THE INWARD STRUGGLE OF THE SELF WITH GOD: Gerard Manley Hopkins and George Herbert

By PETER HARDWICK

GEORGE HERBERT was born on the third day of April 1593 at Blackhall, Montgomery, the son of Sir Richard Herbert of Montgomery and of Magdalen Herbert, and the younger brother of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. From Westminster School he passed to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he later became a Fellow and Public Orator of the University. Growing sickly in health, he would ride over to Newmarket and there lie for a day or two for fresh air. He continued to delight in music and also indulged his 'gentile humour for cloaths and Court-like company'[1] while relishing prospectively the reputation and importance which his public office seemed likely to bring. He was returned to Parliament in 1624, but two years later he took a step unprecedented for a seventeenth-century nobleman and entered holy orders. In doing so he renounced all temporal ambition, justifying his departure from the great world with a characteristic blend of personal humility and family pride, observing 'It hath been formerly judged that the Domestick Servants of the King of Heaven, should be of the noblest Families on Earth'.[2] In 1630 he became Rector of the small and remote parish of Bemerton, in Wiltshire, and in the three years of his ministry there he set an example of the care of a priest of his parish which was to remain for three hundred years the Anglican ideal. And when in February, 1633, shortly before his fortieth birthday, he lay dying, he entrusted the poems he had written in English to the hand of his friend Edmund Duncon with instructions to carry them to Nicholas Ferrar, at Little Gidding, saying:

> Sir, I pray deliver this little Book to my dear brother Farrer (*sic*) and tell him, he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed betwixt God and my Soul, before I could

> subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master: in whose service I have now found perfect freedom; desire him to read it: and then, if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected por Soul, let it be made publick: if not, let him burn it: for I and it, are less than the least of God's mercies.[3]

Had Gerard Manley Hopkins in 1889 confided a similar 'little book' to Bridges or to Dixon the message would surely have been the same in tenor, for in the poems of these two priests we have direct, profound and moving expressions of that struggle of the self with God which is at heart of spiritual life. Though the terms 'self' and 'God' remain necessarily mysterious, the struggle is known to us all by experience, and it goes to the core of individuality. Thus Edouard Pousset, commenting on the *Spiritual Exercises*, says that good and evil struggling within man are not two tendencies or principles or forces but two *I's*: firstly, the *I* which is yet to come to full being but which is already felt; this is Jesus calling me beyond myself to union with him. Secondly, the *I* experienced as self-sufficient, which is posited by itself and seeks to serve itself. Pousset continues:

> The discord within a person's consciousness ultimately has a significance as vast as the duel of the rebellious angel . . . with the Word made flesh. I take after both of them! I am these two *I's* at grips with each other, within the unity of a single consciousness.[4]

In the context of this struggle let us first compare two poems each characteristic of its author. Pousset's two *I's*, the *I* which seeks to serve itself and the *I* which is Jesus calling (and calling here so briefly) find perfect voice in Herbert's poem of revolt, 'The Collar':

I struck the board, and cry'd, No more,
I will abroad.
What? shall I ever sigh and pine?
My lines and life are free; free as the rode,
Loose as the winde, as large as store.
Shall I be still in suit?
Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me bloud, and not restore
What I have lost with cordiall fruit?
Sure there was wine
Before my sighs did drie it: there was corn

Before my tears did drown it.
Is the yeare onely lost to me?
Have I no bayes to crown it?
No flowers, no garlands gay? all blasted?
All wasted?
Not so, my heart: but there is fruit,
And thou hast hands.
Recover all thy sigh-blown age
On double pleasures: leave thy cold dispute
Of what is fit, and not. Forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands,
Which pettie thoughts have made, and made to thee
Good cable, to enforce and draw,
And be thy law,
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
Away; take heed:
I will abroad.
Call in thy deaths head there: tie up thy fears.
He that forbears
To suit and serve his need,
Deserves his load.
But as I rav'd and grew more fierce and wilde
At every word,
Methoughts I heard one calling, *Child*!
And I reply'd, *My Lord*.

The second part of Pousset's statement, that 'The discord within a person's consciousness ultimately has a significance as vast as the duel of the rebellious angel . . . with the Word made flesh' points to some of those infernal perspectives which open out of Hopkins's dark sonnets:

> Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;
> Not untwist—slack they may be—these last strands of man
> In me or, most weary, cry *I can no more*. I can;
> Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be.

> But ah, but O thou terrible, why wouldst thou rude on me
> Thy wring-world right foot rock? lay a lionlimb against me? scan
> With darksome devouring eyes my bruisèd bones? and fan,
> O in turns of tempest, me heaped there; me frantic to avoid thee and flee?

Why? That my chaff might fly; my grain lie, sheer and clear.
Nay in all that toil, that coil, since (seems) I kissed the rod,
Hand rather, my heart lo! lapped strength, stole joy, would laugh, cheer.
Cheer whom though? The hero whose heaven-handling flung me, foot trod
Me? or me that fought him? O which one? is it each one? That night, that year
Of now done darkness I wretch lay wrestling with (my God!) my God.

The difference in voice is striking. Despite the apostrophe, Hopkins is talking to himself; but Herbert is answered by God who, with a single sufficient word, turns soliloquy to colloquy.

Secondly, there are differences in what is at stake. Herbert's case is simple: it is the complaint of the man who has renounced the world and got nothing in exchange but suffering and a sense of constriction. Hopkins is managing much darker business which issues in the temptation to despair and in a terror which goes to the core of his being as God his creator is apprehended as God his potential annihilator.

Thirdly, in Herbert's poem the conflict is resolved, and with high poetic art, as the emotional curve of the rebellious spirit, mounting through ever more histrionic protestations of defiance to collapse in sweet submission is precisely followed by the versification, 'in which the elaborate anarchy of the patterns of measure and rhyme'[5] at last subside into the balanced and concordant order of the last four lines. Thus at a single word the distracted personality and the disordered verse fall together into harmony and peace. Hopkins's sonnet comes to no such satisfying close, and the summary dismissal of the darkness to the past seems unconvincing after the intensity of feeling with which it was evoked.

Such sense of oppressive darkness is not strong in Herbert, and the sharp regret of the loss of this world in pursuance of the next in not found in Hopkins; but there is a wide range of the experience of spiritual struggle from which they both wrote. Both men suffered a sense of failure, which deepened into general frustration, and tended towards despair. Why, since they knew they had God-given abilities and their intentions were good and they wanted to do—had tried to do—God's will, why was it that they failed so persistently that their failures thickened behind them to merge into one black embodiment of failure whose shadow stretched forward over the prospect to come?

Such feelings set in precociously with Hopkins. Shortly before his twenty-first birthday he wrote: 'See how Spring opens with disabling cold' and the intimation must have seemed prophetic for in retrospect his life must have appeared as a tale of failure, complex and complete. His conversion had divided him from his family; his early scholarship had yielded no completed work; as a teacher he had left no mark either at Stonyhurst or at University College, Dublin; his sermons had excited the laughter of his young contemporaries, puzzled his Lancashire congregations and drawn down ecclesiastical caution; he seems to have been a good curate but had not been allowed to settle to the work; his patriotic hopes for England were unrealized and he felt exiled in Ireland, where his chief work was marking examination papers, which he did with painful scrupulosity. Above all, at his death his poems remained unpublished and virtually unknown. 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' and 'The Loss of the Eurydice' had been rejected by *The Month*; Stonyhurst had refused to publish in-house 'The May Magnificat'; and the few friends to whom he did disclose much of what he wrote encouraged him without proper understanding. Thus Bridges himself had written that he would not read 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' again 'for any money', at which Hopkins had gently reminded him, 'As well as money you know, there is love'.[6]

And so in Dublin in 1885 he was moved to write the sonnet beginning: 'To seem the stranger lies my lot, my life/Among strangers . . .' and ending:

> Only what word
> Wisest my heart breeds dark heaven's baffling ban
> Bars or hell's spell thwarts. This to hoard unheard,
> Heard unheeded, leaves me a lonely began.

The creative implications of 'word' in association with 'breeds' are arrested, denied, and the poem limps away into silence, the poet never having got very far from life's starting-gates. A yet more moving expression of failure and of the frustration of the creative impulse is made in another sonnet written three months before his death. It ends:

> See banks and brakes
> Now, leavèd how thick! lacèd they are again
> With fretty chervil, look, and fresh wind shakes
> Them; birds build—but not I build; no, but strain,
> Time's eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes.
> Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.

The contrast between the straining sterility of the poet and the fresh images of quickening nature as it lay about him in what was to be the last spring of his life generates the question, why should the Creator-God so frustrate or allow to be frustrated the creator-poet, who loves and wishes to imitate him? The question is unanswered, but the cry drawn forth in the last line assigns the complaint to a wider context which includes trust and submission, for there is great poetic energy in the word 'Mine', with which time's eunuch proclaims that the Lord of Life is his Lord yet.

The poem invites comparison with the concluding stanzas of Herbert's 'Affliction I':

> Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me
> 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 household to me, and I should be just.
>
> Yet though thou troublest me, I must be meek;
> In weakness 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.

Here is the same sense of frustration, the same inability to see any sense in it, the same longing to be at one with great creating nature expressed in images of organic life and growth; but in Herbert's poem something happens. A decision is taken to resolve the tension by apostasy, made under the characteristically seventeenth-century form of 'changing the service'; and then the final lines complete the poem by reversing its direction, as the grumbling resentment of a chafing servant is suddenly displaced by the involuntary cry of all of us who do not love God enough to serve him freely but who cannot help loving him too much to be satisfied with serving anyone else.

When feelings of failure and frustration are compounded by a sense of God's absence, a deeper desolation is reached, described by St Ignatius as 'the condition in which the soul finds itself listless, apathetic, melancholy, like one cut off from its Creator and Lord'.[7] The reflection of such a condition is percurrent in Herbert's poetry:

> Whither, O, whither art thou fled
> My Lord, My Love?

My searches are my daily bread;
Yet never prove . . . .

The sickening thought strikes him that perhaps this is what God *wants*:

Where is my God? What hidden place
Conceals thee still?
What covert dare eclipse thy face?
Is it thy will?

O let not that of any thing;
Let rather brasse,
Or steel, or mountains be thy ring,
And I will passe.
('The Search')

With God away, the self disintegrates, as he writes in 'Deniall':

When my devotions could not pierce
Thy silent eares;
Then was my heart broken, as was my verse . . .

My bent thoughts, like a brittle bow,
Did flie asunder . . .
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.

This sense of God's persistence in withholding himself from his loving creature is resumed in 'Longing':

Behold, thy dust doth stirre,
It moves, it creeps, it aims at thee;
Wilt thou deferre
To succour me,

Thy pile of dust, wherein each crumme
Sayes, Come?

The pathos lies in the contrast between the poet's wonder that dust should stir, move, creep and entertain purpose, and the apparent indifference of the Creator who vivified it.

A sense of God's absence is one of the first deep notes struck by Hopkins. In December 1865 he wrote: 'My prayers must meet a brazen heaven/And fail or scatter all away' (No. 18). And during Lent, 1866, he wrote in '*Nondum*':

> We see the glories of the earth
> But not the hand that wrought them all:
> Night to a myriad worlds gives birth,
> Yet like a lighted empty hall
> Where stands no host at door or hearth
> Vacant creation's lamps appal.

But such poems do not yet express the grief of a man who, like Herbert, has walked familiarly with God and then lost him, but rather the dissatisfaction of one for whom theological ideas cannot fill the universe with a sense of personal presence. But when in 1885 Hopkins writes of his unanswered lamentations as, 'cries like dead letters sent/To dearest him that lives alas! away', the quiet tone, simple domestic image and familiar designation suggest personal intimacy with a loved one, a figure very different from the absentee universal-host of '*Nondum*'.

And yet Hopkins is most deeply troubled, is indeed almost destroyed, not by a sense of God's absence as a friend, but of his terrible and overwhelming presence as absolute being, unapproachable but all-demanding. In this mode God is apprehended as transcendent, other, over-against his creature, with whom his relations are those of violent domination, such as are asserted in the first three words with which Hopkins opens his mature poetic *oeuvre*: '*Thou* mastering *me* . . .'. It is a relationship which may be illuminated by reference to schoolmaster and victim: 'I did say yes/O at lightning and lashed rod'. Indeed, as we have seen in 'Carrion Comfort', God the assailant can be felt as God the uncreator. This theme, too, is announced at the beginning of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland':

> Thou hast bound bones and veins in me, fastened me flesh
> And after it almost unmade, what with dread,
> Thy doing.

Of course in sunnier mood Hopkins could recognize God with simple gratitude as the joyful source of his being:

> Thee God, I come from, to thee I go,
> All dáy long I like fountain flow
> From thy hand out, swayed about
> Mote-like in thy mighty glow.

But it was the darker apprehension which generated the greater poetic intensity.

God as transcendent, unapproachable, unknowable, yet the ground of being in a creature terrified by its own contingency, is suggested in recurring images of an appalling cliff, towering to invisibility above, falling to the abyss below, to the sheer face of which clings the lonely terrified self. The image is first suggested in the second and third stanzas of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', where Hopkins writes of,

> The swoon of a heart that the sweep and the hurl of thee trod
> Hard down with a horror of height:
> And the midriff astrain with leaning of, laced with fire of stress.
>
> The frown of his face
> Before me, the hurtle of hell
> Behind, where, where was a, where was a place?

It is explicit in the sestet of 'No worst there is none':

> O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
> Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
> May who ne'er hung there. Nor does long our small
> Durance deal with that steep or deep.

This setting of God over against his creature corresponds to the way in which Hopkins came to set man's will over against his affections. He saw the affections as being humble, finding their proper object in finite nature, whereas it was by his will that man aspired to infinity, for the proper object of the will was God.[8] Hopkins never rid himself of the fear that the opposition between these two powers of the soul might be absolute, and if it were, then the affections would have to be dominated and wholly subdued by the will in its pursuit of its supreme end. Hence those things in which a man particularly delights, for example the scapes of nature and the making of poetry, he must approach with caution and be prepared to renounce if he is to follow Christ in his great sacrifice.[9] This flat opposition between the affections and the will, between what man delights in and what he must choose, is the central subject of 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves', in which the poet of 'Pied Beauty', still joying in life's 'skeined stained veined variety', forces himself to will that his response to all that is should be reduced to the naked act of choice between the blankly opposed

categories of 'black, white; right, wrong'; and he admonishes himself to,

> reckon but, reck but, mind
> But these two; ware of a world where but these two tell, each
> off the other; of a rack
> Where, selfwrung, selfstrung, sheathe- and shelterless, thoughts
> against thoughts in groans grind.

The strained effort of denial vibrates through this concluding cacophony, which ends in a vision of hell.

Such terrors are reflected but weakly in Herbert, as in 'Justice II':

> O dreadfull Justice, what a fright and terrour
> Wast thou of old . . .
>
> The dishes of thy ballance seem'd to gape,
> Like two great pitts;
> The beam and scape
> Did like some torturing engine show;
> Thy hand above did burn and glow
> Danting the stoutest hearts, the proudest wits.
>
> But now that Christ's pure vail presents the sight,
> I see no feare:
> thy hand is white,
> Thy scales like buckets, which attend
> And interchangeably descend
> Lifting to heaven from this well of tears.

It is characteristic of Herbert both that this terror should be recognized as belonging to the past, dissolved now, by Christ's coming, into love, and that this dissolution should be accomplished through the image of two buckets and a well. And this modulation of fear into a familiar love which can be expressed in domestic imagery characterizes Herbert's poetry as whole, which, organized as it is in *The Temple*, seems to be about to close with meditations on the four last things. There is a poem on death, followed by two on judgement, then one on heaven, and as we are bracing ourselves for hell, we are given the great concluding *agape* of 'Love III'.

Before inferring, however, that whereas Herbert is the poet of God's love Hopkins is the poet of his terror, it is as well to recall that love is manifested in all God's dealings with humanity, but that some are more transparent to love than others, and it may be

accounted Hopkins's greatest achievement that he recognized and accepted the dark descending of the Spirit even when he could not understand it, and could only hang moment by moment to the cliffs of fall, wish day come, not choose not to be, and in all this find some place to stand outside the experience that threatened to overwhelm him, a place from which he could see his terror defined against something which transcended it.

But spiritual desolation, says St Ignatius, should not be the normal state of man, but should convert, through grace, to consolation, 'bringing the soul to peace and tranquillity in its Creator and Lord',[10] and it is towards just such a resolution that most of Herbert's poems of conflict tend. Ignatius, moreover, indicates the means by which they attain it when he recommends the practice of colloquy:

> The colloquy is really the kind of talk friends have with one another, or perhaps like the way a servant speaks to his master, asking for some kindness or apologising for some failure, or telling him about some matter of business and asking advice.[11]

This suggests the very tones in which Herbert often talked to his dear Lord, though indeed these could vary from those of collapsing bombast, as heard rumbling already through 'The Collar': 'I struck the board and cry'd, No more'; and impotent anger, 'Well, I will change the service, and go seek/Some other master out' ('Affliction I'); through pleading: 'Behold thy dust doth stirre,/It moves, it creeps, it aims at thee ('Longing'); and wheedling (recalling God to that proper sense of his Godhead which he had shown in Hosea 11,9):

> Throw away thy rod;
> Though man frailties hath,
> Thou art God:
> Throw away thy wrath ('Discipline').

and reasoning: 'Sweetest Saviour, if my soul/Were but worth the having . . .' ('Dialogue'), to silence. For the last obstacle to communion with God for Herbert was not terror, but his chattering self, protesting out of season its own unworthiness. But as each of his poems tends towards its own spiritual and artistic resolution, so Herbert's 'little book' as a whole is structured as an organic unity in which all conflicts are finally resolved. The book is called *The Temple* and its main division is 'The Church', of which the first poem is 'The Altar' and the second 'The Sacrifice', and

thereafter the symbol of the eucharist becomes thematic, at times fully realized, at times obliquely indicated. Thus, as has been noticed, there is a suggestion of blasphemy when Herbert begins 'The Collar' with 'I struck the board', after which, in this poem of rejection, the wine and corn and blood and 'cordiall' fruit are all reduced to their merely secular significance, until at the last they are recognized retrospectively for what they really are: the signs of Christ's sacramental presence. And in the last poem in 'The Church' Herbert closes with the full approach to the Lord's table, which is both communion table and heavenly banquet set:

Love bad 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,
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.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the blame?
My deare, then I will serve.
You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste my meat:
So I did sit and eat.

With that simplest and most satisfying line the poet passes into silence.

This sense of a love which is at once overwhelming and yet wholly familiar, the divine love expressed through the gently-urged ministrations of a quick-eyed host, is perhaps the distinguishing characteristic of the poetry of George Herbert, to whom God seems closest when he is met as the lord who, at some cost to himself, will agree to revise a lease in your favour, or as the friend who will give you the benefit of a diplomatic bag, or lend you, at need, a handkerchief; in short, in a domestic or social context. Hopkins, however, seems most intensely aware of God's presence when, in solitude, he perceived it embodied, with astonishing vividness and power, in the natural world. Of course, Herbert too, delighted in

the world as God's handiwork, and sometimes wrote of creation as though he were trying to sell it: 'Lighte without winde is glasse: warm without weight/Is wooll and furres: cool without closenesse, shade' ('Providence'). But he could never have burst out: 'The world is charged with the grandeur of God./It will flame out, like shining from shook foil' ('God's Grandeur').

Time and again while he was at St Beuno's, and especially in the year 1877, Hopkins's inward struggle was hushed, laid-by, forgotten before a tremendous sense of natural beauty, which, like mortal beauty, 'does this: keeps warm/Men's wits to the things that are', and that which *is*, originally and actually, is God. It is this amazed delight in nature, recognized as 'word, expression, news of God'[12] which quietens the inner conflict and informs the most simple and delightful of his poems, such as 'The Starlit Night', 'Spring', and 'Pied Beauty'. But there are passages in other poems which, though rooted in the observation of nature, seem to carry an excitement in excess of that arising from the perception of a beauty which is merely natural. Thus the sestets of some of the nature sonnets are marked by a strained and ambiguous diction and imagery and sometimes by a discontinuity of syntax through which they seem to be striving to express something which escapes the normal use of words:

> Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
> Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
> Times told lovelier . . . ('The Windhover')

> And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder
> Majestic—as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet! . . .
> ('Hurrahing in Harvest')

Such moments may suggest less an awareness of the sacramental presence of God in nature than glimpses of some emergent theophany. In a sacrament both spiritual reality and physical embodiment are present, each requiring its appropriate response: the bread must be eaten, but with love and reverence. But at a theophany, as at the Transfiguration, as the body itself becomes incandescent, fully and immediately expressing the spirit, appearance and reality fuse into one, and for a moment things are seen as they *are*. Such a vision of reality Hopkins seems to have accorded the tall nun at the climax of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', and such, perhaps, his nature sonnets show him to have glimpsed at times himself.

The struggle of the poet's self with his Creator is reflected in his attitude to his poems, which are his own creatures. Considering

the pre-eminence Hopkins ascribed to the human function of giving God conscious and articulate glory, he might have been expected to prize his poetry as his own best achievement, and yet one finds in his writings a persistent mistrust of his own powers of making and an undervaluing of his own creation. Fr Devlin puts the matter graphically: 'His muse was a highborn lady, a chaste matron dedicate to God; but he treated her in public as a slut, and her children as an unwanted and vaguely sinful burden'.[13] But Fr Devlin goes on to say of 'these children, his poems' that 'in secret he loved them passionately',[14] and indeed the subject of the octave of the last poem he wrote is the poem itself, imaged as a child, conceived by divine inspiration and by the poet carried, brought forth, nursed and lovingly cared for.

Herbert accepted his poetic vocation with less ado. In a moving stanza from 'The Flower', a meditation on desolation past, he celebrates spiritual convalescence thus:

> And now in age I bud again,
> After so many deaths I live and write;
> I once more smell the dew and rain,
> And relish versing . . .

Versing, then, comes naturally: as the healthy plant buds, so the poet verses. And Herbert says more. In 'The Quidditie' he talks to God about what for him a poem essentially *is*:

> My God, a verse is not a crown
> No point of honour or gay suit.
> No hawk, or banquet, or renown,
> Not a good sword, nor yet a lute:
>
> It cannot vault, or dance, or play;
> It never was in *France* or *Spain*;
> Nor can it entertain the day
> With my great stable or demain:
>
> It is no office, art, or news,
> Nor the Exchange or busie Hall;
> But it is that which while I use
> I am with thee, and *most take all.*

Poetry then, for Herbert, is prayer: when he is making it he is with God, and God (who is 'most' to Herbert's 'least'), as if in a game, wholly takes over, sweeps the board.

And yet if asked for his vocation, neither Herbert nor Hopkins would have said 'Poet'; both would have said 'Priest'. Each

performed his priestly task assiduously; neither published his own poems nor spread them widely abroad; both committed them to God, for whom Nicholas Ferrar acted speedily and Robert Bridges slowly. We have good reason to be grateful to both men, for the pictures of the many spiritual conflicts that passed betwixt God and the souls of his poets have indeed turned to the advantage of many poor souls since, for not only do we find our own inchoate experience of the inward struggle shaped and given meaning in their words, but they offer us the specific assurance that by final submission in that struggle we shall not lose our individuality, but achieve it; and if we seem to know these two Englishmen better, more distinctively than almost any others in our history, it is because each finally allowed Christ to fill with being the unique void of his own self. Such a process is imagined by Hopkins in a gloss, appropriately enough, on the word 'Temple', as used by St Ignatius in the *Contemplatio ad Amorem*:

> The word Temple at first hides the thought, which is, I think, that God rests in man as a jewel in a case hollowed to fit it, as the hand in the glove or the milk in the breast . . . And God *in forma servi* rests *in servo*, that is/Christ as a solid in his member as in a hollow shell, both things being the image of God; which can only be perfectly when the member is in all things conformed to Christ. This too best brings out the nature of the man himself, as the lettering on a sail or device upon a flag are best seen when it fills.[15]

NOTES

Quotations from Hopkins's poems are taken from W. H. Gardner and N. H. MacKenzie (eds), *The poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Oxford, 1967).

Quotations from George Herbert are from F. E. Hutchinson (ed), *The works of George Herbert* (Oxford, 1941).

'Letters I': *The letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, ed C. C. Abbott (O.U.P., 1935).

'Letters II': *The correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon*, ed C. C. Abbott (O.U.P., 1935).

'Devlin': *The sermons and devotional writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed Christopher Devlin, S. J. (O.U.P., 1959).

'Exx': *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius*, tr. Thomas Corbishley, S. J. (Burns and Oates, 1963).

[1] Izaak Walton, *Lives*, (O.U.P., 1927), p 275.

[2] Walton, p 227.

[3] Walton, p 314.

[4] Edouard Pousset, *Life in faith and freedom*, tr. Eugene L. Donahue S. J. (St Louis, 1980), p 73.

[5] Joseph H. Summers, *George Herbert: his religion and art*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), p 92.
[6] Letters I, p 46.
[7] Exx, p 108, para 317.
[8] Devlin, pp 138–9.
[9] Devlin, pp 107–9. Cf also the spirit of the restored Society as reflected in the spiritual journal of Fr Roothan for 1829: 'What pleases me must be rejected for the sole reason that it pleases and what is loathsome to me must be accepted for the sole reason that I loathe it, unless there is a good reason to act differently . . .', quoted Philip Endean, S. J., 'The spirituality of Gerard Manley Hopkins', in *The Hopkins Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, no. 3, Fall, 1981.
[10] Exx, p 108, para 316. Cf Hopkins's implied acknowledgement that 'consolation should be our normal state and that when God withdraws it he wishes us to strive to recover it' (Devlin, p 205).
[11] Exx p 33, para 54.
[12] Devlin, p 129.
[13] Devlin, p 119.
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] Devlin, p 195.