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FOR M.A 2nd SEMESTER (ENGLISH)

Gerard Manley Hopkins (G.M. Hopkins) was born at Stratford, Essex (now part of Greater London) in 1844. His family was religious and art loving. In his undergraduate days he was under the influence of the Oxford Movement, a religious movement begun by Newman at Oxford University advocating reunion of the national church with the church of Rome. His undergraduate poems show his interest in the Catholic doctrine and pre-Raphaelite imagery. He occupies a unique place in literature history.

From following lines we can imagine how Hopkins was highly religious poet -

"The roll, the carol, the creation.

My winter's world, that scarcely breathes that bliss.

Now, yields you, with some sighs, our explanation?"

The 'sweet fire' which is badly needed for a poet was wanting in case of Hopkins. He had no rapture of an inspiration. These two poems were written in 1889 towards the close of the poet's life. Hopkins held that everything in the world was handi-work. He says that world is charged with the grandeur of God. In one of his sermons, Hopkins says the way in which creation gives way to the glory of God. "The sun and the stars shining glorify God!"

P.T.O

They stand where He placed them, they move where He bids them. The heavens declare the glory of God, they glorify God but they do not know it. Hopkins sees glory is given not only in prayer but in the common avocation of man.

Evans says :-

"Hopkins gives a far profounder poetic expression to religious experience than any poet since seventeenth century. He sought to make a poem as compact and unified as a tune and words and grammar are subdued to this effect."

In a way we can say that Hopkins was primarily a priest & a poet. His poetry has the ring of seriousness and he is undoubtedly a great religious poet.

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