

THE SPRING RUNOFF
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I live in Big Rapids, Michigan through which the rather large Muskegon River passes. This photo is not of the river but rather just a small stream about two blocks from our house called "Mitchell Creek." But this early in the spring, with the runoff and all, even a creek like this, which is usually quiet with the flash of an occasional minnow or the movement of a water strider is angry. The melting snows have to go somewhere and this is one place where it goes. The sound of it all is wonderful and so is the form frozen in the movement of the swift waters.

Watching the water reminds me of a passage by the great English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins that I found in his journals. Many of you will know his poems, but there are many other volumes of sermons, letters, and notes that exist. I doubt that you will have found this passage of his where he describes how water moves through a lock. I will include it here just because it worthy of reading. Hope you enjoy it!

This photo taken yesterday may be worth viewing in high-res.

"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."

