INTRODUCTION

... I remember it was my M.A. Degree Examination, Poetry paper. My preparation was not bad. As usual the question on 'The Windhover' bobbed up. That was such a real snorter. My confidence or over-confidence of answering Hopkins buckled. Puzzling Browning unequally stood to my rescue, and I passed out the examination. The question paper setter was not made of sterner stuff, the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins was. I realized.

Anyway that is what actually made me study Hopkins. The British Council Library, Madras, of which I have the good luck of continuing as a postal member till now, with exemplary promptness sent me entire Hopkins on their stock. As a lecturer in service I studied Hopkins unguided.

But not until I became the student of Dr.V.S. Seturaman, Professor and Head of the Department of English, Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur, as a part time candidate for M.Phil; did I realize that Hopkins is not a poet as much to be studied as to be read with the ear. Prof. Seturaman's teaching of Hopkins meant to me more than I can acknowledge here.
"No one not getting wet in rain, no one not drinking deep of the sparkling and energizing waters of knowledge of the V.S. Seturaman fountain that gush forth in spontaneous profusion" is what I say of those who come down here to become his students.

What is presented in these few pages, I accept, is not anything new to be added to the Hopkinsiana, but I humbly acknowledge it is my renewed attempt to improve my knowledge of the poet. If there are one or two new flashes by the way, I owe them gratefully to the great accumulator of the incisive criticisms of the line of illustrious critics and scholars of Hopkins: Prof. W.H. Gardner, Dr. John Pick, James Finn Cotter, Todd K. Bender, Prof. Norman N. Mackenzie, James Milroy to quote a few; and Prof. Seturaman who not only systematized my little knowledge of Hopkins but guided me through and through in writing this.

For all other flaws and flounderings, I am solely responsible.