

20/5/20
 Lecture No. - 29
 Dr. Hemanti Jha

English (Hons.)

Paper VI / DIII / Modern Literature

Topic : G. M. Hopkins: "Pied Beauty" (continued)

Title of the poem :-

The literal meaning of word "pied" is 'variegated' or multi-coloured. The title of the poem is indicative of the poet's sense of appreciation and awe at the variousness or diversity of beautiful things to be found all around us. The beauties of the earth do not show a uniformity of shape and colour. They are multi-faceted.

Critical Estimate :-

Hopkins's deep religious spirit is intensified by his love of beauty which is a manifestation of God. Beauty lies in the variety of form and colour that are displayed now in harmony and now in contrast, and the spirit of the poet is intoxicated with the rich feel of sensuous things.

②-nd and water and sky, the animate and the inanimate world—each has its quota of beauty, and as the poet takes it in through his senses his heart goes upto God in thankfulness. God, who is changeless, manifests Himself through innumerable; Who is one, reveals himself in the many. But what is most interesting is the poetic style used by Hopkins. For one thing, the bare images are left to produce the sharpest impressions on the senses: not a single word is wasted; each epithet is left to create its own impression. In this way the poet achieves the highest concentration of effects. It is the apotheosis of the concrete. The rhythm also is novel. The unit is the accent, not the syllable as in Langland, or the chorus of "Samson Agonistes" or Coleridge's "Christabel". It had a very great effect in the development of mo-

- dem poetry which even continues to the present day. (3)

Substance:-

May God be praised for the variegated beauty of the world. Though he is above all changes. He has created things that are diversified in colour and appearance. The changing patterns of the sky like a cow's hide, brownish and streaked with other colours; trout speckled with red; the flame coloured nut of the fallen chestnut contrasting with its green husk; multicoloured wings of finches; landscapes divided into separate fields; green pasture lands; brown land left fallow; and tawny fields newly ploughed; men's equipments connect with their jobs, — all things, unusual, strange and out of the ordinary; — all these are creations of God, along with all other things that owe their beauty to principles of contrast, inco-

(4)

- consistency or change. It is our duty to sing hymns in His Honour.

Hopkins's material has no novelty about it. His poetry was based upon material common to his contemporaries. This lyric, for instance, has the themes of praise of God for the peer beauty of Nature. Such praise has been sung by poets in all ages. Nature is God's creation. The last line of the lyric expresses the speechless wonder and the overwhelming gratitude of the poet. As in his other poems, in this lyric too, Hopkins uses the "sprung rhythm" based on stress of syllables to bring it closer to that of common speech.

Hopkins's use of alliteration as well as his use of diction which is drawn from both literary and non-literary sources, has an unusual vitality and freshness as is evident in this lyric. His compounds are also original: "couple-coloured", "chestnut-falls", "fathers-forth" etc.

—x—x— (concluded)