

BLUEBELLS

I know the glory of God by it
Hopkins wrote of the bluebell
from the edge of his private hell.
The blue buzzed-haze and the wafts
of intoxicant perfume
must have seemed glory indeed
from the tight mahogany room
of celibate theology.

The flower itself
has no soul or pretence of one,
it will merely live and die
in its swaying thousands
of stamens and anthers and milken stems,
a perch for the satisfied fly.

A paradigm of art —
this grace of blue
conjured out of the moil
of roots and rotting leaves and mite-stirred soil.



Gerard Manley Hopkins, one of Britain's finest nature poets, wrote this in his journal about the Bluebell, *Endymion non-scriptus*, in the happier period before he produced his so-called 'Terrible Sonnets' and, later, stopped writing poetry altogether.