The Catholic Poets of the Nineteenth Century: A study of the relationship between Religious Experience and Poetic Expression

The six Catholic poets we have chosen—G.M. Hopkins, C. Palmore, F. Thompson, A. Meynell, L. Johnson and E. Dowson—represent a Catholic view of life in the nineteenth century. We hasten to add, we are interested in them primarily as poets and not as Catholics, for our object is to deal with their poetry and not their theology. We would not hesitate, on the other hand, to consider their theological preoccupations if their impact on their poetic sensibility is considerable.

Before we enter deeper into our subject, certain preliminary investigations may prove useful to clear the ground.

In the first place, by Catholic poets we mean Catholic religious poets. Religious poets are not those who write only devotional poetry. Such a supposition would exclude the larger concerns of life. Religious poets are really those who write poetry in a religious spirit. Catholic poets could be also 'catholic'. Nevertheless, their contribution to the literary heritage as Catholics would be worth investigating.

Next, we should consider what religious poetic expression involves. Does such expression necessarily demand genuine religious experience on the part of the poet?
This is by no means obvious. Again, is it only Catholic poets that can express Catholic sentiments?

The problem becomes manifest if we consider that all poetry - not only dramatic poetry - has an element of drama in it. Every poet is, in a sense, a dramatist who identifies himself with the character he impersonates even if the character impersonated is no other than himself as objectified in his mind.

This would explain how Wordsworth, a non-Catholic could speak of the Virgin Mary in a language as apt poetically as it is theologically accurate. Indeed, Catholics take a pride in quoting him:

'Woman! above all women glorified
Our tainted nature's solitary boast'.

The chance of a gifted poet writing religious verse without a corresponding religious experience is so proximate that the Catholic church considers the religious poetry of a candidate for canonization as evidence of sanctity, only after his sanctity has been otherwise established. Saintly sentiments in a poem does not necessarily argue to the sanctity of its author. By the same token, a saint writing poems of mystic experience may be suspected of being no more than an able poet who happens to take a fancy to exploiting certain religious themes. If it is retorted that a genuine poet will not venture into poetic expression without having undergone
a relevant experience, the question still remains as to what that experience should be where religious poetry is concerned. Would it not be enough, for instance, to read sensitively the best religious poetry extant in order to undergo the relevant experience? If not, it remains to be proved.

These considerations lead us to the more fundamental question whether religious poetry is possible at all. The question may sound strange since religious poetry obviously exists, or else what are we talking about?

The point of the difficulty raised will perhaps become clearer if we consider Dr. Johnson's opinion in the matter. He thinks that religious poetry is not possible, for the following reason. Religious devotion revolves around deep personal concerns such as Faith, Repentance, Thanksgiving - themes not meant for poetical exploitation. Such deeply intimate and spontaneous religious experiences forbid the conscious use of colourful epithets and calculated cadences that the poetic craft seems to demand.

Keble is quite surprised by such a stance on the part of a critic of Dr. Johnson's stature. Do not the penitential psalms of David themselves disprove his contention? Why could not Repentance, for instance, be a theme for poetic expression? Repentance consists in an attitude, based either on a certain feeling alone, or on a feeling supported by reasoning. If feeling alone is involved, it could certainly find refined poetic expression. If, on the other
hand, it is the underlying reasoning that is the essential factor, why then, poetry can clothe the kernel of truth with the covering of grace.

Moreover, Keble thinks that there is an indirect form of religious poetry which has the added merit of attracting readers whom overtly religious poems might repel. The *Fairie Queene* is such; it enables even trivialities by noble associations, and maintains a deep religious tone by indirect allusions to the Scriptures. Faith, purity, goodness and justice are all unobtrusively inculcated. The use of allegory far from spoiling the religious aspect of the poem, keeps it unsullied by the profane touch of direct statement from lips unsanctified to utter religious truths. It also enables the poet to keep his fiery imagination under control in an area where angels tread with awe. For the readers, it does the service of leading from sensible appearances to intangible realities.

Keble prefers Spenser to Milton as a model religious poet, because the latter shows in his *Paradise Lost* a spiritual pride characteristic of his age. "To Spenser, therefore," he concludes, "upon the whole, the English reader must revert, as being the sacred poet of his country."

This is well argued. Keble presents a sound apologia for religious poetry. At the same time, it is to be feared he has missed the point of Johnson's objection. What Johnson has in mind is that we cannot directly transfer
so sacred and intimately personal an experience as direct intercourse with God to a vehicle of expression that, though admittedly the result of high art and endowed with an authentic validity of its own, has yet a touch of artificiality in the best sense of the word. An adequate answer to Johnson would involve a careful investigation into the genesis of poetic experience and the art of communicating it.

T.S. Eliot has some pertinent remarks regarding this matter. "What the poet experienced is not poetry but poetic material; the writing of poetry is a fresh 'experience' for him, and the reading of it, by the author or anyone else, is another thing still." (3) "And what is the experience that the poet is bursting to communicate? By the time it has settled down into a poem it may be so different from the original experience as to be hardly recognisable. The 'experience' in question may be the result of a fusion of feelings so numerous and ultimately so obscure, in their origins, that even if there be communication of them, the poet may be hardly aware of what he is communicating; and what is there to be communicated was not in existence before the poem was completed." (4)

What then is poetic creation? Obviously it is not the simple transfer of the poet's wonderful thoughts and feelings into his verses. But to do even faint justice to the matter before us, we must concentrate on two broad aspects of the process – a) the poetic experience – whatever that might be – within the poet; b) the exterior communication of such experience through the medium of an uttered
poem. Each of these divisions comprises several interlocking components.

We begin with the indubitable fact that a poem is a work of art in words written down or spoken out. From here we may trace back the steps to the source in the artist; or, in the other direction, we may follow it up to its goal, which is its effect on the audience.

In the poet several feelings and antecedent experiences converge and, at a moment of extraordinary exaltation of spirit, fuse into the focal point of an intense experience which has its analogy with the conception of a child. Then there is usually a long period of gestation. As if to demonstrate this process in the very poem that sets out to describe it precisely, Hopkins strikingly combines two images suggestive of the maternity-home and the laboratory table of the physical sciences, in a famous sonnet addressed to Robert Bridges:

'The fine delight that fathers thought; the strong Spur, live and lancing like the blow-pipe flame, Breathes once and, quenched faster than it came, Leaves yet the mind a mother of immortal song.
Nine months she then, may years, nine years she long Within her wears, bears, cares and combs the same: The widow of an insight lost she lives, with aim Now known and hand at work never wrong.

Sweet fire the sire of muse, my soul needs this; I want the one rapture of an inspiration.
0 then if in my lagging lines you miss
The roll, the rise, the carol, the creation,
My winter world, that scarcely breathes that bliss
Now, yields you, with some sighs, our explanation.'

Inspiration, then, starting from obscure sources in the
depth of the mind, leaps up as a searing well-defined jet
of blow-pipe flame and causes rapturous delight for a brief
interval before it dies out. But a living nucleus of
organic thought and feeling has come into being. There is
a suffused joy in place of a vibrantly intense delight.
The organic thought-feeling complex grows and grows until
the poet feels the fullness of the poem and utters it.

This is admittedly a figurative description of a
maturing poetic conception. The process begins in an event
in which the poet's contribution is mostly a passive acceptance
of a new experience. We say 'mostly', because a creative
act cannot be totally passive.

The process of dreaming, again, provides a fair analogy
where the passive and active aspects of poetic creation are
concerned. As, in a dream, it is the hidden springs of
action - desires, impulses, fears - that construct a sensible
shape and yet it is the thin layer of consciousness that
imparts to it a sort of inner logic which invests it with
its illusory reality, so, in the process of poetic creation,
though the poet finds himself in the isolated world of the
imagination where words and phrases washed with warm colours
of feelings seem to arrange themselves in a pattern around
the inspirational core, yet the poet is aware that it is he who is imparting to it the poetic reality. When the intensity of the inspirational mood subsides, the poet assumes a more active part. He adjusts the words until he is satisfied that the final product has harmonised with the original inspirational impact whose reverberations still persist in the memory. This may involve intense work and presupposes long training in the use of language.

The publication of a poet's working papers - a practice much in vogue at the present time - also enables us to get a glance at the working of his mind with respect to the active aspect. To take the example of one of the poets we are dealing with, a stanza in the finished version of Francis Thompson's The Kingdom of God reads:

'Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars!-
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay - shuttered doors.'

In the rough draft the first line reads:

'Not where the rolling systems darken'
hurtling
whirling
rumbling

The word finally chosen is not in the list of suggested alternatives. He chooses 'wheeling' because, besides suggesting the meanings of the words on the list, it adds a new shade. In the passive state of inspiration he has
had an insight into something of cosmic proportions going round mightily in the depths of abysmal space. His mind gropes until it finds the exact word that rings true to the original inspiration. 'Wheeling' gives us the idea of something going round and round and yet smoothly and fast. 'Hurtling', for example, would not have given us the idea of something going round. Moreover, it suggests something noisy dashing away roughly and that was not what the poet had, obscurely, in his mind.

Similarly, for the other lines of the stanza the rough draft has several alternatives:

'Where to our numbed conjecture soars conceiving

The drift of pinions, would we hearken

draft

storm

Beats on our own clay - sheltered doors

earth - "

earthy- "

clayey- "

Our shut and earthy doors

closed clayey

From these considerations it is clear that the poetic experience is a vital process that involves not only an initial intense awareness, but also a slow organic process that incarnates it into a verbal configuration. Further, the poetic experience is an artistic experience co-extensive
with the productive process of the poem. There is no preceding poetical experience which is then mechanically transferred to the verbal construct called a poem. The vital growth in the poet's mind - and not on paper - is itself the poetic experience. What is written on paper is a sort of ideogram of the processes that have been going on in the poet's mind.

The process is reversed when we consider the audience. When a poem is properly read, it constructs, brick by living brick, the fiery citadel of words, no longer on a piece of paper, but on the attentive soil of the listener's soul. There is, at first, only a vague intimation of hidden beauty and a general glow of feeling. But with the repeated reading of the poem and deeper involvement in it, the reader begins to perceive a stirring that slowly assumes a well defined mental shape and a sharp distinct feeling. The process goes on until it reaches its maximal focussing of attention resulting in a concentrated perception, along with an upsurge of emotion, that resembles, but is not identical with, the poet's original vibrant inspiration. The more the mental images and the consequent feelings of the reader resemble those of the poet when composing, the greater will be the likelihood of duplicating in the reader the poetic inspirational core in the likeness of the original in the poet. The measure in which the poet's skilful use of words is able to achieve this evocation is also the measure of his success as a poet. If, in reading a poem, the effect on the reader is different from, and perhaps even better than, the experience of the poet, this can only be attributed to
exterior, chance or the poet's failure in his craft.

If the shaping of a poem in a poet resembles the birth of a child, the adequate response on the part of the reader resembles a rebirth. But birth or rebirth implies a birth pang; and before the joy of realisation is felt, one could expect confusion, darkness and pain. This is all the more likely to happen when one encounters a totally new but genuine poem. According to Middleton Murry, the essential experience that he himself underwent when attentively going through the writings of a poet or religious seer, was one of isolation and desolation similar to the darkness of death followed by a feeling of new birth with a fresh attitude towards life. (6)

This darkening and confusing effect finds a curious confirmation in what Hopkins tells Robert Bridges about his own poems. When, on first reading The Wreck of the Deutschland, Bridges felt baffled and refused to read it again, Hopkins wrote to him to say that it was necessary to approach it repeatedly before its impact could be felt. To illustrate his point, he explained how according to an apocryphal story, some people believed that ships setting out on long voyages carried in their tanks dirty water of the Thames. But the water soon cleared and become the purest water in the world. So also, he concluded, a new poem like his own The Wreck of the Deutschland must be allowed to settle down in the mind for some time before it emerged in all its crystalline beauty. The price to pay was the confusion and darkness at the
initial stage of incomprehension. Hopkins's unusual explanation is only another version of the birth analogy.

This analogy, which Christopher Fry exploits to the fullest when he says that a poem 'screams to be cut loose from ... the navel strings and feeding-tubes 'of the poet's ego and that 'the critic takes over, where the poet leaves off', (?) gives some credibility to the contention that once a poem is completed, it assumes a life independent of the poet. What effect it will have on the readers' mind, what its authentic meaning should be, depends no more on the poet than a child's innermost life depends on its parents once it is fully formed. Thus I.A. Richards would have it that The Waste Land cuts off all relationships between poetry and the beliefs on which it may be supposed to be based. Though T.S. Eliot denies this to be the case in his poem, he yet grants that he has no more right to interpret his own poem than Richards. (8)

To return to the point from which we branched off to explain the terms of reference, a poem is a work of art from which we can profit by looking in two relevant directions - one pointing to its creator, and the other to its critic or reader. In a sense, every intelligent reader is a critic; every totally sympathetic and understanding reader is a reborn poet. In the context of the terms thus far clarified, it is now necessary to pose the question again, if religious poetry is possible at all. The answer would seem to be that in a sense it is and in another it is not.
In so far as a poem is a work of art its function is to provide artistic pleasure. Not that it may not prove to be an occasion for experiencing other sentiments, for instance, religious devotion, but then it will not be under the formal aspect of the poem as a work of art. It is in this respect that the dictum 'art for art's sake' has some reasonable meaning, (9) for, if it is taken otherwise to mean that art is an absolute like ethical and religious ultimates, it leads to absurdities.

Some people confuse issues by praising a certain type of verse as good poetry when there may be no poetry at all in it in the first place, or if there is a vestige of poetry in it, it is not this that they have in mind when they praise it but something else, may be something even better than poetry, for instance, edifying religious truths. But such verse should be praised not for its poetry but for its religious value. A.E. Houseman affirms: 'I am convinced that most readers, when they think that they are admiring poetry are deceived by their inability to analyse their sensations, and that they are really admiring, not the poetry of the passage before them, but something else in it, which they like better than poetry.' (10) This is very likely, but when he goes on to assert that the undevout are more likely to enjoy good religious poetry than the devout, he is indulging in sophistry. The truth is that an impartial and intelligent critic, whether devout or not, should be able to appreciate good poetry wherever it is found, whether the poetry is religious or profane. To undevout is no guarantee of being a good critic, any more than to be devout is a hindrance.
to it. Prejudice which can impartially obfuscate the judgment of the devout and the undevout, must, of course, be guarded against. This being granted, even a devout critic can discriminate what is really poetry and what is only the religious element in verses purporting to be religious poetry.

Now we can state in what sense religious poetry is not possible. Since a work of art qua art is expected to impart only an artistic experience, it is not possible for a poem, as a poem, to impart a religious experience. And if a religious poem does seem to impart a religious experience, it is only an accidental result of a work primarily meant to impart a different experience. We say that a poem imparts an experience when the poem as a construct in words expresses - literally presses out - an experience embodied in art form which, being assimilated by the reader, reproduces the experience. The experience that can thus be embodied in art form is only one - the artistic experience. Every other experience must first be reduced to it in order to be embodied in art form. If it is asked what precisely is 'reducing other experiences to the artistic experience' supposed to mean, it may be answered, setting aside for the moment further refinements of critical analysis, that roughly it means: appreciating other experiences aesthetically. It means that the artist - and here we are concerned only with the creative artist and not the dilettante - aesthetically appreciates the divine, the human, the beautiful, the pathetic and the perverse in any experience, situation or object. The formal aspect of this appreciation concerns only the sense of the beautiful, the exquisite, the sublime and other resonances.
associated with the aesthetic experience.

Here is the place to draw an important conclusion from our argument. If every other experience, then even the religious experience must first be reduced to an artistic experience before it could be embodied in an art form. It is precisely here that the point in Dr. Johnson's argument cited earlier assumes clarity; here, too, is the key to understanding the special difficulty that Hopkins spoke of regarding poetic composition.

When one undergoes a religious experience, say, one elicits a sincere act of repentance in the sight of God, if the idea occurs that the act could be expressed in a poem, one has already shifted one's stand from the presence of God; then one has to look steadily at the first act of repentance as an object, abstract it, admire it, and experience an aesthetic pleasure in its presence. All these later acts, apart from the first one, are not in their essence religious acts. When, finally, the poem is written, it is the aesthetic experience, not the religious one, that is embodied in it if it indeed turns out to be a real work of art.

Dr. Johnson's deep religious sense revolts against any such tampering with the first intimate act of communicating with God. To look at one's own act of worship at the moment it is in progress is the best way to spoil it. C.S. Lewis understands this point perfectly when he makes the Master-devil in his Screwtape Letters advise the young devil-in-training
in the methods of tempting devout people during their prayer time. It is to make such souls pat themselves psychologically, as it were, on their back for praying so well and this while they are yet praying. This also explains why Hopkins considered it a sacrilege to make use of his sensibly felt love of God to write poems. (11)

The conclusion to be drawn from the above considerations is not that religious poetry is not possible. It is rather that the essence of religious poetry is not to be sought in the mode of expression of the poem - which would always be a mode of aesthetic experience - but in the theme or the poetic object around which the artistic talent plays. By religious theme we mean more than what at first the words might seem to convey. It includes not only all truths of a particular religion, but all objects whatever towards which a genuine religious attitude is possible. It includes not only the objects of the religious attitude but the very objects as modified by the attitude and this invested with an additional subjective religious aura.

The religious theme thus comprehensively taken is the real basis and one of the essential constituents of religious poetry. It is this that makes a particular poem religious poetry and not any other poetry. Upon this religious basis the artistic superstructure arises. First, this basis or religious object, which may be a religious truth or act or attitude or experience, is contemplated and appreciated aesthetically, and this aesthetic experience is then expressed by another creative act in the poem which, as an art object, can impart only aesthetic pleasure.
In the measure of the poet's artistic power the religious theme thus aesthetically appreciated will be embodied in more and more artistically perfect forms. This explains the great differences we see in the beauty and power of poems by various authors dealing with the same religious theme.

To put it in other words, the theme represents the content and the artistic articulation of it, the form. No doubt, form and content in a work cannot be actually separated though we can conceive of them separately. If for the sake of clarifying the concepts we imagine that the artistic form is separated, what remains will not be the artistic content but something from which the artistic content was derived earlier in the undivided state. Moreover, in a living work of art, form and content mutually act on each other. Yet, what form imparts to content - here the religious theme - will not be more of the content but the identical content enhanced in beauty in the crystalline glamour of the form; and what the content contributes to the form will not be more of the form but to the same crystal of the form will be added the colour of a particular context - here the religious context.

The question may now be asked if, in the total complex of matter and form in a completed work of art in the religious context, there is a form of religious message and truth, or not. Since the essential quality of a work of art is formally determined by its form and not its content, a religious poem
qua work of art formally does not have a religious message. This, however, does not deny that the religious matter does exist in the poem as subsumed by the form: it exists in the work of art only under artistic consideration and not as a religious message.

Earlier we have pinpointed what precisely is the objection raised by Dr. Johnson and the difficulty felt by Fr. Hopkins with respect to the poetic expression of a religious experience. By now we are in a position to offer a solution. Though it may be true that to objectify one's religious experience and contemplate it while yet one is undergoing it, will be intolerable according to one and sacrilegious according to the other. Of the two great men, yet much later when the religious experience has been naturally terminated, nothing prevents one from contemplating it, admiring it, appreciating it aesthetically and, if one is indeed an artist, expressing the derived aesthetic experience in a work of art. In fact, Hopkins must have thought along these lines, since we know for certain that he not only composed highly religious poems but explicitly made use, at times, of this earlier religious experience. He himself wrote to Robert Bridges that the religious experience expressed in the first person singular at the beginning of his poem. The Wreck of the Deutschland did actually take place earlier. As for Dr. Johnson, it is to be hoped that he will not turn in his grave if it is suggested that one may be allowed to admire and express in a poem the vicariously appreciated religious experience of others if one's own is felt to be too personal a matter for the purpose!
We have by now established that it is the aesthetic vision of a religious object that may be used as the basic experience to be transmuted at a second artistic creative level into a poem, and not the religious vision or experience itself at the basic level. Thus poetic vision is basically aesthetic vision whatever may be the poetic matter. Yet, we may make a distinction between the two. Aesthetic vision points to the passive, receptive, appreciative act in the poet; poetic vision represents his active, creative, projective act which creates the vision as the term of such projection. To take a homely example, aesthetic vision is like shooting on location in the cinematic industry; poetic vision is like the projection of the developed roll of film on the screen.

It is worth developing this analogy further. Photographing a scene or situation needs intense concentration on the part of the team engaged in this business. The scene again is intensely illumined in flood-light. When the actual photograph takes palace, though there is active chemical change in the emulsion on the roll of film, it is largely a matter of passive reception of the image.

The aesthetic experience, similarly, is mainly a passive process, though there is a calmly active and fascinated appreciation of the splendour in the object of contemplation.

It is in the wake of this vision of beauty that a jet of intense flame-like energy pushes into a focus of patterned unity all the element gathered and appreciated in the vision. This inspiration is the beam of light that projects the
subconsciously processed film of poetic material through the crystal lens of the intellect on to the screen of the imagination.

Even the poet's plodding work of choosing the right word to express the exact vision appears to have its counterpart in the activity of the film editor who at first runs the whole film, looks on passively, but after that begins the work of cutting and joining several lengths of the film until at last a rounded pattern of artistically arranged scene-sequences emerges.

While a comparison with the cinematic art throws some light on what aesthetic and poetic visions severally are, a look at what they are in themselves may prove helpful.

The aesthetic experience is one of the most significant of human experiences. It is a deep and elevating activity in which the spirit contemplates an objective reality in itself with no reference, at the moment to ulterior considerations. It is a perception in which the contemplative soul is absorbed in the formal splendour of the object. The spirit rests tranquilly on the qualities radiating from the essential form in the object as if they were an end in themselves to terminate the reach of the spirit in its quest for the ideal. (12)

It is as if a fragment of divinity had descended from the transcendental regions of light and shone in a particular spot to draw the fascinated attention of the contemplative soul. This much for the aesthetic vision.

The poetic vision now demands further elaboration. In general, when the shaping imagination uses the aesthetic'
vision as material to construct a new world clothed in ordered splendour, it presents a system of built-in symbolic dialectics that makes the external world intelligible to the human spirit that craves for order. When rhythmical verbal patterns serve as the medium to project this world of ordered splendour we have, in particular, the poetic art issuing in poetic vision.

The words 'system of built-in symbolic dialectics' are there to indicate that the process of projecting the poetic vision is essentially a form of rationalisation. However, it is not didactic reasoning. Neither Hamlet nor Lear is a piece of didactic reasoning. It means that the interpretation is done through symbols which are the poetic tools of meaning. In short, the building up of the organic poem imbeds within it its own interpretation in poetic form. "Poetry, psychologically considered, is not the expression of ideas or a view of life; it is the discovery and creation in one, in the construction of the poetry". (13) This however, does not deny the existence of a poetic vision. It only asserts that the poetic statement is not the same as a philosophic statement. The poetic statement is, in fact, a vision that incarnates a philosophic attitude in a poetic form.

In the light of these clarifications we may maintain that, though the aesthetic and the poetic vision are specifically different, yet generally they are the same. But when we further repeat what we explained earlier, that in the poetic expression of any vision of life - including the religious one - it is always turned into a poetic vision - meaning a form of aesthetic vision -, we clash with a famous
theory of the Abbé Bremond on the nature of poetry and we do so by way of claiming too little rather than too much in our theory.

If we may put in a nutshell what Brémond of the French Academy, argues in a whole book - *Prière et Poésie* (14) - pure poetic experience that terminates in a poetic vision tends to become prayer, or mystical experience. This is much the same as saying that true poetic vision is a quasi-mystical, or religious, vision. In contrast to our theory, that even the poetic vision based on religious perception is not essentially religious, he holds that a true poetic vision, whatever be the theme, essentially tends to be a religious vision.

It is necessary to plunge deeper into Brémond's theory to appreciate its subtlety. One of its chief points is his idea of Catharsis.

From various studies it would appear that Catharsis, according to Aristotle's *Poetics*, is the psychological purification effected in the process of undergoing a poetic experience. Though Aristotle speaks of Catharsis with respect to the spectator of a poetic tragedy and, by extension, to any reader of poetry, yet I think that Bremond is correct in assuming that it is applicable to the poet himself in the first place, for, in the spirit of what we have noted earlier, it may be said that the poet's is the archetypal poetic experience of which the reader's is but a re-enactment though the medium of the poem.
Though Plato makes no mention of Catharsis in his writings, Bremond finds its equivalent in Phaedo and the Sophist, where purificatory ascetical practices are demanded of the disciple in order that his soul, soaring above the sensible appearances, may with pure eyes contemplate Truth and Beauty. There are two eyes in the soul for the purpose—the eye of reason, and the eye of poetic or aesthetic sensibility. These two are, in fact, one, but the formal objects of their contemplation distinguish them, for poetic sensibility is open to the Beautiful as reason to Truth.

Plotinus later combined the insights of Plato and Aristotle. According to him, in the mystical ascent of the soul the senses and reasoning faculties are progressively cleansed and silenced until it is united with the One, 

It is at this point that Bremond steps in to say that, just as in the Plotinian ascent there are two chief elements—Purification and Illumination—, so too there are two parallel happenings in the process of a poetic experience—Catharsis and Inspiration.

To crystallize his concepts Bremond borrows two key words from the famed French writer, Paul Claudel—animus and anima. Animus in the map of the soul is the peripheral, noisy, restless, ratiocinative area; anima is the tranquil, silent, contemplative centre. The animus can attain only the outer rational, notional knowledge; the anima, on the other hand, attains the calm inner knowledge of the Real.
As in the mystical ascent, so in the poetic experience, the transition is from the noisy outer circles of the animus to the centre where anima with an eye of calm concentration contemplates the One, the True and the Beautiful. According to Bremond, as in the mystic it is purification, so in the poet it is Catharsis, that brings about the liberation of the anima from the superficial outer soul. As it is Illumination in the mystic, so it is Inspiration in the poet, that effects the contemplative union with the Real that is one, true and beautiful. But Purification and Illumination in the mystic, Catharsis and Inspiration in the poet are not two separate entities but the positive and negative aspects of the same process of ascent to the Real.

Since, according to what has hitherto been said, the object of the contemplative union in the mystic, as in the poet, is the same Real, is mystical vision same as poetic vision? The answer is not a simple, 'yes'. The psychological pattern of the mystical and poetic experiences is the same. But the ontological reality differs. In the mystical experience, there is perfect union with the Real. In the poetic experience the anima only glances past the Real in a confused manner because it is distracted by the urge for poetical expression. However, the poetic experience, of its nature, tends to become mystical. The poet, accordingly, is a mystic manqué.

In the paragraph above note the words: 'But the ontological reality differs.' That is not exactly what Bremond says.
It is only our way of interpreting his mind. He would probably agree that at the point of union of the anima with the Real, the ontological reality in the mystic and the poet differs, but apparently he would maintain — and in this we cannot agree with him — that, even in the transitional stage, just short of the final point of union, the stuff of which the psychological process is made in either case is, to put it crudely, the same religious elan.

To put it simply, Bremond is saying that the poetic process is really a religious experience, even a mystical one, which unfortunately failed to get hold of the goal when it reached it.

That our interpretation of Bremond's position is correct is clear from his own words:

"In every mystical experience worthy of the name, Animus and Anima collaborate in an act of love, of love in the perfect sense of the word; .... in the poetic experience this act of love, of the complete union with the real, touched and confusedly possessed, miscarries fatally, the Animus or the will of the poet being absorbed by other activities which do not tend to realise, to draw closer, to perfect that union." (1

Two points must be made quite clear before we proceed further. When we say no poetic experience is in itself a religious experience even if the poem happens to be a religious one, we do not deny that de facto, in the case of some people, especially the devout, a religious feeling may occasionally get mixed up with a purely poetic experience. Then again,
when we say that, according to Brémond, every poetic experience is a religious experience, it is not meant to imply that he anywhere explicitly makes such a statement. His exposition is rather subtle and diffuse. The inference is ours. In the above question, the Real is said to be 'touched and confusedly possessed.' He has also clearly stated that a poet is a broken-down mystic. These statements already indicate that the psychological movement of the poetic experience is endowed with a religious finality at least confusedly envisaged. The conclusion that, according to Brémond the poetic experience is a religious experience at the outset, whatever may be the final result, cannot be avoided.

Before rejecting Bremond's position we might profitably explore what insights in his theory could be saved without accepting his conclusions. As we see it, there is only one such: the parallelism that obtains in the concepts and processes pertaining to religion and poetry.

Two key-concepts in religion find a remarkable parallel in poetry. In the objective order, there is **Revelation**, which includes **Inspiration**; in the subjective world of the devotee's soul, there is a set pattern of religious progress. Taking each of these in turn, we can observe the striking similarity in the world of poetry.

**Revelation** is the partial removal of the veil that shrugs God's mystery. What is revealed is only an invitation to probe into the promising depths of receding circles of light. The fan of effulgent rays around the
mist-shrouded sun of Divinity gives the seeker an assurance of the hidden splendour. The cloud of darkness that accompanies religious faith is but a veil to protect the yet too weak eyes of the believer. As his eyes grow stronger, there will be progressive revelation.

Such a revelation is originally made to a person chosen by God, who is charged with the duty of integrally communicating his vision for the benefit of his fellow-beings. What is more, he is, in a manner, possessed by God and made a living instrument to broadcast the visionary message from above:

The power that possesses the man and directs the communicative process is called Inspiration, which has a technical connotation. It implies, for example, that in making use of the human agent, God does not destroy the liberty of his creature. All the idiosyncrasies of the man - his vocabulary, psychic patterns, sensibilities - are made use of in such a manner that, while he is conscious of acting in his own right, he is at the same time aware that a power beyond his control is directing him.

Revelation has its counterpart in poetry. The true poetic experience comes indeed as a revelation - the very word used by a poet and a reader when the new awareness rises full-or-bed above the brightening horizon of the inner landscape. What is revealed in the beginning may not be anything new, but only the usual seen in an unusual light. Of this period of revelation the poet could truly say:
'There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,
The earth and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.'

The words 'to me did seem' sounds a note of uncertainty about the objectivity of the vision, later exploited in Coleridge's Criticism. The attitude has its parallel in a man's religious faith whose object he cannot directly prove to exist though the reasonableness of the faith itself can be established on a firm basis.

With maturing poetic powers there is progressive interiorisation of the experience and penetration into the mystery of the unfolding objective reality. Stage by stage, the poet passes from his animus to his anima.

"...we are laid asleep
In body and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy;
We see into the life of things."

What the tranquil eye sees in this state is nothing less than the Real whose numinous presence is felt disturbingly bright and obscure at the same time. The poet's awareness is one of presence, not of possession, of the Real.

The parallel with mystical experience in a religious context is close. The mystic, too, passes from his animus to his anima, and has a vision of the literally
tremendous and numinous with an immediacy of awareness that surpasses every other experience, but even here the obscurity is not wanting.

Poetic inspiration, again, has a good parallel in religious Inspiration. The divine power which, according to the religious belief, takes possession of the scriptural writer in the performance of his duty as a living and rational instrument, is paralleled by the extraordinary power and exaltation that a poet feels in conceiving and composing a poem - a condition that cannot, in spite of modern advancement in psychological studies, be reduced to a satisfactory rational explanation. This was already recognised by Plato, who maintained that poetic inspiration was a 'divine frenzy', ϑείος άρρητος, which could not be mastered by the force of reason, ὀφθαλμός, and should therefore, be banished along with the poet from his ideal Republic.

Revelation and Inspiration, in both the religious and the poetic context, are mainly concerned with those elements that, originating from the objective world, impinge on the subject's consciousness. A spiritual revolution comes over the soul responding suitably to this impact. The parallel once again is striking.

Just as religious progress results in a spiritual rebirth, poetic experience too, on its own level, results in a rebirth of sensibility. Corresponding to the purgative, illuminative and unitive ways in the religious life, in the
poetic life there are the Catharsis, the poetic illumination, and the serene possession of a mellow view of life. The broad outline of this psychic evolution may be traced in the life of Shakespeare as the plays of the various periods bear witness - as also in that of almost every other great poet.

It is clear that there is a perceptible parallel between the psychological patterns of the poetic and religious experiences. From the parallelism, that we admit, to the identity - even a partial one - that Brémond postulates is a far cry.

Both T.S.Eliot and Middleton Murry reject Brémond's theory, but one feels they have not met and answered his arguments sufficiently. Eliot grants that there may be some similarity between poetry and mysticism at certain levels of experience, but considers that Brémond is concerned with something that will not explain poetry, namely communication.(16)

Murry gives too little credit to Brémond's insight, though, for reasons of his own, he holds that poetry very nearly touches religion. His quarrel with Brémond is specially regarding poetic communication, which he feels could be explained without recourse to mystical experience.(17)

The weak point in Brémond's theory, however, is his unwarranted leap from seeing the similarity to asserting the identity of two essentially diverse experiences. Where we see two parallel lines moving in the same direction, he sees
just one line which is presumed to be the poetic experience until it reaches a point beyond which it could no longer be poetic but is either transformed into a mystic experience or remains a broken-down \(\text{manqué}\) mystical experience. The conclusion that a poet is a stunted mystic is, to say the least, strange, but the direct consequence of his premises.

As a matter of fact, the religious experience has an identity of its own, different from that of the poetic experience. Religious experience is consciously and explicitly aimed at God. Poetic experience clearly aims only at aesthetic appreciation which may have transcendental resonances but has no explicit connection with the idea of a religious goal. Hence also may one take either of these paths and be perfect in it with no direct reference to the other. If this distinction is not clearly kept in mind, one might arrive at the absurd conclusion that Chancer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, Eliot and others are all stunted mystics! We can as well say that the brute beast is a stunted man or that man is a stunted angel.

Now we can suggest one reason which, if it does not excuse, at least explains why Bremond landed into such a mix-up.

Bremond is the victim of a tendency to confuse theological thinking with philosophical (here in the form of aesthetics) preoccupations. The tendency has deep roots in the neo-Platonic basis of Scholasticism.
According to this tradition, what is good is also beautiful. What satisfies the out-going impulse of desire is its good. But the same good is considered beautiful when it is recognised with a pleasant shock how perfectly it satisfies the need.

This concept can be extended to include the Absolute. Then God becomes both the Absolute Good and the Absolute Beauty.

Beauty in the object refers to its form - which in the Scholastic terminology does not mean merely the accidental shape but the essential specifying constituent -; in the subject it points to the faculty of cognition. But the form of the object is also what constitutes its perfection and its good.

So when, in the order of cognition, the beauty of the form crosses over to the cognitive faculty, the latter reacts by reaching out towards the form and being assimilated to it in an embrace of knowledge.

The form thus embraced is also the good of the object. So, in the order of conative impulse, desire goes out to possess this good.

Thus, the cognition of the beautiful is completed by the possession of the good.

So, beauty is the light through which the good is recognised as the object to be possessed.
When beauty is of the highest order, as it might be presumed to be in the best form of art or poetry, it should lead to the possession of the highest good, God. If the highest good is not possessed by the will, the vital movement of the spirit has been cut short unnaturally - that is what happens in the poetic experience. The highest good is possessed only in the movement of the religious experience.

This is really Bremond's argument though it is nowhere expressed in these terms. His premises are presumed by him, hence his conclusion seems strange though attractive. Given his premises, his argument seems faultless.

But we have already pointed out earlier, the fallacy in the argument. Coventry Patmore, whom Bremond quotes, is more cautious in his statement from which Bremond's conclusion hardly follows.

'The poet occupies a singular position in the hierarchy of beings. Half way between a saint and Balaam's ass.' The point to note is that the poet does have a place, singular may be but secure nonetheless, between the saint and the ass. He will not kick up a row if he is not considered a saint, but he can be easily pardoned if he kicks viciously when called a stunted saint! He does not particularly like being called an ass, even Balaam's ass. He is just what he is, dwelling in moments of inspiration in regions beyond the bounds of normal human experience. But where this region is, no one can tell. T.S. Eliot could only say that he had been there but could not tell where. It may be near the border of Heaven as in the case of
Hopkins and Patmore. It may be nearer the Pit as mostly is the case with Baudelaire and frequently with Dowson. It may be midway between the extremes, as is the case with Lionel Johnson. The only certain fact in this matter is that the poet goes deep beyond the surface of things and gives the finest form of expression to what is of deep human concern.

One item of indubitable human concern is religion, dealing as it purports to do with the unique destiny of man in the universe. It certainly calls for no mean talent to appreciate it adequately and give apt expression to it. And in this respect religious poetry has the highest value. But all poetry has not necessarily a religious orientation, except in the very general sense that anything noble can serve as a stepping-stone to Heaven's gate. All true poetry, however, has the ennobling ecstasy that a genuine aesthetic experience can always give.

2. Poetic Communication

Some hold, as we have noted earlier, that communication will not explain poetry. Yet it is communication that brings home to us what the existential reality of poetry is. It is in the poem's construction in the poet's soul, and its reconstruction - communication - in the reader's, that its nature appears in all its immediacy. Such a construction cannot be conceived of without words. Words, of their nature, demand utterance, at least inwardly to oneself. This implies a duality, which is resolved into identity in the perfection of communication with one's self or with others.
An aesthetic experience is transformed into poetic inner expression when inspiration incarnates it into words. The process by which what was at first germinal in the mind develops into its full form, is itself the construction and inner utterance of the poem. On completion of this inner process there is an urgent call for external utterance.

A poem is made to be spoken. A poem is born in rhythmic sound. According to Robert Frost, in the context of poetic experience, without sound, imagination would become mere reason. (18) This question of sound arises already at the level of mental composition.

While matter in poetry has mostly to do with the theme conditioned by the poet's attitude, form is mostly concerned with the question of sound. For 'The living part of a poem is the intonation entangled somehow in the syntax, idiom and meaning of a sentence. It is the most volatile and at the same time important part of poetry'. (19)

The question of sound implies more than the mere utterance of words to secure the plain meaning of the poem. It would seem that the words, when uttered rightly, apart from conveying the plain meaning, do something unusual. Their very sounds in their rhythmic movement set going a dance that induces a mood akin to religious ecstasy.

'The dance of rhythmical speech, like the dance of the ancient chorus, excites the Dionysian ecstasy wherein arises, serene and clear, the Apollonian vision of the imaged meanings the dancing words convey'. (20)
Dylan Thomas thinks that it is a mystery that we could be so moved by the words of a poet. Even more intriguing is the fact that the conscious omission of certain words could cause something not in the poem to come slowly or thundering in. (21)

If, then, a poet can reduce any authentic aesthetic vision to a rhythmic dance of words that will induce a sort of religious ecstasy, it should be natural for him to reduce an aesthetic experience based on the religious theme to such a dance with even better results.

Hopkins provides with an illustration of this in his poetic practice. In his composition of The Wreck of the Deutschland it is intriguing to note that it was a rhythm that was conceived first, and the drawing of the nuns, with the religious associations connected with it, was only an opportunity to utilise this haunting rhythm. "I had long haunting my ear the echo of a new rhythm," he tells Canon Dixon simply, in connection with the composition of this poem, "which now I realised on paper".

If the rhythm of the dancing words could induce a quasi-religious ecstasy, it is pertinent to inquire if the converse of this may not be equally possible. It is conceivable that the poet's past ecstatic religious experience it was that suggested, all unbeknown to him, the haunting rhythm. The very word 'haunting' would seem to suggest he was not aware of its source. It also suggests that there was in him a disembodied feeling and movement that sought to incarnate itself in a concrete situation, which was, in
the event, provided by the death of the nuns in the shipwreck.

Does a religious experience suggest a rhythm different from other experiences? Possibly it does, but there is no sure method of specifying its characteristic. From the end-product, the poem, of course, we may deduce that it has a serious rhythmic movement, sometimes tender, sometimes emphatic, but always oriented to a solemnity associated with the supernatual. Yet this may not be specific enough to distinguish it from similar rhythms that may not be directly religious.

Nevertheless, it is certain that rhythm has such power to suggest an intended mood, that a religious poet cannot afford to minimise its importance. Hopkins was emphatic in his insistence on this aspect of his poems: "...remember what applies to all my verse, that it is, as a living art should be, made for performance and that its performance is not reading with the eye but loud, leisurely, poetical (not rhetorical) recitation, with long rests, long dwells on the rhyme and other marked syllables, and so on."(22)

Some would go to the extent of saying that a poem, like a piece of music, essentially consists of sound, the words being accidental. Hopkins almost said it - but not quite - when he defined verse as "figure of spoken sound,"(23) or as spoken sound having a repeated figure. He arrived at a neat distinction between prose and verse by saying that in ordinary prose there are sense-words, sense-clauses and sense-sentences, whereas in verse there are sound-words, sound-clauses and sound-sentences.
Hopkins was not an extremist regarding this aspect of the question. He wanted sense and sound nicely balanced in every poem. But he insisted on sound rather than sense, because he took for granted that every one would obviously expect the presence of good sense, but few would pay critical attention to the sound. He perfected the sprung Rhythm, which is more than a mere counting a fixed number stressed syllables a line, with a limitless number of unstressed syllables clustering around them. Every little syllable is contrived with care to produce a sound-effect. The whole poem in sprung Rhythm is like a musical score which, when performed with competence, will bring out every ebb and flow of feelings with their innumerable shades of refinement. If 'out of three sounds' Browning's Abe-Vogler framed a star, of the same Hopkins made a living brick to construct a temple, sound in more than one sense. Robert Bridges said of The Wreck of the Deutschland that it was 'like a great dragon, folded in the gate to forbid all entrance'. But the gate is of a temple, and true devotees of religious poetry will not be hurt by the dragon if the necessary preparatory sacrifices are made. The dragon is there merely to keep away idle's who seek ruly amusement in the poetic art. Hopkins himself grants that this poem 'needs study and is obscure, for indeed I was not over-desirous that the meaning of all should be quite clear'.

Hopkins's enthusiastic praise of Wordsworth's Intimations of Immortality shows where his own interest lay. In a letter to Canon Dixon (25) he points out that in this poem the theme is of the highest kind, the insight deepest and the execution superb. The rhymes are musical, the
rhythmes magical, and the diction throughout 'charged and steeped in beauty and yearning.'

He points out the particular merit of this poem in connection with a theory about poetic communication according to which, when a poet once in a while manages to write a poem combining the best in theme, insight and execution, through him — that is, through his portion of human nature, as it were, — the whole of human nature gets a poetically electric shock. The tremble from this shock goes in ripples all around on the field of human nature as more and more people come into contact with the poem. Hopkins asserts that he himself is one in such a tremble ever since he read this Ode of Wordsworth's.

What, then, a poem of this kind communicates is a shock — the shock of recognition, the recognition of one's vital link with human nature. By the same token, I think, we might assert, what a truly great religious poem, like Hopkins's own The Wreck of the Deutschland, communicates is a shock — a shock of recognition, the recognition of our transcendental relationship with God in the widest sense of the word 'relationship', whatever might be the religious denomination to which our personal loyalties are committed, and to push the point to its ultimate implication, whatever might be our overt belief or want of belief as religious men, agnostics or atheists.

It is relevant here to inquire briefly how poetry manages to touch so deeply the human and religious constituent imbedded deep down in every individual. Poetry does it by suggestion rather than open statement. Poetry, like all
genuine art, touches us deeply because it manages to bring us, though indirectly, into contact with truth itself, unlike philosophy that feeds the mind with all possible theories about truth and starves the soul that longs for the bread of reality.

A philosopher might retort that the assurance of reaching reality through art is as sorry an illusion as any other. But a man cannot spend all his life dabbling in possibilities that he considers might equally well be impossibilities. There is a limit to the unsettled hovering of his winged soul. It wants a perch. Art provides it. Even the confirmed agnostic and sceptic is sure at least that nothing is sure, and thus is hoist with his own petard. By admitting this one truth he admits the existence of truth. All philosophies are ultimately built on this modicum of truth. It is also enough for art to make a beginning.

Based on the assurance of this fundamental intuition into the existence of truth, art presents the many-splendoured mystery draped in beauty and grace without any tedious argument.

What confers this grace is the style. Style in pure art, no less than in the practical art of living, is based on premises, just as rational philosophy, no less than geometry, is based on them. The presumption in every system of thought is that its premises are valid.

Now, if one questions the validity of the premises on which artistic style is based, the artist is not bothered.
He knows that his premises are forged on the anvil of life beside the fire of an intensive experience of reality. That is why there are strictly as many artistic styles as there are artists. That is why, more relevantly, a particular artistic style comes with a shock, for such a style is but a live wire in contact with and conveying the current of reality. That, again, - now coming down to our case of poetry, - is the reason why a particular poetic style - and the style is the man! - embodied in a memorable utterance, is an event in human history that keeps human nature at tremble ever after.

The contact with Reality takes on a distinctly religious tone when the encounter emerges as an I – Thou interpersonal relationship between the psyche and the Supreme Spirit whether the union in question is a pantheistic merging of identities or only the Semitic and Christian idea of intimate union of co-presence in knowledge and love.

If in the practical world of experience such a union with Reality actually takes place, it will simply become a religious experience. It is only when such a religious experience is viewed from a distance and objectified that it becomes matter for religious poetry.

This basic vision may also be the result of pondering over and experiencing the dogmas of a particular religion. The poetry elaborated on the basis of such experience will be of another variety. But religious poetry becomes comprehensively when basic intuition is simply concerned with a religious view of life. Since the religious insight based on the
dogmas of a particular religion necessarily presupposes what of general religions concern for all men, even those who would not accept the dogmas could yet accept the religious poetry based on them to the extent that such poetry touches the deeper roots of religious tendency immanent in human nature. It is when this tap-root is touched in poetry that it sets human nature atremble.

One reason why the whole of human nature seems to vibrate when but a single great poet’s nature is touched in a poetic experience is the fact of the solidarity of mankind.

In a well-thought-out and interesting book, The Human Caravan, Comte du Plessis (27) asserts that human history has both direction and meaning if mankind is grasped in a panoramic vision and not at the level of individual persons and incidents. This unity of the panorama, he maintains, is not a subjective idea but a concrete objective fact. Among others, he cites the example of religious bodies that consider themselves literally mystical bodies, each organic and one, of which the individuals members are but the living cells.

Now, whatever might be the validity of the author's reasoning, one can hardly quarrel with his conclusion where the solidarity of mankind is concerned. All intelligent people feel that mankind as such is more than a mere notion in the head. It forms an entity independent of the individuals that constitute it. Not that mankind could exist if no man existed, but it is not the same as being physically present
as a group or even being spiritually bound by cultural bonds.

In a pantheistic view of life, the solidarity of mankind will be easily admitted. But even in the moderately dualistic Christian view of it, there seems to be a need to postulate a certain 'stasis' over and above a mere putative juridical personality to which fundamental human rights are granted. "As the various members of the body are parts of one human person, so all men are parts and in a way members of human nature. Wherefore Porphyrius says that, by sharing in the species, many men are one man."(28).

At any rate, if mankind is looked upon, as if it were, as one man, it is sure to throw a new light of understanding on the cultural, social, religious and political history of mankind.

One persuasive reason, springing from an experimental fact, for postulating a substantial existence of mankind as such would seem to be the reality of racial memory.

Racial memory transcends the individual memory of experiences. Imbedded as it is deep down each one, mere cultural tradition cannot explain it fully. Certain traits appear to be inherited biologically, and this not only in the nerves and instincts but even at the level of psychic and rational tendencies. The religious tendency finds a place at this depth of racial memory.
Since this tendency is mostly hidden at the subconscious level, a poet who works at that level secures a ready response to his religious poetry. He touches a deep chord in all men who are not altogether blunted in their sensibility owing to unusual circumstances.

In the racial memory, then, we may find a clue to poetic communication. When Hopkins, in his letter to Dixon, speaks of the growing mind of the English-speaking world and of all mankind, or when T.S. Eliot dwells on the traditional mind of Europe and of the world, they possibly have in mind the image of a quasi-autonomous common mind with mental activities and memory of its own. The current of activities and memories may be supposed to flow through every individual though it would become conscious in him only when a suitable occasion offers. An encounter with a work of art such as a great poem is one such occasion.

C.G. Jung offers a valuable suggestion in his theory of archetypes through which he explains why certain poems set up a tremor in the readers' mind even before the meaning of the poem is understood. According to him, archetypes are 'psychic residua of numberless experiences' which a race undergoes. The physical basis to carry the residua is the modification in the brain structure induced by the repeated experiences. The brain modification predisposes a man to respond to certain primordial images.

Maud Bodkin, proceeding along lines suggested by Jung, studied several representative poems of the ages to conclude to the existence of archetypal patterns which result from
the organising of basic emotional tendencies. This organising is effected in the case of a people with a particular pattern of life, as well as of all mankind with a universal pattern of thought. Since the cultural pattern of a people depends on its peculiar history, only that people can respond to the pertinent images. Nevertheless, at a deeper level, where all humanity meets, these images of a particular people, may elicit due responses on a universal scale.

Now, poetry in making use of these archetypes, shocks the reader into a thrill of recognition, because to him they appear to awaken and fulfil a hidden expectation within. In this respect, poetic experience has a special relationship with religion. In the religious experience, certain themes such as God-Man, Divine Mother, Heaven-Hall, Rebirth from death to life are recurrent. These themes assume clarity when viewed through the archetypal images in a poetic experience.

Earlier, we spoke of a common mind of mankind informing all the culturally attuned minds of a time. Even if an autonomous existence is denied to such a common mind, the fact of cultural tradition, whose custodian it seems to be, cannot be denied. An item of the greatest importance in that tradition is undoubtedly language, whose fundamental unit is the word. Now, for literary artists, words are living and emotion - charged. They have what Hopkins called a prepossession of feelings, which they acquire in their passage through various cultural stages of a people down the years.
In this awareness of the nature of words Hopkins has anticipated Bodkin by half a century. Moreover, those inclined to take exception to talk of archetypal patterns in poetry, may find it less objectionable to admit the more comprehensive and reasonable explanation that Hopkins gives as to why certain words excite such exceptional feelings. However, for our part we still hold that Maude Bodkin's insight is valuable for our purpose.

Words with prepossessions can evoke certain feelings and raise in the mind several associated ideas. These ideas go back to bygone days in the history of a country. In the English language, there is bound to be associations in the line of religious faith connected with Christianity in general and Catholicism in particular. There was a time when, for hundreds of years, England was Catholic. This cannot but have created prepossessions of feeling in the words of the language. Going a step further, it may be said that such a situation in the past could not but have impressed corresponding cultural patterns on the English consciousness, however, long buried they might remain. By the same token, there could emerge archetypal images associated with the Catholic Religion.

At this point, we are in a position to state that the Catholic poets we have chosen to study have made a contribution to English Literature. They have gone back to the taproots of the language, revitalised it, rekindled the slumbering embers and satisfied the nostalgia for the golden days of faith. As we know, the Pre-Raphaelites had been hankering
after the religious grandeur of the Middle Ages, but they restricted themselves to the cultural aspects of the bygone age apart from its dogmas and moral code. They sought the shadow without the substance, the shell without the meat inside, a beauteous city built in wax. The Catholic poets, on the other hand, have gone to the substance.

No language can survive if it neglects the genuine nerve—centres that reach back to the ages of total commitment to a faith. A failure to realise this may lead to neuratic manifestations of nostalgia, as probably is the case with the Pre-Raphaelites and the Decadents. The Catholic poets, then, have brought to the surface at least one strand in the English literary tradition which had been silently seeking expression. For, their verbal and auditory images trigger visual images which, being associated with archetypes, revive ancestral rhythms of perception.

The rhythms excited by archetypal patterns of poetry, being of a higher order than the one that pertains to an individual, elevate. As Nikos Kazantzaki, the modern Greek poet says, it is only when a man obeys a rhythm superior to his own that he is free. 'The cry is not yours,' he says. 'It is not you talking but innumerable ancestors talking with your mouth....It is not you who desire, but innumerable generations, of descendants longing with your heart' (3C).

Kazantzaki's opinion has been anticipated by Alice Meynell in her poems A Song of Derivations and Singers to come. But of this we will treat in greater detail when we take up the six poets for individual study.
As for Hopkins, we have noted earlier that his talk about *prepossession of words* is suggestive of the later idea of *archetypal images*. It is worthwhile probing a little deeper into this matter.

It would seem that it is more than a coincidence that Hopkins entertained such ideas. Even while at Oxford, Hopkins had formulated a consistent theory of knowledge for his own use. This took a more philosophical shape when he came into contact with the doctrine of Duns Scotus during his philosophical studies in the Society of Jesus. Thus was born Hopkins's own equivalent of a theory that strongly resembles the one about archetypal images.

Reduced to the simplest terms and modern terminology, the genesis of knowledge in man, according to Scotus, demands four levels of emergent awareness of the objective world—

i. the unconscious but potential level of remote capacity to know; ii. the subconscious and proximate level of memory, where all our objects of memory lie buried but ready to be evoked; iii. the semi-conscious, or preconscious, dream-like awareness that is bright but confused, iv. the fully distinct awareness.

The first two levels represent the capacity to know; the last two stand for the actual act of knowing. The third level of confused knowledge, strange as it might seem, is the more real because it is an intensive visionary knowledge that directly touches the Reality outside the knowing subject. No doubt, the fourth level of distinct knowledge is clearer and
explicit and defines the essence of the object known, but is only an abstraction and notional knowledge that does not have its grip as it were, on the object.

Parallel to these two levels of confused and distinct knowledge, at the intellectual level are two ways of knowing things at the level of the senses. There is, for instance, a direct sensation of seeing the object. This is the vision of sight. Then there is a way of looking at things in the imagination, either of things seen directly previously, or of things entirely shaped by the imagination from fragments of past experience. The vision seen in imagination is likely to be clear, since it already presupposes a selection of only a few elements that are distinctly perceived and set up for contemplation but will be like the notional and abstract knowledge at the intellectual level. (31) The direct vision of the eyes, on the other hand, will touch reality immediately and there will be a bright awareness of this, but it is also likely not to be very precise, just because there are too many factors to be absorbed by the vision. (32)

Now, the visionary experience of Scotus, whether at the level of the senses or the mind - in fact, for him they work together - is akin to Hopkins's Inscapte. Scotus, it should be remembered, attempts a reconciliation between the theory of knowledge according to Aristotle and Aquinas, who were Realists, and that according to Plato and St. Augustine who were subjectivists. In the Aristotelian tradition,
knowledge crimes from the outside, but it is the mind that constructs the universal ideas by a process of abstraction which leaves outside all the individual details. In the Platonic tradition, knowledge comes about by a process of immanent unfolding of memory that has stored up within it, at the unconscious level, archetypal images or, more generally universal ideas in germ, that awaken to life on the occasion of any encounter with the exterior shadowy world. In fact, knowledge becomes possible precisely because, on the occasion of meeting a sensible object, the mind passes through it to ascend towards the archetypal ideas in the Absolute.

The merit of the Scotus synthesis, which Hopkins keenly felt, as confirming his own personal experience, is this: For Aristotle the nature of a thing of which a universal idea is formed - for instance that of 'man' - does not exist formally but only fundamentally outside the mind, that is, the idea containing the nature of a thing is only in one's mind though the basis for the idea is in the outer world. For Plato, again, the nature of a thing which the universal idea enfolds is not in the thing which we consider to exist outside us. The reality of such individualised natures are actually only in the Absolute and not in the things we see immediately before us.

In either theory the reality of the individual nature outside the mind of the seer seems to be not
altogether as the mind sense complex sees it in its direct vision.

Displeased with these views, Scotus comes out with a compromise formula; that the individual nature in the object exists outside the mind just as it is seen. He admits, though, that the individuality of the thing itself cannot be seen by others, as it is closed to all except to its own self. But the nature that it shares with other individuals can be seen. The observer can see such a nature, not in abstract ideas—Aristotle—or in transcendent ideas—Plato—but in direct vision.

This nature is constituted by the same principles in all individuals of the same species. But what creates the difference between individual and individua is the manner in which the individual possesses the basically identical specific nature. This is the point of Hopkins's introductory note to his unusual poem *Henry Purcell*, in which he says Purcell, the musician, has expressed in his compositions not only his own moods but 'the very make and species of man as created in him and all men generally'. This vision of 'the species of man as created' is not an unusual achievement: every man sees it implicitly; a philosopher sees it explicitly but with respect to its meaning; an artist sees it in all its beauty; a religious man sees it as the root of the brotherhood of mankind and fatherhood of God.
The special merit of the artist consists in his ability, not only to see, but to recreate this vision for others. The capacity to recreate the vision partly depends on the extent to which an individual is able to possess his nature. For, apart from the basic individuality granted to every one at birth, the process of getting possession of one's nature is something done throughout one's life. In everyone's nature is there a basic innate attraction towards the Absolute, which is felt confusedly though really and intimately. It is the act of the free will that takes possession of this tendency and makes it deliberately and consciously its own. This progressive actuation of the natural impulse towards the Absolute is, in fact, development of personality or self realisation. Where the poet, the philosopher and the priest combine into one as in the case of Hopkins - and every man at his best is, in his degree, all three - the Absolute assumes the aspect of the True, the Beautiful and the Personal End.

Now, the point connecting Scotus with Hopkins is this: It would seem Hopkins's Inscape is no other than the individual created nature which acts as the object of visionary sensation and intuition for Scotus. What contributes to the brilliance of this vision is the archetypal over-image embedded in the concrete nature of the individual. This directly leads the seer to the archives (33) of the archetypes in God. If in this
context the poet pays attention to God explicitly, the religious tone and attitude enter his poetry.

So, there is a link between the archetypes and inscape. The use of a strange word combination in Henry Purcell invites investigation in this connexion. The word 'arch - especial' in the Purcell sonnet is strange, but suggestive. But what precisely does it suggest? In the sonnet, Hopkins speaks of the tremendous impact that the Inscapes in Purcell makes on those who listen to his music, revealing as it does the very core of specific human nature. This seems to indicate nothing but the archetypal in his human nature. This suggestion is made not only because of the similarity of arch in arch-especial and arch in archetype, but because of their intrinsic semantic link, Arch and arche have the same origin - αρχή - denoting both chief and original. In the context of what Hopkins himself says in his introductory note to the sonnet, the reference would seem to be aimed at the archetype as concretised in the individual nature of Purcell. Paradoxically, the more individualised one is, the more powerfully does one express the universal nature.

The sonnet also furnishes a remarkable illustration of the Scotist theory of knowledge as absorbed by Hopkins. As we read it, there is an unmistakable sensation of seeing a vision that fixes our attention.
But the vision does not immediately yield a distinct notion that can be carried away from it. As soon as we have reflected and obtained a clear notion, the vision ceases to be vibrantly bright unless we immediately relax and passively allow the sonnet to work on us.

Then again, as we read the sonnet there is, along with the visionary sensation, the experience of something numinous beyond the immediate picture presented, towards which the mind seems to tense. (34)

Here, then, we see exhibited the manner in which poetic expression blends with the poet's religious experience. From terrestrial inscapes and archetypes he ascends to the transcendental home of all reality. On the inscaped archetypal steps bridging the two poles of the metaphysical ladder - *Voluntas ut Natura* and *Voluntas ut Arbitrium* - that Scotus built for him, Hopkins sees his soul go up higher and higher until it vanishes into a point in eternity where the parallel poles meet.

It is pertinent here to note that the archetypal poetic patterns could be pursued on two planes. They can be the result of a particular cultural group or religious faith accepted by vast multitudes, and then we have the archetypes that will appeal only to those consciously or subconsciously associated with it. This is the case in the English-speaking world.
On the other hand, there can be the greatly generalised archetypes along the line of Platonic ideas. We can conceivably think of an ideal archetypal pattern in every one of us. When that is set in motion by the appropriate presentation of an object, the rhythmic pattern in the individual is aroused. Then one feels the rhythmic dance of the universe and hears the music of the spheres. There is a sense of freedom, and the isolation of the self disappears in the perceived sense of being integrated with the rest of the world. There is a sense of perfect meshing of the mental mechanism with the harmonious reality of the outer world. One feels that somehow the ideal has become actualised before one's eyes.

The broader type of archetypal patterns mentioned earlier, having a base of more universal validity, will have the advantage of appealing to those who do not share the poet's faith. This also answers the question raised by Mr. Rajan apropos of T. S. Eliot's statement that the difference between believers and rejecters of Christian Revelation is the most profound of differences between man and man. This, Rajan thinks, is a forbidding conclusion. Non-Christian readers of Eliot's poetry would have to think, he says, that Eliot's conclusion is untrue. (35) The question of truth or want of it, in Eliot's opinion, arises only if Eliot maintains that non-christians cannot understand Christian poetry. For, in itself, Eliot's opinion about the effect of belief on
a man's nature is more a theological conclusion than a critical canon of literary assessment. A non-Christian, therefore, may ignore Eliot's opinion here so far as its critical aspect is concerned.

Yet, it would seem that Eliot maintains that even the critical assessment of Christian poetry will depend on the critic's faith. To this it may be answered that, even according to an ancient and respected opinion, it could be said that a non-Christian is naturally capable of understanding the Christian faith when he pays attention to it. (36)

Further, Christian poetry can be appreciated under its artistic aspect apart from its Christian affirmation. This is possible, not only through the voluntary suspension of disbelief when reading the poems, but also by the more positive process of appreciating the broad religious archetypal images that transcend particular creeds. For, even where a poem is overtly tuned to a particular creed, if it is a genuine religious poem, it will, at its deeper level, be rooted on the larger archetypal religious images.

It is also worth noting that the use of religious imagery does not necessarily make a poem religious. On the other hand, it is quite possible that a poem with no overt religious imagery may yet be religious. What makes a poem religious is its concern with the ultimate realities and with man's struggle to trail a path of sanity and
dignity in a world that appears mysterious if not unintelligible and absurd. (37) A poet, as a poet, is not concerned with persuading anyone to believe in a particular creed or truth. Even in a religious poem, he only gives expression to his artistic reaction to something he has experienced in a religious context. He thus gives the reader a chance to understand what it means to undergo such an experience. (38)

So far we have been exploring, in general, the possibility of poetically expressing a religious experience. We must now focus our attention on the Victorian literary scene where the question of such poetic expression assumes an all pervasive role:

The Victorian Era was a period of crisis - moral, intellectual, social, economical - comparable only, with the upheaval at the time of the Renaissance that broke up the Feudal structure of the Middle Ages. Since the Renaissance opened the way for the modern ism - Humanism, Liberalism, Individualism, Capitalism - the era it ushered in is still referred to as modern. However, the modern world, as we know it to-day, is the direct product of the Victorian Crisis.

Our attitude towards the Victorian Era is no longer condenscending as it was the fashion a few decades ago. We no longer think of it as a smug era offering a fine target for bear-baiting to minds of Bernard Shaw's calibre. We rather imagine it as a brooding volcano, the delayed
report of whose cataclysmic outbusts we have heard in the two World Wars of the twentieth century.

Various factors contributed to the crisis. The Industrial Revolution obliterated the traditional tripartite division of society into the aristocracy, the gentry and the peasants. In its place arose the few uncultured nouveaux riches, the many cultured men of the disgruntled middle class, and the vast force of downtrodden labourers.

Advancement in various sciences, as well as scientific theories popularized by writers like Sir Charles Lyell, created a mood of questioning in fields that were earlier held sacrosanct. Agnosticism, if not atheism, became fashionable among the intellectuals.

Obviously, not all men of brains, much less the majority of the people, lost their faith in a revealed religion or ultimately in God. Yet, there can be no doubt that the situation resulting from a combination of forces precipitated a spiritual crisis which has been called, quite aptly, the schism of the soul.

Though the crisis manifested itself at various levels, fundamentally it was religious in character. I.A. Richards has quite a point when he asserts that religion was the chief problem of the nineteenth century. (39) The life of Annie Besant, who was a believing Christian in her early days and remained married to an Anglican Clergyman for six years, then lost her faith and wrote
the Gospel of Atheism and finally staged a sort of comeback in embracing Theosophism, presents in a nutshell the pressures to which the Victorian soul was subjected. This may be an extreme case, but surely the struggle that Arthur Hugh Clough went through, striving to believe and yet unable to do so, is typical of the tension of the age.

A single word can condense the characteristic feature of the age - ugly. Both the outer landscape of Nature and the inner one of the soul were ugly. The face of Nature was made ugly by greedy capitalists who erected their smoky factories everywhere. The dreary life of the toiling masses who worked for a pittance was ugly. The soul that lost its traditional faith which had draped it in grace, was ugly. The institutional Church that lost its vitality and became a tool of Parliament, was ugly.

It is necessary to insist on this aspect of the era, because it immediately explains not only its pessimism and melancholy but also its unnatural pursuit of beauty for beauty's sake - or Art for Art's sake - that so many of its artists indulged in. Beauty is the result of harmony, just as pleasure is the result of healthy living. Neither the one nor the other can be attained by direct pursuit. The pursuit only indicates the lack. The Victorian era lacked beauty primarily the beauty of the soul.
The process through which the soul of England became ugly can be identified with her progressive apostasy from the traditional Roman Catholic faith. It is not by chance that most of the Romantic and Victorian poets cast nostalgic glances at the beauty of the medieval world. But most of them were under the impression that the beauty of the medieval world consisted in its external grandeur, the central religious symbol of it being the liturgical ceremonies of the Catholic Church. Some were convinced that the Church of England continued to be the Catholic Church even after its severance from Rome and in it, therefore, was perpetuated the beauty of the medieval Church. That this opinion was entertained as late as the last quarter of the nineteenth century is clear from what Mathew Arnold wrote in his Mixed Essays in 1874.

"Its real superiority is in its charm for the imagination - its poetry. I persist in thinking that Catholicism has, from this superiority, a great future before it; that it will endure while all the Protestant sects (in which I do not include the Church of England) dissolve and perish. I persist in thinking that the prevailing form for the Christianity of the future will be the form of Catholicism; but a Catholicism penitent, opening itself to light and air, having the consciousness of its own poetry,...".
But the point that Arnold was not fully aware of was that the Church of England — apart from the fact that the Roman Catholic Church considered it Protestant from its inception — was in fact progressively becoming Protestant. Of this Keble was better aware when he preached his famous *Sermon on National Apostasy* in 1833. The division of the English Church, again, into Low, Broad and High Church was but a symptom that the religion of the Protestant middle class people was making inroads into the Anglican Church that had begun as the stronghold of the aristocracy and the gentry.

Apparently, Arnold was satisfied with the seeming beauty of what appeared to him as the Catholic Church. In his way, he was pursuing beauty for beauty's sake in the modified form: the Catholic Church for beauty's sake. The fact is, that he lost his religious faith.

'The Sea-of Faith

Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd!  
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar....  

(Dover Beach).

Nevertheless Arnold chose to hug the beauteous husk while he lost the kernel, and hence his glorification of the poetry of the Catholic Church.

There were, however, others more seriously concerned with the fate of the Church of England, who attempted to
establish that it was not Catholic merely because it was beautiful like the ancient Catholic Church, but that it was truly Catholic in its doctrine, which was embodied in its beautiful liturgical practices. The Oxford Movement, as well as the Tractarian Movement, were efforts made in this direction.

The efforts were not entirely successful. John Henry Newman, one of the foremost participants in the attempt, came out disillusioned. The beauty of the Church of England, he felt, was largely the result of a carefully cultivated prejudice.

"Thus it is that students of the fathers, antiquarians, and poets, begin by assuming that the body to which they belong is that of which they read in times past, and then proceed to decorate it with that majesty and beauty of which history tells, or which their genius creates. For is it by an easy process or a light effort that their minds are disabused of this error. It is an error for many reasons too dear to them to be readily relinquished. But at length, either the force of circumstances or some unexpected accident dissipates it; and, as in fairy tales, the magic castle vanishes when the spell is broken, and nothing is seen but the wild heath, the barren rock, and the forelorn sheep-walk, so it is with us as regards the Church of England, when we look in a sense on that we thought so unearthly, and find so common place or worthless."
Subsequently, in conformity with his conviction, Newman solved his personal religious crisis by embracing the ancient faith, thus showing the path to many. This is an interesting fact to remember, because the religious experience of a convert, when the conversion is the result of hard-won conviction, manifests an intensity and freshness of awareness rarely seen in those whose religion is solely conditioned by the accident of their birth. When such converts are capable of composing religious verse, their message comes across with a characteristic note of luminous conviction. As it happens, of the six poets under study, five are such converts. And even the sixth - Francis Thompson - a cradle Catholic, was the son of parents that were both converts.

Admittedly, the trend that met the religious crisis by reverting to the ancient faith is only one of the many forms that the religious unrest took in the last century. Yet it had the merit of touching the deep roots of the English religious tradition, and the Catholic literature that blossomed as a consequence has the beauty, freshness and vitality of the ancient culture recaptured afresh.

There is a striking contrast between the attitude of this group of Catholic poets who found the peace of their soul in the ancient faith, and that of the others who sought it elsewhere. These others were on the whole unhappy in losing the absolute values of the past and agonised over finding a substitute. George Eliot gave up
her faith in God and Immortality but insisted on the imperious claim of Duty. Mathew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, Conrad, Henley, A.E. Housman, Hardy— all stand for various shades of thought broadly along the same lines, agnostically inclined towards the absolute values of religion but advocating the gospel of work and stoic perfectionism. James Thomson is among the rare few who openly professed atheism. He pretends to be happy in this profession, but the gloomy atmosphere of his poems in general and The City of Dreadful Night in particular betrays his basic unhappiness. Tennyson, who struggled hard to regain his lost faith and felt bewildered in his unsure position between the Old and the New, better represents the Victorian predivament. In contrast to all these the catholic poets manifest a reasoning praise.

This, however, must not lead us to conclude that these Catholic poets entertained the facile optimism of a Robert Browning. They were realists, and keenly felt the common burden of mortality. The cold winds of unprecedented change, that affected the artists and thinkers of the last century, shook them no less. There is much gloom and pessimism in Francis Thompson and Ernest Dowson. Lionel Johnson does not impress us as being happy about the world around him. Patmore's deep sorrow and Alice Meynell's gentle melancholy make them appear touchingly human. The terrible moral tension in Hopkins seems only to bring to a sharp focus the earnest endeavour of many an eminent Victorian to possess his soul with integrity. Nevertheless,
behind all the gloom and struggle there emerges, in these Catholic poets, a note of secure hope and firm conviction that all things have their meaning in God, to whom they have committed themselves.

As the concluding point of this general introduction, we may ask where the Catholic poets under study are to be placed in the literary map of the last century. To answer this briefly, it should be noted that towards the close of the last century the reaction of the poets towards the spiritual crisis of the age took shape in two distinct but not mutually exclusive trends - a moody passivity and a stoic activism. The aesthetes, by and large, belong to the first group, and poets like Henley, Kipling and Hardy belong to the second. Now, if a choice could be made between these, the Catholic poets would fit better with the first. For it may be said that these Catholic poets sought beauty for beauty's sake in a manner similar to that of the aesthetes, but with this important difference, that they identified beauty with Absolute beauty, which, moreover, they invested with the qualities of the Catholic concept of God as one in Essence and three in Persons - the Ground of Being, the Word that is Truth, and the Spirit that is Love.

The pursuit of beauty for beauty's sake under this aspect of religious association furnished their aestheticism with a firm spiritual basis which the others lacked. Such a pursuit has its analogy with the service of God for God's sake - not for reward primarily - which is the highest
form of religious worship. Hence, the poetry that expresses such an attitude has its characteristic aura of religious beauty.

The aesthetic appreciation of a Catholic religious experience expressed in apt poetic form is, on the whole, the characteristic feature of all the six poets. Yet not all of them express this appreciation with equal power and beauty, nor do they express it in all their poems. Nevertheless, in general, their poems tend to express such an attitude.

The order in which the six poets - Gerard Manley Hopkins, Coventry Patmore, Francis Thompson, Alice Meynell, Lionel Johnson, Ernest Dowson - will hereafter be studied in detail also indicates their comparative merit as Catholic poets. Though their common faith sets them apart as a group, each of them has a different background, each had a totally different experience of life, each writes poetry of a quality entirely different from that of the others, and yet they are all one in this, that they share a common religious faith which has influenced their poetic expression in different degrees.

Whether explicitly stated or quietly assumed, they have a literary theory that is associated with a Catholic philosophy of life. It implies that they interpret the mystery of life in terms of a vision that is full of optimism despite the prevalence of evil in the world, because the historical fact of Incarnation is, seen as the
ultimate solution whereby God descends to the level of the human that man might ascend to the level of the Divine. The long history of literary debates has all been based on philosophical systems or religious beliefs. Some have based their world-view on Platonic or Gnostic ideals. Some others have turned to the Manichean dualism of eternal conflict of principles. Whether a Catholic view of life helps better to accommodate a more authentic literary theory is a matter of opinion. But that was the opinion of our six poets and, may be, of others too. (40)

To conclude this general introduction, before we enter into the detailed study of each, I might perhaps present a symoptic picture that sums up the personalities of the six poets.

In the last decade of the last century in a pastoral village between Oxford and London a rare Gothic Church rears its graceful spires against a vibrantly blue sky that is speckless but for a few tufts of sailing silken clouds. The white radiance of the morning sun, 'lancing through the stained-glass windows, splits to adorn the altar and the pews in rose and orange tints. Within, at the altar, stands with uplifted hands Gerard Manley Hopkins, priest and poet, offering the eternal sacrifice of the Lamb. On the left, seated at the Organ, is Francis Thompson awakening his multi-chorded magical strains. Near by stands Alice Meynell, her chaste voice trumbling suspended in the air. Down below, among the worshipers kneeling in
the front pew, is Coventry Patmore with head in cupped hands and eyes closed, praying, lost in contemplation. Near the main door of the Church, beside the marble holy-water font, stands, like a chiselled Greek statue, Lionel Johnson, staring earnestly towards the altar. Just outside the door, with one foot on the lowest step leading up to it, stands Ernest Dowson with a bunch of fading yellow roses under one arm and wistfully looking towards the door, hesitant to enter yet reluctant to part.

As they march away after the service we shall meet each of them in their best mood of religious serenity, their faces radiant with the beauty of the vision they had just seen.
Notes


(3) T.S.Eliot, The Use of Poetry and the use of Criticism, (Faber and Faber), London, 1933, p.126.

(4) Ibid. p. 138.


(9) Ibid.


(11) L.I., p. 66.


(14) Henry Brémond, Prière et Poesie of which the English translation by Algar Thorold is entitled as in (13).

(15) Prayer and Poetry, p. 194.


(19) Ibid. p. 5.


(22) L.I., p. 246.


(24) L.I., p. 50.


(27) Cf. Thomas Aquinas' Commentary on 'The Epistle to the Romans', Chapter 5, Lesson 3.

(28) C.G. Jung, On the Relationship of Analytical Psychology to the Poetic Art.


(30) We are here concerned only with persons possessing a good imagination. Artists are such.

Cf. The Webster International Dictionary, II Ed. Quotes: "On words become records in God's Court and one laid up in his archives as witnesses".

What this is will be considered later.

B. Rajan, in his foreword to T. S. Eliot: His Mind and Art by A. G. George (Bombay), 1962, p. XII.

Tertullian, Apologeticum, Ch. 17, P.L.I. 257-536. "O, testimonium animae naturaliter Christianae!"


B. Rajan, Loc. Cit., p. XII.

T. S. Eliot, Loc. Cit., p. 126. Eliot is not quite convincing when he twits Richards for this assertion, declaring that religion was not a problem in the first place and even as a concern it was nothing peculiar to the nineteenth century.