GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

The Lantern out of Doors

Sometimes a lantern moves along the night.
That interests our eyes. And who goes there?
I think; where from and bound, I wonder, where,
With, all down darkness wide, his wading light?

Men go by me whom either beauty bright
In mould or mind or what not else makes rare:
They rain against our much-thick and marsh air
Rich beams, till death or distance buys them quite.

Death or distance soon consumes them: wind
What most I may eye after,¹ be in at the end
I cannot, and out of sight is out of mind.

Christ minds: Christ’s interest, what to avow or amend
There, éyes them, heart wánts, care haúnts, foot fóllows kínd,
Their ránsom, théir rescue, and first, fást, last friénd.

Inversnaid¹

This darksome burn,² horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb³ the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fáwn-fróth
Turns and twindles⁴ over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged⁵ with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes⁶ that the brook treads through,

¹. “I mean that the eye winds only in the sense that its focus or point of sight winds and that coincides with a point of the object and winds with that. For the object, a lantern passing further and further away and bearing now east now west of one right line, is truly and properly described as winding” (Hopkins, Letters).
². On Loch Lomondside, Scotland, famous for its rushing stream and waterfall.
³. Stream.
⁴. “Coop”: hollow; “comb”: crest.
⁵. Apparently Hopkins’s coinage: twists and dwindles.
⁶. Hills.
Wiry heathpacks, flitches\(^\text{7}\) of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

1881\hspace{1cm}1918

---

7. Tufts, clumps.