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The Imagery in the Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins

Sister Magdalen Louise Blum

BLUM

THE POETRY OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

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THE IMAGERY IN THE POETRY
OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

By

Sister Magdalen Louise Blum, S. C.

Presented to

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INTRODUCTION

For many years the works of Gerard Manley Hopkins remained unpublished and unknown. Literary enthusiasts welcomed and admired the beauty and significance of Hopkins's poetry when it was carefully arranged for publication by Robert Bridges in 1918. Since then many books and articles have been written dealing with the life and poetry of this poetic genius.

The purpose of this study is to classify the imagery of Gerard Manley Hopkins and to trace the sources from which he drew his similes, personifications, and metaphors. A consideration of the language in which the imagery is expressed and of Hopkins's aesthetic theories should contribute to a clearer interpretation of the imagery and to a better understanding of a poet who is considered obscure, eccentric, and beyond the comprehension of all save a few special admirers and critics.

This study of the imagery of Hopkins should enable the reader to acquire some knowledge of the poet's mental and physical experiences, and to enter the spiritual world in which Hopkins lived. Such a systematic survey of Hopkins's world and his intensive study of nature, man, and God will throw added light upon his personality and character; a poet will be portrayed who is himself "the very

make and species of man as created both in him and in all men generally."[1]

In this thesis study was given to seventy-five completed poems and forty-six unfinished poems and fragments as found in the third edition of Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, edited by W. H. Gardner, 1948. All references to poems throughout this study will be to this edition.

I am indebted to the Library of the University of New Mexico and to the Riggs Memorial Library, Georgetown University, for assistance in securing books and material.

Writing under the supervision of Dr. T. M. Pearce, I was encouraged to work out the problem in my own way. I wish to express my indebtedness, therefore, to Dr. Pearce for his interest and for his suggestions for the improvement of the thesis. I also wish to thank Dr. C. V. Wicker and Dr. D. A. McKenzie for their helpful suggestions and for serving on the committee.

In my method of approach I have been guided to some extent by the work of Caroline Spurgeon, Shakespeare's Imagery, and that of Dr. George St. Clair, Dante Viewed Through His Imagery. However, I have made no attempt to make such an exhaustive count or tabulation of images as was found in Caroline Spurgeon's and Dr. St. Clair's work.

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1 Blanche Mary Kelly, The Well of English (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936), p. 290.

CHAPTER I

THE LANGUAGE OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

Much has been written by critics of all ages concerning the language of poetry and the object of poetry, but only the works of a few critics will be used in this comparative study of Hopkins's language--his approach to it, and what diction meant to him as a poet.

Wordsworth,[1] the great nature poet, based his observations on the theory that "the primary laws of nature" and the "beautiful and permanent forms of nature" are perceived through "incidents and situations from common life." The language of his poetry was that "language really used by men." For his subjects and speech he turned from the highest class of society to the lowest--the rustic. The peasant was thought to be more poetic because of his nearness to nature. Wordsworth further alleged that there could be no "essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition."[2] In other words, to write good poetry it was necessary to make use of the same language that was found in prose when this type of literature

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1 Edmund D. Jones, English Critical Essays of the XIX Century (London: Oxford University Press, 1922), p. 4.

2 Ibid., p. 10.

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1 Edmund D. Jones, English Critical Essays of the XIX Century (London: Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 4.

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was well written.

The object of poetry according to Wordsworth and Coleridge was to describe incidents and situations from ordinary life. Although these two poets were much concerned with nature and agreed upon the fundamental purpose which was the interpretation of nature, Coleridge nevertheless, objected to the view of his friend that there could be no essential difference between the language of prose and of poetry. Coleridge claimed that every man's language varied according

> to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its individualities; secondly, the common properties of the class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of universal use.[3]

While still at college, Hopkins wrote in protest against Wordsworth's and in defense of Coleridge's view concerning the language of poetry. "It is plain," he stated, "that metre, rhythm, rhyme, and all the structure which is called verse both necessitate and engender a difference in diction and in thought."[4] The effect of verse on thought and expression is summed up in one word--

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3 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Biographia Literaria (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1917), p. 189.

4 Humphry House, editor, The Note-books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 92.

concentration, by which he means vividness of idea. This liveliness is achieved by the principle of parallelism. Marked parallelism in structure tends to beget parallelism in the words and sense, which in turn produces parallelism in thought.

According to Gardner, this parallelism in thought and syntax, an outstanding feature of Hopkins's style, is similar to a feature of Welsh poetry--dyfalu, "the accumulation of images to illuminate one central idea."[5]

With Hopkins's principle of parallelism in mind, we can determine the difference between poetry and prose. The medium of words when employed in literature with order and arrangement helps to differentiate the language of literature from the speech used ordinarily.

Gradation, intensity, climax, tone, emphasis are important in literary prose; and indeed it is by means of these effects that the prose of literature differs from the prose of common speech. Poetry not only has a "continuous and regular artificial structure, but also employs throughout a more strictly regular parallelism, both in diction and in thought."[6] For this reason poetry demands

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5 W. H. Gardner, Gerard Manley Hopkins (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), I, p. 109.

6 William T. Noon, "The Three Languages of Poetry," Immortal Diamond (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1949), pp. 269-70.

a higher degree of concentration to follow through the structure and other parallelisms.

Poetry is literature; therefore, Hopkins's definition of literature: "Language that is deeply penetrated by idea,"[7] clarifies his theory concerning the language of poetry. By language we must understand not simply words, but the principle that animates words.

A summary of Hopkins's letter to Baillie will help to clarify his theory of language which gives life to poetry. He divided the language of poetry into three kinds, a classification in which may be discovered valuable hints that language is living and not merely words. "The first and highest is poetry proper, the language of inspiration."[8] Poetry of this type can only be written by poets when they are in a mood of mental excitement brought about generally by physical causes.

The second kind he called Parnassian, the language spoken by a poet "on and from the level of a poet's mind,"[9] but not under a spell of inspiration. A great deal of a poet's style and manner can be found in his particular

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7 Ibid., p. 252.

8 Claude Colleer Abbott, editor, Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 69.

9 Loc. cit.

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7 Idem., p. 212.

8 Claude Colleer Abbott, editor, Hopkins Letters to Robert Bridges (New York: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 69.

9 Loc. cit.

kind of Parnassian. A higher class of Parnassian, but the lowest form of inspiration, is Castalian. Hopkins is of the opinion that Wordsworth's sonnets possess a certain stiffness because he wrote in Parnassian, "that language and style of poetry mastered and at command, but employed without any inspiration."[10]

A third division of the language of poetry as distinct from that of prose, is that which he termed Delphic, or the language of the sacred Plain.

As will be noted, Hopkins's divisions of the language of poetry are made solely on the basis of inspiration. To write good poetry, inspiration, in addition to technical skill and genius, is a requisite. A genius without inspiration may rise to Castalian or to Parnassian; but if not a genius, he will write nothing better than verse. Yet it must not be thought that every line of poetry can be written in this "mood of great abnormal, in fact, mental acuteness."[11] Nor can the origin of every line be traced back to a mood of such intense emotional stress and mental excitement.

Hopkins's own poetry has a steady current of

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10 Claude Colleer Abbott, editor, The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 72.

11 Abbott, op. cit., p. 69.

inspiration. "The Wreck of the Deutschland" is charged with it from beginning to end. "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo" opens with that eagerness to find words to express the thoughts:

> 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?[12]

The last lines of "Hurrahing in Harvest" may also be evidence of the language of inspiration:

> 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.[13]

Another principle worth consideration is that of bidding,

> the art or virtue of saying everything right <u>to</u> or <u>at</u> the hearer, interesting him, holding him in the attitude of correspondent or addressed or at least concerned, making it everywhere an act of intercourse--and of discarding everything that does not bid, does not tell.[14]

In spite of the fact that Hopkins's poetry has been criticized for oddness and obscureness, the poet did not

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12 "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo," p. 96.

13 "Hurrahing in Harvest," p. 75.

14 Abbott, <u>Letters to Robert Bridges</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 160.

feel that these qualities were faults. Though oddity and obscurity are not to be sought, still there are "higher excellences," Hopkins writes to Bridges, "than clearness at first reading." When conversing with genius, reflection or even repetition may be needed to understand what has been said. Hopkins adds that "things should be at once intelligible; but everything need not and cannot be."[15]

If a poet has a profound thought to express, or if he is endeavoring to produce an emotional reaction in his hearer, it is expected that much will not be clear on first hearing it. To accomplish this purpose "something must be sacrificed, and this may be the being at once, nay perhaps even the being without explanation at all, intelligible."[16] Hopkins here seems to be in agreement with Richards who believes that "modern verse is perhaps more often too lucid than too obscure."[17]

The meaning of a poem cannot always be understood without effort as one reads, nor is clearness in every instance an asset to a poem. "One of two kinds of clearness one shd. have--either the meaning to be felt without effort as fast as one reads or else, if dark at first

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15 Ibid., p. 265.

16 Ibid., pp. 265-66.

17 I. A. Richards, "Gerard Hopkins," Dial, LXXXI (September, 1926), 195.

reading, when once made out to explode.[18] This explosion may give a clarity to the meaning of the poem which would repay the reader for the effort put forth to dispel the initial obscurity.

At first, the poems of Hopkins seem filled with devices which produce only obscurity for the casual reader. He must expect obstacles and difficulties in understanding the meaning of the words. Behind the terrific constructions there is magnificence. In spite of the verbal excesses and oddities there is an originality. Hopkins's poetry, as he states, was written primarily to be listened to, to be heard by the ear, rather than to be read or scanned by the eye.

Hopkins does not disappoint his reader. The effort exacted is great but once made, the meaning is clarified and the reader returns again and again to enjoy the permanent possession whose value increases with time. He is a "poet with whom familiarity breeds reverence and affection. He is often intractable, sometimes incomprehensible, frequently obscure."[19]

Hopkins's conception of words as tools led him to

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18 Abbott, Letters to Robert Bridges, op. cit., p. 90.

19 Robert Speaight, "Gerard Manley Hopkins, S. J.," Commonweal, XXXIII(March 28, 1941), 565.

employ the ordinary modern speech or what Coleridge called the lingua communis. His vocabulary which was so varied, colorful and figurative was a personal thesaurus gathered from all sources. He believed that "the poetical language of an age should be the current language heightened, to any degree heightened and unlike itself but not . . . an obsolete one."[20]

Hopkins avoided artificial poetic diction, in fact, his vocabulary is basically Saxon. In his earnest and sincere desire to render his poetry original and distinctive, he employed the Saxon language because "it is a vastly superior thing to what we have now."[21] He preferred "hie" to "haste," "ghost" to "spirit," "lade" to "load," "thew" and "brawn" to "muscle." Words rarely used in modern English like "fettle," "pash," "rivel," "wend," "heft," "shive," "bole," "tuck" found an important place in his poetry.[22]

To Hopkins the Anglo-Saxon words were not artificial or archaic adornment but the proper medium for expression of his thoughts. His English which had the "vigour of an

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20 Abbott, Letters to Bridges, op. cit., p. 89.

21 Ibid., p. 163.

22 W. A. M. Peters, Gerard Manley Hopkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 64.

early language with the sophistication of a late one,"[23] served his purpose best.

Poetry "crammed with Latin words" was judged a fault, although an apposite use of the language produced such magnificent lines as:

> . . . all is in an enormous dark
> Drowned. O pity and indignation! Manshape, that shone
> Sheer off, disseveral, a star, death blots black out; nor mark
> Is any of him at all so stark
> But vastness blurs and time beats level. Enough! the Resurrection,
> 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;[24]

There is found much originality in his compounds and coinages which strengthens his poetic expressions. The first group of compounds is the noun-noun combination: "Heaven-handling," "wonder wedlock," "couple-colour," "gold-wisp," "goldnails," "flockbells," "day-spring," "lipmusic," "gospel proffer."[25]

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23 Elsie E. Phare, The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins (London: Cambridge University Press, 1933), p. 65.

24 "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection," p. 112.

25 Peters, op. cit., p. 116.

Secondly, there is the adverb-noun combination: "backwheels," "betweenpie," "uproll," "downcarol," etc.; and the verb-noun combination in "dare-gale," "spend-savour," "fall-gold," "wring-world."[26]

The poet also made considerable use of adjectival compounds as specific marks for qualities. Instances abound: "lovely-asunder," "rash-fresh," "kindcold," "wet-fresh," "leaf-light," "glass-blue," "champ-white," "bell-bright."[27]

Hopkins wanted the language to perform more functions than it was ordinarily capable of doing. Without doing violence to its essence he exploited the hidden resources. He freely converted nouns into verbs and also reversed the process. The suffix was put to greater use by this poet than by any other. It appears that Hopkins liked to juggle with the suffix -le after verbs. He uses "nursle," "girdle," and "brandle"; but the normal "brindled" and "curdled" are changed into "brinded" and "curded."[28]

Hopkins performs other tricks with compounds--he "splits them up, takes them to pieces, and patches them

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26 Ibid., p. 117.

27 Ibid., p. 119.

28 Ibid., p. 145.

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Hopkins performs other tricks with compounds--he "splits them up, takes them to pieces, and pastes them

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26 Ibid., p. 117.

27 Ibid., p. 119.

28 Ibid., p. 145.

together; but often not caring where the pieces originally belonged."[29]

His deviations from the standard poetic diction and precedented arrangement of words produce in the reader a redoubled attentiveness. This achievement was the result of his genius for what has been called "the magic of grammar"--a pleasing faculty for arranging words, for dramatic concentration, which almost defies analysis.

Hopkins's neologisms produced an air of strangeness more marked than in any other English poet. Yet this oddity or queerness, as he himself called it, is not in itself an undesirable quality.

Although to fathom the depths of Hopkins's imagery is seemingly impossible, a glimpse at the apt use he makes of words and his treatment of language as a medium of expression should convince the reader that words were to the poet a real stimulus in themselves and that language was a vivid reality, a depth of thought.

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29 Ibid., p. 146.

CHAPTER II

TIED AND FREE IMAGERY

Hopkins was a great master of the language and with his keen knowledge and love of it he elaborated upon it and used it in his poetry to convey vividly what his eye saw and his heart felt. The effective stimulating power of words is reflected in the dynamic images which transmit the poet's experiences directly to the reader.

According to Spurgeon,[1] "image" may be defined as:

> The little word-picture used by a poet or prose writer to illustrate, illuminate and embellish his thought. It is a description or an idea which by comparison or analogy, stated or understood, with something else, transmits to us through the emotions and associations it arouses, something of the "wholeness," the depth and richness of the way the writer views, conceives or has felt what he is telling us.[2]

Lewis[3] compares images to a series of mirrors placed at different angles reflecting a theme in a number of various aspects. They are, in a sense, magic mirrors which not only reflect but give life and form to the theme.

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1 Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, Shakespeare's Imagery (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935), p. 9.

2 Loc. cit.

3 C. Day Lewis, The Poetic Image (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 80.

The richness and full worth of the poet's experiences are felt within and produce the mental pictures referred to by I. A. Richards,[4] the psychologist and literary critic, as tied and free imagery. "Tied imagery is directly 'of' or related to the words as such."[5] There are three kinds of tied imagery: articulatory, auditory, and visual, or the effect of the words on the mind's tongue, in the mind's ear, and on the mind's eye.

Reading Hopkins's poems silently in an attempt to experience the consciousness of how the tongue and lips would feel if the words were actually sounded is somewhat difficult since the reader does not put forth as much effort when reading in this manner as is actually necessary in an attempt to read well the poetry. Hopkins himself declared that he did not intend his poetry to be read with the eyes but with the ears. When reading the following line

> I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
> dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn
> Falcon, in his riding[6]

or the lines

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4 I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism, cited by Charles W. Cooper, Preface to Poetry (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), p. 721.

5 Loc. cit.

6 "The Windhover," p. 73.

The violence and full words of the poet's protest are felt within and produce the medical phenomena noted by I. A. Richards,[4] the psychological and literary critic, as fine and true imagery. "Fine imagery is directly or related by the words as such."[5] These are [illegible] of fine imagery: stimulatory, sensuary, and [illegible]. The effects of the words on the minds happen in the [illegible], and on the mind's eye.

Reading Hopkins's poem silently is an attempt to experience the sensuousness of how the words and line would feel if the words were actually spoken in [illegible] difficult since the reader does not get [illegible] [illegible] in this manner as if actually [illegible] in an effort to feel with the poetry. Perhaps [illegible] believed that he did not intend his poetry to be read with the eyes but with the ears. When reading the following line:

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[4] I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd., 1926), p. [illegible].

[5] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[6] "The Windhover," p. 72.

Wag or crossbridle, in a wind lifted, wind-
laced--
See his wind-lillylocks-laced;
Churlsgrace, too, child of amansstrength, how
it hangs or hurls[7]

one realizes that they do not lend themselves to silent reading. There is a tendency to hesitate while the mind's tongue attempts to form and sound each word.

In the second kind of tied imagery, auditory, rhythm is an important factor. Hopkins makes use of Running Rhythm, the common English rhythm measured by feet of either two or three syllables; and Sprung Rhythm measured by feet of from one to four syllables, regularly, and for particular effects using any number of weak syllables. In some poems there is a mixture of both Running and Sprung rhythm. The music of poetry depends partly upon the rhythm. The music of Hopkins's poems, because of the obscurity, is not easily perceived by the mind's ear and hence does not give the pleasure which the silent reading of poetry should afford.

Another form of rhythm is produced by the repetition of particular sounds as in rime and alliteration. Hopkins's rimes are peculiar, appearing as obstacles instead of adding charm to the verse. Alliteration abounds in the poems of this poet, often making the lines difficult to

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7 "Harry Ploughman," p. 108.

read and comprehend, but affording excitement desired by the conscious reader. The s and t sounds occur most frequently, the b, d, f, m, p, r, and w sounds recur frequently.

The long sweeping lines of the poems "Felix Randal," "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo," "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves," and "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection" affect the retinal image of the page. The greater number of his poems, however, have lines which call for the usual span of eye-movement.

The peculiar scheme of prosody invented and developed by Hopkins aids in the visual experience. Where the rhythm might seem doubtful, the accents have been printed over the syllables. In the poems "To what serves Mortal Beauty?," "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves," "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection," and "Moonrise," a symbol (a short vertical line placed between the words) is used to show the division between the feet within a line.

The second kind of imagery is quite different: it includes "the free images or mind pictures and comparable goings-on in the imagination, stimulated by the meanings of the words."[8] Free imagery of various kinds pervades

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8 Charles W. Cooper, Preface to Poetry (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), p. 712.

read and comprehend, but affecting enrichment received by the conscious reader. The g and j sounds occur more frequently, the b, d, f, k, p, s, and z sounds occur frequently.

The long sweeping lines of the poems "Pallid Beauty," "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo," "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves," and "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the Comfort of the Resurrection" affect the metrical image of the page. The greater number of his poems, however, have lines which call for the usual span of eye-movement.

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8 Charles W. Cooper, Preface to Poetry (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), p. 212.

all the poems of Hopkins. His elaborate descriptions are the result of his mastery of the language. Words for him were no mere signs but vital things.

Auditory free imagery or the hearing in the mind's ear is best understood by studying the following selections:

> My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a
> main, a chief
> Woe, world-sorrow; on an age-old anvil
> wince and sing--[9]

> And I could hear the tiniest sound,
> The morning was so still--
> The bats' wings lisping as they flew
> And water draining through and through
> The wood: but not a dove would coo.[10]

> A beetling baldbright cloud thorough England
> Riding: there did storms not mingle? and
> Hailropes hustle and grind their
> Heavengravel? wolfsnow, worlds of it, wind
> there?[11]

> . . . she rears herself to divine
> Ears, and the call of the tall nun
> To the men in the tops and the tackle rode
> over the storm's brawling.[12]

The many descriptions made vivid and beautiful by the careful blending of color-words acted as a stimulus to the mind's eye. Hopkins's ability to paint with words is comparable to that of the great artists and lines from his

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9 Poem 65, p. 107.

10 "The Nightingale," p. 41.

11 "The Loss of the Eurydice," p. 77.

12 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 61.

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A beetling baldheight aloud throughout my land
Riding: there dint storms not single? and
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Heavenpraveyl? wolfenhow, warfle of it, wind
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. . . she rears herself to diving
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9 from 65, p. 107.

10 "The Nightingale," p. 71.

11 "The Loss of the Eurydice," p. 77.

12 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 61.

poems will prove this.

> For how to the heart's cheering
> The down-dugged ground-hugged grey
> Hovers off, the jay-blue heavens appearing
> Of pied and peeled May!
> Blue-beating and hoary-glow height; or night,
> still higher,
> With belled fire and the moth-soft Milky Way,
> What by your measure is the heaven of desire.[13]

> And was as tho' some sapphire molten-blue
> Were vein'd and streak'd with dusk-deep lazuli,
> Or tender pinks with bloody Tyrian dye.[14]

> The Autumn yellow feather in the boughs
> While there is neither sun nor rain;
> And a gray heaven does the hush'd earth house,
> And bluer gray the flocks of trees look in
> the plain.[15]

Rarely is Hopkins content to appeal to a single sense. In "Spring" he speaks of the cuckoo's song:

> Through the echoing timber does so rinse
> and wring
> The ear, it strikes like lightnings to
> hear him sing,[16]

Here he describes the sound first in terms of touch and taste, and then in terms of touch and sight.

Gustatory and olfactory imagery--the fancied taste and smell of things--is less frequent, but can be found

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13 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 64.

14 "A Vision of the Mermaids," p. 19.

15 Poem 85, p. 132.

16 "Spring," p. 71.

poems will prove this.

For how to the heart's unerring
The down-dagged ground-hugged grey
Hovers off, the jay-blue heavens appearing
Of pied and peeled May!
Blue-beating and hoary-blow height; or night,
still hiding
With helled fire and the moth-mark milky sky,
Where by your measure lie the heaven of desire 13

And was as who, some purpleness molten-blue
Here veins'd and streak'd with dusk-deep lapis,
Or tender pinks with bloody Tyrian dye.14

The Autumn yellow feather in the boughs
While there is mistiness sun nor rain;
And a grey heaven dose the hush'd earth house,
And silver grey the flocks of trees look in
the plain.15

Barely is Hopkins content to appeal to a single sense. In "Spring" he speaks of the cuckoo's song:

Thrush the coloring timber does so rings
and wring
The air, it strikes like lightnings to
hear him sing.16

Here he dessrs the sound figure's in terms of touch and taste, and then in terms of touch and sight.

Gustatory and olfactory imagery--the fruited taste and smell of things--is less frequent, but can be found

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13 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 64.

14 "A Vision of the Mermaids," p. 19.

15 Poem 85, p. 132.

16 "Spring," p. 71.

in the poetry of Hopkins as the following will prove:

Sweet flowers I carry,--sweets for bitter.[17]

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!

Nostrils, your careless breath that spend
Upon the stir and keep of pride
What relish shall the censers send
Along the sanctuary side! [18]

The imaginative feel of things to the sense of touch and the sensation of heat and cold known as tactile and thermal imagery is also found in Hopkins's poems.

To knead with cool feet the clay juicy soil.[19]

At length the bellows shall not blow,
The furnace shall at last be cold.[20]

See how Spring opens with disabling cold,
And hunting winds and the long-lying snow.[21]

Hopkins's antithetic use of the thermal imagery is skillfully handled in "Pilate":

Unchill'd I handle stinging snow;
The sun whose vast afflictive heat
Does lay men low with one blade's sudden blow
Cleaves not my brain, burns not my feet,

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17 "For a Picture of St. Dorothea," p. 39.

18 "The Habit of Perfection," p. 47.

19 "A Soliloquy of One of the Spies left in the Wilderness," p. 27.

20 "The Alchemist in the City," p. 32.

21 Poem 14, p. 35.

In the poetry of Hopkins as the following will prove:

Every flower I carry,--sweets for sixty.[17]

Relate, the button off tasty lust,
Desire not to be rinsed with wine:
The can must be so sweet, the corse
So fresh that once the taste divine!

Mortifia, your carelessness breath that spend
Upon the air and keep of pride
What relics shall time cancers send
Along the sanctuary side! [18]

The imaginative feel of things to the sense of touch and the sensation of heat and cold known as tactile and thermal imagery is also found in Hopkins's poems.

To knead with cool feet this clay juicy soil.[19]

At length the bellows shall not blow,
The furnace shall at last be cold.[20]

See how spring opens with dangling catkins,
And hunting winds and lame long-lying snow.[21]

Hopkins's antithetic use of the thermal imagery is skillfully handled in "Pilate":

Unchill'd I handle athrobing embers;
The sun whose vast artificive heat
Does lay mere low with one blade's breadth blow
Cleaves not my brain, burns not my feet.

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17 "For a Picture of St. Dorothea," p. 39.

18 "The Habit of Perfection," p. 47.

19 "A Soliloquy of one of the Spies left in the Wilderness," p. 27.

20 "The Alchemist in the City," p. 32.

21 Poem 16, p. 35.

When the fierce skies are blue to black albeit
The shearing rays contract me with their blaze
Most dead-alive upon those days[22]

The poetry of Hopkins appeals not only to taste, smell, and touch; but also excites strong muscular sensations. The vivid description in "Tom's Garland" of the tired laborer as he finishes his day's hard work and trudges home brings to the mind of the reader the recollection of muscular sensations.

Tom--garlanded with squat and surly steel
Tom; then Tom's fallowbootfellow piles pick
By him and rips out rockfire homeforth--
sturdy Dick: [23]

Harry Ploughman likewise leaves the reader tired and exhausted after his hard day in the fields.

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, finds his, as at
a roll-call, rank
And features, in flesh, what deed he each
must do--

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22 "Pilate," p. 117.

23 "Tom's Garland," p. 107.

His sinew-service where do.[24]

The first octave of "The Windhover," "A Soliloquy of One of the Spies left in the Wilderness," "The Loss of the Eurydice" also stimulate muscular responses.

Since Hopkins at times suffered physical and mental pain, he embodied these experiences in his poems. Pain imagery or fancied hurt is best expressed in the lines describing the death of Margaret Clitheroe who was pressed to death at York in 1586.

> She held her hands to, like in prayer;
> They had them out and laid them wide
> (Just like Jesus crucified);
> They brought their hundredweights to bear.
> . . . . . .
> Within her womb the child was quick,
> Small mater of that then! Let him smother
> And wreck in ruins of his mother.[25]

In a similar manner he tells of the death of St. Lawrence who was roasted to death on a gridiron during the early Roman persecutions.

> For that staunch saint still prais'd his
> Master's name
> While his crak'd flesh lay hissing on the grate;
> Then fail'd the tongue; the poor collapsing
> frame,
> Hung like a wreck that flames not billows beat--[26]

From the study of Hopkins's free imagery it can

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24 "Harry Ploughman," p. 108.

25 "Margaret Clitheroe," pp. 161-62.

26 "The Escorial," p. 14.

readily be seen that he did not consider imagery as something ornamental and superfluous. To him imagery was inseparable from the true experience and thus was embodied in the poem as a vital part. His poetry has a richness in texture and imagery which reflects his great passion and complex personality.

CHAPTER III

INSTRESS AND INSCAPE

"Instress" and "inscape" are two words frequently used by Hopkins, but whose precise meaning cannot be explained. A Hindu scholar writes of these terms thus:

> "Instress" signifies the design cohering the particulars of a scene, that gives each particular item a habitation and a frame of reference, while "inscape" signifies the core of creative purposiveness underlying, and galvanizing into a spiritual entity, the formal design. "Sake," "instress," and "inscape," then, are further and nearer approximations to our apprehension of ultimate reality.[1]

Hopkins never satisfactorily defines "instress." Dr. Pick defines the word as the "intensity of feeling and associations which something beautiful brought to him and a desire to convert it to God."[2] The beauty of the physical world conveys a message of love from God to man; but only to the hearts illumined by the "instress" of God's grace.

> I kiss my hand
> To the stars, lovely-asunder
> Starlight, wafting him out of it; and
> Glow, glory in thunder;

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1 K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, Gerard Manley Hopkins (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 21.

2 John Pick, Gerard Manley Hopkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942), p. 32.

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.[3]

Instress has a twofold meaning; "as a cause" it "refers . . . to that core of being or inherent energy which is the actuality of the object;" as effect it "stands for the specifically individual impression the object makes on man."[4]

"Instress" served Hopkins as a source of imagery. Just as a thing can be described in terms of another which is like or unlike it, so this poet compared objects on the basis of the instress that each possessed. It cannot be perceived by the senses, but must be interpreted in terms of its impression on the soul. In his eager desire to feel the instress of things he was acquiring a keener knowledge of his own self. This self-awareness is expressed in the line

Selves--goes itself: myself it speaks and spells.[5]

"Inscape," the other term figuring conspicuously in Hopkins's vocabulary was used to designate the principle of beauty in things. In a letter to Robert Bridges Hopkins

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3 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 57.

4 John Conley, "Hopkins Enshrined," Poetry, LXXIV (August, 1949), 297.

5 Poem 57, p. 95.

wrote of his own poetry:

> No doubt my poetry errs on the side of oddness. . . . But as air, melody, is what strikes me most of all in music and design in painting, so design, pattern or what I am in the habit of calling "inscape" is what above all I aim at in poetry. Now it is the virtue of design, pattern, or inscape to be distinctive and it is the vice of distinctiveness to become queer. This vice I cannot have escaped.[6]

Conley treats this theory of "inscape" and states:

> inscape is the essential uniqueness of an object as this uniqueness is perceptible to the senses. . . . If, on the one hand, inscape allows man to know objects in their essential uniqueness, on the other, according to this theory, it allows him to know God inferentially. . . . Logically, the better man knows the inscapes of creation, the better he knows God.[7]

"Inscape" was defined by Hopkins as a "species or individually-distinctive beauty of style."[8] The term is always applied to some particular thing of beauty which is distinctive. The word was used with some flexibility: sometimes he stressed the "outer form" of a thing; sometimes he stressed "inscape" as the ontological secret behind a thing, as the "inner form." Usually, however, he

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6 Claude Colleer Abbott, editor, The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 66.

7 Conley, loc. cit.

8 Claude Colleer Abbott, editor, Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 225.

used the word to indicate the individuality and particularity of a thing expressed in design and pattern.[9] This was Hopkins's conception of beauty.

The schoolmen called beauty "the splendor of form shining on the proportioned parts of matter."[10] Hopkins spoke of it clearly and precisely:

> It is certain that in nature outward beauty is the proof of inward beauty, outward good of inward good. Fineness, proportion, of feature comes from a moulding force which succeeds in asserting itself over the resistance of cumbersome or restraining matter; the bloom of health comes from the abundance of life, the great vitality within. The moulding force, the life, is the form in the philosophic sense, and in man this is the soul.[11]

Thus to have beauty the "inner form" must be expressed in "outer form."

Hopkins found a justification for his analysis of beauty in Scotism. Duns Scotus places the principle of individuation within the form itself. Scotus holds that "the individual, as such, exists by virtue of something positive which makes it just exactly what it is and nothing else." This positive entity Scotus usually calls the "*ultima realitas entis*" although occasionally he adopts

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9 Pick, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

10 *Loc. cit.*

11 Abbott, *Further Letters*, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

"haecceitas"[12] to express this notion."[13] Such a philosophical theory appealed to Hopkins, the artist, who saw beauty as "the splendour of form shining on the proportioned parts of matter"[14] in a highly organized variety, and showing forth inner particularity.

Hopkins became a disciple of Scotus in the sense that both had the same idea of "form" as something individual and particular. Scotus assured the poet that he could revel in Nature and still live his life as a Christian, even as a zealous priest. He was a true poet of Nature and a member of the Church Militant justifying the ways of God to man.

As a young novice he wrote in his Journal:

> I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at, I know the beauty of our Lord by it. Its inscape is mixed of strength and grace.[15]

The young poet was recording not only his experience of the

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12 Haecceitas: "thisness," i.e., that which makes a thing this, and not other; a principle within the thing which makes it individual, singular, particular, concrete.

13 Maurice J. Grajewski, The Formal Distinction of Duns Scotus (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1944), p. 151.

14 Pick, loc. cit.

15 Humphry House, editor, Note-books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), pp. 133-34.

beauty of the bluebell; he was also pointing out a religious experience in which the idea of inscape had a part. It was as if he had discovered the beauty of God reflected in the beauty of His creatures.

Inscape was not primarily important because of its close relation to beauty, but was appreciated for its own worth. For Hopkins inscape was his spiritual outlook on this world. The inscape of an object, in its own peculiar way, made him aware of the presence of God and imparted to him a love and knowledge of the Creator. Likewise in his perception of inscape the poet came to know the individual and through him he attained a more profound knowledge of the intelligence, wisdom, power, and glory of the Almighty. Hopkins recognized each individual as being charged with love, charged with God, and deserving of his personal love.

> 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. . . .[16]

It must be understood that Hopkins was in no sense a nature mystic or a religious mystic, but an analogist. He does not close his eyes to the world in order to concentrate better on the divine, but takes the sacramental view of nature. Again Scotus offered Hopkins a justification for his inscapes, when he contended that the Creator

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16 "God's Grandeur," p. 70.

intended that the beauties of the universe made it possible for man to be led to the Infinite through the finite.[17] Therefore, Scotus taught Hopkins that moral beauty could be supernaturalized.

> Dogged with dew, dappled with dew
> Are the groins of the braes that the brook
> treads through,
> Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
> And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.
>
> 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 wilderness yet.[18]

Not only did inanimate nature interest Hopkins, but men and women, and their actions were of great concern to him.

> She leans on him with such contentment fond
> As well the sister sits, would well the wife;
> His looks, the soul's own letters, see beyond,
> Gaze on, and fall directly forth on life.
>
> But ah, bright forelock, cluster that you are
> Of favoured make and mind and health and youth,
> Where lies your landmark, seamark, or soul's star?
> There's none but truth can stead you. Christ is
> truth.[19]

This interest in creatures is expressed when he writes of the bugler boy:

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17 Pick, op. cit., p. 36.

18 "Inversnaid," p. 95.

19 "On the Portrait of Two Beautiful Young People," pp. 169-70.

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.
. . . . . .
How it does my heart good, visiting at that
bleak hill,
When limber liquid youth, that to all I teach
Yields tender as a pushed peach,
Hies headstrong to its wellbeing of a self-
wise self-will! 20

Hopkins's faith in the beauty of human faces is expressed in terms of universality

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each
hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its
name;
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
. . . . . .
. . . 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.21

The poems written after he had become a Jesuit priest are full of wonder at the beauty of the world, and of joy, because he realized the beauty of creation and made use of it to praise the Creator. He directed his senses and made them a means of praising God.

Glory be to God for dappled things--
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout

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20 "The Bugler's First Communion," p. 86.

21 Poem 57, p. 95.

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.[22]

The inscapes of the world participating in God which Hopkins poured into "Pied Beauty," itself an inscape of delicate variety and pattern, lifted him to a higher Beauty. The sacramental world left to be enjoyed but not worshipped as the absolute Beauty.[23]

The nature poems are truly the poet's Laudate Dominum in which he calls upon creation to praise its Creator. Perhaps more fanciful is "The Starlight Night" in which the inscapes of the sky are set forth in a series of images.

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!--

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22 "Pied Beauty," p. 74.

23 Pick, op. cit., p. 54.

Ah well! it is all a purchase, all is a prize.[24]

"Hurrahing in Harvest" climaxes his experience of beauty. The lines have a delight resulting from a spiritual joy experienced by a heart surrounded with a beauty which contains a message of divine love.

Hopkins was well aware of beauty as a reflection of God but could not understand why this fact was not obvious to all thinking men.

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, which Hopkins studied and put into practice as a Jesuit, exhorted him to make use of all of God's creatures to attain the Creator. This consideration is called in the Spiritual Exercises the "First Principle and Foundation."[25] To know, love, and serve his Master was the purpose of his priestly life and the underlying principle of his poetry.

> I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes,
> Down all that glory in the heavens to glean
> our Saviour;[26]

The "Contemplation for Obtaining Love" and the "Kingdom of Christ"[27] likewise found expression in the lines of

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24 "The Starlight Night," pp. 70-1.

25 John Morris, translator, The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius (Westminster: the Newman Bookshop, 1943), p. 12.

26 "Hurrahing in Harvest," p. 74.

27 Morris, op. cit., pp. 33, 74.

Hopkins's poems. "The Windhover," which he referred to in a letter to Bridges as "the best thing I ever wrote,"[28] is a poetic re-statement of the powerful meditation on the Kingdom of Christ. The falcon became for the poet a symbol and a reminder of Christ, the crusading King in search of souls. The experience is sublimated in Hopkins's religious mind into a vision of a spiritual combat under the leadership of Christ.[29]

The poet is in an ecstasy of amazement at the success of the windhover--a beauty difficult to imagine. But there is a beauty more lovely, the act of "buckling," when its flight is crumpled, when "brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume" in an act of self-sacrifice, of self-immolation give off a fire greater than any natural beauty.[30]

> 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![31]

In his own life Hopkins had "inscaped" the mystery

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28 Abbott, Letters to Bridges, op. cit., p. 85.

29 Raymond V. Schoder, "What Does the Windhover Mean?," Immortal Diamond (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1949), p. 288.

30 Pick, op. cit., p. 71.

31 "The Windhover," p. 73.

of suffering with the cross--with the suffering of Christ to be triumphant with Him forever. This idea is significantly expressed in the lines:

> . . . Enough! the Resurrection,
> 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.[32]

Far greater than his esteem for natural beauty was his cognizance of the supernatural truths of "God's better beauty, grace" found in his poem "To what serves Mortal Beauty?"

Once these supernatural truths are recognized and given serious consideration, the poetry of Hopkins can be understood and mastered--it no longer seems odd and obscure. Beneath the words, with which Hopkins took many and great liberties, can be found ideas which can become guiding principles for all who like Hopkins are searching for the Eternal Beauty through the natural.

Hopkins can truly be called a great and successful poet of nature and of the supernatural--a poet in search of "inscape."

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32 "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection," p. 112.

CHAPTER IV

SIMILES

One of the greatest delights of poetry is found in its imagery. It is the imagery which gives to poetry a distinctive quality, a richness, and an atmosphere. Furthermore, the imagery conveys through the emotions and associations it arouses the somewhat hidden thoughts and ideas of the poet. It might even be said that a poet, to some extent, unconsciously "gives himself away" through his images.

Imagery serves two purposes: first, as an adornment of the verse; and second, for clarification of the idea. Hopkins did not consider imagery as something ornamental or superfluous, but as a vital part of the poem, inseparable from the real experience.

From a systematic study of Hopkins's imagery it is hoped that much can be discovered about this poet and some light thrown upon the obscure lines of his poems which contain such depth and affluence of thought.

For convenience in studying Hopkins's imagery, the images are divided into three kinds: similes, personifications, and metaphors. In this chapter consideration will be given to similes and the sources from which they are

drawn. There may be some difference of opinion with regard to the classification of images, as no two people would entirely agree upon the exact characteristics separating one form from the other.

If a poet draws upon certain things, certain qualities of things, and certain aspects of life for his comparisons, it is likely that those things appeal to him especially, or hold for him a particular interest.

A simile is a figure of speech by which one thing, action, or relation is likened or explicitly compared in one or more aspects, often with as or like, to something of different kind or quality.

The chief source of Hopkins's similes was the world of everyday experience. Nature in all of its aspects supplied most of his images. Hopkins's notes on celestial and astronomical phenomena explain his imagery drawn from the firmament--sky, heavens, clouds, and stars. One of his longest similes is that in which he compares the short life of man to a piece of a comet moving in the midst of the mighty planets. The poet is ever aware of his insignificance in the vast universe and the small part he has to play in the great drama of life.

> --I am like a slip of comet,
> Scarce worth discovery, in some corner seen
> Bridging the slender difference of two stars,
> Come out of space, or suddenly engender'd

By heady elements, for no man knows;
But when she sights the sun she grows and sizes
And spins her skirts out, while her central star
Shakes its cocooning mists; and so she comes
To fields of light; millions of travelling rays
Pierce her; she hangs upon the flame-cased sun,
And sucks the light as full as Gideon's fleece:
But then her tether calls her; she falls off,
And as she dwindles shreds her smock of gold
Between the sistering planets, till she comes
To single Saturn, last and solitary;
And then she goes out into the cavernous dark.
So I go out: my little sweet is done:
I have drawn heat from this contagious sun:
To not ungentle death now forth I run.[1]

In one of his very early poems Hopkins describes an experience which he had while looking into the water. He saw

--An isle of roses,--and another near;--
And more, on each hand, thicken, and appear
In shoals of bloom; as in unpeopled skies,
Save by two stars, more crowding lights arise,
And planets bud where'er we turn our mazed eyes.[2]

The clouds and stars possessing a beauty and moving at a great distance from the earth, seemed to have a special appeal for the poet. Into this imagery was infused a range of associations often difficult to trace.

And Charles's Wain, the wondrous seven,
And sheep-flock clouds like worlds of wool,
For all they shine so, high in heaven
Shew brighter shaken in Penmaen Pool.[3]

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1 Poem 83, p. 130.

2 "A Vision of the Mermaids," p. 19.

3 "Penmaen Pool," p. 68.

None but a lover of beauty could write a line like

Thrush's eggs look little low heavens.[4]

Only the beauty of the vast blue heavens could adequately describe for Hopkins the beauties found in the nest of a bird.

In addition to the firmament, the elements--air, wind, water, ice, lightning keenly interested the poet. As a source of similes, air provides a magnificence and an originality which is rather startling. God in His generosity permeates the world with His mercy, but in a greater degree does Mary's influence affect the world.

I say that we are wound
With mercy round and round
As if with air: the same
Is Mary, more by name.
She, wild web, wondrous robe,
Mantles the guilty globe,
Since God has let dispense
Her prayers his providence:
Nay, more than almoner,
The sweet alms' self is her
And men are meant to share
Her life as life does air.[5]

Overwhelmed with the power of the Blessed Virgin and the help received through her intercession, Hopkins tries to impress upon the reader the great part she plays in the life of each individual. It is through her that we come to know her Son better.

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4 "Spring," p. 71.

5 "The Blessed Birgin compared to the Air we Breathe," p. 100.

If I have understood,
She holds high motherhood
Towards all our ghostly good
And plays in grace her part
About man's beating heart,
Laying, like air's fine flood,
The deathdance in his blood;
Yet no part but what will
Be Christ our Saviour still.
. . . . . .
Men here may draw like breath
More Christ and baffle death:[6]

In this last figure Hopkins alludes to the teaching of St. Paul, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ: and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences."[7]

In his travels, Hopkins must have delighted in watching the sea and the river, thus he was able to produce two significant though rather ambiguous figures:

Not out of his bliss
Springs 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.[8]

Suffering, which is as inescapable as life, travels through history yet perseveres in time.

When a sister, born for each strong month-brother,
Spring's one daughter, the sweet child May,

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6 Ibid., pp. 100-101.

7 Romans, 13:14.

8 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 57.

Lies in the breast of the young year-mother
With light on her face like the waves at play,[9]

Hopkins's close observation of the elements of nature made him study self more intimately.

My tears are but a cloud of rain;
My passion like a foolish wind
Lifts them a little way above.[10]

The dynamic force exerted by the sudden flash of lightning served the poet best when describing the sensation produced by the beautiful song of the thrush.

. . . and thrush
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;[11]

Hopkins delighted not only in the splendor of the firmament and the elements, but appreciated equally the beauty of the animal and plant world. The number of animals used in similes is very small. The poet mentions three domestic animals by name--the cow, the sheep, and the horse. From these creatures he drew such comparisons as:

Glory be to God for dappled things--
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;[12]

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9 "Ad Mariam," p. 49.

10 "A Voice from the World," p. 122.

11 "Spring," p. 71.

12 "Pied Beauty," p. 74.

His locks like all a ravel-rope's end,
. . . . . .
Or wind-long fleeces on the flock
A day off shearing day.[13]

My cry is like a bleat; a few
Intolerable tears I bleed.[14]

And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder
Majestic--as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet!--[15]

In a moment of instress, the muscular hills covered with a soft haze remind the poet of a strong, valiant horse and likewise of the supernatural beauty of Christ--colossal, but not forbidding; majestic, yet gentle and attractive. According to Dr. Gardner, images of this kind must be interpreted in the light of Catholic nature-mysticism.[16]

Birds also served as a source for Hopkins's images. He was interested most in things in motion--creatures that exercised all their energies. This point is clearly stated by Miss Phare in her study of the poet:

> Hopkins loves any kind of movement, not only the effortless movement of drifting and flying. The movement which is the product not of delirium

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13 Poem 104, p. 152.

14 "A Voice from the World," p. 123.

15 "Hurrahing in Harvest," p. 75.

16 W. H. Gardner, Gerard Manley Hopkins (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), II, p. 255.

> but of normal energy is his favourite symbol of delight. . . . The image most characteristic of Hopkins is that of a bird.[17]

The swiftness with which the falcon rides through the air is skillfully and effectively compared to the heel of the skater who scrapes up a flurry of ice flakes as he sweeps onward.

> I caught this morning morning's minion, kingdom
> of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, 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![18]

In "The Windhover" the poet pictures the soul of man free and active so that it may accept the noble challenge and soar to the heights of perfection. On the contrary, in "The Caged Skylark" the soul is imprisoned in the body:

> As a dare-gale skylark scanted in a dull cage
> Man's mounting spirit in his bone-house, mean house, dwells--
> That bird beyond the remembering his free fells:
> This in drudgery, day-labouring-out life's age.[19]

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17 Elsie E. Phare, The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins (Cambridge: University Press, 1933), p. 39.

18 "The Windhover," p. 73.

19 "The Caged Skylark," p. 75.

Just as the skylark becomes accustomed to his cage and seems to forget about his natural habitat, so the spirit of man forgets about his eternal home and becomes enslaved by the material world.

Hopkins's own groping in the dark for truth is similar to the flight of the bat and the circling bird in the night:

> Let me be to Thee as the circling bird,
> Or bat with tender and air-crisping wings
> That shapes in half-light his departing rings,
> From both of whom a changeless note is heard.[20]

Another bird simile is found in his nuptial poem, "Epithalamion," in which he describes the beauty of nature as observed on a summer day.

> . . . Rafts and rafts of flake-leaves light,
> dealt so, painted on the air,
> Hang as still as hawk or hawkmoth, as the stars
> or as the angels there,
> Like the thing that never knew the earth, never
> off roots
> Rose . . .
> What is . . . the delightful dene?
> Wedlock. What is water? Spousal love.[21]

Besides the birds already mentioned, Hopkins also uses the sea-fowl, the kingfisher, and the carrier pigeon.

> As kingfishers catch fire, . . .
> Each mortal thing does one thing and the same."[22]

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20 Poem 16, p. 37.

21 "Epithalamion," pp. 172-73.

22 Poem 57, p. 95.

> 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.[23]

Only two insects--the hawkmoth and the dragonfly--are mentioned by Hopkins; hence, he must have had some knowledge of their habits.

Closely allied to animal life is plant life which furnished the source for nine of the figures. In the ash, one of Hopkins's favorite trees, he discovered the same inscape "mixed of strength and grace" as in a bluebell,[24] and in 1870 he entered in his Journal, "the skeleton inscape of a spray end of ash."[25] In May 1871 he noticed that the ashes having opened their knots, made "strong yellow crowns against the slaty blue sky."[26] On this subject of the ash Dr. Gardner writes:

> The poet had to feel himself lying in a coffin of dejection before his spirit, casting the body's vest aside, could slip finally into the boughs of his beloved trees. Once more that outward visible beauty was the sign of an inward

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23 "The Handsome Heart," p. 90.

24 Humphry House, editor, The Note-books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 134.

25 Ibid., p. 141.

26 Ibid., p. 147.

spiritual grace: for "Ash-boughs" implies a reading of earth and its inanimate progeny as in a mystical sense related to the nostalgic, developing, aspiring spirit in man.[27]

> Not of all my eyes see, wandering on the world,
> Is anything a milk to the mind so, so sighs deep
> Poetry to it, as a tree whose boughs break in the sky.
> Say it is ash-boughs: whether on a December day and furled
> Fast or they in clammyish lashtender combs creep
> Apart wide and new-nestle at heaven most high.[28]

In an earlier fragment called "Richard" Hopkins writes of the ash:

> There was a meadow level almost; you traced
> The river wound about it as a waist.
> Beyond, the banks were steep; a brush of trees
> Rounded it, thinning skywards by degrees,
> With parallel shafts,--as upward-parted ashes,--
> Their highest sprays were drawn as fine as lashes,
> With centres duly touch'd and nestlike spots,--[29]

The fruit trees in the orchard and the leafy willow symbolize for Hopkins, the man who has been offered abundant graces for which he must pay with the coin of sacrifice.

> 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! 30

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27 Gardner, op. cit., p. 349.

28 "Ash-boughs," p. 164.

29 "Richard," p. 134.

30 "The Starlight Night," p. 71.

Hopkins uses many flowers--lilies, dewbell, larkspur, rose; but his favorite flowers seem to be the bluebell and the poppy. He was attracted to the bluebell by its beauty, and to the poppy by its color:

His locks like all a ravel-rope's end,
. . . . . .
Or like a juicy and jostling shock
Of bluebells sheaved in May.[31]

'From nine o'clock till morning light
The copse was never more than grey.
The darkness did not close that night
But day passed into day.
And soon I saw it shewing new
Beyond the hurst with such a hue
As silken garden-poppies do.[32]

The peach is the only fruit mentioned. The tenderness of this fruit best served the poet in his description of the simple, child-like bugler boy:

How it does my heart good, visiting at that bleak hill,
When limber liquid youth, that to all I teach
Yields tender as a pushed peach,
Hies headstrong to its wellbeing of a self-wise self-will![33]

For Hopkins the metals, minerals, gems and other products of the earth furnished some unusual figures. The sonnet "God's Grandeur" begins with a dynamic, original

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31 Poem 104, p. 152.

32 "The Nightingale," p. 41.

33 "The Bugler's First Communion," p. 86.

and thought provoking image:

> 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. Why do men then not reck his rod?[34]

Dr. Gardner in his analysis of the poem states that there are deep implications. In the image of "shook foil" lies an important doctrine: "life itself must be shaken, disturbed, jarred, before the deepest instress can be felt and the heroic virtues (the highest beauty) can appear." The next simile, the crushing of oil-seed is likewise relevant. The Divine effluence, normally obscured by industrialism, is richly re-communicated in terms of an industrial process. 'Crushed' is the verbal link between the omnipotent World-Wielder and the pitiful, obtuse human agent, who so easily forgets both the source and the true purpose of all this power.[35]

Three products--coal, quartz, and salt--dug from beds in the earth were for Hopkins a source of imagery:

> 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

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34 "God's Grandeur," p. 70.

35 Gardner, op. cit., p. 230-31.

Flashing like flecks of coal,
Quartz-fret, or sparks of salt,
In grimy vasty vault.[36]

These lines are proof of Hopkins's recognition of the Almighty who watches over this vast universe and tempers the sun so that it cannot work havoc. The poet very effectively pictured the earth as a grimy vault were Providence to withdraw.

Similarly, the insignificant stones and rocks proved useful to the poet:

When skies are hard as any stone.[37]

The clouds come like ill-balanced crags,
Shouldering, Down valleys smokes the gloom.[38]

The beautiful rubies, sapphires and diamonds were prized by Hopkins on account of their color, brilliance, and beauty. Lines in which these gems are mentioned contain a certain richness and freshness:

And the sunlight sidled, like dewdrops, like
dandled diamonds
Through the sieve of the straw of the plait.[39]

To show the crimson streams that inward
shine,
Which, lightening o'er the body rosy-pale,

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36 "The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air we Breathe," p. 102.

37 "A Voice from the World," p. 121.

38 "Pilate," p. 119.

39 Poem 104, p. 152.

Like shiver'd rubies' dance or sheen of
sapphire frail.[40]

The entire poem "The Vision of the Mermaids" is a series of highly colored descriptions. A few lines will clearly indicate the joy experienced by the poet in dealing with color:

And was as tho' some sapphire molten-blue
Were vein'd and streak'd with dusk-deep lazuli,
Or tender pinks with bloody Tyrian dye.
From their white waists a silver skirt was spread
. . . . . .
One scarlet feather trailing to the wind;
Then, like a flock of sea-fowl mounting higher,
Thro' crimson-golden floods pass swallow'd
into fire.[41]

The bugle moon by daylight floats
So glassy white about the sky,
So like a berg of hyaline,
And pencilled blue so daintily.[42]

From these images it would seem that the favorite colors of the artist-poet were: white, blue, pink, rose, scarlet, crimson, purple, gold, silver, brown, and black. This rainbow of color symbolized at different times peace, serenity, nobility and power--all conducive to goodness and beauty. In contrast to this, black denoted horror, depression, and vice.

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40 "The Vision of the Mermaids," p. 20.

41 Ibid., pp. 19-20.

42 "Winter with the Gulf Stream," p. 23.

The second main source of Hopkins's imagery is man--his body and objects used by him. A most effective comparison is made of the poplar and the eye of man. The destruction of the tree deprives the earth of beauty in the same sense as depriving man of his sense of sight with which he is able to enjoy the beauty of creation.

> To touch, her being so slender,
> That, like this sleek and seeing ball
> But a prick will make no eye at all,
> Where we, even where we mean
> To mend her we end her,
> When we hew or delve:
> After-comers cannot guess the beauty been.[43]

Hopkins speaks of the beautiful folded hands of Margaret Clitheroe when telling the terrible and heart-rending story of her martyrdom:

> She held her hands to, like in prayer;
> They had them out and laid them wide
> (Just like Jesus crucified);[44]

As the result of poor health and an unhappy state of mind, Hopkins found it difficult at times to deal with his fellow men. This inability is comparable to the difficulties experienced by the man afflicted with blindness or lameness:

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43 "Binsey Poplars," p. 83.

44 "Margaret Clitheroe," p. 161.

Yet it is now too late to heal
The incapable and cumbrous shame
Which makes me when with men I deal
More powerless than the blind or lame.[45]

An indication of the tenderness and affection of Hopkins is to be found in his image drawn from the relationship of mother and child:

Speak! whisper to my watching heart
One word--as when a mother speaks
Soft, when she sees her infant start,
Till dimpled joy steals o'er its cheeks.
Then, to behold Thee as Thou art,
I'll wait till morn eternal breaks.[46]

Hopkins also knew that in order to embrace the truth he had to put aside doubts and fears and be led as a child by the light of faith.

Let patience with her chastening wand
Dispel the doubt and dry the tear;
And lead me child-like by the hand;
If still in darkness not in fear.[47]

With commonplace, one might say, uninteresting, objects Hopkins was able to produce some of his effective and striking comparisons. Some objects which he used were: bells, blast, casque, eggs, flame, fountain, grate, hall, handle, letters, mote, race, rope, swords, waist. The poet was familiar with these objects and realized that each ordinary thing could be used in a more sublime situation.

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45 "The Alchemist in the City," p. 32.

46 "Nondum," p. 45.

47 Ibid., p. 44.

Some of the more original figures are:

> 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.[48]

A note of sadness and dejection pervades these lines:

> . . . And my lament
> Is cries countless, cries like dead
> letters sent
> To dearest him that lives alas! away.[49]

> Your comfort is as sharp as swords;
> And I cry out for wounded love.
> And you are gone so heavenly far
> You hear nor care of love and pain.[50]

> He gave her kisses cold as ice;
> Down upon ground fell she.
> She has gone with him to Paradise.[51]

In the sight of the Creator man is like a fountain, continually moving toward its destination:

> Thee, God, I come from, to thee go,
> All day long I like fountain flow
> From thy hand out, swayed about
> Mote-like in thy mighty glow.[52]

Strange as it may seem, only two classes of men are mentioned in his similes.

One bound o'er dripping gold a turquoise-gemm'd

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48 Ibid., p. 43.

49 Poem 69, p. 109.

50 "A Voice from the World," p. 122.

51 "The Queen's Crowning," p. 141.

52 Poem 116, p. 167.

> Circlet of astral flowerets--diadem'd
> Like an Assyrian prince, with buds unsheath'd
> From flesh-flowers of the rock;[53]

Since Hopkins wrote this poem while in school, it is likely that he had read about the ancient kings of the Assyrians. Their nobility, power, and wealth had made them interesting people and admired by the youth. The grandeur and magnificent adornment appealed to the boy-poet and supplied him with a most appropriate description of his diademed Mermaids.

The other reference to man mentioned in a simile is to the poet who in this case tells of evil omens and death:

> . . .whether that they ring the knells
> Of seamen whelm'd in chasms of the mid-main,
> As poets sing; or that it is a pain
> To know the dusk depths of the ponderous sea.[54]

Love, hope, and death are the only abstractions used in the similes:

> The love of women is not so strong,--
> 'Tis falsely given--as love in men;
> A thing that weeps, enduring long:[55]

> . . . Near or far
> He says his science helps him not to look

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53 "The Vision of the Mermaids," p. 20.

54 Ibid., p. 22.

55 "A Voice from the World," p. 122.

At hopes so evil-heaven'd as mine are.[56]

As she lay weeping at the night
She heard but knockings three.
'It is as cold as death without:
Open the door to me.'[57]

The three comparisons are simple and not of unusual significance; hence, it may be said that concrete things were of greater importance to the poet in expressing his ideas.

Last of all, are the three similes drawn from the Bible and Church history. In his poem "Barnfloor and Winepress," Hopkins makes use of the town of Libanus renowned for its abundance of wood, sweet-scented shrubs, and fragrant plants, and mentioned so frequently in Scriptures.

The field where He has planted us
Shall shake her fruit as Libanus,
When He has sheaved us in His sheaf
When He has made us bear His leaf.[58]

A second figure is drawn from the Biblical story giving the genealogy of the Promised Redeemer:

For thou, as she, wert the one fair daughter
That came when a line of kings did cease,
Princes strong for the sword and slaughter,
That, warring, wasted the land's increase,
And like the storm-months smote the earth
Till a maid in David's house had birth,

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56 "The Beginning of the End," p. 30.

57 "The Queen's Crowning," p. 139.

58 "Barnfloor and Winepress," p. 39.

That was unto Judah as May and brought her
A son for King whose name was peace.[59]

The bold image of a saint's fiery constancy is effectively and remarkably expressed by the schoolboy poet in lines like

For that staunch saint still prais'd his
Master's name
While his crack'd flesh lay hissing on the
grate;
Then fail'd the tongue; the poor collapsing
frame,
Hung like a wreck that flames not billows
beat.[60]

Upon completion of the study of the similes found in Hopkins's poems, a brief summary of the sources will reveal a few facts about the poet. Two-thirds of the total ninety-one figures were taken from Nature. If the importance of the various fields is to be judged by the use made of them, then the elements were of greatest interest.

Following closely was animal life, especially the birds. Their swiftness and their soaring heavenwards was an inspiration to the poet. Similarly, he had to keep before him the eternal goal and always aim higher and higher to attain his purpose.

From these conclusions it would follow that Hopkins was a lover of Nature, who took great delight in the

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59 "Ad Mariam," p. 50.

60 "The Escorial," p. 14.

things of Nature because he saw in them a reflection of their Creator. His was not the view of the pantheist, who believed that the universe, taken as a whole, is God; but of one who believed the universe to be a reflection of God. Furthermore, a true lover of Nature must be simple, kind, good, and sympathetic--Hopkins was all of these in an eminent degree.

It may also be concluded from this study that the poet was interested in the ordinary things of life, that he mingled with men, carefully observed them at work and play, and so made himself a better member of society. He had adopted for himself the rule of life as set forth by St. Ignatius in the Spiritual Exercises:

> Man must make use of creatures in so far as they help him to attain his end, and in the same way he ought to withdraw himself from them in so far as they hinder him from it.[61]

Such a spiritual man respected the dignity and goodness of other men and treated them with kindness and respect; thus was he able to produce his beautiful simile drawn from the relationship of mother and child.

Indeed, Hopkins can truly be ranked with the other great Nature poets, and the originality and effectiveness of his imagery is proof of his genius.

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61 John Morris, translator, The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius (Westminster: The Newman Bookshop, 1943), p. 12.

CHAPTER V

PERSONIFICATIONS

Hopkins in an attempt to express his thoughts and ideas in a fresh and original manner made use of personification which furnished him with a means of saying concisely and clearly what otherwise might have been difficult to express.

Personification is a figure of speech in which an inanimate object or abstract idea is endowed with personal attributes; hence it follows that there are good reasons for personifying in poetry. Dr. Richards states that

> The structure of language and the pronouns, verbs and adjectives that come most naturally to us, constantly invite us to personify. And, to go deeper our attitudes, feelings, and ways of thought about inanimate things are moulded upon and grow out of our way of thinking and feeling about one another. Our minds have developed with other human beings always in the foreground of our consciousness; we are shaped, mentally, by and through our dealings with other people.[1]

These reasons may also have been Hopkins's, for he, too, found this figure quite useful in producing such original and thought-provoking lines as will be considered in this chapter. In the masterful hands of Hopkins, words became powerful means for conveying the thoughts and

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1 I. A. Richards, Practical Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939), p. 198.

feelings of a poet who was attempting to produce in poetry a new, startling, and satisfying beauty.

As a student, a teacher, a religious, and a parish priest he had splendid opportunities for studying the characters of men as he mingled and lived with all types of individuals. This contact with men having different beliefs, ideals, likes, and dislikes proved to be an invaluable experience for Hopkins in the writing of poetry which would evoke attitudes tending to the social and spiritual welfare of mankind.

From this further study of Hopkins's images and their sources it is hoped that a more intimate knowledge of the poet, a greater appreciation for his work, and a clearer understanding of the poems can be realized.

As Nature in all of its aspects was the chief source of the imagery classified as similes, so is it the primary source of the figures of personification. Hopkins, no doubt, studied and observed Nature so closely and so continuously in all of its details that Nature in its entirety and in its manifold aspects of experience became personalized, living not just as natural life forms but as personalized entities.

In his early devotional poem "Easter," the poet personifies the Earth as he urges man to live his days in

the joyful spirit of the resurrection, forgetting the hardships and sorrows which are the lot of all men traveling the road of life.

> Gather gladness from the skies;
> Take a lesson from the ground;
> Flowers do ope their heavenward eyes
> And a Spring-time joy have found;
> Earth throws Winter's robes away,
> Decks herself for Easter Day.[2]

Hopkins in "Ribblesdale" says that man is "the eye, tongue, heart" of Earth. When man experiences pain and sorrow at the sight of ugliness and sin, Earth seems to "wear brows of such care, care and dear concern."[3] A further expression of the creature's dependence on Mother Nature as children of Earth is found in his poem "Ash-boughs":

> They touch heaven, tabour on it; how their
> talons sweep
> The smouldering enormous winter welkin! May
> Mells blue and snow white through them, a
> fringe and fray
> Of greenery: it is old earth's groping to-
> wards the steep
> Heaven whom she childs us by.[4]

Dr. Gardner in his analysis of the poem "Brothers" recognizes in the last image of the poem a tender concern in Nature for the spiritual welfare of others, suddenly

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2 "Easter," p. 45.

3 "Ribblesdale," p. 96.

4 "Ash-boughs," p. 165.

turning to denunciation.

> 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.[5]

The salt of tears is the salt of Christ, whereby men become "the salt of the earth"; and the savour of that salt is not entirely lost.[6] This idea is likewise found in Scripture in the words of Christ addressed to the multitude:

> You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing any more but to be cast out and to be trodden on by men.[7]

From Nature, Hopkins turned next to the heavens, as a personal entity, which witnessed the tragic death of Margaret Clitheroe, who cheerfully accepted her agony.

> And every saint of bloody hour
> And breath immortal thronged that show;
> Heaven turned its starlight eyes below
> To the murder of Margaret Clitheroe.[8]

These lines again exemplify the sadness and grief experienced by Nature when the children of earth are afflicted.

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5 "Brothers," p. 93.

6 W. H. Gardner, Gerard Manley Hopkins (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), II, p. 305.

7 St. Matthew, 5:13.

8 "Margaret Clitheroe," p. 161.

In three poems the poet makes use of the luminous heavenly body the sun, describing it as a "crimson fire-ball"[9] which

> . . . on falling waters writes the text
> Which yet is in the eye or in the thought.[10]

and which

> . . . lanced fire in the heavenly bay;[11]

Such were the attributes assigned to the mightiest of the planets. Quite in contrast is the moon, a secondary planet, described by the poet as

> The bugle moon by daylight floats
>
> So glassy white about the sky,
> So like a berg of hyaline,
> And pencilled blue so daintily,
>
> I never saw her so divine.[12]

A reminiscence of childhood and faery lore appears in his rhapsodic poem "The Starlight Night," in which he speaks of the heavenly bodies as "fire-folk sitting in the air" enclosed by the outer wall of heaven separating the world from the Eternal Beauty.

> Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies!
> O look at all the fire-folk sitting in the air!

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9 "Winter with the Gulf Stream," p. 23.

10 Poem 81, p. 129.

11 "The Loss of the Eurydice," p. 77.

12 "Winter with the Gulf Stream," p. 23.

The bright boroughs, the circle-citadels
there! 13

In another of his boyhood poems he personifies light, through which an inner firmament could be seen:

. . . but spikes of light
Spear'd open lustrous gashes, crimson-white.14

All of the images drawn from the firmament offer proof of Hopkins's knowledge and appreciation of the beauties reflected in the celestial bodies, and provided an originality and a richness to many lines of his poetry.

The seasons--Spring, Summer, and Winter were for Hopkins symbols of a kind, loving, young mother; a haughty, boastful brother; and an aged father, respectively. The month of May represents the joyful maiden daughter of Spring, and is symbolic of the all-beautiful, all-loving virgin mother Mary.

Spring's one daughter, the sweet child May,
Lies in the breast of the young year-mother
With light on her face like the waves at
play,
. . . . . .
And May has come, hair-bound in flowers,
With eyes that smile through the tears of
the hours,
With joy for to-day and hope for to-morrow
And the promise of Summer within her breast! 15

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13 "The Starlight Night," p. 70.

14 "A Vision of the Mermaids," p. 18.

15 "Ad Mariam," p. 49.

With an entirely different attitude does Hopkins speak of the month March:

And you were a liar, O blue March day.[16]

Such a treacherous month caused the Eurydice to be wrecked and three hundred lives to be lost--a tragedy similar to the disaster which overtook the Deutschland.

'A crimson East, that bids for rain.
So from the dawn was ill begun
The day that brought my lasting pain
And put away my sun.[17]

Such pathetic words were uttered by the young maiden who was affected by the song of the nightingale while she thought of her sailor-lover on his way to sea--and to death. What a powerful influence the elements have upon the events in the life of man. The elements were carefully and artistically used by Hopkins to express in more familiar terms his thoughts and ideas.

In the vivid description of the foundering of the Eurydice, Hopkins appeals to sight and sound as he makes animate and personal the day, the sunlight, the wind, the cloud, the storm, hail, and snow.

And you were a liar, O blue March day.
Bright sun lanced fire in the heavenly bay;
But what black Boreas wrecked her? he
Came equipped, deadly-electric,

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16 "The Loss of the Eurydice," p. 77.

17 "The Nightingale," p. 41.

A beetling baldbright cloud thorough England
Riding: there did storms not mingle? and
    Hailropes hustle and grind their
Heavengravel? wolfsnow, worlds of it, wind
    there?[18]

What could have been more tragic than to have all the elements of the universe rise in rebellion, like so many individual enemies, and play havoc with the ship that carried hundreds of passengers down to destruction and into another world. The piling up, as it were, of the destructive force of each element emphasizes the poet's skillfulness in employing the common language and "heightening" it to express in a realistic manner what the poet had to say.

Another vivid and moving description is that which described the rebellious elements in terms of personalized malice, as they became responsible for the wreck of the Deutschland:

For the infinite air is unkind,
And the sea flint-flake, black-backed in
    the regular blow,
Sitting Eastnortheast, in cursed quarter,
    the wind;
    Wiry and white-fiery and whirlwind-
        swivelled snow
Spins to the widow-making unchilding unfathering
    deeps.[19]

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18 "The Loss of the Eurydice," p. 77.

19 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 59.

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: . . .[20]

Still another example of Hopkins's description of the elements in imagery common to man, is found in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire":

Cloud-Puffball, torn tufts, tossed pillows' flaunt forth, then chevy on an air-
built thoroughfare: heaven-roysterers, in gay-gangs' they throng; they glitter in marches.
Down roughcast, down dazzling whitewash,' wherever an elm arches,
Shivelights and shadowtackle in long' lashes, lace, lance, and pair.
Delightfully the bright wind boisterous' ropes, wrestles, beats earth bare
Of yestertempest's creases;' in pool and rut peel parches.[21]

The fragmentary poem "Pilate" contains vigorous imagery of personification which seems reminiscent of Dante:

The clouds come like ill-balanced crags,
Shouldering, Down valleys smokes the gloom.
The thunder brags. In joints of sparkling jags
The lightnings leap. The day of doom![22]

This poem which was intended as a monologue by Pilate's spirit has as its theme retribution and salvation. The

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20 Ibid., p. 62.

21 "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection," p. 111.

22 "Pilate," p. 119.

likely source is the punishment of the High Priest Caiaphas in the Inferno.[23]

Fire in its various aspects is employed by Hopkins as an incarnation of the divine vital principle, the essence of life:

> Sweet fire the sire of muse, my soul needs this;
> I want the one rapture of an inspiration.[24]

> . . . And the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
> Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier! [25]

Personification of plant life is only in two early poems: "Easter" and "Winter with the Gulf Stream." In the first is found the simple embodiment:

> Flowers do ope their heavenward eyes.[26]

and in the other

> With bills of rime the brambles shew.
> The hoarse leaves crawl on hissing ground
> Because the sighing wind is low.[27]

Both passages gain vitality from the personalized quality of the imagery.

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23 Gardner, op. cit., p. 63.

24 "To R. B.," p. 114.

25 "The Windhover," p. 73.

26 "Easter," p. 45.

27 "Winter with the Gulf Stream," p. 23.

Hopkins in his pictorial description and narration of the wreck of the Eurydice described the ship as:

> Too proud, too proud, what a press she bore!
> Royal, and all her royals wore.
> Sharp with her, shorten sail!
> Too late; lost; gone with the gale.
> . . . . . .
> But she who had housed them thither
> Was around them, bound them or wound them
> with her.[28]

The ship is the only object personified in the many lines of poetry which contain such a variety of themes and images.

Although Hopkins, as an artist, was attracted by the beauties of nature, as an ascetical religious he was inclined to reject the senses. Yet in praise or requdiation of sensory experience he addresses the senses as if each were a being, capable of response to his words and accepting the way of sacrifice and penance:

> 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!

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28 "The Loss of the Eurydice," pp. 77-8.

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.[29]

In his fragmentary poem "To his Watch," Hopkins compares the timepiece with the life of man and describes the passing day as:

Field-flown, the departed day no morning brings
Saying 'This was yours' with her, but new one, worse,
And then that last and shortest . . .[30]

Hopkins considered night as the time in which the great wonders of creation were accomplished and attributed to the personalized night the power of assisting in the great work of creation.

We see the glories of the earth
But not the hand that wrought them all:
Night to a myriad worlds gives birth,[31]

In a third figure, Hopkins makes animate and personal the weeks.

. . . He plants the year;
The weighty weeks without hands grow,
Heaved drum on drum; but hands also

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29 "The Habit of Perfection," pp. 46-7.

30 "To his Watch," p. 166.

31 "Nondum," p. 43.

Must deal with Margaret Clitheroe.[32]

Of the eighty-seven figures of personification, about one-third personify abstract ideas including virtues, vices, and death. For Hopkins, Hope was one of the cardinal virtues which "is the virtue by which we firmly trust that God, Who is all-powerful and faithful to His promises, will in His mercy give us eternal happiness and the means to obtain it."[33] In a short poem he interprets the doctrine in his own way, dwelling upon the difficulty of meriting the gift of Hope.

> Hope holds to Christ the mind's own mirror out
> To take His lovely likeness more and more.
> It will not well, so she would bring about
> An ever brighter burnish than before
> And turns to wash it from her welling eyes
> And breathes the blots off all with sighs
> on sighs.
> Her glass is blest but she as good as blind
> Holds till hand aches and wonders what is
> there;
> Her glass drinks light, she darkles down
> behind,
> All of her glorious gainings unaware.[34]

In the "Wreck of the Deutschland" he speaks of Hope as:

> Hope had grown grey hairs,
> Hope had mourning on,
> Trenched with tears, carved with cares,

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32 "Margaret Clitheroe," p. 160.

33 Michael A. McGuire, Baltimore Catechism (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1941), p. 52.

34 Poem 113, p. 166.

Hope was twelve hours gone:[35]

The picture thus presented seems to be one of sadness and despondency rather than of confidence and trust.

In an octave Hopkins personalized the virtue of Patience, speaking of it as something very difficult to acquire, demanding great sacrifice on the part of the recipient, but rewarding the soul with many consolations.

> Patience, hard thing! the hard things but to pray,
> But bid for, Patience is! Patience who asks
> Wants war, wants wounds; weary his times, his tasks;
> To do without, take tosses, and obey.
> Rare patience roots in these, and, these away,
> Nowhere. Natural Heart's ivy, Patience masks
> Our ruins of wrecked past purpose. There she basks
> Purple eyes and seas of liquid leaves all day.[36]

These lines seem to be an explanation of the following lines:

> O surely, reaving Peace, my Lord should leave in lieu
> Some good! And so he does leave Patience exquisite,
> That plumes to Peace thereafter . . .[37]

Man deprived of peace is given instead the virtue of patience to forebear and to wait for the return of peace.

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35 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 60.

36 Poem 70, p. 110.

37 "Peace," p. 85.

In another poem that poet prays for the patience to live in doubt until God sees fit to send him the light of faith.

> Oh! till Thou givest that sense beyond,
> To show Thee that Thou art, and near,
> Let patience with her chastening wand
> Dispel the doubt and dry the tear;
> And lead me child-like by the hand:
> If still in darkness not in fear.[38]

Honor is personified when Hopkins sings the praises of the old laybrother, St. Alphonsus:

> Honour is flashed off exploit, so we say;
> And those strokes once that gashed flesh
> or galled shield
> Should tongue that time now, trumpet now
> that field,
> And, on the fighter, forge his glorious day.[39]

The saint earned his reward after long years of hardship and austerities in an attempt to conquer self and all temptations. His life was comparable to that of the martyrs, and so was deserving of a similar reward.

In "Nondum" the personal concept of God is developed as Hopkins searched for some manifestation of God in the world; he wanted to find a creed in which God the Father, gave personal expression of Himself.

> And Thou art silent, whilst Thy world
> Contends about its many creeds
> And hosts confront with flags unfurled
> And zeal is flushed and pity bleeds
> And truth is heard, with tears impearled,

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38 "Nondum," p. 44.

39 "St. Alphonsus Rodriguez," p. 112.

A moaning voice among the reeds.[40]

While groping for the true faith, the poet realized that he could not hear the Master's voice through the turmoil, so he called upon

> 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.[41]

After embracing the Catholic religion, Hopkins wanted to give himself entirely to his Creator, therefore, he vowed to live a life of poverty depending upon Providence to supply his needs.

> And, Poverty, be thou the bride
> And now the marriage feast begun,
> And lily-coloured clothes provide
> Your spouse not laboured-at nor spun.[42]

These lines have for their source the words of Christ with which He rebuked the Pharisees who were trying to serve two masters--God and Mammon or worldly interests: "And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin."[43]

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40 "Nondum," p. 44.

41 "The Habit of Perfection," p. 46.

42 Ibid., p. 47.

43 St. Matthew 6:28.

Another effective personification is found in the stern rebuke administered to the captain of the ship after it met with disaster:

> . . . Right, rude of feature,
> He thought he heard say
> 'Her commander! and thou too, and thou this way.' [44]

The terrifying experience of a soul overcome by troubles and temptations, suffering the loss of love and hope--even His God is related in the lines of a sonnet which sounds the depth of desolation:

> My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief
> Woe, world-sorrow; on an age-old anvil wince and sing--
> Then lull, then leave off. Fury had shrieked 'No ling-
> ering! Let me be fell: force I must be brief'.[45]

Experiencing great difficulty in accepting humiliations and overcoming self-love, Hopkins tends to become despondent; however, he struggles desperately not to yield to despair, as an entity.

> Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;
> Not untwist--slack they may be--these last strands of man
> In me or, most weary, cry <u>I can no more</u>. I can;
> Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be.[46]

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44 "The Loss of the Eurydice," p. 78.

45 Poem 65, p. 107.

46 "Carrion Comfort," p. 106.

When moral duty seems too much, the poet turns to nature with all of its beauty and finds relief.

> A windpuff-bonnet of fáwn-fróth.
> Turns and twindles over the broth
> Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,
> It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.[47]

Death with his "charnelhouse-grate ribs" was referred to in an early poem "Spring and Death," and again in "The Loss of the Eurydice" he is described by Hopkins as

> Death teeming in by her portholes
> Raced down decks, round messes of mortals.[48]

In a fragmentary poem, the poet when upbraiding the practice of unchristian funerals, suggests that men

> Gather the sooty plumage from Death's wings
> And the poor corse impale with it . . .[49]

Hopkins's use of the figure of personification definitely aided him in stating clearly, concisely, and effectively his thoughts and ideas. A study of the images further convinces the reader that the poet in his intensive study and close observation of Nature was overwhelmed by its beauty and inscape which tended to draw him always closer to the Creator. He came to a greater realization

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47 " Inversnaid," p. 95.

48 "The Loss of the Eurydice," p. 78.

49 Poem 79, p. 128.

of the power and majesty exercised over the world by the Supreme Ruler.

In the many lines describing the tragedies and chastisements permitted by the good God, there is given some insight into the soul of the poet who suffered intensely from the trials and crosses sent to him. However, difficult and unbearable life at times became for Hopkins, he found release in his poetry as is clearly observed in the study of the poems of this poet-priest. By the dynamic quality of his imagination he was capable of transferring the imagery of human experience to inanimate forces and objects so that the quality of imagery we call personification illustrates the manner in which the world and its forms were identified with humanity.

CHAPTER VI

METAPHORS

"Metaphor is that familiar figure of speech in which one object is spoken of in terms of the other."[1]

According to J. M. Murry, "metaphor is the means by which the less familiar is assimilated to the more familiar, the unknown to the known." He considers it "as ultimate as speech itself, and speech as ultimate as thought." In poetry metaphor is used as a means to incite a vague and heightened awareness of spiritual qualities and also to define such indefinable qualities. Metaphor can be defined as the analogy by which the human mind explores the universe of quality and describes the non-measurable world.[2]

The genius of a poet is to be judged by the masterful use made of the metaphor, according to Aristotle:

> But the greatest thing of all by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learned from others; and it is also a sign of original genius, since a good metaphor implies the intuitive perception of the similarity

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1 Harold M. Stanford, editor, "Metaphor," New Standard Encyclopedia (Chicago: Standard Encyclopedia Corporation, 1934), VI.

2 John Middleton Murry, Countries of the Mind (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), pp. 1-9.

in dissimilars.[3]

A close examination of Hopkins's metaphors will reveal the strength and subtlety of his imagery which furnished proof of his genius. In addition to using objects which were alike or unlike in his comparisons, he used the instress of objects as a basis for some of his comparisons or contrasts.

The same divisions used in previous chapters will be employed in classifying the sources of the metaphors. The elements of Nature were the source of five figures found in his early poems. The comparisons are not concrete but they add a certain touch of beauty and freshness to the poetry.

Hopkins describes a winter scene in such picturesque lines as

> Frost-furred our ivies are and rough
> With bills of rime the brambles shew.[4]

The fur comparison is similarly used in another poem:

> Then even in weariest wintry hour
> Of New Year's month or surly Yule
> Furred snows, charged tuft above tuft, tower
> From darksome darksome Penmaen Pool.[5]

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3 Murry, op. cit., p. 3.

4 "Winter with the Gulf Stream," p. 23.

5 "Penmaen Pool," p. 68.

Too a student of Greek mythology, the golden sands of the Pactolus would have an appeal, and in the case of Hopkins their beauty resembled the beauty which he saw in a colourful sunset.

> A gold-water Pactolus frets
>
> Its brindled wharves and yellow brim,
> The waxen colours weep and run,
> And slendering to his burning rim
>
> Into the flat blue mist the sun
> Drops out and all our day is done.[6]

To the Jesuit priest borne down by spiritual desolation and troubled in mind, the overpowering and insurmountable characteristics of the mountains seemed most suitable to describe his obstacles.

> O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
> Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed.[7]

Again speaking of his separation from his heavenly Father, Hopkins uses a very simple comparison but one which aptly points out the intensity of his suffering:

> My tears are but a cloud of rain;[8]

Flowers came next in the world of Nature. The rose seems to be the favorite of Hopkins, making its appeal

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6 "Winter with the Gulf Stream," p. 24.

7 Poem 65, p. 107.

8 "A Voice from the World," p. 122.

through beauty of form and color which satisfactorily describes the beauties seen around him:

> 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.
> The zenith melted to a rose of air;
> The waves were rosy-lipp'd; the crimson glare
> Shower'd the cliffs and every fret and spire
> With garnet wreaths and blooms of rosy-budded fire.[9]

Such images equal the luscious quality of Keat's Romantic imagery, and are as lavish as the painting of a Pre-Raphaelite.

In "Rosa Mystica" Hopkins developes at some length the symbolic significance of the rose. This poem will be given consideration later in the chapter.

In the exquisite image--ivy mantling the scarred ruins of some old abbey or castle--man is made to see and feel the process or transformation from dangers, difficulties, and wound to that of healing, reconciliation, and peace.

> Rare patience roots in these, and, these away,
> Nowhere. Natural heart's ivy, Patience masks
> Our ruins of wrecked past purpose.[10]

The passionflower, so called because it suggests the instruments of Christ's crucifixion, was chosen to

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9 "A Vision of the Mermaids," pp. 18-9.

10 Poem 70, p. 110.

symboliize the great St. Thecla who bravely went to the stake, but was miraculously saved.

> Great Thecla, the plumed passionflower,
> Next Mary mother of maid and nun.[11]

Hopkins the great admirer of beauty in Nature, no doubt, spent much time observing the rising and setting sun and the notable changes effected in the sky. In one poem thee west appears to wear royal purple

> Plum-purple was the west.[12]

while inn a later poem the west assumes a more brilliant garb

> When lily-yellow is the west.[13]

"The skyy to him is never a painted cloth; it is full of colours hurrying to replace each other."[14]

The poet was also extremely interested in birds--their power of flight, their beauty of song. In the poem "The Sea and the Skylark" he compares man with the sea and the skylark.

> On ear and ear two noises too old to end
> Treench--right, the tide that ramps against the

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111 "Margaret Clitheroe," p. 160.

122 "A Vision of the Mermaids," p. 18.

133 "A Voice from the World," p. 123.

144 Elsie Elizabeth Phare, The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hoopkins (London: Cambridge University Press, 1933), p. 30.

shore;
With a flood or a fall, low lull-off or all
roar,
Frequenting there while moon shall wear and wend.

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.[15]

The first quatrain is dedicated to the sea, the second to the lark, and both subjects are richly inscaped. The lark sings of purity which man has lost; but whether nature sings with the lark or with the sea, she eternally puts man to shame:

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.[16]

Man is "life's cared-for crown" because he alone has been given the means--reason, grace, and free will to attain eternal life.

In the poem comparing the motherhood of Mary with Nature's motherhood, the poet describes the popular European songster

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15 "The Sea and the Skylark," p. 72.

16 Ibid., p. 73.

Star-eyed strawberry-breasted
Throstle above her nested

Cluster of bugle blue eggs thin
Forms and warms the life within;[17]

Lastly the poet likened wandering Peace to a wild dove:

When will you ever, Peace, wild wooddove, shy
wings shut,
Your round me roaming end, and under be my boughs?[18]

"The Windhover" a vigorous and colorful piece of nature poetry containes rich imagery drawn from French chivalry.

I caught this morning morning's minion, king -
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-
drawn Falcon, 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! . . .[19]

The poet's emotions are aroused by the natural beauty of the kestrel, and in a similar manner by the immortal beauty--the character of Christ..

The hardness of two metals--brass and iron--helped the poet to describe the heaven and earth which he hoped to move by his prayers.

My heaven is brass and iron my earth:[20]

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17 "The May Magnificat," p. 81.

18 "Peace," p. 85.

19 "The Windhover," p. 73.

20 Poem 15, p. 36.

In the concluding lines of this same poem:

> A warfare of my lips in truth,
> Battling with God, is now my prayer.[21]

Hopkins likens the difficulty experienced in prayer to a battle waged against God by a soul whose prayers seem to go unheard.

The seventeen metaphors whose source can be traced in Nature furnish further proof that Hopkins was truly a great nature poet who found in Nature a real satisfaction and a means of drawing him closer to the Creator.

Parts of the human body, which had been carefully studied by the poet, were the basis for four rather unusual and original metaphors. What a weird allegorical figure of death was achieved by Hopkins:

> Sudden, Death before me stood;
> In a hollow lush and damp,
> He seem'd a dismal mirky stamp
> On the flowers that were seen
> His charnelhouse-grate ribs between,
> And with coffin-black he barr'd the green.[22]

The colorful, muscular, gracefully rounded hills seem a part of the mystical anatomy of Christ

> And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder
> Majestic--as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet!--[23]

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21 Loc. cit.

22 "Spring and Death," p. 24.

23 "Hurrahing in Harvest," p. 75.

The hills remind one of the supernatural beauty of Christ--colossal, but not forbidding; majestic, yet comforting, gentle and attractive.[24]

The human heart deprived of love without knowing the cause was carefully described as

My bankrupt heart has no more tears to spend.[25]

Upon the occasion celebrating the twenty-fifth year of the episcopate of the first Bishop of Shrewsbury, Hopkins wrote in praise of the prelate's work. In that poem he mentions the gray hair of this dignitary in terms of silver symbolic of the anniversary.

Not today we need lament
Your wealth of life is some way spent:
  Toil has shed round your head
Silver but for Jubilee.[26]

The dying poet in the sonnet written to his friend, Robert Bridges, compares the mind of a poet which creates immortal poetry with a mother who gives life to a child.

The fine delight that fathers thought; the strong
Spur, live and lancing like the blowpipe flame,
Breathes once and quenched faster than it came,
Leaves yet the mind a mother of immortal song.

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24 W. H. Gardner, Gerard Manley Hopkins (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), II, pp. 255.

25 "The Beginning of the End," p. 31.

26 "The Silver Jubilee," p. 69.

Nine months she then, nay years, nine years
she long
Within her wears, bears, cares and combs the
same;
The widow of an insight lost she lives, with
aim
Now known and hand at work now never wrong.[27]

In the lines telling of the conflict between Hopkins's sympathy with the Catholic Irish and his loyalty to his country, the poet thinks of England as the wife of his thoughts:

England, whose honour O all my heart woos, wife
To my creating thought, would neither hear
Me, were I pleading, plead nor do I:[28]

Commonplace objects were the next great source from which Hopkins drew some of his finest and invigorating metaphors. The list of objects include gate, pen, wand, hook, vale, bonfire, tune, towers, scaffold, tears, government, and law. A few selections will exemplify the poet's ability to find in ordinary things a means by which to express his poetic ideas.

. . . Angels fall, they are towers, from heaven--
a story
Of just, majestical, and giant groans.
But man--we, scaffold of score brittle bones;
Who breathe, from groundling babyhood to hoary
Age gasp; . . .[29]

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27 "To R. B.," p. 114.

28 Poem 68, p. 109.

29 Poem 122, p. 173.

Another singular figure is foundd in the lines:

> . . . Million-fuelèd,' natture's bonfire burns on.
> But quench her bonniest, 'dearest' to her, her
> clearest-selvèd spark
> Man, how fast his firediinntt,' his mark on mind,
> is gone! 30

Implied in this concrete image iiss the idea that the world, despite the destructive forces, continues to exist because it is constantly nourished by mesw philosophies and new ideas; so unlike man who, depriweedi of the spark of life, departs, leaving little impressiiton on the world of which he was a part.

The soul of man compared tto a great commonwealth emphasizes the importance that tthe poet places upon one of man's greatest faculties, the will which reigns supreme in the kingdom of the soul.

> Or what is else? There iis your world within.
> There rid the dragons, rooot out there the sin.
> Your will is law in that small commonweal.31

For Pilate exile was compeairable only to a horrible place of torment:

> This outer cold, my exxiile from of old,
> From God and man iis hell no doubt.32

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30 "That Nature is a Heracollitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection," p. 1112.

31 Poem 112, p. 165.

32 "Pilate," p. 117.

Another unusual comparison is mmade between the breath of man and the memory of death:

> . . .whose breath is ourr memento mori--
> What bass is our viol foor tragic tones?[33]

Finally, Hopkins makes the straange comparison of beauty and death:

> Immortal beauty is deathh with duty,
> If under her banner I fahll for her honour.[34]

In the poem on the unemployed, Hopkins condemns the society which permits a large nnumber of able-bodied men to remain outside the realm of social usefulness. He divides the unemployed into two main types; but stigmatizes them all as "packs" which "infest the age."

> Of earth's glory, earth's ease, all; no one, nowhere,
> In wide the world's weal; rare gold, bold steel, bare
> In both; care, but share care--
> This, by Despair, bred Hangdog dull; by Rage,
> Manwolf, worse; and their packs infest the age.[35]

Hopkins's early poem becomes trivial by an excess of shallow imagery. In the limes

> Ah dip in blood the palmtree pen
> And wordy warrants are flawed through.
> More will wear this wand and then
> The warped world we shall undo.[36]

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33 Poem 122, p. 173.

34 Poem 118, p. 169.

35 "Tom's Garland," p. 108.

36 "Lines for a Picture of St. Dorothea," p. 49.

the martyr's palm becomes a pen, a wand, a hook or magic wand that will undo a twisted world.

Hopkins habitually shifts his gaze from the purely natural order to that of the supernatural. It is then that he produces the profound and masterly images which cause the reader to reflect upon the attributes of the Triune God. Nowhere does he go beyond the range of a thoughtful Catholic, but deals sensitively with the well-known doctrines of the Church. The first figure presents the doctrine of the Trinity:

> She caught the crying of those three,
> The Immortals of the eternal ring,
> The Utterer, Uttered, Uttering,
> And witness in her place would she.[37]

In the words

> Christ is truth.[38]

and in the line

> Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty,
> back to God, beauty's self and beauty's
> giver.[39]

the poet expresses his ideas concerning the Cause responsible for our wonderful and carefully planned universe, Who is identified with truth and beauty.

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37 "Margaret Clitheroe," p. 162.

38 "On the Portrait of Two Beautiful Young People," p. 170.

39 "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo," p. 98.

The last reference is too the third person of the Trinity Who is always thought of as a dove:

> Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
> World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.[40]

In the fifty metaphors thus far considered there was found a certain simplicity, originality, and variety; however, these figures may not be sufficient proof to determine the genius of the poet. Eight metaphorical poems whose source is traced primarily to Scripture and Greek mythology still remain to be studied. It must be admitted here that some of the imagery classified under other headings may have had their source in the poet's reading.

In the poem in which Hopkins compares the Blessed Virgin to the air we breathe, there are found beautiful and inspiring lines

> I say that we are wound
> With mercy round and round
> As if with air: the same
> Is Mary, more than name.
> She, wild web, wondrous robe,
> Mantles the guilty globe.[41]

In this same poem a more striking parallel is drawn between the soul of man and the towns made sacred by the presence of the Man God.

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40 "God's Grandeur," p. 770.

41 "The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air we Breathe," p. 100.

Not flesh tbuut spirit now
And makes, OO marvellous!
New Nazaretthhs in us,
Where she sshhall yet conceive
Him, mornimgg, noon, and eve;
New Bethlemss, and he born
There, evemiing, noon, and morn--
Bethlem or NNazareth,
Men here mayy draw like breath
More Christt and baffle death;
Who, born sioo, comes to be
New self amdi nobler me
In each one: and each one
More makes, when all is done,
Both God's aand Mary's Son.[42]

A third figure

Be thou tthaen, O thou dear
Mother, my atmosphere;
My happier wworld, wherein
To wend and meet no sin;[43]

convinces the reader that Hopkiinns regarded the Blessed Virgin as the greatest and mosit wonderful of God's creatures.

A second poem dedicated tto the Virgin is "Rosa Mystica" in which the poet consiiders Mary as a tree in blossom--the blossom her Son amdd her God. The flower is the poet's favorite--the rose wwhhich when it first appeared was white symbolic of purity amdd later became red when stained with the blood of the RReedeemer.

Is Mary that Rose, then?? Mary, the Tree?
But the Blossom, the Blossom there, who can it be?

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42 Ibid., p. 101.

43 Ibid., p. 103.

Who can her Rose be? It could be but One:
Christ Jesus, our Lord—her God and her Son.
. . . . . .
What was the colour of that Blossom bright?
White to begin with, immaculate white.
But what a wild flush on the flakes of it stood,
When the Rose ran in crimsonings down the Cross-
wood.[44]

The leaves of this flower originally numbered five corresponding to the five wounds, but throughout the years they have increased with the sins of mankind. The fragrance of the rose symbolizes grace. The last stanza summarizes the doctrine of grace and its influence upon the world.

Does it smell sweet, too, in that holy place?
Sweet unto God, and the sweetness is grace;
The breath of it bathes the great heaven above,
In grace that is charity, grace that is love.
To thy breast, to thy rest, to thy glory divine
Draw me by charity, Mother of mine.[45]

In "New Readings," whose source is the Bible, Hopkins uses three well-known parables which he artistically interprets and finds hidden in them new symbols of Christ.

Although the letter said
On thistles that men look not grapes to gather,
I read the story rather
How soldiers platting thorns around CHRIST'S HEAD
Grapes grew and drops of wine were shed.

Though when the sower sowed,
The winged fowls took part, part fell in thorn,
And never turned to corn,

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44 "Rosa Mystica," p. 51.

45 Ibid., p. 52.

Part found no root upon the flinty road--
CHRIST at all hazards fruit hath shewed.

From wastes of rock He brings
Food for five thousand: on the thorns He shed
Grains from His drooping Head;
And would not have that legion of winged things
Bear Him to heaven on ceaseful wings.[46]

This poem and "Barnfloor and Winepress" may have been inspired by the poet's love and admiration of George Herbert. The title "Barnfloor and Winepress" is an expression in the second book of Kings. The theme of this poem is very similar to that of "New Readings" and a few lines suffice to identify the poem as metaphorical.

Thou that on sin's wages starvest,
Behold we have the joy in harvest:
. . . . . .
For us by Calvary's distress
The wine was racked from the press;
Now in our altar-vessels stored
Is the sweet Vintage of our Lord.
. . . . . .
On Easter morn the Tree was forth,
In forty days reached Heaven from earth;[47]

The poet states in a concise manner the doctrines of the Church concerning grace, transubstantiation, the resurrection (the basic truth of the Catholic faith), and the ascension.

In "Easter Communion," figures are found which tell of the penances and sacrifices prescribed by the Church

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46 "New Readings," p. 281.

47 "Barnfloor and Winepress," pp. 38-9.

during the Lenten season as a preparation for the glorious feast of Easter. Though simple and original these images convince the reader of the value of self-denial.

> God shall o'er-brim the measures you have spent
> With oil of gladness; for sackcloth and frieze
> And the ever-fretting shirt of punishment
> Give myrrhy-threaded golden folds of ease.[48]

In "Andromeda" Hopkins employed a complete episode from Greek mythology.

> Now Time's Andromeda on this rock rude,
> With not her either beauty's equal or
> Her injury's, looks off by both horns of shore,
> Her flower, her piece of being, doomed dragon's food.
> Time past she has been attempted and pursued
> By many blows and bane; but now hears roar
> A wilder beast from West than all were, more
> Rife in her wrongs, more lawless, and more lewd.
>
> Her Perseus linger and leave her to her extremes?--
> Pillowy air he treads a time and hangs
> His thoughts on her, forsaken that she seems,
> All while her patience, morselled into pangs,
> Mounts; then to alight disarming, no one dreams,
> With Gorgon's gear and barebill, thongs and fangs.[49]

Andromeda who was rescued from the sea monster by Perseus and later became his wife, symbolizes the Church founded by Christ upon the rock, Peter. The Church in a similar manner is rescued from the persecutions, heresies, schisms, and doctrines of Antichrist by her spouse Christ. The concluding lines of the poem prefigure the second coming

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48 "Easter Communion," p. 35.

49 "Andromeda," p. 89.

of the Redeemer Who will allay fear, overcome Evil and its power, and bring everlasting peace.

The thirty-five stanzas of Hopkins's masterpiece are filled with images developing the theme, "the mastery of God, in which all things work together for good."[50]

> 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.[51]

The two images, hourglass and well, convey the thought that as the physical life of man decomposes, the spiritual life is developed or strengthened by grace and faith.

> Be adored among men,
> God, three-numbered form;
> Wring thy rebel, dogged in den,
> Man's malice, with wrecking and storm.
> Beyond saying sweet, past telling of tongue,
> Thou art lightning and love, I found it, a winter and warm;
> Father and fondler of heart thou hast wrung:
> Hast thy dark descending and most art merciful then.[52]

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50 Robert R. Boyle, "The Thought Structure of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland'," Immortal Diamond (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1949), p. 334.

51 "The Wreck of the Deutschland," p. 56.

52 Ibid., p. 58.

Thus does Hopkins address God as the "thrree-numbered form," as lightning, as love, as a Father, and aas a fondler deserving to be adored by His creatures upoon whom He could inflict punishment.

In another stanza of the poem, Hoppkins recognizes the fact that the nun came from Germany where lived the saintly Gertrude and the noted Luther, whom the poet compares to the lily and beast, respectivelyy.

> She was first of a five and came
> Of a coifed sisterhood.
> (O Deutschland, double a despoerate name!
> O world wide of its goodi!
> But Gertrude, lily, and Luther, are two of a town,
> Christ's lily and beast of the waste wood:
> From life's dawn it is drawn down,
> Abel is Cain's brother and breasts they have sucked the same.)[53]

The five wounds of Christ are compared witth various objects in the lines

> Five! the finding and sake
> And cipher of suffering Christ.
> Mark, the mark is of man's makke
> 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.[54]

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53 Ibid., p. 62.

54 Loc. cit.

Every stanza of this masterly poemm contains one or more metaphorical lines but a quotation ffrom each would tend to monotony; hence, the last two staamzas rich with metaphors will furnish an appropriate coomclusion to the study of this poem.

> Now burn, new born to thee world,
> Doubled-natured name,
> The heaven-flung, heart-fleshed, maiden-furled
> Miracle-in-Mary-of-flame,,
> Mid-numbered He in three of the thunder-throne!
> Not a dooms-day dazzle in his coomming nor dark as he came;
> Kind, but royally reclaimingg his own;
> A released shower, let flash to thee shire, not a lightning of fire hard-hurled.[55]

Such was Hopkins's conception of Christ WWho made possible the salvation of all men through grace anad the Church. The climax is the poet's desire to have tthe true Church re-established on English soil and the Etaernal King reigning in the heart of every Englishman.

> Dame, at our door
> Drowned, and among our shhoals,
> Remember us in the roads, tthe heaven-haven of the Reward:
> Our King back, oh, upon EEnglish souls!
> Let him easter in us, be a dayspring to the dimness of us, be a crimson-cresseted east,
> More brightening her, rare-dear Britain, as his reign rolls,
> Pride, rose, prince, hero off us, high-priest,

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55 Ibid., p. 66.

Our hearts' charity's hearth's firee, our thoughts' chivalry's throng's Lord.[56]

The last poem is most unusual becaause in it the poet makes use of his favorite epithet "ddappled" and reveled in variety and multiplicity. Thee entire poem is metaphorical and "pied beauty" is stated in terms of the spotted fins of trout, bright reddish broown chestnuts, and the colorful wings of the finch.

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.[57]

The beauty of the landscape is made possibble by the artistic arrangement of the fields, the pasturees, and the village. Hopkins liked the forms and activitties of the world to be as varied as the Creator chose to maake them. He was aware that Nature was ever ready to fulfilll its purpose of making God known to man.

Hopkins's metaphors are abundant, uusually brief, striking, effective, original, and generallly concrete. The richness of his figures is not carefullly built up;

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56 Ibid., p. 67.

57 "Pied Beauty," p. 74.

it is handled rather recklessly as if thes poet could not find figures rich and rapid enough to expdress his many and varied ideas. The metaphors found in his religious poems furnish the poet with an excellent means for teaching Catholic doctrine, despite the fact that he was considered a poor preacher.

The study of the sources from which the metaphors were drawn and the conclusions reached reggarding them verify the work of previous chapters. Thee sources for all the figures can be summarized under three heads--Nature, Man, and God.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim in this study was to acquiire a better knowledge of a great poet who was frequently thought of as obscure, eccentric, and difficult to undeerstand. A careful examination of Hopkins's imagery and its source has revealed in some degree his character and personality. His imagery which was abundant, rich, varried, and original found its source in Nature, Man, and God. One of the poet's chief interests was Nature in all of its aspects--the firmament, the elements, the differennt animals, birds, trees, flowers, even the precious metals and minerals hidden beneath the earth's surface. This intense interest placed him in close relationship with thee great Romantic poets; however, he was not indoctrinated with pantheistic ideas but with Christian principles whichh led him to see the Creator reflected in every object of nature.

Hopkins's idea of <u>inscape</u> and <u>instress</u>, which was closely connected with Scotus's theory of individuation, justified his reveling in Nature and alsoo formed the basis for his principle of beauty.

Man and his actions were another great source of his similes, personifications, and metaphhcors. Each individual was recognized by its distinctive beauuty, as a being

charged with love--charged with God. In his intercourse with men, the poet respected their dignity and goodness, and treated them with Christian charity. Removed as he was from the world, he could have retreated into a spiritual sanctuary and forgotten about mankind; but instead, he mingled with men as a teacher, priest, and friend who was interested in their welfare and sympathetic with their problems.

After years of intimate contact with God through prayer and contemplation, Hopkins came to a definite realization that no creature could acquire the perfections of his Maker. The similes and personifications do not have God as a source, because the poet recognized the fact that no created object or abstraction was comparable to God; and that no inanimate or animate object could be endowed with divine attributes. However, some of the richest, most original, and masterly metaphors found their source in God.

As seen through his figures of speech, Hopkins was a man with varied interests--intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, and spiritual. His poetic accomplishments prove that he was a great lover of books; especially the Bible, Church history, classical literature and mythology, and English literature. He was an enthusiastic student

of the works of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, and Keats.

As a poet, Hopkins was creative, devoid of echo or imitation. His originality or innovations in diction and imagery were indispensable characteristics of his style. Occasionally he was compared with Cynewulf and Caedmon, for like them he was fired with Christian ideals; with Shakespeare because of his intensive interest in the English language as a living thing; and with the Romantic poets inasmuch as he was a great lover of Nature.

The Jesuit priest realized that his poetic talent need not be sacrificed, but that it should be used, as it was used, for the glory of God. His intense meditation and contemplation induced by the Spiritual Exercises influenced his poetic imagination. Many of Hopkins's mature poems are illustrations of the Jesuit ideal and personal commentaries on certain passages in the Ignatian rule. His religious poems are veritable instructions on spiritual matters and Catholic doctrine. His spontaneous poetic utterances made him, despite his comparative failure as a preacher, a powerful Christian evangelist.

Hopkins's influence as a poet on other generations is well expressed in the statement:

> In brilliantly original verse he brought a new manner to the old tradition. Almost unknown

> in his day, neglected by practically all his contemporaries, Hopkins influenced another generation by the richness of his style, the splendor of his vocabulary, and his way of packing every phrase with far-reaching allusions.[1]

The portrait produced is that of a poetic genius, a priest-poet who by his poetry attempted to enter into direct communication with his Maker, and partake of the knowledge denied to so many others.

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1 Louis Untermeyer, Modern British Poetry (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942), p. 12.

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SIMILES

SOURCES	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Nature		
The firmament	5	5
The elements	15	18
Domestic animals	5	5
Birds	9	10
Insects	2	2
Trees	5	5
Flowers	2	2
Shrubs	1	1
Fruit	1	1
Minerals and gems	13	14
Color	1	1
Man		
The body	6	6
Objects used by him	15	18
Relationships	4	4
Abstractions	4	4
Books	3	3
Totals	91	100

PERSONIFICATIONS

SOURCES	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Nature		
The firmament	11	13
The elements	23	26
Flowers	3	4
Seasons and months	15	17
Man		
The body	7	8
Objects used by him	2	3
Abstractions	25	29
Totals	86	100

METAPHORS

SOURCES	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Nature		
The elements	6	9
Birds	3	5
Flowers	4	6
Minerals and gems	2	3
Color	3	5
Man		
The body	4	6
Objects used by him	15	23
Relationships	2	3
Abstractions	6	9
God		
The supernatural	20	31
Totals	65	100