By the rustle of the "tempestuous petticoat" we are left to surmise its silken texture.

"To Meadows" gives a vivid picture of country pleasure :

"Ye have been fresh and green
Ye have been filled with flowers ;
And ye the walks have been
Where maids have spent their hours.

"Ye have beheld how they
With wicker arks did come
To kiss and bear away
The richer cowslips home."

The poem ends with a melancholy note which is consistent with the poet's tendency to take a bounded and external view of nature. For, although Herrick's poetry abounds with exquisitely descriptive touches, as in "Corinna's Going a Maying" and "To Daisies," he is no interpreter of Nature as is Wordsworth. He is too deeply imbued with the spirit of his age, and of his set ; and lapses at times into a vein which is not to be atoned for by his prayer for the Divine forgiveness for his "unbaptized rhymes."

Yet Herrick has given us exquisite songs and poems, and among his religious pieces "The Dirge of Jeptha's Daughter" has very sweet stanzas :

"O thou, the wonder of all days !
O paragon, and pearl of praise !
O virgin martyr, ever blest
Above the rest
Of all the maiden train ! We come
And bring fresh strewings to thy tomb."

The next to the last verse is marvellously sweet and descriptive :

"May no wolf howl or screech-owl stir
A wing about thy sepulchre,
No boisterous winds or storms come hither,
To starve or wither
Thy soft sweet earth, but like a spring
Love keep it ever flourishing."

There are touches in this poem which remind of George Herbert ; for instance :

"And in the purchase of our peace
The cure was worse than the disease."

The Hebrew virgins who are supposed to chant the dirge, dwell with grateful devotion upon the self-sacrifice of the maid whose life is represented as having been paid as the price of their deliverance from the invader. For Herrick accepts the interpretation which represents the Gileadite as having slain his daughter in the fulfilment of his vow ; in some ways this is the more directly effective interpretation of the incident.

In the poem, "To his Saviour, a Child ; a Present by a Child," he bestows a touch of most acceptable and exquisite realism upon a subject concerning which a widely different view has been taken by both poet and painter :

"Go, pretty child, and bear this flower,
Unto thy little Saviour."

That word "little," in such a connection, possesses a force of human feeling and tenderness, which makes us feel that the poet-parson—for Herrick was a country clergyman—must have been popular with the mothers of his rustic flock. He speaks of the other simple gifts to be offered :

"And tell him, for good handsel too,
That thou hast brought a whistle new,
Made of a clean strait oaten reed,
To charm his cries at time of need."

One almost feels, perhaps one quite feels, that these happy verses press nearer to the true spirit of the subject than do the verses by Mrs. Browning on the same theme. And in the silence of the inspired record concerning the infant Christ and his life, one accepts Herrick's picture in preference to that drawn with so much massed shadow, and sorrowful suggestion, by Mrs. Browning. In his "Grace for a Child" :

"Here a little child I stand,
Heaving up my either hand ;
Cold as paddocks though they be,
Here I lift them up to Thee,
For a benison to fall
On our meat, or on us all. Amen."