

# *Theology* on *the Web.org.uk*

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes.  
Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit  
or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the  
copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the  
ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the  
links below:



*Buy me a coffee*

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbadshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_churchman\\_os.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php)

THE  
CHURCHMAN

---

MAY, 1883.

---

ART. I.—GEORGE HERBERT'S LIFE AND CHARACTER.

To understand George Herbert's characteristics as a Churchman, a Clergyman or a Poet, we must first endeavour to appreciate his qualities as a man. A due apprehension of the general tenour of his life, and of the experience which he brought to the service of the Church, throws a vivid light upon his work in the Ministry; and the following sketch is mainly directed to illustrate this relation between his earlier and his later career. The chief sources from which we derive our knowledge of him are, first his own writings, and secondly the well-known Life by Izaak Walton. The latter is a singularly beautiful sketch, particularly in its latter part, describing Herbert's life in his country parish; but it needs to be read with one caution, which applies perhaps to all Izaak Walton's writings. He is "The contemplative angler," and his love is for those aspects of life which harmonize best with the quiet scenes of that gentle sport. There is a reference to George Herbert in his "Complete Angler," which exactly illustrates this tendency of his mind. "And now, scholar," says the angler, "my direction for fly-fishing is ended with this shower, for it has done raining. And now look about you, and see how pleasantly that meadow looks; nay, and the earth smells as sweetly too. Come, let me tell you what holy Mr. Herbert says of such days and flowers as these, and then we will thank God that we enjoy them; and walk to the river and sit down quietly, and try to catch the other brace of trouts." Then he quotes the poem on Virtue, which begins, "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright—the bridal of the earth and sky;" and the scholar replies, "I thank you for the sweet close of your discourse with Mr. Herbert's verses; who, I have heard, loved angling; and I do the rather believe it, because he had a spirit

suitable to anglers, and to those primitive Christians that you love, and have so much commended."

That is an exact reflection of Walton's disposition. Accordingly, in his pictures of the men whom he has commemorated he is always on the look out for these sweet days in their lives, "so cool, so calm, so bright," and he is not so apt to observe the rougher and sterner aspects of their careers or characters, still less to dwell on them. He prefers to contemplate Hooker in his country retirement and his calm meditation, rather than in his rough battle with Travers at the Temple. Similarly, although Herbert did not become a country clergyman till he was thirty-six years of age, and died in three short years, Walton's whole picture of him is coloured by the graver religious light of those closing days. The effect produced by his narrative is illustrated by the graceful but, as it seems to me, very imperfect sketch of Herbert's character and influence which Mr. Shorthouse, the author of "*John Inglesant*," has prefixed to Mr. Unwin's beautiful reprint of "*The Temple*."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Shorthouse has selected "exquisite refinement" as the main characteristic of George Herbert, and has said that the peculiar mission of Herbert and his fellows was that "they showed the English people what a fine gentleman who was also a Christian and a Churchman might be." This refinement certainly was an essential element in the man; but his main interest consists in far different qualities, in sterner stuff, and a deeper experience; while the service he rendered to the Church is to be clearly distinguished from that of those friends of his with whom Mr. Shorthouse associates him, and was of a much wider and more comprehensive kind. To appreciate those other elements in his character, we must pay more attention to the earlier, or rather to the larger, portion of his life, and to his natural disposition.

Mr. Shorthouse has, however, very justly observed that to understand George Herbert we must study the character of his elder brother, Lord Herbert of Cherbury. We see, at all events, in the life of Lord Herbert, and in the account he gives of his family, what were the natural foundations on which the character of his brother George was built up. He sprang from a distinguished Welsh family, the Herberts of Montgomeryshire, to which also the Earls of Pembroke belonged. Lord Herbert is proud to mention that his great-great-grandfather, Sir Richard Herbert of Colebrook, was "that incomparable hero who (in the history of Hall and Grafton, as it appears) twice passed through a great army of Northern men alone, with his poleaxe in

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Elliot Stock has also published an interesting fac-simile—in type, paper, binding—of the sole known exemplar of some undated copies of the first edition, which appear to have been printed by Nicholas Ferrar as gift copies for friends.

his hand, and returned without any mortal hurt, which is more than is famed of Amadis de Gaul, or of the Knight of the Sun." The posterity of this Sir Richard Herbert and of the Earl of Pembroke, his brother, were united in Lord Herbert and his wife; and it is a curious illustration of the manners of the times that, to ensure this union of the two kindred houses, Lord Herbert was engaged at the age of fifteen to his wife who had reached the age of twenty-one, and they were married when he was seventeen. George Herbert himself, though he and his wife had long heard of each other, was married three days after he first met her; and there are many other instances in that day which show that Lord Bacon was not entirely alone among his friends and contemporaries, in thinking that "they do best who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter." But in this Sir Richard Herbert, taller by a head than anyone in the army at the battle of Edgecot Hill, cleaving his way with his poleaxe through a great army of Northern men, and at another time offering to forfeit his own life in the place of a prisoner to whom he had pledged his word, but whom the King wished to execute, we have no inapt type of the general character of the Herberts. For generations they appear to have been marked by a high-minded chivalry, tinged with a dash of Don Quixotism, and spurred on by a fiery restlessness which is somewhat characteristic of their countrymen of the Principality. Lord Herbert's account of his brothers is one of the most curious records which could well be found of a fighting, not to say rather quarrelsome, race.

"My brother Richard" (he says) "after he had been brought up in learning, went to the Low Countries, where he continued many years with much reputation, both in the wars and for fighting single duels, which were many, insomuch that, between both he carried, as I have been told, the scars of four-and-twenty wounds upon him to his grave." . . . "My brother William, being brought up likewise in learning, went afterwards to the wars in Denmark, where he distinguished himself in single combat." Henry, "after he had been brought up in learning as the other brothers were, was sent by his friends into France, where he attained the language of that country in much perfection; after which time he came to Court, and was made gentleman of the King's privy chamber and Master of the Revels, by which means, as also by a good marriage, he attained to great fortune for himself and posterity to enjoy." He had also given several proofs of his courage in duels and otherwise. Thomas, a brave commander at sea "also fought divers times, with great courage and success, with divers men in single fight, sometimes hurting and disarming his adversary, and sometimes driving him away." Lord Herbert himself, being made a

Knight of the Bath, took deeply to heart the oath administered to him, “never to sit in place where injustice should be done, but right it to the utmost of his power, and particularly in the case of ladies and gentlewomen that should be wronged of their honour, if they demand assistance.”

Accordingly he tells us how, besides other occasions, he offered to fight with a French cavalier, and at another time with a Scottish gentleman, who had presumed to snatch ribbons from young ladies’ heads. “These passages,” he says, “I have related . . . that it may appear how strictly I held myself to my oath of Knighthood; since for the rest I can truly say, that though I have lived in the armies and courts of the greatest princes in Christendom, yet I never had a quarrel with man for mine own sake: so that although in mine own nature I was ever choleric and hasty, yet I never without occasion given quarrelled with anybody, and as little did anybody attempt to give me offence, I having as clear a reputation for my courage as whosoever of my time. For my friends often I have hazarded myself, but never yet drew my sword for my own sake singly, as hating ever the doing of injury, contenting myself only to resent them when they were offered me.”

The chivalrous sense of honour which prevailed in the family receives a vivid illustration in another statement of this Lord Herbert. His grandfather accumulated a large landed property; but Lord Herbert is careful to say that he did this without doing anything unjustly or hardly, “as may be collected,” he says, “by an offer I have publicly made divers times; having given my bailiff in charge to proclaim to the country, that if any lands were gotten by evil means, or so much as hardly, they should be compounded for, or restored again; but to this day, never any man yet complained to me in this kind.”

Such was the blood which flowed in George Herbert’s veins—the blood of as generous and noble a gentleman as could well be found in that day. He was the inheritor of long traditions of chivalrous conduct in war and in peace, in public battle, in private feud, and in all social relations. We are therefore not surprised to find that he had one characteristic which would hardly be guessed from Walton’s placid narrative, but which is duly recorded in a touching account of him by his brother. “My brother George,” says Lord Herbert, “was so excellent a scholar, that he was made the public Orator of the University in Cambridge, some of whose English works are extant, which, though they be rare in their kind, yet are far short of expressing those perfections he had in the Greek and Latin tongues, and all Divine and human literature; his life was most holy and exemplary, in so much that about Salisbury, where he lived benefited for many years, he was little less than sainted. He was not exempt from passion and

choler, being infirmities to which all our race is subject; but that excepted, without reproach in his actions."

Such then was the natural disposition with which George Herbert started in life, and these are the influences which he inherited. We have now to consider the circumstances in which these elements were developed. He distinguished himself at Westminster School, and went from there to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was elected fellow in the year 1614, at the age of twenty-one. His father had died when he was young, but his mother maintained a strong influence over him. It would seem that from the first she discerned what was the true bent of his nature, and his real destiny, and that it was always her wish that he should enter into holy orders. A poem which he sent to her at the age of seventeen shows that his heart was early touched by the deep piety which afterwards possessed it entirely, and that he realized what was the use for which his literary and poetical gifts were intended. "I need not," he says, "the help of the Muses 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 should be all and ever consecrated to God's glory; and I beg you to receive this as one testimony." But notwithstanding this, it was not until fifteen years later that he was induced to take holy orders; and four or five more passed before he could make up his mind to proceed to priest's orders, and accept the full duties of a clergyman. The interest, and to some extent the riddle of his life, consists in the history of his mind during those twenty years, which occupied so large a part in his short career. Walton treats them briefly; but with the aid of his sketch, and what Herbert himself tells us, it seems not difficult to form a clear and interesting view of the course of his mind and heart.

It appears, in the first place, from Walton's account, that he was very conscious of the family honours he inherited. We are told that the Master of his College "was a cherisher of his studies, and such a lover of his person, his behaviour, and the excellent endowments of his mind, that he took him often into his own company, by which he confirmed his native gentleness; and if, during this time, he expressed any error, it was that he kept himself too much retired, and at too great a distance with all his inferiors; and his clothes seemed to prove that he put too great a value on his parts and parentage." This was his disposition when he was appointed Orator of the University, and it must be remembered that the position was then one of much greater distinction than in the present day. George Herbert himself gives an account of it in a letter to a

friend, which at once describes its importance, and illustrates the attractions it had for him. "The Orator's place," he says, "that you may understand what it is, is the finest place in the University, though not the gainfullest; ... but the commodiousness is beyond the revenue; for the Orator writes all the University letters, makes all the Orations, be it to king, prince, or whatever comes to the University. To requite these pains he takes place next the Doctors, is at all their assemblies and meetings, and sits above the Proctors, is Regent or non-Regent at his pleasure, and such like gaynesses, which will please a young man well." He was evidently very anxious to obtain the office, for this letter presses his friend to procure interest for him. "I long," he says, "to hear from Sir Francis. I pray, sir, send the letter you receive from him to me as soon as you can, that I may work the Heads to my purpose. I hope that I shall get this place without all your London helps, of which I am very proud; not but that I joy in your favours, but that you may see, that if all fail, yet I am able to stand on mine own legs." His two immediate predecessors in the post had both attained to important public employments. The first, Sir Robert Naunton, was made Secretary of State; and the second, Sir Francis Nethersole, not very long after his becoming Orator, was made secretary to King James's daughter Elizabeth, the Queen of Bohemia.

Here then, it will be seen, was an opening only too well fitted to fire the ambition, and if not to turn the head, at least to divert the heart, of a young man with George Herbert's enterprise and position. A gentleman of high birth, somewhat choleric in his temperament—like the rest of the Welsh family to which he belonged—master of the best learning of his day, fully able to hold his own with any person of distinction who might come to the University, whether prince or scholar, and succeeding two persons who had both been promoted to high office, possessing great interest at Court, alike through relations and through friends, one brother being constantly at Court, while another was in high diplomatic employment abroad, becoming at length Ambassador from King James to the Court of France—With all this, is it wonderful if George Herbert was dazzled by such opportunities, and if his inclinations were diverted for some years from the more self-denying though lofty work to which in the best moments of his youth he had thought of devoting himself?

King James came very often to hunt at Newmarket, and was almost as often invited to Cambridge, where, we are told, "his entertainment was Comedies suited to his pleasant humour, and where Mr. George Herbert was to welcome him with Gratulations and the Applauses of an Orator; which he always performed so well, that he still grew more into the King's favour, insomuch that he had a particular appointment

to attend his Majesty at Royston." Another year King James was attended "by that great secretary of nature and of all learning, Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam." Lord Bacon put so high a value on Herbert's judgment, that he usually desired his approbation before publishing any of his books ; and Herbert translated for him into Latin a part of his "Advancement of Learning." Bishop Andrews came to Cambridge at the same time ; and it is evident that Herbert was still studying Divinity, since we are told that, in consequence of a discussion between them on Predestination and Sanctity of life, Herbert "did not long after send the Bishop some safe and useful aphorisms in a long letter, written in Greek ; which letter was so remarkable for the language and the reason of it, that the Bishop kept it near his heart till the last day of his life." Bacon, too, dedicated to him a translation of some of the Psalms into English verse, on the ground that, as the subject was a combination of divinity and poetry, Herbert was a peculiarly fit person to receive it.

But, nevertheless, the attractions of the public career which seemed opening before him overpowered for the time other influences ; and Walton tells us plainly of his hopes, that,

"as his predecessors, so he might in time attain the place of Secretary of State, he being at that time very high in the King's favour, and not meanly valued and loved by the most eminent and most powerful of the Court nobility. This, and the love of a court conversation, with a laudable ambition to be something more than he was, drew him often from Cambridge to attend the King, wheresoever the Court then was, who then gave him a sinecure, . . . that Queen Elizabeth had formerly given to her favourite, Sir Philip Sidney, and valued to be worth £120 per annum. With this, and his annuity, and the advantage of his College, and of his Oratorship, he enjoyed his genteel humour for clothes, and court-like company, and seldom looked towards Cambridge unless the King were there ; but then he never failed ; and at other times left the management of his Orator's place to his learned friend, Mr. Herbert Thorndike."

It would thus seem as if worldly ambition had for some time gained the mastery of other and higher impulses in Herbert's soul ; but we cannot do him justice unless we appreciate, as these considerations may help us in doing, the singular strength of the temptation to which he for a time, and partially, succumbed. Nor will any generous mind regard it as more than an example of the weakness of the best human nature if, at this critical moment, it was the hand of God, rather than his own strength, or any human influences, by which he was checked in his course, and led back to his true destiny.

But at this very time, when his favour and his prospects were at the highest, "God," says Walton, "in whom there is an unseen chain of causes, did, in a short time, put an end to the lives of two of his most obliging and most powerful friends, Lodo-

wick, Duke of Richmond and James, Marquis of Hamilton ; and not long after them King James died also, and with them all Mr. Herbert's Court hopes." Herbert withdrew into the country, and in this time of retirement had, we are told, many conflicts with himself, "whether he should return to the painted pleasures of a Court life, or betake himself to a study of Divinity, and enter into Sacred Orders, to which his dear mother had often persuaded him." "These," says Walton justly, "were such conflicts, as they only can know that have endured them ; for ambitious desires, and the outward glory of this world, are not easily laid aside ; but, at last, God inclined him to put on a resolution to serve at His altar." The struggle which had been going on in his mind and heart for so many years was thus decided for him, and he felt in his inmost soul that it had been decided aright. After this he never wavered, and though it was still some time before he felt himself fitted for the full work of a clergyman, he never looked back. And now having brought him to this point, let us read one of his poems, in which he seems to review all this experience, all these fascinations and temptations of the world, and to express his deep and grateful conviction that a Divine hand, and not his own wisdom or strength, had led him out of the labyrinth in which he had been entangled.

#### THE PEARL.

I know the ways of learning ; both the head  
 And pipes that feed the press, and make it run ;  
 What reason hath from nature borrowed,  
 Or of itself, like a good housewife, spun  
 In laws and policy ; what the stars conspire,  
 What willing nature speaks, what forced by fire ;  
 Both the old discoveries, and the new-found seas,  
 The stock and surplus, cause and history :  
 All these stand open, or I have the keys :  
     Yet I love Thee.

I know the ways of honour, what maintains  
 The quick returns of courtesy and wit :  
 In vies of favours whether party gains,  
 When glory swells the heart, and mouldeth it  
 To all expressions, both of hand and eye,  
 Which on the world a true love-knot may tie,  
 And bear the bundle, wheresoe'er it goes ;  
 How many drams of spirit there must be  
 To sell my life unto my friends or foes :  
     Yet I love Thee.

I know the ways of pleasure, the sweet strains,  
 The lullings and the relishes of it ;  
 The propositions of hot blood and brains ;  
 What mirth and music mean ; what love and wit

Have done these twenty hundred years, and more :  
I know the projects of unbridled store ;  
My stuff is flesh, not brass ; my senses live,  
And grumble oft, that they have more in me  
Than he that curbs them, being one to five :  
    Yet I love Thee.

I know all these, and have them in my hand :  
Therefore not sealed, but with open eyes  
I fly to Thee, and fully understand  
Both the main sale, and the commodities ;  
And at what rate and price I have Thy love ;  
With all the circumstances that may move :  
Yet through the labyrinths, not my grovelling wit,  
But Thy silk twist let down from heaven to me,  
Did both conduct and teach me, how by it  
    To climb to Thee.

We cannot but observe the openness and manliness of the confession. He had felt, as this poem says, not the mere vulgar temptations of the world, but all the noblest and finest, all that could best appeal to great spirits ; and he frankly owns the immense fascination they had possessed for him. He had never, indeed, yielded to the degrading temptations of life. Not only had the high and generous spirit he inherited kept him above them, but he had been protected from them by the deep Christian feeling which we discern in him from the first. All that can be said in blame of him—and in candour and in due appreciation of his character I think it must be said—is that he had, for a while, listened to the suggestions which tempted him to fly from the comparatively obscure, but sacred vocation, for which his inner nature told him he was destined, and to which the voice of his mother was ever leading him. His life, during this first stage of his career, is that of a Christian gentleman and scholar of the highest possible type, knowing, as he says, all the ways of "learning, honour, courtesy and wit," sensible of all the temptations of pleasure, but constantly resisting them, and, even when his aims were not those for which he was specially destined, still aiming high. To know his character at this time of his life we have only to read the first and most considerable of his poems, "The Church Porch," describing the conditions of character which may be regarded as preliminary to an admission into the innermost shrine of Christian life and truth. It may well be doubted whether, in the same space, there is an equal amount of the truest and most generous wisdom in our own or in any other language. It is the concentrated essence of the wisdom of the wisest age of the English nation—the age of Hooker, of Bacon, and of Shakespeare, the age when

the great foundations of the grandeur of this country were laid. There are some obscure expressions in it which make one wish that it could be edited with a good commentary ; but if one were asked to provide a young man—aye and a grown-up man—in short compass, with a summary of the Christian wisdom of life, he might well be commended to this poem. The good sense of men of the world, the grace and tact of the courtier, the generosity of a true gentleman, the religious morality of the Christian, are all combined in about eighty stanzas of some of the most masculine English which our literature can exhibit. It is sufficient to read this poem in order to be satisfied of the imperfection, to say no more, of the suggestion that “exquisite refinement” is the main characteristic of George Herbert. Refinement he had, no doubt, but the refinement is but the polish of a masculine intellect and a manly Christian morality. None but a man who had lived in the great world, who had mixed with men largely, and who had striven to live up to a noble standard, amidst the greatest difficulties of active life, could have written such a poem. There are expressions in it worthy of the best masters of our language.

Who keeps no guard upon himself is slack,  
And rots to nothing at the next great thaw.  
  
 Command thyself in chief. He life's war knows,  
Whom all his passions follow, as he goes.  
  
 A sad wise valour is the brave complexion,  
That leads the van and swallows up the cities.  
  
 Pitch thy behaviour low, thy projects high,  
So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be.  
  
 In brief, acquit thee bravely, play the man ;  
Look not on pleasures as they come, but go.

The poem begins with the main temptations of youth, leads a man through the chief experiences of life ; and whether we regard its order, or its substance, or its expression, it is one of the most precious inheritances of our race.

But we have still to see Herbert's real greatness. Even though his hopes of high state preferment had for the moment gone, it was a great sacrifice for a man in his position to devote himself entirely to the work of a country clergyman. He had more than sufficient means ; and he might have lived, even after he had taken priest's orders, with many of the luxuries of his former position. But having made his choice, he made it absolutely, and it would almost seem as if he took a pleasure in making amends for the tardiness he had shown in yielding himself to the call of his Master. The completeness

and cheerfulness of his renunciation of the world is expressed, with a characteristic simplicity, wit, and directness, in a little poem entitled the "The Quip":

## THE QUIP.

The merry World did on a day  
With his train-bands and mates agree  
To meet together, where I lay,  
And all in sport to jeer at me.  
First Beauty crept into a rose ;  
Which when I pluckt not, "Sir," said she,  
"Tell me, I pray, whose hands are those ?"  
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.  
Then Money came, and clinking still,  
"What tune is this, poor man ?" said he ;  
"I heard in music you had skill ;"  
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.  
Then came brave Glory puffing by  
In silks that whistled, who but he !  
He scarce allow'd me half an eye ;  
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.  
Then came quick Wit and Conversation,  
And he would needs a comfort be,  
And, to be short, made an oration ;  
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.  
Yet when the hour of Thy design  
To answer these fine things shall come,  
Speak not at large, say, I am Thine,  
And then they have their answer home.

Fully to understand him in this respect we must perhaps recur once more to the associations of his early life, and to the traditions he inherited. The old principles of personal devotion to a King and Master still survived, and were potent among the men of his day. His brother, Lord Herbert, describes how, on one occasion, when he heard some of the guests in a hotel speaking disrespectfully of King James, he felt bound on his honour to get up and offer to fight them all; instead of which, however, they all preferred to drink King James's health. But such was the spirit of the great men of the day. There was an idealism in their devotion to the Master or the Mistress they served. The late Professor Brewer has described, in one of the most beautiful passages of his "English Studies," (p. 286) the spirit which animated the men of that era. He says :

"The men of this reign were the growth of this reign; we catch not a glimpse of them before, and they disappear when this reign comes to an end. I mean not merely the Burleighs, the Walsingtons,

the Leicesters, and the Howards, but that class of worthies who even more than these are characteristic of the reign of Elizabeth ; the Sidneys, the Essexes, the Raleighs, the Carews, the Grevilles, and the like. One is inclined to ask, whence did these men come, and how did they grow ? How did they manage to stamp their image so strongly on this reign ? What was the secret of that influence ? Look at them, as they appear in the pictures of that century, with their high, oval piled foreheads, their delicate lips, their clear olive complexions, and their lofty and somewhat Spanish bearing. Look at their exquisite hands and long tapering fingers, neither too white as indicative of effeminacy, nor too coarse as indicative of low breeding. Look, too, as a type of their minds, at their lace ruffs and gold-studded corselets ; strength, beauty, and grace united, not without a spice of foppery. What is it that these men cannot do ? For what of valour, of strength, of agility, of grace, of wit, of wisdom, of poetry, of policy, are they not sufficient ? At their ease in Queen Elizabeth's presence-chamber, dancing a *corranto* in pearls and murrey-coloured velvet, exquisite in the falls of a ruff and the adornments of the last new sword-belt, more than a match for the bench of bishops in scholastic theology and abstruse divinity, competing with Spenser in all the varieties of English metre and rhythm, slicing up wild Irishmen under Sir Arthur Gray, and seeking the bubble reputation across the Spanish Main ; wits, warriors, and gentlemen, dutiful sons, passionate lovers, firm friends, and ready—aye, ready, if Queen Elizabeth only looks upon them, to carry her name and her colours on their sleeve to the utmost corners of the earth."

Now these were the qualities and this the spirit which George Herbert henceforth devoted to the service of his Master, the Lord Jesus. "My Master" was his favourite phrase ; and it had not that half-sentimental sense which it has sometimes conveyed, but meant that he surrendered himself to that Master's service, and transferred to Him all the energy and devotion, and, if you will all the pride which he had formerly been willing to devote to the service of an earthly Master. The enthusiastic self-sacrifice of his race, all the fervour and devotion which they had lavished on the ideals of chivalry—all this, and infinitely more than this, as called out by a nobler object, Herbert lavished upon his new Master.

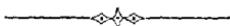
I have thus endeavoured to sketch the chief phases of this noble character, as represented by his various writings. In his "Church Porch" we have the summary of all the wisdom of a Christian gentleman in the greatest age of English life. In his "Temple," besides his maturer spiritual meditations, we have a record, as he himself states, of the struggles which, through long years, prevailed with him before he could induce himself to yield completely to the call of his Divine Master. And finally, in many of the poems in the "Temple," and in "The Country Parson," we have a description of a great spirit, refined, it is true,—not, however, by any mere

æsthetic influences, but by the stern experience of life, by all its wisdom and all its conflicts, and sublimed by a pure spiritual devotion to the cause of the Saviour, his Master. The whole range of life seems to be touched by him, and to be harmonized under the calm and mellow light of heaven.

And now, if this picture has in the main been truly drawn, we may, perhaps, see that George Herbert fulfilled a far higher mission in the Church of England than that which Mr. Short-house has been content to assign him. He created, no doubt, that ideal of an English clergyman, and particularly of an English country clergyman, which has since been prominent in the best days of our Church. But its great characteristic was not refinement alone, it was not holiness alone, it was not learning alone, it was not wisdom alone; but it was wisdom, learning, experience, refinement—in a word, all the great and gracious influences which were anywhere at work in English life—all fused and sublimed by the fire of sanctity, and devoted in their combination to the service of the Church and of its Master. To appreciate the greatness of this service we must realize the peculiar crisis at which it was rendered. The Church of England, as a reformed Church, adhering at the same time to primitive doctrine and discipline, was then, it is not too much to say, an experiment. It had practically been established in this form for the first time by the great statesmen and prelates of Queen Elizabeth's day. Until then, there had seemed to be only two alternatives—that of the old Roman Catholic system, or that of the Puritan model which prevailed in different forms in all other Protestant countries. The question was whether the new creation could be given a form, a life, and a spirit of its own. Could a married clergy combine the virtues of the poor parson of Chaucer's poem with the wider learning and the larger interests which were opening before men in Elizabeth's time? Could the various elements of the national life be united in the service of the national Church, and at the same time remain true to the loftiest types of the best men of the middle ages and of primitive times? The grand service, I would suggest, which George Herbert rendered, was to answer this question with a clearness and a persuasiveness which did as much for the ideal of the pastoral life of the English clergy, as Hooker did for the reformed theology. Herbert showed, and placed on record, in his poems and still more in his "Country Parson," how high ancestry, and high temper, and experience of the world, and fine scholarship, and an acquaintance with natural science, and a sympathy with new philosophy,—in short all the qualities which he had inherited and acquired, could be united in one beautiful life, and be placed at the service of the sanctuary. He thus represents in an eminent degree that

which has been the glory, and perhaps to some extent the salvation, of English religion and of the English Church—the capacity of the office of the clergyman for harmonizing all the elements of our nation. An English clergyman who is a true disciple of the “Country Parson” of George Herbert will regard every gift, whether of body or of mind, of birth or of fortune, as having its proper place and influence in his work. Herbert’s fellows, to whom Mr. Shorthouse refers, did not, at least in any similar degree, render the Church this service. They preferred to seclude themselves from the world, and sought their ideal in a dim and monastic way of life. Perhaps there are tendencies in our time which also point in too great a degree to the separation of the profession of the clergyman from English life as a whole. Against such a danger George Herbert will ever be the best, and we may hope a sufficient, antidote. As the weaknesses of men are turned by God to His own purposes, so we see cause to be thankful that George Herbert was allowed for a while to yield to the temptations of Courts and of Universities, in order that, in his mature age, he might not so much renounce them all, as show how it is the glory of the Church of England to turn to account all the lessons they can give, and to weave together in one holy bond the best elements of our life.

HENRY WACE.



## ART. II.—ON THE USE OF THE TURBAN AND VEIL IN HOLY SCRIPTURE.

SOME places in the Old and New Testaments, relating to the covering and treatment of the head, have been encumbered with a mass of misapplied learning from want of closer attention to the actual usages of the time and country. The “Speaker’s Commentary,” with all its excellencies, has not supplied all the advantage in this particular that might have been expected from modern criticism. The Revised Version, too, perpetuates in one place a mistranslation of really mischievous effect, which could hardly have occurred with proper attention to the well-known head-dress of the Asiatic Jews.

The turban was certainly in use among the Hebrews before the time of Moses. The mention of the costly turbans of kings, nobles, and ladies by no means warrants the inference that in other classes “the head was usually uncovered” (“Bible Dictionary,” i. 767). Some defence against the Eastern sun must always have been necessary. The ancient Egyptians are depicted with thick caps and *wigs*. The Bedouins of the