

**Technique and Language of Hopkins/Style/Diction with Special reference  
to *The Windhover & Pied Beauty* (Part-2)**

[BA (Hons.), Part-3, Paper-VI]

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**...to be continued...**

As far as diction is concerned, in spite of Hopkins' avowed love for plain speech ('I dearly love calling a spade a spade'), his language appears to be obscured or eclectic. But choosing of rare, unusual and striking words in preference to ordinary ones is the consequence of trying to capture in word or phrase the exact essence or nature of something. For this purpose he often used dialectal words, especially Irish and Lancashire expression. In his poetry perhaps the most remarkable example of Lancashire usage is in *Felix Randal*:

'...Ah well, God rest him all road he ever offended!'

Here the word 'road' is from 'only road' or 'any way' so that it can mean 'God forgive him for all the ways in which he has ever sinned.' On the other hand, it may also mean 'God rest him for his sins, anyway.' Hopkins sometimes invents his own compound words or obsolete words such as 'furrow-down sillion' in *The Windhover*. He sometimes uses a 'kenning' or a

roundabout way of describing something, much used in Old Norse poetry. Thus, Hopkins describes a horse shoe as a 'bright and tottering scandal' in *Felix Randal*. The unexpected phrase, almost like a picture, makes the reader see the object afresh. Finally, one must also refer to Hopkins' frequent use of inversions:

'This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.'

Before concluding one may also point to Hopkins' gifts for assonance (as the repetitive sound /o/ in "Glory be to God for dappled things" in *Pied Beauty*) and alliteration (as repetitive /s/ and /d/ sounds in "With swift, slow; sweet, sour; dazzle, dim" in *Pied Beauty*; repetitive /m/ and /d/ sounds in "I caught this morning morning's minion, king-/dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon" in *The Windhover*), features which are the cause of the verbal melody of Hopkins.