

Mary's May



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Flesh and fleece, fur and feather,
Grass and greenworld all together;
Star-eyed strawberry-breasted
Throttle above her nested.

Cluster of bugle blue eggs thin

Forms and warms the life within;
And bird and blossom swell
In shod or sheath or shell.

All things rising, all things sizing
Mary seeing, sympathising
With that world of good,
Nature's motherhood.

Their magnifying of each its kind
With delight calls to mind
How she did in her stored
Magnify the Lord.

Well, but there was more than this :
Spring's universal bliss
Much, had much to say
To offering Mary May.

When drop-of-blood-and-foam-dapple
Bloom lights the orchard-apple
And thicket and thorp are merry
With silver-surfed cherry.

And azuring-over greyball makes

Wood banks and brakes wash wet like lakes

And magic cuckoocall

Caps, clears, and clinches all -

This ecstasy all through mothering earth

Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's birth

To remember, and exultation

In God who was her salvation.

Gerard Manley Hopkins (From 'The May Magnificat')

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