Conclusion

Contributing to the symposium, 'Faith that Illuminates' (1935), T.S. Eliot wrote that he would not "pretend to offer Vaughan, or Southwell, or George Herbert, or Hopkins as major poets: "In the same article he also asserted that as religious poets the first three were of a "limited awareness" as against "the general awareness which we expect of the major poet". But so far as Herbert is concerned, the account of his personality and poetry, as given in the present work, will easily prove this position to be untenable. Happily, however, Eliot revised his opinion in 1949 and, to quote his exact words, "stated with some emphasis ... that Herbert is a major, not a minor poet." ('Selected Prose', Penguin, 1953, P. 35 f.n.) The question of determining Herbert's position in the literary history of England, as a major or a minor poet, is rather immaterial. What really deserves consideration is the lasting spell he has cast upon the reader. The longing that George MacDonald, the novelist and poet, or Auden felt for Herbert, is rarely matched by any felt for any other literary personality. MacDonald wrote: "Among the keener delights of life which is at the door, I look for the face of George Herbert, with whom to talk humbly would be in bliss a higher bliss". Almost in the same vein Charles Fulloch also observed that Herbert's evangelical spirit and catholic outlook was so marked that we could not long too earnestly for a wide-spread
revival of his 'Old Divinity' at the present time.

As if to reciprocate such sentiment, the Bemerton church today has become a place of pilgrimage. The extent of Herbert's popularity can be seen from the interest shown in his life and works, in recent days, by literary critics and others. A television film, called 'The Pilgrimage of George Herbert' was directed and produced, at the University of York, by Tom Guttridge in 1972. It was based on the poet's life.

Charles Bullock's further observation that "Herbert's life was itself a devotional poem" is no exaggeration. Nor is Emerson's when he said that "so much piety was never married to so much wit." Herbert's contribution to the realization of the Kingdom of Christ on earth is immeasurable. As a kindly soul and singer, he may indeed be called the Kabir of English religious poetry.
Notes and References:

Preface


Chapter I

5. Ibid., p. 23.
Chapter II


2. ibid., pp. 34-36.


4. op.cit., pp. 45-47.


12. ibid., p. XVI.

Chapter III


Chapter IV


6. op.cit., p. 506.

7. op.cit., p. 464.

8. op.cit., p. 55.


Chapter V

5. op. cit., p. 578.
6. op. cit., p. 194.
9. op. cit., pp. 582-583.
10. op. cit., p. 8.
11. op. cit., p. 586.

Chapter VI

Chapter VII


2. 'Times Literary Supplement', March 2, 1933, p. 133.


6. op.cit., p. 40.

7. ibid., p. 42.


9. ibid., p. 97.


12. op.cit., p. 2.
16. ibid., p. 146-147.
18. op.cit., p. 158.
23. ibid., pp. 133-146.
25. op.cit., p. 6-28.
26. op.cit., p. 70.
27. op.cit., pp. 116-117.
29. cf. *Keats*: *Ode to Autumn*:

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruits the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples, the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruits with ripeness to the cove;
30. op.cit., p. 111.
32. op.cit., pp. 56-57.
38. op.cit., pp. 21-25.