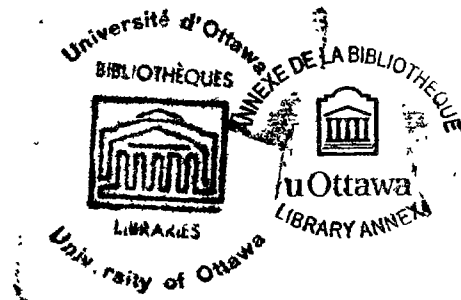


GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS'S CONCEPT OF NATURE  
AS INFERRED FROM A STUDY OF HIS PROSE

by Brother Nicholas F.S.C.

[ie Gerald Stephenson]

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## INTRODUCTION

Much has been written on the different aspects of the life and work of Gerard Manley Hopkins. There are many problems connected with the man and his work. One has to do with the conflict between the Jesuit priest and the poet. Another concerns the explanation of his theories of inscape and instress. All writers agree that he is an excellent nature poet. But no one goes on to explain at length his ideas about nature and his philosophy of nature. Joseph Warren Beach ignores Hopkins's attitude towards nature in his famous book The Concept of Nature in the Nineteenth Century English Poetry. Possibly this is explained by the fact that Mr. Beach's book was published in 1936 and Hopkins's position in literature has been in the process of being established since that time. Certainly Hopkins's concept of nature is at least as significant as that of many of the other poets of the Nineteenth Century.

In order to clarify Hopkins's concept of nature, his prose writings on the subject will be used as much as possible. These are contained in four volumes, his Note-books and Papers published in 1937 and republished in two volumes. Only one of these has appeared as yet, his Journals and Papers which was published in 1959. A revised edition of his Letters to Robert Bridges was

published in 1955 and a revised edition of his Letters to Richard Watson Dixon in the same year. The Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins was revised and enlarged in 1956.

Hopkins's concept of nature was shaped and formed by influences of different kinds and of different origins. Some of these influences are products of his early training and education, some of his life as a Jesuit priest and some from his continuous pursuit of learning.

Since his Jesuit training and the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola did much to shape his concept of nature, Chapter One will suggest the nature of these influences and will show how Hopkins's concept was Christian and spiritual.

Since inscape was Hopkins's particular way of looking at things in the world, Chapter Two will treat of inscape in its various implications. Also, since the theories of Duns Scotus provided Hopkins with a philosophical basis for inscape, these ideas will be explained in this chapter.

Since Hopkins's own writings provide us with examples of his love of nature and his way of looking

at nature, Chapter Three will contain examples of his keen and accurate observations.

Since Hopkins was very much interested in beauty in all its forms and in particular its concrete manifestation in the visible world, Chapter Four will treat of his theories of beauty and these theories will be compared and contrasted with the traditional Thomistic theories of beauty.

After these considerations have been presented, it should be apparent that Hopkins deserves a place among the most noted Nineteenth Century nature poets. Future scholarship will undoubtedly determine just how high that place should be.

## CHAPTER ONE

### SPIRITUAL BACKGROUND OF HOPKINS'S CONCEPT OF NATURE

Gerard Manley Hopkins was interested in nature and the beauties of nature from an early age. A love of music, painting, poetry and out-of-the-way knowledge was engendered in all of their children by his parents. It was to make an ordered collection of such material that Hopkins kept his Note-books and Journals from an early age. Long before he joined the Jesuits, Hopkins loved nature and beauty. It was the Jesuit training, however, that gave him a solid basis for a Christian concept of nature.

Hopkins was intensely aware of the beauties of nature and realized that a too sensuous awareness could be dangerous. The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola put love of nature in its proper place and showed how man should look on natural beauty. St. Ignatius taught his followers that self-discipline was necessary to control sensuous delight in nature and, indeed, led his disciples to rise from created beauty to Uncreated Beauty.

This first chapter will attempt to show how the Spiritual Exercises provided the basis for a sensible concept of nature and that Hopkins agreed with its

teachings. It will try to show, too, that the critics who were amazed at or scandalized by Hopkins's sensuous delight in nature did not understand the guiding influence of the Spiritual Exercises on his concept of nature. It will be seen that self-discipline was an important quality in Hopkins's approach to nature and, as a result, that Hopkins was able to harmonize his love for earthly beauty and his religious mind. Examples will be given of Hopkins's evident delight in nature and various critics will be cited to show that the Spiritual Exercises influenced Hopkins's concept of nature.

Gerard Manley Hopkins had a love for nature before he joined the Jesuits. That can easily be seen from the accurate and fond observations of nature found in his Note-Books and Papers. Nevertheless, his love of nature was disciplined, formed and directed by his Jesuit studies and training, especially by his contact with the Spiritual Exercises of his founder, Saint Ignatius of Loyola. In his Note-Books and Papers Hopkins wrote commentaries on the Spiritual Exercises. These commentaries are his own reflections on the subject and the development of his concept of nature can be

judged from them.

The opening statement of the "Principle or Foundation" of St. Ignatius lays the framework for a sensible concept of nature.

Man was created for a certain end. This end is to praise, reverence, and to serve the Lord his God, and by this means to arrive at eternal salvation.

All the other beings and objects which surround us on the earth were created for the benefit of man, and to be useful to him, as means to his final end; hence his obligation to use, or to abstain from the use of, these creatures, according as they bring him nearer to that end, or tend to separate him from it.<sup>1</sup>

In his commentary on the "Principle or Foundation", Hopkins shows that he agrees wholeheartedly with the above quotation. He says that God did not create for sport or for nothing, and that every sensible man has a purpose in all he does, every workman has a use for every object he makes. "Much more has God a purpose, an end, a meaning in his work. He meant the world to give him praise, reverence and service; to give him glory."<sup>2</sup> "In other words he does not need it

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1. Saint Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises, p.21.

2. Note-Books and Papers of Gerard Nanley Hopkins, edited by Humphrey House, p.302.

(man's praise)... Nevertheless he takes it; he wishes it; he asks it, he commands it, he enforces it, he gets it."<sup>3</sup> Hence all things of nature glorify God. "The birds sing to him, the thunder speaks of his terror, the lion is like his strength, the sea is like his greatness, the honey like his sweetness."<sup>4</sup> "What they can they always do."<sup>5</sup>

By his meditations Hopkins came to surrender his mind to the Ignatian Christian way of thinking which is clearly seen in the following paragraph of the Spiritual Exercises.

Creatures were formed for an end as well as myself, and this end is the glory of God; for God could only create for His Glory. Creatures deprived of understanding are not made to glorify God directly; they are made to serve man, who, in exchange for their services, must lend his intelligence and heart to praise and love God, and thus make them to conduce to the glory of their common Creator. This, then, according to the light of faith and reason, is the order of my relations with God and with creatures. I am for God and creatures for me. From this follows that I cannot, like worldlings, make creatures my end without making myself guilty and miserable.<sup>6</sup>

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3. Ibid., p.302.

4. Ibid., p.303.

5. Ibid., p.303.

6. Spiritual Exercises, op.cit., p.33.

Mr. Humphrey House, the editor of Hopkins's Note-Books and Papers, says: "No single sentence better explains the motives and directions of Hopkins's life than this 'Man was created to praise'. He believed it as wholly as a man can believe anything; and when regret or sorrow over anything in his life comes to a critic's mind this must be remembered. To remember it is not to share or advocate the belief; but it is essential to an intelligent reading of his work."<sup>7</sup>

The close connection between the Exercises and poetry is brought out in this paragraph in Spirit by Father Alfred Barrett, S.J.

It is interesting to see how the poetics of St. John Damascene accord with those of Gerard Manley Hopkins, and how Hopkins stemmed from the Ignatian poetry of the Spiritual Exercises composed by a man who loved to step out on his Roman balcony and gaze up at the stars. Ignatian spirituality supposes a rise from the Created to the Uncreated which is distinctly poetical. St.

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7. Note-Books and Papers, op.cit., p.416.

Robert Bellarmine, S.J., called one of his treatises The Ladder of Created Things.<sup>8</sup>

Many critics of Hopkins's poetry, such as Robert Bridges, Herbert Read and Basil de Selincourt are "amazed to find a Jesuit who can communicate the loveliness of God's world with such haunting appreciation."<sup>9</sup> John Pick remarks that they highly approve of his exuberant delight in natural beauty. And yet they are shocked that a Jesuit should write such poetry - such poetry, they hint, is incompatible with the life and ideals of a religious. The answer lies in the statements of the Spiritual Exercises and Hopkins's acceptance of them. The amazement of the critics is a reflection on their own lack of religious belief and conviction. In Poetry, July, 1939, Terence Heywood criticizes Herbert Read for failing to realize that the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius formed, for better or for worse, the very stuff and not merely

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8. Return to Poetry, Critical Essays from Spirit, edited by John Gilland Brunini, Francis X. Connolly and Joseph G.E. Hopkins; article by Alfred Barrett, S.J., is entitled "Image-makers and Image-breakers", pp. 194-198. This quotation is on page 197.

9. John Pick, America, January 23, 1943, pp. 437-438.

the accidental channel of Hopkins's poems.<sup>10</sup>

In his comments on the "Principle or Foundation" Hopkins brings out the fact that man alone can deliberately mean to give God glory. This is done not only by prayer but also in the common avocations of man. "Smiting an anvil, sawing a beam, driving horses, scouring, everything gives God some glory if being in his grace you do it as your duty... He is so great that all things give him glory if you mean they should."<sup>11</sup>

The Foundation Exercise of St. Ignatius begins by saying not only that man was created to praise, reverence and serve God and by that means to save his soul - which was sufficient for Hopkins - but that all things else on earth were created to help man towards that end: man should use them just so far as they can afford him that help and "should withdraw himself from them just so far as they hinder him." When Hopkins

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10. Terence Heywood, Poetry, July, 1939, pp. 209-219.

11. Note-Books and Papers, op, cit., pp. 304-305.

thought that writing of poetry was interfering with his spiritual life, writing was abandoned. It explains too why Hopkins mortified his senses at times. He did this so that created beauty would remain only a means. "But a penance which I was doing from January 25 to July 25 prevented my seeing much that half-year."<sup>12</sup> His philosophy of nature is based on the Spiritual Exercises which calls not only for enjoyment but also for retrenchment. "But he could never give free rein to the sensuous side of his nature; he was a Jesuit, vowed to religion and strict vows ... there was a natural austerity within him, in conflict with the natural sensuous delight."<sup>13</sup>

The "Principle and Foundation" urges men to use all created things to attain God. "So, too, a sacramental view of the world which sees all creatures as avenues to Uncreated Being there has its origin, and

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12. Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins, edited by Humphrey House and completed by Graham Storey, p.190.

13. John Pick, America, op.cit.

its culmination comes in the closing section of the Exercises, the famous Contemplation to Gain Love."<sup>14</sup> This explains why Hopkins took such a delight in natural beauty. The following excerpts from his Journal are examples. "I do not think that I have seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of the Lord by it."<sup>15</sup> "As we drove home the stars came out thick: I leant back to look at them and my heart opening more than usual praised our Lord to and in whom all that beauty comes home."<sup>16</sup> Hopkins's delight in the world about him was heightened because it was enjoyed in and for God.

Besides his personal commentaries on the Spiritual Exercises Hopkins also recorded some of his sermons in his Journal. He was advised by his Superiors to write out his sermons in order to overcome his nervousness and consequent fumbling for words

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14. John Pick, America, op.cit.

15. The Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.199.

16. Ibid., p.254.

when he preached. John Pick thinks that all his pictorial skill and dramatic effectiveness in reconstructing scenes, his concreteness and use of all the senses are to be seen in his sermons. Hopkins did not have a pessimistic outlook on the world because his keen intellect knew that the proper stress should be placed on the Incarnation and Redemption and that the fall of man should not be over-emphasized.<sup>17</sup> There is nothing in his sermons bearing directly on his concept of nature but the general background of logical, Christian thought is visible. His sermon in which he describes the physical, mental and moral qualities of Christ shows both his outstanding prose qualities and his personal love of God which carries over into his philosophy of nature. The same could be said for the sermons on the Immaculate Conception and the Sacred Heart. They all tend to show us that Hopkins's mind and emotions were moulded and shaped by the Spiritual Exercises. Father A.A. Stephenson has expressed very

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17. John Pick, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Priest and Poet, p.81.

well the resulting personal sanctity of Hopkins.

Hopkins learned to discern even in nature a quality and a rhythm which only a Christian sensibility can know; and he came to fulfil the condition Milton declared to be necessary for the production of true poetry, that a man 'first be a true poem himself.'<sup>18</sup>

Father M.B. McNamee, S.J., in Immortal Diamond agrees that it was in the Spiritual Exercises that Hopkins found a justification for his remarkable sensitivity to the beauty of the world about him.<sup>19</sup> In a letter written to R.W. Dixon in 1881 Hopkins expresses his ideas on the Order that forms its members by the Exercises: "This I say: my vocation puts before me a standard so high that a higher can be found nowhere else ... I have never wavered in my vocation, but I have not lived up to it."<sup>20</sup> The latter part of the quotation refers to the natural longing of a man to be

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18. A.A. Stephenson, Dublin Review, Winter 1953, p.174.

19. Immortal Diamond, edited by Father Norman Weyand, p.226.

20. The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon, edited by Claude Collier Abbott, p.88.

better than he is, to rise to a higher degree of spirituality, and not to any particular defection on Hopkins's part.

R.W. Dixon, without knowing too much about the Jesuits or the Spiritual exercises, was able to notice something special about Hopkins's verse that was due to his Ignatian training.

But first, I hope that you are going on with poetry yourself. I can understand that your present position, seclusion and exercises would give to your writings a rare charm - they have done so in those that I have seen: - something that I cannot describe, but know to myself by the inadequate word terrible pathos - something of what you call temper in poetry: a right temper which goes to the point of the terrible; the terrible crystal. Milton is the only one else who has anything like it: & he has it in a totally different way: he has it through indignation, through injured majesty, which is an inferior thing in fact.<sup>21</sup>

Mr. Claude Collier Abbott, the editor of the Letters, in his introduction, expresses a belief that the religious element in Hopkins's life and poetry are not dominant, rather that he is a creature of senses.

They are poems written to the glory of God by a man who is looking on the world as charged with His grandeur and revealing His

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21. Ibid., p.80.

bounty and presence. But always as I read them I feel that the poet is primarily seized by the beauty of earth, and that though a man of exquisitely tempered and religious mind, his senses, not his religion, are in the ascendant.<sup>22</sup>

Father William T. Noon, S.J., in America, does not agree on this point with Mr. Abbott and he proceeds to show how Hopkins did harmonize his love for earthly beauty and his religious mind.

Early in his religious life, Gerard Hopkins understood that love for creatures is, by no means, a rival to one's love of God. In a comment on St. Ignatius' Contemplation to Obtain Love Hopkins imagines a vision in which God showed us 'the whole world enclosed first in a drop of water, allowing everything to be seen in its native colours; then the same in a drop of Christ's blood, by which everything whatever was turned to scarlet, keeping nevertheless mounted in the scarlet its own colour too.'<sup>23</sup>

Again in the same connection Hopkins says, "All things therefore are charged with love, are charged with God and if we know how to thank them give off sparks and take fire, yield drops and flow, ring and tell of him."<sup>24</sup>

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22. Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, edited by Claude Colleer Abbott, p.xxvii.

23. William T. Noon, S.J., America, "Hopkins: Christian Humanist," pp.73-75

24. Note-Books and Papers, op.cit., p.342.

Father Noon points out that a Christian humanist, such as Hopkins is, loves the world, but he sees the world as the dynamic handiwork of God. Nature, he knows, cannot be true to itself without the supernatural. To love things for what they are in themselves, without any admixture of self-interest, is the best way to love them, the sure road back to God. Since every man is destined by nature for God, for the supernatural life, really to be a nature poet is the supreme test of an artist's spiritual being.

For Hopkins, as for every Catholic, poet or mystic, the whole world is sacramental; really to condemn it or turn one's back on it is blasphemy; to prepare nature for the Divine art becomes the highest work that a Christian humanist can do. Furthermore, we should be mistaken were we to conclude that a Christian humanist, like Hopkins, loves created beauty simply because he views it as a symbol of the Divine. Starlight and thunder, ashboughs in bud, the winging of a bird across the heavens - such creatures are fair and worthy to be cherished for their own sakes. So it is that God loves them and has given them to us for our own fellowship and admiration.<sup>25</sup>

It cannot be said, then, that in being faithful to nature, Hopkins is disloyal to God. A realistic poet will not disdain mundane things nor will he be blind to the supernatural elements in life. If he

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25. William T. Noon, op.cit.

appreciates the beauty of God, it will show in what he writes about the beauty of the world and nature. The more manifold beauties of nature make the poet realize that there is need of a centre, a principle of unification. The Christian finds such a centre in the Incarnation. Hopkins, himself, in his Commentary on the Exercises expresses it thus: "God's utterance of himself in himself is God the Word, outside himself in this world. This world then is word, expression, news, of God. Therefore its end, its purpose, its purport, its meaning is God, and its life or work to name or praise him."<sup>26</sup>

Stanley S. James in an article entitled "The Sacrifice of Song" in the Catholic World of June, 1935, points out the necessity of discipline in the writing of poetry. He traces the subject back to the Middle Ages during which era literature had the "beneficial discipline of a firm religious faith." The Elizabethan era

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26. Immortal Diamond, op.cit., p.226.

threw off this discipline but Shakespeare with his "sheer energy of genius" was still able to remain "an amazing example of undisciplined strength." A period of exhaustion followed. Milton tried unsuccessfully to bring poetry back to religion. So did Dryden, but he did not succeed completely either. Romanticism threw off all discipline. "The need of finding a discipline which would chasten but not destroy pure delight in the glory of this world had yet to be found." It was found in a band of Catholic Victorian poets, such as Coventry Patmore, Francis Thompson, Lionel Johnson and especially Hopkins because of his Jesuit training in the Spiritual Exercises. These Catholic poets, to a certain extent, sacrificed poetry to religion. Hopkins did actually renounce poetry in obedience to what he deemed the demands of his vocation as a Jesuit. However, he did write sufficient verse to show us what were the effects of the religious discipline to which he had submitted. Mr. James thinks that much of Hopkins's poetry bears deeply impressed upon it "the traces of his religious asceticism."<sup>27</sup> Claude Colleer Abbott shows that he,

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27. Stanley B. James, Catholic World, June, 1935, article entitled "The Sacrifice of Song", pp.290-295.

too, is affected by Hopkins's disciplined approach to poetry. "His vision of earth and her creatures make a bevy of astonishing and new felicities rarely to be matched in English poetry."<sup>28</sup>

W.H. Gardner, as can be seen in his writings on Hopkins, understands the dominant place that Ignatian spirituality has in the life of the priest-poet.

Much of the power of Hopkins's mature poetry came from the tension between the inborn creative personality of the artist and the acquired character of the Jesuit priest. This tension sometimes resulted in what Bridges called 'the naked encounter of sensualism and asceticism'; but Bridges did not do justice to the fine and significant balance which Hopkins maintained between these two opposite but necessary forces.<sup>29</sup>

Gardner further says: "As regards their content, (i.e. the "terrible sonnets"), such moods of 'desolation' conform to those periods of spiritual dryness which are carefully described, and prescribed for, by St. Ignatius in the Spiritual Exercises."<sup>30</sup>

Gardner would disagree with Abbott's appraisal of

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28. C.C. Abbott, Letters to Bridges, p.xxviii.

29. W.H. Gardner, Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Penguin, p.xxiii.

30. Ibid., p.xxix.

Hopkins. In the Introduction to the Letters, Abbott says:

Though Hopkins seems to have undergone a religious discipline comparable in sternness to that suffered by mystics, it is not easy to see how the ill-defined term 'mystical' can be applied to his poetry. His work lacks the inevitable fusion of the divine and the temporal, that savour given by the subtle interpenetration of the spirit working through the whole man, that is vouchsafed those who, in subduing all else to His contemplation and service have felt the warmth of God.<sup>31</sup>

Abbott seems to have misunderstood completely the lessons of the Spiritual Exercises.

The Times Literary Supplement of September 26, 1942, stresses the importance of the Spiritual Exercises in Hopkins's poetry. "The Order, if it severely limited the range of his poetry, profoundly intensified it. In this intensification the Spiritual Exercises, acting upon a nature so tensely poised in itself between the sensuous and the ideal, played a principal part."<sup>32</sup>

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31. C.C. Abbott, Letters to Bridges, p.xlii.

32. Times Literary Supplement, September 26, 1942, p.474.

John Pick in an article in Renaissance, Autumn 1954, again reaffirms the importance of the Exercises in the life and poetry of Hopkins.

So pervasive are the Spiritual Exercises - with which Hopkins acquainted himself immediately upon his entrance into the Jesuit novitiate in 1868 and which he reread, restudied and re-meditated constantly all the rest of his life - in the formation and direction of the controlling ideas of his poems, the ideas which make the individual images take on a fresh and integrated set of meanings and tensions and relationships that their importance can hardly be overemphasized.<sup>33</sup>

It was evident, then, that the Spiritual Exercises which Hopkins knew and loved helped to form not only his spiritual life but also his outlook on nature and natural beauty. His commentaries on the Spiritual Exercises were added proof of his adoption of the Ignatian Christian way of looking at the natural world around him. Ignatian spirituality showed that love of created beauty led inevitably to the love of Un-created Beauty provided that man did not put obstacles in the way and was willing to develop the requisite self-discipline.

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33. John Pick, Renaissance, Autumn 1954, p.37.

The Spiritual Exercises gave Hopkins the approval that he needed to give full rein (but disciplined and controlled at the same time) to his personal awareness of beauty and nature. The Note-books and Journals were full of examples of his fond and accurate descriptions of nature. He realized that too sensuous a love of nature could be dangerous and here his Jesuit training came to his aid with its teaching of disciplined love of created beauty.

Hopkins's sermons showed that he had a strong and sensible spiritual outlook on life. His note-books showed that he was able to mesh smoothly his religious beliefs and his love of earthly beauty. The Spiritual Exercises supplied the necessary ideas to co-ordinate these views. The world became, for Hopkins, a book in which he could read about God; every page of this book gave him more knowledge of the wonders of nature and so, of the wonders of God. Those who were surprised that a Jesuit priest could have such a love of nature and beauty as Hopkins had have failed to comprehend the deep penetration of the Spiritual Exercises into Hopkins's mind and outlook on the world.

In this first chapter the spiritual background of

Hopkins's concept of nature has been discussed. His love of nature and his outlook on nature were shaped by his Jesuit training. Chapter Two will discuss further aspects of his outlook on nature and show that there was also a strong philosophical basis to his concept of nature.

## CHAPTER TWO

### HOPKINS'S INSCAPE AND DUNS SCOTUS

Gerard Manley Hopkins kept records and notebooks of his observations of nature and of beauty, whether of architecture, poetry, art, or music. All of these subjects interested him from an early age. What interested him especially about all these things was particular details that gave distinctiveness to things. This is what he called inscape - the external pattern of things which expressed their inner form. What made inscape especially precious to him was that it reminded him of the Creator more than any other way of viewing things.

In this chapter Hopkins's ideas of inscape and instress will be explained. Also it will be seen that he had a great preoccupation with the self of things. It will also be shown that he found philosophical justification for his theories of inscape, instress and self from the teachings of John Duns Scotus, a Franciscan teacher of the Thirteenth Century. Scotus stressed the importance of the individuality of objects, of this-

nesses as well as whatnesses; also he stressed the importance of the self of things. His theory of knowledge in which the senses and the intellect work together in one simultaneous act to express both the inner form and its outward manifestation suited Hopkins's theory of inscape. It will also be seen in this chapter that Hopkins was never satisfied unless he experienced the inscape and instress of things and that this eagerness was matched by his keen consciousness of his own self. All of these theories are important to him because then the visible beauties of the world could serve as a bridge between the finite and the infinite. Individual inscapes were analogues of Divine Ideas and hence the experience of inscape leads to Beauty, to God. This way of viewing the world was an integral part of his concept of nature.

Hopkins's Note-books and Journals show that from an early age he had an interest in "all those distinctive details of a particular landscape which make it absolutely different from every other one."<sup>1</sup> He was in-

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1. Immortal Diamond, op.cit., p.226.

terested in colour, contour and shape. This is seen in his entries about an ordinary walk that he took on May 3, 1866.

Cold. Morning raw and wet, afternoon fine. Walked then with Addis crossing Bablock Hythe, round by Skinner's Weir through many fields into the Witney Road. Sky sleepy blue without liquidity. Fr. Cumnor Hill saw St. Philip's and the other spires through the haze rising pale in a pink light. On further side of the Witney road hills, just fleeced with grain or other green growth, by their dips and waves foreshortened here and there and so differenced in brightness and opacity the green on them, with delicate effect. On left, brow of the near hill glistening with very bright newly turned sods and a scarf of vivid green slanting away beyond the skyline, agst. which the clouds shewed the slightest tinge of rose or purple. Copses in grey-red or grey-yellow - the tinges immediately forerunning the opening of full leaf. Meadows skirting Sevenbridge road voluptuous green.<sup>2</sup>

Hopkins took great pains to select the right word and the perfect comparison to illustrate his perceptions.

At an early age, then, Hopkins learned to look for what he called inscape. He shows how important he considers it to be in a letter to Bridges: "But as air, melody, is what strikes me most of all in music and

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2. The Journals and Papers, op.cit., pp.134-135.

design in painting, so design, pattern or what I am in the habit of calling "inscape" is what I above all aim at in poetry."<sup>3</sup> In a letter to Dixon he calls inscape "the very soul of art".<sup>4</sup> This feeling for the external pattern expressive of the inward form of things came to be a pivotal point in his thought to which he returns again and again in his journal and in his poetry.<sup>5</sup>

Father Peters, S.J., defines inscape as "the unified complex of those sensible qualities of the object of perception that strike us as inseparably belonging to and most typical of it, so that through the knowledge of this unified complex of sense-data we may gain an insight into the individual essence of the object."<sup>6</sup> Since this word stands for something that was not observed by other men, and therefore caused a very personal experience, and so was to stand for something not experienced by others, it has an important place in

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3. Letters to Bridges, p.66.

4. Letters to Dixon, p.135.

5. Immortal Diamond, p.227.

6. W.A.M. Peters, S.J., Gerard Manley Hopkins,

Hopkins's concept of nature. Most people are inclined to look for what is universal in the objects put before them. Hopkins, by dint of forced concentration until it became a habit, tried to catch what was individually distinctive in objects in order thus to arrive at some insight into their essence as individuals. Inscape, then, is the word he used to express this set of individualizing characteristics.<sup>7</sup>

Hopkins's Note-books and Journals are replete with examples of his inscapes. They refer to the sunset, to trees, to bluebells, the Horned Violet, to clouds et cetera. He regretted that people in general did not know about or try to appreciate the inscape of things as he did: "I thought how sadly beauty of inscape was unknown and buried away from simple people and yet how near at hand it was if they had eyes to see it and it could be called out everywhere again."<sup>8</sup> He complains that "even with one companion ecstasy is almost banished; you want to be alone and to feel that, and leisure -

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7. Peters, op.cit., p.2.

8. Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.221.

all pressure taken off."<sup>9</sup> On July 25, 1868, he ascends the Breithorn with four companions. He describes the experience as follows:

Stars twirling brilliantly. Taurus up, a pale light stressily edging the eastern skyline, and lightning mingled with the dawn. In the twilight we tumbled over the moraine and glacier until the sunrise brightly fleshed the snow of the Breithorn before us and then the colour changing through metallic shades of yellow recovered to white.<sup>10</sup>

In trying to assess why inscape was so important to Hopkins, Father Peters comes to the conclusion that it was Hopkins's spiritual outlook on this world that made inscape so precious to him; the inscape of an object reminded him more of the Creator, than a superficial impression could have done. How intense his awareness was of the actual presence of God in each individual thing and how he realized that each individual thing in its own peculiar way brought him news about the Creator can be seen in passages like this:

The busy working of nature wholly independent of the earth and seeming to go on in a strain

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9. Ibid., p.182.

10. Ibid., p.181.

of time not reckoned by our reckoning of days and years but simpler and as if correcting the preoccupation of the world by being preoccupied with and appealing to and dated to the day of judgment was like a new witness to God and filled me with delightful fear.<sup>11</sup>

Another word that Hopkins coined is instress.

It also plays a large part in his concept of nature. Father Peters gives the original meaning of instress as "that stress or energy of being by which 'all things are upheld' and strive after continued existence."<sup>12</sup> But when the word instress is used in connection with inscape it is noted that "the instress will strike the poet as the force that holds the inscape together; it is for him the power that ever actualizes the inscape. Further, we observe that in the act of perception the inscape is known first and in this grasp of the inscape is felt the stress of being behind it, is felt its instress."<sup>13</sup>

Inscape, being a sensitive manifestation of a being's individuality, is perceived by the senses; but instress, though given in the perception of inscape, is not directly perceived

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11. Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.200.

12. Peters, op.cit., p.14.

13. Ibid., p.14.

by the senses, because it is not a primary sensible quality of the thing. Hence it follows that, while inscape can be described, however imperfectly, in terms of sense impressions, instress cannot, but must be interpreted in terms of its impression on the soul, in terms, that is, of affects of the soul. Instress, then, in Hopkins's writings, stands for two distinct and separate things, related to each other as cause and effect; as a cause 'instress' refers for Hopkins to that core of being or inherent energy which is the actuality of the object; as effect 'instress' stands for the specifically individual impression the object makes on man.<sup>14</sup>

W.H. Gardner attributes at least part of Hopkins's interest in pattern and design and then inscape and instress to his meeting with the poet Swinburne and the painter Simeon Solomon.

Instress is akin to what Shelly (following Plato) called 'the One Spirit's plastic stress', which sweeps through the 'gull dense world' of matter and imposes on it the predestined forms and reflections of the Prime Good. But instress is not the only unifying force in the object; it connotes also that impulse from the 'inscape' which acts on the senses and through them, actualizes the inscape in the mind of the beholder... instress, then, is often the sensation of inscape - a quasi-mystical illumination, a sudden perception of that deeper pattern, order and unity which gives meaning to external forms.<sup>15</sup>

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14. Peters, op.cit., pp.14-15.

15. W.H. Gardner, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Penguin edition, p.xxi.

Some examples of the use of instress in Hopkins's prose are seen in these extracts from his Journal.

At eight o'clock about sunset hanging due opposite the house in the east the greatest stack of cloud, to call it one cloud, I can ever recall seeing. Singled by the eye and taken up by itself it was shining white but taken with the sky, which was a strong hard blue, it was anointed with warm brassy glow: only near the earth it was stunned with purplish shadow. The instress of its size came from comparison not with what was visible but with the remembrance of other clouds.<sup>16</sup>

Usually, Hopkins had to be alone to experience instress, as this quotation illustrates.

I saw the inscape though freshly, as if my eye were still growing, though with a companion the eye and the ear are for the most part shut and instress cannot come.<sup>17</sup>

A frequent source of instress was a beautiful but old work of art or architecture.

We went up to the castle but not in: standing before the gateway I had an instress which only the true old work gives from the strong and noble inscape of the painted arch.<sup>18</sup>

Austin Warren suggests that the word inscape was derived from "landscape". An inscape is any kind of

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16. Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.212.

17. Ibid., p.228.

18. Ibid., p.263.

formed or focussed view, any pattern discerned in the natural world. Being so central a word in his vocabulary and motif in his mental life, it moves through some range of meaning: from sense-perceived pattern to inner form. The prefix seems to imply a contrary, an outerscape - as if to say that an inscape is not mechanically or inertly present, but requires personal action, attention, a seeing and seeing into.<sup>19</sup>

Father Peters points out a logical inference concerning instress. "If Hopkins is going to describe the individually distinctive aspect of an object, he can do so by giving a word-picture in terms of its inscape, or he can choose a second way and describe it in terms of instress, which was to Hopkins as distinctive as inscape."<sup>20</sup> Hopkins' prose writings establish him as a writer who takes pains to describe things objectively in their minutest detail. Prose writing subordinates emotional appeal to objective representation and so there is little room for instress. Nevertheless there are examples; he speaks, for instance, of "sad-coloured" sky;<sup>21</sup>

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19. Kenyon Critics, pp.76-77.

20. Peters, pp.17-18.

21. Journals and Papers, p.228.

"pinings of snow"<sup>22</sup> "grave green"<sup>23</sup> "happy leaves."<sup>24</sup>

It is to be expected that in his poetry this way of giving the essence of things should come more to the fore than in his prose writings.

Inscape and instress are two terms which well bring out Hopkins's preoccupation with the self of things. These coinages clearly point to his intense awareness of what was individually distinctive in every object and to his consciousness of the object's independence in being and activity. It is here that Hopkins differs from other poets. For one thing since he was more conscious of the individuality of objects and their effect upon man, his reaction following contact with objects was more reasoned and less spontaneous than the reaction of other poets. Father Peters penetrates more deeply into the subject and is convinced that Hopkins considered objects as "selves". As a result of this view he could not bestow on things imagined life and

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22. Ibid., p.229.

23. Ibid., p.206.

24. Ibid., p.223.

imagined activity. Each object has a "life" entirely its own. Therefore, Hopkins cannot ascribe to an object qualities which to his mind it does not really and literally possess. Other poets will give to the object fancied and imagined qualities; they cast around it an emotional atmosphere which the object possesses only in virtue of the poet's imagination and of the poet's imaginative interpretation. It is this peculiar non-imaginative attitude of Hopkins towards the selves that gives his poems severity and rawness of tone.

It was in 1872 that Hopkins first came across the teachings of Duns Scotus which gave philosophic justification for his long-standing preoccupation with inscape and with the sharply individualized features of things. Hopkins had an interest in philosophy even before his Jesuit days. His philosophical essays written at Oxford show this. His ideas concerning inscape and instress and his awareness of an active principle in things pre-date his acquaintance with Scotus. So it is easy to understand his joy and enthusiasm when he first discovered some philosophical justification for his views concerning external reality.

At this time I had first begun to get hold of the copy of Scotus on the Sentences in the Baddely library and was flush with a new stroke of enthusiasm. It may come to nothing or it may be a mercy from God. But just then when I took in any inscape of the sky or sea I thought of Scotus.<sup>25</sup>

The reason for Hopkins's attraction to Scotus is in their experience of form as sharply individual and particular.

In general St. Thomas and the Schoolmen conceived all created things as containing two principles, the principle of matter and the principle of form, both terms here being understood in the philosophical sense. These two exist as correlatives and together make up the composition. Neither exists without the other.

St. Thomas held that the form determines the species of a thing, while the matter determines its individuality within the species. For him the form determined the whatness of a being, while the matter determined the thisness. Together they made up the individual thing. Thus the Thomistic principium individuationis is a spatially determinant matter materia signata.

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25. Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.121.

Scotus on the other hand, as Etienne Gilson points out, almost destroys the unity of the species in order to safeguard the particularity of the individual, for he places the principle of individuation within the form, itself. He distinguishes two things within the form, the universal nature common to all individuals of the same species, and the haecceitas or thisness which he calls the entitas singularis and which constitutes the individuality of the form.<sup>26</sup>

Such a philosophical exposition of the sharp singularity of inner form which necessarily expresses itself in unity with outward distinctness appealed to Hopkins who, in looking about him, saw beauty as "the splendour of form shining on the proportioned parts of matter" in a highly organized and patterned variety expressive of inner particularity.

In his poetry, Hopkins tried to capture and give a life of their own to, to inscape, his experiences not

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26. John Pick, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Priest and Poet, p. 156. It should be noted that the writer is heavily indebted to John Pick for the material on St. Thomas and Duns Scotus. The paraphrasing is quite close to the original text.

only of the world of nature, the world of variegated and differentiated beauties, but also to his experiences of the world of men, each distinct and individual and proclaiming his own selfhood.

In his Journal for 1871, Hopkins wrote a paragraph that illustrates his wide interests.

Early in December was frost and some skating. Then much wind and rain but very little cold till when I made the note, Feb. 11, and later. It was as mild a winter as could be. Things budded early, oelandine for instance was springing at the end of January. At the beginning of March the weather was balmy. On March 21 leaves on the poplar, quick, and hornbeam had been out some time and knots of leaf were open on the sycamore: ep. last year, April 15. On March 21 was the first snow fall. There was then snow and frost for some days, the second winter.<sup>27</sup>

Etienne Gilson points out that there are many points of dissimilarity between the thought of St. Thomas and Duns Scotus but that "it is not empty subtleties or simple pettifogging words that separate the two doctors. Both theologies make use of the same stock of concepts borrowed from Aristotle's philosophy, but the edifices constructed with those common materials are very different in style."<sup>28</sup>

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27. Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.218.

28. A Gilson Reader, Image Book, p.139.

Gilson explains Scotus's ideas succinctly in this paragraph:

It must therefore be admitted that the real is in itself neither pure universality nor pure individuality. The very fact that we can abstract general ideas from it shows that it is not pure individuality. If species had not already a certain unity, although inferior to the numerical unity of the individual, our concepts would not correspond to anything. Inversely, the same common nature of the species is still found in individuals, but, this time, determined by their principle of individuation. In accounting for the possibility of individuals, Duns Scotus still had to start from the "nature" or "common essence" neither universal nor particular, which the metaphysician considers. Solving this problem, therefore, inevitably consisted for him in adding an individuating determination to the essence. That determination could not be a form, for all form is common to the individuals of one species; it must therefore be added to form from within. In fact, says Duns Scotus, it is its ultimate actuality. The famous "hecceity" of the Scotists is the ultimate act which restricts the form of a species to the singularity of its individuals.<sup>29</sup>

John Pick points out that Scotus may have helped to mould the sacramentalism expressed in Hopkins's poems, though it is found in the Spiritual Exercises and in all of the scholastics in one form or another.

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29. A Gilson Reader, Image Book, p.137.

But in general we must remember that there is little that is daringly different from the general tradition of scholastic thought in anything Hopkins wrote. Scotus himself was but a current in the large stream of the scholastic tradition, which was very flexible within its limits.

Hopkins went to Scotus, too, for an epistemology required by his experience of inscape. The inscape comes from aesthetic experience which differs from rational knowledge. The latter concerns itself with individuals; it is abstract concerning itself with forms abstracted from their concrete embodiment; it is conceptual. But an experience of inscape would have to be a knowledge of a thing in its entirety; it would have to be individual, not general; concrete, not abstract; real, not conceptual. For aesthetic experience is concerned with the individuated "inner form" expressing itself in "outer form". It differs from rational knowledge inasmuch as the "inner form" is not abstracted from its sensible manifestation, but it is an experience of that "inner form" expressed in its sensible manifestation. The brilliance of form is enjoyed in the sensible.

Both St. Thomas and Duns Scotus maintained that all knowledge has its origin in the senses. But Scotus, unlike St. Thomas, contended that intellectual knowledge starts directly with the particular concrete thing and not with the universal, because for Scotus the particular is "part of" the form. According to his theory the intellect may know both the particular and the universal; the individual in its particular aspects is known by the species specialissima while its quiddity or whatness is known by the species intelligibilis. For St. Thomas intellectual knowledge is of the universal: the intellect knows the species intelligibilis; only per quamdam reflexionem can the intellect know the individual concrete thing.

Scotus, then, would seem to offer a theory of knowledge in which sense and intellect collaborate in one obviously simultaneous act to experience both the species intelligibilis (the particularized nature or form within) and the species specialissima (the outward sensible manifestation of inner form). Such a theory of knowledge is eminently suited to the experience of beauty as inscape for it does not abstract the form from its concrete embodiment; rather, by one act of mind and

senses it apprehends the inner in the outer, the splendour of individuated form shining upon proportioned parts of matter.

Where Hopkins was undoubtedly directly influenced by Scotus is in his attitude towards his own self. Since it affects his concept of nature, it fits in here. The study of Scotus made him turn in upon himself and consider the essence of the individuating principle in himself. This preoccupation with self, his own nature, its origin and its end, has unmistakably left its mark upon his poetry.

In his Note-books and Papers Hopkins develops the idea at length. The following selections are the ones closely connected with his concept of nature.

We may learn that all things are created by consideration of the world without or of ourselves the world within. The former is the consideration commonly dwelt upon, but the latter takes on the mind more hold. I find myself both as a man and as myself something more determined and distinctive, at pitch, more distinctive and higher pitched than anything else I see ... Nothing else in nature comes near this unspeakable stress of pitch, distinctiveness, and selving, this selfbeing of my own ... searching nature I taste self but at one tankard, that of my own being.<sup>30</sup>

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30. Note-Books and Papers, op.cit., p.309-310.

Father Peters summarizes Hopkins's attitude in the following quotation.

Hopkins was aware of his body as he was aware of his soul. This awareness of his body, of the life of the senses, of the nature of his sensitive experience, explains the serious character of his poetry. He reflected upon all his activities; all his senses were concerned in the perception of inscape, and he himself was conscious of it... He is never satisfied unless he has caught the inscape of things and has felt their instress; and his eagerness to know the self of things is matched by the keen consciousness of his own self, a most acute self-awareness.<sup>31</sup>

Bernard Kelly, in an article in Blackfriars, June, 1937, entitled "Gerard Manley Hopkins", is rather critical of Hopkins's Scotism. He misses in Hopkins, he says, the attitude of mind of a Catholic or Thomist universality. For the Thomist it is always a greater happiness to know that good exists than to know that he could explain it whether it existed or not. This is to say that contemplation is better than explanation and is better even than the love which leads to it. For Hopkins, following Scotus in this, love is better than contemplation; love which particularizes, individualizes,

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31. W.A.M. Peters, op.cit., p.26 and p.28.

isolates, experience foredrawing the world of experience and, ultimately, the person of Jesus Christ to a self-reference and evoking a personal, individual, and in some sense isolated response. Not that the way of individual love and desire is in any sense opposed to the liberty of contemplation and the universality of the intelligence. There is a valid contrast and the question is one of emphasis and predominance. The words Hopkins uses in developing his psychology of the contemplation of natural phenomena, particularly the word instress, indicate in him a dwelling on the value of sheer effort in the will's response and of effort rather particularized in its expression than universalized in its object.<sup>32</sup>

John Pick points out that Scotus was very forceful in the statement of a sacramental view of the world, for he contended that God created the world to make it possible for man to look upon the visible beauties of the universe and experience them as a bridge between the finite and infinite. Individual inscapes, forms

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32. Bernard Kelly, Blackfriars, June, 1937, "Gerard Manley Tunks", p.427.

splendidly shining on matter, are images, similitudes, representations, analogues of Divine Ideas. The experience of the beauties of the world, of its inscape, then, leads to Beauty, to God. Thus Scotus offered to Hopkins a very real justification for his love of inscapes.<sup>33</sup>

Pick summarizes the influence of Duns Scotus and the Spiritual Exercises on Hopkins.

The sacramentalism of Scotus and the Spiritual Exercises, the realization of the far-reaching implications of the Incarnation, the full dedication of all the powers of man to the 'praise, reverence and service of God' gave his mature poems their combination of sensitivity to created beauty - a vital awareness even more appealing than his earlier Keatsian sensuousness - and their intellectual and emotional direction. 'Such divination of the spiritual in the things of the sense, which also will express itself in the things of the sense', Maritain has penetratingly remarked, 'is what we properly call poetry.'<sup>34</sup>

In this chapter Hopkins's theories of inscape and instress have been presented. They are essential to the understanding of his concept of nature. What must

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33. John Pick, op.cit., p.36.

34. Ibid., p.51.

be kept in mind is that he had these ideas, this particular way of looking at the universe, quite some time before he found philosophical backing for it in the teachings of Duns Scotus.

Hopkins from an early age was interested in all the details of colour, contour, shape, taste and feel that give distinctiveness to things. He coined the word inscape to represent the individually distinctive external qualities of things which give an insight into their individual essences. Hopkins called inscape "the soul of art." Examples were given in this chapter to show his inscapes and instresses and his love of them. The development of this special way of looking at things required personal effort and attention but after a time it became easier for him.

It has been shown, also, why Hopkins was so delighted when he discovered the writings of Duns Scotus. Scotism held that both the universal and individual nature of things were in the form and that they were grasped at the same time even though in a vague manner. The mind and senses at the same time apprehend the inner essence in the outer qualities. This stress upon the importance of individual characteristics of objects

fitted in admirably with Hopkins's theory of inscape.

Scotism also led Hopkins to a great preoccupation with self and the essence of the individuating principle in himself. This preoccupation came to take a greater hold on his mind than the consideration of the world around him. His eagerness to catch the self of things, then, went hand in hand with the strong consciousness of his own self. It was not difficult for Hopkins to give approval to the Scotist sacramental teaching that the visible beauties of the world and their inscapes, too, were analogues of Divine Ideas and so led to God.

Chapters One and Two have shown, to some extent at least, the spiritual and philosophical background of Hopkins's concept of nature. They have shown the important place that inscape had in this concept. Chapter Three will try to give examples of what has been seen so far - examples of his accurate observations of nature, of his inscapes, of nature as a declaration of God's glory, of the dynamic force and movement in nature, of his sacramental view of nature.

## CHAPTER THREE

### HOPKINS'S OBSERVATIONS OF NATURE

#### The Note-books and Journals of Gerard Manley

Hopkins were the records of a man of extreme sensitivity to nature and the beauties of nature. His detailed entries were almost a scientific analysis of the outer manifestations of nature in all its forms- movement, colour, sound, music, touch, taste, smell and wildness. From these sharp details he penetrated to the inscape of things. Both his scientific approach to nature and his inscapes were essential to his concept of nature. For this reason Chapter Three will contain examples of these.

However, it will be shown that these are only a first step in Hopkins's concept of nature. For Hopkins, external nature was a declaration of God's glory and beauty. Nature was a channel of God's external revelation of Himself. Hopkins loved natural beauty and the beauty of man and these led him to love the beauty of grace and the beauty of God. He came to look on all nature as a reflection of God's grandeur and he learned

to inscape nature with the Incarnate Word. Everything became tinged with the Word-made-flesh. If man trained himself to be sensitive to the individualizing qualities of natural objects, these qualities revealed a portion of God's beauty. Chapter Three will endeavour to present the growth of this sacramental view of nature.

Geoffrey Grigson has well expressed another phase of Hopkins's concept of nature.

To know this poet one does not need dictionaries alone, or a fine recognition of ambiguities alone, or only a knowledge of the Ignatian Exercises or of Iuns Scotus, 'Of reality the rarest-veined unraveller': one must also have or must also cultivate some equivalence of pure sensation, some of Hopkins's own accurate empathic cognition of the plants, trees, fruit, metals, skies, clouds, sunsets, birds, waters, surfaces, grains, activities, perfumes, of all the phenomena at which he stared or to which he opened his senses.<sup>1</sup>

Grigson tells the story about the gardener at Stonyhurst who considered Hopkins peculiar because he saw him staring at and walking round and round a piece of glass on the path. Grigson concludes the story thus: "But star-

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1. Geoffrey Grigson, Gerard Manley Hopkins, p.8.

ing at glass among the gravel may involve meanings, causes and principles of things."<sup>2</sup>

Grigson places him in the poetic company of George Herbert and John Donne. "His religious meditation on the meanings, causes and principles of things then conferred... the highest sanction upon his pursuit and interests as a poet; and livened them with the greatest glint and flush and fullness."<sup>3</sup>

Robert Lowell, one of the Kenyon Critics, considers Hopkins to be probably the finest of English poets of nature, i.e., of inanimate creation. Hopkins's love of nature is seen from his minute and loving observation of nature. "It still seems incredible how much of his time was spent in remarking the details of sunsets, flowers and waves. Like Keats he had a most intense sensuous awareness of nature to support this admirably objective and painstaking observation of nature."<sup>4</sup>

The best part of the Journal consists of carefully written observations on natural phenomenon -

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2. Ibid., p.9.

3. Ibid., p.9.

4. Kenyon Critics, op.cit., p.97.

on colour, organic form, movement, in fact the intrinsic quality of any object which was capable of striking through the senses and into the mind with a feeling of novelty and discovery.<sup>5</sup>

Father Lahey praises the prose style of the Journal and notes the growth of the mastery of expression. Hopkins's observations of natural phenomena remind him of the same quality in Tennyson; "but apart from identity of purpose, the notes of the latter do not gain by any comparison, however lenient."<sup>6</sup>

Humphrey House, the editor of the Note-books and Journals, in his book of literary criticism called All in Due Time made the following observation.

He was a close and wonderful observer of the smallest intricacies of form and colour in objects - the grain of stones, the veins of leaves, the fretting and lacing and wimpling of clouds, water, plumage and trees. From these sharp details he saw what he called the "inscape" of things, the essential form to which each minutest part contributed. But the detail and the inscape he aimed to show in the most beautiful little drawings in pencil.<sup>7</sup>

Lawrence Binyon in the 1939 University of Toronto

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5. W.H. Gardner, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Penguin edition, p.xx.

6. G.F. Lahey, Gerard Manley Hopkins, p.159.

7. Humphrey House, All In Due Time, p.160.

Quarterly writes concerning Hopkins:

He was gifted with exquisite senses, warmly moved by the beauty of the world, beauty in cloud and sky, trees and flowers, birds and animals, even more by beauty in choice types of human beings ... His observation is imaginative and subtle; he loved to note living movement; to colour he was specially susceptible.<sup>8</sup>

Geoffrey Grigson calls Hopkins's interest in nature "a passionate science" and further that "a first and central fact of his poems is their birth in a science of passionate empathy, carried so far that it distinguishes Hopkins's entirely from every other English poet."<sup>9</sup> He points out also that Hopkins's eccentricity of observation is confined mostly to his Journals which were for himself alone. In 1872, on a Holy Saturday warm with thunder Hopkins observed "odd tufts of this thin-textured very plump round clouds something like the eggs in an opened anthill."<sup>10</sup>

Grigson continues:

Clouds, as well, are poetic properties of the century: they would do for other English poets, Patmore or Tennyson or Barnes or Bridges; yet

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8. Lawrence Binyon, U. of T. Quarterly, 1939, p.270.

9. Grigson, op.cit., p.8.

10. Note-Books and Papers, op.cit., p.159.

now the explicative object is more peculiar, the clouds are like ants' eggs in the opened nest, they are different altogether from Tenayson's clouds in Water-colour; and the nature of the Hopkins science is more revealed.<sup>11</sup>

In Lancashire in 1873 he watched a dying sheep under a stone hedge, making of it an entirely matter-of-fact record without sentiment. He described how there ran slowly from the sheep's nostrils a thick flesh-coloured ooze, scarlet in places, coiling and roping its way down, so thick that it looked like fat.

In a letter to his friend A.W.M. Baillie in 1863 Hopkins wrote:

I think I have told you that I have particular periods of admiration for particular things in Nature; for a certain time I am astonished at the beauty of a tree, shape, effect etc.; then when the passion, so to speak, has subsided, it is consigned to my treasury of explored beauty, and acknowledged with admiration and interest ever after, while something new takes its place in my enthusiasm. The present fury is the ash, and perhaps barley and two shapes of growth in leaves and one in tree boughs and also a conformation of fine-weather cloud.<sup>12</sup>

For Hopkins, nature was a declaration of God's

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11. Grigson, op.cit., p.7.

12. Further Letters, op.cit., p.202.

glory. But at the same time he avoided using nature merely as a spiritual utility, something from which moral lessons could be drawn. He endeavoured to let each object exist per se in his apprehension of it. He tried to use language entirely and accurately correspondent to the sum of the qualities of the object. Poetry was not to be vague and indefinite in its grasp of reality. What was needed in poetry were men who were concrete observers of nature rather than the school of Wordsworth who were "faithful but not rich observers of nature."

Elizabeth Phare stresses Hopkins's love of movement in nature as opposed to Wordsworth's more passive approach. So, too, Shelley sees everything in Nature as drifting in a lazy flux, whereas Hopkins sees it as animated by a most violently dynamic force. Hopkins is thoroughly at home in a world where everything is rushing to and fro in a transport of wild activity. Hopkins notes in Canon Dixon's poetry an affinity with Wordsworth's. When Dixon cannot answer the question which asks the meaning of natural phenomena, he gives up inquiring into nature's significance and simply submits to her good influences. This passivity is quite foreign

to Hopkins who strives to find parallels between God's works in nature and in the sphere of divine revelation.<sup>13</sup>

"With his remarkable sensitivity to all the varied and distinctive beauty of visible creation, and his fresh realization of the function of nature as the channel of God's natural revelation of Himself, it is not surprising that Hopkins made this natural revelation of God's beauty the frequent theme of his poetry."<sup>14</sup>

Remote from him is the old 'natural theology' which finds the humanly satisfactory and well-furnished world such an effect of its Creator as the watch of the watchmaker. Nor does he, after the fashion of some mystics and Alexandrians, dissolve nature into a system of symbols translating the real world of the spirit. Like Ruskin, he was able to recover the medieval and Franciscan joy in God's creation.<sup>15</sup>

Father McNamara has expressed this aspect of Hopkins's concept of nature as follows:

Each individual thing in creation by being itself as well as it can, and by revealing

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13. Elizabeth Phare, The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, A Survey and Commentary, p.37 and p.88.

14. Immortal Diamond, op.cit., p.229.

15. Kenyon Critics, op.cit., p.75.

itself to man as fully as it can, reveals to him a bit of God's beauty that nothing else in the universe can reveal to him. Therefore, if man wants to catch the full natural revelation of God, he must learn to be sensitive to the particular, individualized aspects of 'each mortal thing'. God multiplied species, and individuals in the species, precisely that from the contemplation of the many, man might come to know something of the One.<sup>16</sup>

"In all physical beauty, but very particularly in all human beauty of body and soul, Hopkins saw a revelation of the beauty of God Himself. He was as exact in his observation of all the distinctive features of nature as was Tennyson; he was even more deeply aware of nature's sacramentalism than was Francis Thompson; he was an eminently successful poet of the natural revelation of God."<sup>17</sup>

The fullest supernatural revelation of God to man was realized in the Incarnation when the very "Word of God became flesh and dwelt amongst us." In a letter to E.H. Coleridge, Hopkins says that no man could ever consider life trivial if he realized what humiliations and limitations the Second Person of the Blessed

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16. Immortal Diamond, op.cit., p.231.

17. Immortal Diamond, op.cit., p.236.

Trinity took upon himself to raise the lives of all men above the trivial.<sup>18</sup> It was one of the purposes of the Incarnation to reveal God's lovableness to man in a human form. It was the Incarnation that stepped down God's glory to the capacities of men. This grasp of the marvellous implications of the Incarnation so steeped the very atmosphere of Hopkins's thought that he came to see everything in the world as touched and tinged by the Word-made-flesh. Thus Hopkins came to invest everything with a double sacramentalism. He had learned not only to see nature "charged with the grandeur of God"; he had also learned to inscape it with the Incarnate Word.

For Hopkins the sensuous beauty of the world was neither to be denied nor suppressed but accepted and subordinated to grace. "The clearness of his thought, however odd his words, on the immanence and transcendence of God saved him from any of the jerry-built cosmologies to which the Victorians and Romantics had

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18. Further Letters, op.cit., p.19.

frequently to resort in trying to deal with their intense awareness of nature."<sup>19</sup>

Coventry Patmore in a letter to Bridges said that although Hopkins was "a Catholic of the most scrupulous strictness, he could nevertheless see the Holy Spirit in all goodness, truth and beauty."<sup>20</sup>

Blanche Mary Kelly in an article in the Catholic World, 1937, points out the things that inspired Hopkins to write as he did.

First of all beauty, the beauty of the world, the stars, the sea, the thrush. The beauty of man next, and of woman, the glory of human courage ... the perception of 'God's better beauty, grace.' Over all, pervading all, God himself, the world charged with his grandeur, man knit to his greatness, especially through brotherhood with Christ.<sup>21</sup>

This idea of Nature and natural beauty as the "word of God" to be apprehended and instressed by the individual man in his desire for "correspondence" with God is always with Hopkins. It is the subject of much of his prose and a consistent theme in his poetry.

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19. Kenyon Critics, op.cit., p.101.

20. Lahey, op.cit., p.53.

21. Catholic World, "Immortal Diamond", January, 1937, pp.481-2.

By Hopkins's sacramental view of nature is meant that he believed that every individual thing had an innate beauty which was to be realized in some way. "This realization comes about when the individual thing exerts itself to the full extent of its individual powers - when it is most fully itself. By realizing itself perfectly, each individual thing proclaims the glory and power and majesty of God."<sup>22</sup>

In his writings on the Spiritual Exercises Hopkins considers the purpose of creation and he holds that man, the poet, the artist, the worker, is meant like the rest of creation to sing a hymn of praise to God. The "design, the character, the air, the plan" he is to find in the diverse scattered images of nature is a theophany and a Laudate Dominum.<sup>23</sup>

Elizabeth Phare says that Hopkins seems actually to obtain from nature a sense of the presence of one or other of the persons of the Trinity. Hopkins was a devout Christian and a man of extreme intellectual

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22. Thomas J. Grady, America, January 29, 1944, "Windhover's Meaning", pp.465-466.

23. John Pick, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Priest and Poet, p.38.

scrupulousness who aimed at reconciling what he knew of the natural world with what he knew and believed of the spiritual. In a rational Christianity the body must play a considerable part; and Hopkins is not ashamed of allowing his senses to provide him with ways of approach to God. For Hopkins the whole universe has become unified from the time of Christ's Incarnation. Both Hopkins and Dixon have a peculiar devotion to the wild aspects of nature, which, because they are peculiarly baffling to human logic, seem to them to be particularly characteristic of the workings of the divine mind.<sup>24</sup> In this connection Louis Untermeyer writes: "To Hopkins everything was happy and magnificent. The world was not merely colorful but prodigal, 'barbarous in beauty'. Nature was a divine turmoil and God was an eternal exuberance."<sup>25</sup>

In his personal reflections on Contemplatio ad Obtinendum Amorem Hopkins writes: "It is the contemplation of the Holy Ghost sent to us through creatures..."

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24. Elizabeth Phare, op.cit., p.89.

25. John Pick, Renaissance, "Hopkins' Imagery: The Relation of His Journals to His Poetry", Autumn 1954, p.38.

all things therefore are charged with love, are charged with God and if we know how to touch them give off sparks and take fire, yield drops and flow, ring and tell of him."<sup>26</sup>

In the Autumn edition of the Renascence, 1954, John Pick wrote an article entitled "Hopkins's Imagery: The Relation of his Journal to his Poetry." Some of the pertinent paragraphs are the following.

While it is true that this poem (Wreck of the Deutschland) and those that followed until his death in 1839 are so different from his juvenalia and early verses as to seem almost the writing of another man, nevertheless the germinal seeds of his nature poetry are to be found in the Journal that he kept between 1838 and 1875 and in the lecture notes which he gathered for the purpose of teaching rhetoric during his early Jesuit years of poetic silence.

This is very especially true of his imagery, for a study of his Journal shows that he was setting down those same carefully incisive descriptions of nature that are later found in his poetry. His Journal became his preliminary sketch pad, his field book in which the rudimentary and embryonic images of his later poetry are to be found.

It would be easy to demonstrate that in both the earlier Journal and the poems the same man is at work. Even more remarkable is the fact that often the very same images in the Journal

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26. Note-Books and Papers, op.cit., p.342.

crop out in poems written six, eight or even twenty years later. Indeed, in this poem "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" written the year before his death, he continues to employ these earlier observations.

At first sight it would seem that he drew on his Journal for the raw material of his images - and indeed we know that he occasionally reread his Journal in later life. Or at first sight it would seem that he so fixed these images in his mind that later his memory could call them up.

The truth, however, seems to be that through the practice of keeping the Journal he developed certain ways of looking at things and certain ways of setting them down - that he developed a habitus and therefore one should not be surprised at the resemblance between the earlier Journal and his later poetry.

Even more significant is the way in which the raw material was finally transmuted into poetry. A study of the two sets of images becomes an important approach to an understanding of the creative process no matter how many mysteries of that alchemy may remain unsolved.<sup>27</sup>

Pick continues the article by giving a comparison of the images in poetry and prose. He remarks that we ought not to be surprised at the remarkable similarity because in reality it is the same artist looking at the

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<sup>27</sup>. Renaissance, Vol.VII, No.1, Autumn, 1954, pp.30-1.

same materials in much the same way. He says it would be incongruous to think of Hopkins as rushing back from fishing in the Elwy to his room in order to comb his Journal for images to express his delight. The fundamental difference between the Journal and the poetry is, of course, the basic difference between prose and poetry.

Towards the end of his article Pick has this to say:

Now, while the rudimentary images themselves are to be found in the Journal, so also is the centralizing idea of the poems which fuses the images into an organic and living poem. These ideas, like the images, are not so much repeated in the poems as the result of an habitual way of looking at reality.<sup>28</sup>

A consistent nature theme that runs through Hopkins's letters is his love of Wales. "All his life its air was to stimulate and its landscape to inspire him."<sup>29</sup> In a letter to Bridges, Hopkins refers to Wales as "always to me a mother of Muses."<sup>30</sup> Geoffrey

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28. Ibid., p.37.

29. Eleanor Ruggles, Gerard Manley Hopkins, A Life, p. 58.

30. Letters to Bridges, op.cit., p.227.

Grigson expresses the influence of Wales on Hopkins this way: "His senses were exultantly and ecstatically open to his environment around the hill-perched St. Beuno's College in the Vale of Clwyd, in his purple and pastoral Wales."<sup>31</sup> Hopkins admitted to Bridges that his poetic inspiration at times was almost extinct but a notable exception was a fortnight in Wales.<sup>32</sup>

Eleanor Ruggles states that no other land was to be to him, as Wales had been, the mother of his unhindered and happy muse.<sup>33</sup>

The wild natural beauty of Wales had its beneficent effect on Hopkins's spirits and health. "Wales set me up for a while, but the effect is now past."<sup>34</sup> "Since I returned from Wales I have been in better health than usual, fitter for work; and very much better spirits."<sup>35</sup> "The Welsh landscape has a great charm and when I see Snowdon and the mountains in its neighbour-

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31. Geoffrey Grigson, op.cit., p.10.

32. Letters to Bridges, op.cit., p.270.

33. Eleanor Ruggles, op.cit., p.157.

34. Letters to Bridges, op.cit., p.251.

35. Further Letters, op.cit., p.374.

hood, as I can now, with the clouds lifting, it gives me a rise of the heart."<sup>36</sup>

Hopkins's eye was attuned to the beauties of nature. Wales was "this remote and beautiful spot."<sup>37</sup> "But if you have not seen Pont Aberglaslyn in the sunlight you have something to live for."<sup>38</sup> "The house stands on a steep hillside, it commands the long-drawn valley of the Clwyd to the sea, a vast prospect, and opposite is Snowdon and its range, just now it being bright visible but coming and going with the weather."<sup>39</sup> In a letter to his mother in 1876, Hopkins gives a typical description, for him, of a walk in Wales.

As we walked along the hills toward it the valley looked more charming and touching than ever: in its way there can hardly be in the world anything to beat the Vale of Clwyd. The day was then threatening and clouded, the sea and distant hills brimmed with purple, clouds trailing low, the landscape clear but sober, the valley though so

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36. ibid., p.127.

37. Letters to Dixon, op.cit., p.142.

38. Letters to Bridges, op.cit., p.228.

39. Further Letters, op.cit., p.124.

verdant appeared of a pale blush-colour from the many red sandstone fresh-ploughed fields... Looking up along a white churchtower I caught a lovely sight - a flock of seagulls wheeling and sailing high up in the air, sparkles of white as bright as snowballs in the vivid blue.<sup>40</sup>

The main characteristic of Wales that seemed to attract Hopkins was its wild and rugged beauty. He refers to it many times as "wild Wales"<sup>41</sup> and "North Wales, the true Arcadia of wild beauty."<sup>42</sup>

It has been seen in this chapter that Gerard Manley Hopkins had a rightful place in the list of poetic nature lovers and observers. His note-books contained myriad examples of his keen observations of natural phenomenon in all forms. He began with this almost scientific approach and later from this habit of noting the details of things he was led to his theory of inscape in which the particular individualized aspects of objects played an important role. The Note-

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40. Ibid., p.137.

41. Ibid., p.177.

42. Ibid., p.370.

books and Journals, it was noted, were the raw material from which many of his poetic images were formed.

It has been pointed out in this chapter that in all of his prose writings Hopkins showed that the study and love of nature was the occasion of great joy. For instance, his love of wild, rugged Wales was a frequent bright spot in a life sometimes difficult, pain-wracked and containing moods of desolation. Part of this joy was the result of a supersensitive nature. The deeper joy came because Hopkins learned to inscape nature and natural beauty with the Incarnate Word. Each individual object revealed to him a bit of God's beauty if he was only acute enough to realize it. Hopkins's sacramental view of nature was the cause of his evident delight.

It has been said that part of Hopkins's joy in nature came because he learned to inscape nature with the Incarnate Word. Part of the background of Hopkins's theory of inscape lay in his attraction to beauty and his attempt to develop a theory of beauty. Chapter Four will attempt to explain this background.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### HOPKINS AND THE IDEA OF BEAUTY

In his early years at Oxford Hopkins was much concerned with the idea of beauty, so much so, that he tried to develop a philosophy of beauty. At this time of his life he was under the influence directly of Walter Pater, who was one of his teachers, and indirectly of John Ruskin whose writings on literature and art attracted Hopkins very much.

This present chapter will attempt to illustrate Hopkins's developing theory of beauty. This development will be best seen in his undergraduate essays written at Oxford. It will then be shown how his theory of beauty fitted into his concept of nature. There will be a short presentation of traditional Thomistic ideas on beauty and a further section will compare and contrast these theories.

Hopkins's theories on beauty developed gradually. When he was in his early twenties and an undergraduate at Oxford he wrote a striking composition, written in all probability for Pater, entitled On The Origin of

Beauty. It is in the form of a Platonic dialogue, and in spite of his youth it is an astonishing piece of mature writing.

Hopkins advances two theories which have important bearings on his later poetry. The first theory is that beauty is a blending of regularity with variety, evenness with oddness. The idea is not original but it is maintained with freshness and point throughout a lengthy discussion on a horse-chestnut leaf. "Then the beauty of the oak and the chestnut-fan and the sky is a mixture of likeness and difference or agreement and disagreement or consistency and variety or symmetry and change."<sup>1</sup> The second theory distinguishes two kinds of beauty which he calls "chromatic" and "diatonic" beauty. As applied to poetry, "diatonic" includes Parallelism and all its forms; "chromatic" applies to expression, emphasis, tone, intensity, climax. Emphasis and intensity, he admits, may be given abruptly, and so belong to "diatonism"; "perhaps tone or expression best give the field of chromatic beauty."<sup>2</sup> In explaining this termin-

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1. The Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.90.

2. Ibid., p.106.

ology he says: "The diatonic scale, you know, leaves out, the chromatic puts in, the half notes."<sup>3</sup>

In another essay written in his undergraduate days, On The Signs Of Health and Decay In The Arts, Hopkins explains the terminology a little more fully.

Proportion having been found to be the source or seat of Beauty, it will appear that accordingly as proportion is expressed is the character of the beauty which follows from it. And it can be expressed in two ways, by interval or by continuance. Both seem really to be expressions of proportion, though it is generally associated with the former, to our ideas. The division then is of abrupt and gradual, of parallelistic and continuous, of intervallary and chromatic, of quantitative and qualitative beauty. The beauty of an infinite curve is chromatic, of a system of curves parallelistic; of deepening colour or of a passing from one colour into another chromatic, of a collocation of colours intervallary; of the change of note on the string of a violin or in a strain of wind chromatic, of that on the keys of a piano intervallary. Art of course combines the two kinds of beauty, some arts have more of the one, some of the other.<sup>4</sup>

Alan Heuser in his book, The Shaping Vision of Gerard Manley Hopkins, says that Hopkins kept his careful prose journals to record the forms and laws of

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3. Ibid., p.104.

4. Ibid., pp.75-76.

nature, and thereby to build up materials for a philosophy of beauty. He goes on to state that in order to communicate his vision of nature in the speculative atmosphere of Oxford, Hopkins had to reduce it to intelligible form, to theory.

His theory was to be scientific, subjecting everything to measured order and meaning, as well as dialectic, turning all on a few critical principles derived especially from the study of Greek. Ruskin's laws, Pater's essences, Plato's ideas, the Pre-Raphaelite naturalistic ideal and colour-music, Pythagorean music and mathematics, all these entered his science.<sup>5</sup>

The basis for Hopkins's early theory of nature and art was the statement: "Beauty therefore is a relation and the apprehension of it a comparison."<sup>6</sup>

The relating process took place in perspective or space and in explorative activity or time. The vital relations of parts in a whole were seized as one thing in space, while experienced as falling into order in time. There were, then, both the single points at which one could unify all the details of a scene or object, and the intervals between those stationary or fixed points.<sup>7</sup>

Hopkins explains his ideas of relationship

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5. Alan Heuser, The Shaping Vision of Gerard Manley Hopkins, p.18.

6. The Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.95.

7. Alan Heuser, op.cit., p.19.

in beauty in another undergraduate essay entitled On The Origin Of Our Moral Ideas.

Beauty lies in the relation of the parts of a sensuous thing to each other, that is in a certain relation, it being absolute at one point and comparative in those hearing it or falling from it. Thus in those arts the effect is in time, not space, it is a sequence at certain intervals - elementarily at least.<sup>8</sup>

In the course of the informal dialogue On The Origin Of Beauty the student Hanbury has to admit that beauty depends on objective relations, not merely on subjective responses; that one way of comparing the relations in beauty - one and many, likeness and difference, proportion and parallelism - is by continuous and non-continuous lines, colours, shades and sounds. It is decided from the correspondence in gradation between light and sound that there are two kinds of beauty: transitional, with intervals or half-notes, and abrupt, without intervals, or, by application of musical terms, chromatic beauty of tonal expression and diatonic beauty of structure.

Hopkins founds his ideal of beauty on the prin-

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8. The Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.80.

eiple of order, of unity in variety. He applies this also in his discussion on the difference between prose and poetry and the pre-eminence of the latter. Father William T. Noon, S.J., illustrates this point in a chapter of Immortal Diamond called "The Three Languages of Poetry". Literature, Father Noon says, like every art, aims at strict beauty, and is distinguished from the other arts because it employs the medium of words. The use of words with order and arrangement is that which differentiates the language of literature from the language of ordinary use. The literary artist must have a sense for, and pay conscious attention to, the arrangement of the words he uses. Gradation, intensity, climax, tone, emphasis, chiaroscuro - all of these effects, according to Hopkins, are illustrative of what he calls "chromatic parallelism". Literary prose partakes of these effects as much as does poetry. Over and above these effects, there is also what Hopkins calls a "marked parallelism". Here the opposition between words is more pronounced, the contrast is more striking, the transitions are more sudden, more abrupt. Metaphor, simile, parable, antithesis, contrast, are the effects produced by this "marked parallelism".

Such effects are, it must be noted, more likely to be found in poetry, where, according to Hopkins, "likeness is sought in unlikeness" far more than in prose. Because poetry employs a far more "continuous and artificial structure" and a more strictly regular parallelism, both in diction and in thought, "poetry tasks the highest powers of a man's mind" far more than prose.

Alan Heuser gives the title "The Idea of Beauty" to Chapter Three of his book. In this chapter he endeavours to show how Hopkins gave a scientific basis to his philosophy of beauty.

Beauty was absolute, fixed, at one point in a series of relations; this absoluteness held and defined the form as the ideal type in which the idea of the whole was manifested. While Hopkins as artist was interested in the relation of parts to the whole in the beautiful form, as theorist he postulated that intervals within a sequence of forms could be measured - thus establishing a scale of fixed points in regular series and giving a scientific basis to his philosophy of beauty. Once the colour-sound analogy was extended, or if Ruskin's principle of musical gradation was applied, then the establishment of fixed types of beauty in sequence was brought to the convenient pattern of music: all relations of points and distances were like those of notes and intervals in the various chords and scales of the archetypal art.<sup>9</sup>

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9. Alan Heuser, op.cit., p.19.

Another one of Hopkins's penetrating undergraduate essays is The Probable Future of Metaphysics. In it he sets forth a new Realism to combat the current materialism. In his summary of this essay Heuser points out that Hopkins traced three points in his preliminary sketch of metaphysics. The first point was that there were fixed types in a string or scale of nature rather than fluctuating accidentals. The second point was that there are unitive wholes prior to their parts. Thirdly, there are objective ideas outside of subjective personality. By applying these three points together to his philosophy of beauty, Hopkins arrived at a Platonic theory for the Pre-Raphaelite naturalistic ideal. His theory was that every fixed form in nature pointed to an underworld of ideal reality, in which its type was established in fullest organization or highest development as one whole, fixed, essential idea. Unity of idea led Hopkins to see in the history of art the rise and fall of types of perfection, and to require in the philosophy of art the identification of those types in terms of truth and beauty. This was Pater's task too. Hopkins was, however, more concerned with the concrete sign in nature. By careful restatement of his Platonic

theory of the naturalistic ideal, he was, within a year, to be led to the discovery and formulation of 'inscape'.<sup>10</sup>

Charles K. Trueblood asserts that if Hopkins was a naturalist, he was a naturalist of beauty. His pronouncements were not random exuberances. They were the products of definite aesthetic views which were matured by Hopkins quite early in life. Beauty, when it arises, Hopkins considered, is the collected effect of a work of art, whether that art be created by man or by nature. These views, Trueblood says, might be summarized in Hopkins's own epigram: "Beauty is a virtue of inscape." Implied, of course, is the qualification that not all kinds of inscape have such virtue but just which kinds do possess it, Hopkins does not indicate, although the extent of his researches into nature's inscapes suggests that he may have been essaying a classification.<sup>11</sup>

Father W.A.M. Peters, S.J., in his book on Hopkins shows the close connection that exists between inscape and beauty. For one thing it is seen in this quotation

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10. Alan Heuser, op.cit., pp.21-22.

11. Charles K. Trueblood, Poetry, August, 1937, Vol.L, p.274.

from Hopkins's essay Poetry and Verse: "But if it (so. verse) has a meaning and is meant to be heard for its own sake it will be poetry if you take poetry to be a kind of composition and not the virtue or excellence of that kind, as eloquence is the virtue of oratory and not oratory only and beauty the virtue of inscape and not inscape only."<sup>12</sup> For beauty, as Hopkins sees it, lies in the "relation between the parts to each other and of the parts to the whole" or, as he expresses himself more carefully, in the "apprehension of the presence of more than one thing". Hence for Hopkins beauty presupposes unity in the object, just as it presupposes inscape, which is clear from the above quotation. The reason why he related beauty to inscape must consequently be that in inscape there is inherent unity, a unity, that is, proceeding from the nature of the object itself.

Such a profound admiration and love of the inscapes of the world is most striking and requires a closer study. Why did Hopkins consider the inscapes so

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12. The Journals and Papers, op.cit., p.289.

precious that their destruction pained him so severely and acutely? When man contemplates an object, he usually does it to grasp the beauty of the thing and to rejoice in its perception; in the case of Hopkins this is not altogether true. Inscap is not primarily valuable because it is so closely related to beauty. Inscap is appreciated for its own sake, for a value entirely its own. It is his spiritual outlook on this world that made inscape so precious to Hop'ins; the inscape of an object was, so to speak, more 'word of God', reminded him more of the Creator, than a superficial impression could have done.

How intense his awareness was of the actual presence of God in each individual thing and how he realized that each individual thing in its own peculiar way brought him news about the Creator appears from a careful reading of his writings. God's utterance of Himself outside Himself in this world, he writes, so that then this world is 'word, expression, news of God'.<sup>13</sup>

Hopkins in his early prose works examined beauty from a purely philosophical or neutral viewpoint. As he developed in maturity he regarded it from a Christian

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13. Father Peters, op.cit., pp.2,3, and 6.

standpoint. W.H. Gardner points out that to Hopkins beauty was two-fold, "mortal beauty" and "immortal (or supernatural) beauty." Thus the effect or instress of beauty was equivocal. Hopkins saw that beauty could be either an insidious attraction towards the lower levels of being or a constant admonition to the higher. It all depended on the state of the receptive mind, the character. The enjoyment of beauty is a sacrament and the implied obligation is an act of sacrifice, the controlling of the sensibility by the disciplined will.<sup>14</sup>

In a letter to Bridges, Hopkins pointed out that no one admired the beauty of the body more than he did. "But this kind of beauty is dangerous." Another type of beauty, Hopkins says, is the beauty of the mind, such as genius. This is greater than the beauty of the body and should not be called dangerous. And more beautiful than the beauty of the mind is beauty of character. Hopkins then proceeds to show that every beauty is not a wit or genius nor has every wit or genius character. The soul need have no further beauty, so to speak, than

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14. W.H. Gardner, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Vol.1, p.18.

that which it expresses in the symmetry of the body and also the soul may have no further beauty than that which is seen in the mind, that there may be genius uninformed by character.

In a letter to Coventry Patmore, Hopkins makes reflections of a similar nature.

It is certain that in nature outward beauty is the proof of inward beauty, outward good of inward good. Fineness, proportion, of feature comes from a moulding force which succeeds in asserting itself over the resistance of cumbersome and restraining matter; the bloom of health comes from the abundance of life, the great vitality within. The moulding force, the life, is the form in the philosophical sense and in man this is the soul . . . But why do we find beautiful evil? Not by any freak of nature, nature is incapable of producing beautiful evil. The explanation is to be sought outside of nature; it is old, simple, and the undeniable fact. It comes from wicked will, freedom of choice, abusing the beauty, the good of its nature.<sup>15</sup>

In the Introduction of The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, Claude Collier Abbott remarks that with his evident delight in earth and her creatures, it was natural that Hopkins should take delight in man and his beauty, both of body and mind. Hopkins possessed the admiration of the contemplative

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15. Further Letters, op.cit., pp.306-307.

man for nature's active creatures and life in which the means are adjusted to the end, and the sinew and brain of the craftsman are magnificently equal to his task. Even more deeply is he moved by the loveliness of youth and young manhood, a loveliness doomed to mutability and threatened by spiritual disaster, yet capable of attaining to character and hallowing grace.

From his youth upwards Hopkins was haunted by the fear that his attachment to beauty was inordinate. The problem of integrating his craving for beauty in a spiritual vision which at once included and transcended the natural was to test him all his life. He strove to see all things and all men in Christ. Certainly Hopkins never ceased to know the danger of the mortal beauty which ravished him, and the need of its continual redemption by the eternal.<sup>16</sup> Father Vincent Turner, S.J., in an article of the Dublin Review, October, 1944, remarks that many of Hopkins's critics miss his centralizing insight, of seeing in one single vision "the own

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16. Times Literary Supplement, Sept. 26, 1942, p.474.

scape" of natural beauties proclaiming the glory of God, and, as a result, they overstress his amazing sensuous awareness. They think that he relates it to the praise of God only by dutiful afterthought. It is the critic's puritanism that makes them misread the real mind of Hopkins.<sup>17</sup> Gardner points out that the introduction of the Christ symbol indicates a profound and spontaneous unification of the intellect and the senses, the mystical fusion of the Many and the One. Judging from his criticisms of Keats and Whitman, Hopkins was not satisfied with a poetry that rested in the senses and emotions alone. He desired intellectual satisfaction as well. For him theism alone could provide this unity and completeness.<sup>18</sup>

Alan Heuser gives what amounts to an excellent summary of the progressive development of Hopkins's ideas on beauty.

Beauty in sky and earth was but a reflexion,  
a Platonic 'shadow' of real beauty. Hopkins  
was led from observed forms to their origin  
in ideas, from the arc of particular beauties

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17. Dublin Review, Vol.CCXV, October, 1944,  
"Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Centenary Article", pp.144-  
159.

18. W.H. Gardner, op.cit., p.19.

to the centre from which the Idea of Beauty shone. And if the fixed types in outward nature were sealed and strung musically, so were their essential ideas in the underlying world of forms. Hopkins passed from art through science to metaphysics. His concept of beauty pointed the way: the subordination of parts in a natural whole was a concrete example of the many particulars and the one universal in an idea. The definition of specific types of beauty in a scale of flux was a way to reach their eternal ideas.<sup>19</sup>

Hopkins felt the need for some scientific basis for aesthetics. While science could not be as exactly applied to painting and poetry as to architecture and music, he tried to apply the proportions and relations of the latter two because they could be numbered and measured.

How does Hopkins's idea of beauty relate to his concept of nature? Before the poetic intuition of a poet lodges in the preconscious of his soul, it passes through, i.e. it is coloured by, his experience. No two people have the same set of experiences. It is for this reason that each poet is individual and distinct. The finished piece of literature contains part

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19. Alan Heuser, op.cit., p.20.

of the poet's self and part of the objective reality that produced the reaction in the first place. What, then, were some of Hopkins's experiences that would lend colour and distinctiveness to his poetry? Some of these would be his training in the Spiritual Exercises which gave discipline to his will and emotions, his love of philosophy and theology, his study of Greek, his early training at Oxford, his close observation of natural phenomena, the development of his theories of inscape and instress, his adoption of the philosophy of St. Thomas Scotus, his physical disabilities, his spiritual outlook, his love of beauty in nature and in man.

Hopkins founded his idea of beauty on the principle of order, of unity in variety. inscape also has inherent unity because the individually distinctive form of a natural object reveals its 'oneness'. Hence, this sensation of inscape, this feeling for the external pattern expressive of the inward form of things, that deeper pattern, order and unity which gives meaning to external form, this instressing the inscape, came to be a pivotal point in Hopkins's thought. He reflects upon all his activities; he uses all his senses in the perception of inscape and he is never satisfied until he

has also felt the instress of things. His eagerness to know the self of things is matched by his keen consciousness of his own self. His theories on beauty led him, therefore, to his theories on inscape and instress which form an essential part of his concept of nature.

For Hopkins the beauty and the worth of all things must be seen in and through the love of God. It is his spiritual outlook on this world that made inscape so precious to Hopkins. The inscape of an object reminded him more of the Creator than a superficial impression could have done. Father McNamee sums up Hopkins's ideas neatly when he evolves from a study of Hopkins's writings that, for Hopkins, "each individual thing in creation by being itself as well as it can, and by revealing itself to man as fully as it can, reveals to him a bit of God's beauty that nothing else in the universe can reveal to him. Therefore, if man wants to catch the full natural revelation of God, he must learn to be sensitive to the particular, individualized aspects of 'each mortal thing'. God multiplied species, precisely that from the contemplation of the many, man might come to know something of the One."

### The Traditional Ideas of Beauty

For purposes of comparison the traditional ideas of beauty will be enunciated. These ideas will be taken from two of Jacques Maritain's books, Art and Scholasticism, and Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry. Since this section is being presented for the purposes of comparison, no attempt has been made to explain, elaborate on, refute or argue about the material presented. It is completely M. Maritain's development of the ideas of Aristotle and St. Thomas on beauty. An attempt has been made for the reason of brevity to select only pertinent material. This material is quoted directly or is closely paraphrased from the original text.

St. Thomas Aquinas's definition of beauty is id quod visum placet, that which, being seen, pleases. The four words say all that is necessary: a vision, that is to say an intuitive knowledge and a joy. The beautiful is what gives joy, not all joy, but joy in knowledge; not the joy peculiar to the act of knowing, but a joy superabounding and overflowing from such an

act because of the object known. If a thing exalts and delights the soul by the bare fact of its being given to the intuition of the soul, it is good to apprehend, it is beautiful.

Beauty is essentially the object of intelligence, for what knows in the full meaning of the word is the mind, which alone is open to the infinity of being. The natural site of beauty is the intelligible world: thence it descends. But it also falls in a way within the grasp of the senses, since the senses in the case of man serve the mind and can themselves rejoice in knowing. The part played by the senses in the perception of beauty becomes in Man's case enormous and well-nigh indispensable, because man's mind is not intuitive like the angelic mind: it can perceive, no doubt, but only on condition of abstracting and discoursing. In man only knowledge derived through the senses possesses fully the intuitivity necessary for the perception of the beautiful. So also man can certainly enjoy purely intelligible beauty, but the beautiful which is connatural to man is that which comes to delight the mind through the senses and their intuition.

If beauty delights the mind, it is because beauty is essentially a certain excellence or perfection in the proportion of things to the mind. Hence the three conditions assigned to it by St. Thomas: integrity, because the mind likes being; perception, because the mind likes order and likes unity; lastly and above all brightness or clarity, because the mind likes light and intelligibility. The element of brightness, radiance or clarity is the most important and the most difficult to explain. The Schoolmen described the radiance or clarity inherent in beauty as splendor formae, the splendor of the form, say the splendor of the secrets of being radiating into intelligence. To understand this we have to understand the implications in the Aristotelian notion of form - which does not mean external form but, on the contrary, the inner ontological principle which determines things in their essences and qualities, and through which they are, and exist, and act. The words clarity, radiance could be very misleading if it was forgotten that being is intelligible in itself, but not necessarily for man, and remains most often obscure to man, either because its intelligibility in itself is obscured in matter or be-

cause it is too high and too pure for the intellect. The word form, that is to say the principle determining the peculiar perfection of everything which is, constituting and completing things in their essence and their qualities, the ontological secret, so to speak, of their innermost being, their spiritual essence, their operative mystery, is above all the peculiar principle of intelligibility, the peculiar clarity of everything. Every form, moreover, is a remnant or a ray of the creative mind impressed upon the heart of the being created. All order and proportion, on the other hand, are the work of the mind. So, to say with the Schoolmen that beauty is the splendor of form shining on the proportioned parts of matter is to say that it is a lightning of the mind on a matter intelligently arranged. The mind rejoices in the beautiful because in the beautiful it finds itself again: recognizes itself, and comes in contact with its very own light.

The beautiful nevertheless is not a kind of truth, but a kind of good. The perception of the beautiful is related to knowledge, but by way of addition, "as its bloom is an addition of youth"; it is not so much a

kind of knowledge as a kind of delight.

It is for its own sake that every form of beauty is loved at first, even if later the too frail flesh is caught in the snare. Love in its turn produces ecstasy, that is to say, makes the lover beside himself: an ecstasy of which the soul experiences a lesser form when it is gripped by the beauty of a work of art, and the fullness when it is absorbed, like dew, by the beauty of God.

Beauty for St. Thomas begins to exist as soon as the radiation of any form over a suitably proportioned matter succeeds in pleasing the mind, and he is careful to warn us that beauty is in a manner relative, - not to the dispositions of the subject in the sense in which relativity is understood nowadays, but to the peculiar nature and end of the thing and to the formal conditions in which it is involved. And however beautiful a created thing may be, it may appear beautiful to some and not to others, because it is beautiful only under certain aspects which some discover and others do not see: it is therefore "beautiful in one place and not beautiful in another."

If this be so, it is because the beautiful belongs

to the order of the transcendentals - that is to say, of concepts which surpass all limits of kind of category and will not suffer themselves to be confined in any class, because they absorb everything and are to be found everywhere. Like the one, the true and the good, it is being itself considered from a certain aspect, it is a property of being: it is not an accident super-added to being, it adds to being merely a relation of reason, it is being considered as delighting, by the mere intuition of it, an intellectual nature. So everything is beautiful as everything is good, at least in a certain relation. And as being is everywhere present and everywhere various, the beautiful likewise is scattered everywhere and everywhere various. Like being and the other transcendentals, it is essentially analogous, that is to say, it is predicated for divers reasons, sub diversa ratione, of the divers subjects of which it is predicated: each kind of being is in its own way, is good in its own way, is beautiful in its own way.

Analogous concepts are properly predicable only of God, in whom the perfection they describe exists in a "formal-eminent" manner, in a pure and infinite state.

God is their "sovereign analogue", and they are to be found in things only as a scattered and prismatic reflection of the face of God. So Beauty is one of the divine attributes.

God is beauty itself, because He imparts beauty to all created beings, according to the peculiar nature of each, and because He is the cause of all harmony and brightness. Every form indeed, that is to say every light, is "a certain irradiation proceeding from the first brightness," "a participation in the divine brightness." And every consonance or harmony, every concord, every friendship and union of whatever sort between creatures, proceeds from the divine beauty, the primitive, super-eminent type of all consonance, which gathers all things together and calls them to itself. Thus "the beauty of the creature is nothing but a similitude of the divine beauty shared among things," and on the other hand, every form being a principle of being, the divine beauty must be said to be the cause of being in everything which is.

In the Trinity, St. Thomas goes on to say, the title Beauty is specially appropriated to the Son. As for integrity or perfection, He has truly and perfectly

in Himself, without the least diminution, the nature of the Father. As for due proportion or consonance, He is the express image of the Father, a perfect likeness; and it is proportion which befits the picture as such. As for brilliance, He is the Word, the light and splendor of the mind, "perfect Word, lacking nothing and, so to speak, art of the Almighty God."

#### Comparison and Contrast Of Hopkins's Ideas Of Beauty And The Traditional Ideas

There are many points of similarity between Hopkins's ideas on beauty and the traditional ideas and a few points of dissimilarity. For one thing, both Hopkins and the Maritain theory stress the idea of proportion. Maritain's ideas based on Aristotle and St. Thomas list proportion as one of the conditions of beauty.

Beauty consists in proper proportion, because the sense derives pleasure from things properly proportioned, as being similar to itself, for sense also is a kind of reason like every cognitive virtue.<sup>20</sup>

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20. Jacques Maritain, Art and Scholasticism, London, Sheed & Ward, 1930, p.127.

Hopkins, too, considers proportion "a source of beauty". He bases many of his attempts at scientific analysis of beauty on the division of proportion into abrupt or gradual, or using musical terminology, as Hopkins did, into chromatic and diatonic.

There is agreement, too, on the fact that beauty is relative. For St. Thomas, beauty begins to exist as soon as the radiation of any form over a suitably proportioned matter succeeds in pleasing the mind. He is careful to warn us that beauty is in a manner relative, - not in the dispositions of the subject but in the nature and end of the thing itself and to the formal conditions in which it is involved. However beautiful a created thing may be, it may appear beautiful to some and not to others, because it is beautiful only under certain aspects which some discover and others do not see. Hopkins for his part said that beauty is a relation and the apprehension of it a comparison. The relating process took place in time and space. The vital relations of parts in a whole were one thing in space and experienced as falling into order in time.

The theories of Maritain and Hopkins put great stress on order. Order of some kind would seem to be

essential for beauty, i.e. the arrangement of a number of things according to some common principle. Where there is no order of some kind there is no beauty. Hopkins's ideas of beauty were based on order, of unity in variety.

Where there was no unity there was no inscape. If the sun and sunset could not be inscaped together, for instance, there was only a random scaping called 'idiom', a graphic writing peculiar in some way without unifying law. Where unity was, there were levels of depth and height to be sensed by inscape and instress.<sup>21</sup>

In 1873 when Hopkins discovered a law of unity even in random clods of snow, he wrote that "chance left free to act falls into an order as well as purpose".<sup>22</sup>

Victor M. Hamm states in The Pattern of Criticism that even if order is the sine qua non of beauty, the beautiful consists, not in any kind or order, but in order that is resplendent or significant. There are thus as many kinds of beauty as there are kinds of resplendent order. Wherever being radiates its forms, there beauty is to be found, though man's limited

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21. Alan Heuser, op.cit., p.35.

22. Further Letters, op.cit., p.173.

powers of sense and intellect restrict the range of beauty that he is capable of perceiving and enjoying.<sup>23</sup> In Immortal Diamond Father Raymond V. Schoder, S.J., points out that the most common meaning of inscape is the intrinsic beauty of the thing, the shining forth or effulgence of its form, the glory of its translucent being or "selfbeing". For, he says, the true experience of beauty arises only from penetrating, by the mediation of the outer form which is its sensible revelation, to inner form, the in-scape, of the object and drinking in its radiant and abundant reality or truth. Hopkins said that in nature outward beauty is a proof of inward beauty and that fineness and proportion come from a moulding force which asserts itself over matter. The moulding force, he points out, is the form in the philosophic sense. Father Schoder says that it follows that not all objects perceived in their innermost reality are in the strict sense beautiful, but only where the reality is striking, radiant, overflowing. Or us-

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23. Victor M. Hamm, The Pattern of Criticism, Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Company, p.13.

ing Hopkins's words, "beauty is the virtue of inscape, not inscape only".<sup>24</sup>

Both Hopkins and the traditional school agree on the large part that the senses play in the perception of the beautiful.

In beings constituted as we humans are, the role the senses play in the perception of the beautiful is very large, for since our intellects are capable of knowledge only through abstraction and reasoning on the data of sense experience, it is sense cognition alone that possesses that intuitive power which the perception of the beautiful requires. Thus the beauty which is proper and connatural to man is that which delights the intellect through the intuitions of the senses.<sup>25</sup>

Hopkins was very much aware of the part that the senses played in his love of beauty. His extreme sensuous awareness has been stressed and overstressed by many of the critics. But with Hopkins, his training in the Exercises, his knowledge of philosophy and Greek, his love of the scientific elements in music and architecture, all these gave intellectual discipline to his senses. He criticized Keats for "his very sensuous" and indeed "sensual" poems. "Their sensuality is their

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24. Immortal Diamond, op.cit., p.218.

25. Victor M. Hamm, op.cit., pp.12-13.

fault." "In Shakespeare the sensuality seems the accident, in Keats the essence."<sup>26</sup> Hopkins was not satisfied with a poetry that rested in the senses and emotions alone. He desired intellectual satisfaction as well.

The Maritain theory holds that beauty belongs to the order of transcendentals, that it is a branch of the good. One of the characteristics of beauty, as of being and the other transcendentals, is that they are analogous. St. Thomas says that analogous concepts are properly predicable only of God. Hence beauty of creature is only a similitude of Divine Beauty. Beauty is specially appropriated to the Son of God. For Hopkins, too, external beauty must be seen in and through the love of God. It was his spiritual outlook on the world that made inscape so precious to him. "If man wants to catch the full natural revelation of God, he must learn to be sensitive to the particular, individualized aspects of 'each mortal thing'."<sup>27</sup>

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26. Further Letters, op.cit., p.381 and p.384.

27. Immortal Diamond, op.cit., p.231.

One of the areas of dissimilarity between Hopkins and the Maritain theory is that of scientific statement. The Thomistic theory is philosophical and is so stated. Hopkins's theory, as Alan Heuser points out, was to be scientific, subjecting everything to measured order and meaning, as well as dialectic.<sup>28</sup> Elements of architecture, the science of numbers, music, colour were used for this purpose. He came by these ideas easily and naturally because of his family background. Music, painting, poetry, out-of-the-way knowledge were all held in highest repute by his parents, brothers and sisters. His father wrote a book on the cardinal numbers. Ruskin, Pater, the Pre-Raphaelites influenced him greatly in his early schooldays and at Oxford. It was this scientific interest that induced him to his Journals with their collection of minute detail and accurate observations of the world around. His attempts at scientific theory led him to inscape and his special way of viewing nature, people and God.

Finally, the difference in the Thomistic and

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<sup>28</sup> Alan Heuser, op.cit., p.18.

Scottist theory of knowledge and Hopkins's attraction to Scotus's views give different approaches to the grasping of beauty. Scotus's theory of knowledge with its species specialissima is eminently suited to the experience of beauty as inscape for it does not abstract the form from its concrete embodiment; rather, by one act of mind and senses, it apprehends the inner in the outer, the splendor of individuated form shining upon proportioned parts of matter.

In the first section of this chapter an attempt was made to show the growth of Hopkins's theories of beauty using for the most part his undergraduate essays. It was seen that he based his theories on the idea that beauty is a relation and the apprehension of it a comparison. He stressed the idea of proportion in his theory. He noted two kinds of beauty, transitional and abrupt, or using musical terminology, as Hopkins did, chromatic and diatonic. The principle of order, of unity in variety, had an important place, too, in his idea of beauty. His theories of beauty and his interest in their concrete sign in nature led him to his ideas of inscape. For this reason his theories of beauty played an important part in his concept of

nature.

Hopkins's early treatment of beauty was scientific in some respects and philosophical in others. But as he grew older his considerations of beauty became more spiritual. The controlling of sensitive nature by the disciplined will also came into play here. It was noted that this spiritual outlook was not something merely taken as an addition, but rather, that it had a strong hold on his mind. This spiritual outlook alone could provide the unity and completeness so essential to a true love of beauty and nature. It was shown in this first section that unity is the connecting link between his theories of beauty and his concept of nature. Hence, the importance of his theories of beauty in relation to his concept of nature was emphasized.

The second section contained a short summary of the Thomistic ideas of beauty as explained by M. Maritain. The third section compared and contrasted Hopkins's ideas on beauty and Maritain's. The points of similarity were found to be regarding proportion, relationship, order, resplendent order of the form, the part the senses played in the perception of beauty,

beauty of creature as an image of Divine Beauty. The areas of dissimilarity lay in the matter of emphasis - Hopkins attempted a more scientific statement than M. Maritain - and on the differences between Thomistic and Scotist theories of knowledge.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter One showed that Hopkins's concept of nature was influenced to some extent by his Jesuit training and in particular by the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Hopkins's concept of nature had a Christian and spiritual element in it. This came from the fact that Ignatian spirituality showed that the love of created beauty led inevitably to Uncreated Beauty. The Spiritual Exercises taught Hopkins to discipline his youthful, too sensuous love of nature,

Chapter Two presented Hopkins's theories of inscape and instress and showed why they were important in any consideration of his nature concept. His interest in all the distinctive details of things required personal effort. From this way of looking at nature he could penetrate with one act of the mind and senses to the essence of a thing from a consideration of its external qualities. This was inscape. It was seen, too, that the teachings of John Duns Scotus gave philosophic backing to this stress on the individuality of things. So, too, Scotism stressed the importance of self. For Scotus, as for Hopkins, the visible beauty of the world

was a similitude of Divine Ideas and thus took us to God.

Chapter Three noted that Hopkins's concept of nature developed from a scientific approach to nature to a theory of inscape and then to a sacramental view of the world. He loved and enjoyed the beauties of nature from an early age. This love and joy developed and deepened as his outlook became more spiritual.

Chapter Four had three sections. The first section presented Hopkins's theories of beauty which were developed in his undergraduate essays. He stressed unity and order in his theory. His early almost scientific approach to beauty and his interest in the concrete sign of beauty in nature led him to his ideas of inscape. The second section was a short summary of the Thomistic teaching on beauty as explained by M. Jacques Maritain. The third section compared and contrasted these views.

It was concluded from Chapter One that even though Hopkins had a love of nature from an early age, it was the Jesuit training and the Spiritual Exercises that helped to form in a considerable way Hopkins's concept of nature. He believed that created beauty led

to Uncreated Beauty. The Spiritual Exercises gave Hopkins approval for his delight in nature but it taught him also to discipline this love and joy. The Spiritual Exercises supplied the oil for the smooth meshing of religious belief and love of earthly beauty. This was carried over into his poetry.

It was concluded from Chapter Two that Hopkins from an early age looked for distinctive details in objects. This led him to his theory of inscape - that the individually distinctive external qualities of things gave insight into their individual essences. Hopkins found philosophical justification for inscape in the teachings of Duns Scotus. The latter stressed the importance of the haecceitas or thisness of things. Scotism also led Hopkins to a great preoccupation with self, and the essence of the individuating principle in himself. Hopkins followed the Scotist teaching concerning a sacramental view of nature, that visible creatures and objects were analogues of Divine Ideas and so led to God.

It was concluded from Chapter Three that Hopkins in his Note-books and Journals showed an almost scientific approach to love of nature and that this approach

formed a background for his theory of inscape. It was concluded also that Hopkins learned to inscape natural beauty with the Incarnate Word.

It was concluded in Chapter Four that Hopkins developed a theory of beauty at an early age. This led him to his theory of inscape which had such a large place in his concept of nature. His spiritual outlook on nature and beauty provided the unity and completeness necessary for a significant concept of nature. It was concluded that Hopkins's ideas on beauty were similar to the Thomistic views. The differences were mainly in the area where Thomists and Scotists have divergent theories of knowledge. This led Hopkins to stress the individuality of things and the self of things. This view was an integral part of his concept of nature.

It would seem that a considerable amount of work could still be done in illustrating in Hopkins's poems the principles of his concept of nature as inferred from his prose works. Some work has been done, of course, by many of the famous critics, but there are still many areas which require more extensive exploration and research. It would be interesting, too, to see to what extent Hopkins's poetry diverged from the

principles stated in his prose.

## ABSTRACT

Gerard Manley Hopkins lived in the nineteenth Century when nature poetry was in the ascendant. His concept of nature was built on solid intellectual, Christian thought.

Chapter One showed that Hopkins's concept of nature had a strong foundation in theology. He read, studied, and meditated on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola who presented a clearcut idea of the proper relationship of man to nature and the things of nature. In his Commentary on the Exercises Hopkins showed that he, too, had these ideas. "This world then is word, expression, news, of God," Hopkins wrote. His theological training did much to teach Hopkins self-discipline which was used to keep his love of and feeling for nature and her beauties under proper control. This spiritual outlook on the universe taught a man to look from created beauty to Uncreated Beauty. The Spiritual Exercises penetrated deeply into Hopkins's outlook on the world of nature and its beauties.

Chapter Two pointed out that one of the most

important elements in Hopkins's concept of nature was his theory of inscape, the feeling for the external pattern of things expressive of their inner form. Hopkins looked for what was individually distinctive in objects. This habit had taken hold of him at an early age as can be inferred from his diaries and Journals. Later as a Jesuit he came upon the philosophical teachings of Duns Scotus which seemed to give justification to his own ideas. Scotus laid great stress upon the individuality of things as well as their universal nature. His theory of knowledge by which the mind and senses in one act apprehend the inner form in the outer matter was eminently suited to Hopkins's theory of inscape. Scotus taught, also, that the visible beauties of the world are but images of Divine Ideas and thus led to Beauty, to God. These ideas helped to shape the nature concept of Hopkins. Duns Scotus filled Hopkins with an eagerness to catch the self of things and with a strong consciousness of his own self.

Chapter Three illustrated that Hopkins's concept of nature was based on his innate sensibility to the world around him, both the physical and the human world. His journals were ample proof that his observa-

tions were keen, constant and empathic. He was interested in form, colour, sound, movement, no matter where he found it. From these details he saw the inscape of things. Visible creation was God's natural revelation of Himself. Hopkins had a wonderful grasp of the Incarnation and he came to see everything as tinged with the Word-made-flesh.

Chapter Four had to do with beauty as applied to Hopkins's concept of nature. Beauty in all its forms had an attraction for Hopkins. It was only natural, then, that he should try to develop a theory of beauty. He founded his ideal of beauty on the principle of order, of unity in variety. Relationships and comparisons were essential ingredients in his theory of beauty. Hopkins was interested in the concrete sign of beauty in nature. This led him to the conclusion that "beauty is a virtue of inscape." Beauty and inscape both led him to God. For him theism alone could provide unity and completeness in nature and natural beauties. His theories were compared and contrasted with the traditional Thomistic ideas on beauty as explained by M. Jacques Maritain. In general, they were found to coincide except where Hopkins followed the

Scotist theory of knowledge.

Although Hopkins's concept of nature has not as yet received adequate recognition from scholars, in time it should earn equal rank with the nature concepts of the eminent nature poets of the Nineteenth Century because of its depth, breadth and solidity.

A Gilson Reader, Selections from the Writings of Etienne Gilson, edited, with an introduction by Anton C. Pegis, New York, A Doubleday Image Book, 1957, 1-358 p.

The chapter of Duns Scotus which contains a brief statement of his ideas on the theory of knowledge was found to be useful.

Beach, Joseph Warren, The Concept of Nature in the Nineteenth Century English Poetry, New York, Pageant Book Company, 1958, ix-618 p.

This monumental volume merely mentions Hopkins as one poet with an interest in nature.

Deutsch, Babette, Poetry In Our Time, New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1952, xi-411 p.

Chapter Ten entitled "The Forged Feature", p. 286-311, is on Hopkins. It was not very useful for this particular topic.

Gardner, W.H., Gerard Manley Hopkins, A Study of Poetic Idiosyncrasy in Relation to Poetic Tradition, London, Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd., 1944, Vol.1, v-304 p., Vol.11, vii-415 p.

These volumes contain biographical material, analyses of Hopkins's poems and such matters as his diction and syntax, rhythm, imagery. There are incidental references to Hopkins and his concept of nature.

Grigson, Geoffrey, Gerard Manley Hopkins, published for the British Council in London by Longmans, Green & Company, 1955, 5-34 p.

This pamphlet gives an excellent treatment of Hopkins's keen observations of natural phenomena.

Hamm, Victor M., The Pattern of Criticism, Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Company, 1951, v-308 p.

A few pages explaining the Thomistic ideas on beauty were found to be helpful.

Heuser, Alan, The Shaping Vision of Gerard Manley Hopkins, London, Oxford University Press, 1958, vii-128 p.

This book is a discussion of the elements involved in the creation of Hopkins's vision

of the world and life. Such elements as music, his ideas of beauty, inscape, instress, technical developments in diction and rhythm. The treatment of inscape and Hopkins's ideas on beauty were found to be quite good.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins, London, Oxford University Press, 1959, edited by Humphrey House and completed by Graham Storey, vi-579 p.

This volume contains Hopkins's early diaries and early note-books, his Journal, notes, etc. from 1866 to 1875 and his lecture notes. This book was excellent because it contains so much of Hopkins's observations of nature and his thoughts on his theory of beauty.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins, including his correspondence with Coventry Patmore, London, Oxford University Press, 1956, edited by Claude Colleer Abbott, v-465 p.

This volume contains letters to various friends of Hopkins, e.g. Patmore, Newman, his mother, his sister Kate, A.W.M. Baillie, E. H. Coleridge. These letters did not contain too much on his concept of nature. There were some excellent observations on nature's beauties and on Wales.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, London, Oxford University Press, 1956, edited by W.H. Gardner, v-307 p.

It contains the preface and notes of the first edition by Robert Bridges together with further notes and a biographical introduction by W.H. Gardner.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon, London, Oxford University Press, 1935, edited by Claude Colleer Abbott, xxxi-194 p.

The letters are between Hopkins and Dixon from 1878 to 1888. These letters were not of too great use except to show how his Jesuit training influenced Hopkins's thinking.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, London, Oxford University Press, 1935, edited by Claude Collier Abbott, xlvi-324 p.

This volume contains the letters of Hopkins to his poet-friend Robert Bridges between 1865 and 1889. The letters had a limited use except for a few ideas on inscape and some observations of natural beauty.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, The Note-books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins, London, Oxford University Press, 1937, edited by Humphrey House, xxxvi-474 p.

It contains Hopkins's early note-books, his Journal from 1868-1874, his lecture notes, sermons, and comments on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. The sections containing Hopkins's thoughts on The Spiritual Exercises were quite useful for the theological background of his concept of nature.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Montreal, Penguin Books (Canada) Ltd., 1953, with an introduction and notes by W.H. Gardner, x-252 p.

The introduction by W.H. Gardner contains some brief but clear ideas on Duns Scotus, inscape.

House, Humphrey, All in Due Time, London, Rupert Hart-Davis, 1955, 15-306 p.

This book contains only a few references to Hopkins's observations of nature and his inscaping of them.

Manresa: or the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, New Edition, New York, The Catholic Publication Society, no date, vii-364 p.

The first section of Part 1 of this book was quite useful. In it St. Ignatius discussed the end of man and the end of creatures.

Maritain, Jacques, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York, Meridian Books, 1955, 3-339 p.

Maritain discusses the fine arts of music, art and poetry and their relationships to intellect

and knowledge. The chapter on Poetry and Beauty explains briefly the Thomistic theory of beauty.

Maritain, Jacques, Art and Scholasticism, London, Sheed & Ward, 1930, v-177 p.

This book treats art under its very aspects and relationships. The chapter on Art and Beauty contains an excellent presentation of the Thomistic ideas on beauty.

Lahey, G.F., Gerard Manley Hopkins, a Life, London, Oxford University Press, 1930, viii-172 p.

This biography gives an account of the different phases of Hopkins's life using his letters to great advantage. There are chapters, too, on Hopkins's poetic theories and language. There is very little reference made to his concept of nature, although there are examples of his nature descriptions.

Peters, W.A.M., Gerard Manley Hopkins, A Critical Essay Towards the Understanding of his Poetry, London, Oxford University Press, 1948, xviii-213 p.

Father Peters give a detailed analysis of Hopkins's theory of inscape in all its various elements. This book was valuable for its treatment of Scotus and inscape and their effect on Hopkins's view of reality.

Phare, E.E., The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, A Survey and Commentary, London, Cambridge University Press, 1933, vii-150 p.

In this book Miss Phare notes many points of comparison and contrast between the ideas on nature of Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley and Hopkins. A few references to Hopkins's particular way of looking at nature and God were found useful.

Pick, John, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Priest and Poet, London, Oxford University Press, 1942, x-169 p.

In this work Pick shows that in Hopkins the priest and poet are unified because many critics thought that there was an unhealthy tension between the two elements. His treatment of Duns Scotus and inscape was very useful.

Return to Poetry, Critical Essays from Spirit, edited by John Gilliland Brunini, Francis X. Connolly, Joseph G.M. Hopkins, New York, The Declan X McMullen Company Inc., 1947, v-289 p.

The essays are on various literary figures and problems. The essay on Hopkins was of small use.

Ruggles, Eleanor, Gerard Manley Hopkins, A Life, New York, W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1944, 7-305 p.

This is a good biography of Hopkins. It was useful for a few ideas on Hopkins's love of wild nature, especially Wales.

Sargent, Daniel, Four Independents, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, 3-243 p.

The chapter on Hopkins is pp. 117-183. The material is very interesting but not of sufficient penetration and depth.

Sitwell, Edith, Aspects of Modern Poetry, London, Duckworth, 1934, 9-264 p.

Chapter Two is on Hopkins, pp. 51-72. It was not of great use for Hopkins's nature concept.

The Kenyon Critics, Gerard Manley Hopkins, New Directions Books, Norfolk, Connecticut, published by James Laughlin, New York, 1945, 1-144 p.

This volume is a collection of essays on different phases of Hopkins e.g. his language, sprung rhythm, Hopkins as Victorian poet, inscape. There are only a few small references to the nature concept of Hopkins.

Weyand, Norman, Immortal Diamond, Studies in Gerard Manley Hopkins, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1949, xxvi-451 p.

Father Weyand is the editor of this volume of essays by Jesuits on Hopkins. There are chapters on sprung rhythm, THE Windhover, The Loss of the Eurydice, The Wreck of the Deutschland, and a glossary of difficult words. One of the chapters, Hopkins: Poet of Nature and of the Supernatural, by Father Maurice B. McNamee was very useful. He traces the growth of Hopkins from his love of nature to his idea of the supernatural mostly as seen in his poetry.

## Periodicals

Binyon, Laurence, "Gerard Manley Hopkins and His Influence", in the University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. VII, issue of April, 1939, pp. 264-270.

In elaborating on how Hopkins has influenced modern poets and poetry the author points out that Hopkins was moved greatly by the beauty of the world but that he kept the sensuous side of his nature under control.

Boyle, Robert R., "A Footnote on the Windhover", in America, Vol. 82, issue of November 5, 1949, pp. 129-130.

In presenting his reflections on The Windhover, the author stresses Hopkins's spiritual outlook on nature.

Clarke, Egerton, "Gerard Hopkins, Jesuit" in Dublin Review, Vol. CXCVIII, issue of January, 1936, p. 127-141.

The author stresses the importance of the religious viewpoint of Hopkins in his prose and poetry.

Grady, Thomas J., "Windhover's Meaning", in America, Vol. LXX, issue of January 29, 1944, pp. 465-466.

This is an analysis of The Windhover. He includes a few ideas on beauty and nature.

Guzie, Tad W., "Are Modern Poets Morbid" in the Catholic World, Vol. 185, issue of April, 1957, pp. 27-32.

The article brings out clearly that Hopkins's outlook on life and the created universe was intensely supernatural.

Heywood, Terence, "Hopkins's Ancestry", in Poetry, Vol. LIV, issue of July, 1939, pp. 209-219. The author in this article points out some of the influences that helped to shape Hopkins and his way of thinking.

James, Stanley B., "The Sacrifice of Song" in Catholic World, Vol. CXLl, issue of June, 1937, pp. 424-429.

This article traces the use of or lack of discipline in poetry through the ages and shows how Hopkins's asceticism influenced his outlook on the world, nature and God.

Kelly, Bernard, "Gerard Manley Tunks" in Blackfriars, Vol. XVlll, issue of June, 1937, pp. 424-429.

The author misses the note of Thomistic universality in Hopkins and this has an effect on his theories and outlook on things.

Kelly, Blanche M., "Immortal Diamond", in the Catholic World, Vol. CXLIV, issue of January, 1937, pp. 481-482. (Excerpt from her book The Well of English.)

The writer emphasizes Hopkins's tremendous prepossession with beauty in all its forms.

Muir, Edwin, "The Note-books of Gerard Manley Hopkins" in London Mercury, Vol. XXXV, issue of March, 1937, pp. 511-512.

In this review of Hopkins's Note-books the author makes several good points on On The Origin of Beauty.

Noon, William T., "Hopkins: Christian Humanist", in America, Vol. LXXIV, issue of October 20, 1945, pp. 73-75.

"The Christian humanist loves the world, but he sees the world as the dynamic handiwork of God." This is the theme of this excellent article in which the writer shows how Hopkins fits into this stated theme.

Pick, John, "Hopkins' Imagery: The Relation of His Journals to His Poetry", in Renascence, Vol. VII, issue of Autumn, 1954, pp. 30-38.

The author's theme is that the Journals are sketch pads in which Hopkins's later poetic images are found in embryonic form. The Journals are indications of Hopkins's habitual way of looking at things.

Pick, John, "The Inspiration of Hopkins' Poetry", in America, Vol. LXVIII, issue of January 23, 1943, pp. 437-438.

An excellent article on the religious outlook and backgrounds of Hopkins's thought and poetry.

Stephenson, A.A., "A Review of John Pick's book Gerard Manley Hopkins: Priest and Poet", in the Dublin Review, Vol. 227, issue of Winter, 1953, pp. 170-174.

This review of Pick's book stresses the strong discipline that Hopkins used to control and make Christian his natural sensibility to the world around him.

Trueblood, Charles K., "Esthetics of Gerard Manley Hopkins", in Poetry, Vol. L, issue of August, 1937, pp. 274-280.

This article praises the Journals of Hopkins for their keen observations of nature. He calls Hopkins "an esthetic Darwin". He stresses the fact that Hopkins was a naturalist of beauty.

Turner, Vincent, "Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Centenary Article", in the Dublin Review, Vol. CCXV, issue of October, 1944, pp. 144-159.

Father Turner disagrees with those who would say that the priesthood of Hopkins limited considerably the poet in Hopkins. He thinks that his priesthood and his further studies as a Jesuit increased his poetic talent.