1960

The Influence of Music on the Life of Gerard Manley Hopkins

John Jerome Lackamp
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/1618

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © 1960 John Jerome Lackamp
THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC ON THE LIFE OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

by

John Jerome Lackamp, S.J.

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

June

1960
John Jerome Lackamp, S.J., was born in Cleveland, Ohio, March 27, 1935. He received his elementary school education at St. Jerome's School in Cleveland. In June, 1953, he was graduated from St. Ignatius High School in Cleveland.

In August, 1953, he entered the Society of Jesus at Milford, Ohio, where he spent the next four years. In the Fall of 1957 he began his three year course in Philosophy at West Baden College, West Baden, Indiana, and enrolled in Loyola University where he took his Bachelor of Arts degree the following June.

He began his work in the graduate school of Loyola University in the Summer of 1958.
Music of Hopkins usually treated in footnotes—Purpose of present study is revelation of Hopkins' personality—Understand Hopkins as artist rather than as poet—Emphasis of thesis is on the man not the music—No treatment of influence of music on form of poetry—Importance which Hopkins placed on music—Personality of artist is prime concern.

Musical training in early years—Passivity of interest in music during college days—Music in his theories of aesthetics—Bridges' interest in Hopkins' musical ventures—Dixon's interest in Hopkins' music—Music in early Jesuit years—1879 revives lagging interest—Growth of interest in composition—Musical sounds of nature—Music and Greek poetry—Great enthusiasm in last years.

Analogy to studies of Hopkins' favorite poets—Admiration for Handel—Personal preference for Weber—Favorite composer is Henry Purcell—Poem on Purcell—Hopkins' music and Purcell's music—General liking of pre-classical period of music—Little to say about classical composers—Opinions on modern composers—Conclusion—Tastes of Hopkins varied because geniuses varied.

Books on music theory which Hopkins read—Novel theories of music—Review of songs of Hopkins—Poems of Hopkins set to music—Detailed analysis of three songs—Critics of Hopkins' day—Critics of present day—Conclusion.
v. MUSIC IN THE POEMS OF HOPKINS: CONCLUSION

Hopkins' desire to be known as Jesuit-artist--Music became subjects for poems--Examples from 33 poems showing music in poems--Images with nature sounds--Images with sounds made by instruments--Hopkins' goals as Jesuit--Hopkins' goals as artist--Blend of both--Restatement of purpose of thesis--Conclusion.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX I: BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE

APPENDIX II: EXAMPLES OF THE MUSIC OF HOPKINS
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Before leaving Stonyhurst I began some music, Gregorian, in the natural scale of A, to Collins' Ode to Evening. Quickened by the heavenly beauty of that poem I groped in my soul's very viscera for the tune and thrummed the sweetest and most secret outgut of the mind. What came out was very strange and wild and (I thought) very good. Here I began to harmonise it, and the effect of the harmony well in keeping upon that strange mode . . . was so delightful that it seems to me (and I think you would find the same) as near a new world of musical enjoyment as in this old world we could hope to be . . . . It is meant for a solo and a double choir singing in unison, the organ or a string band bearing all the harmony. Something like a glee, the third returning to the first.

It does not come as a surprise to find that the author of the above quotation has achieved an almost universal recognition and applause. What does come as a surprise is the fact that the fame of the author is in no way dependent upon the music which he wrote. Biographers and literary critics, it is true, mention the musical interests of this author; but the poetry which he wrote has so captivated their interests, that they relegate the position of the musical studies of the poet to footnotes or appendices. It is the intention of the present thesis to bring the music of Gerard Manley Hopkins out of the scholarly doldrums of footnotes and appendices into a somewhat full biographical treatment.

The importance of such a treatment can be condensed to the single word "personality." Every serious student of Hopkins the poet must eventually become interested in the personality of Hopkins in order to determine what it was that caused him to write such crabbed, dynamic, and at times, magnificent poetry. To this purpose studies have been written to uncover the influence, good or bad, of Hopkins' Jesuit vocation. Others have sought to find the influence which Pater and Jowett, Dixon, and especially Bridges had upon him. It is the intention of the present study to examine Hopkins' love for, and experiments with music in order to reveal, if possible, another facet of the personality of the poet. In the opinion of the present writer, too little has been done in the field of Hopkins scholarship which pertains specifically and directly to Hopkins' musical study. The bibliography at the end of this thesis will testify to the validity of his opinion.

The importance of the study of Hopkins' musical interests, in addition to revealing another facet of his personality, can easily be seen in the fact that his musical studies manifested clearly his ultimate goal of artistry. His desire to excel in art did not stop with the bounds of poetry, but spilled over into the realms of music and painting. To understand Hopkins as an "artist," is a much more realistic picture than to understand him merely as a "poet"; "artist" conveys the generic notion which is specified by the terms, "poet," "musician," and "painter." Hopkins was all three of these. It is, therefore, the intention of the present thesis to examine Hopkins' artistry in the field of music -- his goals, his ideals, his achievements.

It is to be noted from the beginning that the emphasis of the thesis is on Hopkins, not so much as poet, but as gifted man. The goal is an analysis of
the man through his music. Therefore technical analyses of his music will be kept to a minimum. And what might strike the reader of the thesis as surprising, there will be little if any study of the influence of the music of Hopkins on his poetry. This is not to deny that there was any such influence; unquestionably there was, and it was probably great. But to attempt to treat of Hopkins' music from a biographical viewpoint and to examine the influence of the music on the poetry would be to attempt too vast a subject for adequate treatment of either. The present writer is restricting his study to the first of these two possibilities.

It is important when reading the works of Hopkins to remember his musical interests. For example, when we come to the sonnet entitled "Henry Purcell," we are curious to know why Hopkins chose this seventeenth-century composer for the subject of a poem at once so personal and so intense. The same may be said for his "On a Piece of Music"—why music and not poetry for one of his clearest statements on the necessity of artists being true to their art? A biographical study of Hopkins' interest in music will furnish the answers to these questions. How the music influenced the matter of his poems (the subjects) and how it influenced the form of his poems (the rhythms, the choice of words, the rhymes) are two entirely different questions. The present thesis will discuss the first only, and that briefly.

Let us begin our study by outlining the importance which Hopkins himself put upon music. This outline will be filled in and details will be added as

---

2 Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, ed. W. H. Gardner, 3rd ed. (New York, 1948), #45. [Future references will be marked Poems.]

3 Poems, #110.
the thesis progresses, but some fundamental notions are necessary and must be kept in mind while reading the rest of this study.

First of all, Hopkins in no way subordinated his music to his poetry. In the hundreds of times he speaks of music in his letters and notebooks, he nowhere refers to his music as a tool to better poetry, as a stepping-stone which will aid him in his poetic art. To him his music was quite a different thing from his poetry—when he was composing he was not writing poems nor was he practising music in order to write better, more vivid poems. The two arts, for Hopkins, were simply different. In his composing he wished to keep them different. As has been said, the music of Hopkins most likely did have important influence on his poems; but this relationship was not intentional on his part.

As will be seen at greater length in Chapter Two, Hopkins' love for music and his composing increased in intensity and volume as he grew older. The remarkable thing to be noticed is that as his love for music grew and his curiosity to learn as much as he could about the theories of music grew, his love and curiosity for poetry seemed to dwindle. At the beginning of 1888 Hopkins wrote to Bridges, "All impulse fails me: I can give myself no sufficient reason for going on. Nothing comes: I am a eunuch— but it is for the kingdom of heaven's sake." And again in the same letter: "It is now years that I have had no inspiration of longer jet than makes a sonnet, except only in that fortnight in Wales: it is what, far more than direct want of time, I find most

*Letters, I, p. 270. January 12, 1888. Also see Poems #74:

"Birds build—but not I build; no but strain

Time's eunuch, and not breed one work
that wakes."
against poetry and production in the life I lead." 5 Yet in the same letter he writes: "... [t]he tunes I make are very apt to fall into fugues and canons, the second strain being easy counterpoint to the first or to its fugal answer. E.g. my Crocus, which you once expressed an admiration for, makes a canon with itself at the octave two bars off and, as far as I have found, at one bar off too. This is a splendid opening for choral treatment. And I have a fine fugue on hand to 'Orpheus with his lute'; but I shall not hurry with it, but keep the counterpoint correct." 6

As we read through the 1888-1889 letters from Hopkins to Bridges, we find fewer and fewer references to Hopkins' poems, and those we do find are frequently discouraging and disparaging: "... I began an Epithalamion on my brother's wedding; it had some bright lines, but I could not get it done. That is worse." 7 But he goes on to say that he has had one success. "Of this I meekly bray and mildly crow. In counterpoint. I wrote a complicated canon: it was the air to Coventry Patmore's 'The crocus while the days are dark' and I made it serve as counterpoint exercise (they say canon is the best), keeping all rules as strictly as such a composition allows ... . So that I see a world of canon and fugue before me ... . You said nothing would come: I hope you may have been wrong." 8 The song had been given a good mark by a critic and teacher of music, Sir Robert Stewart, and at that Hopkins was justifiably

5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., pp. 270-271.
7 Ibid., p. 277. May 25, 1888.
8 Ibid., pp. 277-278.
As may be seen from these quotations, Hopkins was certainly interested in his musical ventures. To examine in detail the growth of this interest will be the burden of the following chapter. But it must be remembered that the subject of the second and following chapters is Hopkins and not his music qua music. The personality of the artist is the primary concern.

In the third chapter we will discuss Hopkins' ideals in the ranks of musicians — whom did he particularly like and why. In the fourth chapter we will examine Hopkins' personal accomplishments in music and various critics' views of these accomplishments. In the fifth and final chapter we will summarize our findings and conclude.

By way of challenge, the present writer offers to the reader the following quotation to be kept in mind as he reads of Hopkins' growth in music. Is it possible that Hopkins would have become a "Jesuit Wagner" had he continued along the course he was setting out for himself at the end of his life? "Like Pater, he came to understand that all art strives towards the conditions of music. Like Wagner, he eventually subordinated poetical to musical composition. His death interrupted a process of artistic self-development from the neo-Keatsian tonalities of his early poems, through the half-musical sprung rhythm period, towards that complete fusion of form and substance, of matter and manner, attainable only in pure music." 10

---

9 Ibid., p. 277.

CHAPTER II

A CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY OF HOPKINS' INTEREST IN MUSIC

Gerard Manley Hopkins did not become a poet or a musician on the day he entered Balliol or the day he took up his pen to write "The Wreck of the Deutschland." His artistic career as well as his priestly vocation were both present germinally in the young Gerard, "whose native temperament and character showed themselves early in his boyhood."1 It is important to consider Hopkins' early training in music before turning to his college and later Jesuit writings.

"To begin with, he was so fortunate as to be born into a family which encouraged his precocious and artistically sensitive disposition. His was a family in which no ordinary son would be expected, for his father had himself published a volume of poems; uncles on both sides of his family were painters; his brothers, Arthur and Everard, were to become artists; one sister did facile sketches, another wrote competent verses, and still another was to help him all his life with his music."2

Hopkins' family was by no means a part of England's highest class of society; but the family did possess that amount of comfort which made the pursuit of fine art possible and desirable. Gerard's father, Manley Hopkins, was Con-

2Ibid.
Manley wanted his children brought up with the arts, and he wanted this training begun at an early age. "When Gerard was but five or six years old, his character and education were being formed at home in a real, though unprofessional, way. A sister of his father was living with the family then, and being both a musician and a portrait painter, she found in Gerard an unusually promising pupil and accordingly coached the small boy in music and drawing. His correct ear and clear, sweet voice made him an easy and graceful master of the traditional English, Jacobean, and Irish airs."  

The present writer has been unable to discover which, if any, instruments Hopkins studied as a boy; but it is certain that by college days Hopkins had lost any skill which he might previously have had. The germ of musical interest had been planted in early years; it was not to flower until many years later.

Hopkins' interest in music during his college and early Jesuit years might be epitomized by the word "passivity." As a student of Greek and English

---

3. The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins, ed. Humphrey House and Graham Storey, "Notes to Early Diaries" (London, 1959), p. 331. [Future references to this edition, if they refer to Hopkins' text, will be marked Journals. References to notes or appendices will be so specified.]

literature and as an admirer of Walter Pater, Hopkins was intensely interested in art -- painting, literature and music. In painting and in literature he attempted to try his hand at producing works which fit in with the theories of creation which Pater and Jowett were teaching. This was not so with music. The early diaries of Hopkins which date from 1863 to 1865 contain numerous references to music, but all of them refer either to an analysis of beauty in music or attendance at various concerts.

In early September 1864, Hopkins jotted notes in his diary which he intended to expand into a letter to Baillie, his fellow student: "To use that, which poetasters, and indeed almost everyone else, can do, is no more necessarily to be uttering poetry than striking the keys of the piano is playing a tune. Only when the tune is played it is on the keys . . . . There is seemingly much Parnassian music. Same thing no doubt exists in painting." The analogy between music and poetry is interesting for two reasons: it shows his interest in the interrelationship between the arts and it shows that he was interested in uncovering the very essence of poetry: it does not consist in mere theorizing.


In his essay written for the Master of Balliol entitled "On the Signs of

---

5 Journals, p. 38.
6 Ibid., p. 44.
Health and Decay in the Arts," Hopkins considers an element of music which he was to reconsider much later in his life. Speaking of the balance between opposites which "deliberate" beauty must have, he says:

Now though this golden mean must be reached by intuition, and that success in doing so is the production of beauty and is the power of genius, it is not the less true that science is or might be concerned in it as well: sufficient proof of this may be had from the consideration of two provinces of Art in which proportion has more or less a scientific ground and character. These are music and architecture. Science need not interfere with genius; it does not interfere with the fame of the great harmonists, nor with that of the great proportionalist architects of Greece. It is impossible to apply science so exact to the arts of painting and still less of poetry as we do to those of music and architecture, but some scientific basis of aesthetic criticism is absolutely needed; criticism cannot advance far without it; and at the beginning of any science of aesthetics must stand the analysis of the nature of Beauty.

Having found proportion to be the "source or the seat of Beauty," he goes on to distinguish two types, proportion "by interval or by continuance. Both seem really to be expressions of proportion, though it is generally associated with the former, to our ideas. The division then is of abrupt and gradual, of parallelistic and continuous, of intervallary and chromatic, of quantitative and qualitative beauty. The beauty of an infinite curve is chromatic, of a system of curves parallelistic; of deepening colour or of a passing from one colour into another chromatic, of a collocation of colours intervallary; of the change of note on the string of a violin or in a strain of wind chromatic, of that on the keys of a piano intervallary." 8

Hopkins was grounding himself in a firm intellectual system of aesthetics:

7 Ibid., p. 75
8 Ibid., p. 76.
in it music was as important as poetry. In his well-known *On the Origin of Beauty: A Platonic Dialogue*, Hopkins makes the distinction between "chromatic" and "diatonic" beauty. "The diatonic scale, you know, leaves out, the chromatic puts in, the half-notes. Of course in Music the chromatic scale is not truly chromatic; it is only nearer to a true chromatic scale than the diatonic is: but that you will understand. Now therefore we may arrange under these two heads many artificial forms, especially, as we are particularly on that subject, poetical forms, which belong to either of them: for I think you will see that the division is not in truth unimportant, when we have made this distribution." 9 He goes on to develop the distinction -- a distinction grounded in his knowledge and appreciation of music.

All the influences which helped to mold the mind of the young artist Hopkins during his college days are important, but outside the scope of this thesis. One name, however, must be mentioned -- the name of Walter Pater. Pater, Hopkins' tutor, was also his friend and continued so throughout Hopkins' Jesuit life. In 1879 Hopkins wrote to his mother: "I went yesterday to dine with the Paters." 10 This was two years after his ordination to the priesthood. Pater's influence on Hopkins' music is nowhere stated explicitly in Hopkins' writings, but its range can be judged from the essays which Hopkins wrote for Pater on the nature of art and the essence of beauty. Music for the young student played an important role in founding an appreciation for fine art as it

---

did for his tutor: "In the abstractionist academic world, Pater boldly defended the concrete -- of the vital arts and music of perception, of the unique experience."\textsuperscript{11} For Pater "all art strives towards the conditions of music."\textsuperscript{12} For Hopkins, as we shall see, such an understanding did not come until many years later.

Other references to music in the early diaries of Hopkins concern his attendance at various concerts: "Home and then to Henry Leslie's concert, where Sims Reeves sang Adelaida and Halle played the Pathetic Sonata."\textsuperscript{13} And on June 20, 1868: "To Madame Leupold's concert, where Madle. Mela sang in a tenor and a girl played the violin and another, Madle. Vogt, the fingerglasses (Mattlephone), and certainly that instrument is chromatically more perfect than the violin even and of course the tone what one knows and magical. But 'it is the sport' to watch her fingers flying, and at the distance the articulations vanishing, they wave like flakes or fins or leaves of white. Madame Leupold played four short pieces of Schumann."\textsuperscript{14}

Had Hopkins never risen from the level of passive interest in music this thesis would be completed and would require only more and more examples to establish his interest in beauty through music. But Hopkins did not stop at this level: his goal of artistry bore him


\textsuperscript{12}Whitehall, p. 54.

\textsuperscript{13}Journals, p. 166.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., pp. 167-168.
Not free in this because
His powers seemed free to play:
He swept what scope he
To sweep and must obey.

Before beginning to follow Hopkins as he slowly makes his way through the strange "new kingdom" of music, the present writer would like to insert a note about his sources. The letters of Hopkins to Bridges and those to Canon Dixon are the primary sources from which the rest of this thesis has been drawn. Why the letters of Hopkins to Bridges and Dixon and not those to his family or to his friend Baillie or to Coventry Patmore? The answer is to be found when we consider Bridges' and Dixon's attitudes towards music and towards Hopkins' attempts at music.

Bridges was himself a musician. He was a pianist and a composer. In 1866 Hopkins wrote to him: "I have kept on forgetting to ask you this, to copy out yr. air (harmonised I mean of course) for Johnson's verses." In 1874 he wrote: "One of my sisters, who has become musical beyond the common, urged me to find her the music you wrote for 'O earlier shall the roses blow': I hunted for it twice without finding it but I cannot have lost it. I never was quite reconciled to the freak of leaving off away from the keynote and have put imaginary endings to it several times." And in 1879 Hopkins, with a delightful twist, criticizes Bridges' musical attempts: "I wish you would send me all the

---

15 Poems, #110.
16 The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon, ed. Claude Collee Abbott (London, 1924), p. 109, June 25, 1883. [Future references to this edition will be marked Letters II.]
17 Letters, I, pp. 13-14. October 10, 1866. [The spelling in this and in all quotations from Hopkins, is the poet's own.]
music you have to try. I wd. return it. I do not yet the [sic] present piece nor comment on it, as I have not had an opportunity of hearing it. I feel sure you have a genius in music -- on the strength of the only piece I know 'O earlier': it is an inspiration of melody, but somewhat 'sicklied o'er', as indeed the words are."19 Again referring to Bridges compositions Hopkins writes: "I sent her [Gerard's musician-sister, Grace] your hymn. I mentioned it and she begged to see it. She said it was not original-sounding but it was very sweet: she wd. not be pleased if she knew I repeated her criticism. If I could have found her the music to 'O earlier shall the rose buds blow' she would have thought it original-sounding as well as sweet. Yet it was youthful too. I return the hymn."20

In writing to Bridges Hopkins knew that he would have to do no explaining or apologizing for his musical compositions, for Bridges himself knew the triumph which comes to one who tries composition and, in his own mind at least, succeeds. Bridges was a man with whom Hopkins could use technical vocabulary -- the language of music theory -- and not be afraid that he was being misunderstood. To the end of his life he confided in Bridges in all of his musical ventures, and Bridges responded with sympathy. As tokens of his friendship, Bridges would send manuscripts of Hopkins favorite composer Purcell to Gerard, and there are repeated expressions of gratitude in Hopkins' letters for the Purcells which he regrets having kept so long.21

20 Ibid., p. 98. October 22, 1879.
21 Ibid., p. 182. June 28, 1883. Also see Letters I, pp. 34, 171, 189, 219, and 244.
But most importantly, Bridges encouraged Hopkins in his music. At times when Hopkins needed to be told that his work was not in vain, Bridges, with an artist's insight into another artist's personality, gave Hopkins the stimulation he looked for. Bridges did not merely write flattering words of praise. He took steps to make sure that Hopkins was not wasting his time on music. Bridges was personally acquainted with professors of music and with critics of music. Whenever Gerard would send him a new composition, Bridges would in turn send it on to one of the professionals for comment and criticism. This meant a great deal to Hopkins, for it meant that he was grounding himself in the traditional schools of the classical composers. The fact that he ultimately came to reject the classical school could not be based in his lack of understanding of its principles. 22

Hopkins did not begin to correspond with Canon Richard Watson Dixon until the year 1878, the year after his ordination to the priesthood. But the correspondence which lasted until 1889, the year of Hopkins' death, meant a great deal to both poets. "The correspondence between the two poets starts, on a very different footing from that between Hopkins and Bridges, with a letter of admiration from a young priest of 33 to a country vicar of 45 who had for a little while been his schoolmaster; an unexpected letter so full of delicate understanding of his neglected verses that the older man, 'shaken to the very centre', opened like a flower to quickening praise that must have seemed like an act of God, coming as it did at a time of life when encouragement was doubly

---

22 The statements in this section on Bridges and those in the next section on Dixon will be verified later in the chapter by references to Hopkins' letters.
precious." As he read over Dixon's poems, Hopkins began to conceive tunes for them — tunes which must be wedded to the words of the simple but touching poems. "I do not think anywhere two stanzas so crowded with the pathos of nature and landscape could be found (except perhaps there are some in Wordsworth) as the little song of the Feathers of the Willow: a tune to it came to me quite naturally."

Dixon himself was not a composer as was Bridges. He wrote to Hopkins: "I shall look to hear the airs to which you have tuned the two you speak of. I can only wonder: for the faculty of composing a musical air is one that I am entirely destitute of." But he did appreciate Hopkins' music: "The Song seems to me singularly beautiful & proper to the words: which words are too much honoured in being wedded to such music. I have the air running in my head. My daughters have been trying it many times over, and are charmed with it. I am making a copy of it for one of them, who is away since it came." Words such as these inspired Hopkins to go on with renewed vigor. In the light of Dixon's encouraging and enthusiastic letters it is not surprising that the finest song of Hopkins' which has come down to us is a setting for one of Dixon's poems, "Fallen Rain."

September of 1867 brought Hopkins to Dr. Newman's Oratory. It also brought him into his period of active musical interests. On September 30 he

---

23 Letters II, p. xvi.
24 Ibid., p. 3. June 4, 1870.
wrote: "Today I have been hearing a quartet on violins and violincello by the music master, one of my p.p.s, one of my fifth form boys, and Dr. Newman."27 To Bridges he wrote on November 1; "I have taken to playing football but got lamed to some degree by a kick on the ankle [sic]. I have also begun the violin and if you will write a trio or quartet I will some day take the first or second part in it."28 The following February he writes to Baillie: "I have begun learning the violin: I am glad I have."29 It is instructive to note that Hopkins had not returned to the Oratory after Christmas of 1867. His violin studies did not cease after he left his "goad" Dr. Newman.

In September of 1868, (called by Dr. Pick with some exaggeration the "really only one date in the life of Gerard Manley Hopkins that has any great significance,"30) Hopkins put an end to his short-lived violin career by entering the Jesuit novitiate at Roehampton.31 In Hopkins' time, as well as today, musical studies in the novitiate are practically non-existent. The emphasis for the first two years of a Jesuit's life is on the spiritual foundation so necessary for a member of "Christ's Company."32 All secular pursuits such as literature or science, not to mention art, are generally suppressed in order to bring into full focus the ascetical life of the aspirant Jesuit. Contacts with

27 Letters III, p. 44.
28 Letters I, p. 18.
30 Pick, p. 1.
31 The reader of the thesis is encouraged to confer the biographical outline to be found as Appendix I of the present study. Such references will help to keep isolated dates in context of Hopkins' many and varied occupations.
friends by letters are generally frowned upon and so it does not come as much of a shock to realize that we have few letters from Hopkins during these first two years in the Society of Jesus. The only reference to music written during this period of novitiate was written to his mother: "... on Holy Innocents' day, which was a holiday with us, ... we had a very stirring old glee sung called 'Who's the fool now? It is in Chappel and is worth learning." At least we can say that Hopkins had not lost his interest.

Hopkins pronounced his first vows in the Society of Jesus in September of 1870 and then moved to St. Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst, for three years of philosophical studies. During his second year of philosophy Hopkins wrote to Baillie: "Talking of music reminds me that I am teaching myself to play the piano -- under difficulties, so that my progress is slow." It is the first of the many references to his struggling efforts at mastering the piano.

On March 2, 1873, Hopkins wrote to his mother: "I have composed a second part to the litany I made and shall send it to Grace to be set presently." If this is a reference to a musical setting and not to a translation into English of the Latin litany of Loretto, it is the first such reference in his writings. Surprisingly enough it has been generally ignored by those who have written on Hopkins' music. Invariably the date given for the beginning of his

33 Hopkins wrote two letters to Bridges and six to his mother during this period. There is also one letter to Baillie. There may, of course, have been more, but we have only these.


36 Ibid., p. 122.
period of musical compositions is 1880.\footnote{Cf. W. H. Gardner, *Gerard Manley Hopkins*, (London, 1948-49) II, 379.} Granted, the mention of his litany setting is the only one before the "major period"; but it would manifest that he was interested in writing music years before he had the opportunity and necessary theoretical knowledge of music's intricate ways.

From Manresa House, Roehampton, in January of 1874, Hopkins wrote to Bridges: "I myself am learning the piano now, self-taught alas! not for execution's sake, but to be independent of others and learn something about music."\footnote{Letters, I, p. 30. January 22, 1874.} But his efforts were to be frustrated again; for after he had arrived at St. Beuno's in Wales where he was to take up his studies in theology, we find him writing to his mother: "I fear my music has come to an end. I am very sorry, though practising (and I made singularly little way: I think I must be musically deficient somewhere) was a burden and here especially so, with a grunting harmonium that lived in the sacristy."\footnote{Letters III, p. 127. September 20, 1874.} And in June of 1875: "I want to hear Grace's sonata, but her sending it just now would be of no use, as it cd. not be played except on a harmonium."\footnote{Ibid., p. 134. June 10, 1875.}

Evidently Hopkins' discouragement was quite complete: he simply could not play an instrument -- he had neither the time nor the courage needed for a man of thirty-one years of age to sit down and practice scales for hours at a time.

Not until June 4, 1878, do we find another reference to music in Hopkins'
letters. But what he says to Canon Dixon in his first letter to him leads us to believe that music had not died in the life of the Jesuit: "... a tune to it [Dixon's "Feathers of the Willow"] came to me quite naturally."41

More will be seen of Hopkins' deep admiration for the seventeenth-century composer Henry Purcell. But it is of interest to note in this chronological survey of Hopkins' musical growth that during this period of silence about music Hopkins must have heard and penetrated to the very soul of Purcell's music. It is inconceivable that a poet would write so earnest and personal a poem together with the following dedication if he actually did not know the musician well through performances of his music: "The poet wishes well to the divine genius of Purcell and praises him that, whereas other musicians have given utterance to the moods of man's mind, he has, beyond that, uttered in notes the very make and species of man as created both in him and in all men generally."42

It is as if writing the Purcell sonnet opened the gates of Hopkins' musical sensitivity again. It is as if Purcell's example inspired him to try again to utter "in notes the very make and species of man." This time Hopkins did not fail.

On October 8, 1879, Hopkins asked Bridges: "Did you like the song, 'The dappled dieaway Cheek'?"43 This was music which Gerard had written for his own poem "Morning Midday and Evening Sacrifice."44 The music has not come down to us.

41 Letters II, p. 3.
42 Poems, p. 45.
43 Letters I, p. 92.
44 Poems, p. 48.
By March 2, 1880, Hopkins was writing to his mother: "Tell Grace I am really getting on with the two pieces of music set to Bridges' spring Odes and they will be ready in a day or two. They are not the best, but they are the most finished and ambitious things yet." And by June of 1880 he was boasting to Bridges: "... I have invented a new style, something standing to ordinary music as sprung rhythm to common rhythm; it employs quarter tones. I am trying to set an air in it to the sonnet 'Summer ends now.'" In October of 1880 he wrote to tell Bridges how much he liked one of Bridges' latest poems: "The lyric 'Thou didst delight' is, like others before it, a gem. I have music to this which I hope you will like, a little however resembling the quaint old air of 'As once through Cupid's Garden.' I shall send it when I can snatch time and when a difficult minor passage for the third stanza is satisfactory. But more by token, I have got me Stainer's Primer of Harmony and shall perhaps be able to do my own accompaniments by and by." We may ask the reason for Hopkins' strange enthusiasm for an art form which was in no way as familiar to him as poetry, nor as much practised as his sketching. The answer is given to us in a letter to Bridges dated April 3, 1881: "At Hampstead I did some dozen lines or less. Every impulse and spring

45 Letters III, pp. 156-57.
48 Little mention has been made in this thesis about Hopkins' talent for sketching. To the knowledge of the present writer nothing has been written on this subject, but Hopkins' "Ruskinese" sketches have been reproduced between pages 456 and 457 of Journals.
of art seems to have died in me, except for music, and that I pursue under almost an impossibility of getting on. Nevertheless I still put down my pieces, for the airs seem worth it; they seem to me to have something in them which other modern music has not got. I have now also one little piece harmonized: it is only two part counterpoint at present, but it sounds impressive and is a vast improvement on the naked air. If I could only finish the harmony to 'Thou didst delight mine eyes' I hope you would like it.\(^49\) He is even more explicit in his next letter to Bridges: "And in general I have become very musical of late, but graviter invita Minerva; rather I am afraid it may be Almighty God who is unwilling: for if I could conscientiously spend even a little time every day on it I could make great progress -- not in execution: that is past praying for -- but in composition and understanding. Who is the Muse of music by itself? Well, she is the only Muse that does not stifle in this horrible place.\(^50\)

As has been mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, Hopkins was not primarily a poet; but, after his priesthood which came before everything else in his life, he was an artist. If his dismal surroundings in Liverpool could not produce the "wet and wildness" which he needed for poetic inspiration, he could still produce works of art which needed only the poems of his friends to call into his mind tunes which would fit their words. He did not flatter himself that his music was particularly good, but he did feel that he must do some creative work even in a place as depressing as Liverpool. Music was the only art left to him. "I am sometimes surprised at myself how slow and laborious a

\(^{49}\)Letters I, p. 124.

\(^{50}\)Ibid., p. 126. April 27, 1881.
thing verse is to me when musical composition comes so easily, for I can make tunes almost at all times and places and could harmonize them as easily if only I could play or could read music at sight . . . . I do not, in my mind's ear, as a musician would do, hear the chords, but I have an instinct of what will do and verify by rule and reckoning the air which I do hear: this suggests itself and springs from the leading air which is to be accompanied."51

By October, 1881, Hopkins had returned to Roehampton for his year of tertianship which he had looked forward to with some eagerness: "But now I feel that I need the noviceship very much and shall be every way better off when I have been made more spiritual minded. There, I mean at Roehampton, I am pretty well resolved, I will altogether give over composition for the ten months, that I may vacare Deo as in my noviceship proper."52 By way of summary of his musical accomplishments he writes to Dixon: "As for my music, there are four tunes—(1) to 'the Feathers of the Willow' . . . . (2) to Sky that rollest ever; my sister is harmonising this; she says she is doing her very best and as she likes it best of all the airs of mine she has seen it is likely she will make a good thing of it; and she is to send it straight to you . . . . (3) to the Rainbow; this is so very peculiar, that I cannot trust anyone to harmonise it and must, if the opportunity should offer and my knowledge ever be sufficient, do it myself; (4) to Does the South Wind . . . . "53 As the songs were finished he sent them to Dixon who replied, as has been noted on page 16, concerning one of them: "The Song seems to me singularly beautiful and proper to

52 Ibid., p. 135. September 16, 1881.
the words: which words are too much honoured in being wedded to such music." 54

Hopkins was encouraged and replied: "I am very glad indeed you are so well
ted with the music. I shall hope to send you one or two more of your
pieces some day." 55

The sounds of nature were never far from Hopkins' sensitive musical ear.
Even in the early notebooks and diaries we find him noting: "Cuckoos calling
and answering to each other, and the calls not equally timed they overlapped,
making the triple cuckoo, and crossed." 56 And again: "The cuckoo has changed
his tune: the two notes can scarcely be told apart, that is their pitch is al­
most the same." 57 During the period of the early 1880's, we find Hopkins no­
ticing the song of the cuckoo, but now analyzing it from a musical aspect:

I have been studying the cuckoo's song. I find it to vary much.
In the first place cuckoos do not always sing (or the same cuckoo does
not always sing) at the same pitch or in the same key: there are, so
to say, alto cuckoos and tenor cuckoos. In particular they sing
lower in flying and the interval is also then least, it being an ef­
tort to them to strike the higher note, which is therefore more vari­
able than the other. When they perch they sing wrong at first; I mean
they correct their first try, raising the upper note. The interval
varies as much as from less than a minor third to nearly as much as a
common fourth and this last is the tune when the bird is in loud and
good song." 58

Hopkins continued his composing and accomplished most when he had the va­
cation time necessary for setting down his "airs." In early October 1882 he
writes to Bridges:

54 Ibid., p. 100. January 28, 1882.
55 Ibid., p. 103. February 1, 1882.
56 Journals, p. 137. May 20, 1886.
57 Ibid., p. 191. June 28, 1869.
I send with this the air to *I have loved flowers that fade*. A young Mr. Fitzpatrick is going to put me an accompaniment to it, but in the meantime I want you to see the tune. Playing it is of little use, unless it were on the violin; the snapping of a piano cannot give the extreme smoothness I mean: it must be sung. If you do not like it I think it must be a misunderstanding, for properly rendered I believe it could not fail to please you.

I want to go on with the study of harmony, but now my scholastic work is beginning and at first at all events I fear I shall not have time even for necessities, let alone luxuries or rather bywork.\(^5^9\)

Teaching classics at Stonyhurst brought Hopkins to reconsider a subject which he had long since ignored in his writings — the use of music to explain poetic principles. Writing to Baillie on January 14, 1883, he describes what he means by "counterpoint" in Greek poetry: "Perhaps what I ought to say is that the under-thought is commonly an echo or shadow of the over-thought, something like canons and repetitions in music, treated in a different manner, but that sometimes it may be independent of it. I find this same principle of composition in St. James' and St. Peter's Epistles, an undercurrent of thought governing the choice of images used."\(^6^0\) He reminds Baillie of a former argument they had had about some objectionable examples in Pindar. "I do not on the whole agree with your objections and should defend the examples. This sort of thing I should explain in that book if it were written. I shd. also give some fancy music to some choruses and odes, plainchant, not an attempted reproduction of Gk. music but as a means of bringing out the rhythm."\(^6^1\)

Only rarely does Hopkins write of the interrelationship between the sister arts. Once he treats of it in order to criticize his friend Patmore for trying


\(^6^1\) *Ibid.*
to blend the two arts:

I think I remember that Patmore pushes the likeness of musical and metrical time too far -- or, what comes to the same thing, not far enough: if he had gone quite to the bottom of the matter his views would have been juster. He might remember that for more than half the years music has been in the world it had perhaps less time than verse has, as we see in plainchant now. Sir Cozy Gore (so to say), says, and I believe him, that strict musical time, modern time, arose from dance music too. The principle, whether necessary or not, which is at the bottom of both musical and metrical time is that everything shall go by twos and, where you want to be very strict and effective, even by fours. But whereas this is insisted on and recognised in modern music it is neither in verse.62

Hopkins wrote to Patmore in 1883 criticising the latter's Study on English Metrical Law:

It seems to me that, looking at such facts as you here cite, we shall be justified in saying the acute tonic accent was the best marked pitch in each word; which pitch was commonly a rise (say of a fifth, to the dominant -- the most natural interval) from the keynote or readingnote; but sometimes a fall of, say, a fourth, to the same dominant, I mean of course the octave of the other, below. In like manner the grave accent, which Hadley reasonably says means not a lower note, that is, one lower than the keynote or readingnote, but only one not so high as the acute above it, will commonly be a rise of, say, a major third, to the mediant, but sometimes a fall of, say, a minor third, to the submediant. The circumflex is no doubt a sort of turn or shake, two notes syllable instead of one or a rise and fall instead of a rise only.63

However, Hopkins does not want to stress the musical value of poetry. In his 1873 lecture notes on rhythm he had written: "This musical pitch therefore not an element of verse, because so far as dwelt on it gives rise to music, when not dwelt on of course it goes for nothing. However it is a great element of beauty in reading."64 Father John Louis Bonn, S.J., commenting on these two

64 Journals, p. 268.
passages denies the absolute truth of both of them. Concerning Hopkins' theory of the musical values of Greek accents he says: "The idea of musical intervals is probably quite erroneous since it is improbable from the evidence which we possess that spoken words approached as nearly to song as this conjecture implies. . . . There is in Hopkins a strong tendency toward mathematical accuracy, which shows not only a good deal about his general character but also seems to indicate the nature of his rhythmic studies, which were becoming, I fear, more and more musico-mathematical . . . ."  

Concerning Hopkins' denial that pitch is an element of verse Father Bonn writes: "What he means . . . is that musical pitch is not a primary element of Greek and English verse. This is true. It is not, as he says elsewhere, to be considered as a metrical factor but only as an aesthetic factor. Yet this is so inadequate as to be confusing, since the rise and fall of the voice is most decidedly a rhythmic factor -- as in the arrangement of the verse-cadence, which depends upon spoken variation of pitch and which he clearly recognizes. As a secondary element, then, pitch enters and the universal denial is simply not true."

Concentration on his teaching of the classics during this year of 1883 did not prevent Hopkins from continuing his composing. In fact he writes about making another attempt at the piano in order that he might eventually be able to harmonize his songs and not leave them to the feminine touch of his sister Grace: "I try to get a bit of strumming every day now. Somebody left with me a volume of Bach's Fugues and, though it is like beginning at the end, as an

---

66 Ibid., p. 85.
exercise in dead reading I think it is very good for me and perhaps some day I shall find that I can read music pretty easily. If you like to be so good as to send me what you offer, some pieces of Purcell, it will be, as the Irish say when they beg, 'the biggest charity you ever did in your life.' I will send them back and even soon, if you wish." 67

To be able to harmonize becomes Gerard's ambition: "I took to counterpoint not for itself but as the solid foundation of harmony." 68 And to Dixon he wrote: "I fumble a little at music, at counterpoint, of which in the course of time I shall come to know something; for this, like every other study, after some drudgery yields up its secrets, which seem impenetrable at first. If I could get to accompany my own airs, I should, so to say, enter into a new kingdom at once, for I have plenty of tunes ready." 69

Hopkins' life from 1884 to 1889 was a period of great sacrifice and great suffering. "In Dublin his ill health, with the mental fatigue, depression, and tedium which accompanied it, the routine of heavy duties amidst uncongenial surroundings, the strenuous effort to fulfil, at a time of great trial, the Ignatian ideals of perfection and sanctity -- all these interacted and combined to make his 'winter world'." 70 He had lost his enthusiasm for poetry: "I shall shortly have some sonnets to send you, five or more. Four of these came like inspirations unbidden and against my will. And in the life I lead now, which


68 Ibid., p. 182. May 29, 1883.


70 Pick, p. 122.
is one of a continually jaded and harassed mind, if in any leisure I try to do anything I make no way -- nor with my work, alas! but so it must be." The poems which Hopkins wrote during this last period of his life are among his greatest; but they are no longer the poems of the Beauty of God as seen in His creatures -- the harvest, the birds, spring. They are the mature poems of the terrible beauty of God's Justice as manifest in Hopkins' own life. As depressed as he was he would not despair. Most weary, he would not cry, "I can no more. I can; / Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be." We would expect to find that Hopkins' music also lessened in quantity and in enthusiasm. This is exactly what we do not find. Over one third of all the quotations concerning music which we find in Hopkins' letters are to be found in the letters which came from the Dublin period. His crossing from England to Ireland in no way lessened his musical productivity or interest; if anything, it increased it.

To Bridges in November of 1884 he wrote: "You saw and liked some music of mine to Mr. Patmore's Crocus. The harmony came in the end to be very elaborate and difficult. I sent it through my cousin to Sir Frederick Gore Ousely for censure and that censure I am awaiting." He continues with the quotation already given on page 1 of this thesis -- certainly one of the most revealing of all Hopkins' statements about music.

On January 1, 1885, Hopkins writes to Bridges to tell him of a "great

71 Letters I, p. 221. September 1, 1885.
72 Poems, #64.
matter on hand."

It is music to the Battle of the Baltic, the tune made long ago and now I am harmonising it. My first attempt in harmony was the Crocus. I got it sent to Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley a good time ago and he has not returned it. The reason must be that finding it will not do he cannot make up his mind to tell me so. Indeed the second and third verses were a kind of wilderness of unintelligible chords, but the first seemed to me very good. However this new thing will be intelligible, and in a few days I am going to send you the first two -- or two first -- verses (I hold it is all the same) and then I want you, please to get _____ as before to pass judgement on them -- this one time more, as children go on. There is a bold thing in it: in the second verse a long ground bass, a chime of fourteen notes, repeated ten times running, with the treble moving freely above it. It is to illustrate 'It was ten of April morn by the chime'. If _____ should approve it I am made, musically, and Sir Frederick may wallow and choke in his own Oozeley Gore. Then I have in the background Collins' Ode to Evening I mentioned to you before, which is a new departure and more like volcanic sunsets or sunrises in the musical hemisphere than anything else can conceive.74

During 1885 Hopkins began more and more to get away from the traditional handbooks of musical theories and began to write his own "type" of music. Again to Bridges he writes: "When the Ode to Evening is done or well advanced I will send you that; study it yourself till you see my meaning (it is slow and easy to play); it is a test too: if you do not like it it is because there is something you have not seen and I see. That at least is my mind, and if the whole world agreed to condemn it or see nothing in it I should only tell them to take a generation and come to see me again."75 Gerard describes this piece to Bridges:

It seems to me like a new art, the effect is so unlike anything I ever heard. The air is plain chant where plain chant most departs from modern music; on the other hand the harmonies are a kind of advance on

74 Ibid., pp. 201-202. January 1, 1885. Bridges consistently deleted the name of the music critic to whom Hopkins refers.

75 Ibid., pp. 214-215. April 1, 1885.
advanced modern music. The combination of the two things is most singular, but it is also most solemn, and I cannot but hope that I have something very good in hand. It is so very unlike everything else that I am independent of and do not hold myself in abeyance to the judgments of musicians here; for in fact they know no more than I do what right I have to employ such and such chords and such and such progressions. 76

Bridges himself was rather startled at Hopkins' boasting and wrote to ask him if he intended to rival the "greats" of the music world. "Then 'do I mean to rival Purcell and Mozart?' No. Even given the genius, a musician must be that and nothing else, as music now is; at least so it has been with all the great musicians. But I did aim at two things not in themselves unattainable, if to me far easier things were not now unattainable. But of these, if ever, hereafter." 77

To Dixon on June 30, 1886, Hopkins wrote to tell him that he was continuing his music -- again setting Dixon's poems to airs.

And I am very slowly but very elaborately working at 'Does the South Wind' for solos, chorus, and strings. Some years ago I went from Glasgow, where I was, one day to Loch Lomond and landed at Inversnaid (famous through Wordsworth and Matthew Arnold) for some hours. There I had an inspiration of a tune. The disproportion is wonderful between the momentary conception of an air and the long long gestation of its setting. I endeavour to make the under parts each a flowing and independent melody and they cannot be independently invented, they must be felt for along a few certain necessary lines enforced by the harmony. It is astonishing to see them come; but in reality they are in nature bound up (besides many others) with the tune of the principle part and there is, I am persuaded, a world of profound mathematics in this matter of music: indeed no one could doubt that.

I have written a few sonnets: that is all I have done in poetry for some years. 78

76 Ibid., pp. 211-212. March 24, 1885.
On October 6, 1886, Hopkins had some of his music played on the piano. In despair the pianist turned to Hopkins and informed him that "your music dates from a time before the piano was invented." The pianist intended this to be a disparaging remark; the composer took it as a mark of his success: "... the piano cannot really execute independent parts as I make mine...." Hopkins' experiments continued; we find him writing music to Greek poetry: "Ahem, study it ..... I can also let you see some other settings of Greek to music as curiosities and some of them (as indeed the enclosed piece seems to me) as good in themselves." 

In all the letters of the late 1880's it is rare to come upon a reference to Gerard's poetry. He criticizes Bridges's works at length but with the exception of his sonnet in honor of St. Alphonsus Rodriguez and his "Harry Ploughman" he has little to say about his own work. But he has much to say about his music -- so much in fact that it is impossible to deny that he was becoming increasingly fascinated with this "luxury, or rather bywork."

By January 20, 1887, he felt that he had progressed far enough to be able to write to Patmore: "I believe that I can now set metre and music both of them on a scientific footing which will be final like the law of gravitation. This is a great boast, God grant it may not be an empty one."

80 Ibid.
82 Poems, #5 73, 67.
Made bold by the fact that the critics to whom Bridges sent Hopkins' music gave the songs "good marks" Gerard began to examine the possibilities of writing music in the ancient forms of Gregorian Chant. He had never been too contented with modern harmonies — he found them dull. On March 29, 1887, he wrote in this connection to Bridges: "And if Wooldridge is still with you tell him not to trouble to answer that letter at all nor to make the enquiries, which I have made elsewhere (besides which I feel pretty sure the matter never struck Rockstro nor perhaps anyone else and that I have the key to the history of modern music in what my enquiry points to, viz. that modern harmony could not arise till the old system and its tuning was got rid of and that it was goodness, not dulness, of ear which delayed its growth.)"85

Later that year he wrote: "I am at work on a great choral fugue! I can hardly believe it."86 It was probably because Hopkins was unable to play the piano and hence unable to harmonize his melodies that he turned to writing counterpoint (two or more melodies played at the same time.) At the beginning of 1888 he tells Bridges: "I have found a thing that, if I had my counterpoint well at my fingers' ends, wd. be most valuable: it is that the tunes I make are very apt to fall into fugues and canons, the second strain being easy counterpoint to the first or to its fugal answer. E.g. my Crocus, which you once expressed an admiration for, makes a canon with itself at the octave two bars off and, as far as I have found, at one bar off too. This is a splendid opening for choral treatment. And I have a fine fugue on hand to 'Orpheus with his
lute'; but I shall not hurry with it, but keep the counterpoint correct."\textsuperscript{87} Hopkins sent his Crocus to Dr. Robert Stewart, a professor of music in Dublin. "He gave it a good mark, but suggested some changes in the rhythm chiefly. I have made them, but to touch a composition of this sort is like touching a house of cards: one piece pulls down another, so the alterations cost a good deal of trouble more . . . . When all is done it ought to be sung by an unaccompanied choir. I hope in the end it may be; the attempt was daring (like verse in intricate metre) and Sir Robert's verdict amounted to saying that it was successful."\textsuperscript{88} Speaking of his work in counterpoint Hopkins gives one of the happiest descriptions of the music's impression on the composer that the present writer has seen: "Success in canon beats the other successes of art: it comes like a miracle, even to the inventor. It does seem as if the canon discovered the musician and not he it . . . . So that I see a world of canon and fugue before me. I do not say I am going there. But one madrigal in canon I will finish and then I hope one in fugue. No accompaniments; and the human voice is immortal."\textsuperscript{89}

The writer of this thesis must omit, of course, many of Hopkins' references to music in order to keep the length of this chapter within reasonable bounds. But it must be kept in mind that these successes which Hopkins "weelkly brays and mildly crows" about were written during the period of his life when his work and his surroundings were most uncongenial to him. The sections of

\textsuperscript{88}Letters III, p. 393. May 20, 1888.
\textsuperscript{89}Letters I, p. 278. May 26, 1888.
his letters which deal with music are the one bright feature of all his works from this period.

Hopkins continued to venture into territory which is quite familiar to the musician of the present day, but to the musician of his day was a "wilderness of unintelligible chords." Referring to a song of his (with his own words\(^90\)) he writes: "Nor does it strike me as unlike modal music, but quite the contrary, so that I am surprised at that criticism. I will transpose it to F of course: all keys are the same to me and to everyone who thinks that music was before instruments and angels before tortoises and cats."\(^91\)

Hopkins gives no indication that he was slowing up on his music during the last year of his life. He comments at length on various classical musicians\(^92\) and contrasts German singing to English.\(^93\)

Of his own work he writes to Bridges:

First it is in canon at the octave at two bars: but I think scorn of such an achievement as that. But in the next verse it has to be in canon at the third above and third below at two and four bars off respectively -- or to speak more precisely, the alto begins, at the sixth above; the treble, after two bars, follows, with the original tune; and the bass -- which is instrumental -- after four bars, brings up the rear at the sixth below. Now this requires the tune to be capable of counterpoint at the octave, or with itself unchanged, and also with two other transpositions, all exact. It is, I assure you, very baffling; but I hope to do it. It almost comes of itself; so that I am persuaded by coaxing I can make it quite. Besides this I insert a firm chant. I see that the composers of canons besides the Muses and Graces should sacrifice, like Timoleon, to Fortune.\(^94\)

---

\(^{90}\) Poems #118. ("What Shall I Do for the Land that Bred Me").

\(^{91}\) Letters I, pp. 289-290. September 13-14, 1888.


\(^{93}\) Letters I, pp. 299-300. February 23, 1889.

\(^{94}\) Ibid., pp. 301-302. March 20, 1889.
The last letter from Hopkins to Bridges contains a section on music which is probably the most technical passage in all the letters which pertain to music. The entire section is here quoted, not to overwhelm the reader with a mass of technicalities which the reader might not understand, but to demonstrate that Hopkins was certainly set on doing great things in music:

My song will be a very highly wrought work and I do hope a fine one. Do you think canon wd. spoil the tune? I hope not, but the contrary. But if the worst came to the worst, I could, since a solo voice holds its own against instruments, give the canon-following to a violin. I shall hear what Sir Robert Stewart says about it. This is how it now stands. I tried at first to make the air such that it shd. be rigidly the same in every note and rhythm (always excepting the alterations to save the tritone) in all its shifts; but I found that impracticable and that I had reached the point where art calls for loosing, not for lacing. I now make the canon strict in each verse, but allow a change, which indeed is besides called for by the change of words, from verse to verse. Indeed the air becomes a generic form which is specified newly in each verse, with excellent effect. It is like a new art this. I allow no modulation: the result is that the tune is shifted into modes, viz. those of La, Mi, and Sol (this is the only way I can speak of them, and they have a character of their own which is neither that of modern major and minor music nor yet of the plain chant modes, so far as I can make out). The first shift is into the mode of La; this shd. be minor, but the effect is not exactly that; rather the feeling is that Do is still the keynote, but has shifted its place in the scale. This impression is helped by the harmony, for as the Third is not flattened the chords appear major. The chord at the beginning of every bar is the common chord or first inversion; the 6/4 may appear in course of the bar and discords are in passing or prepared. Perhaps the harmony may be heavy, but I work according to the only rules I know. I can only get on slowly with it and must hope to be rewarded in the end. Now I must lie down.95

Five weeks later Gerard Hopkins was dead.

In the present chapter we have examined in detail the chronological development of Hopkins' interest in music. We saw how it began in his early days

95 Ibid., pp. 304-305. April 29, 1889.
and developed into a passive interest during his college days. After his entrance into the Society of Jesus his interest became increasingly active until the end of his life found him writing about music more than anything else.

Let no one say that Gerard Manley Hopkins was not a musician. The proof that he was not as great a musician as he was a poet is the burden of the rest of this thesis.
CHAPTER III

COMPOSERS IN THE WRITINGS OF HOPKINS

If we were considering Hopkins the poet in this thesis, an important and instructive section of the study might well be devoted to examining those writings of Hopkins in which he treats of other poets living or dead. We would consider his tastes in poetry, his likes or dislikes for poets who are generally accepted today, and most especially we would look for sections in his writings where he treats of those poets with whom he is generally associated—Herbert, Milton and the younger Keats.

And so, in the present study of Hopkins and music, it will be valuable to see what Hopkins had to say about musicians by way of adverse or favorable criticism. We have already seen his growth in musical interest. We turn now to his interest in musicians. The purpose of this section is the same as the purpose of the entire thesis: to come to an understanding of the personality of Hopkins the artist through his writings on music.

Hopkins' tastes in music varied greatly throughout his life, so much so that we find him at one period of his life praising the early English madrigalists, at another period praising the early romantics, and at still another, a curious interest in Wagner akin to his feeling of comradeship with Walt Whitman.¹ And yet in all this diversity it is possible to find the thread of

¹Cf. Letters I, p. 155. "... I always knew in my heart Walt Whitman's mind to be more like my own than any other man's living. As he is a very great scoundrel this is not a pleasant confession." October 18, 1882.
unity necessary to draw conclusions. The unity is not to be found in the type
of music which the composer was working with, but in the individual genius who
was doing the composing. He had his preference for one type of music over
another, but the main reason for his liking one composer rather than another
was ultimately not the music but the composer. This will be made clear by con-
sidering Hopkins' writings about musicians.

Writing to Bridges Hopkins tells him of a "goodish concert" he had attend-
ed that afternoon: "A Herr Slapoffski (real name) played Handel's violin Sonata
in A: what a genius! what a native language music was to him; such sense, such
fluency, such idiom, and such beauty!" To Canon Dixon he writes: "You make a
criticism on Handel. I have the very same feeling about him and you 'tell me
my own dream', that 'one can never hear five bars of him without feeling that
something great is beginning, something full of life'. A piece of his at a
concert seems to flutter the dovecot of the rest of them, to be a hawk among
poultry. The immediateness of the impression must be due, I suppose, to his
power being conveyed into smaller sections of his work than other men's and not
needing accumulation for its effect."3

On the other hand Hopkins could not stand artificiality and if he thought
that Handel with all his native genius had fallen prey to a style which he did
not actually feel, Hopkins would criticize him for that: "Of Handel, by the bye.
If it was only recitative of his you did not like and 'wavered in your alle-
giance' never mind. The recitative which arose in the Renaissance at Florence,

artificially and by a sort of pedantry, was to begin with bad, and Handel's employment of it always appeared to me to be his poorest part: the thing is so spiritless and mean, with vulgar falls and floundering to and from the dominant and leading note. . . . But Handel is Handel. I was at the Glasgow Exhibition (a very fine one) and heard a piece of an organ-recital ending with a chorus by Handel: it was as if a mighty beacon swept away so much dust and chaff. 4

But as much as Hopkins admired Handel for his genius, he could not feel close to him. This was not the case with the German composer Carl Maria von Weber. Hopkins wrote to Bridges: "Do you like Weber? For personal preference and fellow feeling I like him of all musicians best after Purcell. I feel as if I could have composed his music in another sphere. I do not feel that of Handel or Mozart or Beethoven. Moreover I do not feel that his great genius is appreciated. I shall like to read his life. He was a good man, I believe, with no hateful affectation of playing the fool and behaving like a blackguard." 5

Just how much of Weber's music Hopkins had heard is not known, but his kinship with the musician is interesting. Abbott notes on this letter of Hopkins:

Weber, though his life was not impeccable, was a conscientious Roman Catholic, serious and devout in disposition: hence the 'virgin sweetness and unearthly beauty' of Agatha in Der Freischutz. The religious sentiment of his day, romantic in kind, has been described as made up 'partly of a sort of medieval fanatical Catholicism, partly of an almost pantheistical nature-worship'. Critics remark on his originality ('complete simplicity, combined with perfect novelty'), on his subtle skill in orchestration, but above all on the unrivalled freshness and variety of his interpretations of Nature in dramatic music. In this sphere his work has been compared to that of Beethoven in symphony. His masses are individual. 6

W. H. Gardner writes of Hopkins: "His ideal self was in fact neither all saint nor all artist, but rather a combination of the two -- the saintly artist or the artistic saint. That is partly the reason why he disliked Goethe, Swinburne, and Victor Hugo and praised Savonarola, George Herbert, and Carl Maria von Weber." And Ernest Newman writes of Weber: "He illustrates the conflict between the form that has been born and bred from music pure and simple and the idea that comes from the infusion into music of poetry or drama or the plastic arts. . . . Finally, what keeps Weber's music still alive is above all his sincerity, his pure naturalness, his freedom from any sophisticated attempts at subtlety or profundity. Everything he wrote has the stamp of having come straight from the heart."  

If Weber was Hopkins' musician of feeling, Henry Purcell was Hopkins' musician of spirit. Hopkins never tired of hearing and praising Purcell and, as has been noted, repeatedly asks Bridges to send him some Purcell's and thanks him when they have arrived.

Only once before 1879 does Hopkins mention the music of Purcell in a letter. To Dixon on October 5, 1878: "I quite agree with what you write about Milton. His verse as one reads it seems something necessary and eternal (so to me does Purcell's music.").

Then in April of 1879 when the poet was at Oxford his sonnet "Henry

---

7Gardner, II, 305.
9Letters II, p. 13, October 5, 1878.
The poet wishes well to the divine genius of Purcell and praises him that, whereas other musicians have given utterance to the moods of man's mind, he has, beyond that, uttered in notes the very make and species of man as created both in him and in all men generally.

Have fair fallen, O fair, fair have fallen, so dear
To me, so arch-especial a spirit as heaves in Henry Purcell,
An age is now since passed, since parted; with the reversal
Of the outward sentence low lays him, listed to a heresy, here.

Not mood in him nor meaning, proud fire or sacred fear,
Or love or pity or all that sweet notes not his might murmure:
It is the forged feature finds me; it is the rehearsal
Of own, of abrupt self there so thrusts on, so throngs the ear.

Let him oh! with his air of angels then lift me, lay me! only I'll
Have an eye to the sakes of him, quaint moonmarks, to his
peited plumage under
Wings: so some great stormfowl, whenever he has walked his while

The thunder-purple seabeach plumed purple-of-thunder,
If a wuthering of his palmy snow-pinions scatter a colossal smile
Off him, but meaning motion fans fresh our wits with wonder.

The poem is Hopkins at his most crabbed, most terse, most cryptic. But it will serve as our guide as we discuss Hopkins' admiration for the seventeenth-century musician.

Bridges -- to whom Gerard sent his poem -- was lost in the intricacies of the grammar. He asked Hopkins to explain at least part of the poem in a future letter. And so, in Hopkins' letter of May 26, 1879, we find the poet explaining the sestet of the Purcell sonnet which "is not so clearly worked out as I could wish. The thought is that as the seabird opening his wings with a whiff of wind in your face means the whirr of the motion, but also unaware gives you

10 Poems, #45.
a whiff of knowledge about his plumage, the marking of which stamps his species, that he does not mean, so Purcell, seemingly intent only on the thought or feeling he is to express or call out, incidentally lets you remark the individualising marks of his own genius."\textsuperscript{11} He goes on to define his word "sake" which he finds "convenient to use . . . . I mean by it the being a thing has outside itself, as a voice by its echo, a face by its reflection, a body by its shadow, a man by his name, fame, or memory, \textbf{and also} that in the thing by virtue of which especially it has this being abroad, and that is something distinctive, marked, specifically or individually speaking, as for a voice and echo clearness; for a reflected image light, brightness; for a shadow-casting body bulk; for a man genius, great achievements, amiability, and so on. In this case it is, as the sonnet says, distinctive quality in genius."\textsuperscript{12}

Bridges, for whom this was little explanation, wrote back to Hopkins asking how this referred to Purcell's music. Hopkins answered: "By the by your remark on Purcell's music does not conflict with what my sonnet says, rather it supports it. My sonnet means 'Purcell's music is none of your d---d subjective rot' (so to speak). Read it again."\textsuperscript{13}

Four years later Bridges, who did not understand the poem yet, wrote for a clearer explanation. Hopkins replied:

\begin{quote}
The sonnet on Purcell means this: 1 - 4. I hope Purcell is not damned for being a Protestant, because I love his genius. 5 - 8. And that not so much for gifts he shares, even though it shd. be in higher measure, with other musicians as for his own individuality. 9 - 14. So that while he is aiming only at impress-
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{11}Letters I, p. 83. May 26, 1879.

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 84. June 22, 1879.
ing me his hearer with the meaning in hand I am looking out meanwhile for his specific, his individual markings and mottlings, 'the sakes of him'. It is as when a bird thinking only of soaring spreads its wings: a beholder may happen then to have his attention drawn by the act to the plumage displayed. 14

We may justifiably ask what it was in Purcell's music that led Hopkins to praise him for his clear fidelity to two principles -- his individual make ('"sakes of him," the Scotist haecceitas) and his specific make (humanitas). Hopkins must have found something in Purcell's music to warrant such high praise. Perhaps the following quotations from Grove's Dictionary of Music and from the American History and Encyclopedia of Music will give some indication of the similarities between Purcell's and Hopkins' musical goals: "In his works he not only showed himself a master of contrapuntal devices, but did not fear to introduce bold and unheard-of harmonies, frequently using false relations effectively, nor to extend the existing melodic forms, and employ in a most ingenious way the meager orchestra at his command, not only in his stage but in his church-music." 15 Keeping in mind Hopkins' ambitions to write modal music we read of Purcell: " [His music] further shows how strong was the influence of modal melody on Purcell, and throughout his works it gains an added interest by its conjunction with the clearly defined notions of major and minor tonalities which had been established in his generation. In the final cadence of 'Save me, O God,' we get a particularly striking instance of that employment of both the major and minor thirds in a chord which had been a special characteristic

of the English polyphonists in the madrigal, and Purcell was wont to get many of his most trenchant effects by the daring employment of such discords."16

As we shall see in the next chapter, Hopkins delighted in two musical "tricks." These were: 1) thorough bass and ground bass in his songs, and 2) the use of quarter tones in progressions. Of Purcell we read: "The sonatas were printed in four partbooks, with one for the continuo part, or thorough bass."17 And again: "... [T]he song is a striking instance of Purcell's love for a moving bass and his skill in treating basses of this kind, whether melodic in themselves, or recurrent, as in the numberless 'ground basses' of fine quality that exist of his."18 And about quarter tones in the musical ventures of Purcell: "In 1684 occurred the competition over the new organ for Temple Church. It was probably at Purcell's suggestion that this instrument was built with two extra quarter tones in each octave, which gave an opportunity for more varied modulation."19

Hopkins' admiration for Purcell is further explained by his general enthusiasm for musicians of the pre-classical period. From Dublin he wrote to Bridges recommending that he include some of the madrigalists such as Wilbye, Orlando Gibbons and Robert Whyte in a collection of English music which Bridges was gathering. Hopkins adds, "Would that I could hear some madrigals."20 While

17 Ibid., p. 288.
18 Ibid., p. 290.
in Dublin Hopkins met a "nice unassuming girl" who was studying for her degree in music at the Royal University. He tells Bridges: "She lends me Blow and I lend her Purcell." John Blow was the teacher of Henry Purcell. At another time Hopkins wrote to Baillie that he had gone to a student performance of Shakespeare's Macbeth "not to see but to hear Locke's beautiful music." Locke was "the most eminent of the predecessors of Henry Purcell in the composition of English stage music."

Concerning the great names of classical music, Beethoven, Mozart, and Bach, Hopkins has little to say. During his college days when he was still establishing his theories of art he wrote to his friend Rev. E. W. Urquhart: "I think you wd. find in the history of art that licences and eccentricities are to be found fully as often in beginners as in those who have established themselves and can afford them; those in Milton, Turner, and Beethoven are at the end, those in Shakspere, Keats, Millais, and Tennyson at the beginning."

He says that he does not prefer Beethoven or Mozart to Weber and Purcell. He felt that in another sphere he could have composed the music of Weber and Purcell: "I do not feel that of Handel or Mozart or Beethoven." And yet he did recognize the genius that was in Mozart: "Then 'do I mean to rival Purcell and Mozart?' No. Even given the genius, a musician must be that and nothing else, as music now is; at least so it has been with all the great musicians."

---

21 Ibid., p. 244. November 26, 1886.
23 Ibid., p. 237, note 2.
24 Ibid., p. 36. July 7, 1867.
26 Ibid., p. 220. May 17, 1835.
And again: "Fine bass! I should think so. But did you never hear Pray Goody before? ... It is simple truth that no German since Mozart has been capable of anything of the sort. The Germans are great and I believe unsurpassable in expressing mood and feeling, but for the bone, frame, and charpente of music they cannot come up to this kind of thing."\textsuperscript{27}

Hopkins seems to have recognized the music of Bach only as exercise pieces for his training in counterpoint. He tells Bridges that reading Bach is like an exercise in "dead reading," and that if Bridges wants to do his friend a real favor, he will send him some pieces of Purcell.\textsuperscript{28} He finds so many places in Bach's music where the master did not follow the rules of counterpoint that he begins to doubt the validity of the rules.\textsuperscript{29} And towards the end of his life he wrote: "What I ought to do, or somebody else rather to have done, is to tabulate Bach's practice and principles."\textsuperscript{30} About Bach's artistry he does not speak.

About musicians of his own time Hopkins writes: "The only great English musician of our times was Sterndale Bennett. He had the divine fire. Unhappily he had to earn his bread and could not spare time for what we have done his genius justice. Bishop had genius too, but was wanting in greatness; had an element of pettiness or vulgarity."\textsuperscript{31} In this same letter which was addressed to Harry Bellamy who later joined the D'Cyly Carte Company and finally became

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., p. 180. May 18, 1883.
\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., p. 173. January 29, 1883.
\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., p. 182. May 29, 1883.
\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., p. 271. January 12, 1888.
\textsuperscript{31}Letters III, p. 67. January 21, 1889.
its director, Hopkins wrote concerning Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan of Gilbert and Sullivan fame: "Sullivan is a highly talented composer, I know: brilliant; but seems to me wanting in genius. Orchestration? Can 'a write canons? Does 'a know counterpoint? If 'a can tell un 'a shd. do it, not that there dratted modern stuff as I can't abide."32

While at Balliol Hopkins wrote about Wagner: "The other arts seem to depend on truth (no: Truth) as well as Beauty. What then answers to, I mean what is, Truth in music? Blow me an answer from thy wreathed horn. Is not Wagner something to do with it?"33 In May of 1880 he again writes to Baillie showing a curiosity in the new type of music coming from the brain of the German romanticist: "What do you think of Wagner? I heard a concert of his music in the winter. He loses greatly, I fancy, off the stage. The Germans call him the Master of Masters and Hartmann the greatest of philosophers and the last new thing everywhere the greatest that ever was. This is a barbarous business of greatest this and supreme that that Swinburne and others practise. What is the thing that has been? The same that shall be. Everything is vanity and vexation of spirit."34 And yet his curiosity gets the better of him and he again writes to Baillie: "Ah! you will have heard the Nibelungs' Ring. You must tell me your impressions."35

The conclusions to be drawn from this chapter all work to manifest to us

32 Ibid., p. 66.
34 Ibid., p. 246. May 22, 1880.
a clearer picture of the personality of Hopkins, for taste is ultimately expli-
cable only in terms of personality. If a person's tastes are varied we say
that his personality admits of that much variety: a person whose tastes are
limited to one art or craft is the person who has a narrow, limited personali-
ty.

As we have seen, Hopkins' tastes in music were not limited to one style
of music or to one type of composition. The basis for his preferring one com-
poser to another was his recognition of the genius of the composer as reflected
in his music. If Hopkins felt that the composer was merely going along with
the convention of the period without enriching the convention by personal
genius, then he would not admit the composer or his music into the scope of his
tastes.

As a result of his criterion it may be concluded that he most deeply ap-
preciated three different schools of music: that of the early madrigalists who
were dependent upon the characteristics of Gregorian Chant: that of the school
of Blow and Purcell in the seventeenth century: that of Weber in the nineteenth
century.

It will now be of interest to turn to Hopkins' own musical compositions
to see how closely he modeled his music on those of his favorite composers.
CHAPTER IV
HOPKINS' MUSICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As we have seen throughout our study of his letters, Hopkins became more and more interested in music and "despite his lack of technical training obviously felt that he could make a contribution of importance to that art based on new theories. So absorbed is he in this pursuit, so enthusiastic about his work in it, that the reader of his poetry expects to find that he has brought to music a similar genius and freshness of approach."¹ Generalities at this point are dangerous, but such expectations on the part of the reader are in general doomed to frustration.

We will consider first Hopkins' novel theories, then some of the music he wrote and finally critics' views of his music.

Practically all of Hopkins' musical studies came after his entrance into the Society of Jesus. As we can tell from his letters, music was rather tolerated than encouraged within Jesuit houses, and so any work Hopkins was to do with his music would be private and "extracurricular." To Baillie he wrote: "Talking of music reminds me that I am teaching myself to play the piano -- under difficulties, so that my progress is slow."² It seems that he never mas-

²Letters III, p. 238, December 3, 1872. See also p. 127, September 20, 1874, and Letters I, pp. 30 (January 22, 1874), 173 (January 29, 1883), 219 (May 17, 1885) and 296 (October 19, 1888).
However he did a good deal of reading of books on music theory, and it was from these that he learned the basic technicalities necessary for writing his songs. It was also from these books that he extrapolated to form his own musical system.

In October of 1880 he writes to Bridges that "I have got me Stainer's Primer of Harmony and shall perhaps be able to do my own accompaniments by and by." By May of 1883 he had read Sir John Frederick Bridge's book on counterpoint and complained to Robert Bridges that the book had not warned him about the difficulties which he was meeting in attempting to compose in this difficult style. He finds that he needs models from the works of the great masters, for they are the "soul of education." The following year he tells Bridges that he was reading another of Stainer's works, his Treatise on Harmony which "has earned him the heart-felt thanks of people as ignorant as myself . . . . Though his theory is not final, it is a great step forward and has quite a daylight, a grand jour, of sense. I am sure Stainer must be nice to know and meet."

By the beginning of 1885 Hopkins felt that he had learned enough of the classical theory to be able at last to criticize it and to get away from it and into his own style. He tells Bridges that the song he was writing at present -- music for Collins' "Ode to Evening," -- was so "very unlike everything else

---

3Ibid., p. 248. May 14, 1881.
4Letters I, p. 112. October 26, 1880.
5Ibid., p. 182. May 29, 1883. 6Ibid., p. 199. November 11, 1884.
that I am independent of and do not hold myself in abeyance to the judgements of musicians here; for in fact they know no more than I do what right I have to employ such and such chords and such and such progressions."  

He began more and more to reject classical harmonies in favor of modality which he heard and studied in Gregorian Chant. About traditional modulation (change from key to key within a song), he wrote:

As for not modulating, that was deliberate: I look on modulation as a corruption, the undoing of the diatonic style. What they call the key of the dominant, viz. one in which the fourth of the tonic is sharpened, I say is not the key of the dominant (which is in another mode than the key of the tonic and has no leading note) but the key of the tonic misplaced and transposed. I believe that ______ and I would give diametrically opposite names to the same things: what he calls variety I call sameness, because modulation reduces all the rich diatonic keyboard with its six or seven authentic, not to speak of plagal, modes, to one dead level of major; where he finds tameness I find variety, specific quality (not of key, which is not specific, but) of mode.8

At the same time Hopkins realized that he would have to actualize his own theories in the songs he was writing. "I find a difficulty in doing so and I am obliged to resort to devices of counterpoint..."9 He was sorry that other people did not hear the variety which he heard in modal music. "To me plain chant melody has an infinite expressiveness and dramatic richness. The putting in or leaving out of a single note in an 'alphabetic' passage changes the emotional meaning: all we admirers of plain chant feel this, the rest of the world (and I expect this includes _____) do not; and it is the old story, Fieri non potest ut idem sentiant qui aquam et qui vinum bibunt; we are sober,

---

7Ibid., p. 212. March 25, 1885.
8Ibid., pp. 213-214.
9Ibid., p. 214.
they intoxicated with rich harmonies cannot taste our fine differences."\(^\text{10}\)

By October of 1886 he was writing passages on the theory of the hepta­
chord scale which is founded "deeply in nature."\(^\text{11}\) The passage is extraordin­
arily technical and is ample proof that Hopkins understood the theory of plain
chant well enough to be able to write songs to Greek lyrics -- songs which he
regarded as curiosities and as "good in themselves."\(^\text{12}\)

When we come to examine the manuscripts of Hopkins' writings we find that
much of the music which he wrote has not come down to us. About half of the
songs to which he refers in the letters to Bridges, Dixon, and others have been
lost. In some cases the music may not have been finished. The fifteen songs
which are extant have been printed in the 1959 edition of Hopkins' *Journals and
 Papers* as Appendix II. It is from that source that the present author draws
his materials for this part of the thesis.\(^\text{13}\)

To analyze each of the songs in any amount of detail would take this the­
sis beyond its purpose. Technical analyses of the music must be left to another
and separate study. But the present work would not be complete if some space
were not devoted to a consideration of the more notable of the songs -- those
which help us to examine Hopkins the man, or better, Hopkins the artist.

As we look through the songs which have lasted for us we notice imme-

\(^{10}\) Ibid.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., pp. 234-235. October 22, 1886.

\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 235.

\(^{13}\) John Stevens, "Gerard Manley Hopkins as Musician," *Journal and Papers of
Appendix III, pp. 457-497.
diately that with two exceptions the songs are not harmonized: we have only the melodies, or "airs" as he called them, to be accompanied not only by a single instrument but in some instances by string band or orchestra.14

Another thing which strikes us before we even begin to read any of the songs is that the ones about which he boasted most have not been preserved. For example we would like to see no song of Hopkins' more than his setting of Collins' Ode to Evening. It is the one referred to on page one of this thesis and on pages thirty and fifty-one. Dr. Stevens remarks about this work: "The musical effects of plainsong were much in GMH's mind at this time and it is in the context of a long discussion of plainsong that he makes his boldest claim to originality as a composer ... ."15

Another of the songs which we can only regret not having is his setting for Patmore's "The Crocus." Hopkins writes of this one: "The harmony came in the end to be very elaborate and difficult."16 The seal of approval which Hopkins received for this song from the hard-to-please Dr. Stewart meant a great deal to the poet.17 It was a song about which he would bray and crow.18 When Bridges told him that a war song which Hopkins had written was to be performed Hopkins asked him why he was not going to do the most ambitious song he had written.19

---

14 Cf. Letters I, pp. 199-200 (November 11, 1884), 211-212 (January 1, 1885), 214-215 (April 1, 1885), and Letters II, p. 135 (December 24, 1875).
15 Journals, p. 475.
17 Ibid., p. 278. May 26, 1888.
18 Ibid., p. 277.
19 Ibid., p. 290. September 13-14, 1888.
And of course we would wish to have the settings to his own poems. Hopkins wrote musical settings for four of his poems, of which only one, "What shall I do for the land," has survived. It is certainly not one of his better poems. The other three poems of his for which he wrote musical settings are "Spring and Fall," "Burrahining in Harvest," and "Morning Midday and Evening Sacrifice." Concerning his music to "Spring and Fall" Hopkins wrote to Bridges and to Dixon in January of 1881 telling them that he had written a plain chant setting for the poem. In June of 1880 he had written: "I wish I could pursue music; for I have invented a new style, something standing to ordinary music as sprung rhythm to common rhythm: it employs quarter tones. I am trying to set an air in it to the sonnet 'Summer ends now.'" The previous year Hopkins had asked Bridges: "Did you like the song 'The dappled dieaway Cheek'?

There are three major characteristics which we note in the songs of Hopkins. These are: a lack of modulation, a delicate variety (variations on a theme) from verse to verse, and closely connected to this last, a highly sensitive interpretation of the words of the text he has chosen. As we have already seen, Hopkins regarded modulation, which is change of key within a piece of music, as destroying the richness of the scale which he chose to write in. Hence, because we depend on modulation for variety in a piece of music, Hopkins'
songs tend to sound rather monotonous. It must be remembered that his songs were not written to entertain others and certainly not for publication. They were written for his own enjoyment, and the fact that others did not and do not find variety in them because of a lack of modulation does not change the fact that he found "specific quality of mode" by writing and remaining in one and the same key throughout a song.25 He defended his songs against the charge of monotony; to him the music seemed "rather cheerful."26

Hopkins' music for Bridges' "Spring Ode: I, Invitation to the Country" is a fine example of the variety which Hopkins was able to derive from the simplest melody. Hopkins took verses 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 11 of Bridges' poem and unified them into a "well-constructed tune . . . with plenty of 'bone' and 'frame' in it."27 The reader is referred to the music of the song and is asked to examine the fifth measure of each verse. By subtle techniques Hopkins has achieved a variety which is just enough to bring out the meaning of the words and yet not enough to warrant an accusation of affectation. "The air is interesting chiefly because it illustrates in the slight variations between the verses GMH's subtle response to different shades of rhythm and meaning in the words."28 Hopkins gives his insight into the slight variations from verse to verse: "Indeed the air becomes a generic form which is specified newly in each verse, with excellent effect."29

25 Letters 1, p. 214. April 1, 1885.
27 Stevens, p. 466.
28 Ibid.
29 Letters 1, p. 305. April 29, 1889.
The third of the characteristics given which delineate the songs of Hopkins is his sensitive interpretation of the words of his chosen text. He brought to the poems which he was enriching by means of another art form his own poetic vision and grasp of emotion and meaning. Writing of Hopkins' setting for John Bridges' (Robert's brother) "Past like Morning Beams Away," Dr. Stevens says: "This song confirms what we know of GMH as a melodist. This music, although sufficient in itself, grows out of the 'inscape' of the poem. It is not so much a transcription as a translation into music of a pattern of sound and sense which GMH may sometimes have felt more vividly, more physically, than the author himself."\(^\text{30}\)

Another splendid example of Hopkins' artistic understanding of his text is his setting of Dixon's "Fallen Rain." Stevens remarks: "It is hard to believe that the elaborate melodic structure is built on a poetic foundation as slender as this:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Silent fell the rain} \\
\text{To the earthly ground;} \\
\text{Then arose a sound} \\
\text{To complain:}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Why am I cast down} \\
\text{From the cloud so sweet,} \\
\text{Trampled by the feet} \\
\text{Of the clown . . .} \quad \text{31}
\end{align*}
\]

Of the poem Hopkins had written to Dixon: "It is the most delicate and touching piece of imagination in the world."\(^\text{32}\) In setting this poem to music Hopkins did

\(^{30}\text{Stevens, p. 461.}\)

\(^{31}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{32}\text{Letters II, p. 20. March 10, 1879.}\)
not, as so many composers of art songs tend to do, destroy the original poem for the sake of the music. "The air taken its being from that intensification of the poem's own rhythmic and dramatic life which we must believe was either GMR's immediate response to a poem which he liked or was the result of long dwelling in imagination upon it." The reader who would care to examine this song of Hopkins in detail is referred to Dr. Stevens' treatment where he treats the blend of poem and music in detail. All the musical effects of the song are patterned into the melody. Whereas effects can frequently call so much attention to themselves that they destroy the life of the piece, in this case they all work to intensify the life. Hopkins had written in his lecture notes: "Music is composition which wholly or partially repeats the same figure of pitched sound (it is the aftering of pitched sound)." Never was theory more accurately executed than in the song "Fallen Rain."

A remarkable feature of this song is the use which Hopkins makes of the quarter tone, a note halfway between the smallest interval of our regular chromatic scale. On the syllable "-go-" in the line "Flashed like agony," Hopkins indicates by a footnote: "This note is a quarter-tone below F." He then writes out the way it is to be performed on the piano which cannot execute the quarter tone. As we have seen, Hopkins' occupation in the classroom was teaching the classics of Greece and Rome. In his reading of the Greek authors and

---

33 Stevens, p. 462.
34 Ibid.
35 Journals, p. 290.
36 Stevens, p. 487.
commentaries upon them he had found that Greek music, as well as being modal, had used scales which to the ears of Hopkins' England would sound strange and oriental. The most interesting feature of the Greek scales was the extensive use of the quarter tone. Hopkins, driven on by his desire for a return to fundamentals, decided to make use of this technique. Although it is true that the interval is "hardly one to achieve much popularity among singers," it has been the experience of the present writer that when sung accurately the effect is that intended by Hopkins — a heightening of the text.

For the final example of Hopkins' music the author has chosen Hopkins' most ambitious surviving composition, his setting for Thomas Campbell's "The Battle of the Baltic." It is a setting for double chorus in unison and piano of the first two stanzas of the poem which he much admired. The important feature of this song is the long bass melody to be played "by bells or something of the sort." This chime of fourteen notes was to illustrate the line "It was ten of April morn by the chime." Dr. Stevens notes that the ground-bass was conceived "as a contrapuntal melody capable of subtle rhythmic rather than of harmonic richness. Hopkins skillfully varies the rhythm in each of the ten repetitions of the theme. This is certainly not the work of a man who simply liked to dabble with melodies, but the accurate development of a theme

37Gardner, II, 389.
38**Letters II**, p. 23. February 27, 1879.
39**Letters I**, p. 208. February 8, 1885.
41Stevens, p. 477.
by a musician well versed in the possibilities of metrics and rhythms.

As has been stated, and it must be stressed, the songs of Hopkins which have been preserved are not those he would consider his best, and we must not judge his capabilities as a musician from them alone. We must turn back to the letters and the journals and determine his musical potentialities and realizations from them.

As we have seen, Hopkins was by no means a conformist to the "d---d subjective rot" of his day which he praises Purcell for avoiding. His goal was to write music which was modal in feeling if necessarily traditional (counterpoint in fugue and canon) in execution. We have seen his aspirations in detail in chapter two; we have seen his accomplishments in some detail in the present chapter. We can conclude that his goals were limited only by an unfortunate lack of musical training: his ambitions rose far above his accomplishments.

The few critics who have written on Hopkins' music have been rather harsh on him. The reason for this is twofold: first of all, the critics are viewing the works of Hopkins simply as songs and analyzing them from a technical point of view only and apart from the context of the letters and other writings in which we have considered the songs; secondly, the critics are in general not in favor of Hopkins' peculiarities -- his lack of modulation which can be found in almost all of his extant songs and his experimentation with Greek and Gregorian modes. The one critic who must be excepted from the list of disparaging critics of Hopkins is John Stevens from whom we have quoted throughout this chapter.

---

42 *Letters I*, p. 84. June 22, 1879.
The chief critics during Hopkins' lifetime and those upon whom he depended for helpful advice are three: Sir Robert Stewart, professor of music at the Royal University in Dublin; H. E. Wooldridge, writer on musical history and lifelong friend of Robert Bridges; and the unknown critic whose name Bridges deleted whenever it appeared in a letter of Hopkins'. It was Bridges who sent Gerard's music to the two latter critics; it was Hopkins who struck up the correspondence and friendship with Stewart.

We find frequent references in Hopkins' letters to Bridges thanking him for having the music corrected by professionals. But he could not help feeling discouraged when their findings were against him. He writes: "I am thankful to __ and did not want him hurried . . . . His remarks are to be sure not in my circumstances encouraging, but they are instructive and if I could manage it I should attend Sir Rob. Stewart's or somebody else's course . . . ." 43 He continues with the justification for a lack of modulation which we have already considered above.

Again: "It was quite right to tell me what Wooldridge thought -- that is what I wanted to know -- and to use it as a dissuasive, if you liked; but not as a discouragement (yr. own word): discouragement is not what my complaint, in my opinion, needs." 44

But Hopkins seems to have put most value on his sending his music to Sir Robert Stewart, who must have been, to judge from his letters to Hopkins, a most interesting personality. 45 Hopkins sent his contrapuntal exercises to

43 Ibid., p. 213. April 1, 1885.
44 Ibid., p. 248. January 2, 1887.
Stewart for correction but could not have expected that they would be so "mauled" by the time Stewart finished with them. 46 Stewart wrote to Hopkins:

"Indeed my dear Padre I cannot follow you through your maze of words in your letter of last week. I saw, ere we had conversed ten minutes on our first meeting, that you are one of those special pleaders who never believe yourself wrong in any respect. You always excuse yourself for anything I object to in your writing or music so I think it a pity to disturb you in your happy dreams of perfectibility -- nearly everything in your music was wrong -- but you will not admit that to be the case -- What does it matter? It will all be the same 100 Years hence." 47 Hopkins must have become irritated with such a letter, for we find Stewart writing: "Darling Padre! I never said anything 'outrageous' to you. Don't think so, pray! but you are impatient of correction, when you have previously made up your mind on any point, & I R.S. being an 'Expert', you seem to me to err, often times, very much." 48 Still Hopkins continued to send his songs to Stewart and when at last the "genial old gentleman, but an off-hand critic of music and me" 49 finally gave one of Gerard's songs a good mark, he was justified to bray and crow. 50

The opinions of twentieth-century critics are approximately the same as those of Stewart but expressed in somewhat less sarcastic terms. Humphrey

48 Ibid. No date.
House reports: "I have seen several musical exercises of his and referred them to competent musicians who report that they are all the most elementary work which would have been undertaken by a beginner in Composition. The settings of songs are judged to be very ordinary, and rather surprisingly showing no marked talent or even eccentricity." Mr. J. Dykes Bower, organist of Durham Cathedral writes: "The MS. music of Hopkins that I have seen may be classified thus:

(a) A setting of 'Sky that rollest ever' . . . . The tune is of no particular interest. (b) Two settings -- melody only -- of 'Who is Sylvia?'. Of these one, in C major, is devoid of interest. The other, in F major, has a graceful tune and is rather reminiscent in style of English songs of the eighteenth century. Each verse, however, starts on a glaring false accent . . . . (e) A setting of 'Done to death by slanderous tongues' . . . . This is a poor tune, badly harmonized." He is willing to grant, however, that "(c) A setting of 'Fallen Rain' . . . . is a tune of real distinction." Concerning the setting of the Ballad from Shakespeare's Winter's Tale he writes: "This attractive tune again shows very clearly the influence of Greek modal music. It seems almost to be single-toned music, defying all attempts to harmonize it." He also says that the ground bass in Hopkins' setting of the "Battle of the Baltic" is an 'excellent subject which undergoes skilful rhythmic variation . . . ."

The article by John Waterhouse in Music and Letters for 1937 gives a very

---

52 Ibid., pp. 169-170.
53 Ibid., pp. 169-170.
54 Ibid.
cursory biographical sketch of Hopkins' interest in music using chiefly the
letters of Hopkins which had been published and some of Hopkins' exercises in
counterpoint. Commenting on Hopkins' use of modal music he says that Hopkins
"does not seem clearly to have realized that a mode which bears 'the feeling Do
is still the keynote' is not to modern ears established as a mode at all; nor
that the power of modulation depends not on the new key but on the process of
establishing the new key."55 That might be true in speaking of "modern ears,"
but if we can believe the letters of Hopkins, it was not true to his.56

About his exercises in counterpoint Waterhouse says: "They have the usual
beginner's faults - motionless parts, great gaps between the alto and tenor,
hidden octaves, even strange confusion of scales; but they are strewn with indica-
tions of his enterprise and enthusiastic impatience."57 And Waterhouse goes
on to make a very wise comment about Hopkins' urge to composition: "There was
no hint of the charlatan or of the iconoclast in Hopkins' eagerness to be an
innovator."58 The one adjective which cannot be used to describe Hopkins' ef-
forts in music is "insincere." Whatever faults his music might have or whatever
mistakes he might have made in musical terminology59 he was always firmly con-
vinced that he was moving in the right direction and that with time he could

p. 234.
57 Waterhouse, p. 231.
58 Ibid.
59 He always referred to a ground bass as a "Basso Continuo." See Letters II, p. 170.
produce a new type of music, one which would stand "to ordinary music as sprung rhythm to common rhythm." 60

John Stevens has been quoted so frequently throughout this chapter that it seems unnecessary to dwell on his contribution to the present study. The very fact that he gathered all of the available music of Hopkins and had it printed is an indication of the scope of his interest. That he went further to give penetrating and instructive comments on each of the songs makes his essay all the more valuable.

By way of summary and conclusion to this chapter we can say that the music of Hopkins which has survived is neither his best nor most representative of his progressive thought on music. On the other hand we can see much of what he wrote about exemplified in his songs, among which his "Fallen Rain" is most outstanding.

A quotation from Hopkins' ideal musician Henry Purcell might well form the conclusion to this section on Hopkins' musical settings: "'Music and poetry,' he wrote, 'have ever been acknowledged sisters, which, walking hand in hand, support each other; as poetry is the harmony of words, so music is that of notes; and as poetry is a rise above prose and oratory, so is music the exultation of poetry. Both of them excel apart, but sure they are most excellent when they are joined, because nothing is then wanting to either of their perfections.'" 61

60 Letters I, p. 103.

CHAPTER V

MUSIC IN THE POEMS OF HOPKINS

CONCLUSION

"Music is more professional than poetry perhaps and Jesuits have composed well, but none has any fame to speak of."¹ It is highly doubtful that Hopkins as a musician will ever attain the fame which he might otherwise have known (at least as an avant-garde theoretician) had he not written some of the most splendid lyric poetry in the English language. Hopkins will ever be known as a poet, but the present writer cannot help but feel that if Hopkins had been asked during his lifetime how he would wish to be known to posterity he would have answered: "I want to be known as a Jesuit who saw the beauty and the glory of God in and through art."

Since Hopkins is known almost exclusively because of his poetry, it will be of interest to consider in the present chapter how the subject of music with all the varied aspects which Hopkins noticed became the subject for poems or for figures within poems. As has been made clear in the introduction to this thesis, there will be no attempt made to analyze the influence of the music of Hopkins on his poetic style -- on his rhythms, his rhymes, his vocabulary. The purpose of this section will be to show that music as an interest of Hopkins forms sub-

¹Letters II, p. 94.
ject matter for his poems. Rather than attempt any sort of analysis of individual references to music, the procedure will be to list all the references and to summarize the findings when the list is complete.

From "A Vision of the Mermaids":

Then they, thus ranged, 'gan make full plaintively
A piteous Siren Sweetness on the sea,
Withouten instrument, or conch, or bell,
Or stretch'd cords tunable on turtle's shell;
Only with utterance of sweet breath they sung
An antique chaunt and in an unknown tongue.
Now melting upward through the sloping scale
Swelled the sweet strain to a melodious wail;
Now ringing clarion-clear to whence it rose
Slumber'd at last in one sweet, deep, heart-broken close.²

From "Winter with the Gulf Stream":

A simple passage of weak notes
Is all the winter bird dare try.³

From "A Soliloquy of One of the Spies left in the Wilderness":

Strike cymbals, sing, eat, drink, be full of mirth.
Forget the waking trumpet, the long law.⁴

From "He hath abolished the old drouth":

He hath put a new song in my mouth,
The words are old, the purport new.⁵

From "To Oxford":

Those charms accepted of my inmost thought,
The towers musical, quiet-walled grove,⁶

²Poems, #2.
³Ibid., #3.
⁴Ibid., #5.
⁵Ibid., #7.
⁶Poems, #12.
"Let me be to Thee as the circling bird":

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.
I have found my music in a common word,
Trying each pleasurable throat that sings
And every praised sequence of sweet strings,
And know infallibly which I preferred.
The authentic cadence was discovered late
Which ends those only strains that I approve,
And other science all gone out of date
And minor sweetness scarce made mention of:
I have found the dominant of my range and state—
Love, O my God, to call Thee Love and Love.7

From "The Nightingale":

For he began at once and shook
My head to hear. He might have strung
A row of ripples in the brook,
So forcibly he sung,
The mist upon the leaves have strewn,
And danced the balls of dew that stood
In acres all above the wood.

I thought the air must out and strain
The windpipe when he sucked his breath
And when he turned it back again
The music must be death.
With not a thing to make me fear,
A singing bird in the morning clear
To me was terrible to hear.

Yet as he changed his mighty stops
Betweens I heard the water still
All down the stair-way of the copse
And churning in the mill.
But that sweet sound which I preferred,
Your passing steps, I never heard
For warbling of the warbling bird. 8

7Ibid., #16.
8Ibid., #21.
From "Nondum":

Our hymn in the vast silence dies.⁹

From "The Habit of Perfection":

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.¹⁰

From "The Silver Jubilee":

Though no high-hung bells or din
Of braggart bugles cry it in --

What is sound? Nature's round
Makes the Silver Jubilee.

Then for her whose velvet vales
Should have pealed with welcome, Wales,
Let the chime of a rhyme
Utter Silver Jubilee.¹¹

From "Spring":

and thrush
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;¹²

From "The Sea and the Skylark":

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.¹³

⁹Ibid., #22.
¹⁰Ibid., #24.
¹¹Ibid., #30.
¹²Ibid., #33.
¹³Ibid., #35.
From "The Caged Skylark":

Both sing sometimes the sweetest, sweetest spells,
Yet both droop deadly sometimes in their cells
Or wring their barriers in bursts of fear or rage.  

"Henry Purcell":  

From "The May Magnificat":

And magic cuckoocall
Caps, clears, and clinches all --

From "Duns Scotus's Oxford":

Cuckoo-echoing, bell-swarmed, lark-charmed, rook-racked,
river-rounded;  

From "At the Wedding March":

Then let the march tread our ears:

From "As kingfishers catch fire,":

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;

From "To what serves Mortal Beauty?:

does set danc-
ing blood—the O-seal—that-so feature, flung prouder form
Than Purcell tune lets tread to?  

---

14 Ibid., #39.
15 Ibid., #45. This poem has been quoted in its complete form on page 42.
16 Ibid., #42.
17 Ibid., #44.
18 Ibid., #52.
19 Ibid., #57.
20 Ibid., #61.
From "No worst, there is none."

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.  \(^{21}\)

From the sonnet "In honour of St. Alphonsus Rodriguez":

And those strokes once that gashed flesh or galled shield  \(^{22}\)
Should tongue that time now, trumpet now that field,

From "To R.B."

Leaves yet the mind a mother of immortal song.

O then if in my lagging lines you miss
The roll, the rise, the carol, the creation,  \(^{23}\)

From "Pilate"

Then the weather rare
Allows the sound of bells in hamlets round
To come to me from the underground.  \(^{24}\)

From "A Voice from the World"

Late in the green weeks of April
Cuckoo calls cuckoo up the wood,
Five notes or seven, late and few:
From parts unlook'd for, alter'd, spent,
At last I hear the voice I knew.  \(^{25}\)

From "Why should their foolish bands,"

Why should their foolish bands, their hopeless hearses
Blot the perpetual festival of day?  \(^{26}\)

\(^{21}\) Ibid., #65.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., #73.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., #75.

\(^{24}\) Ibid., #76.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., #77.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., #79.
From "Six Epigrams":

(ii) Modern Poets:

Our swans are now of such remorseless quill,
Themselves live singing and their hearers kill.

(iii) On a Poetess:

It is the way with Philomel, 27
To sing while others sleep.

From "No, they are come":

No, they are come; their horn is lifted up;
Their clarions from all corners of the field 28
With potent lips call down cemented towers;

From "Now I am minded":

Now I am minded to take pipe in hand
And yield a song to the decaying year; 29

From "Richard":

(i) There was no bleat of ewe, no chime of wether,
Only the burred foxgloves lisp'd together.
And to their feet the narrow bells gave rhyme.

(ii) And for the tinklings on the falls and swells
Gave the much music of our Oxford bells? 30

From "The Woodlark":

Tee wo cheevo cheevio chae!
O where, what can that be?
Weedio-weedio; there again!
So tiny a trickle of song-strain;

27 Ibid., #82.
28 Ibid., #84.
29 Ibid., #85.
30 Ibid., #87.
Round a ring, around a ring
And while I sail (must listen) I sing.  

From "What being in rank-old nature":

What being in rank-old nature should earlier have that breath been
That here personal tells off these heart-song powerful peals?  
Or a jaunting vaulting assaulting trumpet telling.  

"Repeat that, repeat":

Repeat that, repeat,
Cuckoo, bird, and open ear wells, heart-springs, delightfully sweet,
With a ballad, with a ballad, a rebound
Off trundled timber and scoops of the hillside ground, hollow hollow ground:
The whole landscape flushes on a sudden at a sound. 

From "On a Piece of Music":

How all's to one thing wrought!
The members, how they sit!
O what a tune the thought
Must be that fancied it.

Who shaped these walls has shewn
The music of his mind,
Made known, though thick through stone,
What beauty beat behind.

\[31\text{Ibid., }\#100.\]
\[32\text{Ibid., }\#101.\]
\[33\text{Ibid., }\#108.\]
Though down his being's bent
Like air he changed in choice,
That was an instrument
Which overvaulted voice.

Therefore this masterhood,
This piece of perfect song,
This fault-not-found-with good
Is neither right nor wrong,

No more than red and blue,
No more than Re and Mi,
Or sweet the golden glue
That's built for by the bee.

Who built these walls made known
The music of his mind,
Yet here he has but shewn
His ruder-rounded rind.
His brightest blooms lie there unblown,
His sweetest nectar hides behind. 34

From "The Shepherd's brow":

What bass is our viol for tragic tones? 35

"Music, in short, was never far from his thoughts," 36 and when he came to
write his poetry he naturally turned to this life-long interest which would
furnish him with apt images for poems. His musical images, it is interesting
to note, fall into two main categories: the sounds and songs of nature, es-
pecially of birds; and the sounds of musical instruments. From his early years
Hopkins was interested in and fascinated by both of these aspects of music and,
as we have noted above, refers to them repeatedly both in the journals and in

34 Ibid., #110.
35 Ibid., #122.
36 Gardner, II, 380.
The tracing of music as subjects for poems and images is admittedly not the final step in examining the influence which Hopkins' music had upon his poetry, but it is the extent to which this thesis is to go. Furthermore it will serve as a basis upon which further and more literary studies may be made. It is the opinion of the present writer that a study of Hopkins' poetry which recognizes the fact that Hopkins was himself a musician will to that extent help to explain the "musical quality" of his verse.

Gerard Manley Hopkins was a priest and an artist. As a priest his greatest concern was God and His kingdom towards Whom and towards which Hopkins' Jesuit vocation directed him. As an artist he was deeply aware of the attributes of God as manifested in creation -- the Beauty and the Mercy and the Justice of God which was to be found in nature and in brutes and in man.

Moreover, Hopkins knew that he was an artist and consequently that he had talent for expressing the beauty which he saw and felt. This talent, as he understood, was not limited to one field of art, namely poetry, but extended itself to the sister arts, music and painting. That his talent for poetry outshone his talent for music and painting we know only from the examples of each which have come down to us. From his writings we have seen that he did not subordinate his music (we have not considered his painting) to his poetry; and we have also seen that at the end of his life he felt himself more fertile in the field of music than in that of poetry. Such writings as his letters of


38 For an example of such a study see Harold Whitehall's essay on sprung rhythm in Gerard Manley Hopkins by the Kenyon Critics.
1888-1889 tell us much about his personality: they tell us that even though the springs for poetry had dried up, the springs of art had not; they reveal to us the supreme goal of Hopkins -- artistry combined with sanctity; they tell us that if we want to know him as an artist, we must not stop with an analysis of his poetry.

And so the purpose of the thesis may be briefly stated once again and finally: an investigation of Hopkins' interest and accomplishments in the field of music will lead to a more complete and deeper understanding of Hopkins the artist.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. PRIMARY SOURCES


II. SECONDARY SOURCES

NOTE TO THE FOLLOWING BIBLIOGRAPHY ON HOPKINS: The following books and articles are those consulted in writing the thesis Hopkins and Music. Most books and articles contain no mention or only a slight reference to Hopkins' music. Those which have been especially helpful in the writing of the thesis are marked with an asterisk (*).

A. BOOKS


B. ARTICLES


-----, "In a Poet's Workshop," Month, CLXVII (February 1936), 264-270.


-----, "To M'sieu Jourdain," America, LXXIX (September 18, 1948), 541-543.


Patmore, Derek. "Three Poets Discuss New Verse Forms: the Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Robert Bridges and Coventry Patmore," Month, VI (August 1951), 69-78.


Schoeck, R.J. "Originality and Influence in the Poetry of Hopkins," Renascence, IX (Winter 1956), 77-84.


Ward, Dennis. "Gerard Manley Hopkins 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves'," Month, CXCIV (July 1952), 40-51.


C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS


APPENDIX I

BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE

1852. Removal to Oak Hill, Hampstead.
1854. Attended Highgate School.
1855. Met Marcus Clarke at the Isle of Wight.
1857. Tour through the Rhineland.
1859. Prize-poem "The Escorial."
1860. Tour through Southern Germany.
1862. Received gold medal for Prize-poem "A Vision of Mermaids."
1863. Won an exhibition for Balliol College.
1866. August, wrote to Cardinal Newman concerning his conversion.
1867. October, received into the Catholic Church.
1868. Spring, took a double-first in "Greats."
1869. Autumn, taught at the Oratory School, Birmingham.
1870. Tour through Switzerland.
1871. May, decided to enter the Jesuit Order.
1873. September 7, entered the Jesuit Novitiate, Roehampton.
1874. Philosophical studies at St. Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst.
1875. Taught Classics at Manresa House, Roehampton.
1877. Theological studies at St. Beuno's College, North Wales.
1878. Ordination to the Priesthood.
1879. Preacher at Farm Street Church, London.
1880. Sub-minister at Mount St. Mary's College, Chesterfield.
1881. Preacher at St. Aloysius Church, Oxford.
1882. Renewed acquaintance with Canon Dixon.
1883. Preacher at St. Francis Xavier's Church, Liverpool.
1884. Third Year Novitiate, Roehampton.
1885-86. Taught Classics at Stonyhurst.
1887. Met Coventry Patmore while at Stonyhurst.
1888. Trip to Holland.
1889. Chair of Greek at the Royal University, Dublin.
1890. June 8, died.

APPENDIX II

EXAMPLES OF THE MUSIC OF HOPKINS

The plates on the following pages are included here for the benefit of the reader who does not have easy access to the 1959 edition of the journals and papers of Hopkins which has been quoted frequently throughout the fourth chapter of the present thesis. The plates are chosen because they are representative of the music of Hopkins -- both good and bad.

The first three songs, "Spring Ode #1," "Fallen Rain," and "The Battle of the Baltic" have been treated at length in the text of the thesis. The fourth, a setting for a ballad from Shakespeare's Winter's Tale is one of Hopkins' best modal pieces. Dr. Dykes Bower, a modern music critic, says that the tune "defies all attempts to harmonize it." (Journals, p. 474.) The last plate is that of a double setting of Hopkins' for Shakespeare's "Who is Sylvia?" from Two Gentlemen of Verona. The songs, especially the first, have been severely criticized and neither is an example of his better works. (Letters II, p. 169.)

The reader is again recommended to consult Dr. Stevens' appendix in Journals, pp. 457 to 497, for the complete texts and music of all the songs of Hopkins.
Spring Odes — no. 1
Invitation to the Country

Words by Robert Bridges

Gently and smooth

a-gain with plea-sant green has Spring re-warded the world and where the lust-ful-nesses

...are leaf-y and bushy seen And back on bud-ding boughs And back on bud-ding,

boughs Come links of sport and pour whose ri-ver a-morns vears A-sage a-sage a-

sage the scent-ed air A-sage a-sage a-sage the scent-ed air A-sage a-sage a-

sage the scent-ed air A-sage a-sage a-sage the scent-ed air

2. But now in one and let be kinder for you vears have and see and the seasons all in the and
e-ver late-ner the Lord have in its seat and have with specks of white shen with specks of white they

but the brown hill-side 00707 and ring out-right Thus pa-tient teams Thus pa-tient teams a-

strike Thus pa-tient teams Thus pa-tient teams a-strike 3. They sing to feel the sun Re-gnan be made

strength to know the year of length O-pens their li-brary doors to see the root-less stake see the root-less

stick they set base in the ground least with leaf-foot Root into sky and shade the grate-ful

soul, the grate-ful sent a-round, the grate-ful sent a-round the grate-ful sent a-round
on the blight-ed tree, on the blight-ed tree that deck his gard-en kin, and in the thirt-ed bough.

That sweet Spring, sweet Spring-time comes to him, That sweet Spring, sweet Spring-time comes to him. 6. And

coun-try life I choose. And lead be-cause I find The phi-lo-so-phy for man take no middle-way: She

will not leave her love, will not leave her love. To run with men, his art to all to share a-

love, a-love, a-love she could not stand a-part, a-love, a-love she could not stand a-part.

6. Then leave your joy-less ways, my friends, my joys to see: The day you come shall be The choice of cho-

cen's, you shall be lost and earn, shall be lost and learn. New be-yond and for-get your-self, till you return

shall bring, shall bring, shall bring your first re-gret, shall bring, shall bring, shall bring your first re-gret,

re-gret, re-gret. Cuck-o! Cuck-o! Sweet Spring-time! Cuck-o! Sweet Spring-time! Cuck-o!

Cuck-o, Cuck-o!

* Opening and concluding symphony
Fallen Rain
(Silent fell the rain) words by Canon Dixon

Dante molto legato ed espressivo

Silent fell the rain
On the earth's ground, then arose a sound
To come.

Why did I cast down from the cloud so sweet,
Trampled by the foot of the clown, by the feet of the clown?
Why was I drawn through all the rain how bright, o

Then my terrors ceased,
To the smile I bowed and the wailing cloud
flew away.

Forte agitato

Shuddered through the cruel storm
A smile flashed like a glory
And I fell and die through a snare.

Why did I cast down from the cloud so sweet,

This note is a quarter note below for the piano play as below.
When the sign for battle flew
On the lofty British

violenza.

When the sign for battle flew
On the lofty British

violenza.

Both.
l'istesso tempo, mf

Both.
l'istesso tempo, mf

Danes.

British.
espressivo, ad libitum.

British.
espressivo, ad libitum.

Danes.

There was silence deep as death, And the bravest held his breath

19. There is the further direction at the end of this bar: quasi che venisse e andasse
fell'aria. It is repeated at the end of 21 as: dolce quasi che, &c.
Allegretto.

Autolycus. Get you hence, for I must go Where it fits not you to know. Dorcas. Whi-ther? Mopsa. O! whi-ther? D. Whi-ther?

M. It be-comes thy oath full well — Thou to me thy se-crets tell. D. Me too, let me go thi- ther.

M. Or thou go' st to the grange or — mill. D. If to ei - ther thou dost ill. A. Nei- ther. D. What, nei- ther? A. Nei- ther.

D. Thou hast sworn my love to be. — M. Thou hast sworn it more to me. Then whi- ther go' st? say, whi- ther?

11 rest: MS semibreve rest. 12 ♩: MS ♩ 23 rest: MS semibreve rest.
GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS AS MUSICIAN

(A)

Who is Silvia? what is she That all our swains commend her?

Ho-ly, fair, and wise is she: The heavens such grace did lend her-

That she might admired be.

bar 10 adored: written over admired in this version.

(B)

1. Who is Silvia? what is she— That all our swains commend her?
2. Is she kind as— she is fair— For beauty lives with kind-ness.
3. Then to— Silvia let us sing, That Silvia is ex-

mend her? Ho-ly, fair and wise is she: The heavens such grace did lend her, That she might admired, That she might admired be.
 blindness And being helped in-habits, And being helped in-dwell-ing: To-her- let-us- gar-lands, To-her- let-us?

rall.

- mi-red, ad-mi-red— be.
- ha-bits, in-habits— there.
gar-lands, Let us gar-lands— bring.
The thesis submitted by John Jerome Lackamp, S.J., has been read and approved by three members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

May 15, 1960

Norman G.鸡蛋, S.J.
Signature of Adviser