

What is a University?
(Continued from page 4)

and in London a University scarcely exists except as a board of administration. The newspapers, magazines, reviews, journals, and periodicals of all kinds, the publishing trade, the libraries, museums, and academies there found, the learned and scientific societies, necessarily invest it with the functions of a University; and that atmosphere of intellect, which in a former age hung over Oxford or Bologna or Salamanca, has, with the change of times, moved away to the centre of civil government. Thither come up youths from all parts of the country, the students of law, medicine, and fine arts, and employés and attachés of literature. There they live, as chance determines; and they are satisfied with their temporary home, for they find in it all that was promised to them there. They have not come in vain, as far as their own object in coming is concerned. They have not learned any particular religion, but they have learned their own particular profession well. They have, moreover, become acquainted with the habits, manners, and opinions of their place of sojourn, and done their part in maintaining the tradition of them. We cannot then be without virtual Universities; a metropolis is such: the simple question is, whether the education sought and given should be based on principle, formed upon rule, directed to the highest ends, or left to the random succession of masters and schools, one after another, with a melancholy waste of thought and an extreme hazard of truth.

Religious teaching itself affords us an illustration of our subject to a certain point. It does not indeed seat itself merely in centres of the world; this is impossible from the nature of the case. It is intended for many, not the few; its subject matter is truth necessary for us, not truth recondite and rare; but it concurs in the principle of a University so far as this, that its great instrument, or rather organ, has ever been that which nature prescribes in all education, the personal presence of a teacher, or, in theological language, Oral Tradition. It is the living voice, the breathing form, the expressive countenance, which preaches, which catechises. Truth, a subtle, invisible manifold spirit, is poured into the mind of the scholar by his eyes and ears, through his affections, imagination and reason; it is poured into his mind and is sealed up there in perpetuity, by propounding and repeating it, by questioning and re-questioning, by correcting and explaining, by progressing and then recurring to first principles, by all those ways which are implied in the word "catechising." In the first ages, it was work of
(Continued on page 25)

IMPRESSIONS ON
Hopkins

• by MARIA ELENA RUIZ

HOPKINS has been accused, time and again, because of his Catholic faith, of voicing the sentiment of the Church. He has been dubbed "a Catholic poet", just as Graham Greene has been called "a Catholic novelist"; and many of his critics who did not share his belief took up arms against him for this reason alone. Perhaps they would not admit it openly, for critics are a proud people and they themselves shun the idea of being criticized like plague—specially for a gross error in their inferences. Nevertheless, they committed this short-sightedness, even considering that it was done unconsciously. Hopkins' religion does not make him more or less of a poet. The measure of a poet is his poetry. To be fair to Hopkins we should affirm, like what a critic has said of Graham Greene, that his religion is not only a creed but also a way of life.

Hopkins believed that purely artistic judgment can be imposed on poetry, that literary work can be considered for its art value alone. This, however, does not make him a disciple of the art-for-art's-sake theory. He was very far away from it, for he considered purely artistic judgment inadequate when there is no moral effect, and that a work of art is also to educate and to be "standard". "It is by being known it works, it influences, it does its duty, it does good." Since a work of art is also to educate the public and "contribute to the glory of the State and the Church," it must naturally have an audience. To have an audience is what all poets ask for. The audience is essential to the art-world—and to the development of a poet.

Hopkins thought very highly of poetry. He knew its potentialities and its functions. Poetry, he said, must be of the highest quality. The form in poetry must be fully developed and exploited. There must be masterly execution to guarantee great poetry. The idea may be a great matter of poetry, but to make it lasting there must be full knowledge of the technique of the art. Only great ideas together with the most skillful execution produce great poetry: this is the blending of the form with the meaning.

Everything must be realized and the possibilities of form fully exploited. However, as Hopkins believed, a demand for absolute perfection is absurd, for perfection in a work of art can never be achieved but can only be approached. Truth can only be suggested, not stated nor proven.

Hopkins was very much influenced by Scotus, the great medieval thinker. Scotus believed that each individual has a distinctive "form": a *haecceitas*, or thisness, as well as a generic *quidditas*, or whatness. It was from Scotus that Hopkins got his "inscape". Every work of art has its own "inscape", or its own individuality and uniqueness. The working together of all the parts in a poem—the diction, the stanza, the meter, the sounds of the words, etc.—make up the "inscape". It is this unity in a poem that makes up the wholeness, and this wholeness makes the poem exist as it can exist in no other way. Because every poem has its own "inscape", and the characteristic of "inscape" is uniqueness, some poems are very obscure and very difficult to understand. Immediate clarity cannot be achieved at once. But Hopkins, despite this, never believed in sacrificing the "inscape" for intelligibility. To quote Louis Untermeyer speaking of Hopkins: "Behind the tortured construction and heaped-up epithets there is magnificence. In spite of the verbal excesses and idiomatic oddities, there is an originality of vision which is nothing less than startling." The oddities in a poem may make the poem unintelligible and ungraspable at once, but they do not lacerate and destroy it. Instead by its own uniqueness and oddness it has an originality, a particular perspective, which can exist in no other way except by being unique.

Since a work of art with emphasis on form cannot achieve immediate clarity, only the comprehension of the total idea and rhythmic pattern, the total sound pattern, rhyme, assonance, alliteration, i.e., the grasping of the work of art in its totality, grasped not gradually as part by part but in its wholeness, can make the poem clear. Hopkins believed in the existence and reality of "explosive" poetry. The quality of "explosive" poetry is an exact combination of sound and meaning.

In Hopkins' poetry there are series of musical dissonances. He worked out a scheme of prosody. He is considered an innovator in poetic structure. His poems are sometimes very obscure. But behind this obscurity and series of musical dissonances and scheme of prosody in his poetry is the marked consciousness of a very meticulous artist who saw that in a work of art there is a plan and an execution which must fit into the whole work of art. #