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Gerard Manley Hopkins: Sacramentalist and Incarnationist

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GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS:
SACRAMENTALIST AND
INCARNATIONIST

BY
HELEN VIRGINIA BARRY

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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I

INTRODUCTION

I

INTRODUCTION

Gerard Manley Hopkins was a poet who lived during the Victorian Age, yet who can in no way be associated or identified with that period. His poetry reveals very few traces of Victorian influence. His religious interests, he being both a Catholic and Jesuit, and his extreme innovations in both prosody and language put him in almost another world far removed from his Victorian contemporaries. His verse may not be placed even in time with Victorianism because in spite of the fact that his death occurred in 1889, it was not until 1918 that his poems appeared to the world.

Hopkins' poetry has been stamped as being "difficult," because of its complete newness, its peculiarity of technique and language, and also because of its religious doctrines. Yet his poetry is not "private" poetry, nor does it contain personal symbolism or endless allusion--all included in the condemnation launched at the moderns. Neither are his religious interests of an esoteric nature, but are concerned with Christian tradition, particularly with the commonplaces of Catholic dogma in the order of Faith.

It is the purpose of this dissertation to reveal Gerard Manley Hopkins as an incarnationist and sacramentalist, and to show how these doctrines manifested throughout his poetry af-

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fected the entire scope of his verse and completely colored his attitude toward life--toward his own existence and that of his fellow man, and especially toward natural phenomena.

It was also considered necessary by the writer to include a rather detailed discussion of the poet's pre-conversion period. An understanding of Hopkins' spiritual and mental conflicts prior to his conversion is essential in attempting an elucidation of his mature poetry.

Gerard Hopkins is important in relation to the present trend of freedom in modern poetry. He anticipated many major innovations in language, technique and rhythm that may be claimed as original in modern practice. His complete independence and refusal to be bound by any authority makes him the first of the moderns, and the supreme neologist. Hopkins, a scrupulously strict Catholic, is also important in relation to the treatment in his poems of Catholic dogma and doctrine, particularly that of sacramentalism and of the Incarnation.

The early part of Gerard Manley Hopkins' life from his birth in 1844 up until his entrance into Oxford was devoid of any outstanding occurrence in relation to the latter part of his life. He sprang from a moderately wealthy High Church, English family who had already made names for themselves in the world of art. His father was a well known historical writer, his mother an exceptionally intelligent and deeply religious woman, and several of his aunts were gifted in music, art, and poetry. It was not by chance, therefore, that he was endowed with a precocious and artistically sensitive temperament.

He went to Highgate School, and later to Balliol College where he distinguished himself both as a poet and an exceptionally fine student of Greek and Latin. In 1863 he entered Oxford which proved to be the turning point in his life. He became part of the whirlpool of conflicting religious ideas and, after maintaining for a while a via media, his conversion to the Catholic Faith finally came in 1866; just eleven months later he was received into the Society of Jesus.

Although Hopkins had written much youthful poetry up to the time of his conversion, little of it now survives, because he committed his poems to the flames shortly before entering the Jesuit Order. This immolation--that of attempting to subdue his poetic instinct--had never been hinted at by any superior, and after seven years of silence it was his Rector who suggested that he write again. Yet this holocaust of his poems manifested his courageous desire to divest himself completely of all previous influences and interests for the sake of his vocation.

During his twenty-first year as a Jesuit, he died in Dublin in 1889 where he had spent the last five years of his life teaching at the Catholic University.

To his closest friend, Robert Bridges, who was to become the poet laureate of England, Hopkins entrusted his poems. Wisely awaiting the propitious time, Bridges published Hopkins' poetry in 1918.

II

PRE-CONVERSION PERIOD

II

PRE-CONVERSION PERIOD

It was as a direct result of attending Oxford that Gerard Manley Hopkins ultimately became a convert to the Roman Catholic Faith.¹ During his first two years at Balliol, even before serious problems of conscience had begun to assail him, he gave the impression of being both an ascetic and aesthetic young man. Revealed in his poems was the young poet's love of the sensuous struggling against strict religious principles. At that time his life was torn between a conscientious mind open to the barrage of religious obligations and a sensitive heart open to all the beckoning beauties of nature. His anguished soul cried out for relief through the voice of these early poems.

It is interesting to notice how his tastes go through a gradual change from poems which are given over completely to the sensuous, to those which reveal a struggle between the sensuous and the religious, and finally, with a complete renunciation of the aesthetic in his middle Oxford period, to those which contain an exaltation of asceticism. It is clearly evident, as will be seen, that he did not resolve the problem of art and religion until some time after his conversion and

¹Eleanor Ruggles, Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Life (New York: W. W. Norton, 1944), p. 33.

entrance into the Society of Jesus.

In his school days at Highgate, the passionately sensuous apprehension of nature permeates his writing. He is captivated and held in ecstasy whenever beholding beauty in nature. In many of these early writings, the most characteristic of which is "The Vision of the Mermaids," he openly admits of his devotion to Keats. These poems are steeped to overflowing with acute perception and sense receptivity.

Now all things rosy turn'd: the west had grown
To an orb'd rose, which, by hot pantings blown
Apart, betwixt ten thousand petall'd lips
By interchange gasp'd splendour and eclipse.
. . . in gusts of scented wind
Swirling and bloom till all the air is blind
With rosy foam.²

This boyish effusiveness began to change toward his last months at Highgate School, as shown by the couplet:

--A little sickness in the air
From too much fragrance everywhere.³

Oxford at the time of Hopkins' entrance was a maelstrom of religious beliefs. The colleges were still reverberating from the force of Newman and the power of the Apologia Pro Vita Sua which was continuing to send many Romeward. The two main streams of thought were, as in Newman's time, Tractarianism and Rationalism. Pusey, head of the Tractarian movement of the High Church Party, and Jowett, head of the rationalist school, were the two leading thinkers of the University. Hopkins evidently examined the rationalists' standpoint, but he turned from this

²John Pick, Gerard Manley Hopkins: Priest and Poet (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1942), p. 3.

³Ibid.

Oxonian liberalism to a strict adherence of the Anglican doctrine, as he had earlier turned from aetheticism to asceticism.

There had long been evidence of an ascetic strain in Hopkins, even in his outwardly sensuous school days at Highgate. Famous among his school fellows was the incident of his giving up water for a week to prove that man consumed too many liquids which he did not require.⁴

A mistaken view of Christian asceticism--that the senses had to be completely submerged in order to attain the spiritual--was prevalent at Oxford and was shared for a while by Hopkins. It helped him later, however, to find the path of the true religious ascetic, that of purifying the senses in order to attain clearer spiritual insight.

The many unresolved problems of Hopkins' mind led him through various channels of thought and through several successive stages of belief. He was dissatisfied, first with the finical politics of Puseyism, and later with its very tenets. University professors did not discuss theology but concentrated on preparing the students for the bishop's examinations. Innuendo, evaded issues, and veils of ignorance clouded the scene. Any analysis of doctrinal discrepancy came not from the professors but from undergraduate freethinkers.⁵ Hopkins supported the authority of the English Church against Protestant orthodoxy and private judgment which led to rationalism.⁶

⁴Ibid. p. 4. ⁵Ruggles, op. cit., p. 62.

⁶Ibid., p. 63.

Hopkins' mind was slowly turning toward his conversion although even he did not recognize the change in himself for what it was. The course of this conversion may be followed in his letters, journals, and poems. His poetry, as will be shown, is by far the most revealing and least guarded expression of his inner turmoil and unrest.

The summer of 1869, following his first year at Oxford, marks the first presence of Hopkins' newly found exhilarating asceticism, and the beginning of a faintly glimmering realization of the direction he was taking. The theme of penance became stronger in him and is especially evident in an ambitious piece about Pontius Pilate⁷ as a penitent.

Thus shall I make a cross, and in't
Will add a footrest there to stand,
And with sharp flint will part my feet.

His first spiritual flowering was often hindered by the memory of earlier willful behavior:

It is the waste done in unreticent youth
Which makes so small the promise of that yield
That I may win with late-learnt skill uncouth
From furrows of the poor and stinting weald.⁸

And in another fragment he constantly bewails his spiritual aridity:

Trees by their yield
Are known; but I--
My sap is sealed
My root is dry.⁹

⁷Humphrey House (ed.), The Notebooks and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 12.

⁸Ruggles, op. cit., p. 71.

⁹Ibid., p. 72.

Hopkins had been introduced to Christina Rossetti whose rigid devotion to the Anglican Church was well known. For years she hesitated on the convent threshold; in fancy and in poetry she had already entered many times. In the poem, "Convent Threshold," the heroine is her imaginary self who turns from earthly love to assume the veil. She faces for the last time her lover to cry out in warning:

You sinned with me a pleasant sin:
Repent with me for I repent.
Woe's me the lore I must unlearn!
Woe's me that easy way we went,
So rugged when I would return!¹⁰

This desolate voice of the ardent and devout spinster affected Hopkins who wrote as a reply, "A Voice from the World." The voice is that of the forsaken lover who after much mental agony turns his thoughts to the way his mistress chose. He too will follow:

I am not spent
So far but I have yet within
The penetrative element
That shall unglue the crust of sin.
Steel may be melted and rock rent.
Penance shall clothe me to the bone.
Teach me the way: I will repent.

Repentance, expiation, rejection of his "natural self," and purification of his spiritual self through humiliation and pain--all are confronted on the thorny path of the convert:

I who was wise would be untaught
And fain would follow I who led.
How shall I search who never sought?
How turn my passion-pastured thought
To gentle manna and simple bread?¹¹

¹⁰Ibid., p. 60.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 60-61.

It is less difficult to fathom the mind and motives of Gerard Hopkins when it is realized that he, like most converts of the time, was following in almost the very path painfully cut by Newman and his Apologia. The Via Media is desperately clung to and the strictly "Romish" doctrines and practices are despised until one by one the Catholic tenets are discovered and accepted. Hopkins, like Newman, had the questioning, seeking mind of the intellectual convert and the will to push on regardless of the cost. Newman, too, had begun, long before he himself realized it, to sway toward Rome:

In spite of my ingrained fears of Rome . . . I had a secret longing love of Rome and the author of English Christianity, and I had a true devotion to the Blessed Virgin . . . whose Altar I served, and whose Immaculate Piety I had . . . made much of¹²

It took Newman, however, six years to discover that which took Hopkins only a little over a year and a half. Hopkins' barriers fell one by one as had those of his great predecessor. Newman found that the accusation of "idolatry," one of his fiercest charges against Rome, had no foundation-- that the Catholic Church

allows no image of any sort, material or immaterial, no dogmatic symbol, no rite, no sacrament, no Saint, not even the Blessed Virgin herself, to come between the soul and its Creator.¹³

With this revelation Newman's last barrier crumbled.

It is impossible to comprehend all the mental labyrinths through which Hopkins' thoughts must have turned and

¹²Ibid., pp. 67-68.

¹³J. H. (Cardinal) Newman, Apologia Pro Vita Sua (London, Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1927), p. 183.

twisted, making false advancements, again and again returning and starting anew. It is probable that he was tormented by the same questions which confronted Newman: "Can I be saved in the English Church? Am I in safety were I to die tonight? Am I morally responsible for not joining another communion?" His was not, certainly, an unbroken chain of decisions, but rather a constant process of attempting to grope his way through the maze, of disheartening backslidings, and of a plodding determination to go on, to reach a peak of spiritual light, assuredness, and peace.

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail;
To fields where flies not the unbridled hail,
And a few lilies blow.

I have desired to be
Where heavens are dumb;
Where the green water-heads may never come,
As in the unloved sea.

This poem called "Rest"¹⁴ or "Heaven-Haven,"¹⁵ in which he cries for peace, he mentioned to his friends as being one of several with a very "Catholic character."¹⁶ It is prophetic of his future life as a priest.

Hopkins had the gift of faith. Intellect can lead one only so far, he concluded. He sought untiringly for the one way which was the most pleasing to God, the way by which he might make his faith manifest. His sporadic hesitation was

¹⁴Pick, op. cit., p. 17.

¹⁵Robert Bridges (ed.), The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins (H. Milford: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 8.

¹⁶Pick, op. cit., p. 17.

lightened by flashes of happy certainty which shine through the poem with the significant title "The Half-Way House."¹⁷

Hear yet my paradox: Love, when all is given,
To see thee I must thee, to love, love;
I must o'er take thee at once and under heaven
If I shall overtake thee at last above.
You have your wish; enter these walls, one said:
He is with you in the breaking of the bread.

These lines are reminiscent of George Herbert's

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,¹⁸

and show one of Hopkins' moods of temporary quiet trustfulness. In this poem, particularly in the last line, he again points toward his future vocation in the priesthood.

By the fall of 1865 his strongest ties were weakening and tenuously holding him to the established Church. During that autumn the conviction of his ultimate change grew stronger and he fought against the realization of it, as Newman had. About this time he copied in his journal Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light" and following the poem wrote, "Note that if ever I should leave the English Church"¹⁹

Gerard Hopkins was pursuing at this time his own via media. He discussed and held fast to those doctrines which are shared both by the English Church and Rome, particularly the blessed sacrament of the altar and the Incarnation. Concerning these and also some purely Catholic beliefs, he felt that the apprehension of Catholic doctrine and dogma destroys "the

¹⁷House, op. cit., p. 52.

¹⁸Roberta F. Brinkley (ed.), English Poetry of the Seventeenth Century (New York: W. W. Norton, 1942), p. 271.

¹⁹House, op. cit., p. 52.

sordidness of things wh. one is compelled perpetually to feel . . . " and that if everyone could know this one would need no other inducement to lead him to Catholicism and "no opposite inducement could dissuade them fr. it" ²⁰

In January 1866, drawing ever nearer not only to his conversion but also to the priesthood, he wrote "Habit of Perfection," ²¹ which still bore witness to his misconception of Christian asceticism. "Habit of Perfection" exalts the ascetic ideal in which the senses are completely subdued and turned inward from the physical world in order that the mind and soul may commune exclusively with the inward spiritual self. He pleads with the senses to cease their worldly occupations and declares that their reward shall be in hearing the voice which speaks only after the cessation of all outward contact.

Elected Silence, sing to me
And beat upon my whorled ear,
Pipe me to pastures still and be
The music that I care to hear.

Shape nothing lips; be lovely-dumb:
It is the shut, the curfew sent
From there where all surrenders come
Which only makes you eloquent.

Be shelled, eyes, with double dark
And find the uncreated light:
This ruck and reel which you remark
Coils, keeps, and teases simple sight.

Palate, the hutch of tasty lust,
Desire not to be rinsed with wine:
The can must be so sweet, the crust
So fresh that come in fasts divine!

²⁰Ruggles, op. cit., p. 73.

²¹Bridges, op. cit., p. 8.

Nostrils, your careless breath that spend
 Upon the stir and keep of pride,
 What relish shall the censers send
 Along the sanctuary side!

O feel-of-primrose hands, O feet
 That want the yield of plushy sward,
 But you shall walk the golden street
 And you unhouse and house the Lord.

And, Poverty, be thou the bride
 And now the marriage feast begun,
 And lily-coloured clothes provide
 Your spouse not labored-at nor spun.

This is the best known poem of Hopkins' conversion period. It is important to note in these verses, in following the trend of thought toward his conversion, the recurring allusions to phases of the religious life: the ascetic side and its demands, poverty, "fasts divine," "sanctuary side," and reference to the highest privilege of the priesthood, "And you unhouse and house the Lord."

Somewhat later he began to write three religious poems, still fragmentary, which show the definite progress of his thought. They are "Romish" and the one most imbued with Catholicism deals with Christ's Passion:

For us the vine was fenced with thorn,
 Five times the precious branches torn.
 For us by Calvary's distress
 The wine was wracked from the press,
 And terrible fruit was on the tree
 In the acre of Gethsemane.
 Now in our altar vessels stored
 Lo! the sweet Vintage of our Lord²²

Similar symptoms developed rapidly. He began to invoke the saints, and admitted special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary--previously considered an exceedingly "papish"

²²Ruggles, op. cit., p. 58.

practice.

For Hopkins as for any convert, the final step was not easy. One of his last poems before his actual conversion was "Nondum"²³--"not yet." In it he is not trying to convince himself logically of the existence of God, but "is searching for some manifestation of Him in the world about him, some indication that He expresses himself in a church":²⁴

Yet know not how our gifts to bring,
Where seek thee with unsandalled feet.

He desires passionately to worship, to have communion with God through a creed:

And Thou art silent, whilst Thy world
Contentends about its many creeds.

Constantly he searches everywhere in the world for some vestige of God.

God, though to Thee our psalm we raise
No answering voice comes from the skies;
.....
We see the glories of the earth
But not the hand that wrought them all.

With pitiful confusion and ardent desire he prays:

Speak! Whisper to my watching heart
One word

For Hopkins that prayer was not uttered in vain, because in July of that same year, 1866, his conversion, in his own words, "came all in a minute."²⁵

After a short correspondence with Newman to make known his wishes, Hopkins was received into the Roman Catholic Church

²³Bridges, op. cit., p. 138.

²⁴Pick, op. cit., p. 18.

²⁵Ruggles, op. cit., p. 79.

by Father Newman at the Birmingham Oratory in October, 1866. Eleven months later at Manresa he was admitted into the Jesuit Order.

The problems which beset Hopkins prior to the time of his actual conversion gradually, during the seven years of silence immediately following his entrance into the Jesuits, became resolved. As will be seen in the study of his nature poetry, his asceticism and aestheticism, his spirituality and his sensuousness became a combination which moulded both a great poet and a fervent priest.

This asceticism and aestheticism evolve in the mature Hopkins, then, in complete integration to produce an even deeper love of nature and a far more intense love of God. There is no conflict. Through his sacramental view of nature, his sensuousness now leads him only to God, to the discovery of God in nature and of Christ in man.

III

DOCTRINES OF SACRAMENTALISM AND
OF THE INCARNATION

III

A. DOCTRINE OF SACRAMENTALISM

1. CREATION EXCLUSIVE OF MAN

Gerard Manley Hopkins, like so many poets, dedicated the greater part of his poetry to the subject of nature. Nature, however, remained his secondary interest because God and his religion were ever foremost in his thoughts. Everything Hopkins did was dedicated to his Creator, pursuing the ideal of the Order of the Society of Jesus, Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam. His mature poetry was directed to the greater glory of God, whence grew his sacramental*view of nature,

As revealed earlier in his preconversion days at Oxford,²⁶ his Keatsian sensuousness was in persistent conflict with his fervent desire to elevate himself in the eyes of God through his determined asceticism. At that time he felt that his keen love of beauty would deflect his thoughts from God. It was then that he had written "Be shelled, eyes, with double dark."²⁷

After his admittance into the Jesuit Order, however, the conflict between his love of nature and his love of God was at length resolved and a mental equipoise was finally at-

²⁶See page 14.

²⁷Ibid.

* See Appendix.

tained. The poems which he wrote upon returning to the Muse, after seven years of poetic abstinence following his entrance into the Jesuits, bore the full fruit of the time spent in theological study and spiritual contemplation.

From his first poem ("The Wreck of the Deutschland") after that period, it was immediately perceptible that the poet and priest had become perfectly integrated. He had at last extricated himself from this mental enigma, anguishing for one so sensitive. He now apprehended that one did not derogate the supreme act, the adoration of God, by loving nature and enjoying beauty. The entire universe is His creation and in the exaltation of that creation one is really giving greater glory to God. Hopkins at last with fervent and thankful relief drank in the beauty of nature and opened his eyes to gaze upon the "One ablaze in many."²⁸

In an attempt to draw a lucid picture of Hopkins' view of nature, it will help to clarify his position by contrasting his view with that of other nature followers of the past to reveal distinctly what his view was not.

Gerard Hopkins' poems are not mythologized.²⁹ His perception of nature is based purely on Christian tradition. With his theological concept of God as the Creator of all, he does not dream of apostrophizing the natural elements in terms of pagan personifications, nor does he feel the need of com-

²⁸Pick, op. cit., p. 36.

²⁹Kenyon Critics, Gerard Manley Hopkins (Norfolk: Vail-Ballou Press, 1945), p. 104.

plementing the religious beliefs manifested in his poems with any pagan fancies.

Nor is Hopkins like many of the Romanticists who worship nature and turn it into a god.³⁰ He uses nature phraseology but does not sacrifice God in doing so. Everywhere he saw some representation of God and when he described it in verse he knew confidently that he was, in the only way possible, describing God. He greets Christ in all moments of natural perception but never does he make pantheistic claims. There is danger of pantheism in sacramentalism but as Hopkins often stressed, in spite of God's presence in everything, His infinity keeps him from being identified with it. The Creator is infinite; creation is not.

In several places Hopkins wrote that he was deeply moved by Plato who had "seen something" and had such "spiritual insight into nature"³¹ because he tells how earthly beauty is mirrored by Eternal Beauty.³² Hopkins, however, was never a Platonist because the Platonic tradition despised created beauty³³ for the sake of Uncreated Beauty. To Hopkins the perception of the world was a sacramental experience which helped to elevate him to a more exalted Beauty. The sacramen-

³⁰Daniel Sargent, Four Independents (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1935), p. 145.

³¹Pick, op. cit., p. 38.

³²Plato's Phaedrus.

³³Not to be confused with the "contempt of Creatures" of the Christian tradition, the loving contempt of all things other than God. Pick, op. cit., p. 54.

tal world, then, may be enjoyed but not worshipped for the X
sake of itself alone.

Hopkins' method of looking at external nature as a sacrament and almost as Scripture is a traditionally Christian and Catholic method, one which was held by St. Paul and all the Church Fathers, whose vision has always been the prevalent one. This way of contemplating nature is clearly expressed by the conventional English divine, Jeremy Taylor:³⁴

Thus when (God) made the beauteous frame of heaven and earth he rejoiced in it, and glorified himself, because it was the glasse in which he beheld his wisdom, and Almighty power For if God is glorified in the Sunne and Moon, in the rare fabric of the honeycombs . . . God being pleased to delight in those little images and reflexes of himself from those pretty mirrours, which like a crevice in a wall thorow a narrow perspective transmit the species of a vast excellency³⁵ X

A clearer statement of Hopkins' glorying in nature, because X
it reflected God, could not be expressed.

During his university days, Hopkins searched nature somewhat as did Wordsworth, looking for some dramatic shape which would arrest and entrance. He had also studied in the pattern of Ruskin, the precious character of all that lay before him (although Ruskin expected nature to teach even a moral code). In his mature poetry, however, he no longer felt the necessity for searching.

Hopkins' entire life was strongly marked with a loving observation of the world about him. It is almost incredible how much time he spent in remarking the details and de-

³⁴Jeremy Taylor: English prelate and author, 1613-1667. Kenyon Critics, op. cit., p. 19.

³⁵Ibid.

signs of even minute parts of creation. His sense awareness was intensely receptive and a part of him always encouraged and cultivated this sensuousness. Further, Hopkins' brilliant and deeply impressionable mind had come under the sway of several particular forces whose influence continuously reasserted and reaffirmed his own love of creation.

Two highly esteemed Church Fathers, St. Augustine³⁶ and St. Bonaventura,³⁷ both especially known for their philosophical and theological polemics had reiterated often in cogent argument their sanction of this attitude:

Thy whole creation ceaseth not, nor is silent in Thy praise; neither the spirit of man directed unto Thee, nor creation animate or inanimate, by the voice of those who meditate thereon: that so our souls may from their weariness arise towards Thee, leaning on those things which Thou has created, and passing on to Thyself, who madest wonderfully; and there is refreshment and true strength.³⁸

It is significant that Jesuits, particularly those still in the novitiate, are urged to ponder the Confessions of St. Augustine in which there are many similar passages.

St. Bonaventura asserted that the creatures of the visible world signify the invisible attributes of God. In the Middle Ages there was much talk about "vestiges" of God seen in creation. To St. Bonaventura these traces of God were scarcely discernible harmonies between the Creator and His masterpiece, analogous to the similarity existing between the spirit of the artist and the spirit of the thing which he creates. To discern

³⁶St. Augustine: 354-430.

³⁷St. Bonaventura: Italian philosopher and Franciscan monk, 1221-1274.

³⁸Pick, op. cit., p. 59.

these vestiges, the Saint maintained, man had to be illumined by grace, such as the grace which comes to one in contemplating and having faith in the Holy Trinity.³⁹

Hopkins' life was clearly an example of this "seeing" by means of grace. It was evident in the poems written prior to his conversion that he gazed longingly at nature but did not see God:

Night to a myriad worlds gives birth
 Yet like a lighted empty hall
 Where stands no host at door or hearth
 Vacant creation's lamps appal.⁴⁰

After his entrance into the Society of Jesus and the seven years of poetic abstinence, the joyous realization came with faith and grace that God was everywhere in nature. He had an insight into the mercy of God through his belief especially in the Incarnation and in the establishment of a visible Christian Church, and he was now peering intently for traces of God less visible to the mere artist.

The Jesuit Order itself was the most powerful force which aided in shaping Hopkins' attitude toward the realization that the senses were instruments with which one may attain God. St. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, asserted that "If everything is directed toward God, everything is prayer."⁴¹ Many times he found no greater consolation than in looking at the stars. As a result "his soul was strangely

³⁹Sargent, op. cit., pp.126,7.

⁴⁰Bridges, op. cit., p. 138.

⁴¹Pick, op. cit., p. 36.

impelled, as it were, to seek the service of God"; also he beheld God Himself in His works, and from them drew a lesson of the intelligence, wisdom, power and glory of the Heavenly Artificer."

Loyola's turning all into prayer is characteristic of Hopkins who shifts his gaze habitually and humbly from the perspective of nature to the analogous but supreme scenery of the moral order.

It was the core of the doctrine of Loyola, particularly the part defending the senses, which held the mature Hopkins. His experience of created things was directed by the Spiritual Exercises written by St. Ignatius to be used as a guide by the Jesuits, especially during the time of retreat. The prolegomenon of the Exercises, called the Principle and Foundation, is cited again and again by the Jesuit poet as lending authority to his pious zeal for beauty. Hopkins' précis of the Principle and Foundation is a compact summary of his own thought:

God's utterance of himself in himself is God the Word, outside himself is 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 and praise Him.⁴²

This sacramental view of nature sees all things as avenues to supreme Being. Natural beauty can bring man, if he would only realize it, to higher Beauty.

Hopkins thus following the teachings of Loyola joyously learned that the senses must be directed, not submerged,

⁴²Ibid., p. 52.

in order that man's sensitivity to beauty may lead him to God. X

Created beauty, then, must not be made the end of man, X
 must not be deified. This implies the necessity of asceticism
 Hopkins had earlier misunderstood.⁴³ Man should make use of
 the things of the earth in so far as they help him to attain
 his ultimate goal--perfect adoration of God--but he must with- X
 draw from them when they hinder him in this. The purpose of
 true Christian asceticism, therefore, is to free man "from in-
 ordinate attachment--a discipline and purification of the
 senses, which emerge not suppressed but controlled."⁴⁴ This
 is only a negative aspect of a very positive thing which is
 really giving due order to all creation in terms of its truth,
 beauty, and goodness.

As noted once in his Journal, Hopkins disciplined his
 senses. He wrote, "a penance which I was doing from Jan. 25
 to July 25 prevented my seeing much that half year."⁴⁵ When
 he did open his eyes, the beauty of nature became even more
 resplendent and sacred. Also, in the closing section of the
Spiritual Exercises is the famous Contemplation To Gain Love⁴⁶
 where the exercitant contemplates how

God dwells in creatures, in the elements, giving them
 being, in the plants vegetating, in the animals feeling
 in them, in men giving them to understand.

⁴³See page 8.

⁴⁴Pick, op. cit., p. 37.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Elder Mullan, S. J., trans., The Spiritual Exercises
of St. Ignatius Loyola (New York: P. J. Kenedy, 1914), p. 117.

Hence the sacramental view of nature is not only a "nice" idea but an essential part of the worship of God in which the senses themselves are important, not only because they help to lead man to God, but also because they are given to man by God.

The influences then of St. Augustine, St. Bonaventura, and the most powerful and pervading influence of all, that of St. Ignatius and almost all that pertained to the Order of the Society of Jesus, were of great importance in shaping Hopkins' mind and will in reference to the ideal use of the senses.

One other influence began after his entrance into the Jesuit Order. It worked on him unceasingly and had more far reaching effects than any other force. This influence which became clearly perceptible in its ascendancy throughout every phrase of Hopkins' thought and which was to become an integral part of his poems, was that of the medieval philosopher and theologian, Duns Scotus.

Hopkins discovered Scotus during a vacation to the Isle of Man about five years after his entry into the Jesuit Order. He found a copy of Scotus' commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard and became enraptured with the teaching of the philosopher. The immediate impact of the discovery was so great that he pronounced it "a mercy from God."⁴⁷

The philosophical system of the Dominican Thomas Aquinas, which is the basis for most of the Jesuit theology, does

⁴⁷House, op. cit., p. 161.

not emphasize the nearness of God in nature.⁴⁸ St. Thomas had argued that man should begin with the lower creatures and ascend by degrees to the knowledge of God, but this was more or less taken for granted and not emphasized as the basis for a sacramental view of nature. The Thomists were interested more in that particular part of God's creation which was man himself. It is readily perceptible, then, why both the poet and priest in Hopkins turned with such thirsting eagerness to the Scotist doctrines.

Duns Scotus forcibly declared a sacramental view of the world. He contended that God created the world as a visible bridge between the finite and the infinite. Hopkins learned from him that mortal beauty may become supernatural, "God's better beauty grace."⁴⁹

"Inscape," a term used repeatedly by Hopkins in his nature phraseology, developed very largely from Scotus' ideas. "Inscape," a word of Hopkins' own coinage, "is any kind of formed or focussed view, any pattern in the natural world."⁵⁰ It moves through a range of meanings from a sense perceived pattern to inner form, a "seeing into" the thing. The essential aspect of an object or certain pattern is the "inscape" of that object. Often Hopkins employs it to refer directly to the principle of God in a thing.⁵¹ Yet "inscape" was not an

⁴⁸Ruggles, op. cit., p. 136.

⁴⁹"To What Serves Mortal Beauty?" Bridges, op. cit., p. 60.

⁵⁰Kenyon Critics, op. cit., p. 77.

⁵¹Ruggles, op. cit., p. 139.

invisible attribute of nature because for Hopkins, in beauty "inner form" must be expressed in "outer form" or to be more clearly exact, the essential form of a thing in the Aristotelian sense, must be expressed in its physical matter.

Many of Hopkins' ideas relating to the natural phenomena manifested in his poetry are derivations from Scotus' philosophical principles. Hopkins' "inscape" is directly comparable to Scotus' haecceitas, the self or "thisness" of a special object, the formal difference with respect to the thing.

This emphasis on the individuality of substance--Aquinas' individuum--was usually Scotus' point of departure. His ideas pertaining to individuation entailed a kind of weak nominalism,⁵² or a moderate realism.⁵³ The latter school distinguishes between the thing itself and its mode of existence--the condition in which it is presented--and teaches that a thing exists in the mind as a universal, in reality as an individual. Moreover, "that which we apprehend by our ideas as a universal does indeed really exist but only in the objects themselves and therefore individuated--not as a universal."⁵⁴ In other words, substance is divided between individually subsistent being, which exists in reality, and universally sub-

⁵²Nominalism: "sheer negation of the possibility of intellectual knowledge;" universals have no existence in reality. Jacques Maritain, An Introduction to Philosophy, trans. E. J. Watkin (New York: Sheed and Ward, [n.d.]), p. 160.

⁵³Moderate realism: "just mean" between realism and nominalism, not by "watering down or modifying absolute realism. . . transcends the opposing errors." Ibid., p. 161.

⁵⁴Ibid.

sistent being, which exists only in the mind as an abstraction.⁵⁵

Scotus' "thisness," then, was a certain quality attached to an existing bodily substance as a kind of property formally distinct from the essence or nature of the substance itself, and it is this property which constitutes the individual as such--that which makes it what it is and not something else.⁵⁶ Since strict nominalism in denying intellectual knowledge like universals stresses the knowledge of the senses, it is not difficult to see why Scotus was swayed, however slightly, toward that school of thought.

Aesthetic and at the same time supernatural elevation X through sensuous experience--Hopkins' constant theme--is an activity of man's individual nature at the center of which is Scotus' haecitas, the very self-hood--"thisness"--in man identified especially with the will. In exercising his will man may elevate himself in the moral sphere, and by a volitional "act of love" his aesthetic experience may be directed to God X and reaffirmed in God, and thus become a meritorious act. Hopkins often directs beauty by an act of love to God, and through his seeing an affirmation in God, beauty acquires for him eternal value.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Robert E. Brennan, O.P., Ph.D., Thomistic Psychology: A Philosophical Analysis of the Nature of Man (New York: Macmillan, 1941), p. 284.

⁵⁶Scotus has been criticized in that his principle of individuation is an accidental rather than a substantial factor, and hence would not suffice to individuate substances. Paul Glenn, S.J., Ph.D., S.T.D., Ontology: A Class Manual in Fundamental Metaphysics (St. Louis, London: B. Harden, 1943), p. 129.

⁵⁷Pick, op. cit., p. 36.

All the beauty in nature, then, according to Scotus, is analogous to the Divine Idea. The sensuous experience of perceiving all the beauties of the world leads to the Supreme Beauty, God. It was thus, that Hopkins derived from Scotus a very real justification of his own analysis of beauty and for his own love of "inscapes."

Hopkins' nature poetry very often reveals his indulging in violent sensational effects.⁵⁸ The wild aspects of nature, which are particularly baffling to human logic, seem to him to be peculiarly characteristic of the divine mind. Nature appears to him as animated by a most violently dynamic force. He sees leaves pushing out, colors in the sky racing to replace one another, and also columns falling over one another and flames shooting up.

This restless and powerful force is strongly felt in the Jesuit's well known and often quoted poem "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection."⁵⁹ His wind in the poem does not just "blow," but it is a "bright wind boisterous ropes, wrestles, beats/ earth bare/ Of yester-tempest's creases." The dynamic force of nature roars ever onward: "Million-fueled, nature's bonfire burns on."

The original inspiration for "That Nature is a Hera-

⁵⁸E. E. Phare, The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins: a survey and commentary (Cambridge: University Press, 1933), p. 70.

⁵⁹Bridges, op. cit., p. 67.

clitean Fire" came from the early Greek philosopher⁶⁰ Heraclitus who was a promulgator of evolution, basing his conclusions on the belief that all things are in a constant state of change, of perpetual becoming. To him all sensible nature was a differentiation caused by discord of a single mobile principle, fire--divine, ethereal and living. In spite of Hopkins' complete return to Christian doctrine toward the end--"Enough, the Resurrection, a heart's clarion!"--it is easy to see how he was attracted to the pagan philosopher's idea of constant movement.

In Hopkins' poem "Inversnaid,"⁶¹ his love of wildness pulsates through most of the verses:

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

.
What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wildness yet.

Even in common scenes viewed daily, as in his "Spring"⁶² Hopkins sees the dynamic living force which vibrates all nature:

Nothing is so beautiful as spring--
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;
Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;

⁶⁰Hopkins on this poem: It has "much early Greek philosophical thought distilled in it," but its flavor did not turn out very Greek because of his Christian conclusions, a result of his tendency "to admire such philosophy and to do other wise." Ibid., p. 118.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 52.

⁶²Ibid., p. 27.

The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush
 The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
 With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

"The Wreck of the Deutschland," the first poem of his mature art, is Hopkins' most outstanding work in which he limns all the majesty of God in the violence of the natural elements. The second part of the poem, in which he describes in detail the wreck itself, includes the most turbulent descriptions of all his poetry. The wind and the sea can be heard howling and raging:

They fought with God's cold--
 And they could not and fell to the deck
 (Crushed them) or water (and drowned them) or rolled
 With the sea-romp over the wreck.
 Night roared, with the heart-break hearing a heart-broke rabble,
 The woman's wailing, the crying of child without check--
 Till a lioness arose breasting the babble,
 A prophetess towered in the tumult, a virginal tongue told.

 Sister, a sister calling
 A master, her master and mine!--
 And the inboard seas run swirling and hawling;
 The rash smart slogging brine
 Blinds her; but she that weather sees one thing, one;
 Has one fetch in her: she rears herself to divine
 Ears, and the call of the tall nun
 To the men in the tops and she tackle rode over the storm's brawling.

After depicting many scenes of the splendor of nature in its most restless and powerful motions, Hopkins often concludes as he does in "God's Grandeur" that the greatness of God is seen in the heaving turmoil; yet nature is never spent:

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
 It will flame out like shining from shook foil;
 It gathers to a greatness like the ooze of oil
 Crushed.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
 There lives the dearest freshness deep down things.

Akin to Hopkins' love of violently disturbed motion in nature is his delight in the wild and untidy patterns so plentifully scattered throughout creation. He rejoices in this untidiness as an antidote to the dullness and flatness which one imagines would characterize a world which had been made entirely comprehensible. X

The poet is forever thankful for those features which do not accommodate themselves to man's idea of order. The virtue he ascribes to the incomprehensibility of nature is something like that which Wordsworth finds in her impersonality: both may be described as "healing."⁶⁴

He derives pleasure from everything odd and unpatterned. Things which Hopkins enjoys most hover between two categories as "couple-color" of sky, things now swift, now slow, things that are fickle and varied, objects that are freckled, or "pied." These phases of creation which he maintains in his poetry are especially characteristic of God, because only He understands the principle on which they work. X

"Inversnaid" shows the joy of untidy freshness found even in faded monotonous scenes:

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth
 Turns and twindles over the broth
 Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning,
 It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
 Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,

⁶⁴Phares, op. cit., pp. 10,11.

Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern,
And the beadbony ash that sits over the burn.

Hopkins' poem "Pied Beauty" is most characteristic of this tendency and clearly reveals his joyful emotion toward variety. "Pied" things tell of God by their inability to be God, by their helplessness and humility. They indicate their Creator by what they are not. He is simple; they are variety.⁶⁵ "Pied Beauty" also assists in realizing the power of the senses so that it is not only a privilege but a duty and obligation to employ the senses.

Glory be to God for dappled things--
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced--fold, fallow, and
plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

Just shown is Hopkins' categorical enumeration of the many "dappled" things which delight and fascinate him. In "The Wreck" there is reference to "pied" glory: "Kiss my hand to the dappled-with-damson West." In the "Starlight Night"⁶⁶ he again coins phrases to express his love for the myriad un-ordered aspects of nature: "Look, look: a May-mess, like on orchard boughs! . . . This piece-bright paling shuts. . . ." "May-mess" and "piece-bright" are unusual terms which lend to

⁶⁵Sargent, op. cit., pp. 147,8.

⁶⁶Bridges, op. cit., p. 26.

the idea of "dappled" things and communicate his overflowing joy at the starlight sky.

In relation to natural creation particularly, Hopkins is always greatly concerned about beauty itself as such. He enjoys beauty, almost reveling in its delights to the fullest with his hyper-sensuousness. Even in his moments of ecstatic delight over some beautiful pattern of the natural world, however, he never forgets the One who is the originator of beauty. The poet begins with beauty which takes him on many tangential mental excursions, but never does he fail to return to and end with God. No longer is he searching nature futilely for an answer. He now sees the answer everywhere most eloquently spoken through the medium of beauty. He no longer attempts to avoid beauty through a false asceticism, because he is now in-~~tern~~etly aware that all creation having come from God, must eventually return to God. Beauty is, therefore, positive and good.

In Hopkins' poem "To what serves Mortal Beauty"⁶⁷ he X realizes the danger that physical loveliness may easily be taken for its external value only: "To what serves mortal beauty--dangerous; does set danc-ing blood. . . ." Earthly beauty must be recognized as "heaven's sweet gift" and then it will become, as rightly it should, "God's better beauty, grace."

The transient element of mortal beauty is a recurring theme in the poems. The thought often temporarily depresses the poet in him. This is the lugubriously repeated

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 60.

strain of one of Hopkins' most outstanding poems, "The Leadon Echo,"⁶⁸ considered by some to be his masterpiece.

How to keep--is there any any, is there none such, nowhere
 known some, bow or brooch or braid or brace, lace, latch
 or catch or key to keep
 Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, . . . from vanishing
 away?
 O is there no frowning of these wrinkles, ranked wrinkles deep,
 Down? no waving off of these most mournful messengers, still
 messengers, sad and stealing messengers of grey?
 No there's none, there's none, O no there's none,
 Nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair,
 Do what you may do, what, do what you may,
 And wisdom is early to despair:
 Be beginning; since, no, nothing can be done
 To keep at bay
 Age and age's evils, hoar hair,
 Ruck and wrinkle, drooping, dying, death's worst, winding
 sheets, tombs and worms and tumbling to decay;
 So be beginning, be beginning to despair.
 O there's none; no no no there's none:
 Be beginning to despair, to despair,
 Despair, despair, despair, despair.

From sinking almost into despair at the idea of beauty vanishing, he is suddenly caught up from his gloom by remembering that beauty dedicated to God is given eternal value; the act of affirming beauty in God arrests its transience. This joyful returning to faith from despair and gazing into, rather than merely at, beauty, and the happy conclusion, is perpetuated in his poem "The Golden Echo."⁶⁹

Where whatever's prized and passes of us, everything that's
 fresh and fast flying of us, seems to us sweet of us and
 swiftly away with, done away with, undone,

 Winning ways, airs innocent, maiden manners, sweet looks,
 loose locks, long locks, lovelocks, gaygear, going gallant,
 girlgrace--

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 54.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 55.

Resign them, sign them, seal them, send them, motion them
 with breath,
 And with sighs soaring, soaring sighs deliver
 Them; beauty-in-the-ghost, deliver it, early now, long before
 death
 Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God, beauty's
 self and beauty's giver.

When the thing we freely forfeit is kept with fonder a care,
 Fonder a care kept than we could have kept it, kept
 Far with fonder a care (and we, we should have lost it) finer, fonder
 A care kept.--Where kept? Do but tell us where kept, where.--
 Yonder.--What high as that! We follow, now we follow.--
 Yonder, yes yonder, yonder,
 Yonder.

Those who desire selfishly to keep beauty shall lose it; those
 who willingly give it up shall retain it. Again, beauty dedi-
 cated and returned to God is eternal.

Hopkins longs to reconcile the world of nature with
 the world of the spirit as the Christian and Catholic conceive
 it. In "The Starlight Night" any spirituality does not at
 first enter in. Farther on, however, he diverts his ecstasy
 into religious channels without denying Nature her due:

Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies!
 O look at all the fire-folk sitting in the air!
 The bright boroughs, the circle-citadels there!
 Down in dim woods the diamond delves! the elves'-eyes!
 The grey lawns cold where gold, where quickgold lies!
 Wind-beat whitebeam! airy abeles set on a flare!
 Flake-doves sent floating forth at a farmyard scare!--
 Ah well! it is all a purchase, all is a prize.

Buy then! bid then!--What?--Prayer, patience, alms,
 vows.

Look, look: a May-mess, like on orchard boughs!
 Look! March-bloom, like on mealed-with-yellow
 sallows!
 These are indeed the barn; withindoors house
 The shocks. This piece-bright paling shuts the spouse
 Christ home, Christ and his mother and all his
 hallows.

The glorious sight above and about him is not related to any

reward; it is the reward. He makes the starry sky the outermost wall of heaven, and thus comes to a realization of his rapture. The skies are lovely only because Christ is lovely. Hopkins is never so happy as when he feels with unwavering faith that the beauty of God and the beauty of nature are the same.⁷⁰

"Hurrahing in Harvest"⁷¹ communicates his ecstatic experience of the sacramental operation of nature on him. The great beauty of autumn in the country deeply impresses the poet-priest as bearing especial marks of the Creator's presence. Every pattern and object of nature upon which he rapturously gazes now bears traces of the divine mind.

Summer ends now; now, barbarous in beauty, the
 stooks arise
 Around; up above, what wind-walks! what lovely
 behaviour
 Of silk-sack clouds! has wilder, wilful-wavier
 Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies?

I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes,
 Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our
 Saviour;
 And, eyes, heart, what looks, what lips yet gave you a
 Rapturous love's greeting of realer, of rounder replies?

And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding
 shoulder
 Majestic--as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet!--
 These things, these things were here and but the
 beholder
 Wanting; which two when they once meet,
 The heart rears wings bold and bolder
 And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him off
 under his feet.

⁷⁰Phare, op. cit., p. 129.

⁷¹Bridges, op. cit., p. 30.

The happiness overwhelming his soul reaches a powerful emotional crescendo in the last few lines.

In all the simple and intricate workings of the universe, Hopkins perceives the same dynamic spirit. In "St. Alphonsus Rodriguez,"⁷² a poem in honor of a saintly lay brother who neither sought nor attained renown during life, Hopkins sees that God was working in him as quietly but unceasingly as He works in the growth of flowers and trees. The art of the Creator is seen not only in the making of great trees but also in the minute and fragile veining of a violet:

Yet God (that hews mountain and continent,
Earth, all, out; who, with trickling increment,
Veins violets and tall trees makes more and more)
Could crowd career with conquest while there went
Those years and years by of world without event
That in Majorca Alfonso watched the door.

This rational affirmation of his beliefs seen by him in all the physical world heightens his "ecstasy of interest"⁷³ with which he views all creation. By gazing intently into all the natural phenomena surrounding him, he draws forth his "in-scapes," the principle of all life, God. This is best evidenced in the mystical octet of the "The Windhover,"⁷⁴ considered by the poet himself to be his masterpiece:

I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Fal-
con, in his riding

⁷²Ibid., p. 68.

⁷³Kenyon Critics, op. cit., p. 112.

⁷⁴Bridges, op. cit., p. 29.

Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and
 striding
 High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
 In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,
 As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the
 hurl and gliding
 Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
 Stirred for a bird,--the achieve of, the mastery of the
 thing!

The emotion which Gerard Hopkins feels most strongly is the pure love which wells up in him at the vestiges of the Creator so clearly marked to his eager gaze. His fervent love is reciprocated by the vibrant beauty of the physical world which communicates a message of love calling man to God. He greets nature:

I kiss my hand
 To the stars, lovely-asunder
 Starlight, wafting him out of it; and
 Glow, glory in thunder;
 Kiss my hand to the dappled-with-damson west:
 Since, tho' he is under the world's splendour and wonder,
 His mystery must be instressed, stressed;
 For I greet him the days I meet him, and bless when I understand.

This theme which is so vividly discernible throughout all of Hopkins' poems, in which experience of earthly loveliness is closely accompanied by religious experience, is a conception which is evidently natural and consonant with his temperament. All of his descriptions of nature are ended with a "Laus Deo."

Beauty intermingled with the religious, then, became increasingly central for the poet and continued to be explicitly outlined in all of his work. This type of poem was highly developed by Gerard Manley Hopkins, more so than any other writer of his time as revealed and summed up by one of his critics:

It was because his observation of nature was so minute, his response to it so intense, his conception of man's relation to it and to God so precise, that Hopkins was able to bring this kind of a poem to a point of perfection unequalled in his time. He almost never wrote the kind of a poem in which description and observation are at best related only by a mood⁷⁵

Hopkins' twice-born ardent personality had had to be broken on the wheel of spiritual crisis--his conversion--then reassembled and reanimated by the working of divine grace. In his rebirth, as strikingly revealed in the poems just reviewed, objective nature became "twice fair." His mature poetry, that which was produced after his seven years of silence, is a declaration of this renascence. The "distilled vision" is that to which he had strained in his pre-conversion period.⁷⁶

All creation is forever steeped in God's presence. The principle of beauty, the very soul of art--"inscape," that which had been shaped and reaffirmed for Hopkins by both St. Ignatius and Duns Scotus--had become perfectly integrated with his own deeply religious soul. The lines written previous to his conversion, "Be shelled, eyes, with double dark," became completely cancelled. The sacramental world of Gerard Hopkins was to be enjoyed with the highest of approbations--that of God.

⁷⁵Kenyon Critics, op. cit., p. 104.

⁷⁶Ruggles, op. cit., pp. 152,3.

2. RATIONAL CREATION

Man is an important and essential aspect of Gerard Manley Hopkins' sacramental view of nature. Hopkins had never come into contact with many types of humanity, but when he was sent to do parish work, he became somewhat better acquainted with his fellow man. He turned his attention for awhile from birds' eggs and bluebells to the inscape of the individual rational being. He did not separate man from creation; he looked on him as an extension of the dappled world and prized him accordingly. To him each man was different, and each man's deepest beauty was his self.

With man as with all other nature, Hopkins followed Scotus and emphasizes the "thisness" of each person. He finds pleasure in the uniqueness of every personality--in its individuality; every man has an indelible and unmistakable character, and has his own trade-mark on everything that issues from him.⁷⁷

One of Hopkins' most noticeable characteristics in dealing with rational creation is his tendency to bring out the whole man. Never does he separate the soul from the body, or presume to rise above the flesh in an attempt to be all spirit. It is significant that this was the view firmly held

⁷⁷Phare, op. cit., p. 12.

by Aquinas, on whose scholasticism the Jesuit Order bases most of its theological and philosophical principles.

Thomas Aquinas' anthropological view emphasizes that the body of man must be considered equally with the soul. This hylomorphic doctrine,⁷⁸ firmly sanctioned by St. Thomas, states that the body or soul of man is each without the other an incomplete substance. It takes both first matter and first form by mutual complementation to make one complete substance which is man, and the union between the two is a substantial one. In other words, to Hopkins as to St. Thomas, the soul living in the body expresses the perfect equipoise.

Hopkins sees this synolistic⁷⁹ unity or "oneness" in mankind and never fails to feel it in himself. He is aware of the body even in times of spiritual desolation:

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.⁸⁰

He dreads being separated from God as represented by His creation, and the feeling causes him pain to be made more than usually conscious of his own identity as being different from the rest of nature.⁸¹

Hopkins never forgets the important duality of man, his flesh and spirit which make up his psychosomatic⁸² being:

⁷⁸hyle: matter, morphe: form. Brennan, op. cit., p. 68.

⁷⁹Synolistic approach of Aquinas emphasizes body and soul, cf. animistic approach of Aristotle, puts stress on soul. Ibid., p. 48.

⁸⁰Sonnet "45," Bridges, op. cit., p. 65.

⁸¹Phare, op. cit., p. 40. ⁸²Psyche: soul, soma: body.

Man's spirit will be flesh-bound when found at best,
 But uncumbered: meadow-down is not distressed⁸³
 For a rainbow footing it nor he for his bones risen.⁸⁴

He remembers the promise of Judgment Day, the general resurrection, when all the bodies of the dead shall rise in glorified form to join once again to the soul in perfect union-- when man's spirit "when found at best" will again be "flesh-bound" in his "bone-house." In "The Wreck" he addresses God, "Thou hast bound bones and veins in me, fastened me flesh;" and again in the same poem, speaking of a fellow human being, a nun, he refers to her as being "touched in your bower of bone. . . ."

It is appropriate for Hopkins to look thus upon the importance of the body of man, because the dogmas of the Incarnation and of the Resurrection, as well as the whole liturgical worship of the Church, have constantly reasserted the sanctity of the body and the holiness of the senses.⁸⁵

Hopkins did know nature but he did not know much about the human creature. He had been retiring even as a youth and had few close friends. He had usually been engrossed either with nature or scholastic pursuits and had not much opportunity to study men.

When he was later assigned by his Order to parish work,

⁸³"A meadow no more feels the pressure, the discomfort, of the rainbow which rests on it than the new man feels his body." Pick, op. cit., p. 70.

⁸⁴"The Caged Skylark," Bridges, op. cit., p. 31.

⁸⁵Pick, op. cit., p. 70.

he met people through the sacraments and at their occupations, but in his poems he shows little knowledge of their character.⁸⁶ He wrote about his contact through his priestly duties with the occupational types ("Felix Randall"), but he himself realized that when he described his own experiences of nature or God, he was on safer, more solid ground.

There is a small group of poems in which he has tried to enter sympathetically into the hearts of other human beings in order to trace the primary laws of human nature in phases of daily life as related to, or as they are under, the influence of divine grace.

"Felix Randall"⁸⁷ was written on the death of a typical man of labor, big and rough--a type foreign to the sensitive Hopkins. Underneath the brute force, however, Hopkins perceives the gentle and repentant spirit anxious to make peace with his God by means of the "sweet reprieve" of the sacraments tendered to him by the priest:

Felix Randall the farrier, O he is dead then? my duty all ended,
 Who have watched his mould of man, big-boned and hardy-
 handsome
 Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it and some
 Fatal four disorders, fleshed there, all contended?

Sickness broke him. Impatient he cursed at first, but mended
 Being anointed and all; though a heavenlier heart began some
 Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and ransom
 Tendered to him. Ah well, God rest him all road ever he
 offended!

On one of his many excursions about the countryside, Hopkins chanced to see a young farmer ploughing, the sight of

⁸⁶Kenyon Critics, op. cit., p. 91.

⁸⁷Bridges, op. cit., p. 48.

which gave him so much pleasure he commemorated it in a poem, "Harry Ploughman."⁸⁸ Harry is a creature who is sedulously exercising all the power with which he is endowed; he flashes off beauty as a by-product giving both pleasure to the eye of the beholder and satisfaction to the Creator who sees His creature using its faculties to their utmost. The image, as always, gives Hopkins both aesthetic pleasure and spiritual comfort.⁸⁹

Hard as hurdle arms, with a broth of goldish flue
 Breathed round; the rack of ribs; the scooped flank; lank
 Rope-over thigh; knee-nave; and barrelled shank--
 Head and foot, shoulder and shank--
 By a grey eye's heed steered well, one crew, fall to;
 Stand at stress. Each limb's barrowy brawn, his thew
 That onewhere curded, onewhere sucked or sank--
 Soared or sank--,
 Though as a beechbole firm, find his, as at a roll-
 call, rank
 And features, in flesh, what deed he each must do--
 His sinew-service where do.

Rarely socially minded, Hopkins tries in one of these poems to give a sympathetic view of the unemployed. His description is keen and accurate, but it fails to impart any feeling, very probably because Hopkins was and always had been removed from such problems.

Tom--garlanded with squat and surly steel
 Tom; then Tom's fallowbootfellow piles pick
 By him and rips out rockfire homeforth--sturdy Dick;
 Tom Heart-at-ease, Tom Navy: he is all for his meal
 Sure, 's bed now. Low be it: lustily he his low lot (feel
 That ne'er need hunger, Tom; Tom seldom sick,
 Seldomer heartsore; that treads through, prickproof,
 thick

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 64.

⁸⁹Phare, op. cit., p. 73.

Thousands of thorns, thoughts) swings though. Common-
weal
Little I reckon! lacklevel in, if all had bread:

. care, but share care--
This, by Despair, bred Hangdog dull; by Rage,
Manwolf, worse; and their packs infest the age.⁹⁰

Because of their radiantly fresh beauty, Hopkins was always attracted to young people. In his poetry he shows a clear and keen insight into the nature of youth, moreso than into human nature in general. Many of his poems depict the clear-eyed ingenuousness of the young.

"The Handsome Heart"⁹¹ tells of Hopkins' delight in finding a little boy who, when asked what the priest should buy him for a present, answered, "Father, what you buy me I like best." This side of human nature gives Hopkins great joy and reassurance in humanity, a humanity which often tends to sadden the sensitive priest.

What the heart is! which, like carriers let fly--
Doff darkness, homing nature knows the rest--
To its own fine function, wild and self-instressed,
Falls light as ten years long taught how to and why.

Mannerly-hearted! more than handsome face--
Beauty's bearing or muse of mounting vein,
All, in this case, bathed in high hallowing grace. . .

Of heaven what boon to buy you, boy, or gain
Not granted!--Only . . . O on that path you pace
Run all your race, O brace sterner that strain!

"Spring and Fall"⁹² is also addressed to a child but it is sadder, expressing the thought that man, because of his

⁹⁰"Tom's Garland," Bridges, op. cit., p. 63.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 47.

⁹²Ibid., p. 50.

"blight" was born to weep. Pictured here is one of the great "tragedies" of childhood, a little girl sobbing over the death of a forest in the fall.

Margaret, are you grieving
 Over Goldengrove unleaving?
 Leaves, like the things of man, you
 With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
 Ah! as the heart grows older
 It will come to such sights colder
 By and by nor spare a sigh
 Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;
 And yet you will weep and know why.
 Now no matter, child, the name:
 Sorrow's springs are the same.
 Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
 What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
 It is the blight man was born for,
 It is Margaret you mourn for.

Because his sacred duties so often revealed the failings of man, Hopkins received great consolation in being God's dispenser of grace through the sacraments. In a sentimental poem, "The Bugler's First Communion,"⁹³ he tells of a young soldier who came to him for Communion. Hopkins almost wishes that when the boy goes forth to battle he may be killed. In that way he would go directly to heaven because of the grace in his soul, and thus be spared of the sins which will probably enter his life if he lives to grow into manhood.

Here he knelt then in regimental red.
 Forth Christ from cupboard fetched, how fain I of feet
 To his youngster take his treat!
 Low-latched in leaf-light housel his too huge godhead.

 Then though I should tread tufts of consolation
 Days after, so I in a sort deserve to
 And do serve God to serve to
 Just such slips of soldiery Christ's royal ration.

⁹³Ibid., p. 42.

O now well work that sealing sacred ointment!
 O for now charms, arms, what bans off bad
 And locks love ever in a lad!
 Let me though see no more of him

Of the poems in which Hopkins attempts to delve sympathetically into human nature, particularly of the young, "On the Portrait of Two Beautiful Young People"⁹⁴ is the best and most successful. The poet gazes with delight at a picture he has found of a young boy and girl, a brother and sister. He wonders meditatively where the future will take them, realizing that some danger always lies ahead for youth. He asks what their goal is and reflects that nothing but truth will ever keep them in their path. Truth, he believes, is Christ.

But ah, bright forelock, cluster that you are
 Of favoured make and mind and health and youth,
 Where lies your landmark, seamarck, or soul's star?
 There's none but truth can stead you. Christ is truth.

There's none but good can be good, both for you
 And what sways with you, maybe this sweet maid;
 None good but God--a warning waved to
 One once that was found wanting when Good weighed.

One poem which clearly reveals with amusing tenderness an insight into the intensity of youth is "Brothers."⁹⁵ It relates an incident of a play given by one of Hopkins' boys' classes. One boy, whose younger brother was in the play, sat in the audience and went through agony fearing his brother would make a mistake, whereas the young actor himself was quite self-assured, serenely unaware of the anxiety he was causing.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 71.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 49.

Part was picked for John,
 Young John: then fear, then joy
 Ran revel in the elder boy.
 Their night was come now; all
 Our company thronged the hall;

.
 For, wrung all on love's rack,
 My lad, and lost in Jack,
 Smiled, blushed, and bit his lip.
 Or drove, with a diver's dip
 Clutched hands down through clasped knees--

.
 Now the other was brass-bold:
 He had no work to hold
 His heart up at the strain;
 Nay, roguish ran the vein.
 Two tedious acts were past;
 Jack's call and cue at last;
 When Henry, heart-forsook,
 Dropped eyes and dared not look.
 Eh, how all rung!
 Young dog, he did give tongue!
 But Harry--in his hands he has flung
 His tear-tricked cheeks of flame
 For fond love and for shame.

After seeing and finding such comfort in tenderness and affection, Hopkins is as usual recalled to faith in human nature:

Ah Nature, framed in fault,
 There's comfort then, there's salt;
 Nature, bad, base, and blind,
 Dearly thou canst be kind;
 There dearly then, dearly,
 I'll cry thou canst be kind.

Any example of the fresh beauty of youth never failed to delight Hopkins, just as the great beauty of nature never ceased to enrapture him. In "The Handsome Heart" he made an effort to trace in the boy the lineaments of sanctified human nature, and was satisfied with what he saw. He felt that his perception was confirmed in the graciousness of the boy's answer, "What you buy me I like best." The child exhales beauty merely by being what he is.

In "On the Portrait of Two Beautiful Young People," their sweet fresh beauty first captured his gaze:

ah, bright forelock, cluster that you are
Of favoured make and mind and health and youth.

Human beauty, comments Hopkins throughout his work, is good, just as the beauty of nature is good. Man responds instinctively to personal beauty; hence man's nature responds to goodness and truth, attributes of beauty. It is natural and right to admire the beautiful because, says the poet, if Pope Gregory had not seen the beautiful English slave boys in Rome, he might not have been inspired to send missionaries to evangelize England.

Those lovely lads once, wet-fresh windfalls of war's storm,
How then should Gregory, a father, have gleaned else from swarmed Rome? But God to a nation dealt that day's dear chance.⁹⁶

Man is the world's loveliest creation; since beauty is one of God's good gifts it must not be disregarded. Man is God's living creation and Christianity makes it incumbent on men to love each other personally and also to love those marks of unique individuality. All men, therefore, must pay to those with special beauty the homage due them:

World's loveliest--men's selves. Self flashes off frame and face.
What do then? how meet beauty? Merely meet it; own,
Home at heart, heaven's sweet gift; then leave, let that alone.
Yea, wish that though, wish all, God's better beauty, grace.⁹⁷

So he spoke of human beauty and said the same thing of the beauty of nature every time he mentioned it. The clarity of

⁹⁶"To What Serves Mortal Beauty?" Ibid., p. 60.

⁹⁷Ibid.

his thought reveals his belief in the immanence and transcendence of God in relation to beauty. The poet deals thus with human loveliness in the same way that he deals with the beauty of nature--he turns it back to God, the only way through which it acquires any value:

Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God,
beauty's self and beauty's giver.⁹⁸

Hopkins was also attracted to youth because of the innocence that shines from its carefree face. Almost simultaneous with his smile at the pure and untouched beauty, however, a cloud descends over his thought when he realizes the sin which the young will inevitably have to face and fight. He is always conscious of his fears for the spiritual safety of youth. With this fear runs the recurrent theme of the choice of good or evil which man is constantly forced to make. Man has free will, hence his choice is always his own.

Where are you going? he had asked the two beautiful young people:

Where lies your landmark, seamarck, or soul's star?
There's none but truth can stead you. Christ is truth.
· · · · ·
Man lives that list, that leaning in the will · · · · ·
No wisdom can forecast by gauge or guess,
The selfless self of self, most strange, most still,
Fast furled and all foredrawn to No or Yes.⁹⁹

Important here also is the reconcilable doctrine of predestination and free will. The result of man's choice is predestined but each man's life follows out the trend of his own will.

⁹⁸"The Golden Echo," Ibid., p. 55.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 71.

For the "Bugler boy" he feared the evil that lies in wait for him should he return from war and grow into manhood:

Frowning and forefending angel-warder
Squander the hell-rook ranks sally to molest him.

The fact that man, because of his free will, must constantly choose between good and evil is a source of unrest for the sensitive priest. He is forever setting up two camps, one of good, the other of evil, which are at constant war. Man must choose the leader of one or the other to follow:

What makes the man and what
The man within that makes:
Ask whom he serves or not
Serves and what side he takes.

For good grows wild and wide,
Has shades, is nowhere none;
But right must seek a side,
And choose for chieftain one.¹⁰⁰

Military language is typical both of Hopkins and of the militant Jesuit Order, of which St. Ignatius, the founder, was a soldier.

There is, then, no easy way out, no way of avoiding the momentous choice set before each human being. This thought was especially impressed on Hopkins by the Jesuits, because a meditation on good and evil was according to Loyola ineradicable. As always, however, Hopkins turns from gloom to remind rather than warn that "Christ is truth" and none but Him can save.

One of Gerard Hopkins' most frequently repeated and yet most melancholic themes concerns his sorrowful realiza-

¹⁰⁰"On a Piece of Music," Ibid., p. 86.

tion that man fails to accomplish the primary purpose for which he was created--to adore God and glorify Him through nature. The beauties of nature are wasted on most men, the poet fears. He also laments that man does not appreciate the glories of nature, but that he tries to devastate them. It is indisputable, he asserts, that the present trend of civilization is separating man from nature, and hence from his ultimate goal, God.

No one knew better than this sensitively acute priest the imperfections of man and the unsteadiness of his will--"and the drunkards go on drinking, the filthy, as the scripture says, are filthy still: human nature is so inveterate."¹⁰¹ He claimed, however, that his religion helped him to look on those things without despair. The knowledge of man's unsteady course through life is portrayed in part of "The Wreck of the Deutschland":¹⁰²

I am soft sift
 In an hourglass--at the wall
 Fast, but mined with a motion, a drift,
 And it crowds and it combs to the fall;
 I steady as a water in a well, to a poise, to a pane,
 But roped with, always, all the way down from the tall
 Fells or flanks of the voel, a vein
 Of the gospel proffer, a pressure, a principle, Christ's gift.

Man shifting and changing in the traitorous, almost imperceptible, and yet in the end apparently accelerating, movements of time is here revealed in the ominous overtones of "soft sift" and "mined," in the implications of unsteady will in

¹⁰¹Kenyon Critics, op. cit., p. 111.

¹⁰²Bridges, op. cit., p. 12.

"drift," and in the terrifying rush of "and it crowds and it combs to the fall."

The Catholic conception of the supernatural life of grace usually returns to bolster Hopkins' courage when he is tempted to turn from the world in despair. Man was wounded by original sin, but counteracting this fall came the Redemption through Christ's gift.

Through grace man is returned to God. The whole sacramental system of the Catholic Church is designed to bring man the grace of Christ through the mediation of the priest. To "Felix Randall" was given "sweet reprieve"; to the "Bugler boy," Hopkins is happy to "serve God," "Christ's royal ration"--Communion. Grace dispensed through the sacraments then, as Hopkins so often reminds one, helps to bring wayward man back to God.

Thus Hopkins is cognizant of man's ability to sin. He is doubly stricken with sorrow because he knows that it is simply because man has free will--a gift from God--that he is free to sin against God. Since man is free, he can refuse to use nature sacramentally--a terrible thing in Hopkins' sanctified view--and so can refuse to follow the Cross to Christ.

"The world is charged with the grandeur of God," cries the poet. When the reflection of God is so intense, why is it not obvious to all men? And worse than not recognizing the sacramental quality of nature, man ruins and destroys natural creation with his terrifying advance of civilization: ✓

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
 And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with
 toil;
 And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell:
 the soil
 Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.¹⁰³

After this reflection on the failings of man, he returns and hopefully ends with his illimitable faith in God:

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
 World broods with warm breast and with ah!
 bright wings.

Created things praise God although they do not know what they do. Yet man who can mean to praise God does not. Created things are only sacramental through man, who does not make use of this privilege and wastes creation.

Like St. Thomas, Hopkins considers man to be the noblest creature in the hierarchy of all creation. Man, refusing to use nature sacramentally, fails to give glory to God, the very purpose for which he was created. Such blindness seems to be almost inconceivable to the Jesuit poet.

In "Spring"¹⁰⁴ the pure innocence of nature is contrasted with man's tendency to sin. The beautiful season is reminiscent of Eden both in natural and moral beauty.

Nothing is so beautiful as spring--
 When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;
 Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
 Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
 The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;
 The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush
 The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
 With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

¹⁰³"God's Grandeur," Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 27.

What is all this juice and all this joy?
 A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning
 In Eden garden.--Have, get, before it cloy,
 Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,
 Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,
 Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the
 winning.

Hopkins continues to cry out against man's sin in the misuse of nature. Repeatedly he contrasts natural beauty, which unceasingly renews its hymn to God, with man who is wayward, silent:

Left hand, off land, I hear the lark ascend,
 His rash-fresh re-winded new-skeined score
 In crisps of curl off wild winch whirl, and pour
 And pelt music, till none's to spill nor spend

How these two shame this shallow and frail town!
 How ring right out our sordid turbid time,
 Being pure! We, life's pride and cared-for crown,

Have lost that cheer and charm of earth's past prime:
 Our make and making break, are breaking, down
 To man's last dust, drain fast towards man's first slime!¹⁰⁵

He seems to say, how terribly shameful that man the pride of creation--"cared-for crown"-- in his thoughtless and ruthless attempts to advance should only slip backward all the more rapidly towards "man's first slime." Man's materialism is only leading him back to matter, instead of through matter to Heaven.¹⁰⁶

Hopkins' fervent prayer is that man may return to grace and intentionally give glory to God. "In the Valley of Elwy"¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵"The Sea and the Skylark," Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁰⁶Pick, op. cit., p. 66.

¹⁰⁷Bridges, op. cit., p. 32.

there is the same doleful refrain but also the same fervent prayer:

Lovely the woods, waters, meadows, combs, vales,
 All the air things wear that build this world of Wales;
 Only the inmate does not correspond:
 God, lover of souls, swaying considerate scales,
 Complete thy creature dear O where it fails,
 Being mighty a master, being a father and fond.

Man's failure to recognize the sacramental emphasis on nature as news of God is also the subject of "Ribblesdale."¹⁰⁸ Man could but will not communicate with God through His creation. Bound up in his own selfish ends, the human being fails to share in the life of Christ:

Earth, sweet Earth, sweet landscape, with leaves throng
 And louched low grass, heaven that dost appeal
 To, with no tongue to plead, no heart to feel;
 That canst but only be, but dost that long--

Thou canst but be, but that thou well dost; strong
 Thy plea with him who dealt, nay does now deal,
 Thy lovely dale down thus and thus bids reel
 Thy river, and o'er gives all to rack or wrong.

And what is Earth's eye, tongue, or heart else, where
 Else, but in dear and dogged man?--Ah, the heir
 To his own selfbent so bound, so tied to his turn,
 To thriftless reave both our rich round world bare
 And none reck of world after, this bids wear
 Earth brows of such care, care and dear concern.

Once in the evening while out strolling, Hopkins chanced to see a candle burning in a window. The sight set him musing on who or what was behind the tiny flame. Throughout "The Candle Indoors"¹⁰⁹ he keeps hoping that behind the candle is a woman or man, "Jessy or Jack," who thrusts back the dark,

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 46.

like the flame, by glorifying God.

Some candle clear burns somewhere I come by.
 I muse at how its being puts blissful back
 With yellowy moisture mild night's blear-all black,
 Or to-fro tender trambeams truckle at the eye.
 By that window what task what fingers ply,
 I plod wondering, a-wanting, just for lack
 Of answer the eagerer a-wanting Jessy or Jack
 There God to aggrandise, God to glorify.--

Unusual for the mild mannered priest, Hopkins some-
 times turns with almost vehement indignation against men who
 deliberately aid in destroying natural phenomena and help the
 devil in his work of spoiling God's creation:

Enough: corruption was the world's first woe.
 What need I strain my heart beyond my ken?
 O but I bear my burning witness though
 Against the wild and wanton work of men.¹¹⁰

The abruptness and violence of the last two lines suggest
 powerful emotion beyond control. Destruction of nature, to
 the sacramental view of Hopkins, was an attempt to destroy
 God Himself.

In spite of his just anger at "the wanton work of men,"
 at man's failure to see the sacramentalism in nature, and at
 man's tendency to sin, Hopkins sees the sacredness of the human
 personality. Man, too, like nature, was created by God and
 is therefore good. Furthermore, being God's masterpiece, man
 has an immortal soul.

It was in the image of God that rational being was
 created, the same image and likeness in which God became Christ
 incarnate.

In all men, therefore, as in all nature, Hopkins sees

¹¹⁰"On the Portrait of Two Beautiful Young People,"
Ibid., p. 72.

the vestiges, the handiwork of the Creator; in all men's faces
he sees with ever-renewing hope the image of Christ shining
through:

Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is--
Christ--for Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.^{lll}

B. DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION

1. CHRIST AND THE INCARNATION

To Gerard Manley Hopkins the expiation for the Fall of Man--the crucifixion and ensuing Redemption--was the greatest event in history. A contemporary Catholic poet¹¹² and one of Hopkins' close friends in the last few years of his life made a comment on the Incarnation which very well expressed Hopkins' own views:

The one secret, the greatest of all is the Doctrine of the Incarnation, regarded not [only] as an historical event which occurred two thousand years ago, but as an event which is renewed in the body of everyone who is in the way to the fulfillment of his original destiny.¹¹³

The Incarnation was to Hopkins, as it is to every Catholic, the ultimate proof of the indwelling of the Divine in the natural. The call of Christ in the beauty of the world, inviting man to his own redemption and salvation, stems from the graces of Christ's suffering and Passion.¹¹⁴

*final evidence
Ness. Face -
X - beauty of
suffering
nature -> God
by Christ
as proof -*

In Catholic thought, Christ, in assuming human form, had taken on Himself the most humble of physical attributes, and had made the Godhead subjective to the pain and humiliations of the flesh. As one author comments on this doctrine,

¹¹²Coventry Patmore.

¹¹³Pick, op. cit., p. 44.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

It is one of the adorable points of the incredible condescension of the Incarnation . . . that our Lord submitted not only to the pains of life, the fasting, scourging . . . but also to the mean and trivial accidents of humanity.¹¹⁵

In Christ's precedent lies Hopkins' surety that these limitations are once and forever triumphantly set at naught. No matter to what depths of despair he may have sunk, this is always Hopkins' deepest realization and final comment:

Enough! the Resur-
rection,
A heart's-clarion! Away grief's gasping, joyless days, dejection.
Across my foundering deck shone
A beacon, an eternal beam. Flesh fade, and mortal trash
Fall to the residuary worm; world's wildfire, leave but ash:
In a flash, at a trumpet crash,
I am all at once what Christ is, since he was what I am, and
This Jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch, matchwood, immortal
diamond,
Is immortal diamond.¹¹⁶

The petty infirmities shall fall away until only the soul remains--the "immortal diamond"--and this is the glorious future for everyone--"Jack, joke, poor potsherd." This is what Hopkins meant when he, always measuring things according to their eternal value, said:

I think the trivialness of life is, and personally to each one, ought to seem to be, done away with by the Incarnation.¹¹⁷

In his Christology Hopkins emphasizes the human element. Christ to him is the God-Man, the hero of mankind who came to earth to become man Himself. It is significant that

¹¹⁵Ruggles, op. cit., p. 74.

¹¹⁶"That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection," Bridges, op. cit., p. 67.

¹¹⁷Pick, op. cit., p. 44.

Scotus also stressed the human side of Christ. Christ was doubly dear to Hopkins because He was, first, his God; second, He had been on the earth and knew intimately the pain, sorrow and sinfulness of humanity.

Hopkins fervidly believed that an intimacy existed (as Scotus taught) between himself and Christ, where He plays "lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his to the Father through the features of men's faces."¹¹⁸ In a letter to a close friend,¹¹⁹ the poet speaks of Christ as the "only person I am in love with."¹²⁰

One of his critics remarks on the obvious passion of Hopkins, the one in which his religion and his love are one:

Hopkins found supremely in Christ that beauty of body, mind, and spirit which he demanded of his earthly friends, and . . . only toward the person of Christ could he indulge his ardor without risk of disillusionment or excess.¹²¹

His daily, intimate communion with Christ profoundly affected the scope of Hopkins' verse. He very probably attributed his great love to sacramental grace. His poetry of physical desire was transmuted into poetry of compassion.

The Exercises of St. Ignatius gave strength and purpose

¹¹⁸Sonnet "34," Bridges, op. cit., p. 53.

¹¹⁹Robert Bridges.

¹²⁰Claude Williamson, O.S.C. ed, Great Catholics (New York: Macmillan, 1939), p. 361.

¹²¹"Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J.," Commonweal, XXXIII (1941), 563.

to the priest's love of Christ. The meditations in the Exercises are devoted almost entirely to Christ. They are divided into four weeks for purposes of retreat. The first week is spent in thinking of God the Creator and of his, the exercitant's, own disservice to his Creator. The remaining three weeks are spent entirely reflecting on Christ Himself--His life, His Passion, and lastly on the risen Christ in His glory. These reflections were aimed by St. Ignatius at making the novice, especially, a true soldier of Christ. The deep love for the God-Man which had always been evident in Hopkins was thus intensified by the Jesuit teachings.

Hopkins' military phraseology, strengthened by the militant Jesuit Order, was at its best in his favorite concept of Christ, a soldier.

Mark Christ our King. He knows war, served this soldiering through;
 He of all can handle a rope best. There he bides in bliss
 Now, and seeing somewhere some man do all that man can do,
 For love he leans forth, needs his neck must fall on, kiss,
 And cry 'O Christ-done deed! So God-made-flesh does too:
 Were I come o'er again' cries Christ 'it should be this'.¹²²

The soldier was idealized by Hopkins as one who possessed all the noble attributes of his profession. He praises Christ the perfect man, one who loves to praise and reward, more than Christ the "lord of thunder."

Along with Hopkins' conception of Christ as a soldier is his worshipful depiction of Him as a hero. He, the Hero of mankind, suffered the Passion for the sake of wayward man and

¹²²"(The Soldier)," Bridges, op. cit., p. 61.

saved him from lasting sin by redemptive grace.

But to Christ lord of thunder
Crouch; lay knee by earth low under:
'Holiest, loveliest, bravest,
Save my hero, O Hero savest.¹²³

"The Windhover"¹²⁴ is his only poem which is addressed directly "To Christ our Lord" and is "greatest in the implications of its subject."¹²⁵ Hopkins referred to it as the "best thing I ever wrote."¹²⁶ It concerns a beautiful bird, the windhover or kestrel, which to Hopkins in its every sudden gyration and quiet hovering mirrors Christ. The flight of the bird is seen in its magnificent and triumphant career. The poet experiences such ecstasy and amazement at the mastery of its brilliant course that it is difficult for him to imagine an equal to it in beauty. The sestet is devoted to the revelation of that Beauty beyond beauty, a "billion times told lovelier" than the natural flight of the bird.

I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Fal-
con, in his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and
striding
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the
hurl and gliding
Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
Stirred for a bird,--the achieve of, the mastery of the
thing!

¹²³"The Loss of the Eurydice," Ibid., p. 31.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 29.

¹²⁵Pick, op. cit., p. 70

¹²⁶Ibid.

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
 Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a
 billion
 Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!

No wonder of it: sheer plod makes plough down
 sillion
 Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
 Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.

Christ's beauty by the Passion--His very raison d'être--
 was beaten as that of the bird is beaten by the wind. Yet, in
 the consummation of the Passion, Christ's true spiritual beauty
 and divinity was conclusively revealed. Here in "Fall, gall
 themselves, and gash-gold vermilion" is Christ upon the Cross.
 Hopkins, on the other hand is, as always, the alter Christus
 in his attempt to identify himself with Christ. One of Hop-
 kins' most astute critics interprets it thus:

Beautiful was Christ's public life, but "a billion
 times told lovelier" was His self immolation on the Cross,
 His sacrifice transmuted by the Fire of Love into some-
 thing far greater than any mere natural beauty. More
 beautiful than any natural achievement was Hopkins' own
 humble and plodding continuance of the ethic of redemp-
 tion through his own mystical self-destruction, his own
 humble following of Christ to the very Cross of Calvary.
 And the beauty of Christ and the beauty of the Jesuit to
 the eyes that see more than this world is the beauty of
 their dying to live.¹²⁷

This "dying to live" is the story of Christ and it is the
 story of Gerard Manley Hopkins.

Hopkins' interpretation of every natural event in terms
 of supernatural values and its relation to the effects of the
 Incarnation is best portrayed in his longest and most discussed
 poem, "The Wreck of the Deutschland." Here even more than

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 71.

usual, Hopkins' excites himself and the reader to a fuller realization of the truths of religion.

In 1875 the Deutschland foundered in a storm off the Thames estuary. The entire crew and five Franciscan nuns, exiles from Germany by the Falk laws, went down with her.¹²⁸ Far away in the Welsh mountains Hopkins was shocked into writing his first poem for seven years.

The poem is difficult, as Hopkins admitted. It sits at the beginning of the poet's mature verse, the editor said, like a "great dragon folded in the gate to forbid all entrance."¹²⁹ To understand and appreciate "The Wreck," it has been said that one must meditate a fortnite on the Passion. Most of the difficulty of the poem lies in the fact that few readers^{are} really Christians.¹³⁰

"Ipse, the only one, Christ," are the words in which the author tersely sums up the meaning of "The Wreck." For further comprehension, it is necessary to repeat that the meaning of this poem concerns only Christ; its meaning is Christ:

It is the story of the Passion and Redemption working themselves out in the lives of men; it tells how Christ the "martyr-master" calls the souls of men to Him, calls them through suffering and sacrifice, through the Cross, to perfection, to Himself--how He appeals to them through the beauty of the world--how submission to Christ is the only true deliverance--how Christ's majesty and terror

¹²⁸"Gerard Manley Hopkins," Time, XLIV (1944), 99.

¹²⁹Bridges, op. cit., p. 104

¹³⁰Pick, op. cit., p. 41.

and might are merely His love trying to bring men "to hero of Calvary, Christ's feet."¹³¹

The story is about a nun and a priest--Hopkins--who read in temporal events an eternal message from God. The poem completely affirms the Way of the Cross. Hopkins interprets the actual wreck as the type of worldly disaster that brings conviction, supernatural assurance to the soul,

Stroke and a stress that stars and storms deliver,
That guilt is hushed by, hearts are flushed
by, and melt.

and identifies such experience mystically with the Passion.¹³²

Throughout the poem the protagonists are Hopkins and Christ. The introductory stanzas are as surely autobiographical as the Apologia. Clearly revealed is Hopkins, sometimes the pursuer, sometimes being pursued by Christ until the poet willingly and thankfully gives up to Christ. It is, moreover, markedly reminiscent of Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven."

The frown of his face
Before me, the hurtle of hell
Behind, where, where was a, where was a place?
I whirled out wings that spell
And fled with a fling of the heart to the heart of the Host.

Hopkins openly confesses, "What refers to myself in the poem is all strictly and literally true and did all occur; nothing is added for poetical padding."¹³³

¹³¹Ibid., p. 41.

¹³²Frank R. Leavis, New Bearings In English Poetry: a study of the contemporary situation (London: Chatto and Windus, 1942), p. 176.

¹³³Ruggles, op. cit., p. 151.

Parts of "The Wreck" suggest the specifically Christian raptures which date from the time of the Incarnation. Because He was in the world, the whole universe has been unified, has become in a way, a huge single relic.

The very first lines of the "Deutschland" burst with impassioned fervor into a magnificent apostrophe to the Creator and Providence:

Thou mastering me
 God! giver of breath and bread:
 World's strand, sway of the sea;
 Lord of living and dead;
 Thou hast bound bones and veins in me, fastened me flesh,
 And after it almost unmade, what with dread,
 Thy doing: and dost thou touch me afresh?
 Over again I feel thy finger and find thee.

Thence it passes to the action of the Creator on men:

I did say yes
 O at lightning and lashed rod;
 Thou heardst me truer than tongue confess
 Thy terror, O Christ, O God;
 Thou knowest the walls, altar and hour and night:
 The swoon of a heart that the sweep and the hurl
 of thee trod
 Hard down with a horror of height:
 And the midriff astrain with leaning of, laced with fire of stress.

This stanza is not merely an affirmation of the poet, a saying "yes" to the Passion and Redemption working themselves out in the lives of men--here, in the case of the Franciscan nuns--but that in his personal life he had heard God calling to him through Christ on the Cross. His own experience coupled with that of the brave nun on the decks, gives the full impact of meaning to the Spiritual Exercises, the reflections on the Passion in particular.

The poet, in dealing with the problem of suffering,

inevitably returns to the Passion and the grace flowing from it to all who suffer:

Not out of his bliss
Sprints the stress felt
Nor first from heaven (and few know this)
Swings the stroke dealt--
Stroke and a stress that stars and storms deliver,
That guilt is hushed by, hearts are flushed by and melt--
But it rides time like riding a river
(And here the faithful waver, the faithless fable and miss.)

Through the medium of Scotist theology, then, Hopkins sees such suffering as consequent on the Incarnation:

It dates from day
Of his going in Galilee;
Warm-laid grove of a womb-like grey;
Manger, maiden's knee;
The dense and the driven Passion, and frightful sweat;
Thence the discharge of it, there its swelling to be,
Though felt before, though in high flood yet--
What none would have known of it, only the heart, being hard
at bay.

With the aid of all the grace from the Passion, all things summon man to Christ, even the beauty of the world communicates a message of love. The heart has been illumined by the "instress" of Christ's grace:

Since, tho' he is under the world's splendour and wonder,
His mystery must be instressed, stressed;
For I greet him the days I meet him and bless when I understand.

This "mystery" stems from the wonder of the Incarnation, the result of God's assumption of human form, and His own immersion concretely and really into the active realm of finite existence. Here is the ultimate inexplicable God-Man, and the Incarnation is the ultimate proof of the indwelling of the Divine in the natural.

The call of Christ in the beauty of the world invites man to his own redemption and salvation. The priest feels that

all men, regardless of their moral and spiritual wanderings, will eventually attain their ultimate goal, Christ:

Hither then, last or first,
To hero of Calvary, Christ's feet--
Never ask if meaning it, wanting it, warned of it--men go.

Hopkins sees suffering as the true badge of Christ's love, a badge of those who imitate Him, those who wish to be identified with Him, and of those who are His chosen ones--for they are re-enacting the Redemption:¹³⁴

Loathed for a love men knew in them,
Banned by the land of their birth,
Rhine refused them. Thames would ruin them;
Surf, snow, river and earth
Gnashed: but thou art above, thou Orion of light;
Thy unchallenging poisoning palms were weighing the worth,
Thou martyr-master: in thy sight
Storm flakes were scroll-leaved flowers, lily showers--sweet
heaven was astrew in them.

Everything about the wreck itself seems to Hopkins to bear Christ's marks. He notices the resemblance between the number of nuns, five, and five crucifixion wounds of Christ, and also the relation of the stigmata to St. Francis whose joy was overwhelming at thus being able to show his love for Christ:

Five! the finding and sake
And cipher of suffering Christ.
Mark, the mark is of man's make
And the word of it Sacrificed.
But he scores it in scarlet himself on his own bespoken,
Before-time-taken, dearest prized and priced--
Stigma, signal, cinquefoil token
For lettering of the lamb's fleece, ruddying of the rose-flake.

Joy fall to thee, father Francis,
Drawn to the Life that died;
With the gnarls of the nails in thee, niche of the
lance, his
Lovescape crucified
And seal of his seraph-arrival! and these thy daughters

¹³⁴Pick, op. cit., p. 47.

And five-lived and leaved favour and pride,
 Are sisterly sealed in wild waters,
 To bathe in his fall-gold mercies, to breathe in his all-fire
 glances.

Toward the end of the description of the wreck, Hopkins' excitement reaches a powerful crescendo during which he searches frantically for words and feels that he is failing to make clear his great exuberance:

But how shall I . . . make me room there:
 Reach me a . . . Fancy, come faster--
 Strike you the sight of it? look at it loom there,
 Thing that she . . . there then! the Master,
Ipse, the only one, Christ, King, Head:
 He was to cure the extremity where he had cast her;
 Do, deal, lord it with living and dead;
 Let him ride, her pride, in his triumph, despatch and have done
 with his doom there.

Here is the perfect oblation; here the perfect self-sacrifice, perfect fulfillment, the Christus and the alter Christus.¹³⁵

It is clearly perceptible then that the one Person to whom Hopkins was devoted and to whom he had dedicated his life, was Christ. Everywhere in the world that he looked he saw evidences left by the Incarnation. Even the trees, the sight of which never failed to give him great pleasure, were a symbol to him of the redemptive power of the Cross. The excitement is in the joy of discovering and collecting these traces which Christ left in the world. Thus Hopkins' spiritual life as a priest rested on close intimacy with Christ and Him crucified.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 49.

2. MARY AND THE INCARNATION

It is to be expected that Gerard Hopkins, who emphasized throughout his poetry the doctrine of the Incarnation, should also pay homage to the mother of Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary, who brought God into the world as man. His great devotion to her did not stem from his priesthood nor even from his entrance into the Catholic Church, but rather it was a predominating factor in his religious life during his pre-conversion days at Oxford. At that time he often admitted, as Newman had before him, of a private devotion to the Virgin Mary, although this practice was then looked upon by the Oxford intellectuals as being too suspiciously "papish." The usual objection to this devotion was that Mary is raised to the level of Christ and "adored." She is not. The sign of a true Catholic is the extent of his love for the mother of Christ, but she is neither adored nor looked up to as a Divinity. She is not divine; only God is divine. She is, however, looked upon as an intercessor between man and God. Evidence of this is in the motto of many religious orders, "To Jesus through Mary." It is correct to say that a Catholic prays through her for grace, not to her.

Identified with the devotion to the Virgin is the

doctrine of the Immaculate Conception¹³⁶ in which Mary is honored because she alone, by grace granted to her beforehand for her Son Jesus Christ, was born without original sin.

Hopkins' early predilection to love and pray to Mary was intensified, shaped, and reaffirmed by two particular forces which held powerful sway over him during his life as a Catholic. The first to lend authority to his devotion was the medieval philosopher and theologian, Duns Scotus, who as previously disclosed was an influential factor throughout Hopkins' life. The devoutness of Scotus toward the Virgin and his constancy as a defender of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, ("Who fired France for Mary without spot,")¹³⁷ has long been famous. This discovery by Hopkins, coming early in his life as a Catholic and before his entrance into the priesthood, caused him to delight the more in Scotus' teachings and to feel a reaffirmation in his pious zeal toward Mary.

The second influence which confirmed Hopkins in his devotion to the Virgin was the Society of Jesus. In this Order contemplation of the goodness, purity and spiritual beauty of the Mother of Christ and prayer to her as a dispenser of grace through God, is constantly urged and emphasized.¹³⁸ A portion of the retreat period is always devoted to her. After daily Mass the Office of the Blessed Virgin is often recited. Thus,

¹³⁶Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was defined specifically by Pope Pius IX, Dec. 8, 1854.

¹³⁷Bridges, op. cit., p. 40.

¹³⁸Mullan, op. cit., pp. 43, 76, 126.

the two pervading influences in Hopkins' life, the Jesuit Order and Duns Scotus, also unceasingly re-established his devotion to Mary.

Throughout his poetry and especially in the Marian poems themselves Hopkins reveals his great love for the Blessed Virgin Mary. His usual theme depicts her as the gracious and pitying mother of all mankind and, through the Immaculate Conception, he honors her sinlessness--the one alone who was spared the "blight man was born for."

Hopkins' greatest Marian poem, "The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air we Breathe,"¹³⁹ is a consistent and extended metaphor in which the air, depended on by our own natural life, is analogous to the Blessed Virgin as the mother of grace, the sustainer of our supernatural life.¹⁴⁰ The air is a "nursing element"

which, by life's law,
My lung must draw and draw
Now but to breathe its praise,
Minds me in many ways
Of her who not only
Gave God's infinity
.....
But mothers each new grace
That does now reach our race--
Mary Immaculate.

The limitless air brings to mind the inexhaustible fecundity of Mary, mediatrix and purveyor of God's grace. She is the spiritual mother in whom men breathe and grow, in the only true sense of growth, of becoming more Christ-like.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹Bridges, op. cit., p. 56.

¹⁴⁰Pick, op. cit., p. 103.

¹⁴¹Sargent, op. cit., p. 164.

And men are meant to share
Her life as life does air.

Men here may draw like breath
More Christ and baffle death;

Be thou then, and thou dear
Mother, my atmosphere.

She is the beautiful, ever-loving and compassionate mother of all human kind, the "world-mothering air," who is the instrument of God's grace and through whose intercession with God man's burden of sin may be lightened.

She holds high motherhood
Towards all our ghostly good
And plays in grace her part
About man's beating heart.

Mary stands between man and God to beg mercy for mankind, just as the air exists between man and the sun in order to give him the sun's benefits, and at the same time to shield him from its full strength.

Whereas did air not make
This bath of blue and slake
His fire, the sun would shake,
A blear and blinding ball
With blackness bound, and all
The thick stars round him roll
Flashing like flecks of coal,
Quartz-fret, or sparks of salt,
In grimy vasty vault.

This poem is infused with the symbolism of the Blessed Mother. The color blue has ever been symbolic of her and also the number seven which signifies the Seven Dolours or the seven sorrowful mysteries of Mary, Our Sorrowful Mother.

Blue be it: this blue heaven
The seven or seven times seven
Hued sunbeam will transmit
Perfect, not alter it.

"The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air" demands leisure and meditation. It is a "miracle of artistic simplicity; the mystic import . . . makes it an achievement in Marian poetry almost unrivalled and never surpassed."¹⁴²

"May Magnificat"¹⁴³ is a realization of God's acting through the church to choose the month of May as the month of Mary. In this month special devotions are offered to Our Lady, to which spring itself adds a gift to her by making May the beautiful month it is.

Well but there was more than this:
Spring's universal bliss
Much, had much to say
To offering Mary May.

When drop-of-blood-and-foam-dapple
Bloom lights the orchard-apple
And thicket and thorp are merry
With silver-surfed cherry

And azuring-over greybell makes
Woodbanks and brakes wash wet like lakes
And magic cuckoocall
Caps, clears, and clinches all--

The coming to life of Christ in Mary's womb is reenacted by the coming to life of nature in the earth.

All things rising, all things sizing
Mary sees, sympathising
With that world of good
Nature's motherhood

Their magnifying of each its kind
With delight calls to mind
How she did in her stored
Magnify¹⁴⁴ the Lord.

¹⁴²G. F. Lahey, S.J., Gerard Manley Hopkins (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 115.

¹⁴³Bridges, op. cit., p. 37.

¹⁴⁴magnify: literally meaning "to swell," pun, typical of Hopkins.

All the senses are used as instruments through which Mary is praised.

This ecstasy all through mothering earth
Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's birth
To remember and exultation
In God who was her salvation.

His other two Marian poems, "Ad Mariam" and "Rosa Mystica" are neither so mystical nor so doctrinal in content as the former two; they were written merely as festal pieces. According to Bridges, Hopkins would not have included these two with his more serious work.

Hopkins, as the Anglican Oxford student and later as a convert and priest, always had shown a deep and enduring devotion to the Blessed Virgin, a devotion which continued to intensify until the end of his life. All nature also seemed to him to breathe with love for her as for her Son. She, too, like Christ, is a part of Gerard Hopkins' sacramental view of nature, a nature which is sanctified by reflecting not only the glory of God but also the ethereal beauty of Mary.

IV

SUMMARY

IV

SUMMARY

The poetic realization of the Incarnation and the sacramental view of creation is the center of the religious art of the saintly priest and poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, whose life was a continuous substantial progress toward perfection. He lived, believed and manifested his religion in his poetry. Always he was in a state of spiritual exhilaration. His writing is the result of his unique personality, keen intelligence, and unconscious holiness.

He would not have become the great poet he was if he had turned his back on the religious life for the sake of poetry. He climbed far in perfection and became a holy Christian instead of a literary aesthete. In spite of his delicate nature, he played well the part of the soldier, ever ready to make sacrifices in order to stand with St. Ignatius.

The sensuousness in his vital awareness of nature, the fervently spiritual interpretation of natural phenomena, combined with his intellectual perceptivity make him the great and unique poet he is.

Thus, Hopkins was, as has been communicated through the medium of his poetry, an incarnationist and sacramentalist. All the world of natural creation, man inclusive, was

to him a sacred relic bearing vestiges of God the Creator, revealing indestructible evidences of Christ, God incarnate. All the beauty of the sacramental world, through which man was meant to glorify God, is a result of the grace continuously flowing from the Incarnation; in the ensuing Redemption the poet sees ever-renewing hope for wayward man. k

In the fervently spiritual poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, it is easily discernible that the poet and priest had become so indivisibly integrated that he was able to serve with the highest perfection, with derogation to neither, both his God and his Muse.

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APPENDIX

A P P E N D I X

Explanation of the Term Sacramentalism

In order to understand the term sacramentalism as applied to the poetry of Gerard Hopkins, it is necessary to comprehend a part of the background from which the word was derived - - the sacraments and the sacramentals as used in the Roman Catholic Church.

Sacraments- There are seven sacraments which were instituted by Christ: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Holy Orders, Matrimony, Penance, and Extreme Unction. The sacraments are channels for the divine grace which is ever flowing from the fruits of the Redemption to the individual soul. A sacrament is an outward sign of inward grace.

Sacramentals- The rites of the sacraments are indicated by the word Sacramentalia, the object of which is to manifest the respect due to the sacrament and to secure the sanctification of the faithful. The sacramentals belong to widely different categories: substance, in the mingling of water with the Eucharistic wine; quantity, in the triple baptismal effusion; quality, in the condition of unleavened bread; relation, in the capacity of the minister; time and place, in feast days and churches; habit, in the liturgical vestments; posture, in genuflexion; action, in chanting,

and so forth.

Many external conditions, therefore, connect the sacramentals with the virtue of religion, their object having been indicated by the Council of Trent which asserted that apart from their ancient origin and traditional maintenance ceremonies, blessings, lights, incense, etc., enhance the dignity of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and arouse the piety of the faithful.

Apart from the ceremonies relating to the administration of the seven sacraments, the Church has instituted these others for the purpose of private devotion. To distinguish between them, the latter are named sacramentals because of the resemblance between their rites and those of the sacraments properly so-called.

In ancient times the term sacrament alone was used, but due to the ensuing confusion, the definition of the word sacramental came to be used after the time of Peter Lombard, and had a fixed character exclusively applicable to those rites presenting an external resemblance to the sacraments but not applicable to the sensible signs of Divine institution. Saint Thomas Aquinas made use of the term sacramentalia which theologians adopted. At present, therefore, sacramentalia is exclusively reserved for those rites which are practiced apart from the administration of the seven sacraments, for which the word ceremonies is used.

The sacramentals do not produce sanctifying grace ex opere operato by virtue of the right or substance employed,

and this constitutes their essential difference from the sacraments.

Since the whole value of the sacramentals proceeds from the opus operantis, all external good works could be called sacramentals. The special virtue in the sacramentals consists in official prayers whereby one implores God to pour forth special graces on him who makes use of the sacramentals. These prayers move God to give graces which He would not otherwise give. The virtues of the sacramentals are particularly to drive away evil and to deliver the soul from sin-- that is, remission of venial sin because only the sacraments themselves have efficacy to remit mortal sin.

The way in which the present writer uses the term sacramentalism, and the way in which Hopkins perceived it, could be called an extension of the sacramental system. To Hopkins the loving, pious observation of nature is a sacramental in that by perceiving in creation the vestiges of the divine Creator, and by seeing His reflection in all nature, the observer gives glory to God. In using nature, therefore, for the greater glory of God, one receives in return divine grace, and in this way, the cyclical process of nature as a sacramental is completed.

Hopkins revels sensuously in the beauties of creation, but when he exclaims over nature he is purposefully only giving glory to God. Anyone, he believes, who thus gives God glory by deeply enjoying and appreciating His creation, receives grace into his soul. This, then, is Hopkins' sacramental view of nature which helps to endow the enlightened and pious

observer with sanctifying grace.