

POET GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS  
ON WATER COMING THROUGH A LOCK  
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My favorite poet when I was coming up was Gerard Manley Hopkins. Most of us have read at least one of his poems, but that is not all he wrote. He also wrote journals, letters, sermons, and so on – many volumes. Over the years I have found wonderful prose in the journals and letters. I have learned a lot.

Here is a passage of his where he describes how water moves through a lock. I include it here just because it worthy of reading. Hope you enjoy it!

“The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins,” Oxford Press

Early Diaries (1863), pg. 9

“Note on water coming through a lock.

"There are openings near the bottom of the gate (which allow the water to pass through at all times, I suppose). Suppose three, as there often are. The water strikes through these with great force and extends itself into three fans. The direction of the water is a little oblique from the horizontal, but the great force with which it runs keeps it almost uncurved except at the edges. The end of these fans is not seen for they strike them under a mass of yellowish boiling foam which runs down between the fans, and meeting covers the whole space of the lock entrance. Being heaped up in globes and bosses and round masses the fans disappear under it. This turbid mass smoothes itself as the distance increases from the lock. But the current is strong and if the basin into which it runs has curving banks it strikes them and the confusion of the already folded and doubled lines of foam is worse confounded.”