

*The Collected Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Volume VII: The Dublin Notebook* edited by Lesley J. Higgins and Michael F. Suarez. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014. 336 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-953402-9. £100.00.

Between February 1884 and December 1885, Gerard Manley Hopkins recorded everything from his students' examination scores to drafts of his poems-in-progress in a large leather-covered notebook. Oxford's edition of that document, since termed the *Dublin Notebook*, will undoubtedly prove useful to students and scholars of Hopkins. At the core of the volume are facsimiles of the *Notebook's* extant pages – a careful codicology explains that some of the book's leaves were cut or torn out – and the editors' meticulous transcriptions of those pages are conveniently presented in parallel with their corresponding facsimiles. Higgins and Suarez also offer a biographical-contextual chronology; "Explanatory and Textual Notes"; nine appendices (including the texts of William Collins's "Ode to Evening," Cicero's *On Duty*, and Hopkins's own "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves," all of which figure prominently in the *Notebook's* commentaries and meditations); and, of course, a critical introduction. From a utilitarian perspective, the editors' introduction is especially valuable, since it provides a rich but condensed account of the circumstances and influences that shaped Hopkins during his time in Dublin, which yielded some of his best-known (if also bleakest) poetry. Although Hopkins's difficult years in Dublin have been chronicled and explored in numerous book-length studies of his work, the introduction to this edition affords an excellent starting point for the reader in search of a foothold with regard to that material, since, in addition to providing the relevant details about Hopkins's idiosyncratic attitudes and anxieties, Higgins and Suarez work to paint a broader picture. Their introduction describes contexts ranging from the organization of and interrelationships among Ireland's universities to the "public health problems" that plagued Dublin in the late nineteenth century. (At St. Stephen's Green, where Hopkins resided, there was "sewage in the basement," and "rats were an ongoing problem.") In their overview of English-Irish political relations, Higgins and Suarez begin with references to Norman England, the Tudor monarchs, and Oliver Cromwell before detailing the "opening salvos of the 'Land War'" and their aftermath. For students, that characteristic explanatory gesture and others like it will, I anticipate, prove immensely useful.

But as readers of William Morris understand, it is difficult to distinguish utility from beauty – or, at least, it *ought* to be. It bears noting, then, that Oxford's *Dublin Notebook* succeeds by Morris's standard, too, for its beauty is remarkable. With its Marian blue dust jacket, generous margins, and heavy pages filled with Hopkins's almost calligraphic writing in both English and