

EDWARD TAYLOR AND G. M. HOPKINS:
STYLISTIC RESULTS OF THEIR SUBJECT MATTER

by

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INTRODUCTION

So long as T. S. Eliot, G. M. Hopkins, Dylan Thomas and others who have adopted the qualities of seventeenth century poetry are read with interest and admiration, so long will [Edward] Taylor's verse be experienced with enjoyment.¹

By placing Edward Taylor in the tradition of Eliot and Hopkins, Norman Grabo has implied a similarity of stylistic devices in these poets who were separated by the Atlantic Ocean and two centuries. Moreover, Grabo has suggested that Taylor anticipates Hopkins in his "method with images."² The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that Taylor anticipates Hopkins not only in his imagery, but also in his diction and even sprung rhythm. The striking stylistic similarities between the two poets may be partially explained by the fact that both men led lives of religious devotion, Taylor as a Puritan minister in the pioneer country of Westfield, Connecticut, and Hopkins as a Roman Catholic convert and a Jesuit priest. Both men created some of their best poetry in moments of spiritual anguish or exaltation; it is this emotion which may have led them to similarities of imagery, diction, and, hence, sprung rhythm. In fact, the word-choice and the imagery make the sprung rhythm inevitable. Sprung rhythm will be defined on page 14.

The two poets had similar reading tastes as well as religious interests. The major literary sources which influenced both Taylor and Hopkins were the Greek and Latin poets, Milton, and the King James version of the Bible. The strong rhythms as well as the imagery and diction of these sources are often paralleled in the poetry of Taylor and Hopkins.

¹Norman Grabo. Edward Taylor. New York, Twayne Publishers, Inc. 1961. p. 168.

²Ibid., p. 172.

DICTION AND IMAGERY

Two characteristics of Greek choral poetry can be found in the poetry of both Taylor and Hopkins: 1) the repetition of motif words, and 2) the piling up of epithets.

The repetition of motif words was almost inevitable for both Taylor and Hopkins because both restricted their poetry almost entirely to religious topics. Much of the basic Christian vocabulary, words such as God, Christ, Son, love, hope, thee, Heav'n, are monosyllabic and hence contribute to the eventual sprung rhythm. Hopkins was describing Everyman drowning in the sea of life when he wrote:

But it rides time like riding a river
(And here the faithless waver, the faithless fable and miss.)³

Ride and faith are the motif words of this excerpt. Hopkins' most famous repetition of motif words is probably the line from "God's Grandeur:"

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod.⁴

Taylor uses the same technique in his Meditation 20:

Sing Praise, sing Praise, sing Praise, sing
Praises out.⁵

In Meditation 2.142, Taylor writes:

What shall I say, my Deare, Deare Lord? most
Deare of thee!"⁶

³ Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins. Robert Bridges and W. H. Gardner, eds. New York, Oxford University Press, 1948, p. 57. Hereafter, referred to as "Bridges."

⁴ Bridges, op. cit., p. 70.

⁵ The Poems of Edward Taylor. Donald E. Stanford, ed. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1960, p. 35. Hereafter referred to as Stanford.

⁶ Ibid., p. 339.

Here, where Taylor's emotion exceeds his vocabulary, the word "deare" swells in meaning and suggests the limitation of the human mind in comprehending the incomprehensible. Taylor's repetition of motif words is the result of his great spiritual tension, whether it is overwhelming joy, as in the first example, or overwhelming love, as in the second. Taylor's repetition of motif words often tends to be the result of his artistic as well as spiritual frustration,⁷ whereas Hopkins' repetition seems to be calculated for its aesthetic pleasure. Hopkins' technique seems to be more carefully controlled, while Taylor's is an outpouring of excessive emotion.

The piling up of epithets is also practiced extensively by these two poets. Hopkins writes:

The heaven-flung, heart-fleshed, maiden-furled
Miracle-in-Mary-of-Flame.⁸

With these epithets he suggests the spiritual power and miraculousness of the Holy Mother. In a poem on the almost secular topic of Duns Scotus' Oxford, Hopkins describes the city as

Cuckoo-echoing, bell-swarmed, lark-charmed, rook-
racked, river-rounded.⁹

Notice how the alliteration and assonance call for more than ordinary emphasis on each epithet, and hence create a rather rough rhythm. Note the smoothness of the vowel and liquid consonant combinations as contrasted

⁷Charles W. Mignon. "Diction in Edward Taylor's Preparatory Meditations." AS, xli, 243-253, 1967. Mignon suggests that Taylor viewed Calvinist art as fallen art which succeeds only through God's grace.

⁸Bridges, op. cit., p. 66.

⁹Ibid., p. 84.

to the /d/ and /k/ sounds.

Whereas Hopkins' epithets were often filled with strength and beauty, Taylor's often suggested his spiritual fears and his imaginary depravities. In Meditation 40 he describes himself:

✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ /
 A Sty of Filth, a Trough of Washing-Swill
 ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ /
 A Dunghill Pit, a Puddle of mere Slime.
 ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ /
 A Nest of Vipers, Hive of Hornets; Stings.
 ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ /
 A Bag of Poyson, Civit-Box of Sins.¹⁰

But, often Taylor's epithets are not as imaginative¹¹ as those of Hopkins. In the following example, Taylor uses traditional Biblical imagery to suggest the vast dimensions of the spiritual relationship he felt with Christ.

I am thy Patient, Pupill, Servant, and
 Thy Sister, Mother, Doove, Spouse, Son, and Heire.
 Thou art my Priest, Physician, Prophet, King,
 Lord, Brother, Bridegroom, Father, Ev'ry thing.¹²

In their piling on of epithets, both Hopkins and Taylor used striking, even unexpected imagery. Taylor's "trough of washing-swill" or the comparison of his relationship to Christ as that of brother and sister are

¹⁰Stanford, op. cit., p. 64.

¹¹Taylor's images, when not from the Bible, are often straight from his confined, little New England dooryard. His images are often items such as the spinning wheel, the bucking tub, the meal bowl, and the loaf of bread. Hopkins, on the other hand, draws most of his images from nature -- the sky, the stars, the sun, the distant view. Just as Taylor's images suggest a young, insecure environment, so Hopkins' grand images suggest a settled and orderly society.

¹²Stanford, op. cit., p. 47.

unique, even if they do not have the beauty of Hopkins' imagery. Although Taylor is often criticized for his inconsistent metaphors and his jumbled imagery,¹³ one critic, Peter Thorpe, finds the inconsistency artistically satisfying because it suggests Taylor's sense of uncertainty.¹⁴

Part of the interest of Taylor's and Hopkins' epithets lies in the fact that they both often used combinative words. In "The Reflexion"¹⁵ Taylor refers to Christ as "Pearle-like" and "thy Rosy-selfe;" he describes his happiness as "heaven-lost." Taylor's phrase "Heav'nswhelm'd-down Chrystall meelee Bowle"¹⁶ sounds as if it were something Hopkins might have written. The words that Taylor combined were words that would be likely to have appeared together anyway; however, the fact that he did combine them suggests that he felt the need to depart from the ordinary patterns of speech and compress the meanings of words when he wrote about his God.

Hopkins' most famous combinative words appear in "The Windhover:"¹⁷ "dapple-dawn-drawn," "bow-bend," "gold-vermilion." Hopkins' combinative words often show the unity of nature, God's creation. Closely allied to the combinative words are the coinages which each of the poets made. In "Spring and Fall," Hopkins coined the phrase, "Though worlds of wanwood

¹³ Grabo, op. cit., p. 169. Louis Martz, "Foreword" to Stanford's edition, p. xxx. Austin Warren, *Rage for Order: Essays in Criticism*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 9.

¹⁴ Peter Thorpe, "Edward Taylor as Poet," *NEQ*, xxxix, 372, 1966.

¹⁵ Stanford, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁷ Bridges, op. cit., p. 73.

leafmeal lie." Obviously Hopkins' coinage grew out of his habit of combining words. Taylor's coinages such as "snick-snarls" have been thoroughly analyzed by Charles Mignon.¹⁸ The combinative words and the coinages that these poets used were unusual enough that the reader would have to emphasize them, and thus create sprung rhythm.

In addition to the Greek and Latin poets, the major literary classic with which Taylor and Hopkins were intimately familiar was the Bible. Both were students of the Old Testament and knew well the free verses of Psalms, Song of Solomon and Ecclesiastes. Hopkins begins his famous sonnet "Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord," with these conversational, free-sounding lines:

Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend
 With thee; but, sir, so what I plead is just.
 Why do sinners' ways prosper? and why must
 Disappointment all I endeavour end?¹⁹

The influence of the King James version of the Bible on Hopkins is obvious when these lines are compared with those of Jeremiah xii:1.

Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee;
 Yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments:
 Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?

¹⁸Mignon, op. cit., p.245. See also Thorpe, op. cit., p. 358.

¹⁹Bridges, op. cit., p. 113.

Hopkins' extensive use of the monosyllable in the first line of the sonnet and the sprung syntax in the last line of the sonnet help contribute to the sprung rhythm, the same type of sprung rhythm which can be found in the passage from Jeremiah.

Edward Taylor drew inspiration from the famous poetry of Ruth i:16 when he wrote:

/ / ∨ / ∨ / / ∨ /
 I thy Relations my Relations name.
 / / ∨ / / / ∨ /
 Thy Father's mine, thy God my God.²⁰

In Ruth, the text reads "thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." Taylor retains the Old Testament rhythm pattern in his verse.

In Meditation 20 he takes lines directly from Psalms xxiv:7.

/ / ∨ / ∨ / / ∨ / ∨ /
 Lift up your Heads, ye lasting Doore, they sing
 ∨ / ∨ / ∨ / ∨ / ∨ /
 And let the King of Glory Enter in.²¹

As in the excerpt from Ruth, these lines are packed with the monosyllables that help to create sprung rhythm.

Both Hopkins and Taylor had read the powerful rhythms of Milton. Hopkins called Milton the master of handling rhythm,²² and he especially favored the sprung rhythms of the choruses of *Samson Agonistes*. Both the rhythm and the imagery of the following lines from *Samson Agonistes*

²⁰Stanford, op. cit., p. 47.

²¹Stanford, op. cit., 35.

²²W. H. Gardiner. *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Study of Poetic Idiosyncrasy in Relation to Poetic Tradition*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1949, vol. 1, p. 42.

sound like Hopkins and Taylor.

O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
 Irrecoverably dark, total Eclipse.

Without all hope of Day!

O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
 "Let there be light, and light was over all."²³

The motif words in this passage are "dark" and "light," and emphasizing them tends to create the sprung rhythm. The many important monosyllables of this excerpt -- blaze, noon, hope, day, Beam, thou, great, word -- all call for extra stress. The overwhelming emotion which Milton packs into these lines recalls the fervor evidenced by Taylor and Hopkins.

Perhaps the most spectacular imagery any Christian poet can use is that of the heavens, and both Taylor and Hopkins, like Milton, employed the images of sky, clouds, stars, heaven, and the vastness of space. Compare Taylor's metaphor "heav'ns whelm'd-down Chrystall Meele Bowle" with Hopkins'

Let him easter in us, be a dayspring to the dimness of us,
 be a crimson-cresseted east.²⁴

Like Milton, both poets use the imagery of sunrise, the arch of heaven, and light and darkness. These lines from both Taylor and Hopkins recall Milton's "Nativity Ode" or Book I of Paradise Lost. ("Him the Almighty

²³

"Samson Agonistes," John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose, Merritt Y. Hughes, ed. New York, The Odyssey Press, 1957, p. 533.

²⁴

Bridges, op. cit., p. 67.

Power/Hurled headlong flaming from th'ethereal sky.")²⁵

Norman Grabo has suggested that Taylor anticipated Hopkins in his images rather than in his rhythm. Compare, for example, Hopkins "ooze of oil crushed"²⁶ and Taylor's

Like Caskd wines jumbled breake the Caske, this Sparke
Oft swells when crusht: untill it breakes the Heart.

Both Taylor and Hopkins used the traditional imagery of the bird in a cage²⁷ to symbolize the soul in man's body. See Taylor's "Bird of Paradise"²⁸ and Hopkins' "Caged Skylark."²⁹ They used many other similar images: God as the judge; frequent repetition of gold, silver and jewels as symbols of spiritual worth; color -- the blackness of man and his deeds and the milk-white of God; blood as a symbol of man's sin and God's grace. As has already been established, a similarity of images can naturally lead to a similarity of rhythm patterns.

²⁵Hughes, op. cit., p. 212.

²⁶Bridges, op. cit., p. 70.

²⁷Grabo, op. cit., p. 172.

²⁸Stanford, op. cit., p. 18.

²⁹Bridges, op. cit., p. 75.

SPRUNG RHYTHM

Now that the diction and imagery parallels between Taylor and Hopkins have been established, it will be possible to illustrate how Taylor anticipated Hopkins in the use of sprung rhythm. As has already been stated, separating diction and imagery from the resultant sprung rhythm is impossible. The purpose of discussing the diction and the imagery separately has been to show that certain elements common in sprung rhythm such as the monosyllable, the highly concentrated imagery, and the combinative words abound in the poetry of Taylor and Hopkins.

Both men of deep religious fervor, Edward Taylor and Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote compulsively of their intensely personal religious experiences and their imaginary unworthiness. They lament their worldliness with similar imagery and similar rhythm patterns in the following passages. Hopkins cries:

Thou mastering me
 God! giver of breath and bread;
 World's strand, sway of the sea;
 Lord of the living and dead;
 Thou hast bound bones and veins in me, fastened me flesh
 And after it almost unmade, what with dread,
 Thy doing: and dost thou touch me afresh?
 Over again I feel thy finger and find thee.³⁰

³⁰Bridges, op. cit., p. 55.

In this passage, it is the alliteration, rather than the end rhyme, which unifies the stanza. Most of the important words -- Thou, me, God, Lord, bones, breath, bread, flesh, feel, find -- are monosyllables.

Taylor, too, pleads to be made one with God, but he uses different imagery:

Thou! thou! my Deare-Deare Lord, art this rich tree
 The Tree of Life Within Gods Paradise.
 I am a Withred Twig, dri'de fit to bee
 A Chat Cast in thy fire, Writh off my Vice.
 Yet if thy Milke white-Gracious Hand will take mee
 And grafft mee in this golden stock, thou'lt make mee,³¹

In these two examples, once again clusters of stressed feet suggest one can imagine -- the tortured souls of these men.³² Taylor's metrical roughness seems to stem from his effort to squeeze the maximum amount of sense into an iambic pentameter framework; this results in packed lines such as "Heav'ns whelm'd-down Chrystall mee le Bowle." Because God's grace is overflowing and abundant, Taylor's rhythms are too.³³ Perhaps another reason that the poet's rhythm patterns and imagery are so "packed" is that the sacred subject matter cannot be compromised; the theology from which it is drawn is absolute.

³¹Stanford, op. cit., p. 47.

³²Peter Thorpe, op. cit., p. 360. Thorpe mentions that the sprung syntax of much of Taylor's poetry suggests his suffering.

³³Ibid., p. 366.

Neither Taylor nor Hopkins thought of poetry as a major vocation, but each thought of it as, in addition to his ministry, a mode of worship, devotion and penance. Each man was in constant need of defining his religious position; perhaps that is why these men turned to the art form of poetry. Only through its symbolism could they translate a mystical experience into comprehensible terms.³⁴ Taylor suggests some of the mental agony he suffered in these Hopkinsian sounding lines:

But plung'd I am, my minde is puzzled,
 When I would spin my Phancy thus unspun,
 In finest twine of Praise I'm muzzled.
 My tazzled Thoughts twirld into Snick-Snarls run.
 Thy Grace, my Lord, is such a glorious thing,
 It doth Confound me when I would it sing.³⁵

In the poem, "Pied Beauty," Hopkins describes the glorious confusion of nature in which he sees the magnanimity of God reflected:

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
 Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
 With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
 He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
 Praise him.³⁶

³⁴ Ibid., p. 358. Thorpe supports a point already made in this paper: that Taylor had to coin terms by which he could translate his incomprehensible, even mystical, ideas.

³⁵ Stanford, op. cit., p. 51. The frustration apparent in the above lines show a Calvinist artist who believes that even his art is fallen, until it is saved by God's grace. See footnote seven on page 3.

³⁶ Bridges, op. cit., p. 74.

The eternal mystery (who knows how?) was a source of both frustration and inspiration to these poets.

The term "sprung rhythm" -- already used extensively in this paper -- has never been thoroughly defined. Although Hopkins coined the term, he defined it simply as "bringing the living language to poetry through the use of the stress and rhythm of natural speech."³⁷ He wrote to Robert Bridges, "I do not of course claim to have invented sprung rhythms, but only sprung rhythm....What I do in Deutschland is to infranchise them as a regular and permanent principle of scansion."³⁸

Several scholars have attempted to define sprung rhythm. According to W. H. Gardner, the primary rule of sprung rhythm is that one stress makes one foot, no matter how few the syllables.³⁹ An example of heavily loaded sprung rhythm can be found in Hopkins' "Harry Ploughman:"

He leans to it, Harry bends, look. Back, elbow,
and liquid waist
In him, all quail to the wallowing o' the plough:'s
cheek crimsons; curls⁴⁰

As many as ten stresses can be found in the first line and eight are in the second line. The same lines could also be read with as few as seven stresses.

³⁷Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, C. C. Abbott, ed., London, Oxford University Press, 1935, vol. 1, p. 35.

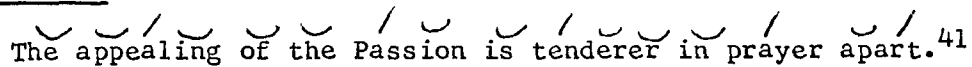
³⁸Ibid., p. 35.

³⁹Gardner, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 43.

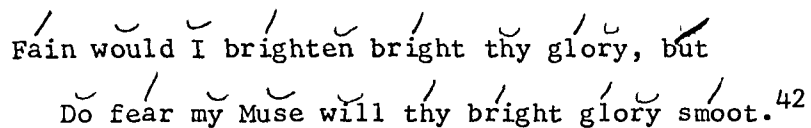
⁴⁰Bridges, op. cit., p. 108.

Another Hopkins scholar, Alan Heuser, points out that in addition to the monosyllable, the basic foot of sprung rhythm is the paeon, a foot of one long syllable and three short syllables occurring in any order. Hopkins uses the paeonic foot extensively; one example occurs in

Deutschland:


 The appealing of the Passion is tenderer in prayer apart.⁴¹

Taylor too uses the paeon in his Meditations:


 Fain would I brighten bright thy glory, but
 Do fear my Muse will thy bright glory smoot.⁴²

Note not only the paeons in these lines, but also the many monosyllabic feet which give an effect of roughness to the poem. There is also a repetition of motif words (bright, brighten) which call for emphasis.

What, then, is "sprung rhythm?" No formal definition will be posited here, but perhaps the following could serve as a working definition: Sprung rhythm is found in verse where there is an abundance of monosyllabic and paeonic feet, reversed syntax, run-on lines, and a rhythm controlled by the number of beats per line rather than the number of syllables. Sprung rhythm will often be accompanied by alliteration, assonance, internal and slant rhymes, combinative words and packed images. Almost any combination of these characteristics, providing there is an abundance of monosyllabic feet, will result in sprung rhythm. Sprung rhythm departs from the basic iambic foot of conventional English verse. Because of the freedom of rhythm patterns, a poem containing sprung rhythm will usually

⁴¹Ibid., p. 64.

⁴²Stanford, op. cit., 308.

have startling imagery and a strong emotional appeal. One can sense the poet's exaltation or anguish, joy or fear, as he beats out these contorted rhythm patterns.

In a recently published article,⁴³ Elizabeth W. Schneider has suggested that most poets, including Hopkins, used sprung rhythm as a variant, rather than as a principle of scansion. Most of Wreck of the Deutschland is conventional rhythm, she says, with sprung rhythm appearing primarily in the last stanzas. In order to refute Miss Schneider's theory, look at stanza three of Deutschland:

The frown of his face
 Before me, the hurtle of hell
 Behind, where, where was a, where was a place?
 I whirled out wings that spell
 And fled with a fling of the heart to the heart of the host.
 My heart, but you were doveswinged, I can tell,
 Carrier-witted, I am bold to boast,
 To flash from the flame to the flame then, tower from the grace to the
 grace.⁴⁴

This is the most "regular" example to be found in Deutschland. Although the anapestic foot vies with the monosyllable for the dominance here, the extensive use of alliteration (frown/ face/ fled/ fling/ flash/ flame, hurtle/ hell, whirled/ wings, heart/ host) demands that the alliterated

⁴³ Elizabeth W. Schneider. "Sprung Rhythm: A Chapter in the Evolution of Nineteenth Century Verse," PMLA, lxxx, p. 251, 1965.

⁴⁴ Bridges, op. cit., p. 56.

words be emphasized. Notice also the extensive use of the "l" sound to give a sense of whirling or flying. These devices are what "spring" the ostensibly regular rhythm pattern of the stanza.

In contrast to Hopkins' poetry, the simplest examples of sprung rhythm can be found in nursery rhymes such as "Jack Sprat could eat no fat/ His wife could eat no lean." On a more sophisticated level, it is found in Tennyson's "Break, break, break/ On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!" For nearly perfect use of the paeonic foot, note Walter de la Mare's "'Is there anybody there,' said the Traveller/ Knocking on the moonlit door." Or, Robert Frost's famous line, "One could do worse than be a swinger of birches."

Examples of sprung rhythm abound in the poetry of Edward Taylor:

- (1) Hope's Day-peep dawns hence through this chinck, Christ's name,
 Propitiation is for sins. Lord, take
 It 'so for mine.⁴⁵
- (2) What wonder's here, that Bread of Life should come
 To feed Dead Dust? Dry Dust eate Living Bread?⁴⁶
- (3) See waile, and Will thy Will, I must, or must
 From Heavens sweet Shine to Hells hot flame be thrust.⁴⁷

There is an abundance of stress clustering in example one. Notice the alliteration (Day/dawns, peep/Propitiation, chinck/Christ), and the

⁴⁵ Stanford, op. cit., p. 66.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 20.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 28.

slant rhyme (chinck/take). This proliferation of poetic devices draws attention to almost every syllable, and thus helps to create sprung rhythm.

In example two, there are regular iambs in the first line, but a predominance of stress clustering in the second. The repetition of motif words (dust) and the use of oxymoron ("Dry [Dead] Dust eate Living Bread") draw special attention to the diction and thus break the regular rhythm pattern. In example three there is again the dominant stress cluster, repetition of motif words, rhyme, alliteration, and assonance.

Now that Taylor's use of sprung rhythms has been established, let us look at some of his sprung rhythm, used in the Hopkinsian sense of a regular and permanent principle of scansion.⁴⁸

- (1) This fill would to the brim
 Heav'ns whelmed-down Chrystall meelee Bowle, yea and higher.
 This Bread of Life dropt in my mouth, doth Cry
 Eate, Eate me, Soul, and thou shalt never dy.⁴⁹
- (2) Once at the Feast, I saw thee Pearle-like stand
 'Tween Heaven, and Earth where Heaven's Bright glory all
 In streams fell on thee, as a floodgate and,
 Like Sun Beams through thee on the World to Fall.
 Oh! sugar sweet then! my Deare sweet Lord, I see
 Saints Heaven-lost Happiness restor'd by thee.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Gardner, op. cit., p. 43.

⁴⁹Stanford, op. cit., p. 19.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 14.

(3) Thou Rod of Davids Root, Branch of his Bough
 My Lord, repara thy Palace, Deck thy Place.
 I'm but a Flesh and Blood bag: Oh! do thou
 Sill, Plate, Ridge, Rib, and Rafter me with Grace.
 Renew my Soul and guild it all within:
 And hand thy saving Grace on ery pin.⁵¹

In these three examples, Taylor has extended his sprung rhythm throughout an entire stanza of a meditation. Again, note the excess of monosyllables, the alliteration, the assonance, the rhyme, the repetition of motif words, and, in example three, the piling on of epithets. There is reversal of syntax in the first line of example one, and in the third line of example three. This sprung syntax creates sprung rhythm because the reader must emphasize word order for clarity. The intentional repetition of sounds, which Taylor probably would have learned in his rhetorical training in school, varies the cadence and stops the reader's attention at unexpected intervals; hence, sprung rhythm.

A distinction must also be made between sprung rhythm and simply poor versification on Taylor's part. Many of his irregular rhythms were the result of his lack of skill in handling rhythm. In the early Meditations, the couplet at the end of each stanza is usually quite regular in spite of the rough rhythm in the preceding four lines. By about 1710, Taylor had achieved regular rhythm consistently in the Meditations; the change can be interpreted in two ways: 1) Taylor had always wanted

⁵¹Stanford, op. cit., p. 49.

smooth rhythms and finally achieved them after many years of practice; or, 2) Taylor lost some of the emotional tension of his younger days, and hence did not feel the need for the strained, irregular rhythm patterns. The former explanation seems more plausible because the miscellaneous poems and God's Determinations, which Taylor intended to be read, were all written in a rather regular rhythm with frequent use of the rhyming couplet. These are the poems that Taylor polished and probably thought were his best; often in these poems he makes frequent use of alliteration, assonance, and end-rhyme just as he did in the earlier Meditations. The 214 Meditations, written over a period of forty years, were his personal preparations for his pastoral duties; therefore, the private devotions were not intended for publication. In the poems he intended for others to read, Taylor used an almost neo-classical style; however, the subject and imagery were the same often crude, sometimes erudite, usually flamboyant ones used in the Meditations.

In Hopkins a reverse process can be seen; his early poems such as "A Mermaid" and "A Soliloquy of One of the Spies Left in the Wilderness" were written in quite regular rhythm and rhyme. What Hopkins desired was to break away from this style and experiment with rhythm as he did in his later poems.

CONCLUSION

Although separated by the Atlantic Ocean and two centuries, Edward Taylor and Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote with surprisingly similar diction, imagery and rhythm patterns. Since Taylor was not discovered until 1939, there was, of course, no possibility of influence; what must have driven these men to use comparable types of diction, imagery and rhythm was a similarity of religious fervor. Each found in the sprung rhythm patterns a "technical correlative" through which his emotions could be expressed. The coinages and combinative words which these poets devised were another means by which they could convey their unique spiritual experiences. Taylor and Hopkins are men who distinguished themselves by stepping out of the mainstream of poetic tradition.

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