It is a well-known fact that St. Ignatius Loyola's conversion was the offshoot of his reading *The Life of Christ* by Ludolf of Saxony, *The Golden Legend* by Jacopo de Voragine and *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis. Ignatius' biographers attest the fact that he paid a good deal of importance to *The Life of Christ* and the stories of St. Augustine, St. Francis, St. Dominic and St. Onuphrius which he found in *The Golden Legend*. These books brought Ignatius into direct contact with the whole tradition of Christianity. Needless to say, the contents of his *Spiritual Exercises* draw their sustenance from the Holy Bible, especially from the *New Testament*.

St. Ignatius did not try to make any radical departure from the orthodox Christian theology. He took great pains to attune his religious experiences to the central dogmas of the Church. This obviously explains the presence of a chapter in the Exercises entitled "Rules For Thinking With The Church" in which he writes: "... for our Holy Mother the Church is guided and ruled by the same Spirit and Lord that gave the Ten Commandments". Significantly enough, Ignatius linked "thinking with the Church" with obedience to God which was one of the
At the very outset, it is important to understand the meaning of the term "Ignatian" with reference to the pith and marrow of Hopkins' body poetic. Ignatius projects in the Exercises the image of a triune God in action: God, the Father (in the Principle and Foundation, and the First Week) Who created, chastised and expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, Christ, the Son (Second, Third and Fourth Weeks) Who became man for the redemption of mankind, and the Holy Spirit (Contemplation for Obtaining Love) Who instills into man the gnosis and love of God. For Ignatius, the Nativity is the supreme event in the annals of mankind inasmuch as it was through Christ that man was freed from the blight of the Original Sin. These aspects of St. Ignatius' thought determine the basic nature of his view of Christianity, as we find it in the Exercises.

The foundation of Ignatian spirituality lies in practising the Ignatian code of conduct. A follower of Ignatius is acutely conscious of God's grandeur and the mystery of the operation of His will in the world of
His making. Total submission to the will of God is another attribute of an Ignatian man. The Ignatian perception of the universe is basically sensuous in quality. An Ignatian man does not discard the world, but rather tries to have a first-hand experience of it. He is ravished by the beauty of things because they transmit the news of the existence of God. His attitude to the beautiful things of the world is basically sacramental. He is firmly of the view that all things lead him back to God and does not, therefore, like to use anything which may in the least hinder his understanding of God. He, in other words, makes a persistent effort to live in the world created by God for His greater glory.

Ignatius, we are told, was a soldier typefying in himself the ideal of chivalric knighthood. He laid utmost stress on the values of perfect discipline in the conduct of human life and chivalrous decorum in personal relationships. The practice of these values was enjoined on his followers by St. Ignatius "to distinguish oneself more" by showing his loyalty to the Eternal King — in contradistinction to an earthly one — in order to act as the Knight of Christ to pull down the Standard
of Lucifer. He is enjoined to defeat the interests of Lucifer by practising stern and discreet discipline in his life like Christ. These ideas are expressed by St. Ignatius in "The Kingdom of Christ" and "A Meditation on Two Standards" which guide an Ignatian man to the "Election" of Christian knighthood, the true adherence to which is based on the idea of all-embracing love.

It is not possible to appreciate Hopkins in a genuine manner without discussing the formidable influence of Ignatius and his spirituality on his poetry. Hopkins' poetic vision was characterized in a very conspicuous manner by Ignatian ideals and spirituality. Needless to say, Hopkins had an acute poetic sensibility and his whole poetic endeavour was basically of a sensuous nature. His poetic sensibility consistently exhibits a movement from the material to the spiritual. One can argue that many poets exhibit this kind of transcendence in their poetic vision. But there is perhaps hardly any who sacramentalized the physical universe in the Hopkins manner. It can be appropriately said that his relation to physical universe was ecstatic and in this particular respect he was quite close to the
Romantics. In Hopkins' poetic aesthetics, the beauty of the spiritual always overrides that of the material reality. In this sacramentalization of created beauty belonging to the physical universe lies the core of Hopkins' sensousness which is guided by the spirit of Ignatius.

When St. Ignatius laid down the qualifications of a general of the Order of Jesus in the Constitutions (ix.2,6), he greatly emphasised discretion and prudence in the management of the spiritual life of his followers. The soldier of Christ must always discern the mysterious actions of God in human life. Hopkins knew this during his training as a Jesuit at St. Beuno's when he wrote his longest ur-poem The Wreck of the Deutschland (1876). The poem can be regarded as a poetical analysis of his discernment of the mysterious ways of God in the affairs of human life.

There can be perhaps no more accurate description of the First Week of Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises than the one found in Hopkins' words in The Deutschland: "Trod hard down with a horror of hight". Herein consists the psychological effect produced in the exercitant by
the First Week. The exercitant reflects on his past sins and considers himself "as an ulcer and abscess whence have issued so many sins and so many inequities, and such vile poison". Under such circumstances, God's descent to touch him afresh is aptly described by Hopkins as full of the "horror of height". Ignatius says:

"Consider who God is, against Whom I have sinned, looking at His attributes, comparing them with their contraries in myself: His wisdom with my ignorance, His omnipotence with my weakness, His justice with my inequity, His goodness with my malice."¹ It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that Hopkins expresses, in stanza 2, the afflictive forces of grace experienced by him through the Exercises in terms of physical suffering: "And the midriff astrain with leaning of, laced with fire of stress".

In stanza 3, Hopkins finds himself between two negative situations: on the one hand, he reflects on his sins and the horror they lead to and, on the other, he confronts God Whom he has offended: "where was a place". This is the spiritual tight corner in which Ignatius puts the exercitant during the First Week: the "frown" before and the "hurtle" after. It is in such circumstances that Hopkins delivers his "heart to the heart of the
"Host". The phrase "fling of the heart" symbolizes "the aspiration in answer to his inspiration". It also stands for the "Election" of the Exercises after a psychological metamorphosis intended by the Exercises. In his Commentary on The Spiritual Exercises, Hopkins writes: "for there must be something which shall be truly the creature's in the work of corresponding with grace: this is the arbitrium, the verdict on God's side, the saying Yes, the 'doing-agree' (to speak barbarously), and looked at in itself, such a nothing is the creature before its creator, it is found to be no more than the mere wish, discernible by God's eyes, that it might do as he wishes, might correspond, might say Yes to him."

In stanza 5, Hopkins expresses his sensuous perception of God through the world of Nature: "I kiss my hand/ To the stars, lovely-asunder/ Starlight, wafting him out of it." The Foundation of the Exercises deals with the whole concept of created things leading man back to the Creator: "The other things on the face of the earth were created for man's sake, and in order to aid him in the prosecution of the end for which he was
In stanza 28, Hopkins poetically expresses the shock of the presence of the Lord: "Strike you the sight of it? Look at it loom there,/ Thing that she ... there then! the Master,/ Ipse, the only one, Christ, King, Head". In stanza 29, Hopkins poetically exalts the tall nun and her other four colleagues who corresponded to God's grace: "Ah! there was a heart right!/ There was a single eye!/ Read the unshapeable shock night/ And knew the who and why." The tall nun knew what Ignatius wrote at Manresa — that all man are led back to God by His stress: "Wording it how but by him that present and past,/ Heaven and earth are word of, worded by?" In his Commentary, Hopkins writes: "God's utterance of himself in himself is God the Word, outside himself is this world. This world is then Word, expression, news, of God. Therefore its end, its purpose, its purport, its meaning, is God, and its life or work to name and praise him".  

In the last line of stanza 28, Hopkins finds the action of the nun similar to that of Christ: "Let him ride, her pride, in his triumph, dispensage and have done with his doom there". In stanza 30, he regards the nun
as another Virgin Mary conceiving Christ anew for another Incarnation: "For so conceived, so to conceive thee is done;/ But here was heart-throe, birth of a brain,/ Word, that heard and kept thee and uttered thee outright".

This similarity of divine and human action pin-points the way Divine grace operates in human life. Hopkins further illuminates the point in his Commentary:

For grace is any action, activity, on God's part by which, in creating or after creating, he carries the creature to or towards the end of its being, which is its self-sacrifice to God and its salvation. It is, I say, any such activity on God's part; so that so far as this action or activity is God's it is divine stress, holy spirit, and, as all is done through Christ, Christ's spirit; so far as it is action, correspondence, on the creature's it is actio salutaria; so far as it is looked at in esse quieta it is Christ in his member on the one side, his member in Christ on the other. It is as if a man said: That is Christ playing at me and me playing at Christ, only that it is no play but truth. That is Christ being me and me being Christ.
There are two qualities in *The Deutschland* which make it strikingly Ignatian in content. The first is that Hopkins finds the action of God in the wreck of the 'Deutschland'. He believes that God placed human beings in such physical agony that they must choose quickly to consign their lives to Him renewing the Passion and the Crucifixion. The other Ignatian quality of the poem consists in the service that the nuns offer Christ. They consign themselves to Him in a horrible situation. The way they do it is heroic, chivalric and knightly which precisely bears the stamp Ignatius put on the Society of Jesus: "the greatest sacrifice in the greatest danger made with the greatest generosity". By doing so, the nuns affirmed the majesty of Christ the King. This, on its most profound level, is the pith and marrow of this great poem. The spirit and tone of *The Deutschland* is patently Ignatian. Its movement from agony to joy in the company of Christ as the exemplar of both is the quintessence of Christian doctrine and central to the Exercises.

In his important poem *To what serves Mortal Beauty?*, Hopkins tries to explore the human relationship with mortal beauty. Ignatius believed that man should use
mortal beauty to the extent of its leading him back to God for the sake of His greater glory.

It has already been pointed out that Hopkins' perception of beauty is tantamount to partaking himself of a sacrament which involves sacrifice: "Give beauty back ... back to God, beauty's self and beauty's giver". This Ignatian attitude marks the union of the poet with the priest which can be discerned in most of his poetry. In his nature sonnets, one finds a gradual movement from the mortal beauty of the physical universe to the immortal beauty of God. One can aptly call it the "Ignatian manner in Hopkins' poetic technique. Since the sonnet structure is ideally suited to this sort of movement, this is an important reason that Hopkins preferred the sonnet as a favourite medium of his poetic expression.

For Hopkins the lure of mortal beauty had dangerous implications on account of human shortsightedness. It tends to make it an end in itself rather than a means to a higher end. That is why he calls it "dangerous". Hopkins' concepts of the inscape and instress of things clarify the fact that the danger of being entrapped by mortal beauty was perhaps greater for him than for
ordinary mortals. Since he foresaw grave consequences in the application of his senses to the perception of the beauty of the physical world, he tried to restrict his relationship with it. He is always keen to adapt his relationship to such beauty with a view to satisfying both his artistic and religious sensibilities. This is perhaps the reason that he could not become a painter, although he had ample inclination for it. Ignatius provided Hopkins with the vision and the spirit which enabled him to consummate both his religious and artistic aspirations to the desired extent.

Hopkins' poetry presents a grand combination of an inseeing imagination and a penetration into the deeper springs of language and its dynamics. This gives the stamp of individuality to his poetic vision and art.

It can now be said with certitude that St. Ignatius profoundly influenced Hopkins' poetic sensibility. Hopkins shows a religious sensibility in embryo even in his early poems. In Heaven-Haven, which he wrote sometime before 1866, he looks for a spiritual El Dorado:

I have desired to go
Where springs not fall
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.
And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,
And out of the swing of the sea.

In his poem *Nondum* (1866), Hopkins makes an exploration of the divine truth. The poem carries the motto, "Verily Thou Art a God that Hidest Thyself". Although the poet complains that God seemingly does not respond to the human psalms, he feels convinced that the sole prerogative of forgiving sins rests with Him. There seems to be an Ignatian rationale behind this:

"It will much benefit him who is receiving the Exercises to enter upon them with a large heart and with liberality towards his Creator and Lord, offering all his desires and liberty to Him, in order that his Divine Majesty may make use of his person and of all he possesses according to His most holy will".5

Hopkins' *The Habit of Perfection* (1866) points to the fact that he was fully predisposed to espouse the Jesuit creed inasmuch as it deals with the quintessence
of traditional Christianity: spiritual fruition through asceticism. In this poem all contact with the external world is shut off for the sake of the illumination of the inner self:

Be shelled, eyes, with double dark
And find the uncreated light:
This ruck and reel which you remark
Coils, keeps, and teases simple sight.

Palate, the hutch of tasty lust,
Desire not to be rinsed with wine:
The can must be so sweet, the crust
So fresh that come in fasts divine.

The poem is also noteworthy because Hopkins in the last unquoted stanza, mentions Poverty which is one of the three obligatory vows prescribed by Ignatius for a Jesuit.

Hopkins expresses a more profound insight into religious experience in _The Lantern out of Doors_ (1877) by showing poetically a new and more comprehensive awareness of spiritual goals and their fulfilment. In
conformity with the teachings of Ignatius, Christ is the "first, fast, last friend" of man:

Christ minds; Christ's interest, what to avow or amend
There, eyes them, heart wants, care haunts,
foot follows kind,
Their ransom, their rescue, and first, fast last friend.

St. Ignatius writes: "And the other things were created for man's sake, and in order to aid him in the prosecution of the end for which he was created". Hopkins beheld "other things" and realized the truth that God

...hews mountain and continent,
Earth, all, out; who with trickling increment,
Veins violets and tall trees makes more and more;

The end for which man was created — the glorification of God — is also highlighted in 
Pied Beauty — the more so because God is the creator of the variegated beauty of the different objects of perception in the physical world:
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.

Ignatius argued that man should use creatures as a medium for the understanding of the beauty of God. The question which always vexed Hopkins' mind was: How to accord permanence to "beauty-in-the-ghost" by which he meant spiritual beauty? To find an answer to this question, Hopkins, in The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo, was led to Ignatius' prescription for the prudent use of the terrestrial objects of perception:

Resign them, sign them, seal them, send them, motion them with breath,
And with sighs soaring, soaring sighs deliver them; beauty-in-the-ghost, deliver it, early now, long before death
Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty,
back to God, beauty's self and beauty's giver.
In the Prelude to the First Exercise of the First Week, Ignatius enjoins the exercitant to see the place of the meditative matter with the eyes of the imagination. He further tells the exercitant that when meditation is on invisible things, "the composition will be to see with the eyes of the imagination and to consider that my soul is imprisoned in this corruptible body, and my whole self in this vale of misery, as it were among brute beasts . . . ." This is the subject-matter of the octet of The Caged Skylark, the first quatrain of which is quoted below:

As a dare-gale skylark scanted in a dull cage
Man's mounting spirit in his bone-house,
mean house, dwells —
That bird beyond the remembering his free fells;
This in drudgery, day-labouring-out life's age.

In sacred history, the First Sin was committed by the Angels who "coming to pride, were changed from grace into malice and hurled from Heaven to Hell". It is thus that Ignatius writes about it in the Exercises. Hopkins poetically envisions this horrible scene in The Shepherd's Brow.
The shepherd's brow, fronting forked lightning, owns
The horror and the havoc and the glory
Of it. Angels fall, they are towers, from heaven —
a story
Of just, majestical, giant groans.

The Second Sin was that of Adam and Eve whose
disobedience to God, according to Ignatius, tarnished the
human race and led "so many men being put on the way to
Hell". In the subsequent lines of the above-mentioned
poem, Hopkins draws this picture of the fallen man and
his mate. The vision of mankind that he presents in
these lines is really terrific. Hopkins handles the
theme of the corruption of man in The Portrait of Two
Beautiful Young People — an unfinished poem about a
brother and sister in which he exclaims: "O I admire and
sorrow". He further writes in this poem:

... what worm was here, we cry,
To have havoc-pocked so, see, the
hung-heavenward boughs?
Enough: corruption was the world's first woe.

The Second Exercise in the First Week of the
Exercises is a meditation on sins. In this Exercise, Ignatius wants the exercitant to consider the horror of all those sins which he has committed. He ought to view himself as an "ulcer and abscess". These two images obviously highlight the idea of man's chronic state of sinfulness. Hopkins also expresses this diseased condition of mankind in terms of physical corruption:

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me!
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed
the curse.
Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

(I wake and feel ...)

In the second part of the Contemplation on the Kingdom of Christ, Ignatius enjoins an exercitant "to consider that all who have the use of judgement and reason will offer their whole selves for labour". This idea of service is a staple theme of the Exercises and
Hopkins was fairly influenced by it. In his poem, *Morning, Midday, and Evening Sacrifice*, Hopkins poetically expresses the idea of a voluntary and absolute offering of oneself to Christ:

The dappled die-away
Cheek and wimpled lip,
The gold-wisp, the airy-grey
Eye, all in fellowship—
This, all of this beauty blooming,
This, all this freshness fuming,
Give God while worth consuming.

On the fourth day of the Second Week, a retreatant, in accordance with Ignatian teachings, is required to meditate on the Two Standards: The Standard of Christ and The Standard of Lucifer. Hopkins likewise meditates on the Two Standards in one of his difficult poems *Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves* and tries to show how difficult and necessary it is for a man to choose the standard under which he would like to act:

Our evening is over us, our night whelms, whelms, and will end us.
Only the beak-leaved boughs dragonish damask the
tool-smooth bleak light; black,
Ever so black on it. Our tale, O our oracle! Let life,
waned, ah let life wind
Off her once skeined stained veined variety upon, all
on two spools; part; pen, pack
Now her all in two flocks, two folds-black, white; right,
wrong; reckon but, reck but, mind
But these two; ware of a world where but these two tell,
each off the other; of a rack
Where, selfwrung, selfstrung, sheathe-and shelterless,
thoughts against thoughts in groans grind.

In the Second Week, the exercitant is enjoined to
contemplate on the Kingdom of Christ, the higher meaning
of which is to be understood through its comparison with
the kingdom of a temporal king. Hopkins’ poem, The
Soldier, is strongly influenced by this act of contemplation
recommended by Ignatius. The poem can better be under­
stood by considering what Ignatius says in the Exercises:
"... if we consider the temporal King's summons to his
subjects, how much more worthy of consideration is it to
see Christ our Lord, the Eternal King, and before him the
whole world, all of whom and each in particular He calls,
and says: 'My will is to conquer the whole world, and all enemies, and thus to enter into the glory of My Father. Whoever, therefore, desires to come with me must labour with Me, in order that following me in pain, he may likewise follow Me in glory.' Such is the spiritual benefit of joining the army of Christ. If a soldier serves this army whole-heartedly, Christ will decorate him as no earthly king can. Here is the sestet of this sonnet:

Mark Christ our King. He knows war, served this soldiering through;
He of all can handle a rope best. There he bides in bliss
Now, and seeing somewhere some man do all that man can do,
For love he leans forth, needs his neck must fall on, kiss,
And cry 'O Christ-done deed! So God-made-flesh does too:
Were I come o'er again' cries Christ 'It should be this'.

In The Windhover, which Hopkins considered his
best composition, the poet is fascinated by the marvellous flight of the falcon. The bird's act of flight puts Hopkins in mind of chivalric knight-errantry, especially because the sonnet contains several images from that realm. The analogy between the majestic act of the bird and its chivalric knight-errantry in the temporal sense reminds Hopkins of the knight-errantry of Christ recommended by Ignatius.

The achievement of that goal is, however, arduous. But the spiritual benefits of becoming the knight-errant of Christ are everlasting. The real answer to Ignatius' question "what shall I do for Christ?" consists in choosing the Standard of Christ and fighting for the permanence of his Kingdom in order that his Kingship be proclaimed. This is the meaning of Ignatian Election during the Second Week of the Exercises and Hopkins gives a poetic expression to it:

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride,
plume, here
Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!
No wonder of it: sheer plod makes plough down sillon
Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion.
REFERENCES


3. Unpublished MS (Oxford), Read Commentary on Spiritual Exercises.


5. Exercises, p. 3.

6. Ibid., p. 34.