been able to find in these experiences subtle interpretations of their own.

Ellis, in his *Specimens of English Poetry*, remarks that "nature intended Herbert for a knight-errant, but disappointed ambition made him a saint." That is as misleading a half-truth as Ferrar's declaration in his *Epistle to the Reader* that Herbert was impelled altogether by "inward enforcements, for outward there was none." While unquestionably the priesthood was his accepted aim from childhood, he spent most of the last third of his life in trying to avoid it, and it is doubtful if he would ever have reached it had not events between 1625 and 1629 obstructed other courses. His inclination to enter the service of God, however, was just as genuine as was his disposition to

find excuses for delay. He *could not go away nor persevere*. That is his own judgment as expressed in his three principal autobiographic poems,—AFFLICTION, included in this Group, LOVE UNKNOWN and THE PILGRIMAGE of Group IX.

In my essay on the Life of Herbert I have gone over the events of this Crisis period with some care, and shown how they coöperated to bring about his final decision for the priesthood. Epitomizing them here, I may mention the increased interest in religious things, partly causing and partly caused by his rebuilding of Leighton Church; the wreck of his political hopes, brought about by the death of the King and his own noble patrons; the reproachful loss of his mother, who had been his chief incitement to the priesthood; the resignation of the Oratorship, and his withdrawal from the University. The mental conflicts attending these events threw him into serious illness. He went into retirement. A severe course of fasting saved his life, but left his health shattered. During this retirement the poems constituting the present Group, with possibly a few included in earlier Groups, were written. Near the close of the period, in March, 1629, at Edingdon Church, he suddenly married Jane Danvers, a daughter of the cousin of his stepfather. There is no mention of her in his verse, unless in one dark line of THE PILGRIMAGE.

When, in 1630, the Rectory of Fuggleston-cum-

Bemerton became vacant, the Earl of Pembroke induced the King to offer it to George Herbert. Though Herbert had already "put on a resolution for the Clergy," a month's hesitation followed. Then at a friend's persuasion he paid a visit to the Earl at Wilton House, where at that time the King and Laud also were. "That night," says Walton, "the Earl acquainted Dr. Laud with his Kinsman's irresolution. And the Bishop did the next day so convince Mr. Herbert that the refusal of it was a sin, that a Taylor was sent for to come speedily from Salisbury to Wilton to take measure and make him Canonical Cloaths against next day; which the Taylor did; and Mr. Herbert being so habited, went with his presentation to the learned Dr. Davenant, who was then Bishop of Salisbury, and he gave him Institution immediately." This was April 26, 1630. Five months later he received formal Ordination and came to live at Bemerton. He had just reached his thirty-eighth year when he began to carry out his lifelong purpose.

At the beginning of the Group which describes this struggle I place *EASTER WINGS* and the long *AFFLICTION*; the latter written, I believe, as late as 1628 and well summarizing the whole period of turmoil. Three poems follow, expressing political disappointment and the sense of depression in being cast aside. In two or three pieces there is repentance for a particular past sin. Then begins the debate over taking final Orders, extending

through half a dozen pieces and culminating in PEACE, THE PEARL, OBEDIENCE, THE ROSE, and AN OFFERING. The Series closes with two songs of gladness and one of tender distrust of his own desert.

THE CRISIS

DATE:

Found in W., and closely connected in subject with AFFLICTION, IV, 135.

METRE:

The form of this poem is not dictated by imitative considerations merely, but — as usual with Herbert — is shaped by the subject, in this case decline and enlargement. Possibly he may here be turning in a new direction the figure already employed in CHURCH-MUSICK, III, 199, l. 6; or THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 23, l. 83. Cf. PRAISE, III, 95, l. 5. Between any given line of one of these wings and the corresponding line of the other, there is close parallelism. In Quarles' Hieroglyphics are some Pyramids, similar to these EASTER WINGS, and having something of the same charm, as the line and thought enlarge together. I quote Hierog. IX.

“How soon
Our new-born light
Attains to full-eyed noon!
And this how soon to grey-haired night!
We spring, we bud, we blossom, and we blast,
Ere we can count our days — our days that flee so fast.”

Drummond of Hawthornden has a similarly expanding poem of thirteen lines, and Wither in *The Mistress of Philarete* four which swell and shrink through fourteen lines. Christopher Harvey was naturally attracted by a form so striking, and imitates it in his *Schola Cordis*, Ode XXXVII, without any perception, however, of its inner significance.

EASTER WINGS

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,

Though foolishly he lost the same,

Decaying more and more

Till he became

Most poore;

With thee

O let me rise

As larks, harmoniously,

And sing this day thy victories;

Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

5

9

SUBJECT:

Cramped by sin and sorrow, in Christ we are set free. Psalm lv, 6.

NOTES:

8. The mounting lark is mentioned again in SION, VI, 25, l. 23.
11. Contrasted with the first line of the first stanza.
19. *Imp* (German *impfen*)=to insert, and so to reinforce, to repair. The damaged wing of a hawk is mended by grafting it with feathers from another bird. Milton in his sonnet to Fairfax complains that the Scotch, allying with the English Royalists, will "imp their serpent wing." Oley uses the word in his Preface to THE COUNTRY PARSON: "With fasting, Herbert impeded his prayers both private and public."

EASTER WINGS

My tender age in sorrow did beginne;

And still with sicknesses and shame

Thou didst so punish sinne,

That I became

Most thinne.

15

With thee

Let me combine,

And feel this day thy victorie;

For if I imp my wing on thine,

Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

INTRODUCTORY:

Four other poems with this title are given, IV, 43, VI, 29, 31, 33,—“His Mother would by no means allow him to leave the University [i. e. his divinity studies] or to travel. And though he inclin'd very much to both, yet he would by no means satisfie his own desires at so dear a rate as to prove an undutiful Son to so affectionate a Mother. And what I have now said may partly appear in a Copy of Verses in his printed Poems; 'tis one of those that bears the title of AFFLICTION:” Walton's Life.

DATE:

Found in W. Probably written about 1628. Lines 55-60 show that he had not yet taken orders. Line 32 seems to point to that series of deaths in 1625-7 which changed the course of his life.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

The double-minded man. James i, 8.

NOTES:

1. Cf. THE GLANCE, VI, 91, where, nearing his death, he recalls these early experiences.
4. In the holy life I saw pleasures which I supposed would make a clear addition to those I already possessed. So AFFLICTION, IV, 43, l. 7.
10. 'Tice, again in THE SIZE, V, 195, l. 29.
11. *Such* = such and such. Stars are Herbert's frequent name for ideal and glorious ends; cf. THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 35, l. 171, and THE STARRE, IV, 161.

AFFLICTION

WHEN first thou didst entice to thee my heart,
I thought the service brave;
So many joyes I writ down for my part,
Besides what I might have
Out of my stock of naturall delights, 5
Augmented with thy gracious benefits.

I looked on thy furniture so fine,
And made it fine to me;
Thy glorious houshold-stuffe did me entwine,
And 'tice me unto thee. 10
Such starres I counted mine; both heav'n and
earth
Payd me my wages in a world of mirth.

17. *My sudden soul* ; cf. Walton's account of Herbert's marriage and ordination, and his own recognition of his hasty disposition in THE ANSWER, IV, 147, l. 6.
18. *Fiercenesse*, as in THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 51, l. 307 = excitability. "My brother George was not exempt from passion and choler (being infirmities to which all our race is subject) but that excepted, without reproach in his actions:" Lord Herbert's Autobiography.
24. *Made a partie* = raised a faction. The idea of a contest is continued in the next, and also in the eighth stanza.
25. *Began*. "Either a misprint or a noticeable idiom of the word began: yes, and a very beautiful idiom it is, the first colloquy or address of the soul:" S. T. Coleridge. Notes and Queries for September 21, 1850, says the idiom is still in use in Scotland. "You had better not begin to me," is the first address of the schoolboy, half angry, half frightened, at the bullying of a companion.

What pleasures could I want whose King I served ?
 Where joyes my fellows were.
Thus argu'd into hopes, my thoughts reserved 15
 No place for grief or fear.
Therefore my sudden soul caught at the place,
And made her youth and fiercenesse seek thy face.

At first thou gav'st me milk and sweetnesses;
 I had my wish and way. 20
My dayes were straw'd with flow'rs and happinesse,
 There was no moneth but May.
But with my yeares sorrow did twist and grow,
And made a partie unawares for wo.

My flesh began unto my soul in pain, 25
 Sicknesses cleave my bones;
Consuming agues dwell in ev'ry vein,
 And tune my breath to grones.
Sorrow was all my soul; I scarce beleaved,
Till grief did tell me roundly, that I lived. 30

35. *Fence* = defence.
37. B. Oley, in his Preface to *THE COUNTRY PARSON*, writes of Herbert: "Himself intimates that whereas his Birth and Spirit prompted him to martiall Atchievements — *The way that takes the town* — and not to sit simpering over a Book, God did often melt his spirit and entice him with Academick Honor to be content to wear and wrap himsele in a gown so long till he durst not put it off, nor retire to any other calling." The scholar's life is here, and in the previous extract from Walton, conceived as naturally leading to the priesthood. Clerks are Clerics or Clergymen.
38. *The way that takes the town*, again in a reading of W. for l. 22 of *THE CHURCH-PORCH*.
44. *Simpring* = the smile of one in an inferior position who is seeking favor; cf. *THE CHURCH-PORCH*, III, 29, l. 123, and *THE SEARCH*, V, 219, l. 14. He alludes to his many unsuccessful attempts at secular preferment.
45. So holding him to university life and the priestly aim.
47. *Till I came neare*; when I tried to come to close quarters with the scholar's life and to content myself with it, I could not.

When I got health thou took'st away my life,
 And more; for my friends die.
My mirth and edge was lost; a blunted knife
 Was of more use then I. 34

Thus thinne and lean, without a fence or friend,
I was blown through with ev'ry storm and winde.

Whereas my birth and spirit rather took
 The way that takes the town,
Thou didst betray me to a lingring book
 And wrap me in a gown. 40
I was entangled in the world of strife
Before I had the power to change my life.

Yet, for I threatned oft the siege to raise,
 Not simpring all mine age,
Thou often didst with Academick praise 45
 Melt and dissolve my rage.
I took thy sweetned pill till I came neare;
I could not go away, nor persevere.

50. Lest I should accustom myself to such hesitations, illness compelled me to abandon secular hopes.
53. *Thy power crosse-bias*, i. e. cuts athwart me, against my natural disposition, as *bias* is used in *CONSTANCIE*, V, 121, l. 32. There is another mention of bowling in *PROVIDENCE*, V, 85, l. 60.
55. *Here* = probably Woodford or Dauntsey.
56. Herbert was a lover of books. In a letter to his step-father (1617), soliciting more money for books, he writes: *If a book of four or five shillings come in my way, I buy it, though I fast for it; yea, sometimes of ten shillings.*
57. The same wish is expressed in *EMPLOYMENT*, III, 105, l. 21, and suggested in *MAN*, IV, 13, l. 8.
60. *Just*; I would keep what was intrusted to me.
61. Each pair of lines in this final stanza represents a different mood of mind.
66. The resolve of reason checked by love (cf. the close of *THE COLLAR*, V, 211) is intentionally paradoxical, but in substance means: I cannot take another master; fixed as I am in love to thee, I know no greater punishment than to be forbidden to love. Cf. Psalm lvi, 3. Possibly it is a reminiscence of Sidney's Sonnet LXXXVII: "I had been vexed if vexed I had not been."

Yet lest perchance I should too happie be
 In my unhappinesse, 50
Turning my purge to food, thou throwest me
 Into more sicknesses.

Thus doth thy power crosse-bias me, not making
Thine own gift good, yet me from my wayes taking.

Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me 55
 None of my books will show.
I reade, and sigh, and wish I were a tree,
 For sure then I should grow
To fruit or shade. At least some bird would trust
Her houshold to me, and I should be just. 60

Yet, though thou troublest me, I must be meek;
 In weaknesse must be stout.
Well, I will change the service and go seek
 Some other master out.
Ah my deare God! Though I am clean forgot,
Let me not love thee if I love thee not. 66

INTRODUCTORY:

Another poem with this title is given, III, 103. In this is expressed a dependence upon God to make and keep us well employed; in that an obligation upon ourselves to be so.

DATE:

Found in W. Trying to content himself with failure.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Herbert's frequent lament over inactive powers.

NOTES:

1. This metaphor is worked out more elaborately in THE FLOWER, VI, 65.
2. *Extend*=unfold, grant opportunity for enlargement. So again l. 1, and 6.
4. So in DENIALL, IV, 95, l. 24.
5. Cf. SUBMISSION, V, 205, l. 7.
6. But I too should then have a place among thy honorable things. Cf. l. 21.
8. I. e. DOOMS-DAY, IV, 63.
11. In this place and only during this life is enjoyment measured out to us. The material for it is in thy keeping. Bestow!

EMPLOYMENT

IF as a flowre doth spread and die,
Thou wouldst extend me to some good,
Before I were by frost's extremitie
Nipt in the bud;

The sweetnesse and the praise were thine, 5
But the extension and the room,
Which in thy garland I should fill, were mine
At thy great doom.

For as thou dost impart thy grace,
The greater shall our glorie be. 10
The measure of our joyes is in this place,
The stuffe with thee.

13. Cf. DULNESSE, V, 207, l. 1.
16. *But with delays*=though even in coming to its end life lags.
19. *That*=honey. *These*=flowers. Coleridge seems to have had these lines in mind in his *Work Without Hope* :

“And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.”

21. In MAN, IV, 11, and in PROVIDENCE, V, 79, Herbert explains at some length his conception of the world as a divine organism, in which each part is linked with every other part. Cf. Drayton, *Eclogues*, VII, 184 :

“The everlasting chain
Which together all things tied,
And unmoved doth them retain,
And by which they shall abide.”

22. *Companie*=I am as useless to society as a weed, reversing the thought of THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 57, l. 368.—*A weed*, not the *flowre* of l. 1 and 19. Cf. THE CROSSE, V, 233, l. 30.

Let me not languish then, and spend
A life as barren to thy praise
As is the dust to which that life doth tend, 15
But with delaies.

All things are busie; onely I
Neither bring hony with the bees,
Nor flowres to make that, nor the husbandrie
To water these. 20

I am no link of thy great chain,
But all my companie is a weed.
Lord place me in thy consort; give one strain
To my poore reed.

DATE:

Not found in W. Line 7 implies that he is not yet in the priesthood.

METRE:

Of seventeen sonnets, six — like this — are in the Shakespearian form.

SUBJECT:

Life passes. My work remains undone. Men call me dilatory. There has been reason for the delay, — though what it is, I cannot precisely say.

NOTES:

3. *Fierce youth*; cf. AFFLICTION, IV, 137, l. 18. Youth is spoken of as now past. — *Bandie* may mean toss to and fro; or more probably band together, as in HUMILITIE, IV, 37, l. 29.
5. Probably written after his disappointment at Court.
6. Cf. EVEN-SONG, V, 59, l. 12.
8. A mist rising from a damp place. Perhaps suggested by James iv, 14. Again, in CHURCH-MONUMENTS, III, 201, l. 5. Cf. Herbert's letter to Bishop Andrewes: *Ut halitus tenuiores solent, qui primo caloris suasu excitati atque expergefacti, ubi sursum processerint paulo, frige facti demum relabuntur.* Vaughan imitates in his Shower, Isaac's Marriage, and Disorder and Frailty.
9. *Means*=aims at. THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 53, l. 334.
10. *Pursie*=swollen.
13. We say, "Show me off, and set me off."
14. *More*=more fully. The object of *know* is *which*.

THE ANSWER

My comforts drop and melt away like snow.

I shake my head, and all the thoughts and ends,
Which my fierce youth did bandie, fall and flow

Like leaves about me; or like summer friends,
Flyes of estates and sunne-shine. But to all 5

Who think me eager, hot, and undertaking,
But in my prosecutions slack and small —

As a young exhalation, newly waking,
Scorns his first bed of dirt, and means the sky,

But cooling by the way, grows pursie and slow,
And setling to a cloud, doth live and die 11

In that dark state of tears — to all that so
Show me and set me, I have one reply:

Which they that know the rest, know more then I.

INTRODUCTORY:

Ambition, or untimely desire of promotion to an higher state or place, is a common temptation to men of any eminency, especially being single men: THE COUNTRY PARSON, IX. "On the time of his Induction Herbert said to Mr. Woodnot, *I now look back upon my aspiring thoughts and think myself more happy than if I had attained what then I so ambitiously thirsted for:*" Walton's Life.

DATE:

Found in W. Written when reflecting on baffled ambition, perhaps his failure to obtain the Secretaryship of State.

METRE:

Used also in DIVINITIE, V, 97, and CHURCH-MUSICK, III, 199.

SUBJECT:

The futility of fame.

"Resolve to be thyself! And know that he
Who finds himself loses his misery."

M. Arnold, Self-Dependence.

NOTES:

8. Over-zealous watchfulness.

15. *Let loose to*=aim its arrow at.

16. *Take up*=accept, accommodate itself to. Herbert probably has the Emperor Charles V in mind, who in 1555 abdicated his throne and retired to a cloister. The occurrence is referred to by both Walton and Oley in their Lives of Herbert.

CONTENT

PEACE mutt'ring thoughts, and do not grudge to
keep

Within the walls of your own breast.

Who cannot on his own bed sweetly sleep,
Can on another's hardly rest.

Gad not abroad at ev'ry quest and call 5
Of an untrained hope or passion.

To court each place or fortune that doth fall
Is wantonnesse in contemplation.

Mark how the fire in flints doth quiet lie,
Content and warm t' it self alone; 10

But when it would appeare to others' eye,
Without a knock it never shone.

Give me the pliant minde, whose gentle measure
Complies and suits with all estates;

Which can let loose to a crown, and yet with plea-
sure 15

Take up within a cloister's gates.

20. One who is inwardly contented finds comfort and freedom from accident everywhere. The rhyme occurs again in CONFESSIO, VI, 21, l. 22.
21. *Brag* = things boasted of. So Milton, *Comus*, l. 745, "Beauty is Nature's brag."
22. Cf. DOOMS-DAY, IV, 65, l. 21. Herbert's disposition to repeat himself is strikingly seen on comparing this passage with one in his ORATION ON THE RETURN OF PRINCE CHARLES FROM SPAIN, delivered in October, 1623: *In resolutione illa ultima, nulla sit distinctio populi aut principis. Nulla sunt sceptrum in elementis, nulli fasces aut securae. Vapores serviles ad nubes educti, aequae magnum tonitru edent ac regi.*
25. The only difference between thee and men of eminence is that no record will be preserved of the events of thy life. So A DIALOGUE-ANTHEME, VI, 103, l. 3, and Donne's Canonization, l. 31: "And if no piece of Chronicle we prove."
28. *May not rent* = may yield no returns. *Rent* is not confined by Herbert to income from lands. Cf. PROVIDENCE, V. 81, l. 27.
29. *Deeds* whose full significance you alone can know.
31. *Digestion*, in apposition to *wit*, carries out the figure already begun in *chaw'd* and *tongue*. People will be able to digest, assimilate, comprehend, your deeds only if they are themselves intelligent.
32. *Nourisht*, that to which you gave so much care.
33. *Discoursing*, probably here used in its early sense of running to and fro.

This soul doth span the world, and hang content
From either pole unto the centre;
Where in each room of the well-furnisht tent 19
He lies warm and without adventure.

The brags of life are but a nine dayes' wonder.
And after death the fumes that spring
From private bodies make as big a thunder
As those which rise from a huge King.

Onely thy Chronicle is lost; and yet 25
Better by worms be all once spent
Then to have hellish moths still gnaw and fret
Thy name in books, which may not rent:

When all thy deeds, whose brunt thou feel'st alone,
Are chaw'd by others' pens and tongue;
And as their wit is, their digestion, 31
Thy nourisht fame is weak or strong.

Then cease discoursing, soul. Till thine own
ground,
Do not thy self or friends importune.
He that by seeking hath himself once found 35
Hath ever found a happie fortune.

INTRODUCTORY:

Another poem with this title is given, V, 133. In both cases the word does not carry our meaning of desire for social esteem, but has its old sense of emptiness, futile action.

DATE:

Not found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

He is enticed by a fair-eyed, money-loving woman (l. 3, 6, 12); cf. *THE CONVERT*, VI, 157, and *THE PILGRIMAGE*, V, 237, l. 13. The temptation which Herbert oftenest mentions is that of lust.

NOTES:

3. Cf. *SONNETS TO HIS MOTHER*, III, 81, l. 22, and *FRAILTIE*, IV, 155, l. 3.
4. *Embroyderies*; cf. *DOTAGE*, V, 137, l. 5.
15. Cf. last stanza of *THE PULLEY*, V, 149.
18. This line suggests that the poem was written early in life, though it does not appear in W.

DATE:

Found in W.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Attracted both by the world and the priesthood, he sees that the latter, which he has loved from childhood, may be pushed aside by the former, which he inwardly despises. Cf. with VANITIE.

NOTES:

1. *In my silence*=in times of reflection.
6. *Deare*=costly.
9. *Abroad*, in contrast with *in my silence*, l. 1.—*Regiments*=governments, methods of rule. Hooker uses the word frequently, e. g. : “Men might have lived without any public regiment:” Eccl. Pol. I, 10.
11. *Sad*=serious, sober. Cf. THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 43, l. 247.
13. *Weeds*=garments; cf. THE SACRIFICE, III, 141, l. 178.
15. *Dust before*; cf. l. 4, and LOVE, III, 85, l. 23.
16. *Prick*=stimulate; so used in FAITH, IV, 31, l. 38, and Ecclesiasticus xxii, 19.
18. Cf. l. 7.
19. *Affront*=be brought into comparison with.
22. *It*=honour, riches, or fair eyes, l. 3 and 17.
23. *Commodious to*=fitted to, with power to do that for which the Tower of Babel was designed, Genesis xi, 4. Babel is mentioned again in SINNES ROUND, V, 145, l. 15.

FRAILTIE

LORD, in my silence how do I despise
 What upon trust
 Is styled *honour, riches, or fair eyes,*
 But is *fair dust!*
 I surname them *gilded clay,* 5
 Deare earth, fine grasse or hay.
 In all, I think my foot doth ever tread
 Upon their head.

But when I view abroad both Regiments,
 The world's and thine; 10
 Thine clad with simplenesse and sad events,
 The other fine,
 Full of glorie and gay weeds,
 Brave language, braver deeds; 14
 That which was dust before doth quickly rise,
 And prick mine eyes.

O brook not this, lest if what even now
 My foot did tread,
 Affront those joyes wherewith thou didst endow
 And long since wed 20
 My poore soul, ev'n sick of love,
 It may a Babel prove
 Commodious to conquer heav'n and thee
 Planted in me.

INTRODUCTORY:

Cf. the following poem, and THE STORM, VI, 23.

DATE:

Not found in W. But he is questioning whether he shall longer disobey the divine call, and hopes that God may bless his alien wishes.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

The projection upon God of our desires. He has been observing some meteor shower, and reflects that as influences pass from heaven to earth, so may others pass from earth to heaven. A star with Herbert is always a name for an exalted and divine impulse, something *which has the face of fire, but ends in rest* (l. 8); cf. VANITIE, IV, 153, l. 3; THE BANQUET, V, 53, l. 10.

NOTES:

1-3. One of the Latin poems contained in the Williams Manuscript (Lucus V) is upon the Holy Scriptures. The opening lines describe the author's mental agitation, and the poem proceeds:

*Numquid pro foribus sedendo nuper
Stellam vespere suxerim volentem,
Haec autem hospitio latere turpi
Prorsus nescia, cogitat recessum?*

ARTILLERIE

As I one ev'ning sat before my cell,
 Me thoughts a starre did shoot into my lap.
 I rose and shook my clothes, as knowing well
 That from small fires comes oft no small mishap.
 When suddenly I heard one say, 5
Do as thou usest, disobey,
Expell good motions from thy breast
Which have the face of fire, but end in rest.

I, who had heard of musick in the spheres, 9
 But not of speech in starres, began to muse.
 But turning to my God, whose ministers
 The starres and all things are, If I refuse,
 Dread Lord, said I, so oft my good,
 Then I refuse not ev'n with bloud
 To wash away my stubborn thought; 15
 For I will do or suffer what I ought.

9. Possibly there are other allusions to the *music in the spheres* in PROVIDENCE, V, 83, l. 40, and THE STORM, VI, 23, l. 13. For full statement of the doctrine, see Milton's Ode on the Nativity, stanza xiii, and Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, v, i, 60.
- 14-16. My refusal (l. 6) is due to my determination to bear the penalty of my own sin, and not to allow thee to wash it away with thy blood.
24. The justification of l. 19.
27. "*Parley* and *artickling* (l. 31) are both military terms; the soul cannot surrender on articles of capitulation:" A. B. Grosart.
28. *Behold my breast*, i. e. shoot into me thine arrows also.
30. So CLASPING OF HANDS, V, 37, l. 2.

But I have also starres and shooters too,
Born where thy servants both artilleries use.
My tears and prayers night and day do woove
And work up to thee, yet thou dost refuse. 20
Not but I am (I must say still)
Much more oblig'd to do thy will
Then thou to grant mine, but because
Thy promise now hath ev'n set thee thy laws.

Then we are shooters both, and thou dost deigne
To enter combate with us and contest 26
With thine own clay. But I would parley fain.
Shunne not my arrows, and behold my breast.
Yet if thou shunnest, I am thine;
I must be so, if I am mine. 30
There is no articing with thee.
I am but finite, yet thine infinitely.

INTRODUCTORY:

Vaughan imitates this poem in his *The Star*. The star is a favorite word with Herbert, occurring in eighteen of his poems. He attaches mystic meanings to it, and employs it to indicate more than the physical object. Perhaps in early life his imagination had been stirred by some striking spectacle in the heavens. Halley's comet appeared in 1607. Another notable comet appeared in November, 1618, and was believed by many to prophesy the death of the Queen. (See S. R. Gardiner, *Hist. of England*, III, 298, and Howell's *Letters*, Bk. I, 2, VI.) In this strange poem he may connect the nimbus which he has seen around the head of Christ in some picture (l. 2 and 22) with the coal of fire which an angel brought from the altar (Isaiah vi, 5-8) as the call and purification of a prophet for his work, i. e. in Herbert's case, the priesthood.

DATE:

Not in W. But, like the preceding, it discusses his divine call.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever:" Daniel xii, 3.

NOTES:

12. *It* = my heart, as in l. 8.

THE STARRE

BRIGHT spark, shot from a brighter place,
Where beams surround my Saviour's face,
Canst thou be any where
So well as there?

Yet if thou wilt from thence depart, 5
Take a bad lodging in my heart;
For thou canst make a debter,
And make it better.

First with thy fire-work burn to dust
Folly, and worse then folly, lust. 10
Then with thy light refine,
And make it shine:

So disengag'd from sinne and sicknesse,
Touch it with thy celestiall quicknesse,
That it may hang and move 15
After thy love.

17. *Light* of l. 11.
18. *Motion, and heat*, l. 14 and 9.
19. The place described in l. 2.
26. *Winde* is a favorite word with Herbert. See **THE WORLD**, IV, 23, l. 13; **OUR LIFE IS HID**, IV, 79, l. 6; **CONFESSION**, VI, 19, l. 8.
30. Cf. **EMPLOYMENT**, IV, 145, l. 18.
31. Cf. **HOME**, VI, 85 l. 20.

Then with our trinitie of light,
Motion, and heat, let's take our flight
Unto the place where thou
Before didst bow. 20

Get me a standing there, and place
Among the beams which crown the face
Of him who dy'd to part
Sinne and my heart.

That so among the rest I may 25
Glitter, and curle, and winde as they;
That winding is their fashion
Of adoration.

Sure thou wilt joy, by gaining me,
To flie home like a laden bee 30
Unto that hive of beams
And garland-streams.

INTRODUCTORY:

Besides this poem the following have the dialogue form: HEAVEN, IV, 69; LOVE, IV, 197; BUSINESSSE, V, 139; LOVE UNKNOWN, V, 179; and A DIALOGUE-ANTHEME, VI, 103.

DATE:

Not found in W. Written when debating about dedicating himself to the priesthood.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

Shall my lack of worth keep me from God? Shall it not rather draw me to Him?

NOTES:

4. *Waving*=waving; cf. James i, 6.
6. *Gains*. Cannot make such a wretch profitable to thee.
12. *Treasure*, so OBEDIENCE, IV, 181, l. 15.

DIALOGUE

SWEETEST Saviour, if my soul
 Were but worth the having,
 Quickly should I then controll
 Any thought of waving.
 But when all my care and pains 5
 Cannot give the name of gains
 To thy wretch so full of stains,
 What delight or hope remains?

*What (childe) is the ballance thine,
 Thine the poise and measure ? 10
 If I say, Thou shalt be mine,
 Finger not my treasure.
 What the gains in having thee
 Do amount to, onely he
 Who for man was sold can see, 15
 That transferr'd th' accounts to me.*

20. *Savour*=knowledge (Fr. *savoir*).
22. John xiv, 6.
25. *That*=that disclaimer.
28. Would be as resigned to the divine will as I was.
Isaiah xlv, 9.
31. Philippians ii, 6-8.
32. Here as in THE COLLAR, V, 213, l. 36, the settlement of the controversy is reached through affection.

INTRODUCTORY:

"He knew full well what he did when he received Holy orders, as appears by the Poems called PRIESTHOOD and AARON:" Oley's Life of Herbert.

DATE:

Not found in W. Hesitating over the priesthood.

METRE:

Used only here, but differs merely in rhyming system from DOTAGE, V, 137.

SUBJECT:

The decision whether he is worthy to enter the priesthood must be made by God, not by himself.

NOTES:

2. Matthew xvi, 19.
5. Walton tells how Herbert, after he was made rector of Bemerton, changed his sword and silk clothes into a canonical coat. Before taking orders as a priest in 1630 he had accepted the sinecure Rectorship of Whitford in 1623, and the Prebend of Leighton Ecclesia in 1626; but in both cases as deacon only.
10. From a child he was feeble, inclining to fevers, weak of lungs and digestion. EASTER WINGS, IV, 133, l. 11-15.
16. *That earth* = potter's clay. Romans ix, 21. He has in mind the fire of l. 7.

THE PRIESTHOOD

BLEST Order, which in power dost so excell
 That with th' one hand thou liftest to the sky,
 And with the other throwest down to hell
 In thy just censures; fain would I draw nigh,
 Fain put thee on, exchanging my lay-sword 5
 For that of th' holy word.

But thou art fire, sacred and hallow'd fire,
 And I but earth and clay. Should I presume
 To wear thy habit, the severe attire
 My slender compositions might consume. 10
 I am both foul and brittle, much unfit
 To deal in holy Writ.

Yet have I often seen, by cunning hand
 And force of fire, what curious things are made
 Of wretched earth. Where once I scorn'd to stand,
 That earth is fitted by the fire and trade 16
 Of skilfull artists for the boards of those
 Who make the bravest shows.

24. Cf. MAN, IV, 15, l. 24.

32. 2 Samuel vi, 6.

39. *The distance*; cf. THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 45, l. 260.

40-42. Proud evil people honor the great by attempting to rival with their own splendor that of their princes, and still falling short. Good poor people, who will show no less honor, must do so by fulness of submission. So may I, submissive in my poverty, lead God to count me worthy to be his priest.

But since those great ones, be they ne're so great,
 Come from the earth from whence those vessels
 come; 20

So that at once both feeder, dish, and meat
 Have one beginning and one finall summe;
 I do not greatly wonder at the sight,
 If earth in earth delight.

But th' holy men of God such vessels are 25
 As serve him up who all the world commands.
 When God vouchsafeth to become our fare,
 Their hands convey him who conveys their
 hands.

O what pure things, most pure must those things be,
 Who bring my God to me!

Wherefore I dare not, I, put forth my hand 31
 To hold the Ark, although it seem to shake
 Through th' old sinnes and new doctrines of our
 land.

Onely since God doth often vessels make
 Of lowly matter for high uses meet, 35
 I throw me at his feet.

There will I lie, untill my Maker seek
 For some mean stuffe whereon to show his skill.
 Then is my time. The distance of the meek 39
 Doth flatter power. Lest good come short of ill
 In praising might, the poore do by submission
 What pride by opposition.

INTRODUCTORY:

“ An admirable specimen of the allegorical style which, under the first two Stuart kings, took the place of the pastoral Elizabethan allegory. Few poets, in C. Lamb’s language, are more ‘matterful’ than Herbert, or express their thoughts in fewer words:” F. T. Palgrave.

DATE:

Not found in W. He reviews the past, and is happy in thinking of his coming priesthood.

METRE:

Unique, but closely resembles that of *THE PILGRIMAGE*, V, 237. Vaughan has imitated it in his *I Walked the Other Day*, and in *The Sap*.

SUBJECT:

Peace is sought first in solitude, next in beauty, then in high station, and only at the last in the service of God. Yet nothing can bring peace except that bread which came down from heaven.

NOTES:

5. The very emptiness of withdrawal from the world denies him peace.
12. Beauty proves unsubstantial.
17. So *CHURCH-RENTS AND SCHISMES*, V, 105, l. 5. Envy attends eminence.

PEACE

SWEET Peace, where dost thou dwell? I humbly
crave

Let me once know.

I sought thee in a secret cave,
And ask'd if Peace were there.

A hollow winde did seem to answer, No: 5
Go seek elsewhere.

I did, and going did a rainbow note.

Surely, thought I,
This is the lace of Peace's coat,

I will search out the matter. 10

But while I lookt, the clouds immediately
Did break and scatter.

Then went I to a garden and did spy

A gallant flower,
The crown Imperiall. Sure, said I, 15
Peace at the root must dwell.

But when I digg'd, I saw a worm devoure
What show'd so well.

19. One who had had experiences like my own.
22. Hebrews vii, 2.
23. *Salem* or Jerusalem, "the home of peace," is thought of as the chief city in the life of Christ; cf. Psalm lxxvi, 2.
28. The twelve Apostles, through whom the bread of life is given. They appear as twelve suns in WHITSUNDAY, III, 159, l. 15.
35. This final inner secrecy is contrasted with the outer secrecy at first sought in l. 3.
37. *My garden*. Perhaps the *rev'rend good old man* of l. 19 is St. Peter. Or may it be the *friend* of LOVE UNKNOWN, V, 181, l. 43, and possibly of THE PILGRIMAGE, V, 237, l. 17? A sketch of this poem appears in AN OFFERING, stanza iv, IV, 191.
42. Psalm cxix, 165.

INTRODUCTORY:

That for which all else should be exchanged. Cf. the Book of Wisdom vii, 17-23, and Job xxviii, 18.

DATE:

Found in W. He decides on the priesthood.

METRE:

Unique.

SUBJECT:

For Thee, I gladly resign Learning, Honour, and Pleasure, — whose full significance I know. "For his unforc'd choice to serve at God's Altar he seems in THE PEARL to rejoyce:" Walton's Life.

NOTES:

2. "I have a feeling that Herbert intends a quibble here between the printing press and some other, such as a wine or olive press. I don't know what kind of press would be fed by a *head* (i. e. fount) and *pipes*, but there may be some confusion. In Zechariah's vision the lamps are fed by *pipes* from the olive trees:" H. C. Beeching. Conducting-pipes are mentioned in WHITSUNDAY, III, 159, l. 17-18, and THE WATER-COURSE, V, 147, l. 6.
3. The branches of learning successively mentioned are Mathematics, Ethics, Jurisprudence, Astrology, The Natural Sciences, Alchemy, Geography.
6. *Forc'd*. AVARICE, V, 113, l. 9.
8. "*Stock and surplus* may be the learning we inherit, and that which we add to it:" H. C. Beeching.

THE PEARL

(MATTHEW XIII, 45)

I KNOW the wayes of learning, both the head
 And pipes that feed the presse, and make it
 runne;
 What reason hath from nature borrowed,
 Or of it self, like a good huswife, spunne 4
 In laws and policie; what the starres conspire;
 What willing nature speaks, what forc'd by fire;
 Both th' old discoveries and the new-found seas,
 The stock and surplus, cause and historie;
 All these stand open, or I have the keyes;
 Yet I love thee. 10

I know the wayes of honour, what maintains
 The quick returns of courtesie and wit;
 In vies of favours whether partie gains
 When glorie swells the heart, and moldeth it
 To all expressions both of hand and eye, 15
 Which on the world a true-love-knot may tie,
 And bear the bundle wheresoe're it goes;
 How many drammes of spirit there must be
 To sell my life unto my friends or foes;
 Yet I love thee. 20

13. *Whether* = which one of two. "I know how to gauge by the rules of courtesy who wins in a contest of doing favors; when each party is urged by ambition to do all he can by look or deed to win the world and bind it on his back:" H. C. Beeching.
19. He *sells his life* to his friends in such drinking-bouts as are described in **THE CHURCH-PORCH**, stanzas vii and viii; and to his foes in the duel.
25. *Twentie*, i. e. going back to the beginning of Western civilization, to the days of Greece and Rome.
26. *Unbridled store* = unhampered wealth.
29. A single will is pitted against five senses.
32. *Sealed* is the technical term for closing the eyes of a hawk. So **THE CHURCH-PORCH**, III, 63, l. 415.
34. "The terms of the exchange, and the nature of the things exchanged (learning, etc.) are well understood by the poet; yet it is not his wisdom, but God's guidance, that has prompted the surrender:" H. C. Beeching.
35. *Rate and price*. The phrase is repeated from **THE CHURCH-PORCH**, III, 15, l. 2.
38. Perhaps an allusion to Ariadne's silken clue by which Theseus passed the Labyrinth. But classical allusions are rare in Herbert. A clue is again mentioned in **THE CHURCH-PORCH**, III, 29, l. 124.
40. The same ending as **MATTENS**, IV, 81.

I know the wayes of pleasure, the sweet strains,
The lullings and the relishes of it;
The propositions of hot bloud and brains;
What mirth and musick mean; what love and wit
Have done these twentie hundred yeares and more;
I know the projects of unbridled store; 26
My stuffe is flesh, not brasse; my senses live,
And grumble oft that they have more in me
Then he that curbs them, being but one to five;
Yet I love thee. 30

I know all these and have them in my hand;
Therefore not sealed but with open eyes
I flie to thee, and fully understand
Both the main sale and the commodities;
And at what rate and price I have thy love, 35
With all the circumstances that may move.
Yet through the labyrinths, not my groveling wit,
But thy silk twist let down from heav'n to me
Did both conduct and teach me how by it
To climbe to thee. 40

INTRODUCTORY :

The legal character of this poem recalls Donne's Will, and Quarles' Last Will in his *Divine Fancies*, iv, 67. The Elizabethan love-poets often amused themselves with legal terms. So Shakespeare, Sonnet LXXXVII and CXXXIV; and Donne, *Satire II*, l. 47-57. Sir John Davies, *Gulling Sonnets*, VIII, ridicules the fashion.

DATE:

Found in W. This poem marks the formal ending of Herbert's long-deferred decision to enter the priesthood.

METRE:

Unique, though resembling *THE SIZE*, V, 193.

SUBJECT:

This is the covenant that I will make. Jeremiah xxxi, 33, and Hebrews x, 16. For Herbert's acquaintance with Law, see *THE COUNTRY PARSON* XXIII.

NOTES:

13. *This* = this deed or conveyance, l. 10.
17. 2 Thessalonians i, 11.
18. This line has parallels in the second stanza of *THE ELIXER*, III, 99, *PROVIDENCE*, V, 81, l. 32, and *THE CHURCH MILITANT*, VI, 119, l. 8.

OBEDIENCE

My God, if writings may
Convey a Lordship any way
Whither the buyer and the seller please,
Let it not thee displease
If this poore paper do as much as they. 5

On it my heart doth bleed
As many lines as there doth need
To passe it self and all it hath to thee;
To which I do agree,
And here present it as my speciall deed. 10

If that hereafter Pleasure
Cavill, and claim her part and measure,
As if this passed with a reservation,
Or some such words in fashion, 14
I here exclude the wrangler from thy treasure.

O let thy sacred will
All thy delight in me fulfill!
Let me not think an action mine own way,
But as thy love shall sway,
Resigning up the rudder to thy skill. 20

21. Psalm viii, 4. In this and the preceding stanza, the legal terminology is for the moment dropped.
22. Cf. MAN, IV, 13, l. 8.
25. The thought is repeated in SUBMISSION, V, 205, l. 19.
28. So DOTAGE, V, 137, l. 7.
30. Or if we did attempt to take, might be withstood.
33. *Where in the deed*, i. e. l. 10.
34. A line clumsy in rhythm is so rare in Herbert that I suspect this should read, *Of gift or a donation*.
40. *To both our goods* = to the advantage of us both.
- 41-45. What if some like-minded man, reading my deed, should put hand and heart to a similar deed of his own! How blessed to have the angels enter our covenants in the celestial archives together!

Lord, what is man to thee,
 That thou shouldst minde a rotten tree?
 Yet since thou canst not choose but see my actions,
 So great are thy perfections, 24
 Thou mayst as well my actions guide, as see.

Besides, thy death and bloud
 Show'd a strange love to all our good.
 Thy sorrows were in earnest; no faint proffer,
 Or superficial offer 29
 Of what we might not take, or be withstood.

Wherefore I all forego.
 To one word onely I say, No:
 Where in the deed there was an intimation
 Of a *gift* or *donation*,
 Lord, let it now by way of *purchase* go. 35

He that will passe his land,
 As I have mine, may set his hand
 And heart unto this deed, when he hath read,
 And make the purchase spread
 To both our goods, if he to it will stand. 40

How happie were my part
 If some kinde man would thrust his heart
 Into these lines; till in heav'ns court of rolls
 They were by winged souls
 Entred for both, farre above their desert! 45

INTRODUCTORY:

“ We have had many blessed patterns of a holy life in the British Church, though now trodden under foot and branded with the name of Antichristian. I shall propose but one to you, the most obedient son that ever his Mother had, and yet a most glorious true Saint and a seer. Hark how like a busy bee he hymns it to the flowers, while in a handful of blossoms gathered by himself he foresees his own dissolution:” H. Vaughan, *Man in Darkness*.

DATE:

Not found in W. Herbert's reply to those who condemned his decision.

METRE:

Used also in *THE CALL*, V, 9.

SUBJECT:

In alluring objects — pleasures or roses — we must consider ultimate effects.

NOTES:

2. *Sugred lies*. The phrase is repeated in *DULNESSE*, V, 209, l. 21.
4. What this is, is explained in *THE SIZE*, V, 193.
12. Cf. *OBEDIENCE*, IV, 181, l. 8.

18. Cf. PROVIDENCE, V, 87, l. 78, and LIFE, VI, 81, l. 13.
- 19, 20. Its purgative effect reveals the rose as our beautiful enemy and inclines us thereafter to avoid it. So should the repentance induced by pleasure cause antipathy (l. 28).
23. *It*=the summary of all that is sought by lovers of beauty and fragrance.
29. And therefore I do not take pleasures.
31. *Fairly*=beautifully, gracefully, with no bitterness.
32. This is the fourth stanza in which *rose* is rhymed.

What is fairer then a rose?
What is sweeter? Yet it purgeth.
Purgings enmitie disclose,
Enmitie forbearance urgeth. 20

If then all that worldlings prize
Be contracted to a rose,
Sweetly there indeed it lies,
But it biteth in the close.

So this flower doth judge and sentence 25
Worldly joyes to be a scourge;
For they all produce repentance,
And repentance is a purge.

But I health, not physick choose.
Onely though I you oppose, 30
Say that fairly I refuse,
For my answer is a rose.

DATE:

Not found in W. He wonders whether he is whole-hearted enough for the priesthood. There is similarity between this and LOVE UNKNOWN, V, 179.

METRE:

Unique, but differs only in rhyming system from THE CHURCH-PORCH, III, 15; JORDAN, III, 91; CHURCH - MONUMENTS, III, 201; and SINNES ROUND, V, 143. The metre of the song is unique.

SUBJECT:

A gift should be clean and whole. Only He to whom I give it can render my heart such.

NOTES:

2. If God gave gifts to us as slowly as we, in our folly, bring gifts to Him, what would become of us!
- 7-10. Since thy gifts are many, I could wish that my gift of a heart were many too. Perhaps it may prove so; for as a good priest, I may be fruitful and bring thee many hearts. Cf. OBEDIENCE, IV, 183, l. 42. Possibly Herbert here plays also on the old mathematical opinion which regarded the number one as not itself a true number, but only the general form or scheme of unity underlying all numbers. To this opinion Shakespeare alludes in Sonnet CXXXVI: "Among a number one is reckoned none." Herbert urges that under suitable circumstances one might deserve to be entitled a number.

AN OFFERING

COME, bring thy gift. If blessings were as slow
As men's returns, what would become of fools?
What hast thou there? A heart? But is it
pure?
Search well and see, for hearts have many holes.
Yet one pure heart is nothing to bestow. 5
In Christ two natures met to be thy cure.

O that within us hearts had propagation,
Since many gifts do challenge many hearts!
Yet one, if good, may title to a number,
And single things grow fruitfull by deserts. 10
In publick judgements one may be a nation
And fence a plague, while others sleep and
slumber.

But all I fear is lest thy heart displease,
As neither good nor one. So oft divisions
Thy lusts have made, and not thy lusts alone;
Thy passions also have their set partitions. 16
These parcell out thy heart. Recover these,
And thou mayst offer many gifts in one.

11. When *publick judgements* are about to fall, a single man may stand for a whole nation, — like Lot or David, — and while the rest are asleep may save his people from calamity.
12. The *plague* or infection was in Herbert's time a constant menace. In 1630 most of the Cambridge colleges were closed on account of its ravages. Herbert alludes to it elsewhere in the CHURCH-PORCH, III, 43, l. 249, and perhaps in MISERIE, IV, 49, l. 35.
13. *Thy*=*my*. He addresses himself.
17. *Parcell out*. So LOVE, III, 83, l. 3.
22. *All-heal*. "The mistletoe was so called by the Druids on account of its medicinal qualities:" H. R. Waller. — The figure is worked out at length in PEACE, IV, 173. Cf. also FAITH, IV, 29, l. 9.
33. Even when purified, the gift is slight.
- 37, 38. Same rhyme as in DIALOGUE, IV, 167, l. 18, 20.

There is a balsome, or indeed a bloud,
 Dropping from heav'n, which doth both cleanse
 and close 20
 All sorts of wounds; of such strange force
 it is.

Seek out this All-heal, and seek no repose
 Untill thou finde and use it to thy good.
 Then bring thy gift, and let thy hymne be
 this:

Since my sadnesse 25
 Into gladnesse
 Lord thou dost convert,
 O accept
 What thou hast kept,
 As thy due desert. 30

Had I many,
 Had I any,
 (For this heart is none)
 All were thine
 And none of mine, 35
 Surely thine alone.

Yet thy favour
 May give savour
 To this poore oblation;
 And it raise 40
 To be thy praise,
 And be my salvation.

INTRODUCTORY :

Two other poems with this title are given, III, 95, V, 45. This poem has been imitated by Vaughan in his Praise.

DATE:

Not found in W. Written at a crisis period, perhaps after recovery from his long illness and just before his marriage.

METRE:

Unique. With the exception of the sixth, the stanzas have alternate refrains of *thee* and *me*.

SUBJECT:

Gladness in being at last accepted by God. In imitation of Psalm cxvi.

NOTES:

1. Psalm xxiv, 8; Isaiah ix, 6. Also L'ENVOY, VI, 141, l. 1.

PRAISE

KING of Glorie, King of Peace,
I will love thee.
And that love may never cease
I will move thee.

Thou hast granted my request, 5
Thou hast heard me.
Thou didst note my working breast,
Thou hast spar'd me.

Wherefore with my utmost art
I will sing thee. 10
And the cream of all my heart
I will bring thee.

Though my sinnes against me cried,
Thou didst cleare me.
And alone, when they replied, 15
Thou didst heare me.

4. *Move*=press, urge, as in *THE METHOD*, V, 197, l. 6.
17. Cf. *THE SINNER*, IV, 91, l. 3.
19. "‘I can give thee a higher place in my affections;’ then the poet, perhaps for rhyme’s sake, adds the irrelevant, ‘I cannot, of course, give Thee a higher place in heaven:’” H. C. Beeching.
21. Luke xix. 41.
26. *Enroll*=put thee into my pages.

Sev'n whole dayes, not one in seven,
 I will praise thee.
In my heart, though not in heaven,
 I can raise thee. 20

Thou grew'st soft and moist with tears,
 Thou relentedst;
And when Justice call'd for fears
 Thou dissentedst.

Small it is in this poore sort 25
 To enroll thee.
Ev'n eternitie is too short
 To extoll thee.

INTRODUCTORY :

Two other poems with this title are given, III, 83,
VI, 147.

DATE :

Found in W. Entering God's service, he feels him-
self abashed.

METRE :

Unique.

SUBJECT :

Love's welcome to the timid guest.

NOTES :

2. Matthew xxii, 12.
7. I lack being a worthy guest.
12. Psalm xciv, 9.
15. 2 Corinthians v. 21.
16. The answer of the guest, as in l. 9.

LOVE

LOVE bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
 Guiltie of dust and sinne.

But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
 From my first entrance in,
 Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning 5
 If I lack'd any thing.

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here.
 Love said, You shall be he.
 I, the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah my deare,
 I cannot look on thee. 10
 Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
 Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them; let my
 shame

Go where it doth deserve.

And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the
 blame? 15

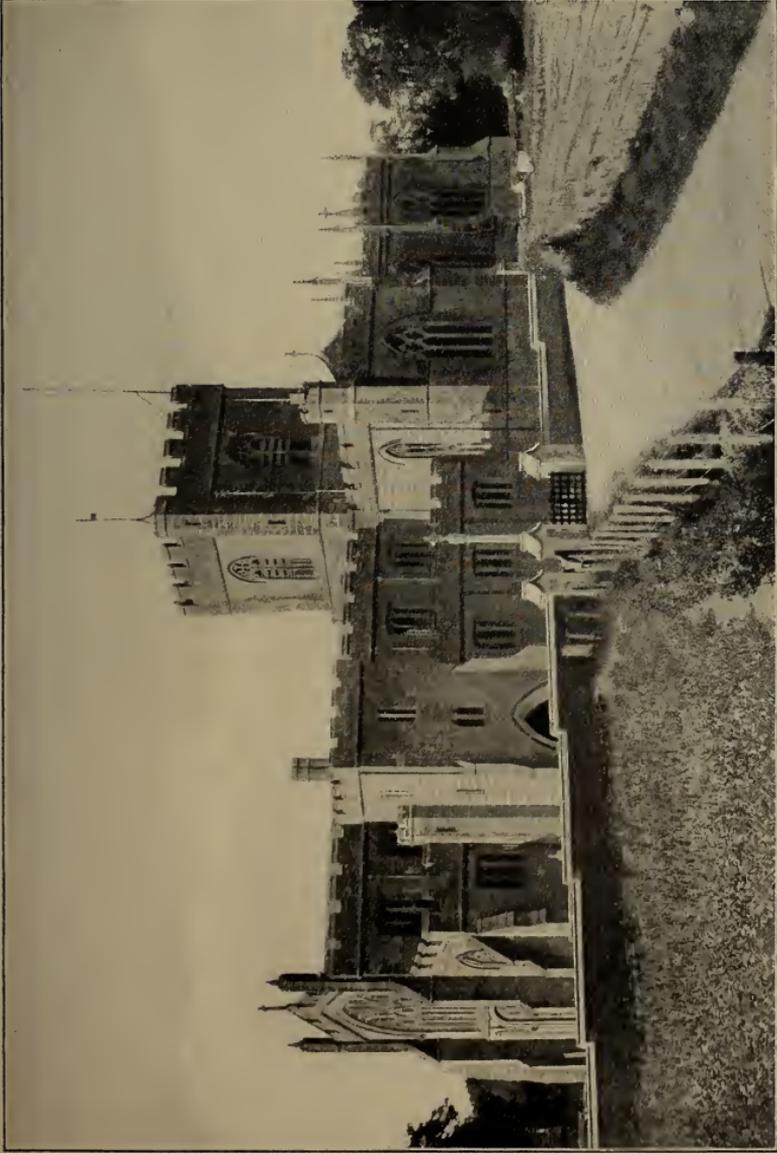
My deare, then I will serve.

You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste my
 meat.

So I did sit and eat.



Edington Church, Wiltshire, where in 1629 Herbert married Jane Danvers. See Vol. I, p. 37.



Clutcke, Derises, Photo.

**TEXTUAL VARIATIONS OF THE
MANUSCRIPTS**

TEXTUAL VARIATIONS

CHARMS AND KNOTS (p. 7):

2. For *ill* W. reads *sore*.
3. For this line and the next W. reads:
*A poore mans rod if thou wilt hire,
Thy horse shal never fall or tire.*
7. For *doth* W. reads *does*.
8. For this line W. reads:
Doubles the night and trips by day.
10. For *head* W. reads *hart*.
11. The order of this and the following couplet is reversed in W.
14. For *doth* W. reads *does*.
16. For this line W. reads:

Ten if a sermon goe for gains.

Before this couplet W. inserts this:

*Who turnes a trencher setteth free
A prisoner crusht with gluttonie.*

And after it these:

*The world thinks all things bigg and tall;
Grace turnes the optick, then they fall.*

*A falling starr has lost his place;
The courtier gets it that has grace.*

*In small draughts heaven does shine and dwell;
Who dives on further may find Hell.*

MAN (p. 11):

2. For *none doth build* W. reads *no man builds*.
 8. For *no* W. reads *more*.
 20. For *hath* W. reads *has*.
 26. For this line W. reads:

Earth resteth, heaven moveth, fountains flow.

41. For *Hath one such* W. reads *If one have*.
 53. For *serves* B. reads *serve*.
 53-54. In W. these lines read:

*That as the world to us is kind and free,
 So we may bee to Thee.*

THE WORLD (p. 21):

10. For *Reformed all at length* W. reads *Quickly reformed all*.
 14. For *inward* W. reads *inner*.
 19. For *Grace took* W. reads *took Grace and*.

SINNE (p. 27):

7. For *strategems* W. reads *casualties*.
 13-14. For these two lines W. reads:
*Yet all these fences with one bosome sinn,
 Are blown away, as if they neer had bin.*

FAITH (p. 29):

- 15-16. For these two lines W. reads:
*with no new score
 My creditour belev'd so too.*
 19. For *placeth* W. reads *places*.
 24. For this line W. reads:
My nature on him with the danger.
 31. For *bend* W. reads *bow*.

35. For *impute* W. reads *impart*, erased.

36. For *And in this shew* W. reads *This shadows out*.

REDEMPTION (p. 33):

10-11. For these lines W. reads:

*Sought him in cities, theatres, resorts,
In grottos, gardens, palaces and courts.*

But these lines are then erased and the ordinary reading substituted.

UNGRATEFULNESSE (p. 39):

7. For this line W. reads:

Thou hadst but two rich cabinets of treasure.

9. For *unlockt them* W. reads *laid open*.

16. For *fully to us* W. reads *to us fully*.

18. For *that* W. reads *this*.

23. For *box* B. reads *bone*.

MISERIE (p. 47):

3. For *all* W. reads *out*.

21. For *scann'd* W. reads *stand*.

28. For *wing* W. reads *wings*.

39. For *So our* B. reads *Some*.

44. For this and the following lines of this stanza W. reads:

*And feed the swine with all his mind and might :
For this he wondrous well doth know
They will be kind, and all his pains requite,
Making him free
Of that good companie.*

51. For *pull'st the rug* W. reads *lyest warme*.

65, 66. For these two lines W. reads:

*All wretched man,
Who may thy follies span?*

75. For *the* W. and B. read *a*.

MORTIFICATION (p. 55):

1. For *doth* W. reads *does*.

30. For *house* W. reads *place*.

DEATH (p. 59):

16. For *sought* W. reads *long'd*.

DOOMS-DAY (p. 63):

21. For *bodie* W. reads *bodies*.

HEAVEN (p. 69):

5. For *trees* W. reads *woods*.

7. For *that* W. reads *which*.

MATTENS (p. 81):

12. W. omits *that*.

THE THANKSGIVING (p. 83):

1. For *Oh King of grief* W. reads *King of all grief*.

3. For *Oh King of wounds* W. reads *King of all wounds*.

11. For *skipping thy dolefull* W. reads *neglecting thy sad*.

20. For *by* W. reads *in*.

22. For *The* W. reads *That*.

26. For *thence* W. reads *out*.

27. For *I give* W. reads *I'le give*.

34. For *mine* W. reads *my*.

35. For *I will* W. reads *will I*.

45. For

*never move
Till I have found therein thy love.*

W. reads:

never linn
Till I have found thy love therein.

THE REPRISALL (p. 89):

- 2. For *dealing* W. reads *medling*.
- 14. For *the* W. and B. read *thy*.

THE SINNER (p. 91):

- 11. For *hundredth* W. and B. read *hundred*.

DENIALL (p. 93):

- 13. For *knees and heart in* W. reads *hart and knees in a*.
- 20. For *But* W. reads *Yet*.
- 29. For *minde* W. reads *soule*.
- 30. For *mend* W. reads *meet*.

CHURCH-LOCK AND KEY (p. 97):

- 1. For *locks* W. reads *stops*.
- 5. For *But* W. reads *Yet*. In W. a new verse is inserted between the first two here given:

If either Innocence or Fervencie
Did play their part,
Armies of blessings would contend and vye,
Which of them soonest should attaine my heart.

- 6. For *And mend* W. reads *Mending*.
- 9. For this last stanza W. reads:

O make mee wholly guiltles, or at least
Guiltles so farr,
That zele and purenes circling my request
May guard it safe beyond the highest starr.

NATURE (p. 99):

- 9. For *turn* W. reads *be all*, but it is erased.

REPENTANCE (p. 101):

3. For *momentanie* B. and W. read *momentarie*.

9-10. For these two lines W. reads:

*Looking on this side and beyond us all ;
We are born old.*

28-30. For these three lines W. reads

*Melt and consume
To smoke and fume,
Fretting to death our other parts.*

UNKINDNESSE (p. 105):

8. For *blasted* W. reads *darkned*.

GRACE (p. 107):

5. For this line W. reads:

*If the sunn still should hide his face,
Thy great house would a dungeon prove.*

13-16. This stanza is wanting in W.

17. The next stanza, which is cancelled, reads:

*What if I say thou seek' st delays,
Wilt thou not then my fault reprove ?
Prevent my sin to thine own praise
Drop from above.*

THE TEMPER (p. 111):

5. For *some fourtie* W. reads *a hundred*.

25. For *flie with angels, fall with* W. reads *angell it or
fall to*.

EASTER WINGS (p. 131):

8. For *harmoniously* W. reads *do by degree*.

9. For *victories* W. reads *sacrifice*.

10. For the first *the* W. reads *my*.

12. For *And still* W. reads *Yet thou*.
 13. For *Thou* W. reads *Daily*.
 14. For *That* W. reads *Till*. These five readings are then erased and the ordinary text is given.
 18. W. omits *this day*.

AFFLICTION (p. 135):

6. For *gracious benefits* W. reads *grace's perquisites*.
 7, 8. For *fine* W. reads *rich*.
 9, 10. For *entwine*, etc., W. reads:

*bewitch
 Into thy familie.*

- 15, 16. For *my thoughts*, etc., W. reads:

*I was preserved
 Before that I could feare.*

23. For *sorrow* W. reads *sorrows*.
 29. For *I scarce beleaved* W. reads:

*I did not know
 That I did live but by a pang of woe.*

47. For *neare* W. reads *where*. In B. *where* is also written above the line.
 58. For *should* B. reads *could*.
 65. For *God* W. reads *King*.

EMPLOYMENT (p. 143):

- 23, 24. For these lines W. reads:

*Lord, that I may the sunn's perfection gaine
 Give mee his speed.*

CONTENT (p. 149):

6. For *or* W. reads *and*.
 7. For *doth* W. reads *does*.

9. For *flints* W. reads *flint*.

30. For *pens* W. reads *pen*.

FRAILTIE (p. 155):

6-7. For these two lines W. reads:

*Misuse them all the day,
And ever as I walk, my foot doth tredd.*

16. For *And prick* W. reads *Troubling*, but it is erased.

17. For *what even now* W. reads *that which just now*.

ARTILLERIE (p. 157):

2. For *Me thoughts* B. reads *methought*.

THE PEARL (p. 177):

3. For *borrowed* W. reads *purchased*.

22. For *lullings* W. reads *gustos*, but erased.

25. For *twentie* W. reads *many*, but erased.

26. For *unbridled* B. reads *unbundled*.

26-29. For these four lines W. reads:

*Where both their baskets are with all their store,
The smacks of dainties and their exaltation:
What both the stops and pegs of pleasure bee,
The joyes of company or contemplation.*

But the first three lines are then erased.

32. For *sealed* W. reads *seeled*.

37. For *the* W. and B. read *these*.

OBEDIENCE (p. 181):

7. For *there doth* W. reads *it does*.

8. For *hath* W. reads *has*.

15. For *exclude* W. reads *shutt out*.

38. For *hath* W. reads *doth*.

