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THE ENGLISH WORKS OF

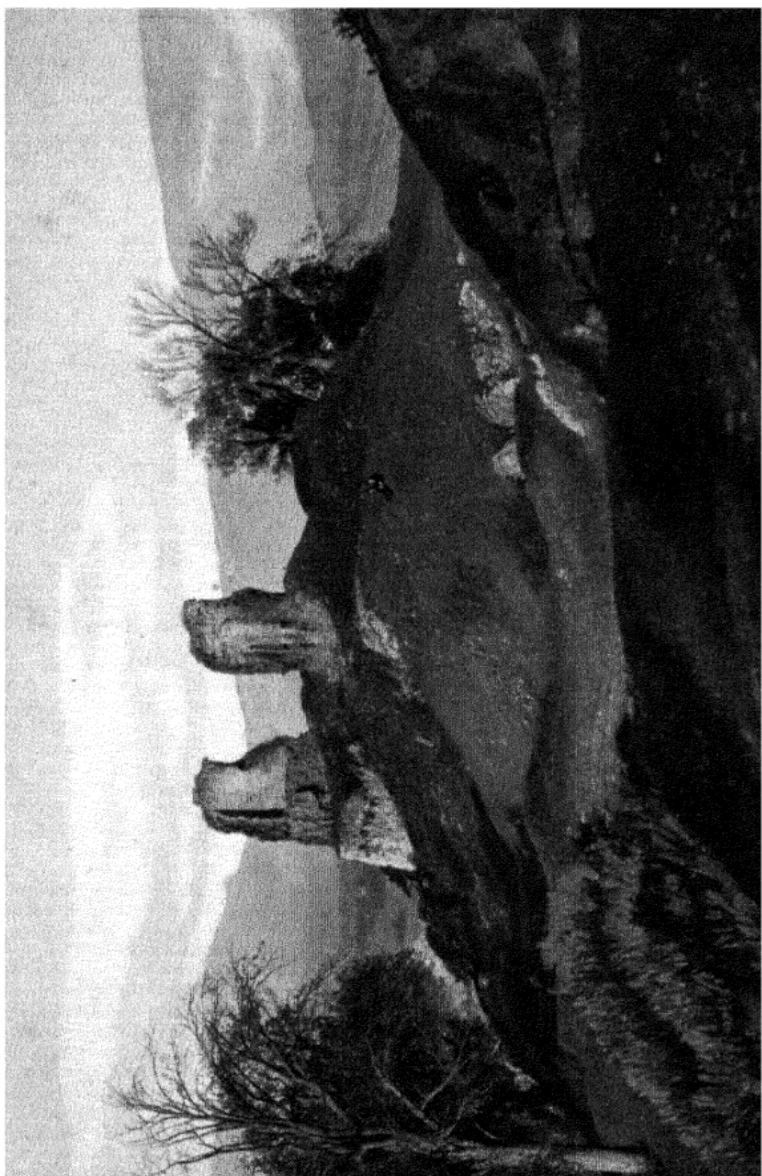
GEORGE HERBERT

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOLUME II







*Ruins of Montgomery Castle in North Wales, the birthplace of  
Herbert. See Vol. I, p. 20.*



THE ENGLISH WORKS OF  
*George Herbert*

NEWLY ARRANGED AND ANNOTATED AND  
CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO HIS LIFE

BY GEORGE HERBERT PALMER

VOLUME II

CAMBRIDGE POEMS

BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
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## THE DEDICATION

*LORD, my first fruits present themselves to thee.  
Yet not mine neither; for from thee they came,  
And must return. Accept of them and me,  
And make us strive who shall sing best thy name.  
Turn their eyes hither who shall make a gain.  
Theirs who shall hurt themselves or me, refrain.*



## THE PRINTERS TO THE READER<sup>1</sup>

THE dedication of this work having been made by the Authour to the *Divine Majestie* onely, how should we now presume to interest any mortall man in the patronage of it? Much lesse think we it meet to seek the recommendation of the Muses for that which himself was confident to have been inspired by a diviner breath then flows from *Heli-con*. The world therefore shall receive it in that naked simplicitie with which he left it, without any addition either of support or ornament more then is included in it self. We leave it free and unforestalled to every man's judgement, and to the benefit that he shall finde by perusall. Onely for the clearing of some passages, we have thought it not unfit to make the common Reader privie to some few particularities of the condition and disposition of the Person.

Being nobly born, and as eminently endued with gifts of the minde, and having by industrie and happy education perfected them to that great height of excellencie whereof his fellowship of Trinitie Colledge in Cambridge and his Oratorship in the Universitie, together with that know-

<sup>1</sup> The work of Nicholas Ferrar.

ledge which the King's Court had taken of him, could make relation farre above ordinarie; quitting both his deserts and all the opportunities that he had for worldly preferment, he betook himself to the Sanctuarie and Temple of God, choosing rather to serve at God's Altar then to seek the honour of State-employments. As for those inward enforcements to this course (for outward there was none) which many of these ensuing verses bear witness of, they detract not from the freedome, but adde to the honour of this resolution in him. As God had enabled him, so he accounted him meet not onely to be called, but to be compelled to this service. Wherein his faithful discharge was such as may make him justly a companion to the primitive Saints, and a pattern or more for the age he lived in.

To testifie his independencie upon all others, and to quicken his diligence in this kinde, he used in his ordinarie speech, when he made mention of the blessed name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to adde, *My Master.*

Next God, he loved that which God himself hath magnified above all things, that is, his Word; so as he hath been heard to make solemn protestation that he would not part with one leaf thereof for the whole world, if it were offered him in exchange.

His obedience and conformitie to the Church

and the discipline thereof was singularly remarkable. Though he abounded in private devotions, yet went he every morning and evening with his familie to the Church; and by his example, exhortations, and encouragements drew the greater part of his parishioners to accompanie him dayly in the publick celebration of Divine Service.

As for worldly matters, his love and esteem to them was so little as no man can more ambitiously seek then he did earnestly endeavour the resignation of an Ecclesiasticall dignitie, which he was possessour of. But God permitted not the accomplishment of this desire, having ordained him his instrument for re-edifying of the Church belonging thereunto, that had layen ruined almost twenty yeares. The reparation whereof, having been uneffectually attempted by publick collections, was in the end by his own and some few others' private free-will-offerings successfully effected. With the remembrance whereof, as of an especiall good work, when a friend went about to comfort him on his deathbed, he made answer, *It is a good work, if it be sprinkled with the bloud of Christ.* Otherwise then in this respect he could finde nothing to glorie or comfort himself with, neither in this nor in any other thing.

And these are but a few of many that might be said, which we have chosen to premise as a glance to some parts of the ensuing book and for an

xiv THE PRINTERS TO THE READER

example to the Reader. We conclude all with his own Motto, with which he used to conclude all things that might seem to tend any way to his own honour:

*Lesse then the least of God's mercies.*

**I**

**THE CHURCH-PORCH**



## PREFACE

THE CHURCH-PORCH bears much the same relation to Herbert's other poetry as the Jewish Wisdom books — Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus, and Wisdom — bear to the Psalms and the Prophets. There is little religion in it, but shrewd knowledge of men, manners, and methods of winning eminence. It is a collection of wise saws and modern instances which speak of precedents and the best social usage. It is written by the friend of Bacon, by the university courtier, the collector of proverbs, the lover of a pregnant phrase. Its sagacity of thought and expression, though strongly marked by the temper of its time, has, like the Wisdom of the Jews, held well the esteem of after ages. Probably few parts of Herbert are less outgrown.

Its theme determines its position. Propriety, beauty, good judgment, familiarity with the best customs, always of high importance in Herbert's eyes, are here set forth as the suitable introduction to religion, which itself lies beyond. This is the significance of the title, THE CHURCH-PORCH. Good breeding opens the door of the TEMPLE. Attention to the refinements of life teaches the youth how to behave himself in church. The results of Herbert's

secular experience, which he always professed was to prepare him for the priesthood, are here offered to the young reader as his best preparation for the spiritual fervors which follow. Purified of coarser faults by good taste, he may become accessible to the delicacies of divine love.

To this work of purification the enigmatic word refers which follows the title. *Perirrhanterium* is the Greek term for a sprinkling instrument. At the entrance of the church stands a basin of holy water, placed there to remind the intending worshipper of his need of cleansing (Numbers viii, 7, and Hebrews x, 22). According to the warning in SUPERLIMINARE, II, 119, l. 2, he is fit to enter the temple itself only after being properly sprinkled at the entrance.

The style of THE CHURCH-PORCH, no less than the spiritual conditions displayed in it, connects it with Herbert's earlier life. It contains no statement that its author is a priest, though he is deeply interested in the priest's work and office. As it is included in the Williams Manuscript, it must have been written before 1630. But how greatly its author valued it, and how steadily he labored on its improvement, may be read in the multitude of changes, great and slight, which were introduced during the Bemerton years. Few of Herbert's poems show so large a difference between their earlier and their later forms.

The processes of alteration in THE CHURCH-

PORCH which went on during the last half-dozen years of Herbert's life are instructive as regards the original methods of its composition. Probably written piecemeal and not produced during any single year, it possesses little organic unity. Its many themes might be increased, diminished, or transposed without injury to the plan. Why should a single stanza on lying stand between considerable discussions of swearing and of idleness? Why should the precepts on eating be parted from those on drinking? Or stanzas so similar as the eleventh and fortieth be widely removed? Or a single stanza on conversation be introduced between gambling and self-restraint, while the general discussion of the subject follows fourteen stanzas later? Many such incongruities occur, a fact the more noticeable and the more likely to be connected with temporal causes because Herbert's artistic sense when exercised on a small scale usually secures great firmness of form. That THE CHURCH-PORCH, however, does not altogether lack plan is remarked by G. Ryley, who quaintly writes:

"With his *Perirrhanterium* Herbert takes care to sprinkle handfuls of advice to them that will go to church. These he throws out under four heads.

- (1) Ethics or personal duties, l. 1-150.
- (2) Œconomics or family duties, l. 151-204.
- (3) Politics or Sociable Maxims, l. 205-384.
- (4) Lastly he comes to scatter a handful or

two of Ecclesiastics or Church Duties, l. 385-end.”<sup>1</sup>

The piece begins with the ruder sins and advances to the niceties of worship, the instructions about public worship being more coherent than any other part of the poem. These may have been written last, when Herbert’s long interest in the priesthood was approaching a decision. In short, the style and texture of the poem indicate that it was begun early, that it grew by accretion rather than construction, and that it never in its author’s mind was altogether finished.

How early it was begun seems hinted in THE DEDICATION. This solitary stanza stands to THE CHURCH-PORCH in about the same relation as the ENVOY to THE CHURCH MILITANT. While not exactly a part of the poem, the poem would be incomplete without it, and it would be fragmentary without THE CHURCH-PORCH. It is written to introduce something. And while what it introduces includes more than THE CHURCH-PORCH, it is with

<sup>1</sup> This and many subsequent quotations are taken from a manuscript of four hundred pages, written by a certain George Ryley in 1714 and now in the Bodleian Library. Of Ryley’s history nothing is known. His volume forms an elaborate commentary on Herbert’s poems, in which they are all passed in review and expounded with reference to their religious import. Ryley’s aims and my own are so divergent that I have been able to quote him less often than I should like, especially as I obtained a copy of his manuscript only after my notes were practically complete.

this that THE DEDICATION primarily joins itself, being identical with it in sententious metre. Accordingly, though in the Bodleian Manuscript it is printed on the title-page, in Ferrar's Edition and in the Williams Manuscript it stands on a leaf by itself just before THE CHURCH-PORCH, which it serves as a kind of antecedent stanza. When this connection is once recognized, its mention of *first fruits* becomes significant.

In 1613 Herbert contributed two Latin poems to the Cambridge Elegies on the death of Prince Henry, and in 1619 a Latin poem to the Elegies on Queen Anne. His ANGLI MUSAE RESPONSORIAE, or reply to Melville, had long been in circulation. In 1623 he printed his Latin Oration on the return from Spain of Prince Charles and Buckingham. Would the phrase *first fruits* naturally have been used after so many publications? In my third Essay I explained how in 1610 Herbert announced a resolution to consecrate all his abilities in poetry to God's glory. Between this date and 1613 I think THE DEDICATION was most probably drawn up, the metre of THE CHURCH-PORCH selected, and the poem itself at least begun. The large amount of secular matter, the borrowed and regular measure, and the hortatory style — peculiarities absent from Herbert's other work — suggest an early date.

A comparison of THE CHURCH-PORCH with Herbert's other long poems, THE CHURCH MILITANT and THE SACRIFICE, throws light on the character

of each and fixes the place of each in the collection. THE CHURCH MILITANT, in both manuscripts and in Ferrar's original edition, stands at the close, appearing there almost as an independent work. The preceding poems are separated from it by the word *Finis* and a GLORIA. In order not to break the continuity of the lyric verse, I retain this late position of THE CHURCH MILITANT, though I believe it to be one of the very earliest of Herbert's poems. Substantially also I keep the positions of the other two unchanged ; for dissimilar as is THE SACRIFICE from everything else Herbert wrote, it is not, like THE CHURCH MILITANT, a detachable piece. In its elaborate display of the forthgoing love of God and the averseness of man, it is plainly intended as the natural presupposition and starting-point of all the subsequent verse. I respect this intention and keep its priority unchanged. To devise another position for THE CHURCH-PORCH is obviously impossible.

It may not be fanciful, however, to find the distinctive character of these three poems in their personal pronouns. Each has one peculiar to itself. That of THE CHURCH MILITANT is the third, *he* or *it*; for this poem alone is descriptive and historical. The pronoun of THE SACRIFICE is *I*, a word which gives color to nearly all of Herbert's verse, but has here a unique employment. It is used as the pronoun of a monologue, of Herbert's single attempt at sustained dramatic speech. The pronoun of

THE CHURCH-PORCH is announced in its first word, *Thou*, this being the only occasion on which Herbert attempts a piece of instruction. CHARMS AND KNOTS and CONSTANCIE are similar in substance, but the form of direct address is not employed. *Thou* appears not infrequently in Herbert's other poems. But elsewhere it marks the address of the writer to himself or to God. It is a part of that inner communion so characteristic of THE TEMPLE, an appeal to the worser self by the better, and not, as in the case of THE CHURCH-PORCH, an exhortation addressed to some one standing by.

The metre of THE CHURCH-PORCH is the same as that used in SINNES ROUND, III, 143, and, with a peculiar adaptation of the final line, in THE WATER-COURSE, III, 147. The metre was a favorite one in Herbert's time. It had already been employed by Sidney in some of the songs of his Arcadia; by Spenser in Astrophel, The Ruines of Time, and in two sections of The Shepherd's Calendar; by Shakespeare in Venus and Adonis; and more frequently than any other metre by Southwell. It appears also in Breton, Lord Brooke, Campion, Donne, Drummond, Lord Herbert, Overbury, Quarles, and Wither. It generally serves these writers as a metre of instruction. A stanza from Southwell's Preparative to Prayer (1595) might easily be mistaken for one from THE CHURCH-PORCH:

“ When thou dost talk with God (by prayer I meane)  
Lift up pure hands, lay down all Lust’s desires,  
Fix thoughts on heaven, present a conscience cleane ;  
Such holy balme to mercie’s throne aspires.

Confesse faults’ guilt, crave pardon for thy sinne,  
Tread holy paths, call grace to guide therein.”

THE CHURCH-PORCH has been imitated in the same metre by Vaughan in his Rules and Lessons; by Christopher Harvey in his Church Yard, Gate, Walls, and Porch; and was translated into Latin by William Dillingham in 1678.

At St. John’s School, Hurstpierpoint, England, the statutes direct that every boy shall learn THE CHURCH-PORCH by heart. Accordingly, in 1867 the Head-Master, E. C. Lowe, D. D., edited a convenient edition with explanatory notes. Many of these notes I have adopted and acknowledged.

The topics of THE CHURCH-PORCH and the order of their discussion appear in the following list:

- I. Address to the young Reader.
- II-IV. Chastity.
- V-IX. Temperance.
- X-XII. Oaths.
- XIII. Lying.
- XIV-XVI. Indolence.
- XVII-XIX. Education.
- XX-XXI. Constancy.
- XXII-XXIII. Gluttony.
- XXIV-XXV. Self-discipline.

- xxvi–xxx. The use of money.
- xxxi–xxxii. Dress.
- xxxiii–xxxiv. Gaming.
- xxxv. Conversation.
- xxxvi–xxxviii. Command of temper.
- xxxix–xlii. Mirth.
- xliii–xlv. Behavior to the great.
- xlvi. Friendship.
- xlvii–xlviii. Suretyship.
- xlix–lv. Social intercourse.
- lvi–lviii. Magnanimity.
- lix–lx. Indebtedness to others.
- lxii. Personal nicety.
- lxiii–lxv. Almsgiving.
- lxvi–lxxi. Public prayer.
- lxxii–lxxv. Preaching.
- lxxvi. Review of the day.
- lxxvii. Conclusion.

King James, instructing his son in *Basilikon Doron*, Bk. III (1599), follows the order of food, drink, sleep, clothes, language, games, gambling, companions, passions, magnanimity. Other books on education which Herbert probably knew are Castiglione's *Courtier* in Hoby's translation (1561); Ascham's *Scholemaster* (1570), Peacham's *Compleat Gentleman* (1622), and Brathwaite's *English Gentleman* (1630).



*Title-Page of the first edition of Herbert's Poems. See Vol. I,  
p. 175.*



THE  
TEMPLE.  
SACRED POEMS  
AND  
PRIVATE EJA-  
CULATIONS.

---

By MR. GEORGE HERBERT.

---

PSAL. 29.

*In his Temple doth every  
man speak of his honour.*

---



CAMBRIDGE:  
Printed by Thom. Buck,  
and Roger Daniel, printers  
to the Universitie.

1633.



## **THE CHURCH-PORCH**

## NOTES :

4. Sidney in his *Apology for Poetry* says that the poets "delight to move men to take that goodness in hand which, without delight, they would fly." Archbishop Leighton quotes from Gregory Nazianzen, *τὸ τερπνὸν τοῦ καλοῦ ποιούμενοι ὅχημα καὶ τυποῦντες ἐκ μελῶν τρόπους.*
6. *Sacrifice*=something consecrated.
7. "He very properly places lust in the front of all the rest that he cautions against, following the example of St. James (i, 15), who makes it the mother of all. 'When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth death.'" G. Ryley.
9. T. Churchyard in his *Praise of Poetrie* (1595), l. 240, speaks of "a wanton blotted minde."
12. Matthew v. 8.

## THE CHURCH-PORCH

PERIRRIANTERIUM

## I

THOU whose sweet youth and early hopes inhance  
Thy rate and price, and mark thee for a treasure,  
Hearken unto a Verser, who may chance  
Ryme thee to good, and make a bait of pleasure.  
A verse may finde him who a sermon flies,        5  
And turn delight into a sacrifice.

## II

Beware of lust: it doth pollute and foul  
Whom God in Baptisme washt with his own  
blood.  
It blots thy lesson written in thy soul;  
The holy lines cannot be understood.        10  
How dare those eyes upon a Bible look,  
Much lesse towards God, whose lust is all their  
book?

13. In the second edition of 1633 the reading *Wholly abstain* appeared, and has since been generally used; but the Bodleian Manuscript has the reading of the text.
18. *Rottennesse.* Proverbs xii, 4.
21. *Impal'd*=hedged us in. The law of marriage is grounded in both God's demand and man's need.
24. In order to be perverse. Cf. l. 395 and THE SINNER, II, 295, l. 7. For the thought, GIDDINESSE, III, 131, l. 17.
25. Sir William Temple (1628–1699) writes, in his Essay upon Health and Long Life: “The first Glass may pass for Health, the second for good Humour, the third for Friends; but the fourth is for our Enemies.”
30. If I go on drinking, passing the bottle round.

## III

Abstain wholly, or wed. Thy bounteous Lord  
 Allows thee choise of paths. Take no by-wayes,  
 But gladly welcome what he doth afford;      15  
 Not grudging that thy lust hath bounds and  
 staies.

Continence hath his joy. Weigh both; and so  
 If rottennesse have more, let Heaven go.

## IV

If God had laid all common, certainly  
 Man would have been th' incloser; but since  
 now

God hath impal'd us, on the contrarie      21  
 Man breaks the fence and every ground will  
 plough.

O what were man might he himself misplace!  
 Sure, to be crosse, he would shift feet and face.

## V

Drink not the third glasse, which thou canst not  
 tame      25

When once it is within thee; but before,  
 Mayst rule it as thou list and poure the shame,  
 Which it would poure on thee, upon the floore.  
 It is most just to throw that on the ground      29  
 Which would throw me there, if I keep the round.

33. "The sin of drunkenness is the root of all sin:"  
King James' Counterblast To Tobacco (1616).
36. He divests himself of every endowment except his animal nature. So Shakespeare, Othello, ii, 3: "I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial."
37. *Wine-sprung*=strained, cracked, or bent by wine.
38. Cf. THE ROSE, II, 389, l. 3.
39. *His canne*=the other man's cup. The word occurs again in PROVIDENCE, III, 93, l. 127. Shakespeare's men drink from cans: "I hate it as an unfilled can:" Twelfth Night, ii, 3.
41. *Thy hold* of thy self.
46. *Beast*, referring to l. 36.

## VI

He that is drunken may his mother kill,  
 Bigge with his sister. He hath lost the reins,  
 Is outlawd by himself. All kinde of ill  
 Did with his liquour slide into his veins.      34  
 The drunkard forfets Man, and doth devest  
 All worldly right save what he hath by beast.

## VII

Shall I, to please another's wine-sprung minde,  
 Lose all mine own? God hath giv'n me a  
 measure  
 Short of his canne and bodie. Must I finde      39  
 A pain in that wherein he findes a pleasure?  
 Stay at the third glasse. If thou lose thy hold,  
 Then thou art modest, and the wine grows bold.

## VIII

If reason move not Gallants, quit the room,  
 (All in a shipwrack shift their severall way,)  
 Let not a common ruine thee intombe.      45  
 Be not a beast in courtesie. But stay,  
 Stay at the third cup, or forego the place.  
 Wine above all things doth God's stamp deface.

50. Philippians iii, 19.
53. Isaiah xlv, 9.
55. Exodus xx, 7.
60. Even if pleasure were my only law, I could dispense with swearing.
63. Repeated in l. 235.
64. *If there be any ill in the custome that may be severed from the good, he pares the apple and gives them the clean to feed on:* COUNTRY PARSON, XXXV.
66. *Stake*=a post in the ground as a hold-fast. PROVIDENCE, III, 93, l. 123. *A maim'd man turns his staff into a stake:* JACULA PRUDENTUM. “Hereby we forfeit the refuge we might otherwise make use of in our afflictions, when our help and hope is in the name of the Lord:” G. Ryley.

## IX

Yet if thou sinne in wine or wantonnesse,  
Boast not thereof nor make thy shame thy glorie.  
Frailtie gets pardon by submissiveness; 51  
But he that boasts shuts that out of his storie.  
He makes flat warre with God, and doth defie  
With his poore clod of earth the spacious sky.

## X

Take not his name, who made thy mouth, in vain:  
It gets thee nothing, and hath no excuse. 56  
Lust and wine plead a pleasure, avarice gain:  
But the cheap swearer through his open sluice  
Lets his soul runne for nought, as little fearing.  
Were I an *Epicure*, I could bate swearing. 60

## XI

When thou dost tell another's jest, therein  
Omit the oathes, which true wit cannot need.  
Pick out of tales the mirth, but not the sinne.  
He pares his apple that will cleanly feed.  
Play not away the vertue of that name 65  
Which is thy best stake when griefs make thee tame.

67. *Cheapest*, cf. l. 58.
71. There is no need of seizing occasions so petty. Matthew vii, 13.
76. Isaiah lvii, 20.
79. So King James' short poem, Time, l. 39: "Flee idleteth, which is the greatest lett."
80. "Mistressing is dawdling in day-long attendance and obsequience on a lady-love; but it must be remembered that a young unmarried yet marriageable lady was called 'Mistress,' not 'Miss' as now, and that mistressing here does not carry its deteriorated sense:" A. B. Grosart. The line is quoted from Donne's To Mr. Tilman After He Had Taken Orders, l. 30:

"Why doth the foolish world scorn that profession  
Whose joys pass speech? Why do they think unfit  
That gentry should joyn families with it?  
As if their day were only to be spent  
In dressing, mistressing, and compliment."

In THE COUNTRY PARSON, XXXII, Herbert speaks of the *unlawfulness of spending the day in dressing, Complementing, visiting and sporting.*

83. *Wings*=affections. Do not employ in lazy gallantry the endowments which should raise you to high station.

## xii

The cheapest sinnes most dearely punisht are,  
Because to shun them also is so cheap;  
For we have wit to mark them, and to spare.  
O crumble not away thy soul's fair heap. 70  
If thou wilt die, the gates of hell are broad;  
Pride and full sinnes have made the way a road.

## xiii

Lie not; but let thy heart be true to God,  
Thy mouth to it, thy actions to them both.  
Cowards tell lies, and those that fear the rod; 75  
The stormie working soul spits lies and froth.  
Dare to be true. Nothing can need a ly.  
A fault which needs it most grows two thereby.

## xiv

Flie idlenesse; which yet thou canst not flie  
By dressing, mistressing, and complement. 80  
If those take up thy day, the sunne will crie  
Against thee; for his light was onely lent.  
God gave thy soul brave wings; put not those  
feathers  
Into a bed, to sleep out all ill weathers.

85. *Severe*=strict, exact. Shakespeare's Justice too has "eyes severe:" *As You Like It*, ii. 7. Cf. JACULA PRUDENTUM: *He cannot be virtuous that is not rigorous.*
86. Herbert's idea of scholarship is not the discovery of fresh truth, but the preservation and readjustment of what is already known.
91. *The great and nationall sin of this Land he esteems to be Idlenesse; great in it selfe and great in Consequence:* COUNTRY PARSON, XXXII.
93. English wool has always been famous.
94. *Thy storie*=the description of you; as in l. 52, p. 21.
96. *Gone to grasse*=gone to grazing (cf. l. 93), as in Shakespeare, 2 Henry VI, iv, 2: "In Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass." *Grass* is used in a somewhat similar sense in H. COMMUNION, III, 385, l. 38. The line would say, This sheeplike people are devoted to their food, and to nothing else.
98. *His family is his best care, to labour Christian soules and raise them to their height, even to heaven; to dresse and prune them, and take as much joy in a straight-growing childe or servant as a Gardiner doth in a choice tree:* COUNTRY PARSON, XXXII.
99. *Mark*=aim at, fix the sight upon.
100. Send them abroad for the "grand tour," or as colonists to America.
101. *This art*=education; cf. l. 97.

## xv

Art thou a Magistrate? Then be severe. 85

If studious, copie fair what time hath blurr'd;  
Redeem truth from his jawes. If souldier,

Chase brave employments with a naked sword  
Throughout the world. Fool not: for all may  
have,

If they dare try, a glorious life or grave. 90

## xvi

O England! full of sinne, but most of sloth,  
Spit out thy flegme and fill thy brest with  
glorie.

Thy Gentrie bleats, as if thy native cloth  
Transfus'd a sheepishnesse into thy storie.

Not that they all are so; but that the most 95  
Are gone to grasse and in the pasture lost.

## xvii

This losse springs chiefly from our education.

Some till their ground, but let weeds choke their  
sonne;

Some mark a partridge, never their childe's fashion;  
Some ship them over, and the thing is done.

Studie this art, make it thy great designe; 101  
And if God's image move thee not, let thine.

106. *The time of breeding is the time of doing children good: and not as many who think they have done fairly if they leave them a good portion after their decease:* Herbert to his brother Henry, 1630.
110. *A little with quiet is the only diet. He is rich that wants nothing:* JACULA PRUDENTUM.
117. *Stowre* or *stour*, frequently used by Spenser and others as a substantive, meaning tumult, danger, conflict, seems here to mean stout, sturdy, firm,—the quality described at length in CONSTANCIE, III, 119. B. and W. read *sowre*, a reading which is defended by Dr. Grosart, who fails, however, to quote a passage in Herbert, or in any other writer, where *sour* indicates a desirable quality. Herbert always employs it in an offensive sense, as l. 211, and GRIEVE NOT, III, 255, l. 2.
118. *To thrall*=to bondage, its regular meaning in Herbert, cf. l. 286, and THE SACRIFICE, II, 139, l. 167; though he also uses *thraldome*; e. g. HOME, III, 325, l. 21.
120. *Shelf*=a ledge, reef, or shelving coast. Cf. MISERIE, II, 257, l. 77. William Browne in Britannia's Pastorals (1614), Bk. I, Song 1, speaks of "Him who is shipwrackt on love's hidden shelfe." The meaning is, What nature intended for swift service, he makes an engine of destruction.

## XVIII

Some great estates provide, but doe not breed  
A mast'ring minde; so both are lost thereby.  
Or els they breed them tender, make them need  
All that they leave; this is flat povertie. 106  
For he that needs five thousand pound to live  
Is full as poore as he that needs but five.

## XIX

The way to make thy sonne rich is to fill 109  
His minde with rest before his trunk with riches.  
For wealth without contentment climbes a hill  
To feel those tempests which fly over ditches.  
But if thy sonne can make ten pound his measure,  
Then all thou addest may be call'd his treasure.

## XX

When thou dost purpose ought, (within thy power,)  
Be sure to doe it, though it be but small. 116  
Constancie knits the bones and makes us stowre  
When wanton pleasures becken us to thrall.  
Who breaks his own bond forfeiteth himself.  
What nature made a ship he makes a shelf.

123. *Simpring.* “Smiles of pretended friendship are in the layman the hypocrisy that pretended holiness is in the clerk:” E. C. Lowe. Cf. AFFLICTION, II, 343, l. 44, and THE SEARCH, III, 219, l. 14.
124. Where thread is wound into a ball, if the end or clue is pulled, the whole unwinds. So Shakespeare, All’s Well, i. 3: “You have wound a goodly clue.” The meaning is, Any loose end of character endangers the whole.
127. *Whatsoever was the father of a disease, an ill diet was the mother. By suppers more have been killed than Galen ever cured:* JACULA PRUDENTUM. For Herbert’s Rules for Eating, see COUNTRY PARSON, XXVI.
128. *Sconse* (Ger. schanz)=fence or protection. So Shakespeare, Comedy of Errors, ii. 2: “I must get a sconce for my head and inseconce it too.”
130. *Two*, i. e. the host whom he believes, and the guest whom he serves. Cf. Swift’s Epistle to a Lady:

“We may carve for others thus;  
And let others carve for us:  
To discourse and to attend,  
Is to help yourself and friend.  
Conversation is but carving;  
Carve for all, yourself is starving.  
And that you may have your due,  
Let your neighbors carve for you.”

## XXI

- Doe all things like a man, not sneakingly. 121  
    Think the king sees thee still; for his King  
        does.  
Simpring is but a lay-hypocrisie:  
    Give it a corner, and the clue undoes.  
Who fears to do ill, sets himself to task; 125  
Who fears to do well, sure should wear a mask.

## XXII

- Look to thy mouth; diseases enter there.  
    Thou hast two sconses if thy stomach call:  
Carve, or discourse. Do not a famine fear. 129  
    Who carves, is kind to two; who talks, to all.  
Look on meat, think it dirt, then eat a bit;  
And say withall, Earth to earth I commit.

133. *Sickly healths*=“healths” which are drunk, inducing sickness; or, health impaired by drinking.
135. *Common-wealths*, a favorite word at this time. King James in the preface to his Counterblast To Tobacco (1616) says, “All sorts of people are more careful for their private ends than for their mother, the Commonwealth.”
137. *Ecliptick*=the apparent path of the sun, oblique with reference to the equator. Referred to again in **OUR LIFE IS HID**, II, 283, l. 4.
140. “As soon as the tight hold of circumstances, which like frost keep a man from falling away, is released, he drops to pieces under the influence of temptation, as in a thaw. We call a man who acts under no self-restraint *dissolute*; that is, one who has melted away, as the opposite character is resolute:” E. C. Lowe. Cf. **MORTIFICATION**, II, 261, l. 26.
142. “*Under-writes*, i. e. subscribes to a law, which law each parcel or quality of man is thus bound not to vary from or exceed:” A. B. Grosart.
148. Cf. **THE METHOD**, III, 197, l. 10.
149. *Good fellows*=boon companions. Cf. Donne, Letter to Roland Woodward, l. 28.
- “So works retiredness in us; to roam  
Giddily and be everywhere but at home,  
Such freedom doth a banishment become.”

## XXIII

Slight those who say amidst their sickly healths,  
Thou liv'st by rule. What doth not so but man?  
Houses are built by rule, and common-wealths.  
Entice the trusty sunne, if that you can,      136  
From his Ecliptick line; becken the skie.  
Who lives by rule, then, keeps good companie.

## XXIV

Who keeps no guard upon himself is slack,  
And rots to nothing at the next great thaw.  
Man is a shop of rules, a well truss'd pack,    141  
Whose every parcell under-writes a law.  
Lose not thy self, nor give thy humours way;  
God gave them to thee under lock and key.

## XXV

By all means use sometimes to be alone.      145  
Salute thy self, see what thy soul doth wear.  
Dare to look in thy chest, for 't is thine own,  
And tumble up and down what thou find'st  
there.  
Who cannot rest till hee good fellows finde,  
He breaks up house, turns out of doores his  
minde.      150

152. "Riches are for spending; spending for honour and good actions:" Bacon, Essay XXVIII. *In spending lies the advantage:* JACULA PRUDENTUM.
153. *Scraper*=one whose mind is on petty savings. Cf. l. 173. *In brief, a poor man is an occasion, my countrey is an occasion, my friend is an occasion, my Table is an occasion, my apparell is an occasion ; if in all these I either do nothing, or pinch, and scrape, and squeeze blood undecently to the station wherein God hath placed me, I am Covetous:* COUNTRY PARSON, XXVI.
156. *Contemptible*, accented on the first syllable.
162. Thy last journey.
166. These dangerous contracts between a magician and a devil may have been suggested to Herbert by Marlowe's History of Dr. Faustus, printed in 1604.
167. Cf. CHARMS AND KNOTS, II, 211, l. 5.

## xxvi

Be thriftie, but not covetous; therefore give  
Thy need, thine honour, and thy friend his  
due.

Never was scraper brave man. Get to live;  
Then live, and use it. Els, it is not true  
That thou hast gotten. Surely use alone      155  
Makes money not a contemptible stone.

## xxvii

Never exceed thy income. Youth may make  
Ev'n with the yeare; but age, if it will hit,  
Shoots a bow short, and lessens still his stake  
As the day lessens, and his life with it.      160  
Thy children, kindred, friends upon thee call;  
Before thy journey fairly part with all.

## xxviii

Yet in thy thriving still misdoubt some evil;  
Lest gaining gain on thee, and make thee  
dimme      164  
To all things els. Wealth is the conjurer's devil;  
Whom when he thinks he hath, the devil hath  
him.  
Gold thou mayst safely touch; but if it stick  
Unto thy hands, it woundeth to the quick.

170. Luke xvii, 2. Cf. I. 156.
171. *Starres*, i. e. treasures in heaven, lofty things, ideals. Cf. AFFLICTION, II, 339, l. 11, ARTILLERIE, II, 361, and THE STARRE, II, 365. He who will possess ideals can have them, though what they will cost cannot be precisely known.
174. *For one*, i. e. for gold. Proverbs xiii, 7.
177. Forty pounds is mentioned, not banteringly as one hundred and fifty years later by Goldsmith, but as a large income. In one of Oldham's Satires (1680) he calls "Diet, an horse, and thirty pounds a year," an enviable salary for a domestic chaplain. Herbert's income during his student years was probably somewhat short of that named in the poem; for his annuity from his father's estate was £30. In 1615 there was added the income from his Fellowship, and in 1619 the £30 of his salary as Orator. In 1623 the King gave him a sinecure which yielded £120 a year. It is improbable that these lines were written after Herbert had come into the receipt of something like £200 a year.
179. *Curious unthrift* = the fastidious prodigal.
180. When, on account of the cloth consumed, the suit has cost more than was intended, the man of pleasure does not blame himself, but the tailor.
184. "If you have only a dashing exterior to commend you, you are worth no more than a ship with sails set and no cargo aboard:" E. C. Lowe.

## xxix

What skills it if a bag of stones or gold        169

About thy neck do drown thee? Raise thy head,  
Take starres for money; starres not to be told

By any art, yet to be purchased.

None is so wastefull as the scraping dame.

She loseth three for one: her soul, rest, fame.

## xxx

By no means runne in debt. Take thine own mea-  
sure.        175

Who cannot live on twentie pound a yeare

Cannot on fourtie; he's a man of pleasure,

A kinde of thing that's for it self too deare.

The curious unthrift makes his cloth too wide,

And spares himself, but would his taylor chide.

## xxxI

Spend not on hopes. They that by pleading clothes

Do fortunes seek, when worth and service fail,  
Would have their tale beleeved for their oathes,

And are like empty vessels under sail.        184

Old courtiers know this; therefore set out so

As all the day thou mayst hold out to go.

187. Inexpensive suitability is the thing to be desired, has the preëminence. The expression *bear the bell* occurs again in THE SEARCH, III, 223, l. 59. Spenser uses it in The Faerie Queene, Bk. VI, 10, 26.

“So farre doth she in beautyfull array  
Above all other lasses beare the bell.”

Browning, too, has employed it in Hervé Riel:

“The fight whence England bore the bell.”

Dr. Lowe writes: “Several explanations of this common expression are offered. The best perhaps is that in olden days, and in Herbert’s time, a bell was the prize in horse-racing. Some have found its meaning in bell-wether; the sheep that carries the bell being the leader of the flock.”

189. Not, “This will go well with that lace, and the lace must accordingly be purchased;” but, “This can be made beautiful by my good taste.”
191. *Much curiousnesse*=over-nicety. A long passage in Bk. I of Castiglione’s Courtier inveighs against *curiousness*.
196. He risks his own, his wife’s, and his children’s fortunes, the wages due to his servants, and the alms and obligations due to God.
198. His coat of arms, in the window of the church, is all which perpetuates his memory; and that also is neglected. The *herald* was a state official whose duty it was, between 1413 and 1686, to make “Visitations” throughout England and report upon the bearing of arms, genealogies, etc.

**xxxii**

In clothes, cheap handsomenesse doth bear the  
bell.

Wisedome's a trimmer thing then shop e're  
gave.

Say not then, This with that lace will do well;  
But, This with my discretion will be brave.

Much curiousnesse is a perpetuall wooing,      191  
Nothing with labour, folly long a doing.

**xxxiii**

Play not for gain, but sport. Who playes for more  
Then he can lose with pleasure, stakes his  
heart;

Perhaps his wife's too, and whom she hath bore;  
Servants and churches also play their part. 196  
Onely a herald, who that way doth passe,  
Findes his crackt name at length in the church-  
glassee.

203. *Civil*, i. e. domestic, as opposed to foreign. The Gunpowder Plot in 1605 would give special point to the illustration.
205. A more natural position for this stanza would be before stanza xl ix.
208. *Braverie*=excellence, in contrast with *boldnesse* of l. 210.
211. *Complexion*=disposition, which was supposed to be the result of the mixture of the four physical humors. So Sir J. Davies, *Nosce Te ipsum* (1599), Pt. II, l. 33:
- “Musicians think our souls are harmonies,  
Physicians hold that they complexions be.”
- Cf. l. 247, and EMPLOYMENT, II, 103, l. 5.
212. *Allay*, used, like alloy, for anything which in combination abates or allays a predominant quality or humor. Dryden uses *complexion* and *allay* in like relation: Stanzas on Oliver Cromwell (1659), l. 25.
214. *He that stumbles and falls not, mends his pace*:  
**JACULA PRUDENTUM.**
215. He understands the battle of life who himself takes command of his passions, instead of allowing them to lead.

## XXXIV

If yet thou love game at so deere a rate,      199  
Learn this, that hath old gamesters deerely cost:  
Dost lose? Rise up. Dost winne? Rise in that  
state.

Who strive to sit out losing hands, are lost.  
Game is a civil gunpowder, in peace  
Blowing up houses with their whole increase.

## XXXV

In conversation boldnesse now bears sway.      205  
But know that nothing can so foolish be  
As empty boldnesse. Therefore first assay  
To stufte thy minde with solid braverie,  
Then march on gallant. Get substantiall worth.  
Boldnesse guilds finely and will set it forth.

## XXXVI

Be sweet to all. Is thy complexion sowre?      211  
Then keep such companie, make them thy alloy.  
Get a sharp wife, a servant that will lowre.  
A stumbler stumbles least in rugged way.  
Command thy self in chief. He life's warre  
knows      215  
Whom all his passions follow as he goes.

218. "You are not a coward for not taking up an affront that was only hinted; if an affront was meant, he who was afraid to go beyond the hint is a coward, not you:" A. B. Grosart.
223. If your reputation is brought to a stand-still by every trifle, it has no more substance than a floating spider's web. So *pos'd* is used in THE CHURCH MILITANT, III, 363, l. 51. Cf. Donne, Satire IV, 20: "A thing which would have posed Adam to name."
225. Any great soldier. No special one is meant. So *the two*, l. 218; *the businesse*, l. 338; *the great heart*, THE CHURCH MILITANT, III, 363, l. 67.
227. If persons are rude, you will of course not select them for friendship. But outside of friendship there is a considerable field of human intercourse, ruled by civility; and civilly to avoid a trifler without a quarrel will always command respect from men of good breeding. So JACULA PRUDENTUM: *Many friends in general, one in special.*
232. Thy amusing remark be counted the more amusing as involving thyself. For the thought, cf. THE COUNTRY PARSON, XXVIII: Contempt the Parson takes in a slighting way, shewing that reproaches touch him no more then a stone thrown against heaven, where he is and lives.
233. Do not find merriment in evil. *He that lies with dogs riseth with fleas:* JACULA PRUDENTUM.

## XXXVII

Catch not at quarrels. He that dares not speak  
Plainly and home is coward of the two. 218  
Think not thy fame at ev'ry twitch will break.  
By great deeds shew that thou canst little do,  
And do them not. That shall thy wisdome be,  
And change thy temperance into braverie.

## XXXVIII

If that thy fame with ev'ry toy be pos'd,  
'T is a thinne webbe, which poysous fancies  
make. 224  
But the great souldier's honour was compos'd  
Of thicker stufte, which would endure a shake.  
Wisdome picks friends; civilitie playes the rest.  
A toy shunn'd cleanly passeth with the best.

## XXXIX

Laugh not too much. The wittie man laughs least;  
For wit is newes onely to ignorance. 230  
Lesse at thine own things laugh; lest in the jest  
Thy person share, and the conceit advance.  
Make not thy sport, abuses; for the fly  
That feeds on dung is coloured thereby.

235. This stanza repeats stanza xi, and suggests that the poem was written piecemeal and over considerable intervals of time.
238. I. e. that which is “fined,” or refined,—a technical term in cookery,—by removal of the scum. “The word is therefore used in a conceitful or double sense, in contrast with *scumme* and coarse:” A. B. Grosart. — *Go lesse* occurs also in l. 329.
239. *Bigge*=pregnant, l. 32.
242. “ ‘T is the sport to have the engineer hoist with his own petard,’ Hamlet, iii, 4, occurred perhaps to Herbert’s mind as it must to Herbert’s reader:” E. C. Lowe.
246. Like our slang, “a precious fool.”
247. For *complexion*, see l. 211. A serious and daring disposition fits a man to lead and to impress himself on cultivated city circles. The country girl, who laughs easily, is easily frightened by stories of the Plague or the blaze of a bonfire. *Men are willing to sell the interest of their discourses for no price sooner than that of mirth; whither the nature of man, loving refreshment, gladly betakes it selfe, even to the losse of honour:* COUNTRY PARSON, XVIII.
251. *He*, and *his* in the next line, refer to the discomfited giggler.
252. It is the serious person who can crow at the end of the merriment. “He laughs best who laughs last.”

## XL

Pick out of mirth, like stones out of thy ground,  
Profanenesse, filthinesse, abusivenesse. 236  
These are the scumme with which course wits  
abound.

The fine may spare these well, yet not go lesse.  
All things are bigge with jest; nothing that's plain  
But may be wittie if thou hast the vein. 240

## XLI

Wit's an unruly engine, wildly striking  
Sometimes a friend, sometimes the engineer.  
Hast thou the knack? Pamper it not with liking;  
But if thou want it, buy it not too deere.  
Many, affecting wit beyond their power, 245  
Have got to be a deare fool for an hour.

## XLII

A sad wise valour is the brave complexion  
That leads the van and swallows up the cities.  
The gigler is a milk-maid, whom infection  
Or a fir'd beacon frighteth from his ditties. 250  
Then he's the sport; the mirth then in him rests,  
And the sad man is cock of all his jests.

253. *Respective.* Substantially the same meaning as *respectfull*, which W. reads. *He carryes himself very respectively as to all the Fathers of the Church, so especially to his Diocesan:* COUNTRY PARSON, XIX. For the thought, compare Herbert's letter to his brother Henry (1618): *Have a good conceit of your wit, mark what I say, have a good conceit of your wit; that is, be proud not with a foolish vaunting of yourself when there is no cause, but by setting a just price of your qualities. And it is the part of a poor spirit to undervalue himself and blush.*

254. *Theirs*=their due.

255. "Where you are a dependent, care or attention to your patron is needed; for in proportion to your alacrity or your indifference is the making or mar-ring of your fortune:" E. C. Lowe.

258. You go shares with the devil in bringing about the man's destruction.

260. For the *distance*, cf. THE PRIESTHOOD, II, 375, l. 39.

261. *Worm.* Do not regard yourself as insignificant; cf. GRIEVE NOT, III, 255, l. 5, and Psalm xxii, 6. Or possibly, do not envenom yourself with your own poison; cf. Shakespeare, Antony and Cleopatra, V, 2, 243, and Milton, Arcades, l. 53.

264. The animal nature itself tends toward righteousness when its excesses are curbed.

**XLIII**

Towards great persons use respective boldnesse.  
That temper gives them theirs, and yet doth  
take  
Nothing from thine. In service, care or coldnesse  
Doth ratably thy fortunes marre or make. 256  
Feed no man in his sinnes; for adulacion  
Doth make thee parcell-devil in damnation.

**XLIV**

Envie not greatnessse; for thou mak'st thereby  
Thy self the worse, and so the distance greater.  
Be not thine own worm. Yet such jealousie 261  
As hurts not others, but may make thee better,  
Is a good spurre. Correct thy passions' spite;  
Then may the beasts draw thee to happy light.

266. *Its* occurs once more in VERTUE, III, 335, l. 7 (but W. there reads *his*), and in JOSEPH'S COAT, III, 301, l. 3.
268. The allusion is probably to 1 Samuel vi, 10, where the ark is carried to Beth-shemesh by two milch kine.
270. *Arras* was the best sort of tapestry, named from the French town where it was made. The worth of a state robe is derived rather from the wearer than from the material. *Arras* is also mentioned in DOTAGE, III, 137, l. 3, and THE FORERUNNERS, III, 319, l. 26.
272. *Still*=always. *The best mirror is an old friend*: JACULA PRUDENTUM.
273. In time of peril you must shed your blood for him. Dr. Grosart suspects an allusion to Antonio, in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice.
276. 1 Samuel xviii, 1, and John xiii, 23.
279. *He*=my friend. For the thought, cf. JACULA PRUDENTUM: *He that hath children, all his morsels are not his own.*
280. *Both*=my friend and I.
281. A father's first obligation is to those he has begotten.

## XLV

When basenesse is exalted, do not bate      265  
The place its honour for the person's sake.  
The shrine is that which thou dost venerate,  
    And not the beast that bears it on his back.  
I care not though the cloth of state should be  
Not of rich arras, but mean tapestrie.      270

## XLVI

Thy friend put in thy bosome; wear his eies  
    Still in thy heart that he may see what's there.  
If cause require, thou art his sacrifice;  
    Thy drops of bloud must pay down all his fear.  
But love is lost, the way of friendship's gone,  
Though *David* had his *Jonathan*, *Christ* his  
*John.*      276

## XLVII

Yet be not surety if thou be a father.  
    Love is a personall debt. I cannot give  
My children's right, nor ought he take it. Rather  
    Both friends should die then hinder them to live.  
Fathers first enter bonds to nature's ends,      281  
And are her sureties ere they are a friend's.

- 283–288. When, being unmarried, I have devoted myself to the service of my friend, have *brought myself to thrall* (cf. l. 118), I rightly offer him my single life, my single estate; but I must not promise to do the work of two. If in my devotion I make such promises, I shall find, when put to the test, that I can give not several times myself, but failures by the score. Cf. also Proverbs vi, 1–4.
290. *All such* = all pleasing discourse.
295. *To put men to discourse of that wherein they are most eminent is the most gainfull way of Conversation*: COUNTRY PARSON, XXIII.
296. *Him* = the other man. Herbert has a habit of using *he* as a general indefinite pronoun; cf. l. 279, and CONTENT, II, 355, l. 20.
297. The allusion appears to be to some game in which the stake — the *rest*, or remainder — was won by courage and sagacity in declaring one's hand at the right moment. Cf. l. 293. The meaning is, Many a man misses the information he might obtain because he is not willing to confess that he does not already possess it. On the whole stanza Dr. Lowe well quotes Bacon, Essay XXXII: “He that questioneth much shall learn much and content much; but especially if he apply his questions to the skill of the person whom he asketh, for he shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather knowledge.”

## XLVIII

If thou be single, all thy goods and ground  
Submit to love; but yet not more then all.  
Give one estate, as one life. None is bound 285  
To work for two, who brought himself to thrall.  
God made me one man; love makes me no more,  
Till labour come and make my weaknesse score.

## XLIX

In thy discourse, if thou desire to please,  
All such is courteous, usefull, new, or wittie.  
Usefulness comes by labour, wit by ease, 291  
Courtesie grows in court, news in the citie.  
Get a good stock of these, then draw the card  
That suites him best of whom thy speech is  
heard.

## L

Entice all neatly to what they know best; 295  
For so thou dost thy self and him a pleasure.  
But a proud ignorance will lose his rest  
Rather then shew his cards. Steal from his trea-  
sure  
What to ask further. Doubts well rais'd do lock  
The speaker to thee and preserve thy stock. 300

303. "Let him be sure to leave other men their turns to speak. Nay, if there be any that would reign and take up all the time, let him find means to take them off, and bring others on:" Bacon, *Essay XXXII.*

307. *Unmoved in arguing and voyd of all contentiousnesse*: COUNTRY PARSON, XXIV. Do not import personal feeling into argument, as if your opponent meant by his errors to injure you, or you by your truth to injure him. You are no more responsible for his intellectual weaknesses than for those of his body or estate,— except, indeed, so far as you can benefit him. Coleridge has the strange note, "I do not understand this stanza."

313. These lines expand *nor wisdome neither* of l. 312.

316. *To tire*, i. e. to exhaust their adversaries.

317. While your opponent is beclouded with irritation he will not be able to command truth enough to damage you. Dr. Grosart quotes Thomas Brooks, a Puritan writer, who, speaking of the rainbow, calls it "The Bow of God, to which he has given no string and furnished with no arrows of vengeance." For other allusions to the rainbow, see AFFLICTION, II, 249, l. 24. On the doctrine of the *spheres*, see note on PRAYER, II, 183, l. 8.

## LI

If thou be Master-gunner, spend not all  
That thou canst speak at once; but husband it,  
And give men turns of speech. Do not forestall  
By lavishnesse thine own and others' wit,  
As if thou mad'st thy will. A civil guest      305  
Will no more talk all, then eat all, the feast.

## LII

Be calm in arguing; for fiercenesse makes  
Errour a fault, and truth discourtesie.  
Why should I feel another man's mistakes  
More then his sicknesses or povertie ?      310  
In love I should; but anger is not love,  
Nor wisdome neither. Therefore gently move.

## LIII

Calmnesse is great advantage. He that lets  
Another chafe may warm him at his fire,  
Mark all his wandrings, and enjoy his frets;    315  
As cunning fencers suffer heat to tire.  
Truth dwels not in the clouds; the bow that's  
there  
Doth often aim at, never hit the sphere.

320. They are responsive only to their own ideas. *An-gusti est animi aut superbi sua tantum nôsse* : Herbert's ORATION ON RETURN OF PRINCE CHARLES.
322. Weigh the good sense of others as carefully as if it could work your cure.
327. What makes a man to be of consequence in his neighborhood is a kindly temper, intellectual ability, and high station.
329. *There* is the emphatic word. — *Go lesse*=are inferior. So l. 238, and CHURCH MILITANT, III, 365, l. 92. *They do not loose or go lesse but gaine by it* : COUNTRY PARSON, XXIX.
334. *Means*=intends, aims at, as in THE ANSWER, II, 351, l. 9. *I have resolved to set down the Form and Character of a true Pastour, that I may have a Mark to aim at ; which also I will set as high as I can, since hee shoots higher that threatens the Moon then hee that aims at a Tree* : COUNTRY PARSON, The Authour to the Reader.
335. The same mingling of humility and high-mindedness (Aristotle's *μεγαλοψυχία*) is commended in l. 210, 247, 253.

## LIV

Mark what another sayes; for many are      319  
Full of themselves and answer their own notion.  
Take all into thee; then with equall care  
Ballance each dramme of reason, like a potion.  
If truth be with thy friend, be with them both;  
Share in the conquest and confesse a troth.

## LV

Be usefull where thou livest, that they may      325  
Both want and wish thy pleasing presence still.  
Kindnesse, good parts, great places are the way  
To compasse this. Finde out men's wants and  
will,  
And meet them there. All worldly joyes go lesse  
To the one joy of doing kindnesses.      330

## LVI

Pitch thy behaviour low, thy projects high;  
So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be.  
Sink not in spirit. Who aimeth at the sky  
Shoots higher much then he that means a tree.  
A grain of glorie mixt with humblenesse      335  
Cures both a fever and lethargicknesse.

338. *The businesse.* We should catch the meaning more easily if the article *the* were omitted. *The citizen is at his business before he rises:* JACULA PRUDENTUM.
339. Starting with the medical dictum that lack of exercise induces worms, he suggests that purposes formed and not at once carried out meet a multitude of small destroyers.
341. *Alone*=are the only ones who live.
349. Dr. Grosart quotes from the JACULA PRUDENTUM: *A child's service is little, yet he is no little fool that despiseth it.* But the meaning of the present passage is not merely that one should not neglect gain from any quarter; but also that, however high the receiver, love is always a gift. So JACULA PRUDENTUM: *Love is the true price of love.*
352. 1 Samuel xvii, 50.
353. *They say it is an ill Mason that refuseth any stone; and there is no knowledg but, in a skilfull hand, serves either positively as it is or else to illustrate some other knowledge:* COUNTRY PARSON, IIII.

## LVII

Let thy minde still be bent still plotting where,  
And when, and how the businesse may be done.  
Slacknesse breeds worms; but the sure traveller,  
Though he alight sometimes, still goeth on.  
Active and stirring spirits live alone.      341  
Write on the others, Here lies such a one.

## LVIII

Slight not the smallest losse, whether it be  
In love or honour, take account of all.  
Shine like the sunne in every corner. See      345  
Whether thy stock of credit swell or fall.  
Who say, I care not, those I give for lost;  
And to instruct them, 't will not quit the cost.

## LIX

Scorn no man's love, though of a mean degree;  
(Love is a present for a mightie king)      350  
Much lesse make any one thine enemie.  
As gunnes destroy, so may a little sling.  
The cunning workman never doth refuse  
The meanest tool that he may chance to use.

355. *Forrain*=the wisdom that others can teach, contrasted with the *native good* of l. 361. Herbert was never out of England. The thought is repeated from stanzas I and liv.
360. Repay with kindness all that you receive. Only those who do so are free from debt.
361. *Be covetous of all good which you see in Frenchmen, whether it be in knowledge or in fashion or in words. So shall you play a good merchant, by transporting French commodities to your own country :* Herbert to his brother Henry in Paris, 1618.
364. *Forfeitteth his will*=loses his individuality.
368. *Board.* French *aborder*, to approach, as Herbert uses the word in THE COUNTRY PARSON, X : *The Parson to his Children shewes more love than terrour, to his servants more terrour than love ; but an old good servant boards a child*, i. e. approaches it, is on the border. But he uses the word in the ordinary sense in AFFLICTION, II, 247, l. 11.
369. "The traditional peck of dust which every one has to swallow, with the sub-thought of the *noisomenesse* of the decaying body in the grave :" A. B. Grosart.
371. *His*=its.
372. *The purity of the Parson's mind breaks out and dilates it selfe even to his body, cloaths, and habitation :* COUNTRY PARSON, III.

## LX

All forrain wisdome doth amount to this, 355

To take all that is given: whether wealth,  
Or love, or language; nothing comes amisse.

A good digestion turneth all to health.  
And then as farre as fair behaviour may,  
Strike off all scores; none are so cleare as they.

## LXI

Keep all thy native good and naturalize 361

All forrain of that name, but scorn their ill:  
Embrace their activenesse, not vanities.

Who follows all things forfeiteth his will.  
If thou observest strangers in each fit, 365  
In time they'l runne thee out of all thy wit.

## LXII

Affect in things about thee cleanlinesse,

That all may gladly board thee, as a flowre.  
Slovens take up their stock of noisomnesse 369

Beforehand, and anticipate their last houre.  
Let thy minde's sweetnesse have his operation  
Upon thy body, clothes, and habitation.

375. *Market-money*=market rate, lowest price.
378. I. e. be yourself a good poor man.
379. Genesis i, 27.
381. Matthew xxv, 40; Proverbs xix, 17.
382. *Great alms-giving lessens no man's living*: JACULA PRUDENTUM.
383. Acts x, 4.
384. "A warning against deathbed charities :" E. C. Lowe.
386. Malachi iii, 8–10; CHARMS AND KNOTS, II, 213, l. 15.
387. Cf. PRAYER, II, 181, l. 13.
388. *The gentry or nobility of the Parish sometimes make it a piece of state not to come at the beginning of service with their poor neighbours, but at mid-prayers, both to their own loss and of theirs also who gaze upon them when they come in, and neglect the present service of God*: COUNTRY PARSON, VI.

## LXIII

In Almes regard thy means and others' merit.

    Think heav'n a better bargain then to give  
    Onely thy single market-money for it.         375

    Joyn hands with God to make a man to live.  
    Give to all something; to a good poore man,  
    Till thou change names and be where he began.

## LXIV

Man is God's image, but a poore man is         379

    Christ's stamp to boot; both images regard.  
    God reckons for him, counts the favour his.

    Write, So much giv'n to God; thou shalt be  
        heard.

Let thy almes go before and keep heav'n's gate  
Open for thee, or both may come too late.

## LXV

Restore to God his due in tithe and time.         385

    A tithe purloin'd cankers the whole estate.  
    Sundaiies observe: think when the bells do chime,  
        'T is angels' musick; therefore come not late.  
    God then deals blessings. If a king did so,  
    Who would not haste, nay give, to see the show ?

391. *Having read divine Service twice fully, and preached in the morning and catechized in the afternoone, he thinks he hath in some measure, according to poor and fraile man, discharged the publick duties of the Congregation :* COUNTRY PARSON, VIII. In l. 391, 392, Herbert says, Give God his due twice on Sunday, for all the week thy two (main) meals are given by Him. Then in l. 393, 396, he proceeds to the Holy Communion, from which the phrases of l. 393 and 394 get their significance; and also the *thwart* of l. 395 and *fast* of l. 396. “To fast when God intends you to feast is loss:” A. B. Grosart.

395. *Crosse*=contrary, as in l. 24.

397. In THE COUNTRY PARSON, X, he remarks that *private praying is a more voluntary act in them then when they are called to others' prayers.*

399. *A weight*=a weighty influence. Love, the attraction of our fellow men, has weight with our hearts to carry us on in prayer; the sight of many around us engaged in the same act suggestively moves us.

401. Do not suppose that the little companies at family prayers will be a substitute for the church service.

403. *Bare*=bare-headed.

408. *Sins make all equall*: COUNTRY PARSON, III.

## LXVI

Twice on the day his due is understood;      391  
For all the week thy food so oft he gave thee.  
Thy cheere is mended; bate not of the food  
Because 't is better, and perhaps may save thee.  
Thwart not th' Almighty God. O be not crosse!  
Fast when thou wilt; but then 't is gain, not  
losse.      396

## LXVII

Though private prayer be a brave designe,  
Yet publick hath more promises, more love;  
And love's a weight to hearts, to eies a signe.  
We all are but cold suitours; let us move    400  
Where it is warmest. Leave thy six and seven;  
Pray with the most: for where most pray is  
heaven.

## LXVIII

When once thy foot enters the church, be bare.  
God is more there then thou: for thou art  
there  
Onely by his permission. Then beware,      405  
And make thy self all reverence and fear.  
Kneeling ne're spoil'd silk stocking. Quit thy  
state.  
All equall are within the churches gate.

409. "It was the Puritan fashion of Herbert's time and subsequently to exalt preaching at the expense of public prayer:" E. C. Lowe.
411. Cf. JACULA PRUDENTUM: *When prayers are done, my lady is ready.*
415. *Seal* or *seel* (Fr. siller)=to close the eyelids partially or entirely by passing a fine thread through them. This was done to hawks till they became tractable. Cf. THE PEARL, II. 383, l. 32, and Shakespeare, "Come, seeling night:" Macbeth, iii, 2. For the thought, Proverbs xvii, 24.
419. The danger of allowing attendance at church to become an occasion of social display was already in Herbert's mind in the preceding stanza.
423. John ii, 15; 1 Corinthians iii, 17.
426. 2 Corinthians ii, 16. *The Parson often tells them that Sermons are dangerous things, that none goes out of Church as he came in, but either better or worse; that none is careless before his Judg, and that the word of God shal Judge us:* COUNTRY PARSON, VII.

## LXIX

Resort to sermons, but to prayers most: 409

Praying's the end of preaching. O be drest,  
Stay not for th' other pin. Why thou hast lost  
A joy for it worth worlds. Thus hell doth jest  
Away thy blessings, and extreamly flout thee;  
Thy clothes being fast, but thy soul loose about  
thee.

## LXX

In time of service seal up both thine eies, 415  
And send them to thine heart; that spying  
sinne,

They may weep out the stains by them did rise.  
Those doores being shut, all by the eare comes  
in.

Who marks in church-time others' symmetrie,  
Makes all their beautie his deformitie. 420

## LXXI

Let vain or busie thoughts have there no part:  
Bring not thy plough, thy plots, thy pleasures  
thither.

Christ purg'd his temple; so must thou thy heart.  
All worldly thoughts are but theeves met to-  
gether

To couzin thee. Look to thy actions well: 425  
For churches are either our heav'n or hell.

427. Dr. Grosart thinks that *he* of this line and the second *him* of the next should be referred to God and printed in capitals. This would make the theology better and the grammar worse.
429. 1 Corinthians i, 21.
430. 2 Corinthians iv, 7.
435. *The ditch* = the gutter. The church is at least better than the alehouse.
440. *Him*, Herbert's general pronoun, referring here to a plural substantive.
442. *Tarry* may mean remain in church; do not go out, finding the sermon dull; but the connection rather requires it to mean, Stay thy criticism of the preacher.
444. Cf l. 266.

## LXXII

Judge not the preacher; for he is thy Judge.  
 If thou mislike him, thou conceiv'st him not.  
 God calleth preaching folly. Do not grudge  
     To pick out treasures from an earthen pot.  
 The worst speak something good; if all want  
     sense,    431  
 God takes a text and preacheth patience.

## LXXIII

He that gets patience, and the blessing which  
 Preachers conclude with, hath not lost his  
     pains.    434  
 He that by being at church escapes the ditch,  
     Which he might fall in by companions, gains.  
 He that loves God's abode, and to combine  
     With saints on earth, shall one day with them  
     shine.

## LXXIV

Jest not at preachers' language or expression.  
 How know'st thou but thy sinnes made him  
     miscarrie?    440  
 Then turn thy faults and his into confession.  
     God sent him, whatsoe're he be. O tarry,  
     And love him for his Master. His condition,  
     Though it be ill, makes him no ill Physician.

449. However God approaches us, whether in awe-inspiring or familiar ways, we turn away. To the Jews he announced his law in the thunders of Sinai (*Exodus xix, 16*); to us in preaching so homely that it is often called folly (l. 429); and both appeals are equally ineffective. Herbert's sonnet on **SINNE, II, 231**, is an expansion of l. 450.
454. *Watch*. “Just about Herbert’s time the manufacture of watches was improving greatly. It was about 1620 that watches of present form became general, instead of the strange devices of ducks, Ganymedes, death’s heads, etc., in which they had hitherto been fixed. Malvolio, in his dreams of greatness, beholds himself a great man; ‘I frown the while, and perchance wind up my watch or play with some rich jewel:’ *Twelfth Night*, ii, 5. ‘He’s winding up the watch of his wit; by and by it will strike:’ *Tempest*, ii, 1:” E. C. Lowe. Watches are mentioned again in **HOPE, III, 203**, l. 1, and clocks in **EVEN-SONG, III, 61**, l. 24.
456. Luke xvi, 2.
460. Do not assume that life will be long and that you have time to trifle.

## LXXV

None shall in hell such bitter pangs endure, 445  
As those who mock at God's way of salvation.  
Whom oil and balsames kill, what salve can cure?  
They drink with greedinesse a full damnation.  
The Jews refused thunder; and we, folly. 449  
Though God do hedge us in, yet who is holy?

## LXXVI

Summe up at night what thou hast done by day;  
And in the morning, what thou hast to do.  
Dresse and undresse thy soul: mark the decay  
And growth of it; if with thy watch, that too  
Be down, then winde up both. Since we shall be  
Most surely judg'd, make thy accounts agree.

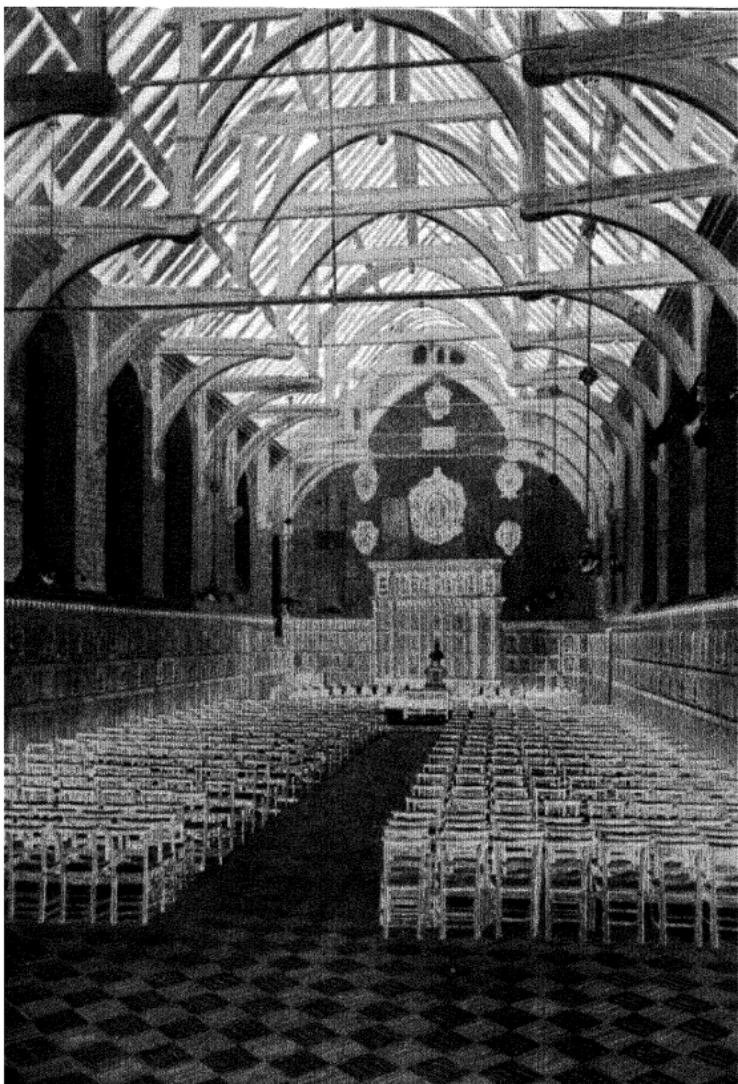
## LXXVII

In brief, acquit thee bravely; play the man.  
Look not on pleasures as they come, but go.  
Deferre not the least vertue. Life's poore span  
Make not an ell by trifling in thy wo. 460  
If thou do ill, the joy fades, not the pains:  
If well, the pain doth fade, the joy remains.



*Hall of Westminster School, London, where Herbert was a pupil,  
1605–1609. See Vol. I, p. 25.*







**II**

**THE RESOLVE**



## PREFACE

THE poems of this fundamental Group announce the resolve of Herbert to become a poet, and state certain ends which he desires his poetry to accomplish. He will antagonize the love-poets of his day, employing against them, however, all their own vigorous intellectuality, passionate enthusiasm, and technical resource. All poetry has the single theme of love, but hitherto poets have misconceived it. They belittle love by *parcelling it out*, erroneously confining it to the petty relations of men and women. It shall be Herbert's task to set it forth in its native fulness, and to reveal it as a world-principle, working on an infinite scale and drawing together God and man.

The conception of love here advocated is substantially that set forth by Plato in his *Lysis*, *Phaedrus*, and *Symposium*. Adopted by the Neo-Platonists, it influenced through them many of the Church Fathers. During the Renaissance it gained a wider currency through Ficinus' Latin translations of Plato, through his commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, and especially through its eloquent presentation in the fourth Book of Castiglione's *Courtier*. French poetry became affected by it. The group of writers who gathered about Sir

Philip Sidney, and who looked to France and Italy for inspiration, took it up. Spenser, employing it to some extent in *The Faerie Queene*, gave it magnificent expression in his *Hymns in Honour of Love and Beauty*. During the first half of the seventeenth century Platonism through all its teachings entered profoundly into English thought. At the University, just after Herbert's time, there was formed a considerable group of Cambridge Platonists, of whom Henry More and Ralph Cudworth are the best known. One of the later members of this company, and a successor of Herbert in the Bemerton Rectory, John Norris, in his *Essay on Love* and his translation of Waring's *Picture of Love*, gave in beautiful English prose an elaborate exposition of Platonic love. A copy of this latter book (4th edition, 1744) is in my possession which once belonged to R. W. Emerson, and was given by him to a philosophic friend. It may be, therefore, that Emerson's *Essay on Love*, one of the best modern statements of the Platonic doctrine, received contributions from Bemerton itself.

In brief, Plato taught that love is our passion for unity, for wholeness. As Love inspires our search, so does Beauty make known its end. For wherever in nature we catch glimpses of harmonious adjustment, the wholeness there suggested affects us as beautiful and prompts us to approach. Following the clue of Beauty, then, we may say that Love directs every rational life. Originally

one with God, with the universe, and with one another, we find ourselves now in the present world detached and fragmentary. Feeling this fragmentariness, as the wise unceasingly do, we are horror-stricken and lonely. We long for supplementation. We turn to the objects around us, and especially to one another, to obtain that wholeness which we feel ourselves to lack. To our eyes those we love are always beautiful, and we are restlessly eager to join them. Yet such lesser unions continually bring disappointment and a new sense of incompleteness. Their little wholenesses are, after all, but fragmentary, their function being to disclose the necessity of the one ultimate and only adequate wholeness. In reality there can be but one, that which is found in union with Goodness, God, the Ideal, Heavenly Beauty, that Love which is the *authour of this great frame*. Truly to love is to look through all else to Him.

We must, then, clear away the special conditions under which Love first appears, if we would rise to a knowledge of its nature. "The eye of Love," says Emerson in one of his letters, "falls on some mortal form, but it rests not a moment there. As every leaf represents to us all vegetable nature, so Love looks through that spotted blighted form to the vast spiritual element of which it was created and which it represents." When Love is true to itself as the passion for perfection, it continually supersedes its lower forms in the interest of what is

larger. None of these inferior forms is so obscuring, so little regardful of anything beyond itself, as that instinctive passion between the sexes which tries to monopolize the name of Love. Friendship is more intelligent. Unities of a still wider and firmer kind are disclosed in the social, artistic, and scientific impulses. These are all prompted by Love and follow increasing grades of Beauty. Religion, however, alone reveals the full significance of these struggles toward conjunction ; for God is the only complete wholeness, and every endeavor to unite with other things or persons is but a blind seeking after Him.

Plato's doctrine of love has many aspects, which variously influenced other English poets. I develop here only that quantitative presentation of it which peculiarly appealed to Herbert's practical and non-mystical mind. In this Group of poems he applies the doctrine as he understands it, resolving to devote himself to abolishing love's blindness. Like all poets he will sing of love, but not of that fettering attachment to particular persons which is miscalled by its great name. Even in his two youthful sonnets he has discovered the emptiness and necessary artificiality of this. The theme of all his verse shall be the striving of the soul after union with God, who is conceived as a definite detached person hostile to subordinate manifestations of himself. This all-excluding devotion to God Herbert carefully expounds in the two sonnets

on LOVE; defends it against the love-poets in the first JORDAN; in the second JORDAN sees that his own exuberant disposition exposes him to the very errors he is fighting; calls for divine aid in PRAISE; acknowledges in THE QUIDDITIE how little he can effect; encourages himself in THE ELIXER by recalling Love's transforming power; in EMPLOYMENT guards against sluggishness; and in ANTI-PHON joins with men and angels in adoration. In this Group of poems we have, therefore, the announcement of a poetical programme. How long it remained near Herbert's heart may be read later in DULNESSE, THE FORERUNNERS, LIFE, and THE FLOWER; where, feeling death approach, he reviews his campaign against the love-poets and mourns that his beautiful weapons must be laid aside.

Similar protests against the tendency of poetry to find love in sexual conditions rather than in rational or divine are not uncommon in the Jacobean poetry, and even in the later Elizabethan. Spenser himself had uttered them in the Preface to his Hymns in Honour of Heavenly Love and Beauty. So had Herbert's special master, Donne, in his Divine Sonnets and elsewhere. Just after Herbert's death, and partly through his influence, Platonic love became so fashionable as itself to awaken protest. Herbert, then, cannot be called the first to set heavenly love in contrast to earthly. He merely treated the antagonism with peculiar

precision and persistency, gave it the special turn which gained acceptance, and used it as did no other poet to inform the total body of his work.

It may be interesting to notice how different a conclusion a grave and passionate poet of recent years, Coventry Patmore, has drawn from the same Platonic premises. All Patmore's poetry, like that of Herbert, is a study of love. Love, too, in his view is not many but one, human loves being partial embodiments of a single divine principle. But while Herbert rejects the human loves as partial, Patmore, just because they are small embodiments, reverences them as our appointed means of approaching God. If, then, we call the tendency of Herbert Abstract Monotheism, because it sets in sharp and antagonistic contrast infinite and finite love, we might name that of Patmore a kind of Henotheism; since it finds a particular finite object needful if we would apprehend the universally divine. From the extreme and desolating consequences of his doctrine Herbert is saved by his rich Elizabethan temperament.

## **THE RESOLVE**

## INTRODUCTORY:

“This following Letter and Sonnet were in the first year of his going to Cambridge sent his dear Mother for a New Year’s gift. *I fear the heat of my late Ague hath dried up those springs by which Scholars say the Muses use to take up their habitations. However, I need not their help to reprove the vanity of those many Love-poems that are daily writ and consecrated to Venus; nor to bewail that so few are writ that look towards God and Heaven.* For my own part, my meaning, dear mother, is in these Sonnets to declare my resolution to be that my poor Abilities in Poetry shall be all and ever consecrated to God’s glory:” Walton’s Life. — Giles Fletcher in Christ’s Triumph over Death, stanza vi (1610), has a similar attack on the love-poetry of the time.

“Go giddy brains, whose wits are thought so fresh,  
Pluck all the flow’rs that nature forth doth throw,  
Go stick them on the cheeks of wanton flesh;  
Poor idol (forc’t at once to fall and grow)  
Of fading roses and of melting snow!  
Your songs exceed your matter; this of mine  
The matter which it sings shall make divine;  
As stars dull puddles guild, in which their beauties shine.”

## DATE:

As Herbert entered the University in the year 1609, the “New Year” here mentioned must have been that of March, 1610, just before he became seventeen years of age. The style of these sonnets shows

TWO SONNETS  
TO HIS MOTHER

I

My God, where is that antient heat towards thee  
Wherewith whole shoals of Martyrs once did  
burn,  
Besides their other flames ? Doth Poetry  
Wear Venus' livery, only serve her turn ? 4  
Why are not Sonnets made of thee, and layes  
Upon thine Altar burnt ? Cannot thy love  
. Heighten a spirit to sound out thy praise  
As well as any she ? Cannot thy Dove  
Outstrip their Cupid easily in flight ? 9  
Or, since thy ways are deep and still the same,  
Will not a verse run smooth that bears thy name ?  
Why doth that fire, which by thy power and might  
Each breast does feel, no braver fuel choose  
Than that which one day Worms may chance  
refuse ?

the influence of Donne, whose friendship his mother had formed in 1606-7, a grateful letter being addressed to her by Donne in the latter year. These are the earliest English poems of Herbert of which we have knowledge. They were not included in **THE TEMPLE**. See Vol. I, 104.

**METRE:**

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

**SUBJECT:**

True love-poetry should be addressed only to God.

**NOTES:**

8. The dove is also the bird of Venus; cf. **THE INVITATION**, III, 51, l. 26.
10. This line is more like Herbert's later style than any other in these sonnets. It may be compared with **THE BUNCH OF GRAPES**, III, 217, l. 13.
19. By comparing it to a woman's robe.
21. *Thy abuse*=an injury done to thee.
22. Cf. **VANITIE**, II, 357, l. 3.
24. *Fire*, i. e. the fire of l. 12.
28. *In the discovery*=in the uncovering or disclosure; the more fully God is known, the greater the beauty. In King James' Version of the Bible, *discover* is used more than thirty times in this sense, only twice with the modern meaning.

## II

SURE, Lord, there is enough in thee to dry      15  
Oceans of Ink; for as the Deluge did  
Cover the Earth, so doth thy Majesty;  
Each cloud distils thy praise, and doth forbid  
Poets to turn it to another use.  
Roses and Lilies speak thee; and to make    20  
A pair of Cheeks of them, is thy abuse.  
Why should I Women's eyes for Chrystal take?  
Such poor invention burns in their low mind  
Whose fire is wild, and doth not upward go  
To praise, and on thee, Lord, some ink bestow.  
Open the bones, and you shall nothing find    26  
In the best face but filth; when Lord, in Thee  
The beauty lies in the discovery.

**INTRODUCTORY:**

"In the first of these poems he complains of the diversion of the passion from God. In the second he prays for the direction of it to him:" G. Ryley (1714). Two other poems with this title are given, II, 401, III, 387.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

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

**SUBJECT:**

The love that fashions the universe is a greater inspiration to poetry than woman's love. So Dante in the last line of the Paradiso : "L'amor che muove 'l sole e l' altre stelle."

**NOTES:**

3. Man has made a multitude of loves, while really there is but one. The phrase occurs again in DOOMS-DAY, II, 269, l. 28, and AN OFFERING, II, 393, l. 17.
4. I. e. on human beings, created out of dust. Genesis ii, 7; TRINITIE-SUNDAY, II, 161, l. 1.
5. The title of love.
6. *Invention*, cf. JORDAN, II, 91, l. 3.
11. Standing aside, not taking part.
13. *Skarf or glove*, i. e. those of the mistress.

## LOVE

## I

IMMORTALL Love, authour of this great frame,  
Sprung from that beautie which can never fade,  
How hath man parcel'd out thy glorious name  
And thrown it on that dust which thou hast made,  
While mortall love doth all the title gain! 5

Which siding with invention, they together  
Bear all the sway, possessing heart and brain,  
(Thy workmanship) and give thee share in neither.  
Wit fancies beautie, beautie raiseth wit.

The world is theirs; they two play out the game,  
Thou standing by. And though thy glorious  
name 11

Wrought our deliverance from th' infernall pit,  
Who sings thy praise? Onely a skarf or glove  
Doth warm our hands and make them write of  
love.

20. *Pant thee*, i. e. pant for thee. Psalm xlvi, 1.
21. *Invention*, l. 6.
23. *Dust*, cf. l. 4.
24. This figure appears repeatedly; cf. FAITH, II, 285, l. 38; UNGRATEFULNESSE, II, 243, l. 17; FRAILTIE, II, 359, l. 15. Cf., too, JACULA PRUDENTUM: *He that blows in the dust fills his eyes with it.*
26. *Disseized*=dispossessed; cf. SUBMISSION, III, 205, l. 12. So Donne says (A Litany, l. 40) that the Virgin Mary “disseized sin.”

## II

IMMORTALL Heat, O let thy greater flame        15  
Attract the lesser to it! Let those fires,  
Which shall consume the world, first make it  
tame,  
And kindle in our hearts such true desires  
As may consume our lusts and make thee way.  
Then shall our hearts pant thee; then shall our  
brain    20  
All her invention on thine Altar lay,  
And there in hymnes send back thy fire again.  
Our eies shall see thee, which before saw dust,  
Dust blown by wit till that they both were  
blinde.  
Thou shalt recover all thy goods in kinde,    25  
Who wert disseized by usurping lust.  
All knees shall bow to thee; all wit shall rise  
And praise him who did make and mend our  
eies.

**INTRODUCTORY:**

The Jordan is a meandering stream, running one hundred and twenty miles to cover sixty. Attacking the artificiality and indirectness of the love-poets, Herbert calls such love-utterances Jordans. Cf. G. Fletcher's Christ's Triumph after Death, stanza v:

"Answer me, Jordan, why thy crooked tide  
So often wanders from his nearest way,  
As though some other way thy stream would slide  
And fain salute the place where something lay?"

**DATE:**

Found in W. In style similar to Two SONNETS, II, 79.

**METRE:**

Unique, but differs only in rhyming system from DECAY, III, 115.

**SUBJECT:**

Human love makes its poetry labored and artificial; divine love shall make mine swift and simple.

**NOTES:**

2. *Become*=are becoming to.

5. *Painted chair*: cf. THE TEMPER, II, 313, l. 9; THE BRITISH CHURCH, III, 103, l. 16; CHURCH-RENTS AND SCHISMES, III, 105, l. 1. A painted face is false as compared with the natural face. So the chair or throne of grace filled by God is true compared with the painted chairs of the love-poets.

**JORDAN**

WHO sayes that fictions onely and false hair  
    Become a verse? Is there in truth no beautie?  
Is all good structure in a winding stair?  
    May no lines passe except they do their dutie  
Not to a true, but painted chair?                         5

9. Though Herbert here sneers at love-poems for their lack of directness and double meanings, he acknowledges in the following poem that his verse is often open to attack on the same grounds.
12. Commenting on Donne, Satire II, l. 86: "Piece-meal he gets lands, and spends as much time Wringing each acre, as maids pulling prime," Dr. Grosart writes: "Prime, in primero, is a winning hand of different suits (with probably certain limitations as to the number of cards, since there were different primes) different to and of lower value than a flush or a hand of (four) cards of the same suit. The game is now unknown; but from such notices as we have, it would seem that one could stand on his hands, or, as in écarté and other games, discard and take others. From the words of our text the fresh cards were not dealt by the dealer, but 'pulled' by the player at hazard." The phrase is therefore equivalent to making a great fuss over a small matter. *Pull* is used in the sense of *draw* in THE CHURCH MILITANT, III, 369, l. 134. — *For me=so far as I am concerned, for all me.*
13. *Nightingale or spring*, i. e. "sweetness of expression or plenitude of matter:" G. Ryley (1714).
14. On this thought of the loss of rhyme, see note at the end of A TRUE HYMNE, III, 27.
15. ANTIPHON, III, 63, celebrates this phrase, which occurs again in THE ELIXER, II, 99, l. 1.

Is it no verse except enchanted groves  
And sudden arbours shadow course-spunne  
lines ?  
Must purling streams refresh a lover's loves ?  
Must all be vail'd, while he that readeas divines,  
Catching the sense at two removes ?                   10

Shepherds are honest people; let them sing,  
Riddle who list for me, and pull for Prime.  
I envie no man's nightingale or spring;  
Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme,  
Who plainly say, *My God, My King.*               15

**INTRODUCTORY:**

In W. this poem is entitled INVENTION. It is strikingly similar to Sir Philip Sidney's first sonnet to Stella. "He deliver'd his first Sermon after a most florid manner. But at the close of this Sermon told them *That should not be his constant way of Preaching. For since Almighty God does not intend to lead men to heaven by hard Questions, he would not therefore fill their heads with unnecessary Notions; but that for their sakes his language and his expressions should be more plain and practical in his future Sermons:*" Walton's Life.

**DATE:**

Found in W. In style later than the previous JORDAN. Line 1 states that many poems had preceded.

**METRE:**

Unique, but differs only in rhyming system from THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 15; JORDAN, II, 87; CHURCH-MONUMENTS, II, 201; AN OFFERING, II, 393; and SINNES ROUND, III, 143.

**SUBJECT:**

The poet, contriving a gift for his love, offers his choicest intellectual treasures; but learns that the only thing desired is love itself.

**NOTES:**

2. *Their*, i. e. heavenly joys, as in l. 12.
4. *Burnish*, usually in the sense of polish, as in Shakespeare's "Burnished sun :" Merchant of

**JORDAN**

WHEN first my lines of heav'nly joyes made men-  
tion,

Such was their lustre, they did so excell,  
That I sought out quaint words and trim inven-  
tion;

My thoughts began to burnish, sprout, and swell,  
Curling with metaphors a plain intention,        5  
Decking the sense as if it were to sell.

Venice, ii, 1, here has the meaning of spread. Dryden may be using it in this sense in his Prologue to Circe, l. 20:

“A slender poet must have time to grow,  
And spread and burnish as his brothers do.”

Dr. Gibson quotes from Fuller's Joseph's Coat: “We must not all run up in height like a hop-pole, but also burnish and spread in breadth.”

5. Cf. DULNESSE, III, 207, l. 7.
6. Cf. Shakespeare's Sonnet XXI: “I will not praise that purpose not to sell.”
8. *Sped*=supplied, aided on my way.
9. *Blotted*=corrected. The editors of the First Folio of Shakespeare say: “We have scarce received from him a blot in his papers.” The truth of Herbert's statement is evident in the many alterations of the poems in the interval between the Williams and the Bodleian Manuscripts.
10. *Quick*=vivid. Cf. DULNESSE, III, 207, l. 3.
13. *Work and winde*. The same combination in THE WORLD, II, 227, l. 18, and with a modification in BUSINESSE, III, 139, l. 9.
16. *Wide*=wide of the mark, far-fetched.—*Pretence* here=stretching forth, strain. Cf. Donne, To the Countess of Bedford, l. 40:

“So we have dulled our mind, it hath no ends;  
Only the body's busy and pretends.”

So too UNKINDNESSE, II, 309, l. 16; MAN'S MEDLEY, III, 125, l. 8; DULNESSE, III, 209, l. 19.

Thousands of notions in my brain did runne,  
Off'ring their service, if I were not sped.  
I often blotted what I had begunne; 9  
This was not quick enough, and that was dead.  
Nothing could seem too rich to clothe the sunne,  
Much lesse those joyes which trample on his  
head.

As flames do work and winde when they ascend,  
So did I weave my self into the sense.  
But while I bustled, I might heare a friend 15  
Whisper, *How wide is all this long pretence!*  
*There is in love a sweetnesse readie penn'd;*  
*Copie out onely that, and save expense.*

**INTRODUCTORY:**

Two other poems with this title are given, II, 397, and III, 45.

**DATE:**

Found in W. Line 1 shows him already in the practice of writing verse.

**METRE:**

Unique.

**SUBJECT:**

Without divine aid my poetic work cannot be done.  
But I am eager to accept aid, and that is itself a power — as is seen when men employ wings, slings, cordials, or stimulating examples.

**NOTES:**

4. This is the refrain of Donne's Hymn to God the Father. Herbert has a similar refrain in another PRAISE, III, 45.
6. The contrast is between flying and going, i. e. walking; as in Watts' hymn:

“Our souls can neither fly nor go  
To reach immortal joys.”

12. More than with his short arm alone. 1 Samuel xvii, 50. Cf. THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 55, l. 352.
13. An allusion to the cordials in vogue, distilled from various herbs. “Grace is such a cordial, lifting the poor soul to the height of the soul rich in comfort:” A. B. Grosart. Cf. PROVIDENCE, III, 87, l. 75, with note.

## PRAISE

To write a verse or two is all the praise  
That I can raise.

Mend my estate in any wayes,  
Thou shalt have more.

I go to Church; help me to wings, and I       5  
Will thither flie.

Or, if I mount unto the skie,  
I will do more.

Man is all weaknesse; there is no such thing  
As Prince or King.                              10

His arm is short, yet with a sling  
He may do more.

An herb destill'd, and drunk, may dwell next doore  
On the same floore

To a brave soul. Exalt the poore,       15  
They can do more.

O raise me then! Poore bees, that work all day,  
Sting my delay;

Who have a work as well as they,  
And much, much more.                              20

**INTRODUCTORY:**

W. entitles this POETRY. *Quidditie* is the schoolmen's name for the "whatness," the essence of a thing, that which makes anything to be what it is. To it Butler refers in Hudibras (1663), I, 1, 150:

"He knew what's what, and that's as high  
As metaphysic wit can fly."

This may often be a matter seemingly unimportant, and so *quiddit* comes to mean an over-niceness, e. g. Hamlet, v. 1: "Where be his quiddits now, his quilletts?"

**DATE:**

Found in W. Like the previous, shows him already a poet.

**SUBJECT:**

In the eyes of the world my poetry is a trifle; but expressing as it does the very essence of my life, my connection with God, I am justified in giving it all my care.

**METRE:**

Used also in the Song of EASTER, II, 155, and in THE QUIP, III, 33.

**NOTES:**

12. *Most, take all*=poetry being all I have, do thou, the greatest conceivable, accept it. The thought occurs again in the last line of THE INVITATION, III, 51.

## THE QUIDDITIE

MY God, a verse is not a crown,  
No point of honour, or gay suit,  
No hawk, or banquet, or renown,  
Nor a good sword, nor yet a lute:

It cannot vault, or dance, or play;        5  
It never was in *France* or *Spain*;  
Nor can it entertain the day  
With a great stable or demain.

It is no office, art, or news,  
Nor the Exchange, or busie Hall.        10  
But it is that which while I use  
I am with thee; and *Most, take all.*

## INTRODUCTORY:

The winning of the Grand Elixir, the discovery of the Philosopher's Stone, the transmutation of the baser metals into gold, are several designations of the aims of the alchemists, according as these are directed toward spiritual, scientific, or material ends. They refer, however, not to three things, but to one and the same thing,—and that, too, something not apprehensible by the senses. In the world of particular objects, whether material or mental, the alchemists — like the early Greek philosophers — seek an ultimate unity. This primal element or absolute they name variously. When calling it a stone (l. 21) they attach to it none of the specific qualities which mark the stone of ordinary life. It may be solid or liquid, hence the *tincture* of l. 15. It is merely the essence, principle, first cause, *ἀρχή*, of all things; and out of it, when once found, all may again be derived. Herbert alludes to the doctrine elsewhere in EASTER, II, 153, l. 5; NATURE, II, 303, l. 7-12; THE PEARL, II, 381, l. 6; VANITIE, III, 135, l. 15-21, and less evidently in THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 33, l. 165. But he is usually too confirmed a dualist, and is accustomed to distinguish too sharply mind from matter, to have any large sympathy with monistic Alchemy. Ben Jonson in his comedy of The Alchemist (1610) brought before the English public an amusing body of alchemical learning. John Wesley has rewritten this poem and made it into a popular hymn.

### THE ELIXER

TEACH me, my God and King,  
In all things thee to see;  
And what I do in any thing,  
To do it as for thee.

Not rudely, as a beast,  
To runne into an action;  
But still to make thee prepossest,  
And give it his perfection.

A man that looks on glasse  
On it may stay his eye,  
Or if he pleaseth, through it passe,  
And then the heav'n espie.

5

10

## DATE:

Found in W. See Vol. I, 120. The many changes show Herbert's estimate of the importance of the poem.

## METRE:

Unique.

## SUBJECT:

*Nothing is little in God's service. If it once have the honour of that Name, it grows great instantly:*  
COUNTRY PARSON, XIV.

## NOTES:

1. *My God and King*, a favorite combination. Cf. JORDAN, II, 89, l. 15, and ANTIPHON, III, 63, l. 2.
5. *Then they labour profanely, when they set themselves to work like brute beasts, never raising their thoughts to God, nor sanctifying their labour with daily prayer:*  
COUNTRY PARSON, XIV.
7. Cf. OBEDIENCE, II, 385, l. 18. Herbert uses the word again in THE COUNTRY PARSON, X: *The stomach being prepossessed with flesh.* Donne has a modification of the thought in The Second Anniversary, l. 459:

“Who being solicited to any act,  
Still heard God pleading his safe precontract.”

8. *His=its.* For the phrase, cf. PRAISE, III, 45, l. 9.
15. In later editions, *his* is often misprinted *this*.
20. *That=the room.*
21. Cf. CORNARO ON TEMPERANCE, I, 350.
24. *Told=reckoned*, as in “telling beads.”

All may of thee partake;  
Nothing can be so mean  
Which with his tincture (for thy sake)      15  
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause  
Makes drudgerie divine;  
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,  
Makes that and th' action fine.      20

This is the famous stone  
That turneth all to gold;  
For that which God doth touch and own  
Cannot for lesse be told.

**INTRODUCTORY:**

Another poem with this title is given, II, 347.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique.

**SUBJECT:**

Life as action. *Active and stirring spirits live alone :*  
THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 55, l. 341.

**NOTES:**

3. *Trade*, cf. THE PEARL, II, 381, l. 12.
4. *Furre*=the warm garments needed by the inactive. Cf. THE CHURCH MILITANT, III, 373, l. 198.
5. *Complexion* = disposition. So THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 39, l. 211. "Man being compounded of the four complexions (whose fathers are the four elements) although there be a mixture of them all in all the parts of his body, yet must the divers parts of our *microcosme* or little world within ourselves be diversly more inclined, some to one, some to another complexion, according to the diversitie of their uses, that of these discords a perfect harmonie may be made up for the maintenance of the whole body:" King James' Counterblast To Tobacco (1616).
6. *No starre*=no fixed and imperishable fire.
9. *Faint*=fainting, sluggish.
11. Of the four elements out of which God formed all

## EMPLOYMENT

HE that is weary, let him sit!  
My soul would stirre  
And trade in courtesies and wit,  
Quitting the furre  
To cold complexions needing it. 5

Man is no starre, but a quick coal  
Of mortall fire;  
Who blows it not, nor doth controll  
A faint desire,  
Lets his own ashes choke his soul. 10

When th' elements did for place contest  
With him whose will  
Ordain'd the highest to be best,  
The earth sat still,  
And by the others is opprest. 15

things, fire (here described in the second stanza) is the highest, earth the lowest, because the most inert. There is danger that we, through inertia, find a similarly low place. For the whole doctrine, see Shakespeare's Sonnets XLIV and XLV (1609).

18. So THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 55, l. 345. The sun is always shining somewhere, while the stars can appear only during some absence of the sun. Like the sun we should be perpetual in action, not like the stars occasional.
21. Because the orange has at the same time both blossoms and fruit. Cf. MAN, II, 217, l. 8; AFFLICTION, II, 845, l. 57; PARADISE, III, 39, l. 2.
25. Isaiah v, 4.
28. *Our wares*=our talents, powers.
29. We lie torpid.

Life is a businesse, not good cheer,  
Ever in warres.

The sunne still shineth there or here,  
Whereas the starres  
Watch an advantage to appeare.

20

Oh that I were an Orenge-tree,  
That busie plant!

Then should I ever laden be,  
And never want  
Some fruit for him that dressed me.

25

But we are still too young or old;  
The man is gone

Before we do our wares unfold.

So we freeze on,  
Untill the grave increase our cold.

30

**INTRODUCTORY:**

In W. this is entitled "ODE." ANTIphon=a responsive song in which strain answers strain.

**DATE:**

Found in W. Another poem with this title is given, III, 63.

**METRE:**

Unique, and an exquisite case of inwoven rhyme. The second, fourth, and sixth lines of each stanza rhyme together; but the fifth of each with the first and third of the following stanza.

**SUBJECT:**

Men and angels unite to praise the love of God; the former having it in prospect, the latter in possession.

**NOTES:**

9. *Th' end*=these latter days.

23. So THE SEARCH, III, 223, l. 60.

## ANTIPHON

*Chor.* PRAISED be the God of love,

*Men.* Here below,

*Angels.* And here above.

*Cho.* Who hath dealt his mercies so,

*Ang.* To his friend,

*Men.* And to his foe,

5

*Cho.* That both grace and glorie tend

*Ang.* Us of old,

*Men.* And us in th' end.

*Cho.* The great shepherd of the fold

10

*Ang.* Us did make,

*Men.* For us was sold.

*Cho.* He our foes in pieces brake.

*Ang.* Him we touch,

*Men.* And him we take.

15

*Cho.* Wherefore since that he is such,

*Ang.* We adore,

*Men.* And we do crouch.

*Cho.* Lord, thy praises should be more.

*Men.* We have none,

20

*Ang.* And we no store.

*Cho.* Praised be the God alone,

Who hath made of two folds one.



*Title-Page of the Bodleian Manuscript of Herbert's Poems. See  
Vol. I, p. 176.*



W. Sandford.

The Original of Mr George Herbert's Temple,  
autentical first Printed for the press.

The Temple

Plat 29. 8.

In his Temple doth every man  
speak of his honour.

The Dedication

Lord, my first fruits present themselves to thee;  
Yet not mine next see, for from thee they com.  
And must returne Accept of them, and see,  
And make us secure, who shall sing best thy Laure.  
There were ones, Father, who shall make a farre?  
thers, who shall last themselves, or me? I faile.

Eliz. Proctor:

Th. Gambrey

M. S. C. N.

William Bratt

Tho. Ifroman



**III**  
**THE CHURCH**



## PREFACE

**I**N religion Herbert, with most of the devout men of his time, Anglicans no less than Puritans, is — as I have already argued — an individualist. The relations between God and his own soul are what interest him. Like Bunyan's Pilgrim, he undertakes a solitary journey to the heavenly city, and concerns himself little about his fellow men, except to cry aloud that they too are in danger. Any notion of dedicating himself to their welfare is foreign to him. Perhaps his poem **THE WINDOWS** comes nearest to expressing something like human responsibility. But such moods are rare. Usually his responsibility is to God alone; and this, passionately uttered in **AARON** and **THE PRIESTHOOD**, is the farthest point to which his self-centred piety carries his verse. The mystic forgets himself in the thought of God ; the philanthropist, in the thought of human needs. To Herbert — at least to the poet Herbert — the personal relationship of the soul to God is the one matter of consequence.

In this relationship he finds the foundation of the Church. As the home organizes and gives opportunity of expression to the love of single persons for one another, so does the Church to the love of single persons and God. Herbert never

thinks of the Church in our modern fashion as the manifestation of God to collective humanity, progressively enlarging human powers and expanding human ideals. Nor does he conceive it as an august divine institution, venerable in itself, and rightly subordinating individuals to its own high ends. It is easy to mistake Herbert for an ecclesiastic, and to say, as has sometimes been said, that he cannot be understood by one who is not Episcopally born. But such an error is due to careless reading. He is, indeed, devoted to the Church. He talks of nothing else. But in his poem SION, as constantly though less explicitly elsewhere, he explains that the Church, God's Temple, is the human heart, and that *all its frame and fabrick is within*. His book he thus very naturally entitled THE CHURCH or TEMPLE, and told Ferrar that it was *a picture of the many Conflicts that have past betwixt God and my Soul before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master.*

It is not strange, then, that one who has made the resolve which is set forth in the preceding Group of poems should become a singer of the Church and its ordinances as thus conceived. For these celebrate the going forth of a loving God to seek a wayward sinner. They show that sinner ill at ease so long as he is parted from his exalted friend, and they indicate the means through which a heavenly union may be accomplished. But one who takes love for his theme will find that there

are three ways of exploring it. He may directly inspect the yearning moods of the soul, viewing them as psychological facts of experience ; or he may consider more abstractly the general relations involved in love, and treat these as theoretic subjects of contemplation; or lastly, he may catalogue the regularities of love, its habitual modes of expression, the fixed avenues through which the loved one becomes accessible. And all these ways are as open to the student of sacred love as to him who would study the profane.

Herbert adopts them all, sometimes in the same poem. I believe, however, I can make his work more intelligible if I roughly classify and divide according to this scheme. Those of his Cambridge poems which predominantly deal with his great theme in the direct way I accordingly entitle *The Inner Life*. Those which treat it as a subject for philosophic analysis I call *Meditation*. And to those which mark out its ordered paths I give the special name of *The Church*. It is true that in doing so I unwarrantably narrow Herbert's comprehensive word. Besides my Group, he covers with that holy name every stirring of the aspiring soul and every serious reflection on the life of love. It is the all-including title of his poems. But I see no harm in applying it, *par excellence* and after this explanation, to the institutional features of love. Only we must be careful to remember that these, no less than the poignant cries of separation

and suffering, derive their meanings from the individual experience of love.

There are advantages in placing this Group first, and in bringing the Group on The Inner Life into close connection with The Crisis. From their style, too, I suspect that most of these churchly poems are of earlier date than the majority of those which follow. That is certainly the case with the longest and most important, **THE SACRIFICE**; an archaic piece which, with all its compact power, is likely to prove somewhat repulsive to a modern taste. In it the suffering of Him who loves us is anatomized in elaborate, and perhaps too calculated, detail. Probably a reader will approach it most understandingly by comparing it with early Flemish and German paintings, or with Albert Dürer's woodcuts. Dürer's Passion and his Life of the Virgin were widely circulated in the century before Herbert. One fancies Herbert turning them over and designing his Altar-piece in their spirit. In it and them there is elaborate realism in setting forth an ideal scene, an exaggeration of physical pain, a forced ingenuity in distressful incident, and a failure to subordinate detail; while at the same time there is distributed everywhere a strange vividness, rich human sympathies, and the impression — conveyed, we hardly know how — that through all the crowded and homely circumstance the solemnest of world-events is occurring. In treating so sacred a subject Herbert allows himself

the smallest possible departure from the words of Scripture. This peculiarity of the poem I have tried to exhibit in the notes.

Following THE SACRIFICE, I set a series of festival songs, in which analogies of the soul's experience are found in historic events. With these falls the festival of SUNDAY, a day more frequent, pompous, and full of human significance than all other holy days. After it are grouped special modes of divine communication, — through PRAYER, SCRIPTURE, BAPTISME, COMMUNION, MUSICK. The group concludes with the solemn monitions of stately burial monuments, inciting the beholder to high aspiration and disentanglement from the body.



## **THE CHURCH**

**INTRODUCTORY:**

In W. the first four lines are headed "Perirrhantrium" (a title which is given to the first stanza of THE CHURCH-PORCH in ed. 1633), and have a page to themselves; the succeeding four lines, also occupying a page, and being headed "Superliminare." — *Superliminare*=the lintel or crossbar of the doorway, a place for an inscription. Cf. Exodus xii, 22.

**DATE:**

Found in W. It is intended as an introduction to a volume of verse.

**METRE:**

Used also in the Song of GOOD FRIDAY, II, 151.

**SUBJECT:**

Conditions of entering the Church of God.

**NOTES:**

1. *Former precepts*=those of THE CHURCH-PORCH which in ed. 1633 immediately precede these lines and refer to outward behavior. L. 1–4 are intended to be heard; l. 5–8 to be read, as an inscription.
- 5–8. Herbert has in mind the conditions for entering the New Jerusalem, Revelation xxi, 27; Hebrews xii, 14. — *Avoid*=avaunt. So Shakespeare, Tempest, iv, 1: "Well done, avoid! No more." In both B. and W. there is no punctuation in the first line, as there is not in the similar case of *Away despair* of THE BAG, III, 157, l. 1.

### SUPERLIMINARE

THOU, whom the former precepts have  
Sprinkled and taught how to behave  
Thy self in church, approach, and taste  
The churches mysticall repast.

AVOID, profanenesse! Come not here!        5  
Nothing but holy, pure, and cleare,  
Or that which groneth to be so,  
May at his perill further go.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique.—Examples of pillars, pyramids, etc., may be seen in Puttenham's Art of English Poetry, and in Sylvester's Dedications before his Translation of Du Bartas. Such fantastic forms were not unknown to the decadent late Greek poetry. In 1650 Hobbes in his letter to Sir W. Davenant speaks of him who would "seek glory from a needless difficulty and contrive verses into the forms of an organ, a hatchet, an egg, an altar, and a pair of wings." In 1682 Dryden may have had Herbert in mind when in Mac Flecknoe he satirically tells Shadwell:

"Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame  
In keen Iambics, but mild Anagram.  
Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command  
Some peaceful province in Acrostic Land,  
There thou mayst *wings* display and *altars* raise,  
And torture one poor word ten thousand ways."

**SUBJECT:**

When the heart is whole it asserts itself, forgetful of God the author of all its parts. Imitating the sacrificial example of Christ, and allowing itself to be broken by affliction, it may out of its fragments build an altar and make its pains God's praise.

**NOTES:**

4. Cf. Exodus xx, 25.
6. Cf. Zechariah vii, 12.
14. Cf. Luke xix, 40.

## THE ALTAR

A BROKEN ALTAR, Lord, thy servant reares,  
Made of a heart and cemented with teares;  
Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;  
No workman's tool hath touch'd the same.

A HEART alone                                        5  
Is such a stone  
As nothing but  
Thy pow'r doth cut.  
Wherefore each part  
Of my hard heart                                      10  
Meets in this frame  
To praise thy name;  
That if I chance to hold my peace,  
These stones to praise thee may not cease.  
O let thy blessed SACRIFICE be mine,  
And sanctifie this ALTAR to be thine.

**INTRODUCTORY:**

THE SACRIFICE was translated into Latin in 1678 by William Dillingham. It is Herbert's only dramatic monologue, or poem put entirely into the mouth of another. His other dramatic poems are the ANTIOPHONS, II, 107, and III, 63; HEAVEN, II, 273; DIALOGUE, II, 369; LOVE UNKNOWN, III, 179; A DIALOGUE-ANTHEME, III, 343; LOVE, III, 387. Herbert's series of twenty-one Latin poems, entitled PASSIO DISCERPTA, looks like a first sketch of THE SACRIFICE. In Christ's Victorie (1610) Giles Fletcher assembles the facts of Christ's death as fully, though in a very different metre and temper.

**DATE:**

From the antithetic style, probably one of Herbert's early pieces. The poem may have been suggested by Donne's Lamentations of Jeremiah.

**METRE:**

Unique. Donne often used a three-lined pentameter stanza. Herbert here adds a refrain, — peculiarly serviceable in emphasizing the monotony of suffering, — but he has never employed this metre without refrain. The other poems where he uses a full refrain are: GRACE, II, 311; THE PEARL, II, 381; HOME, III, 325.

**SUBJECT:**

The death of Christ, as containing in its smallest incident profound contrasts of outward seeming and inner reality. *I, who am Truth, turn into truth their deeds* (l. 179).

## THE SACRIFICE

*On all ye who passe by, whose eyes and minde  
To worldly things are sharp, but to me blinde,  
To me who took eyes that I might you finde,  
Was ever grief like mine?*

The Princes of my people make a head        5  
Against their Maker; they do wish me dead,  
Who cannot wish except I give them bread.  
Was ever grief like mine?

Without me each one who doth now me brave  
Had to this day been an Egyptian slave.      10  
They use that power against me which I gave.  
Was ever grief like mine?

Mine own Apostle, who the bag did beare,  
Though he had all I had, did not forbear  
To sell me also and to put me there.        15  
Was ever grief, &c.

## NOTES:

1. *Oh all ye who passe by*; cf. Lamentations i, 12; ii, 15; and Matthew xxvii, 39.
5. Psalm ii, 2.
7. Exodus xvi, 1–16. *They dishonour him with those mouths which he continually fils and feeds*: THE COUNTRY PARSON, XXVIII.
10. Deuteronomy v, 15.
11. This line well summarizes the crime of the Crucifixion as here conceived by Herbert.
13. John xii, 6.
17. Matthew xxvi, 15.
18. John xii, 5.
21. *Deare treasure*, i. e. my heart; genitive of apposition.
22. "This is a kind of protest against the Roman Catholic rosary and its mechanical use. My blood the only beads, besides which there is no other:" A. B. Grosart. Luke xxii, 44.
23. Luke xxii, 42. This whole line is in apposition to *My words*.
26. A cure for all mankind, Jews and Gentiles.
29. Matthew xxvi, 40–43.
33. Matthew xxvi, 46–57.

For thirtie pence he did my death devise  
Who at three hundred did the ointment prize,  
Not half so sweet as my sweet sacrifice.

Was ever grief like mine ?

Therefore my soul melts, and my heart's deare  
treasure 21

Drops bloud (the onely beads) my words to mea-  
sure :

*O let this cup passe, if it be thy pleasure.*

Was ever grief, &c.

These drops, being temper'd with a sinner's tears,  
A Balsome are for both the Hemispheres; 26  
Curing all wounds but mine, all but my fears.

Was ever grief, &c.

Yet my Disciples sleep. I cannot gain  
One houre of watching; but their drowsie brain  
Comforts not me, and doth my doctrine stain. 31  
Was ever grief, &c.

Arise, arise! They come. Look, how they runne!  
Alas! What haste they make to be undone!  
How with their lanterns do they seek the sunne!

Was ever grief, &c. 36

38. John xiv, 6.

41. Luke xxii, 48.

45. For the *laying hold* of faith, see 1 Timothy vi, 12.

47. Psalm cxvi, 16.

49. Mark xiv, 50.

51. Matthew ii, 1, 2.

53. John xviii, 24.

55. My explanations of their law, they assert, would destroy its meaning.

With clubs and staves they seek me as a thief  
Who am the way of truth, the true relief,  
Most true to those who are my greatest grief.

Was ever grief like mine?

*Judas*, dost thou betray me with a kisse? 41  
Canst thou finde hell about my lips? And misse  
Of life just at the gates of life and blisse?

Was ever grief, &c.

See, they lay hold on me not with the hands 45  
Of faith, but furie. Yet at their commands  
I suffer binding, who have loos'd their bands.

Was ever grief, &c.

All my Disciples flie; fear puts a barre 49  
Betwixt my friends and me. They leave the starre  
That brought the wise men of the East from farre.

Was ever grief, &c.

Then from one ruler to another bound  
They leade me, urging that it was not sound  
What I taught. Comments would the text con-  
found. 55

Was ever grief, &c.

57. The High Priest, Matthew xxvi, 59.
59. Acts viii, 32.
62. John x, 33.
63. Philippians ii, 6.
65. John ii, 19.
66. *Raz'd, and raised.* Cf. THE TEMPER, II, 313, l. 7.
71. " *Thus Adam*, i. e. the offspring of Adam's loins,  
returns my grant of breath to him. Genesis ii, 7: " "  
A. B. Grosart. Cf. PRAYER, II, 181, l. 2.
74. Luke xxiii, 11, 12.
75. *My enmitie*=enmity to me.

The Priest and rulers all false witnesse seek  
'Gainst him who seeks not life, but is the meek  
And readie Paschal Lambe of this great week.  
Was ever grief like mine?

Then they accuse me of great blasphemie,      61  
That I did thrust into the Deitie,  
Who never thought that any robberie.  
Was ever grief, &c.

Some said that I the Temple to the floore      65  
In three dayes raz'd, and raised as before.  
Why, he that built the world can do much more.  
Was ever grief, &c.

Then they condemne me all with that same breath  
Which I do give them daily, unto death.      70  
Thus *Adam* my first breathing rendereth.  
Was ever grief, &c.

They binde, and leade me unto *Herod*. He  
Sends me to *Pilate*. This makes them agree;  
But yet their friendship is my enmitie.      75  
Was ever grief, &c.

78. Psalm cxliv, 1.
79. *Onely*=alone. — Isaiah vi, 5.
86. *Vying* used transitively=matching. So Shakespeare, Antony and Cleopatra, v. 2: “To vie strange forms with fancy.” Cf. EASTER, II, 152, l. 15.
90. A similar phrase in l. 211.
94. Genesis viii, 9. Cf. THE SEARCH, III, 319, l. 20.

*Herod* and all his bands do set me light  
Who teach all hands to warre, fingers to fight,  
And onely am the Lord of hosts and might.

Was ever grief like mine ?

*Herod* in judgement sits, while I do stand; 81  
Examines me with a censorious hand.  
I him obey, who all things else command.

Was ever grief, &c.

The *Jews* accuse me with despitefulnessse, 85  
And vying malice with my gentlenesse,  
Pick quarrels with their onely happinesse.

Was ever grief, &c.

I answer nothing, but with patience prove  
If stonie hearts will melt with gentle love. 90  
But who does hawk at eagles with a dove?

Was ever grief, &c.

My silence rather doth augment their crie;  
My dove doth back into my bosome flie,  
Because the raging waters still are high. 95

Was ever grief, &c.

98. Acts xxii, 22. Cf. PRAYER, II, 185, l. 14.
99. John viii, 58.
102. Luke xxiii, 18.
106. *My life*=the taking of my life.
107. Matthew xxvii, 25.
110. John viii, 12.
113. Luke xxiii, 19.
115. *It*, i. e. murder (l. 113), was naturally approved by those who killed me.

Heark how they crie aloud still, *Crucifie!*  
*It is not fit he live a day,* they crie,  
Who cannot live lesse then eternally. 99

Was ever grief like mine?

Pilate, a stranger, holdeth off; but they,  
Mine owne deare people, cry, *Away, away!*  
With noises confused frightening the day.

Was ever grief, &c. 104

Yet still they shout and crie and stop their eares,  
Putting my life among their sinnes and fears,  
And therefore with *my bloud on them and theirs.*

Was ever grief, &c. 108

See how spite cankers things. These words, aright  
Used and wished, are the whole world's light;  
But hony is their gall, brightnesse their night.

Was ever grief, &c.

They choose a murderer, and all agree  
In him to do themselves a courtesie;  
For it was their own cause who killed me. 115

Was ever grief, &c.

118. Isaiah ix, 6; Philippians iv, 7.
119. *Doth glasse*=doth reflect.
121. John xix, 15.
122. *He*=their real king, Jehovah,— a very violent transition. Numbers xx, 8.
125. Matthew xxvii, 26.
127. Their bitterness adds to my grief the mystery of love repaid by hate. Cf. 1. 11.
129. Mark xiv, 65.
130. Proverbs xxx, 4, and Psalm xcv, 4.
135. John ix, 6.

And a seditious murderer he was,  
But I the Prince of peace; peace that doth passe  
All understanding, more then heav'n doth glasse.  
Was ever grief like mine ?

Why, Cesar is their onely King, not I. 121  
He clave the stonie rock when they were drie;  
But surely not their hearts, as I well trie.  
Was ever grief, &c.

Ah, How they scourge me! Yet my tendernessee  
Doubles each lash, and yet their bitternessse 126  
Windes up my grief to a mysteriousnesse.  
Was ever grief, &c.

They buffet me and box me as they list, 129  
Who grasp the earth and heaven with my fist,  
And never yet, whom I would punish, miss'd.  
Was ever grief, &c.

Behold, they spit on me in scornfull wise  
Who by my spittle gave the blinde man eies,  
Leaving his blindnesse to mine enemies. 135  
Was ever grief, &c.

137. Luke xxii, 64.
138. Exodus xxxiv, 33; 2 Corinthians iii, 13.
139. *Either*; either the Law or the Gospel.
142. Matthew xxvi, 68.—*Dittie* (dictatum)=cry, words which are usually intended to be set to music, as in THE BANQUET, III, 57, l. 50; PROVIDENCE, III, 79, l. 9; THE FORERUNNERS, III, 317, l. 11.
149. Luke xxiii, 28.
150. Luke xxii, 44.
153. Matthew xxvii, 27.
155. Matthew xxvi, 53.

My face they cover, though it be divine.  
As *Moses'* face was vailed, so is mine,      138  
Lest on their double-dark souls either shine.  
Was ever grief like mine ?

Servants and abjects flout me; they are wittie:  
*Now prophesie who strikes thee*, is their dittie.  
So they in me denie themselves all pitie.  
Was ever grief, &c.

And now I am deliver'd unto death,      145  
Which each one cals for so with utmost breath  
That he before me well nigh suffereth.  
Was ever grief, &c.

Weep not, deare friends, since I for both have wept  
When all my tears were bloud, the while you slept.  
Your tears for your own fortunes should be kept.  
Was ever grief, &c.      152

The souldiers lead me to the common hall;  
There they deride me, they abuse me all.  
Yet for twelve heav'ly legions I could call.      155  
Was ever grief, &c.

157. Matthew xxvii, 28.
158. Shews by its scarlet color.
159. A *cordiall* is also mentioned in WHITSUNDAY, II,  
159, l. 18, SIGHS AND GRONES, III, 279, l. 28, and  
THE KNELL, III, 393, l. 17.
163. Isaiah v, 1-7.
165. Genesis iii, 18, and Matthew xxvii, 29.
167. *Thrall*=bondage, as in THE CHURCH-PORCH,  
II, 27, l. 118, and 49, l. 286.
170. 1 Corinthians x, 4; see also note on LOVE UNKNOWN, III, 179, l. 14.

Then with a scarlet robe they me array;  
Which shews my bloud to be the onely way  
And cordiall left to repair man's decay.      159  
Was ever grief like mine?

Then on my head a crown of thorns I wear;  
For these are all the grapes *Sion* doth bear,  
Though I my vine planted and watred there.  
Was ever grief, &c.

So sits the earth's great curse in *Adam's* fall 165  
Upon my head. So I remove it all  
From th' earth unto my brows, and bear the  
thrall.

Was ever grief, &c.

Then with the reed they gave to me before  
They strike my head, the rock from whence all  
store      170  
Of heav'ly blessings issue evermore.  
Was ever grief, &c.

They bow their knees to me and cry, *Hail king!*  
What ever scoffes or scornfulnesse can bring,  
I am the floore, the sink, where they it fling. 175  
Was ever grief, &c.

178. *Weeds*, i. e. garments.
179. They intend their *Hail King*, their sceptres, crowns, and robes to be false. They prove to be true.
182. 1 Peter i, 12.
183. Luke x, 24.
185. *Rout*=rabble, crowd.
186. Luke xxiii, 21.
187. Isaiah lxiv, 12.
190. Matthew xxvii, 31.
191. Matthew viii, 31.
193. *Ingrosse* =to heap up. So Shakespeare, 2 Henry IV, iv, 5:  
“For this they have engrossd and piled up  
The canker'd heaps of strange-achieved gold.”

Yet since man's scepters are as frail as reeds,  
And thorny all their crowns, bloudie their weeds,  
I, who am Truth, turn into truth their deeds.

Was ever grief like mine?

The soulđiers also spit upon that face 181

Which Angels did desire to have the grace,  
And Prophets, once to see, but found no place.

Was ever grief, &c.

Thus trimmed, forth they bring me to the rout, 185

Who *Crucifie him!* crie with one strong shout.

God holds his peace at man, and man cries out.

Was ever grief, &c.

They leade me in once more, and putting then

Mine own clothes on, they leade me out agen. 190

Whom devils flie, thus is he toss'd of men.

Was ever grief, &c.

And now wearie of sport, glad to ingrosse

All spite in one, counting my life their losse,

They carrie me to my most bitter crosse.

195

Was ever grief, &c.

198. Matthew xxvii, 32.
199. Matthew xvi, 24.
202. *Fruit*, Genesis iii, 3–6.
203. *Tree*, i. e. the cross. Galatians iii, 13.
206. *The two*, i. e. the worlds of nature and of sin.
207. *Words*, Psalm xxxiii, 6.
215. Matthew xxvii, 46. Through stress of feeling the line is left unfinished. Cf. DENIALL, II, 297, l. 5.

My crosse I bear my self untill I faint.  
Then Simon bears it for me by constraint,  
The decreed burden of each mortall Saint.      199  
Was ever grief like mine?

*O all ye who passe by, behold and see!*  
Man stole the fruit, but I must climbe the tree;  
The tree of life to all but onely me.  
Was ever grief, &c.      204

Lo, here I hang, charg'd with a world of sinne,  
The greater world o' th' two; for that came in  
By words, but this by sorrow I must win.  
Was ever grief, &c.

Such sorrow as, if sinfull man could feel      209  
Or feel his part, he would not cease to kneel  
Till all were melted, though he were all steel.  
Was ever grief, &c.

But, *O my God, my God!* why leav'st thou me,  
The sonne, in whom thou dost delight to be?  
*My God, my God* —————      215  
Never was grief like mine.

217. Many a wound tears my body.
219. *Reproches*, perhaps in apposition to *shame*. Cf.  
l. 217, and certainly referring to l. 221.
221. Luke iv, 23, and Matthew xxvii, 40, 42.
229. Matthew xxvii, 38.
231. Ephesians iv, 8.
233. Matthew xxvii, 37.
235. Isaiah liii, 9.

Shame tears my soul, my bodie many a wound;  
Sharp nails pierce this, but sharper that confound;  
Reproches, which are free, while I am bound.

Was ever grief like mine?

*Now heal thy self, Physician, now come down!*

Alas! I did so, when I left my crown                  222

And father's smile for you, to feel his frown.

Was ever grief, &c.

In healing not my self, there doth consist                  225

All that salvation which ye now resist;

Your safetie in my sicknesse doth subsist.

Was ever grief, &c.

Betwixt two theeves I spend my utmost breath,

As he that for some robberie suffereth.                  230

Alas! what have I stollen from you? Death.

Was ever grief, &c.

A king my title is, prefixt on high;

Yet by my subjects am condemn'd to die

A servile death in servile companie.                  235

Was ever grief, &c.

238. Matthew xxvii, 34.
239. Psalm lxxviii, 24, 25. *Manna* is mentioned again in PRAYER, II, 181, l. 10.
241. Matthew xxvii, 35.
243. Mark v, 27.
245. "That some person may still be speaking, these two last stanzas are brought in by way of prophecy; for it had been an absurdity to have introduced him speaking when he was dead:" G. Ryley (1714).
247. *As sinne came*, Genesis ii, 21. — *Sacraments*, John xix, 34, and Matthew xxvi, 28.

They gave me vineger mingled with gall,  
But more with malice. Yet when they did call,  
With Manna, Angels' food, I fed them all. 239  
Was ever grief like mine?

They part my garments and by lot dispose  
My coat, the type of love, which once cur'd those  
Who sought for help, never malicious foes.

Was ever grief, &c.

Nay, after death their spite shall further go; 245  
For they will pierce my side, I full well know,  
That as sinne came, so Sacraments might flow.

Was ever grief, &c.

But now I die, now all is finished;  
My wo, man's weal. And now I bow my head.  
Onely let others say, when I am dead, 251  
Never was grief like mine.

**DATE:**

Found in W. and there entitled THE PASSION.

**METRE:**

Used with different rhyming system in THE METHOD, III, 197. The metre of the second part, beginning at l. 21, is used in SUPERLIMINARE, II, 119.

**SUBJECT:**

How many are the sorrows of Christ! They are as many as are his foes, the stars, the leaves and fruits of autumn, the hours or sins of a life. If inscribed on my heart, they would leave no room for sin.

**NOTES:**

7. Matthew ii, 9.
8. *All*=all the stars.
12. John xv, 1.
19. "As the dog knows his medicinable herb; or as the weasel was said to suck 'rue' before encountering a mole; or the mingoos its herb when bitten by a snake,— both erroneous, but the latter, until very lately, believed to be a well-proved fact:" A. B. Grosart. Cf. SUNDAY, II, 177, l. 38.

## GOOD FRIDAY

O MY chief good,  
How shall I measure out thy bloud ?  
How shall I count what thee befell,  
And each grief tell ?

Shall I thy woes                                    5  
Number according to thy foes ?  
Or, since one starre show'd thy first breath,  
Shall all thy death ?

Or shall each leaf  
Which falls in Autumne score a grief ?      10  
Or cannot leaves, but fruit, be signe  
Of the true vine ?

Then let each houre  
Of my whole life one grief devoure;  
That thy distresse through all may runne,  
And be my sunne.                                    16

Or rather let  
My severall sinnes their sorrows get;  
That as each beast his cure doth know,  
Each sinne may so.                                    20

21. In W. this second part of GOOD FRIDAY is printed separately under the title, THE PASSION. I have not separated the two, partly because B. and ed. 1633 — which are later — combine them, and partly because Herbert is fond of thus appending a lyrical passage to a reflective poem. So EASTER, II, 153; CHRISTMAS, II, 167; H. COMMUNION, II, 195; AN OFFERING, II, 393.

22. *The bloudie fight* is the agony of the cross. *Bloudie battell* it is called in PRAISE, III, 47, l. 35. *Fight* in this sense of personal agony is strange to us, but Vaughan employs it in his Faith:

“Then did He shine forth whose sad fall  
And bitter fights  
Were figur’d in those mystical  
And cloudy rites.”

23. *Store* of blood, the fittest ink for such a record.

32. The *writings* referred to in l. 21 and 23.

Since bloud is fittest, Lord, to write  
Thy sorrows in and bloudie fight;  
My heart hath store, write there, where in  
One box doth lie both ink and sinne.

That when sinne spies so many foes,                    25  
Thy whips, thy nails, thy wounds, thy woes,  
All come to lodge there, sinne may say,  
*No room for me,* and flie away.

Sinne being gone, oh fill the place  
And keep possession with thy grace!                    30  
Lest sinne take courage and return,  
And all the writings blot or burn.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Used also in THE STORM, III, 263. The metre of the song, beginning at l. 19, is used also in THE QUIDDITIE, II, 97, and THE QUIP, III, 33.

**SUBJECT:**

The day of gladness.

**NOTES:**

5. The reference may be to Colossians ii, 12,— “Buried with him in baptism;” but probably the thought is complicated by remembering how a metal, in order to be rendered pure, is reduced to ashes.
6. And may make thee much more, i. e. just.
8. After l. 8 he goes on to explain why each part of the lute should awake and strive. Hence I follow Dr. Grosart and punctuate (:), not (.), as is usually done.
- 15–18. The common chord consists of three notes, i. e. any tone with its third and fifth. Herbert conceives all music to be made up by contrasts and repetitions of such chords. If, then, in our song only heart and lute combine, the chord will still be incomplete without the Spirit’s part. Romans viii, 26.

## EASTER

RISE, heart, thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise  
Without delayes,  
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise  
With him mayst rise;  
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,       5  
His life may make thee gold, and much more, just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part  
With all thy art:  
The crosse taught all wood to resound his name  
Who bore the same;       10  
His streched sinews taught all strings what key  
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song  
Pleasant and long.  
Or, since all musick is but three parts vied       15  
And multiplied,  
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,  
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

19. *Straw thy way.* Same phrase in AFFLICTION, II, 341, l. 21. Cf. Matthew xxi, 8. This is the *song* planned in l. 13, and has, as there proposed, three stanzas.
26. They would be presumptuous to compare what they bring with what Easter brings.
29. All the three hundred days of the year (for so in round numbers we may reckon them) get their significance from this single day.

I got me flowers to straw thy way,  
I got me boughs off many a tree,                   20  
But thou wast up by break of day,  
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sunne arising in the East,  
Though he give light, and th' East perfume,  
If they should offer to contest                   25  
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,  
Though many sunnes to shine endeavour?  
We count three hundred, but we misse;  
There is but one, and that one ever.               30

**INTRODUCTORY:**

"We then celebrate the performance of the promise which he made to his disciples at or before his ascension; namely, 'that though he left them, yet he would send them the Holy Ghost to be their comforter;' and he did so on that day which the Church calls Whitsunday:" Walton's Life.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique.

**SUBJECT:**

A longing for direct enlightenment, such as once came in tongues of fire. Cf. DECAY, III, 115.

**NOTES:**

1. The Holy Spirit which first appeared to Jesus as a dove, Matthew iii, 16, appeared to his disciples after his death as fire, Acts ii, 3.

**1-4. Vaughan imitates this in Disorder and Frailty:**

"O yes! But give wings to my fire,  
And hatch my soul, until it fly  
Up where Thou art, amongst thy tire  
Of stars, above infirmity."

3. *Hatching* = brooding. The heart thought of as an egg, incapable of motion till the Holy Spirit gives it life. Psalm lv, 6.
7. Whoever wished might come directly to thee.

**WHITSUNDAY**

LISTEN, sweet Dove, unto my song  
And spread thy golden wings in me;  
Hatching my tender heart so long  
Till it get wing and flie away with thee.

Where is that fire which once descended      5  
On thy Apostles? Thou didst then  
Keep open house, richly attended,  
Feasting all comers by twelve chosen men.

Such glorious gifts thou didst bestow  
That th' earth did like a heav'n appeare;      10  
The starres were coming down to know  
If they might mend their wages and serve here.

14. Cf. MISERIE, II, 253, l. 33.
17. The *pipes* are the Apostles, the conductors of the reviving grace of Christ to us (Zechariah iv, 12). Cf. THE JEWS, III, 109, l. 3. Since their day direct manifestations of the Holy Spirit have ceased.
20. Can *their* be a misprint for *his*? It would then mean that the Apostles were martyred by men who really dealt themselves a blow in piercing the side of Christ. Possibly, however, the text is correct, and it may mean that by stabbing the Apostles men injured themselves.
23. *Braves*=bravadoes. So Shakespeare, Taming of the Shrew, iii, 1: "Sirrah, I will not bear these braves of thine." Only on special occasions does God now intervene.
28. Its right of direct access to thee, l. 7.

The sunne, which once did shine alone,  
Hung down his head and wisht for night  
When he beheld twelve sunnes for one      15  
Going about the world and giving light.

But since those pipes of gold, which brought  
That cordiall water to our ground,  
Were cut and martyr'd by the fault  
Of those who did themselves through their side  
wound,      20

Thou shutt'st the doore and keep'st within,  
Scarce a good joy creeps through the chink;  
And if the braves of conqu'ring sinne  
Did not excite thee, we should wholly sink.

Lord, though we change, thou art the same;  
The same sweet God of love and light.      26  
Restore this day, for thy great name,  
Unto his ancient and miraculous right.

**INTRODUCTORY:**

Another poem with this title is given, III, 389.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Used also in PARADISE, III, 39.

**SUBJECT:**

On Trinity Sunday the divine life presents itself in threefold aspects: God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; by creation, redemption, sanctification; induces man to be purged, confess, strive; with heart, mouth, hands; in faith, hope, charity; through running, rising, resting. With Herbert the subject usually dictates the form,— here three stanzas of three lines each.

**NOTES:**

1. Genesis ii, 7.
5. *Score* = account, indebtedness, as in THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 57, l. 360.

**TRINITIE-SUNDAY**

LORD, who hast form'd me out of mud,  
And hast redeem'd me through thy bloud,  
And sanctifi'd me to do good,

Purge all my sinnes done heretofore;  
For I confesse my heavie score,                       5  
And I will strive to sinne no more.

Enrich my heart, mouth, hands in me,  
With faith, with hope, with charitie,  
That I may runne, rise, rest with thee.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique.

**SUBJECT:**

We refuse worship to angels and saints not because they are unworthy, but because worship of them is uncommanded.

**NOTES:**

1. "Probably Herbert means according to all your orders of precedence: nine orders of angels, of whom seraphim are highest the throne and Presence; and among saints — apostles, prophets, martyrs, etc.:” A. B. Grosart.
5. Revelation iv, 4 and 10. In cathedral sculpture the saints who have been beheaded often hold in their hands both head and crown.
12. Alluding to the common belief that gold, being precious as a metal, must be precious also as a medicine. So Donne, Elegy xi, 112: “Gold is restorative.” And Sir T. Browne, *Vulgar Errors*, Bk. II, ch. iv.

## TO ALL ANGELS AND SAINTS

OH glorious spirits, who after all your bands  
See the smooth face of God without a frown  
Or strict commands;

Where ev'ry one is king, and hath his crown  
If not upon his head, yet in his hands; 5

Not out of envie or maliciousnesse  
Do I forbear to crave your speciall aid.  
I would addresse  
My vows to thee most gladly, blessed Maid,  
And Mother of my God, in my distresse. 10

Thou art the holy mine whence came the gold,  
The great restorative for all decay  
In young and old.  
Thou art the cabinet where the jewell lay;  
Chiefly to thee would I my soul unfold. 15

19. *Injunction*=a command to do; and not, as is usual with us, a command not to do.
21. *Prerogative*, an adjective, not a substantive=authoritatively prescribed.
23. *The last houre*=the day of judgment.
24. Cf. A WREATH, II, 319, l. 1.
25. *Posie*=bunch of flowers. Cf. THE THANKSGIVING, II, 287, l. 14.
30. *Hand*=writing, command, authority.

But now (alas!) I dare not, for our King,  
Whom we do all joyntly adore and praise,  
    Bids no such thing;  
And where his pleasure no injunction layes,  
('T is your own case) ye never move a wing.   20

All worship is prerogative, and a flower  
Of his rich crown from whom lyes no appeal  
    At the last hour.  
Therefore we dare not from his garland steal  
To make a posie for inferiour power.         25

Although then others court you, if ye know  
What's done on earth, we shall not fare the  
    worse  
        Who do not so;  
Since we are ever ready to disburse,  
If any one our Master's hand can show.         30

**INTRODUCTORY:**

Called in W. CHRISTMAS-DAY.

**DATE:**

Found in W. He counts himself already a poet,  
l. 17.

**METRE:**

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

**SUBJECT:**

The thought in this Sonnet is wayward, each phase  
successively suggesting some new phase. Its course  
is something like this: Tired with my hunt after  
pleasure, I turned to whatever offered rest. It  
proved to be my Lord's inn. There he was once  
born among the beasts, and since he does not dread  
what is brutish, let him make of my heart a better  
lodging than he ever found at birth or death.

**NOTES:**

3. The whole pack of my clamorous desires misleading me.
6. *Expecting* = waiting with confidence. So Hebrews x, 13.
14. *Rack* = the hay-rack or manger in which the child Jesus lay.

## CHRISTMAS

ALL after pleasures as I rid one day,  
    My horse and I both tir'd, bodie and minde,  
With full crie of affections quite astray,  
    I took up in the next inne I could finde.  
There when I came, whom found I but my deare,  
    My dearest Lord, expecting till the grief         6  
Of pleasures brought me to him, readie there  
    To be all passengers' most sweet relief?  
O Thou, whose glorious yet contracted light,  
    Wrapt in night's mantle, stole into a manger,  
Since my dark soul and brutish is thy right,   11  
    To Man of all beasts be not thou a stranger.  
Furnish and deck my soul, that thou mayst  
    have  
A better lodging then a rack, or grave.

**METRE:**

Unique.

**SUBJECT:**

Rivalry of man and nature in praise. But there is throughout an allegoric meaning too: *daylight* signifying the light of God's countenance, and *night* the times of its withdrawal.

**NOTES:**

15. Luke ii. 20.
18. The bad guidance of this flock is discussed in **SINNES ROUND, III, 143.**
19. Psalm cxix, 103; and xlvi, 4.
25. *We*=myself and the sun. — *He*=the sun, who, though called to praise our common Lord, deserts me when I would out-sing the daylight hours.
31. *Our own day*=a day made by ourselves, that shall have no night.
32. By such a responsive song as **ANTIPHON, II, 106.**

The shepherds sing, and shall I silent be?      15  
    My God, no hymne for thee?  
My soul's a shepherd too; a flock it feeds  
    Of thoughts, and words, and deeds.  
The pasture is thy word; the streams, thy grace  
    Enriching all the place.      20  
Shepherd and flock shall sing, and all my powers  
    Out-sing the day-light houres.  
Then we will chide the sunne for letting night  
    Take up his place and right.  
We sing one common Lord; wherefore he should  
    Himself the candle hold.      26  
I will go searching, till I finde a sunne  
    Shall stay till we have done,  
A willing shiner, that shall shine as gladly  
    As frost-nipt sunnes look sadly.      30  
Then we will sing and shine all our own day,  
    And one another pay.  
His beams shall cheer my breast, and both so twine  
Till ev'n his beams sing and my musick shine.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Used also in LIFE, III, 321.

**SUBJECT:**

The praise of abstinence, as both beneficial to us and prescribed by the Church.

**NOTES:**

4. Leviticus xxiii, 14; Matthew vi, 16; Luke v, 35.
6. "I. e., obedience to rules and regulations. Corporation is corporate bodies generally, whether municipal or a company :" A. B. Grosart.
10. *Things which use hath justly got* = matters properly directed by usage.
16. Church authority, which ordinarily prescribes temperance on Fast Days, may on occasion set it aside. The occasions are considered in THE COUNTRY PARSON, X. Perhaps these qualifying lines were added with a remembrance of some such experience on the part of Herbert himself, as he declares in a begging letter to his stepfather (Cambridge, 1617): *This Lent I am forbid utterly to eat any fish, so that I am fain to dyet in my chamber at mine own cost ; for in our publick halls, you know, is nothing but fish and white-meats ; out of Lent also twice a week, on Fridayes and Saturdayes, I must do so, which yet sometimes I fast.*
23. *Dishonest* = which do not belong to our nature.

## LENT

WELCOME, deare feast of Lent! Who loves not thee,  
He loves not Temperance or Authoritie,  
But is compos'd of passion.  
The Scriptures bid us *fast*; the Church sayes, *now*;  
Give to thy Mother what thou wouldest allow      5  
To ev'ry Corporation.

The humble soul, compos'd of love and fear,  
Begins at home and layes the burden there,  
When doctrines disagree.  
He sayes, in things which use hath justly got, 10  
I am a scandall to the Church, and not  
The Church is so to me.

True Christians should be glad of an occasion  
To use their temperance, seeking no evasion  
When good is seasonable;      15  
Unlesse Authoritie, which should increase  
The obligation in us, make it lesse,  
And Power it self disable.

Besides the cleanness of sweet abstinence,  
Quick thoughts and motions at a small expense,  
A face not fearing light;      21  
Whereas in fulnesse there are sluttish fumes,  
Sowre exhalations, and dishonest rheumes,  
Revenging the delight.

- 19–24. Cornaro, in his Treatise on Temperance, translated by Herbert, describes in these words the benefits which at the age of eighty-three he experiences as the result of his extreme abstinence: "I am continually in health, and I am so nimble that I can easily get on horseback without the advantage of the ground, and sometimes I go up high stairs and hills on foot. . . . By which it is evident that the life which I live at this age is not a dead, dumpish and sower life, but cheerful, lively, and pleasant. Neither if I had my wish, would I change age and constitution with them who follow their youthful appetites."
25. In the previous verse the profits were mentioned which come to our body and mind through fasting. Here we are reminded of religious gains, *pendant* on these and adding goodness to wise abstinence, which arise through following the intimations of the Christian Year. Possibly there is also in *pendant* the suggestion of hanging like fruits.
31. Matthew iv, 2.
35. Matthew v, 48.
46. Let us be bounteous to the wayfarer and not to our private selves. Isaiah lviii, 7.

Then those same pendant profits, which the spring  
And Easter intimate, enlarge the thing                    26

    And goodnesse of the deed.

Neither ought other men's abuse of Lent  
Spoil the good use, lest by that argument  
    We forfeit all our Creed.                            30

It's true we cannot reach Christ's forti'th day;  
Yet to go part of that religious way  
    Is better then to rest.

We cannot reach our Saviour's puritie;  
Yet are we bid, *Be holy ev'n as he.*                    35  
    In both let's do our best.

Who goeth in the way which Christ hath gone,  
Is much more sure to meet with him then one  
    That travelleth by-wayes.

Perhaps my God, though he be farre before,    40  
May turn and take me by the hand, and more  
    May strengthen•my decayes.

Yet Lord instruct us to improve our fast  
By starving sinne, and taking such repast  
    As may our faults controll;                        45  
That ev'ry man may revell at his doore,  
Not in his parlour; banqueting the poore,  
    And among those his soul.

**INTRODUCTORY:**

Vaughan's Son-days is a composite of this poem and PRAYER, II, 183. Here and in the precepts for Sunday included in THE CHURCH-PORCH (II, 61, 63, 65, 67, l. 391-450) Herbert shows himself no sabbatarian. His thoughts are confined to the reverent observance of public worship. As S. R. Gardiner observes (History of England, vol. iii, p. 250), Herbert "celebrates the joys and duties of the great Christian festival through two whole pages. Of behaviour out of church he has not a single word to say." In THE COUNTRY PARSON, VIII, after detailing the parson's priestly work on Sunday, he adds, *At night he thinks it a very fit time, both suitable to the joy of the day and without hinderance to publick duties, either to entertaine some of his neighbours or to be entertained of them*

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique.

**SUBJECT:**

The pomp and splendor of the Lord's Day.

**NOTES:**

1. VERTUE, III, 335, has a similar opening.

## SUNDAY

O DAY most calm, most bright,  
The fruit of this, the next world's bud,  
Th' indorsement of supreme delight,  
Writ by a friend, and with his bloud;  
The couch of time, care's balm and bay; 5  
The week were dark but for thy light,  
Thy torch doth show the way.

The other dayes and thou  
Make up one man, whose face thou art,  
Knocking at heaven with thy brow. 10  
The worky-daiies are the back-part;  
The burden of the week lies there,  
Making the whole to stoup and bow  
Till thy release appeare.

Man had straight forward gone 15  
To endlesse death; but thou dost pull  
And turn us round to look on one  
Whom, if we were not very dull,  
We could not choose but look on still;  
Since there is no place so alone 20  
The which he doth not fill.

5. *Care's balm and bay*=care's cure (cf. AN OFFERING, II, 395, l. 19, where *balsam*, the longer form of *balm*, is used) and crown (cf. THE COLLAR, III, 211, l. 14). Or does he in *bay* refer to the old superstition that bay-leaves protect against lightning?—a superstition examined by Sir T. Browne in his Vulgar Errors (1646), Bk. II, ch. v.
7. Psalm cxix, 105.
12. Figuring the week as one composite person, we must not allow its overburdened *back-part* to depress its upward-turned *face*.
14. Till the release which thou bringest appear.
26. *They*=Sundays.
29. Walton says that Herbert sang this stanza the Sunday before he died.
31. *Wife*=the Church; cf. Revelation xxi, 9.
37. The Lord's Day has taken the place of the Jewish Sabbath.
38. Isaiah i, 3. A line almost identical with this occurs in GOOD FRIDAY, II, 149, l. 19.
42. Sundays bring healing to those afflicted by sin. Cf. MAN, II, 219, l. 23.

Sundaies the pillars are  
On which heav'ns palace arched lies;  
The other dayes fill up the spare  
And hollow room with vanities.

25

They are the fruitfull beds and borders  
In God's rich garden; that is bare  
Which parts their ranks and orders.

The Sundaies of man's life,  
Thredded together on time's string,       30  
Make bracelets to adorn the wife  
Of the eternall glorious King.

On Sunday heaven's gate stands ope,  
Blessings are plentifull and rife,  
More plentifull then hope.       35

This day my Saviour rose,  
And did inclose this light for his;  
That, as each beast his manger knows,  
Man might not of his fodder misse.  
Christ hath took in this piece of ground,   40  
And made a garden there for those  
Who want herbs for their wound.

45. Sunday, the day of the rising of our Lord, attended by the earthquake (Matthew xxviii, 2), sets aside all the other days employed in creation.
47. Judges xvi, 3. "As Samson took away the gates of the city, so Christ took away the Judaical rites, unhinging their Sabbath day:" G. Ryley (1714).
49. *Unhinge*=carried away from previous uses.
53. Revelation vii, 14.
57. Psalm cxviii, 24, and Nehemiah viii, 12.

The rest of our Creation  
Our great Redeemer did remove

With the same shake which at his passion      45  
Did th' earth and all things with it move.

As Samson bore the doores away,  
Christ's hands, though nail'd, wrought our salva-  
tion

And did unhinge that day.

The brightnesse of that day      50  
We sullied by our foul offence;

Wherefore that robe we cast away,  
Having a new at his expence  
Whose drops of bloud paid the full price  
That was requir'd to make us gay,      55  
And fit for Paradise.

Thou art a day of mirth;  
And where the week-dayes trail on ground,

Thy flight is higher, as thy birth.  
O let me take thee at the bound,      60  
Leaping with thee from sev'n to sev'n,  
Till that we both, being toss'd from earth,  
Flie hand in hand to heav'n!

## DATE:

Found in W.

## METRE:

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

## SUBJECT:

Prayer a world power.

## NOTES:

1. *Churches banquet*=what the Church feeds on.—  
*Angel's age*, — Prayer is as old as the angels.
2. To God who gave us breath (Genesis ii, 7), we in  
prayer return it.
3. *In paraphrase*=in epitome. As a man prays, so  
is he. — *In pilgrimage*=moving toward its goal.
5. *Engine against th' Almighty*, i. e. prayer wrests  
from God for our aid power which would otherwise  
be directed against us. The three following characteriza-  
tions expand this idea.— *Sinner's towre*=a  
place of both refuge and attack. Psalm xviii, 2.
6. The working of thunder is from heaven to earth;  
prayer works from earth to heaven. The former  
overwhelms; the latter preserves.
7. It upsets in an hour by its magic that regulated  
order which God required six days to establish.  
Or, *The six-daies-world* may be the week-day world.
11. *Heaven in ordinarie*=heaven in common life.  
— *Well drest*, i. e. the opposite of THE CHURCH-  
PORCH, II, 63, l. 414.
14. Prayer finds in the world an intelligible order.

## PRAYER

PRAYER the Churches banquet, Angel's age,  
God's breath in man returning to his birth,  
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,  
The Christian plummet sounding heav'n and earth;  
Engine against th' Almighty, sinner's towre, 5  
Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,  
The six-daiies-world transposing in an houre,  
A kinde of tune which all things heare and fear;  
Softnesse and peace and joy and love and blisse,  
Exalted Manna, gladnesse of the best, 10  
Heaven in ordinarie, man well drest,  
The milkie way, the bird of Paradise,  
Church-bels beyond the starres heard, the soul's  
bloud,  
The land of spices; something understood.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique. Rhyming system changes in the final stanza.

**SUBJECT:**

God's accessibility, power, and love, revealed in prayer, make prayer immeasurably precious.

**NOTES:**

4. *State*=stateliness. — *Easiness*, a remembrance of the “easy to be entreated” of James iii, 17.
9. Herbert uses the word *sphere* nine times. Once (CHURCH MILITANT, III, 369, l. 142) it means a field of action. Once (MAN, II, 219, l. 22) it may possibly mean our earth. In all other cases, e. g. DIVINITIE, III, 97, l. 2; VANITIE, III, 133, l. 2, it means one of the nine concentric hollow crystal spheres which in the Ptolemaic astronomy are supposed successively to form circumferences for our globe, and to be the means of carrying the heavenly bodies through their orbits. When the highest sphere is referred to (as here, THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 51, l. 318, and THE SEARCH, III, 219, l. 6), the sphere of the crystalline Heaven is intended, the circumference farthest removed from the earth, its centre.

### PRAYER

OF what an easie quick accesse,  
My blessed Lord, art thou! How suddenly  
May our requests thine eare invade!  
To shew that state dislikes not easinesse,  
If I but lift mine eyes my suit is made;       5  
Thou canst no more not heare then thou canst die.

Of what supreme almighty power  
Is thy great arm, which spans the east and west  
And tacks the centre to the sphere!  
By it do all things live their measur'd hour. 10  
We cannot ask the thing which is not there,  
Blaming the shallownesse of our request.

10. Psalm civ, 19.

11-12. Condensed lines, meaning: The failure of our prayers can never be due to our having foolishly asked God for that which is not in his power to grant.

14. Also in l. 6, and THE SACRIFICE, II, 133, l. 99.

17. Our sins previously hindered God from giving us the blessings He desired to give.

Of what unmeasureable love  
Art thou possest who, when thou couldst not die,  
Wert fain to take our flesh and curse      15  
And for our sakes in person sinne reprove,  
That by destroying that which ty'd thy purse,  
Thou mightst make way for liberalitie!

Since then these three wait on thy throne,  
*Ease, Power, and Love;* I value prayer so      20  
That were I to leave all but one,  
Wealth, fame, endowments, vertues, all should go;  
I and deare prayer would together dwell,  
And quickly gain, for each inch lost, an ell.

**INTRODUCTORY:**

Cf. Ferrar, *The Printers to the Reader*, p. xii.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

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

**SUBJECT:**

*The chief and top of his knowledge consists in the book of books, the storehouse and magazene of life and comfort, the holy Scriptures. There he sucks and lives : COUNTRY PARSON, IIII.* The first sonnet affirms the worth of all parts of Scripture ; the second, the worth of these in combination.

**NOTES:**

2. *Hony*, Psalm cxix, 103.
4. Honey used medicinally is deterotive and balsamic.
7. *Wish and take*=obtain whatever we desire.
8. *Thankfull*=rewarding, beneficial.
10. *Indeare*=make dear, raise in price. So Shakespeare, Sonnet XXXI.
11. *Lidger* is Shakespeare's *leiger*=a legate or ambassador. Cf. Vaughan's *Corruption*.
13. *Handsell*=first instalment, earnest of something more to follow. So Herrick (1648), *On Tears*:  
“Our present tears here, not our present laughter,  
Are but the handsells of our joys hereafter.”

*Flat*=accessible.



## THE H. SCRIPTURES

## I

OH Book! Infinite sweetnesse! Let my heart  
Suck ev'ry letter and a hony gain,  
Precious for any grief in any part,  
To cleare the breast, to mollifie all pain.  
Thou art all health, health thriving till it make  
A full eternitie. Thou art a masse                    6  
Of strange delights, where we may wish and  
take.

Ladies, look here! This is the thankfull glasse  
That mends the looker's eyes; this is the well  
That washes what it shows. Who can indeare  
Thy praise too much? Thou art heav'n's Lidger  
here,    11  
Working against the states of death and hell.  
Thou art joyes handsell. Heav'n lies flat in  
thee,  
Subject to ev'ry mounter's bended knee.

**SUBJECT:**

*All Truth being consonant to it self, an industrious and judicious comparing of place with place must be a singular help for the right understanding of the Scriptures. To this may be added the consideration of any text with the coherence thereof, touching what goes before and what follows after, as also the scope of the Holy Ghost : COUNTRY PARSON, III.*

**NOTES:**

- 1-4. To emphasize the theme the prefix *con-* is used three times in the first four lines.
7. Coleridge suspected an error, and Dr. Willmott proposed to read *match* in the sense of *compose*. But both manuscripts and the edition of 1633 read *watch*. If we retain *watch*, it must picture the scattered herbs of the apothecary as eager to be employed in our service; so MAN, II, 219, l. 23.
9. *Makes good*=verifies.
10. *Comments on thee*=illustrates thy teaching.
13. Throughout this poem runs the allegory of THE STARRE, II, 365, never far from Herbert's mind. We have it in l. 1, 2, 4, 13, 14, probably also in 5, 8, and 9. The closing lines approach most nearly the physical sense, saying that those who consult astrology are often misled. Cf. PROVIDENCE, III, 87, l. 77-80. The Bible gives sure guidance.



## II

OH that I knew how all thy lights combine,  
And the configurations of their glorie!  
Seeing not onely how each verse doth shine,  
But all the constellations of the storie.  
This verse marks that, and both do make a motion  
Unto a third, that ten leaves off doth lie; 6  
Then as dispersed herbs do watch a potion,  
These three make up some Christian's destinie.  
Such are thy secrets, which my life makes good,  
And comments on thee; for in ev'ry thing  
Thy words do finde me out, and parallels bring,  
And in another make me understood. 12  
Starres are poore books, and oftentimes do misse;  
This book of starres lights to eternall blisse.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

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

**SUBJECT:**

My true nature, brought about by baptism, is vis-  
ible beneath the falsifications of sin.

**NOTES:**

6. John xix, 34. Cf. THE SACRIFICE, II, 147, l. 246.  
Since baptism received its meaning from the death  
of Christ, its water is identified with that which  
issued from Christ's wounded side. So WHITSUN-  
DAY, II, 159, l. 18.
7. *Streams.* “Baptism is administered to two kinds of  
subjects: for the one, i. e. infants, it is a preventive  
of the filth of sin by the early washing. Some are  
hence early laid hold of and sanctified from the  
womb. For the other, i. e. adults, who are required  
to make a personal profession of repentance, it  
affords tears to drown grown and growing sins:”  
G. Ryley (1714).
8. *Wide*, the same use in THE DISCHARGE, III, 189,  
l. 34.
12. Philippians iv, 3; Revelation xiii, 8.

## H. BAPTISME

As he that sees a dark and shadie grove  
Stayes not, but looks beyond it on the skie;  
So when I view my sinnes, mine eyes remove  
More backward still and to that water flie  
Which is above the heav'ns, whose spring and  
rent 5  
Is in my deare Redeemer's pierced side.  
O blessed streams! Either ye do prevent  
And stop our sinnes from growing thick and wide,  
Or else give tears to drown them as they grow.  
In you Redemption measures all my time  
And spreads the plaister equall to the crime.  
You taught the book of life my name, that so, 12  
What ever future sinnes should me miscall,  
Your first acquaintance might discredit all.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique.

**SUBJECT:**

The worth of littleness, cf. Vaughan's Retreat:

"Happy those early days when I  
Shined in my angel infancy."

**NOTES:**

2. Matthew vii, 14.
10. *Behither*=on this side of. So Oley, in the second Preface to THE COUNTRY PARSON: "I have not observed any one thing (behither vice) that hath occasioned so much contempt of the clergie as unwillingnesse to take or keep a poor living." Possibly here the preposition takes on a verbal force= keeping ill at a distance.
13. *Bid nothing* (Ger. bitten, as in the phrase, "I bid you good morning") = let her not ask further gain, but only to keep her original endowment.
15. "So Chrysostom, 'The office of repentance is when they have been made new, and then become old through sins, to free them from their oldness and make them new. But it cannot bring them to their former brightness; for then the whole world was good.'" R. A. Willmott. Cf. 1 John ii, 13; VANTIE, II, 357, l. 15.

## H. BAPTISME

SINCE, Lord, to thee  
A narrow way and little gate  
Is all the passage, on my infancie  
Thou didst lay hold and antedate  
My faith in me. 5

O let me still  
Write thee great God, and me a childe  
Let me be soft and supple to thy will.  
Small to my self, to others milde,  
Behither ill. 10

Although by stealth  
My flesh get on, yet let her sister,  
My soul, bid nothing but preserve her wealth.  
The growth of flesh is but a blister;  
Childhood is health. 15

**INTRODUCTORY:**

The first four stanzas are not in W. The last four appear there under the title PRAYER. Another poem with this title is given, III, 383. On the question of separating the parts, see note on GOOD FRIDAY, II, 150.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique in both parts.

**SUBJECT:**

Part I. The subtlety of God's approaches. Part II.

The approach of man to God hindered by sin.

**NOTES:**

2. Joshua vii, 21.
3. It might seem that *from* is a misprint for *for*, but it probably is not. It balances *to* in the next line.
5. If thou hadst come to me in any form of external riches, thou wouldest have remained always external. But cf. AFFLICTION, II, 339, l. 7.
9. *Thy way*=the nourishment and strength of l. 7.
16. The sacred elements are not in themselves spiritual, and cannot be likened to living soldiers, able to leap over all barriers straight to the life within. Rather are they, being physical, like engines of attack, contrived so as by their height to command the walls which shelter the garrison.
22. *Subtile*=withdrawn, retired.
23. *Those*, i. e. the elements which, now spiritualized, wait at the boundary between soul and flesh, listening for orders from divine grace.

## THE H. COMMUNION

Not in rich furniture or fine array,  
Nor in a wedge of gold,  
Thou, who from me wast sold,  
To me dost now thy self convey;  
For so thou should'st without me still have been, 5  
Leaving within me sinne.

But by the way of nourishment and strength  
Thou creep'st into my breast,  
Making thy way my rest,  
And thy small quantities my length; 10  
Which spread their forces into every part,  
Meeting sinne's force and art.

Yet can these not get over to my soul,  
Leaping the wall that parts  
Our souls and fleshly hearts; 15  
But as th' outworks, they may controll  
My rebel-flesh, and carrying thy name,  
Affright both sinne and shame.

Onely thy grace, which with these elements comes,  
Knoweth the ready way 20  
And hath the privie key,  
Op'ning the soul's most subtile rooms;  
While those to spirits refin'd at doore attend  
Dispatches from their friend.

29. Ezekiel xi, 19.
30. 1 Corinthians v, 7. "He finds his captivated soul caught up to the third Heaven, and therefore prays either to be restored to the full use of his faculties again or to be taken all away, soul and body, which he fancies such another lift — i. e. the redoubling of the rapture — might effect:" G. Ryley.
34. Sin did not know how to smother us.
40. *Their*, used as the general pronoun. I can freely feed on thy heavenly blood, abandoning earth's fruits to whoever will take them. Cf. note on THE CHURCH PORCH, II, 41, l. 225.

Give me my captive soul, or take    25  
My bodie also thither.

Another lift like this will make  
Them both to be together.

Before that sinne turn'd flesh to stone,  
And all our lump to leaven,    30

A fervent sigh might well have blown  
Our innocent earth to heaven.

For sure when Adam did not know  
To sinne, or sinne to smother,  
He might to heav'n from Paradise go    35  
As from one room t'another.

Thou hast restor'd us to this ease ✓  
By this thy heav'nly bloud;  
Which I can go to when I please,  
And leave th' earth to their food.    40

**INTRODUCTORY:**

“He was so great a Lover of Church Musick that he usually called it *Heaven upon earth*, and attended it a few days before his death:” Oley’s Preface to THE COUNTRY PARSON.—“Though he was a lover of retiredness, yet his love to Musick was such that he went usually twice every week on certain appointed days to the Cathedral Church in Salisbury, and at his return would say: *That his time spent in Prayer and Cathedral Musick elevated his Soul and was his Heaven upon Earth:*” Walton’s Life. See, too, Herbert’s *Epigrammata Apologetica*, xxvi, De Musica Sacra.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

In CONTENT, II, 353, and DIVINITIE, III, 97.

**SUBJECT:**

Music as a refuge.

**NOTES:**

3. *Thence*, i. e. away from physical pain.
5. See 1. 2.
8. *God help poore Kings*, not, as Canon Beeching supposes, an allusion to the pitiable plight of Charles I, but an exclamation of happy persons who find part of their bliss in contrasting their condition with that of those conventionally reckoned more fortunate.
9. *Comfort*, i. e. music.
10. *Much more*, i. e. besides dying I shall not know the way to heaven.

## CHURCH-MUSICK

SWEETEST of sweets, I thank you! When displeasure

Did through my bodie wound my minde,  
You took me thence, and in your house of pleasure

A daintie lodging me assign'd.

Now I in you without a bodie move, 5

Rising and falling with your wings.

We both together sweetly live and love,

Yet say sometimes, *God help poore Kings.*

Comfort, I'le die; for if you poste from me,

Sure I shall do so, and much more. 10

But if I travell in your companie,

You know the way to heaven's doore.

**INTRODUCTORY:**

In Montgomery Church is the magnificent tomb of Herbert's father and mother, erected by Lady Herbert herself.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique, though it differs only in rhyming system from THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 15; JORDAN, II, 91; AN OFFERING, II, 393; SINNES ROUND, III, 143. The same rhyming system is used in MARIE MAGDALENE, III, 151.

**SUBJECT:**

"At the sight or visit of a Charnel House, every Bone, before the day (i. e. the Last Day), rises up in judgement against fleshly lust and pride :" Oley's Preface to THE COUNTRY PARSON.

**NOTES:**

2. Standing before this tomb, my soul uplifts herself to God; in the dust here inclosed my body perceives what it is made of.
4. Cf. THE CHURCH-FLOORE, III, 167, l. 16.
8. *His*=its. Genesis iii, 19.
- 9-11. The dusty family shields above the monuments suggest that the ancestry of the body can best be read in the dust into which all dissolves.
12. *These*=dust and earth. — *Ieat*=jet.

*Monument of the Herbert family in the parish church at Montgomery, Wales.*







## CHURCH-MONUMENTS

WHILE that my soul repairs to her devotion,  
Here I intombe my flesh, that it betimes  
May take acquaintance of this heap of dust,  
To which the blast of death's incessant motion,  
Fed with the exhalation of our crimes, 5  
Drives all at last. Therefore I gladly trust

My bodie to this school, that it may learn  
To spell his elements, and finde his birth  
Written in dustie heraldrie and lines  
Which dissolution sure doth best discern, 10  
Comparing dust with dust, and earth with  
earth.  
These laugh at Ieat and Marble put for signes

14. *Them*=jet and marble. “Costly monuments keep the dust of the body artificially apart from its natural companion, the dust of the earth; but tombs will at the last day fall and do homage to the dead. Dust is the head of man’s stem or pedigree [so the CHURCH MILITANT, III, 363, l. 74]. His life, like the sand contained in the hour-glass, is destined in its turn to dust:” F. T. Palgrave.
22. *Dust*. This is the seventh time the word has been used in twenty lines.

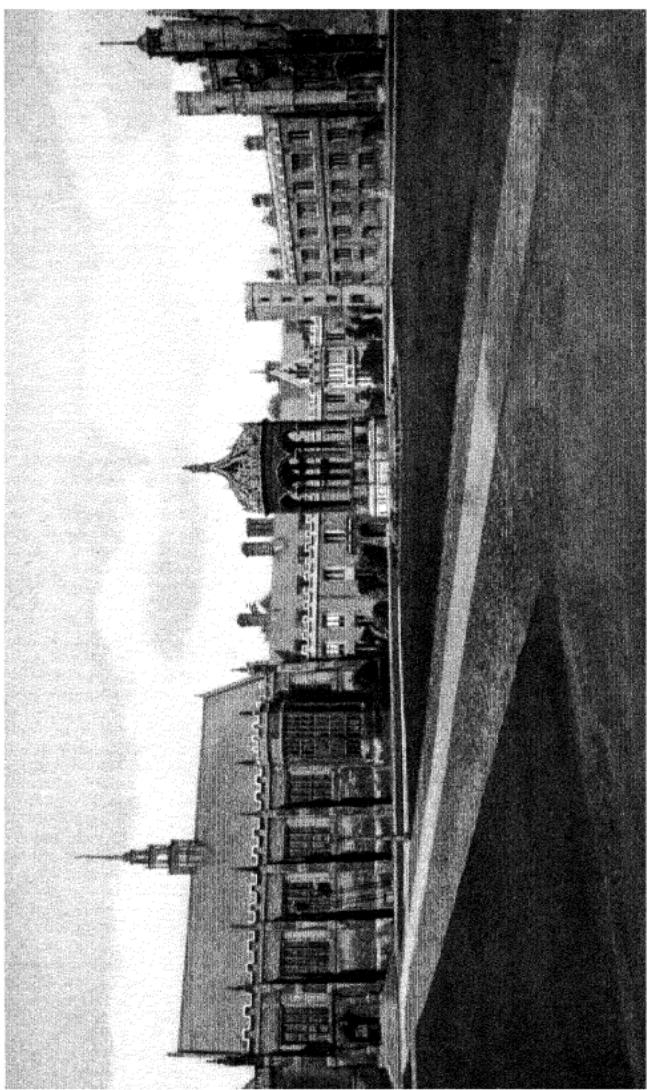
To sever the good fellowship of dust,  
And spoil the meeting. What shall point out  
them,  
When they shall bow and kneel and fall down  
flat 15  
To kisse those heaps which now they have in  
trust?  
Deare flesh, while I do pray, learne here thy  
stemme  
And true descent; that when thou shalt grow  
fat

And wanton in thy cravings, thou mayst know  
That flesh is but the glasse which holds the dust  
That measures all our time; which also shall  
Be crumbled into dust. Mark here below 22  
How tame these ashes are, how free from lust,  
That thou mayst fit thyself against thy fall.



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







**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.

## **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, II, 59, l. 373–384. Cf. JACULA PRUDENTIUM: *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 tithe from the income. Cf. **THE CHURCH-PORCH**, II, 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**, II, 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, III, 79, l. 9-28.

**NOTES:**

1. Similar opening to AFFLICTION, II. 247. — 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, II, 225, 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.

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 alias 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, III, 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, II, 105, l. 21; and AFFLICTION, II, 345, l. 57.



For Man is ev'ry thing,  
And more. He is a tree, yet bears no fruit;  
A beast, yet is, or should be more;  
Reason and speech we onely bring.      10  
Parrats may thank us if they are not mute,  
They go upon the score.

Man is all symmetrie,  
Full of proportions, one limbe to another,  
And all to all the world besides.      15  
Each part may call the farthest, brother;  
For head with foot hath private amitie,  
And both with moons and tides.

- 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 amitie* 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, II, 375, 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.” (1714.)

26. The four elements are here intended. Herbert accepts the Ptolemaic astronomy, with the earth at the centre. So THE TEMPER, II, 313, l. 14.
29. So PROVIDENCE, III, 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, III, 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 withdraws;  
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 FAMILY, III, 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 (1610), 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 embrave;  
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 sicknesses 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, II, 83, l. 1, and MAN, II, 215, 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, 3, l. 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* quickly swept them all away. 5

Then *Pleasure* came, who liking not the fashion,  
Began to make *Balcones*, *Terraces*,  
Till she had weaken'd 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, II, 93, l. 13; BUSINESSE, III, 139, l. 9; CONFESSION, III, 259, 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." (1651.)
15. *Shor'd*=propped, supported. — *These*=the walls.  
— *That*=the sycamore.

Then enter'd *Sinne*, and with that Sycomore,  
Whose leaves first sheltred man from drought  
and dew,  
Working and winding slily 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 *virtue* 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, II, 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, III, 379, 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, tyes of gratefulnesse,  
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, II, 293.

**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, II, 401.
9. Cf. AN OFFERING, II, 395, 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 beleieve that I did nothing owe  
And liv'd accordingly; my creditor 15  
Beleeves so too, and lets me go.

Faith makes me any thing, or all  
That I beleieve 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, II, 95, l. 11, and THE TEMPER, II, 317, 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, II, 359, 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 beleevc 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**, III, 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, III, 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, III, 157, l. 15. Holy beings are again placed *in several ranks* in ALL ANGELS AND SAINTS, II, 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, II, 45, l. 264). Each passion is fitted to make a contribution of real worth to some virtue, if accepted with humility.
10. *Mansuctude*=gentleness. Cf. THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 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, II, 351, 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, II, 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, II, 163, l. 14, and MAN, II, 219, 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 FRAILTIE, II, 359, l. 15, and in LOVE, II, 85, l. 24.

## 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, III, 337, l. 10.
23. *This box*=the Incarnation, i. e. Christ's body; cf.  
l. 28.
26. Proverbs xxiii, 26.
29. Cf. CONFESSION, III, 259, 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, II, 339, III, 269, 271, 273. This poem may be regarded as a preliminary sketch for the great AFFLICITION of II, 339.

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Used also in ASSURANCE, III, 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 AFFLICITION, II, 341. The rhyme occurs again in CHURCH-MUSICK, II, 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 wouldest 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, III, 47, l. 21, at the former.
17. The *bait* of pleasure appears again in THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 15, l. 4. Cf. AFFLICTION, II, 339, l. 4-7.
21. Cf. the *daintie bowre made in the tree of MISERIE*, II, 255, l. 55.
22. *Store*=luxuriance; cf. PROVIDENCE, III, 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, II, 51, l. 317; PEACE, II, 377, l. 7; THE BAG, III, 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, II, 21, l. 66, he speaks of the time when *griefs 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, III, 51, l. 26.
33. Cf. WHITSUNDAY, II, 159, l. 14.
35. *Infection* here=a plague-spotted thing; not the plague itself, as in THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 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 brightness, 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, II, 35, l. 171, and AFFLICTION, II, 339, l. 11.

55. *Bowre* in Herbert, as in Milton, is a green shelter that is natural, not artificial. See AFFLICTION, II, 249, l. 21.

55-60. Cf. PROVIDENCE, III, 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, III, 213, l. 26; Acts xvii, 30.
67. *Treasure*: so in THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 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, II, 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, III, 321, l. 1; and sometimes, as here, a sentiment, a motto. Cf. THE POSIE, III, 29.
77. *Shelf*, — his own means of destruction. See THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 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  
Can thy strange wayes rehearse?

65

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;  
A sick toss'd vessel, dashing on each thing;  
Nay, his own shelf;  
My God, I mean my self.

75

**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, II, 213, 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 bindes 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*, III, 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.

37. *All these dyings*: Cf. Donne's study of the relations of death and life in his last sermon (1630), especially the paragraph containing the sentence, “That which we call life is but *hebdomada mortuum*, a week of deaths.”

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 solemntie,  
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, III, 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 fledge 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, II, 267, l. 3 and 4. Herbert hates dust, and his eyes seem to have been peculiarly sensitive. Cf. LOVE, II, 85, l. 24; FAITH, II, 235, l. 38; UNGRATEFULNESSE, II, 243, l. 16, 17; FRAILTIE, II, 359, l. 16.
- 13-16. For the thought, cf. TIME, III, 341, l. 13-18.
14. Cf. CHURCH-RENTS AND SCHISMES, III, 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, II, 217, 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,  
Each one whispring, *Live you brother?* 5

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,  
Lest at length they plead possession.  
Fleshes stubbornnesse may have  
Read that lesson to the grave. 15

21-24. The body after death, turning to dust, is driven about by the wind, or turning to gases (cf. **CONTENT**, II, 355, 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**, II, 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**, II, 153, l. 13, and **EMPLOYMENT**, II, 349, 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*, III, 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 1. 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.*

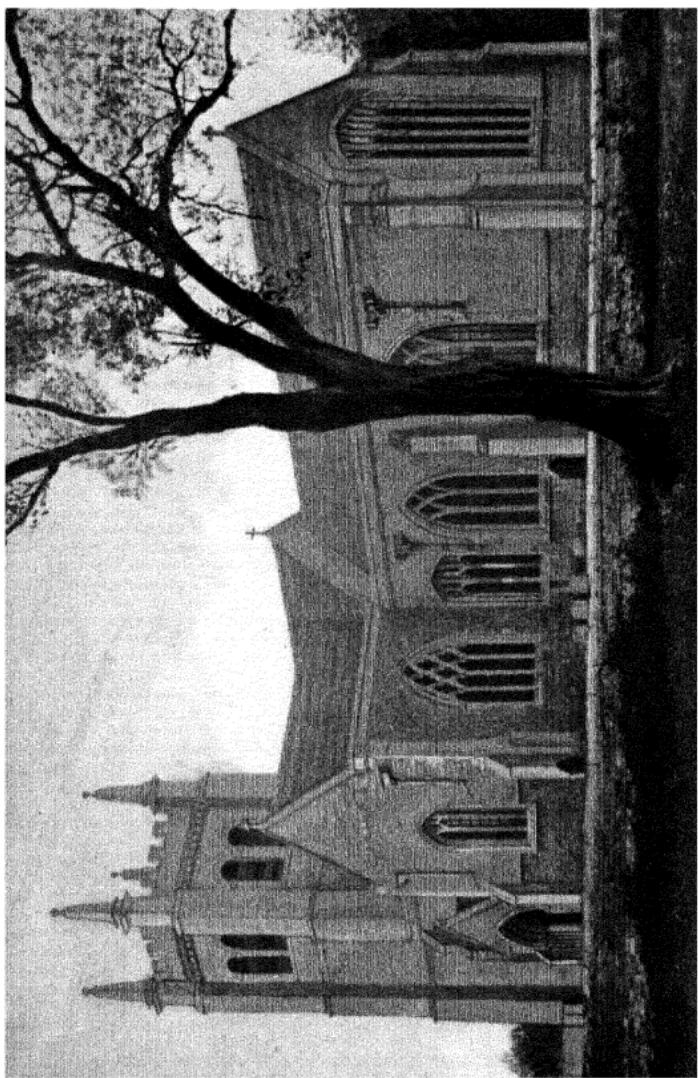
Light, joy, and leisure; but shall they persever?

*Echo.*      *Ever.*      20



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







V

THE INNER LIFE



## PREFACE

**I**N 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, Ralegh, 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 REPRISALL** 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. 8], 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, II, 217, 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, II, 383.

## 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 wooe,  
    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, III, 327, l. 46. — *Boxed* = struck with the fist, as in THE SACRIFICE, II, 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, II, 143, l. 213.
11. *Skipping* = neglecting, as W. reads.
14. *Posie* does not here mean a motto, as in the poem of that title, III, 29, but a bunch of flowers, as in ALL ANGELS AND SAINTS, II, 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 or 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 blasphemeth 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'le contrive  
That three yeares hence, if I survive,  
I'le build a spittle, or mend common wayes,  
But mend mine own without delayes.

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, II, 233.

**SUBJECT:**

By conquering him whom thou dost conquer — myself — I share thy victory. Cf. THE HOLDFAST, III, 17, and one of the doubtful poems, LOVE, III, 387.

**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.
11. Must even my tears for sin have been already shed by thee?
13. Cf. CONFESSIO, III, 259.
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 MAG-  
DALENE, III, 151, l. 11.
8. Reversing the arrangement of nature, heaven be-  
comes 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 con-  
necting 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, III, 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, III, 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, III, 283, l. 42..

**DENIALL**

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, II, 317, l. 23, and in the CHURCH MILITANT, III, 365, l. 76. — *Heartlesse.* Cf. l. 21.
27. *No time*=not at all, as in GRIEVE NOT, III, 257, 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, II, 95, and THE SACRIFICE, II, 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, III, 197. The lock and key (here sin and prayer) are mentioned also in THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 91, 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, II, 338.

**METRE:**

Unique.

**SUBJECT:**

Nature alien to God.

**NOTES:**

2. *Travell*, i. e. run away. On *fight*, or *travell*, see note on AFFLICTION, II, 343, 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, III, 59, l. 14, and VANITIE, II, 357, l. 18.
10. *By kinde*=according to the nature of bubbles. So in A TRUE HYMNE, III, 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, III, 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, III, 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, III, 305.

**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, II, 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, II, 243, but considered personally, instead of theologically.

**NOTES:**

14. We should more naturally write *thee* than *thou*.
16. *Pretendeth to*=seeketh, stretcheth after. Cf. JORDAN, II, 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**, III, 335. 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**, III, 277, l. 9.)
10. *Dove*, i. e. thy Spirit, as in **GRIEVE NOT**, III, 255, 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 **CONFESSIOIN**, III, 261, l. 14.

## GRACE

MY stock lies dead, and no increase

Doth my dull husbandrie improve.

O let thy graces without cease

Drop from above!

If still the sunne should hide his face,

5

Thy house would but a dungeon prove,

Thy works night's captives. O let grace

Drop from above!

The dew doth ev'ry morning fall,

And shall the dew out-strip thy dove? 10

The dew, for which grasse cannot call,

Drop from above.

Death is still working like a mole,

And digs my grave at each remove;

Let grace work too, and on my soul

15

Drop from above.

Sinne is still hammering my heart

Unto a hardnesse void of love;

Let suppling grace, to crosse his art,

Drop from above.

20

O come! For thou dost know the way.

Or if to me thou wilt not move,

Remove me where I need not say,

*Drop from above.*

**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, III, 305.

**NOTES:**

4. *That*=my heart.
5. *Stands to*=abides fixed, according to.
7. *Race*=raze, as in THE SACRIFICE, II, 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, III, 333, l. 12.
9. *Chair of grace*=throne of majesty.
14. *Heaven move.* So in MAN, II, 219, 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 previous poem is  
**THE CHRISTIAN TEMPER.**

**DATE:**

Found in W.

**METRE:**

Unique, but differing only in rhyming system from  
**EVEN-SONG, III, 391.**

**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. Cf. To THE QUEENE OF BOHEMIA, III, 425, l. 8.

## 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, II, 95, l. 11, and FAITH, II, 235, l. 27. While this stanza treats of stretching, the next begs for contraction.
14. *Crumme of dust*. Cf. LONGING, III, 283, l. 41.
18. *Nestle*. Cf. LONGING, III, 285, l. 54.
23. *Tuning*. Cf. CHURCH MILITANT, III, 365, 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 debtor.

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**, III, 179, and in **GRIEF**, III, 323. The first stanza of **JUSTICE**, III, 253, 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**, III, 143. Giles Fletcher has inwoven the last stanza of Christ's **Victorie** (1610) 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**, II, 283, l. 3.
- 7. The same rhyme in **CONSTANCIE**, III, 121, l. 18.
- 10. *Like=like thy wayes.*

### 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.



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 contestation 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,—**AFFLICITION**, 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 cooperated 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 Edington 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, II, 339.

## 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, II, 199, l. 6; or THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 23, l. 83. Cf. PRAISE, II, 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;

9

Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

6

**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, III, 265, 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 imped 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.

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, II, 247, III, 269, 271, 273.—“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, III, 331, 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, II, 247, l. 7.
10. 'Tice, again in THE SIZE, III, 195, l. 29.
11. *Such*=such and such. Stars are Herbert's frequent name for ideal and glorious ends; cf. THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 35, l. 171, and THE STARRE, II, 365.

## 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 housshold-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, II, 351, l. 6.
18. *Fiercenesse*, as in THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 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 sweetnesse;  
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 beleeed,  
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 himselfe 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, II, 29, l. 123, and THE SEARCH, III, 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, III, 121, l. 32. There is another mention of bowling in PROVIDENCE, III, 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, II, 105, l. 21, and suggested in MAN, II, 217, 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, III, 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." (1591.)

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, II, 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**, III, 305.
2. *Extend*=unfold, grant opportunity for enlargement. So again l. 1, and 6.
4. So in **DENIALL**, II, 299, l. 24.
5. Cf. **SUBMISSION**, III, 205, l. 7.
6. But I too should then have a place among thy honorable things. Cf. l. 21.
8. I. e. **DOOMS-DAY**, II, 267.
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 wouldest 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 stiffe with thee.

13. Cf. DULNESSE, III, 207, l. 1.
16. *But with delaies*=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, II, 215, and in PROVIDENCE, III, 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 (1593), 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, II, 57, l. 368.—*A weed*, not the *flowre* of l. 1 and 19. Cf. THE CROSSE, III, 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, II, 341, l. 18. Youth is spoken of as now past.—*Bandie* may mean toss to and fro ; or more probably band together, as in HUMILITIE, II, 241, l. 29.
5. Probably written after his disappointment at Court.
6. Cf. EVEN-SONG, III, 59, l. 12.
8. A mist rising from a damp place. Perhaps suggested by James iv, 14. Again, in CHURCH-MONUMENTS, II, 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, frigefacti demum relabuntur.* Vaughan imitates in his Shower, Isaac's Marriage, and Disorder and Frailty.
9. *Means*=aims at. THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 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, III, 97, and CHURCH-MUSICK, II, 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 CONFESSION, III, 261, l. 22.
21. *Brags* = things boasted of. So Milton, Comus, l. 745, "Beauty is Nature's brag."
22. Cf. DOOMS-DAY, II, 269, 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 sceptra in elementis, nulli fasces aut secures. Vapores serviles ad nubes educti, aequem magnum tonitru edent ac regii.*
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, III, 343, 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, III, 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, III, 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, III, 397, and THE PILGRIMAGE, III, 237, l. 13. The temptation which Herbert oftenest mentions is that of lust.

**NOTES:**

3. Cf. SONNETS TO HIS MOTHER, II, 81, l. 22, and FRAILTIE, II, 359, l. 3.
4. *Embroyderies*; cf. DOTAGE, III, 137, l. 5.
15. Cf. last stanza of THE PULLEY, III, 149.
18. This line suggests that the poem was written early in life, though it does not appear in W.

## VANITIE

POORE silly soul, whose hope and head lies low,  
Whose flat delights on earth do creep and grow,  
To whom the starres shine not so fair as eyes,  
Nor solid work as false embroyderies;  
Heark and beware, lest what you now do mea-  
sure 5  
And write for sweet, prove a most sowre displea-  
sure.

O heare betimes, lest thy relenting  
May come too late!  
To purchase heaven for repenting 10  
Is no hard rate.  
If souls be made of earthly mold,  
Let them love gold;  
If born on high,  
Let them unto their kindred flie.  
For they can never be at rest 15  
Till they regain their ancient nest.  
Then silly soul take heed, for earthly joy  
Is but a bubble and makes thee a boy.

**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, II, 43, l. 247.
13. *Weeds*=garments; cf. THE SACRIFICE, II, 141, l. 178.
15. *Dust before*; cf. l. 4, and LOVE, II, 85, l. 23.
16. *Prick*=stimulate; so used in FAITH, II, 235, 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, III, 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,*  
*Deare earth, fine grasse or hay.*  
In all, I think my foot doth ever tread  
Upon their head.

5

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, III, 263.

**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, II, 357, l. 3; THE BANQUET, III, 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 volantem,  
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 *musick in the spheres* in PROVIDENCE, III, 83, l. 40, and THE STORM, III, 263, 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 articling (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, III, 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 woee  
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 articling 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, VII.) 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:**

## 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, II, 227, l. 13; OUR LIFE IS HID, II, 283, l. 6; CONFESSION, III, 259, l. 8.
30. Cf. EMPLOYMENT, II, 349, l. 18.
31. Cf. HOME, III, 325, 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, II, 273; LOVE, II, 401; BUSINESSE, III, 139; LOVE UNKNOWN, III, 179; and A DIALOGUE-ANTHEME, III, 343.

**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*=wavering; cf. James i, 6.

6. *Gains*. Cannot make such a wretch profitable to thee.

12. *Treasure*, so OBEDIENCE, II, 385, 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  
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, III, 213, l. 36, the settlement of the controversy is reached through affection.

But as I can see no merit  
Leading to this favour,  
So the way to fit me for it  
Is beyond my savour.  
As the reason then is thine,  
So the way is none of mine.  
I disclaim the whole designe,  
Sinne disclaims, and I resigne.

20

*That is all, if that I could  
Get without repining;  
And my clay, my creature, would  
Follow my resigning.  
That as I did freely part  
With my glorie and desert,  
Left all joyes to feel all smart —  
Ah, no more! Thou break'st my heart.*

**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, III, 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, II, 337, 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, II, 219, l. 24.

32. 2 Samuel vi, 6.

39. *The distance*; cf. THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 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 until my Maker seek  
For some mean stiffe 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, III, 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, III, 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, II, 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, III, 181, l. 43, and possibly of THE PILGRIMAGE, III, 237, l. 17? May it be Nicholas Ferrar? A sketch of this poem appears in AN OFFERING, stanza iv, II, 395.
42. Psalm cxix, 165.

At length I met a rev'rend good old man,  
Whom when for Peace 20

I did demand, he thus began:

There was a Prince of old

At Salem dwelt, who liv'd with good increase  
Of flock and fold.

, He sweetly liv'd, yet sweetnesse did not save 25  
His life from foes.

But after death out of his grave

There sprang twelve stalks of wheat;  
Which many wondring at, got some of those  
To plant and set. 30

It prosper'd strangely and did soon disperse  
Through all the earth;

For they that taste it do rehearse

That vertue lies therein,

A secret vertue bringing peace and mirth 35  
By flight of sinne.

Take of this grain, which in my garden grows  
And grows for you,

Make bread of it; and that repose

And peace which ev'rywhere 40

With so much earnestnesse you do pursue  
Is onely there.

**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 rejoice:” 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, II, 159, l. 17-18, and THE WATER-COURSE, III, 147, l. 6.
3. The branches of learning successively mentioned are Mathematics, Ethics, Jurisprudence, Astrology, The Natural Sciences, Alchemy, Geography.
6. *Forc’d.* AVARICE, III, 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, II, 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, II, 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, II, 29, l. 124.
40. The same ending as MATTENS, II, 285.

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 stiffe 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, III, 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, II, 99, PROVIDENCE, III, 81, l. 32, and THE CHURCH MILITANT, III, 359, 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, II, 217, l. 8.
25. The thought is repeated in SUBMISSION, III, 205, l. 19.
28. So DOTAGE, III, 137, l. 7.
30. Or if we did attempt to take, might be withheld.
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 blood  
 Show'd a strange love to all our good.  
 Thy sorrows were in earnest; no faint proffer,  
 Or superficiall offer                                  29  
 Of what we might not take, or be withstood.

Wherfore 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. It is Herbert's reply to those who condemned his decision.

**METRE:**

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

**SUBJECT:**

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

**NOTES:**

2. *Sugred lies.* The phrase is repeated in **DULNESSE**, III, 209, l. 21.
4. What this is, is explained in **THE SIZE**, III, 193.
12. Cf. **OBEDIENCE**, II, 385, l. 8.

## THE ROSE

PRESSE me not to take more pleasure  
In this world of sugred lies,  
And to use a larger measure  
Then my strict, yet welcome size.

First, there is no pleasure here; 5  
Colour'd griefs indeed there are,  
Blushing woes, that look as cleare  
As if they could beautie spare.

Or if such deceits there be,  
Such delights I meant to say, 10  
There are no such things to me,  
Who have pass'd my right away.

But I will not much oppose  
Unto what you now advise,  
Onely take this gentle rose, 15  
And therein my answer lies.

18. Cf. LIFE, III, 321, l. 13, and PROVIDENCE, III, 87, l. 78.
- 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, III, 179.

**METRE:**

Unique, but differs only in rhyming system from THE CHURCH-PORCH, II, 15; JORDAN, II, 91; CHURCH-MONUMENTS, II, 201; and SINNES ROUND, III, 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, II, 387, 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, II, 43, l. 249, and perhaps in MISERIE, II, 253, l. 35.
13. *Thy*=my. He addresses himself.
17. *Parcell out*. So LOVE, II, 83, l. 3.
22. *All-heal*. “The mistletoe was so called by the Druids on account of its medicinal qualities:” A. R. Waller.—The figure is worked out at length in PEACE, II, 377. Cf. also FAITH, II, 233, l. 9.
33. Even when purified, the gift is slight.
- 37, 38. Same rhyme as in DIALOGUE, II, 371, 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 sadness 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, II, 95, III, 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, III, 381, 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, III, 197.  
1. 6.
- 17. Cf. THE SINNER, II, 295, 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  
To enroll thee.  
Ev'n eternitie is too short  
To extoll thee.

25

**INTRODUCTORY:**

Two other poems with this title are given, II, 83,  
III, 387.

**DATE:**

Found in W. Entering God's service, he feels himself abashed. For its form in B, see I, 84.

**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.

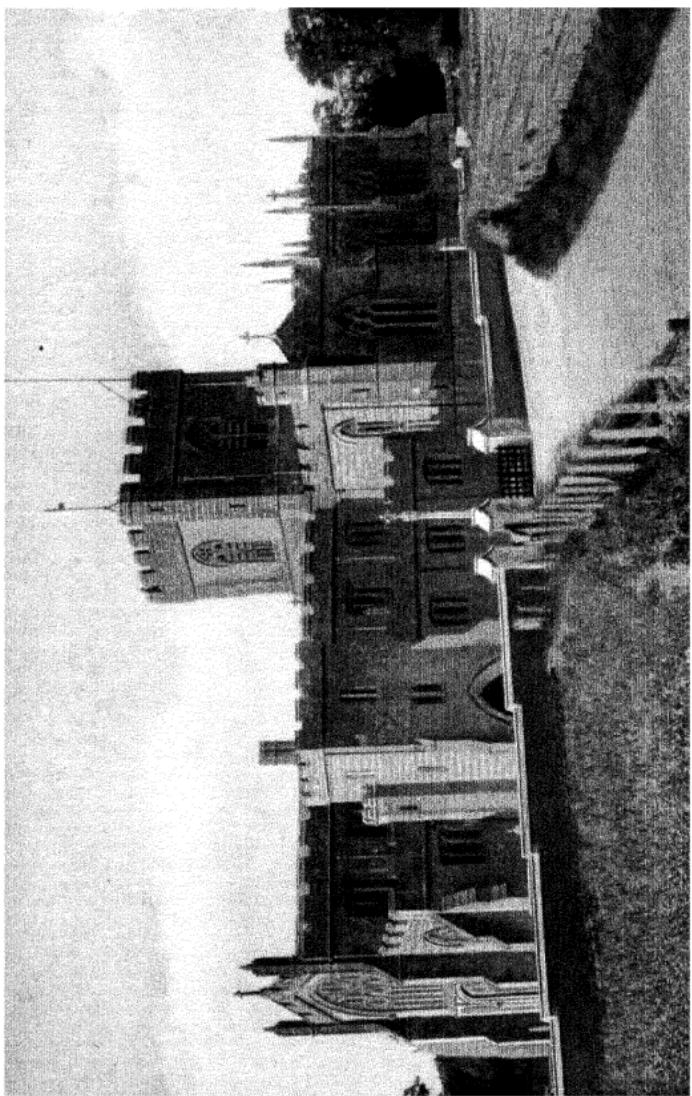
A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here.  
Love said, You shall be he.  
I, the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah my deare,  
I cannot look on thee.       10  
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,  
Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them; let my  
shame  
Go where it doth deserve.  
And know~~s~~ 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.*







**TEXTUAL VARIATIONS OF THE  
MANUSCRIPTS**



## TEXTUAL VARIATIONS

THE CHURCH-PORCH (p. 15):

2. For *Thy rate and price* W. reads *The price of thee.*  
Stanzas ii, iii, iv, in W. read as follows:

*Beware of Lust (startle not), O beware  
It makes thy soule a blott; it is a rodd  
Whose twigs are pleasures, and they whip thee bare.  
It spoils an Angel: robs thee of thy God.  
How dare those eyes upon a bible looke  
Much lesse towards God, whose lust is all their book?*

*Abstaine or wedd: if thou canst not abstaine  
Yet wedding marrs thy fortune, fast and pray:  
If this seeme monkish; think which brings most paine,  
Need or Incontinency; the first way  
If thou chuse bravely and rely on God,  
Hee'le make thy wife a blessing not a rodd.*

*Let not each <sup>funsy</sup> <sub>motion</sub> make thee to detest  
A Virgin-bed, which hath a special crowne  
If it concurr with vertue: doe thy best,  
And God will show thee how to take the towne,  
And winn thyselfe: Compare the joyes and so  
If rotteness have more, lett Heaven goe.*

29, 30. For these two lines W. has lines 35, 36.

33. For *kinde* W. reads *kinds*.

35, 36. For these two lines W. reads:

*He that has all ill, and can have no good  
Because no knowledge, is not earth but mudd.*

56. For *hath* W. reads *has*.  
 57. For *avarice* W. reads *cheating*.  
 64. For *apple* B. reads *apples*.  
 81. For *take up* W. reads *be all*.  
 87. For *jawes* W. reads *chawes*.  
 88. For *employments* W. reads *employment*.  
 90. After this line a new stanza appears in W. :

*If thou art nothing, think what thou wouldest bee  
 He that desires is more than halfe the way.  
 But if thou coole then take some shame to thee.  
 Desire and shame, will make thy labour, play.  
 This is Earth's language, for if Heaven come in,  
 Thou hast run all thy race, ere thou beginn.*

91. For this line W. reads:

*O England, full of all sinn, most of sloth.*

106. For *All that they leave* W. reads *All that is left*.  
 110. For *trunk* W. reads *trunks*.  
 117. For *stowre* W. and B. read *sowre*.  
 120. For this line W. reads:

*And though hee bee a ship, is his owne shelf.*

125. For *fears* W. reads *fearest*.  
 128. For *Thou hast two sconses* W. reads: *Tast all, but  
 feed not.*  
 132. For *And* W. reads *But*.  
 134. For *doth* W. reads *does*.  
 136. For *you* W. reads *thou*.  
 143. For *lose* B. and W. read *loose*; as also in lines  
     194, 201, 202, 297.

163. *Yet in thy thriving, etc.* Instead of this verse W. reads:

*Yet in thy pursing still thy self distrust  
 Least gaining gaine on thee, and fill thy hart.  
 Which if it cleave to coine, one common rust  
 Will canker both, yett thou alone shallt smart :  
 One common waight will press downe both, yet so  
 As that thyself alone to hell shall goe.*

179. For *cloth* W. reads *cloths*.

186. For *As* W. reads *That*.

200. For *that* W. reads *it*.

228. For *passeth with the best* W. reads *is fame's interest*.

232. For *the conceit advance* W. reads *thou thy mirth inhance*.

253. For *respective* W. reads *respectfull*.

265. For *basenesse is* W. reads *base men are*.

275. For *way* W. reads *art*.

286. For *who* W. reads *that*.

292. For *in* W. reads *at*.

317. For *the bow that's there, etc.*, W. reads:

*that bow doth hitt  
 No more then passion when shee talks of it.*

326. For this line W. reads:

*Need, and bee glad, and wish thy presence still.*

330. For *the* W. reads *that*.

336. For *lethargicknesse* W. reads *a drowsiness*.

- 347, 348. For *those I give for lost, etc.*, W. reads:

*those I give for gone ;  
 They dye in holes where glory never shone.*

348. For *'t will* B. reads *will*.  
 350. For *mightie* W. reads *the greatest*.  
 351. For *thine* W. reads *thy*.  
 352. For *gunnes destroy* W. reads *swords cause death* ;  
     and for *sling, sting*.  
 367. For this stanza W. reads

*Leave not thine owne deere country-cleanliness  
 For this French sluttrey, which so currant goes :  
 As if none could bee brave, but who profess  
 First to be slovens, and forsake their nose.  
 Let thy minds sweetnes have his operation  
 Upon thy body, cloths, and habitation.*

384. For *both* W. reads *they*.  
 391. For *the* W. reads *that*.  
 395. For *th' Almighty* W. reads *the mighty*.  
 398. For *hath* W. reads *has*.  
 407. For *stocking* W. reads *stockings*.  
 413. For *Away thy blessings* W. reads *Our blessings from us*.  
 416. For *thine* W. reads *thy*.  
 419, 420. For *others' symmetrie*, etc., W. reads :

*Others comeliness  
 Turns all their beauty to his ugliness.*

421. For *or* W. reads *and*.  
 426. For *are either* W. reads *either are*.  
 441. For *faults* W. reads *fault*.  
 447. For *balsames* W. reads *mercies*.  
 451. For *by* W. reads *that*.

Two SONNETS (p. 79) :

These sonnets do not appear in W., B., or ed. 1633.

They are printed by Walton in his *Life of Herbert*,  
but how he obtained them is unknown.

**LOVE** (p. 83):

- 2. For *that* W. reads *the*.
- 4. For *on* W. reads *in*.
- 5. For *doth* W. reads *does*.
- 25. For *goods* B. reads *good*.

**JORDAN** (p. 87):

- 14. For *ryme* B. reads *time*.

**JORDAN** (p. 91): called INVENTION in W.

- 1. For *lines* W. reads *verse*.
- 4. For *sprout* W. reads *spredd*.
- 6. For *Decking* W. reads *Praising*.
- 14. For this line W. reads:

*So I bespoke me much insinuation.*

- 16. For *long pretence* W. reads *preparation*.

- 18. For this line W. reads:

*Copy out that; there needs no alteration.*

**PRAISE** (p. 95):

- 5. For *help me to wings, and I*, W. reads *make me an angel, I*.
- 7. For *mount unto*, W. reads *steal up to*.
- 9–12. This stanza stands fourth in W.
- 15. For *Exalt the poore*, etc., W. reads:

*For to a poore  
It may doe more.*

- 17–20. For this stanza W. reads:

*O raise me, then; for if a spider may  
Spin all the day;  
Not flyes, but I, shall be his prey,  
Who doe no more.*

THE QUIDDITIE (p. 97): called POETRY in W.

3. For *No* W. reads *Nor* three times.
8. For *a* W. and B. read *my*.

THE ELIXER (p. 99):

W. has a double title—PERFECTION, THE ELIXIR.

- 1-4. For these lines W. reads:

*Lord, teach mee to referr  
All things I doe to thee,  
That I not onely may not erre,  
But allso pleasing bee.*

- 5-8. This stanza is wanting in W.

13. Between this and the following stanza W. inserts this stanza, but erases it:

*He that does ought for thee  
Marketh that deed for thine ;  
And when the Divel shakes the tree,  
Thou saist, this fruit is mine.*

14. W. reads *lowe*, but changes to *meane*.
16. W. reads *to Heaven grow*, but changes to *grow bright and clean*.
19. W. reads *chamber*, but changes to *roome* as.
20. Before the last stanza W. inserts this:

*But these are high perfections :  
Happy are they that dare  
Lett in the light to all their actions  
And show them as they are.*

But this is then erased.

EMPLOYMENT (p. 103):

14. For *sat* W. reads *sate*.

21. For this fifth stanza W. reads:

*O that I had the wing and thigh  
Of laden Bees;  
Then would I mount up instantly  
And by degrees  
On men dropp blessings as I fly.*

26. For *still* too W. reads *ever*.

29. For *So we freeze on* W. reads *Thus wee creep on*.

ANTIPHON (p. 107): called ODE in B.

19. For *thy praises should be* W. reads *thou dost deserve much*.

21. For *And we* W. reads *Wee have*.

THE ALTAR (p. 121):

15. For *blessed* W. reads *only*, but changes it to *blessed*.

THE SACRIFICE (p. 127):

38. For *of truth* W. and B. read *and truth*.

57. For *Priest* W. reads *priests*.

79. For this line W. reads:

*To whose power thunder is but weak and light,*

which is erased, and the present reading is written over it.

103. *Frighting* is in B. misprinted *fighting*.

119. In W. *doth* is omitted.

123. For this line W. reads:

*But not their harts, as I by profe do try.*

129. For *me* W. and B. read *him*, twice.

130. For *grasp* W. and B. read *grasps*.

130. For *my* W. and B. read *his*.

131. For *I* W. and B. read *he*.

169. For *to me before* W. reads *mee heretofore*.

171. For *evermore* W. reads *to the poore*.

174. For *or* W. and B. read *and*.

177-8. For these lines W. reads:

*Yet since in frailty, cruelty, shrowd turns,  
All scepters, Reeds : Cloths, Scarlet : Crowns are Thorns.*

179. For *deeds* W. reads *scorns*.

181. For *that* W. reads *my*.

182. For *Which* W. reads *Whom*.

187. For this line W. reads:

*With stronger blows strike mee as I come out.*

199. For this line W. reads:

*The gladsome burden of a mortal saint.*

210. For *part* W. reads *share*.

214. For *dost delight* W. reads *art well-pleas'd*.

217. For this line W. reads:

*My soule is full of shame, my flesh of wound.*

223. For *for you, to feel* W. reads *to feel for you*.

226. For *ye* W. reads *you*.

GOOD FRIDAY (p. 150):

21, 22. W. reads:

*Since nothing, Lord, can bee so good  
To write thy sorrows in as blood.*

22. For *fight* B. reads *sight*.

27. For *sinne* W. reads *he*.

29. For this stanza W. reads:

*Sinn being gone, O, doe thou fill  
The Place, and keep possession still :  
For by the writings all may see  
Thou hast an ancient claime to mee.*

## EASTER (p. 155):

20. For *off* B. reads *of*.

19. Another version of the last three verses appears in W.:

*I had prepared many a flowre  
To strow thy way and victorie ;  
But thou wast up, before myne houre  
Bringinge thy sweets along with thee.*

*The Sunn arising in the East,  
Though hee bring light and th' other sents  
Can not make up so brave a feast  
As thy discoverie presents.*

*Yet though my flowers be lost, they say  
A hart can never come too late ;  
Teach it to sing thy praise this day,  
And then this day my life shall date.*

## WHITSUNDAY (p. 157):

1. For *Listen*, etc., W. reads:

*Come blessed Dove, charm'd with my song,  
Display thy, &c.*

4. For *it* W. reads *I*.

4. For *and* W. reads *to*.

8. For this line W. reads:

*With Livery-graces furnishing thy men.*

27. Instead of the last four stanzas W. has these three:

*But wee are jalne from Heaven to Earth,  
And if wee can stay there, it's well,  
He that first fell from his great birth  
Without thy help, leads us his way to Hell.*

*Lord, once more shake the Heaven and Earth,  
Least want of Graces seem thy thrift;  
For sinn would faine remove the dearth,  
And lay it on thy husbandry for shift.*

*Show that thy breasts cannot be dry,  
But that from them joyes purle forever,  
Melt into blessings all the sky,  
So wee may cease to suck; to praise thee, never.*

TRINITIE-SUNDAY (p. 161):

1. W. has two forms, the second erased:

*Lord, who has rais'd me from the mudd,  
and  
made me living mudd.*

TO ALL ANGELS AND SAINTS (p. 163):

11. For *holy* W. reads *sacred*.
16. For *our* W. reads *my*.
20. For *a* W. reads *your*.
22. For *rich* W. reads *great*.
25. For *posie* W. reads *garland*, which is erased and *posie* is written over.

CHRISTMAS (p. 167):

1. For *as I rid one* W. reads *riding on a*.
- 13–14. For these two lines W. reads:

*Furnish my soule to thee, that being drest,  
Of better lodging thou maist be possest.*

- 15–34. This Song is wanting in W.

LENT (p. 171):

3. For *compos'd* W. reads *a child*.
29. For *the* W. reads *our*.

37. For *the B.* reads *that*; W. has *the way that*.

39. For *by-wayes* W. reads *cross-ways*, erased.

45. For *our faults* W. reads *all vice*.

SUNDAY (p. 175):

1–7. For this first stanza W. reads:

*O day so calme, so bright :  
The couch of tyme, the balme of teares,  
The indorsment of supreme delight,  
The parter of my wrangling feares,  
Setting in order what they tumble :  
The week were dark, but that thy light  
Teaches it not to stumble.*

23. For *palace arched lies* W. has *kingdome arch'd doth stand*.

25. For *with vanities* W. reads *on either hand*.

26–28. For these three lines W. reads:

*They are the rowes of fruitful trees  
Parted with alleys or with grass  
In God's rich Paradise.*

31. For *to adorn the* W. reads *for the spouse and*.

32. For *eternall glorious* W. reads *Immortall onely*.

PRAYER (p. 181):

5. For *sinner's towre* W. reads *sinner's fort*.

7. For this line W. reads:

*Transposer of the world, wonder's resort.*

PRAYER (p. 183):

2. For this line W. reads:

*Art thou, my blessed King !*

3. For *eare* W. reads *eares*.

10. For *measur'd* W. reads *silly*.

## THE H. SCRIPTURES, I (p. 187):

4. For *mollifie all* W. reads *suple outward*.  
 11. For *too much* W. reads *enough*.

## THE H. SCRIPTURES, II (p. 189):

4. For the second *the* B. reads *thy*.  
 10. For *And comments on thee* W. reads *And more then fancy*.  
 13. For *poore* B. reads *poores*.  
 14. For *lights to* W. reads *can spell*.

## H. BAPTISME (p. 191):

In W. this sonnet appears as follows:

*When backward on my sins I turne mine eyes,  
 And then beyond them all my Baptisme view,  
 As he that Heaven beyond much thicket spyes :  
 I pass the shades and fixe upon the true  
 Waters above the Heavens ; O sweet streams,  
 You doe prevent most sins, and for the rest  
 You give us teares to wash them ; lett those beams,  
 Which then joined with you, still meet in my brest,  
 And mend, as rising starrings and rivers doe.  
 In you Redemption measures all my tyme,  
 Spredding the plaister equal to the cryme.  
 You taught the book of life my name, that so  
 Whatever future sinns should mee miscall,  
 Your first acquaintance might discredit all.*

## H. BAPTISME (p. 193):

11. For *Although* W. reads *Though that*.  
 13. For *preserve her* W. reads *keep her first*.

## THE H. COMMUNION (p. 195):

3. For *from* B. reads *for*.  
 15. For *fleshly* B. reads *fleshy*.  
 27. For *lift* B. reads *life*.

37-40. For this stanza W. reads:

*But wee are strangers grown, O Lord,  
Lett Prayer help our Losses :  
Since thou hast taught us by thy word  
That wee may gaine by crosses.*

CHURCH-MUSICK (p. 199):

9. For *poste* W. reads *part*.

9-12. For this stanza W. reads:

*O what a state is this which never knew  
Sicknes, or shame, or sinn or sorrow ;  
Where all my debts are payd, none can accrue,  
Which knoweth not what means too morrow.*

CHURCH-MONUMENTS (p. 203):

22. For *crumbled* W. reads *broken*.

CHARMS AND KNOTS (p. 211):

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 crush't 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 getts it that has grace.*

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

MAN (p. 215):

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. 225):

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. 231):

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. 233):

- 15–16. For these two lines W. reads:

*with no new score  
My creditour believ'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. 237):

- 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. 243):

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. 251):

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. 259):

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

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

DEATH (p. 265):

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

DOOMS-DAY (p. 269):

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

HEAVEN (p. 273):

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

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

MATTENS (p. 285):

12. W. omits *that*.

THE THANKSGIVING (p. 287):

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. 293):

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

THE SINNER (p. 295):

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

DENIALL (p. 297):

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. 301):

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

NATURE (p. 303):

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

REPENTANCE (p. 305):

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. 309):

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

GRACE (p. 311):

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. 315):

5. For *some fourtie* W. reads *a hundred*.  
 25. For *fifie with angels, fall with* W. reads *angell it or fall to*.

## EASTER WINGS (p. 335):

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. 339):

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 beleevered* 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. 349):

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

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

## CONTENT (p. 353):

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. 359):

- 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. 361):

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

## THE PEARL (p. 381):

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 *seeded*.

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

OBEDIENCE (p. 385):

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*.



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