The Centenary of Charles Dickens.

The influence which Dickens has exercised on the English language (not perhaps so much as that of Shakespeare alone) depends to a large extent on the popular character of his work. Examined from the standpoint of literary art or even from that of literary craftsmanship he hardly deserves a place among the highest. The form he chose to write in, diffuse, overloaded with minute and often irrelevant observation, carefully relieved at regular intervals by the unfailing humorous note, is not the form of the novel which can carry the greatest conviction. Dickens has suffered not a little from too ardent admirers.

Before the centenary there was perhaps a tendency to deny him somewhat. Toward the close of the Victorian period, the peace of literary England was disturbed by the influx of Russian and Scandinavian writers inspired by artistic ideals very different from those according to which the literary world (at least in the last century) of the chief writers of fiction had been shaped. A fierce and headstrong
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Sing Us an Irish Song and the Mortadarthella Taradition:

Some Thoughts on Dickensian Correspondences in the First Chapter of Joyce’s *Ulysses*

by Louis Berrone

What the romantic in rags pines after like all tomtompons haunting crevices for a deadbeat escupement and what het importunes our *Mitleid* for in accomnish with the Mortadarthella taradition is the poorest commonon-guardiant waste of time.

FINNEGANS WAKE, 151

James Joyce in his 1912 Paduan essay, "The Centenary of Charles Dickens," thinks that Dickens has been rightly nicknamed "the great Cockney." He is primarily a Londoner; and because he evokes in fiction that city’s effects on his childhood, youth, and manhood, he has won forever a place in his fellow citizens’ hearts. Joyce also places him "among the great literary creators." With no malice in the tags he says that he is a great caricaturist like Hogarth and a great sentimentalist like Goldsmith. Joyce admits that some people will carp at Dickens’ exaggeration; but, then, he counters that it is precisely this quality that rivets the characters to the popular memory.

The essay also tells us something indirectly about Joyce’s creating the Dublin he knew so well and its many unique characters (with, I might add, a Dickensian concern for the common man). The Londoner qualities that he sees in Dickens are in some ways comparable to the Dubliner qualities in his own works. They are both primarily city novelists. The life of Dublin was the breath of Joyce’s nostrils even as he sensed that the life of London was so for Dickens. One of the first viewers who read "The Centenary of Charles Dickens" when it was on exhibit at the Nyselius Library at Fairfield University remarked, "He’s writing about himself!" The reader will naturally qualify that paradoxical quip; but I do think that it calls proper attention to the affinity that Joyce felt for "the great Cockney." Joyce’s artistic methods may differ widely from Dickens’; but his purpose, to make his characters and their worlds memorably come to life, is similar.

There are many correspondences in Joyce’s fiction with the works of Dickens, and they vary widely. Anyone who has read *Ulysses* (or started it) and some well-pointed criticism is probably aware of Joyce’s method of drawing symbolist comparisons between the actual characters in it and those in the Bible and Homer’s *Odyssey*, in which *Ulysses* has many heroic adventures while he is lost at sea and his son Telemachus searches for him. Joyce’s over-all vision in the novel is based on Vico’s Three Ages of Man, the Divine, the Heroic, and the Human and a rebirth, or recommencement of the Ages as historical cycles. Vico explains these Ages in *The New Science* (1725), a book which is the latter-day forerunner of cyclical studies of history. I shall sometimes, as Vico does, refer to the Ages as theocratic, aristocratic, and democratic. What I propose here is that the correspondences between Joyce’s characters and those in Dickens’ fiction, which represents the third or democratic age, round out symbolist literary correspondences to the Bible and the *Odyssey*, which represent the two previous ages. Literary references to the third age are not exclusively to Dickens, as those to the other ages are not exclusively to the Bible or Homer. But I do think that the connections with Dickens are inherent in *Ulysses* (and *Finnegans Wake*) and that they are relevant to Joyce’s Viconian vision.

How does Joyce’s Paduan essay on Dickens relate to Dickensian analogues with Vico’s cycles in *Ulysses*? His view that Dickens has been rightly called "the great Cockney" marks him not only as a creator of city life, but as the spirited liberal whose outlook on life was not inconsistent with 19th and 20th century liberal views on Vico. Also, Joyce’s estimate in the essay that Dickens was a sentimentalist like Goldsmith may indicate that some of the many connections with Dickens in *Ulysses* might gravitate around sentimental and sympathetic themes. We know perfectly that this is the case in the stylistic
Dickensian echoes and an allusion to “Doady” in David Copperfield in Joyce’s depiction of Mina Purefoy and her newborn babe in Chapter XIV, The Oxen of the Sun.

It is important to make a distinction here between Dickens as a sentimentalist like Goldsmith for which Joyce made it clear in the Dickens essay that he had no malice and Meredith’s definition, “The sentimentalist is he who would enjoy without incurring the immense debtorship of the thing done,” which Stephen sends to Mulligan as a telegram in Ulysses (192). 2 Meredith’s definition would seem to be false sentiment, and not sympathetic as that of Goldsmith and Dickens. Dickens’ sentiment in its best sense is deeply shared care or love; it is a form of popular sympathetic wisdom similar to that which prevails in the Dickensian echoes and an allusion to a telegram in Goldsmith and Dickens. Dickens' sentiment in its best sense is deeply shared care or love; it is a form of popular sympathetic wisdom similar to that which prevails in the Dickensian echoes and an allusion to a telegram in Goldsmith and Dickens. Dickens' sentiment in its best sense is deeply shared care or love; it is a form of popular sympathetic wisdom similar to that which prevails in the Dickensian echoes and an allusion to a telegram in

What seems to be conclusive evidence that Joyce did envision Dickens in Vico’s system can be inferred from one of his Finnegans Wake Workbooks (circa 1923) where he jotted down the note: “Dean Hercules Dickens on/the wet root (spud).” 3 On the same page of the dog-eared and obviously much-used holograph workbook, among other notes, Joyce wrote “De Danaan Gods seek aid of heroes in fights.” Dean could signify the mythical Irish Danaan Gods or any ecclesiastical Dean (perhaps Dean Swift) and hence would be theocratic. Hercules, like Ulysses, is a classical hero, hence aristocratic. Dickens is in the third or democratic position. “Wet root (spud)” probably refers to the Irish potato famine. But as the potatoes grow again, perhaps they would refer to rebirth or ricorso. I have found in my reading of Finnegans Wake that analogues to Dickens in it often are democratic in a Viconian sense. In Finnegans Wake, I, vi, the Viconian tenor of “Dean Hercules Dickens” seems to be implicit in Nuvoletta’s reaction to the Mookse and the Gripses, who, hot in argument, do not notice her or her winsome double, Nuvoluccia: “Not even her feign reflection, Nuvoluccia, could they take their gnoses off for their minds with intrepifide fate and bungless curiosity, were conclaveed with Heliogobulus and Commodus and Enobarbarus and whatever the coordinal dickens they did as their damprauach of papyrs and buchstubs said. As if that was their spiration!” (157). 4 Heliogobulus suggest Helio-gabalus, a Roman emperor who enforced the worship of a sun-god, hence a theocratic age in Roman history. Commodus was a Roman emperor who might simply signify an aristocratic age. Enobarbarus suggests Mark Anthony’s traitorous friend Enobarbus in Shakespeare’s Antony and Cleopatra and the worst, or most “barbarous” aspects of plebian lack of honor in the democratic age, especially in comparison with heroic Antony. The names, Nuvoletta and Nuvoluccia, suggest renewal or Viconian rebirth or ricorso. Nuvoletta is dismayed at the Mookse and the Grips’ debating Roman history and not seeing her as their “spiration,” their spiraling aspiration. The evoking of “coordinal dickens” counters the intellectual argument with a sense of rebirth into feelings from the heart in democratic spiritual equality. Latent in the word, “coordinal” are puns that hint at Dickens’ being a “cardinal” of the new age which would be based on equality (“coordinal” rather than “superordinal”) and heartfelt (from the “bosom’s innermost core”) or cordial feelings (“coordinal” as a pun on the Latin word for heart, cor, cordis). This appears to be a sentimentalist, in the best sense, use of Dickens in the Wake.

Writing “Dean Hercules Dickens” in 1923, a year after the publication of Ulysses, may be retrospective, as well as forward-looking to Finnegans Wake, even as many other entries in the Wake Workbooks incorporate retrospective references to, or notes on, Ulysses. With some thoughts in mind from Joyce’s essay, “The Centenary of Charles Dickens,” on the popular and sentimentalist qualities of Dickens, some critical inferences that may be drawn retrospectively from the note in his Workbook and its connection with the passage in Finnegans Wake, I shall consider some specific Dickensian correspondences in Chapter I of Ulysses with reference to Vico’s cycles.

II

There are hints that Stephen is a Dickensian dispossessed heir in Chapter I and elsewhere in the novel. The “sense” or “meaning” of this Chapter, according to the Linati schema is, in translation of Joyce’s words from Italian, “The dispossessed son in struggle.” 5 Since Stephen’s mother has died, he is actually a half-orphan. His attachment to his father, Simon Dedalus, is so tenuous that he might well be considered an orphan from the second half of his parentage. Mulligan’s ironical reference to Stephen as “Japhet in Search of a Father” (18) is an allusion to Frederick Marryat’s novel, Japhet in Search of a Father, published in 1836, and a predecessor of Dickens’ novels on dispossessed children and heirs. Granted that the theme of Japhet in search of his father Noah would also suggest a further religious reference to The Book of Genesis and Vico’s Divine Age and is correlative with Telemachus’ search for his father Ulysses in The Odyssey, the subject of Marryat’s novel is the plight of a nineteenth-century boy hunting for his real father. The story takes place in the Human Age as Dickens’ stories do. The Vico cycles implicit in these connections set the tone for Joyce’s more indirect connections in a similar manner with Dickens.

There are some interesting correspondences between Stephen and David Copperfield and Mulligan and James Steerforth in Chapter I. First of all, both Stephen and David are future novelistists who are sensitive and reflexive to their own feelings and the world around them. Both their much-loved mothers die, and they often think of
them. Stephen mournfully recalls his sad, dying mother: “Fergus’ song: I sang it alone in the house, holding down the long dark chords. Her door was open: she wanted to hear my music. Silent with awe and pity I went to her bedside. She was crying in her wretched bed. For those words, Stephen: love’s bitter mystery” (9). David also mournfully recalls his sad, frail mother as he traveled to Dover: “But the peace and rest of the old Sunday morning were on everything except me. That was the difference. I felt quite wicked in my dirt and dust, with my tangled hair. But for the quiet picture I had conjured up, of my mother in her youth and beauty, weeping by the fire, and my aunt relenting to her, I hardly think I should have had the courage to go on until next day. But it always went before me, and I followed” (Chp. XIII). As Stephen remembers his mother in happier moods, so also does David. May Dedalus’ youth and “phantasmal mirth” (10) and its pleasant associations which Stephen thinks about immediately after he imagines her on her deathbed compare with David’s recollection of his mother after Peggotty described the scene at her deathbed. “I remembered her, from that instant, only as the young mother of my earliest impressions, who had been used to wind her bright curls round and round her finger, and to dance with me at twilight in the parlour. What Peggotty had told me now, was so far from bringing me back to the later period, that it rooted the earlier image in my mind. It may be curious, but it is true. In her death she winged her way back to her calm untroubled youth and cancelled all the rest” (Chp. IX). Besides the similarities in circumstances and those of a more wide-ranging Oedipal nature, there are also some major differences between the youths’ relations with their mothers and their reactions to their deaths. Stephen is guilt-ridden because he did not kneel and pray at his mother’s bedside as she had requested. His guilt is so obsessive that his mother’s ghost haunts him. David does not feel such guilt. His mother’s troubled years and his involvement in them have been “cancelled” out. He conjures her mainly in happy images, whereas Stephen’s mother comes to him in ghastly dreams. There are further parallels (and divergences) to be drawn through these points, but I shall postpone them for now.

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David’s father having died in his early childhood, he is, like Stephen, searching for an acceptable father figure. This is a particular dilemma for him since he has rejected Murdstone and keeps a running warfare going with him until his aunt “adopts” him. One critic, indeed, has asserted that all of the older men in David Copperfield are surrogate fathers for him. We do not have to go that far, but we may consider one character in this context. Harry Levin has pointed out as early as 1941 that Simon Dedalus, based on Joyce’s father, resembles Wilkin’s Micawber, based on Dickens’ father, with whom David lives for a while and whose household is in similar disorder (and for similar reasons) as Simon’s household in Ulysses. In Levin’s words: “The improvident worldliness of John Stanislaus Joyce had made him, in the unforgiving eyes of his son, a foster-parent. So young Charles Dickens, hastening from the blacking-factory to the Marshalsea, came to look upon his father as a horrible example of good fellowship, a Mr. Micawber... ‘The misrule and confusion of his father’s house,’ (188) comes to stand in Stephen’s mind for the plight of Ireland. Like Synge’s Playboy, he must go through the motions of parricide to make good his revolt.” Levin’s views are generally well taken; though the idea of even only going through the motions of parricide may be too strong for Simon and Micawber. Disorderly and improvident as he is, Simon Dedalus possesses enough virtues to warrant even Oedipal reprieve. Joyce must have thought so when he said that everything he wrote was in honor of his father. The causes of Simon Dedalus’, and Ireland’s, frustrated aspirations were the target of his fire. I do not think that Stephen or Joyce was figuratively killing Simon off any more than David or Dickens was doing that to Micawber. Both youths must part company from the paternal rollickers to fulfill their lives, but they need not fully reject them; and I do not think that they do. Stephen in his hallucination in Circe yells “Hola! Hillyho!” as he battles Beelzebub and his foes and Simon Dedalus’ voice “hilloes” in answer, “somewhat sleepy but ready.” Simon hearteningly cries, “Head up! Keep our flag flying! An eagle gules in a field argent displayed” (572). This “hilloing” back and forth between Stephen and Simon suggests Hamlet’s agitation after he has seen his father’s Ghost and the “Hilloing” back and forth between him and Marcellus and Horatio (Hamlet, I, v).

Though the allusion to “Pater” (572) is to Stephen’s dream of the mythological Daedalus, the artificer who created wings for himself and Icarus, it includes Simon and Joyce’s father, who took great pride in his family and the Joyce’s of Galway’s coat of arms, the “eagle gules” (572). Stephen relates this “eagle” to the Greek bird-like man, Daedalus. But Stephen in this context is siding with his father’s ghost as Hamlet does with his father’s Ghost against his brother betrayer, Claudius. Since Simon was a strong Parnellite, Stephen is siding with him against Parnell’s and Ireland’s
betrayers, past and present: against all of dispossession of Ireland suggested by Stephen's last word in Chapter I, with reference to Mulligan, "Usurper."

Since Ulysses is a comic novel, there are no actual parricides in it (as there are none in David Copperfield). The "going through the motions of parricide" as symbolic acts in the generally comic context is, I think, directed more against characters who betray Ireland or usurp the country, or both, and who would resemble (on the Heroic dispossessor of Telemachus' rights on the island of Ithaca while his father Ulysses in the Odyssey is lost at sea. On the level of the Divine Age, the symbolic act would be "to kill off" nefarious spiritual powers, like those of Mephistopheles who would corrupt Faust's soul. On the Human or democratic level, the "parricidal" symbolic act would be aimed against class-conscious and imperialistic oppression which largely emanates from forces that presided over the two previous ages and still prevail in the third.

Malachi "Buck" Mulligan seems to incorporate many negative aspects that are associated with the three ages, and I think that Stephen, in the comic mode, is very much trying "to kill him off" in Ulysses. Comparisons between Mulligan and Mephistopheles and him and Antinous have already been made. In respect to Dickens, I think that he suggests some correspondences with David Copperfield's ominous "friend," James Steerforth. Mulligan is a "friend" and betrayer of Stephen with Mephistophelian-class-condescending overtones, even as Mephistophelian Steerforth is so towards David. Mulligan and Steerforth not only condense to and exploit their younger friends, but the "natives" of their respective countries as well. F. R. Leavis is quite correct in stating that "the whole Steerforth-Emily episode is treated by Dickens as a class matter."

And I think that Joyce treats Mulligan's (and his friend Haines') attitudes towards Stephen and the Irish lower classes as a class-matter.

Though Mulligan's and Steerforth's class-superiority patterns range widely, we may first consider the two characters as they patronize Stephen and David and usurp their prerogatives and property. Both are older and willful. Mulligan's rich aunt pampers him as Steerforth's rich mother pampers (and dotes on) him. Both expect to get their way in the outside world as they did at home. Both are handsome, brown-haired, partying and commanding scholars. Mulligan persuades Stephen to "lend" him a sovereign for a drinking party and leave two pence for a drink with the key to the Tower (after Stephen paid the rent); Steerforth persuades David to give him his seven shillings for "safe-keeping" which he then uses for a wine party. Both take charge of the living quarters they share with their friends. Both pick the younger men's literary minds. Mulligan wants Stephen to tell him and Haines his theory on Hamlet. Steerforth wants David to tell him the stories of the novels he has read. Mulligan tells Haines, who is anxious to hear the theory, that "The sacred pint alone can unbind the tongue of Dedalus" (18), the pint which he will share and Stephen will buy. Steerforth tells David that the cowslip wine Pegotty sent him at school "shall be kept to wet your whistle when you are storytelling" (Chp. VII). And we know who will share the wine as he lies back to enjoy the stories. The rituals, in both cases, would be disastrous if the young fabulists were to be continually confined within them.

It may be worth noting that, although Mulligan himself did not go to Oxford, Oliver Gogarty, his counterpart in real life, did.

When David meets Steerforth later on in life at the Golden Cross Inn (Chp. XIX), he continues to be condescending. He vaunts his being an "Oxford man," he mocks David's enjoyment of the production of Julius Caesar at Covent Garden which he also saw, and he teases and nicknames him "Daisy" because of his "innocence" and youthful appearance, which may compare with Mulligan's teasing and nicknaming Stephen "Kinch," which means child in German (though Mulligan also associates the word with knife because of Stephen's sharp intellect).

It may be worth noting that, although Mulligan himself did not go to Oxford, Oliver Gogarty, his counterpart in real life, did. Haines, who is staying with Stephen and Mulligan in the Tower, is also an Oxford man and, as he calls himself, a Britisher. Though Haines does have a counterpart in life (Gogarty's friend Samuel Trench, who was a devotee like Haines of Irish folklore and the Gaelic language), on the level of literary analogues there may be some "splitting" or "decomposition" of Steerforth into Mulligan and Haines. When Steerforth later breakfasts with David at Yarmouth, as in Ulysses at the edge of the sea, he says condescendingly, "Let us see the natives in their aboriginal condition" (Chp. XXI). Haines, because of his outsider's interest in Irish native folklore, might have said exactly the same: indeed, he does look at Stephen "smiling at wild Irish" in a condescending manner as Stephen leaves him at the end of Chapter I. Also, Haines' nightmare about shooting a black panther the previous night may be compared to Steerforth's confession to David by the seaside that his wayward life has been a nightmare to him: Tut, it's nothing, Daisy! nothing! he replied. I told you at the inn in London, I am heavy company for myself, sometimes. I have been a nightmare to myself, just now — must have had one, I think. At odd dull times, nursery tales come up into memory, unrecognized for what they are. I believe I have been confounding myself with the bad boy who 'didn't care,' and became food for lions — a grander kind of going to the dogs, I suppose. What old
women call the horrors, have been creeping over me from head to foot” (Chp. XXII). Though there is further evidence of similarity between Haines and Steerforth, the main comparison is between Mulligan and him.

Both Mulligan and Steerforth are “hyperborean,” in the Nietzschean sense that Mulligan gives the word, towards death and mourning. When Stephen objects to Mulligan’s response, “O, it’s only Dedalus whose mother is beastly dead,” to his aunt’s question about who was in his room, Mulligan replies: “— And what is death . . . your mother’s or yours or my own? You saw only your mother die. I see them pop off every day in the Mater and Richmond and cut up into tripes in the dissecting room. It’s a beastly thing and nothing else. It simply doesn’t matter” (8).

When Steerforth brings David the letter from Peggotty telling him that Mr. Barkis is dying and David is disturbed by the news, Steerforth says, “It’s a bad job . . . but the sun sets every day, and people die every minute, and we mustn’t be scared by the common lot . . . No! Ride on! Rough-shod if need be, smooth-shod if that will do, but ride on! Ride on over all obstacles, and win the race!” (Chp. XXVIII). Steerforth’s final comments are more patently Nietzschean than any of Mulligan’s expressions, but he himself is a marauder. In the war of wits between him and Stephen, his remark about Stephen’s not kneeling to pray at her deathbed as she asked him and his “You crossed her last wish in death and yet you sulk with me because I don’t whinge like some hired mute from Lalouette’s. Absurd!” (8) cut gaping wounds in Stephen’s heart which he shields. There is enough truth in what Mulligan says to show that there is ‘hyperborean’ side, like Steerforth’s, in Stephen himself. There is in this case a reversal of roles that may give some credence to Joyce’s brother’s comment that Joyce himself was like Steerforth. All of the callousness in Ulysses is not outside Stephen, and his conscience torments him throughout the novel on this score. It is hard for him not to think that he did not kill his mother and his Oedipal complex is compounded by Orestes-like guilt.

But to return to Mulligan and Steerforth, we can see the class-consciousness bred in their bones most clearly through their attitudes towards servants, the poor, or any other underlings. Mulligan’s “pinching” the cracked looking glass from his aunt’s servant might seem to be a petty item; but it is, rather, another mutum in parvo in the novel that Joyce enjoyed building on. The theft adds insult to the penury of her subservience in the Mulligan household, and she represents the subservience of Irish “skivvys” or “slaveys” to Irish upper-classes. Like the old milkwoman who bows and scrapes before the Anglo-Irish Oxordmen, Mulligan and Haines, she is one symbol of Ireland’s many woes, and she may be related to the Shan Van Vocht, “the poor old woman,” who is the legendary personification of suffering Ireland. And we should emphasize that in the Linati schema Joyce indicated that Stephen, Hamlet, and Ireland were the symbols of Chapter 1.

Stephen bitterly says as he looks at the skivvy’s mirror, “It is a symbol of Irish art. The cracked looking glass of a servant” (6). This statement partially originates from Cyril’s retort to Vivian’s attacks on realism in Oscar Wilde’s “The Decay of Lying”: “I can quite understand your objection to art being treated as a mirror. You think it would reduce genius to a cracked looking-glass.” But this remark, or Wilde’s essay, does not entirely explain Stephen’s assertion. Mulligan slurs and exploits his aunt’s servant as callously as Steerforth slurs and exploits the seaside natives, particularly in his “rape” of Emily. On the subject of his theft, Mulligan says, “It serves her right. The aunt always keeps plain-looking servants for Malachi. Lead him not into temptation. And her name is Ursula” (6). The theft has sexual connotations. If the servants were not plain-looking, he would have seduced all of them, commensurately with his own capacities, as the Huns slaughtered St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins. When Mulligan says “It serves her right,” he is ignoring her feelings and her integrity as an independent person. I think that the event relates in some ways with Steerforth’s treating Rosa Dartle as a “doll” and his cracking her face with a hammer, and the passion she expresses when she plays the harp and sings Irish songs.

When David visits Steerforth in his home in Chapter XX, he is introduced to Mrs. Steerforth and Rosa Dartle whom she has adopted. At the dinner table David notices an old scar on Rosa’s lips, “which had once cut through her mouth, downward towards her chin, but was now barely visible across the table, except above and below her upper lip, the shape of which had altered.” Steerforth tells David that when he was young and exasperated he threw the hammer at her at which caused the scar. We may infer that it occurred during a heated moment in their “love affair” and that the scar has sexual overtones. Rosa ironically sides with the Yarmouth natives when Steerforth disparages them in his class-conscious remarks: “Why, there’s a pretty wide separation between them and us,’ said Steerforth with indifference. ‘They are not to be expected to be as sensitive as we are. Their delicacy is not to be easily shocked or hurt very easily...and they may be thankful that, like their coarse rough skins, they are not ‘easily wounded.’” Rosa responds strongly, “Really!...it’s so consoling! It’s such a delight to know that, when they suffer, they don’t feel!” ‘ When David retires for the night, a picture of Rosa Dartle eagerly looked down at him from above the chimneypiece: ‘It was a startling likeness, and necessarily had a startling look. The painter hadn’t made the scar but I made it; and there it was, coming and going: now confined to the upper lip as I had seen it at dinner, and now showing the whole extent of the wound inflicted by the hammer, as I had seen it when she was passionate.” David is haunted by the image of Rosa’s scarred face as he falls asleep. The powerful impressions of seeing her in person and then “seeing” the scar no one else would see in the picture seem to tie in with Stephen’s sensitivity and his ideas of Irish art. Stephen as artist can “see” how Ireland is a scarred and...
sorrowful victim of subservience and oppression, even as David, the artist in his formative years, could “see” Rosa’s scar. This connection may become more evident when we consider David’s reaction to the passion in Rosa’s music. When David visits the Steerforth’s again in Chapter XXIX, Rosa withdraws from the group into the drawing-room to play her harp, which Steerforth says with a curious smile, she has not played for anyone for the past three years. Steerforth “charms” her and asks her to “sing us an Irish song.” Rosa hesitates, but then plays and sings. David thinks, as he listens:

I don’t know what it was, in her touch or voice, that made the song the most unearthly I have ever heard in my life, or can imagine. There was something fearful in the reality of it. It was as if it had never been written, or set to music, but sprung out of the passion within her; which found imperfect utterance in the low sounds of her voice, and crouched again when all was still. I was dumb when she leaned beside the harp again, playing it, but not sounding it with her right hand.

A minute more, and this had roused me from my trance—for Steerforth had left his seat, and had gone to her, and had put his arm laughingly about her, and had asked, “Come, Rosa, for the future we will love each other very much!” And she struck him, and thrown him off with the fury of a wild cat, burst out of the room.

It is difficult not to sense that Dickens portrayed Rosa Dartle and her song somehow as symbolic of Ireland and Irish art. Her name suggests the names of two Irish heroines, Ros-cràna and Dar-thula, in James MacPherson’s translation of the Poems of Ossian. Ros-cràna, “beam of the rising sun,” sings near the beginning of Book IV of the “Temora,” an epic poem in Ossian: “Half hid in her shady grove, Ros-cràna raises the song. Her white hands move on the harp, I beheld her blue-rolling eyes. She was like a spirit of heaven half-folded in the skirt of a cloud.” Thus does the Celtic hero, Fingal, or Finn, describe her. He later marries Ros-cràna daughter of Cormac, king of Ireland, and she becomes the mother of Ossian. Dar-thula, “woman with fine eyes,” who is commonly known as Deirdre, is the heroine of an entire poem entitled “Dar-thula” in Ossian. The sad story of her love affair with Nathos (Naoise) and her killing herself on the body of her slain lover has been retold by Synge in Deirdre of the Sorrows and by Yeats in Deirdre. Dickens was most likely aware of the Poems of Ossian since Werther in Goethe’s The Sorrows of Young Werther, reads long sections of his translation of the poem to Charlotte. Ossian has been thought to be one of the wellsprings of romanticism because of its expression of deep feelings and because it was primitive folk literature.

Writing David Copperfield between the years of 1848 and 1850, Dickens, in his portrayal of Rosa and in the point that she has not sung for three years, may be alluding to the Irish potato blight and famine in Ireland in the late 1840’s. During that time, as George Petrie explained, “The land of song was no longer tuneful; or, if a human sound met the traveller’s ear, it was only that of the feeble and despairing wail for the dead.” This may be a subject for further exploration, since the broader context of the note on Dean Hercules Dickens on the wet root spud is immediately followed by a reference to G. Petrie and R. Emmet and is preceded by notes on Irish folk song and ballads.

The political overtones of the note on Emmet, who was executed by the English as a rebel, in this context suggest England’s involvement in the Irish woes during the “spud” famine when there was no song. As Frank O’Connor points out, “The Oxford History of England sums up the Famine adequately in a single sentence: ‘It was the misfortune of Ireland that the fate of Governments was decided at Westminster.’” Dickens showed that he was sensitive to Irish woes when as a young reporter he stopped taking notes and wept during Daniel O’Connell’s speech against the Bill for the Suppression of Disturbances in Ireland. 13 This may be a subject for further exploration, since the broader context of the note on Emmet, who was executed by the English as a rebel, in this context suggest England’s involvement in the Irish woes during the “spud” famine when there was no song. As Frank O’Connor points out, “The Oxford History of England sums up the Famine adequately in a single sentence: ‘It was the misfortune of Ireland that the fate of Governments was decided at Westminster.’” Dickens showed that he was sensitive to Irish woes when as a young reporter he stopped taking notes and wept during Daniel O’Connell’s speech against the Bill for the Suppression of Disturbances in Ireland. 13

Dickens does seem to be making a veiled statement of protest on Anglo-Irish relations...
means betrayal). The entire word, "Mortadathella," connotes the Italian word Mortadella, which is a pork or ham sausage, and suggests Ham who was cursed by his father Noah ever to be a servant because he saw Noah naked. Ham or ham as a servant is an extended motif in the *Wake*. The entire word, "Mortadathella" also connotes the Martello Tower, built by William Pitt as one of many such forts in England and Ireland during the Napoleonic Wars. Since the Irish rebels were expecting help from the French, the Tower, in their eyes, would be a symbol of the subjugation of Ireland under English rule. But the word martello also means "hammer" in Italian which suggests both the master and the 'servant' relation: England as the master, hammer, and Ireland as the servant, Ham. But Martello, connected with the syllables darthella (which suggest Darthula and Rosa Dartle) also connotes the hammer which Steerforth threw at Rosa Dartle, and scarred her lips and face. The syllable mort connotes the word mort meaning girl in Gypsy language (see *Ulysses*, Chp. III), but death (mors, mortis, in Latin and in the Romance languages): hence the death of the girl, Darthula, or the slow death of scarred and spinsterish Rosa Dartle, and betrayed and dying Ireland. There is more to tell about "Mortadathella" and the *Morte DARTHUR* tradition and many other correlative parts of the *Wake*, but not now.

The analogies that I wish to stress in Joyce's dexterous combinations of nuances in this phrase are those between Mulligan as betrayer of Stephen and native Ireland in the Martello Tower which is suggested in the puns on "Martello" (Tower) "tradimento" (betrayal) and Steerforth's hitting Rosa Dartle in the face with the hammer which is suggested by the "martello" (hammer) "Darthula" (Dartle) pun. These connections may help to establish a Dickensian perspective on Chapter I. If they are relevant, we may reasonably speculate that the site of the chapter, the Martello Tower, has come down on Ireland's face like Steerforth's hammer and is a reason for Irish art's being the cracked looking glass of a servant. Steerforth's seafaring ways are comparable to those of Britannia, Ruler of the Seas, as opposed to the stay-at-home natives in *David Copperfield* who are Little Britainers. And the Martello Tower as a symbol of English rule that has broken Ireland into impassioned song is not a too distant analogy from Steerforth's *martello* that broke Rosa's face and heart and occasioned her anguish and song.

III

Richard Ellmann in *Ulysses on the Liffey* interprets the Viconian structuring of the novel in a progressive sequence. In his view, Chapter I is primarily theocratic; its language is sacred and its wisdom, oracular. Chapter II, is primarily aristocratic; its language symbolic and its wisdom devious. Chapter III is democratic; its language, the vernacular and its wisdom, sympathetic. Each succeeding three chapters throughout the novel mainly follow this pattern. 17 R.M. Adams agrees with this view, but says that there is a ricorso, or rebirth, in each third or democratic chapter. 18 I tend to agree with both Ellmann and Adams, but I should like to add that symbolic references to Vico's three ages are also tiered in each chapter, as well as being extended through progressive triads of chapters, and that there are frequently correspondences with Dickens on the democratic level that relate to the other levels.

In Chapter I, which is primarily religious (Joyce said that its art was theology), Ellmann makes some interesting insights into Mulligan's Mephistophelian and Stephen's Faustian traits: "He [Mulligan] is like Goethe's Mephistopheles in having no context, his whole family being an aunt. To the extent that Mulligan is the denying spirit, Joyce was faithful to the project he mentioned to his brother of making *Ulysses* an Irish Faust." 19 This view helps us to see the diabolical nature of the chapter from a character-relation perspective. Mulligan not only subverts the sacred language of the mass and its oracular wisdom, but much that might be considered "sacred" in his "friendship" with Stephen. If very little in spiritual matters remains sacred for him, much does for Stephen. He may be "a horrible example of free thought" (20), as he puts it himself; but he accepts the tradition of wearing black to mourn a family death. Though Stephen is no longer the pious Catholic he was, he still has a 'soul,' and he will shield his deepest feelings from Mulligan's mockery of him and his sentiments for his dead mother.

Mulligan is also a usurper and mocker like Antinous in the *Odyssey* and like Claudius in *Hamlet* . . .

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Correspondences with Dickens on the third Viconian level are quite consonant with the characters and actions of the chapter and the novel and with the other two Viconian levels. Both Stephen and David escape from their hostile surroundings to become novelists. Mulligan compares with Steerforth who is, like Mephistophiles, Antinous, and Claudius, a usurper and mocker. Assisted by his demonic and "respectable" manservant Littimer, he is indeed one of the most formidable Mephistophilic in literature. Since the language of the Human Age is the vernacular and its wisdom is sympathetic, Dickens' fiction, written in everyday English and sympathetic throughout, is appropriate to it. David openly confesses his sentiment for his mother and his grief when she dies. He is uniformly respectful for the dead, including Steerforth when he dies, whose sentiments on this score, like Mulligan's, are not respectful. We may recall that Steerforth slurred David's concern for dying Mr. Barkis. This is not a random point. Respect for the dead and the institution of burial are major concerns in Vico's Human Age. They constitute the fine line between being a human being or a barbarian or animal. All Human societies have this respect. Stephen's mourning for his mother is not so much because he is religious, or a proud die-hard, but because it is a human thing to do. When Mulligan and Steerforth mock respect for the dead, in spite of their higher class pretensions, they are barbaric. Also when they mistreat the lower classes they associate themselves with forceful coercion, the law of the Heroic Age, as opposed to "human law dictated by fully developed reason," the law of the Human or democratic age in Vico's view.

Stephen protests in Chapter I when Mulligan stamps on his sentiments. This does not directly make him a great Irish Cockney, but his strong reasoning and liberal character does come through. There are similarities between Stephen as a schoolmaster and schoolmaster Nicholas Nickleby in Chapter II of Ulysses. And in Chapter XV, Stephen's smashing the chandelier, symbolic of the brothel's "dark light" (which compares with Nicholas' smashing up Squeers' corrupt school, Dotheboy's Hall), shows the more spirited Dickensian side of Stephen. Perhaps, also, there is some of the vibrant Dickens in Stephen in Chapter I of Ulysses, who is far less patient with Mulligan's shenanigans than David is with Steerforth's in David Copperfield.

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Observations on a Symposium
by Gary C. Jacobson

Two years ago, Trinity was awarded a $200,000 grant by the Mellon Foundation for support of individual and cooperative research by faculty members. Over a three-year period, twelve individual research projects and three interdisciplinary symposia are to be underwritten through summer stipends and teaching load reductions for faculty participants. The first symposium was conducted in the Summer and Fall of 1975. Participating were Dr. Richard T. Lee, professor of philosophy; Dr. Charles Miller, professor of physics; Dr. Paul Smith, professor of English; Dr. Norman Miller, professor of sociology; Dr. William M. Mace, associate professor of psychology; and Dr. Gary C. Jacobson, associate professor of political science. This article, a brief sketch of some salient aspects of that endeavor, was put together by Dr. Jacobson, but reflects comments and observations by everyone involved.

It is, in a sense, an unhappy circumstance that the symposium took place at all. In a more perfect academic world, special arrangements to organize and sustain serious discussion and criticism of ideas, assumptions, modes of thinking, and research strategies, across disciplinary boundaries, would be superfluous. I find it disquieting to realize that even at Trinity, where it is relatively easy and common for faculty to have frequent informal conversation with colleagues in a variety of fields, academic specialization and the daily demands of teaching, administrative work, and all the other details of professional life leave little time or energy to pursue broader questions of fundamentally greater, though less immediate, importance. If nothing else, our experience in the symposium reminded us that the opportunity to engage such questions is one of the true graces of academic life.

No Official Title

I don’t think the symposium ever had an official title. This was certainly in keeping with our general approach, but made it much more difficult to come up with a satisfactorily brief answer when asked by our colleagues the inevitable question: “Just what is it you are doing in the Mellon Symposium?”

Interdisciplinary symposia traditionally adopt the format of exploring a common topic or theme from the several perspectives represented by the specialized interests of the participants. We decided instead to center our work around separate individual research projects. These were chosen to highlight some of the root assumptions underlying each of our fields and, at the same time, to open new approaches to old questions suggested by what we were learning from each other. Without a substantive focal point, the coherence of the symposium grew somewhat spontaneously out of particular themes and arguments arising regularly in the course of our discussions.

The summer sessions were devoted to groundwork. Each of us in turn introduced the others to some basic concepts and modes of analysis (and their attendant controversies) typical of our individual disciplines. Although more technical questions were not ignored, discussions at this time wound up focusing on the epistemological question of what constitutes valid knowledge within our various academic domains. The individual research projects, undertaken during the fall semester (when we were enjoying a one-third teaching load), provided subjects for more specific consideration of similar themes. Periodically during the semester, each of us delivered a public lecture based on work in progress, with one of the other symposiasts responding with comments before inviting a general discussion by the audience of the issues raised.

It would be impossible to summarize the contents of our conversations or even of our public presentations in the space of this short article. Some flavor of the subjects covered may be imagined from the titles of the public lectures: “The Use of Language in Fiction” (Dr. Richard Lee); “Psychological Aspects of Truth Farming: Cultivating Theories that Grow and Work” (Dr. Mace); “Myth, Symbol, and Language in Politics” (my own contribution); “The Unicorn in the Bedroom: Reflections on a Messed Up Situation” (Dr. Norman Miller); “Quantum Mechanics: Interpretation and Observation” (Dr. Charles Miller); and “The Poet as Parasite: Critical Consequences of the Theory of Speech Acts” (Dr. Smith); “Myth, Symbols and Language in Politics” (Dr. Jacobson). A few general observations on our work will have to suffice.

The papers by Dr. Lee, Dr. Smith, and myself shared a concern with language, and, in various guises, the subject of words and their usage arose continually during the course of our meetings. We spent a good deal of time in the summer sessions learning enough of the working vocabulary of one another’s fields to be able to grasp what the principal controversies were about. One discovery was that most of our disciplines, but especially the humanities and social sciences, employ terms that are ripe with the ac-
cumulated residue of long-standing intramural squabbles quite apart from any conceptual content they may carry. Words like “science” — a particularly prominent example, it turned out — were being used, as Dr. Lee observed, “more as summation words which, for the speaker, referred to a vast range of opinion, dogma, and hope that had been acquired over many years of professional activity. They were fighting words.”

An Important Lesson

This appeared to be a more important barrier to interdisciplinary discussion than the specialized jargon each field inevitably produces. The more specialized terminology, we found, was easier to clarify and, against expectation, little hindrance to mutual comprehension. What seems jargon to outsiders is usually language developed specifically for use in a particular kind of study and is, in fact, quite usefully adapted to that study. The real problem lies in the language we all ostensibly share but which carries different concrete meanings and diffuse associations across disciplinary boundaries.

This was an important lesson, one with consequences for interdisciplinary work in general. An auxiliary purpose of the symposium, I should mention at this point, was to survey the academic territory with an eye to expanding the interdisciplinary reach of Trinity’s curriculum. Clearly, any move in this direction must necessarily be preceded by extensive mutual exploration of the disciplines involved. As Dr. Smith noted, “winding up an historian and a critic, for example, to chatter over a seminar table won’t do.” It is hardly an improvement to replace over-specialization with superficiality. And this is not a hazard to be underestimated. Academic boundaries can be breached, but not effectively without sustained commitments of the time and energy.

Analysis of language, of speaking, as a kind of action in itself, was central to the work of Dr. Lee and Dr. Smith. Among other things, their investigations brought to our attention the very useful distinction between “brute facts” and “institutional facts,” which in turn elucidated an important difference between the natural and social sciences. Brute facts are, roughly, the facts of nature, of the physical world. Physicists study brute facts. Despite both technical and epistemological difficulties involved in observation of the physical world (and Dr. Charles Miller showed us how extensive these might be, as I will explain momentarily), physicists and others in the “hard” sciences are able to go about their work taking for granted that what they are investigating is, in some way or another, out there, existing independently of them, constraining both interpretation and manipulation.

The humanities and social sciences, on the contrary, deal with institutional facts, which are distinguished from brute facts by the circumstance that they are human creations and therefore subject to change by other human beings. The rules of language (concerning which the distinction was first made), baseball, or a legal system are examples of institutional facts, as the law of gravity is an example of a brute fact. In many ways they structure our existence as strictly and extensively as do the brute facts, the constraints of the physical world. And certainly they may be studied with the same end to understanding as the facts of physical nature. On the other hand, they are creations of the human mind (or, more precisely, of many human minds — institutional facts are preeminently social entities: it takes at least two people, knowing the rules, to speak a language or play chess) and are therefore subject to transformation, even at the hands of those who wish only to study them.

A Pertinent Application

If investigation of institutional facts can result in direct modification of the institutions, and hence the institutional facts, themselves, research in the social sciences and humanities is unavoidably reflexive: investigation must take into account the effect of the investigator on what he is investigating. It is even, at times, creative: new institutional facts come into being. From this perspective, it is easier to understand how fraught with uncertainty and complexity (and therefore controversy) social research of any kind may readily become.

A pertinent application of the concept comes to mind. The structure of academic disciplines, and their subdivisions, form a set of institutional facts; they are elements in the institutional apparatus within which professors conduct their professional lives; as such they provide both constraints on what can be done and opportunities for their own modification.

The study of brute facts enjoys some problems of its own. The question of what constitutes “science” as a mode of understanding engrossed us all at one time or another; it was taken up more formally by Dr. Charles Miller and Dr. Mace, although in quite different ways. As a physicist and the only natural scientist among us, Dr. Miller resolutely refused to take the question of what is and what is not science seriously. While storms of controversy rage around the question in our other disciplines, physicists, by his account, go about their work of carefully investigating physical phenomena without giving a thought to whether or not what they are doing should be called science.

It is not the scientists who worry about what it means to do science — they simply do it and leave it up to the philosophers of science and adherents of disciplines less secure in their self-justifications to attempt to unravel just what it is that makes one approach “scientific” and another not. Dr. Mace acquainted us with various notions of what science is and how scientific theories develop that have been proposed by philosophers and historians of science (and have been picked over by social scientists for clues as to how one goes about being scientific). The liberating conclusion we reached on this point (albeit with varying
degrees of conviction) was that the question was not really very significant after all. No particular criteria, no methodology, guarantees that one approach or theory about the world will be demonstrably superior to another. At most, consideration of what makes for theoretical insight, even progress, should concentrate on the element of intellectual craftsmanship, of "being careful." From this, Dr. Smith suggested that "there isn't much possibility of transfer among the methodologies of disciplines if it turns out that we are all doing about the same thing when we do what we do carefully. To put it paradoxically, the only differences among disciplines are merely substantive."

Though physicists don't fret about what science is, they are, the rest of us were gratified to learn, beset with other epistemological puzzles. Dr. Charles Miller introduced us to an unresolved paradox lying at the heart of contemporary physics. The basic problem is that the formal mathematics of quantum physics, which has proven extremely successful in explaining and predicting a great variety of important submicroscopic physical phenomena, also implies conditions which are contrary to equally consistent macrophysical experience. Without further explanation, for which I have neither space nor expertise, suffice it to say that, by quantum mechanical analysis, it is possible (in fact necessary) that, under the requisite circumstances, a cat be simultaneously in the states of being both dead and alive. Ironically, physics has become the model for other disciplines to emulate despite (or perhaps because of) the physicists' habit of ignoring such difficulties and getting on with their research. It relieved some of us to observe that uncertain foundations are not necessarily barriers to the accumulation of knowledge in a field of study.

Dr. Norman Miller fittingly rounded out the symposium presentations by exercising a little applied critical sociology on the symposium itself. We were invited to regard what we had been doing in the group from a perspective quite removed from that we normally maintained as involved participants. What was the broader social function of the symposium (and, by projection, of most scholarly investigation)? Pursuit of this question brought us to the question of power — within Trinity as an institution and in the wider context of American society, represented in the immediate case by the Mellon Foundation itself — and the relationship of intellectuals to the power structures of their society. We were confronted with the anomaly that critical inquiry, typical of sociology, but also of the kind we were enjoying in the symposium, could only take place because it was permitted by socially powerful institutions, which thereby gained substantial immunity from that critical inquiry.

In other words, some institutional facts are not investigated (and thus opened to conscious modification) because to do so may implicitly threaten the status, perhaps livelihood, of the investigator. Not that restrictions are externally imposed; the problem is more a subtle, even unconscious self-censorship concerning subjects selected for study. We were reminded how difficult it is, as members of a society as well as its students, to maintain a sufficiently independent viewpoint to challenge or even scrutinize the fundamental institutional facts which structure the distribution of the things that people value. The symposium thus did not conclude on any note of self-congratulatory complacency, but rather the contrary.

### Beneficial Consequences

Of course some of the more exhilarating aspects of the symposium had less to do with the content of our discussions than with their atmosphere. Dr. Smith put it aptly: "a good deal of what was accomplished in the group came from the unusual situation we all faced: in reconsidering our disciplines, making an unprejudiced selection of texts to bring us all within talking distance, and then representing the several issues and positions that seemed to shape and direct our work. That was no mean task, but what made it so unusual was that we could neither lord it over others as teachers nor could we get the sort of easy tolerance that often stifles, or even worse, does not stifle, dialogues within departments. I found that some notions I could have easily talked through with students, and others that would have gotten a deferential nod from people in English (partly because as in every family we know each other too well), either would not wash up in our group or took on a validity I either had not seen or had forgotten."

In this sense, what each of us learned was not so much about what was going on in other fields, but more a greater awareness of what we ourselves were doing. Again quoting Dr. Smith, "the first and perhaps only virtue of talking with others who don't know your language is to hear it for the first time." Anyone who has taught will recall that the best way to learn what you really know is to try to teach it to someone else.

I do not mean to minimize what we did learn from each other about the other disciplines. One distinct pleasure of the symposium was that, in a way, we reverted to the intellectual status of undergraduates. A delight of undergraduate life often overlooked until one has left college is the variety of subjects and ideas students routinely study at the same time. The intellectual excitement that may be thereby generated is, I think, one thing which inspired many of us to become college professors in the first place. Reviving that element of excitement, the symposium will doubtlessly have beneficial consequences for all of us as teachers well beyond the specific experiences of the symposium itself.

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The Structure of the Economy and Income Distribution — 1776 and 1976

by Robert A. Battis

Introduction

The promoters of the Jamestown colony in Virginia were in the main merchants who had intentions "to plant there (God willing) great plentie of Sugar Canes, for which the soyle and climate is very apt and fit; also Linseed, and Rapeseeds to make Oiles,..." They also expected that "Orenges, Limons, Almonds, Anniseeds, Rice, Cummin, Cotton wool, Carrowey seeds," etc. would "grow and increase as well as in Italy or any other part of the streights, whence we fetch them now." Unfortunately, their expectations were never realized for the new environment was in many ways quite unfamiliar to the settlers sent to the New World. Very soon after their arrival, those who survived found they had to utilize their resources in this New World for more immediate needs—shelter, protection, clothing, and food. While productive activities experienced in the Old World offered some guidance, the settlers had to learn to grow not "limons" and "orenges" but European crops in American soils as well as master the production of new crops found in the New World. In time workable solutions were found to those production problems and, as the population increased, new settlements were developed in selected sites along the Eastern seaboard. The colonists task was an arduous one because they lacked equipment and had a very limited labor force. The only resource they had in abundance was land, much of that covered by forest.

By 1763 the Southern and Middle colonies were self-sufficient in basic foods. New England probably was not self-sufficient, but that condition was more a reflection of the specialization that had developed among the colonies, rather than a failure of that region to develop adequate means of subsistence. The settlers, by that date, had achieved, by contemporary measures, a standard of life which has been compared to that of England. The distribution of the proceeds of the economic activity, however, was probably more egalitarian then in England or Europe, while social and economic mobility was relatively high. But there were pronounced inequalities. A few planting and mercantile families were rich, and approximately one-quarter of the population did not possess personal freedom.

Structure of the Colonial Economy

The great bulk of the colonists, on the order of 90 percent, whether planters, free farmers, indentured servants, convicts or slaves, devoted their energies to agricultural pursuits in a variety of forms. There were at least four significant forms of agricultural enterprises that had been established by the middle of the 18th century: the self-subsistence farms, general purpose farms oriented toward local markets, the specialized crop farming dependent on foreign trade, and the slave plantations also oriented toward foreign markets.

The self-subsistence farm was largely a frontier phenomenon that appeared briefly on the seaboard then moved north into Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, into upper New York and the Appalachian Valley as the frontier moved. These farms were self-sufficient less from choice than from the absence of a low cost mode of transportation. Because their farm crops could not be moved to market, the farmer's cash income was small, but his crops were diversified in order to meet the family's basic needs. Generally, such farms produced bread grains, fibers (flax and wool), meat supplies (cattle, hogs and poultry), dairy products (milk and cheese), as well as a range of household supplies, which included tallow, wax, leather, lye, vinegar and furniture. It was probably an inefficient form of farming, though it did demand considerable versatility. This form of production involved a population — more investors than farmers — whose life was hard, and who could easily be persuaded that their difficulties were caused by the machinations of land speculators, politicians or merchants rather than their own low productivity.

A great many of the colonial farms, located over an area extending from the Kennebec River in southern Maine along the seaboard to Maryland and then inland beyond the coastal plantations down the Piedmont and mountain valleys to the Savannah River in Georgia, could be classified as general farms. The nature of such farming varied according to population density and individual ownership of the farms was the rule. These farmers frequently supplemented their agricultural pursuits by...
hunting, trapping, fishing or exploiting the forests for masts, ashes, naval stores and in some instances, in the northern colonies, searching for bog ores. Many or most of these farms were linked with the village or urban artisans, the port town merchants or with lumbering, fishing or food processing activity. Though frequently self-sufficient in food production and partly in fibers, these farmers were quite dependent upon markets in which they could sell their agricultural produce, or timber, tan bark, pearl ashes and naval stores; as well as to buy tools, furniture, hardware, glass, kitchen utensils, shoes, spices and other household goods. Many of the farms were indirectly linked with overseas markets through grain or livestock buyers who assembled or processed agricultural goods for export, purchasing in small lots from farmers in the village markets. The size of such farms varied with the size of the family and they were found most frequently in areas of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New England.

A third type of farming involved the specialized production of one or two crops, frequently raising grain, or tobacco, and typically for export. This form of agricultural activity required a trade network capable of marketing a cash crop, but flexible enough to permit the specialized crop farmer to buy a very wide variety of commodities. The amount of investment in such farms varied, depending upon the crops produced. For example, large tobacco growers would have to have had a considerable investment in drying sheds, while large grain farmers had to have granaries and threshing floors. The larger grain farms were located in Pennsylvania, Western Maryland and Virginia while the tobacco production was concentrated in Tidewater Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia.

The colonial exports that found the most lucrative markets in Europe were tobacco, rice and indigo. More frequently these crops were raised in the Tidewater areas under the plantation system which had originally been developed in the British West Indies and later copied in Virginia and South Carolina. It was in the production of these crops for the commercial markets that slavery was found to be an effective way of utilizing the cheap land and exploiting labor. These plantations were not "large" as the world has generally regarded plantations — usually the plantations devoted to sugar production in the Caribbean Islands were larger. Once started, the system of slavery utilized for such production proved rather profitable.

It is without exaggeration to say that the agricultural techniques employed in this period were about the same as those that characterized English farming in the 17th century. Most farming was extensive and mined the soil. The average farmer paid little or no attention to animal husbandry, was either ignorant of better modes of cultivation or contemptuous of such techniques. Furthermore, he used rather crude implements. The typical plow was heavy and awkward, the sickle was of ancient invention, the flail had not changed since Biblical times and the cradle was a rarity.

Of the total labor force the great portion, about 1,700,000 or 80 percent of the total white population, was involved in general farming, the other 20 percent resided in plantation regions or lived in urban areas of 2,500 or more inhabitants. In the main, colonial farming was inefficient and the sparse productivity was based primarily on human energy and an abundance of relatively cheap land. On the other hand, it was this same agricultural activity that provided so many of the exportable products that enabled the colonists to import essential manufactured and processed commodities which provided the means for the attainment of a relatively high standard of life. Most, if not all, of the commercial life of the largest cities in the colonies depended to a considerable extent on the labor of those farmers — free, indentured or slave, who worked the fields.

Commercial Developments

Had the economic potential of the colonies been built on agriculture alone, the growth of the economy would have been somewhat different and slower. It was agriculture, however, which provided supplies of goods that could be exported and under the leadership of a number of enterprising merchants an indigenous commercial sector developed which was conducive to further economic expansion. The various crops produced by the many farms were gathered together by the city merchants to be distributed to other colonial communities or shipped to distant ports in Europe and the West Indies. The marketing of such commodities helped to sustain and lent support to the growth of urban centers in New England and the Middle Colonies. In those colonies which were largely free of the trading restraints or dominance of the chartered trading companies, urban life seemed to prosper. By 1770 three of these cities Boston, New York and Philadelphia were major world trading centers. And Philadelphia, with its approximately 28,000 inhabitants, exceeded in size every English city but London. 2

In the South, urban growth was not as great and the trade of the area was dominated by British merchants, who, under mercantilist policies, were able to control the exports of tobacco, rice, indigo, and some naval stores. By 1770 there were only two urban communities of relative
importance in the area — both seaports — Charleston and Baltimore.

Many merchants, in addition to carrying on their import-export activities, found it quite profitable to engage in shipbuilding or to employ workmen in ropewalks, cooperage factories, sail lofts, flour mills, bakeries, distilleries, and candlemaking. Some undertook insurance or finance functions, and many participated in land speculation, all the while accumulating experience with British techniques and practices in management and accounting. This was the era of the merchant entrepreneur who, for the most part, was involved in either foreign or coastal trade.

The principal exports of the larger port cities reflect the very close relationship that existed between the region's basic productive activity, usually agriculture, and the commercial pursuits of the city merchants. Boston's major exports were rum, potash, pearlash, lumber, fish, whale oil, soap and candles. New York and Philadelphia, on the other hand, exported wheat, flour, lumber, beef, pork and livestock, while Baltimore's most important exports were tobacco, corn, wheat and flour, and Charleston exported rice, indigo, tobacco, tar, pitch, turpentine and lumber.

Manufacturing in the colonies was carried on in a limited or rudimentary fashion in farmhouses as household industries, and in yards, shops or furnaces. Shipbuilding was one of the more important industries and iron production another; the latter, on the eve of the Revolution, produced about 15 percent of the world's output. The high cost of both labor and overland transport, as well as the comparative advantage held by England which, by the 1770's, was in the early stages of an industrial revolution, limited the growth of domestic manufacturing.

By 1775 colonial economic development had produced an economy in which most laborers worked the land, but over the years since the first settlement there had been little improvement in agricultural productivity. Possibly some increase in productivity had occurred as a consequence of the growth in the size of markets and the improvements in marketing methods; however, limited internal transportation facilities had restricted more improvements and the exploitation of more fertile lands. The export trade was an integral part of that economic growth, for the colonies had too small a domestic market to enable producers, particularly those producing manufactured goods, to reach an efficient scale of production. This limitation necessitated the importation of a wide range of manufactured products, and engendered the expansion of the port cities.

Population and the Character of Urban Life

Where in 1610 there were approximately 210 settlers in Virginia, by 1775 the thirteen American colonies had an estimated population of some 2,800,000. Approximately 48 percent of that number were in residence in the Southern colonies while the other 52 percent were almost evenly distributed in the New England or Middle Atlantic colonies. As noted earlier, most of the colonists lived in rural areas and most were farmers, or farm laborers. There were, however, spread out among the villages and towns, the artisans and professionals who provided specialized skills for the rural centers. In the larger, so-called urban areas, i.e., communities having a population of 2,500 or more, about 4 percent of the total or approximately 100,000 were “urbanites.” The larger part of them living in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Charleston, Baltimore, Salem and Newport, all seaport communities whose very prosperity was dependent upon free movement of their ships on the Atlantic and coastal sea lanes and the productivity of the hinterland.

In 1775 the city of Boston contained approximately 2,000 dwelling units into which were crowded about 15,000 inhabitants. Comforts of life that we now look upon as necessities were lacking for even the rich. In the North End, housing was cramped and heating facilities enormously inefficient. Lighting was provided by candles or oil, whale or codfish. Water sources were limited, outhouses and open sewers provided a less-than-pleasant hygienic environment. Smallpox infections were common and “death a frequent visitor.” The South End, on the other hand, was an area with open fields, gardens and pastures, dotted with more spacious houses and an occasional ropewalk. What is now Back Bay was then mudflats or marshland. Much of the economic life of the city centered on Long Wharf, the city’s contact point with the rest of the world.

The family heads in this busy city were laborers and clerks, housewrights, and shipwrights, weavers and tailors, master artisans and blacksmiths; leatherworkers, cordwainers, distillers, tavernkeepers, merchants, shopkeepers, sea captains and mariners. The middle class was made up of artisans, shopkeepers, professional farmers, and some smaller merchants, while the lower class consisted of the laborers, artisans and farmers. At the top of the social classes were the merchants, lawyers and large landowners — a considerable number of them Harvard graduates — who held or owned much of the city’s wealth.

To the south, at the confluence of the Schuykill and Delaware Rivers, was Philadelphia, the largest and most prosperous of the seven cities. In 1776, it had about 5,400
dwellings which housed a population of approximately 23,700; about 16,000 living in the city proper, and another 7,000 residing in the adjacent districts of Liberties and Southwark. Again, as in Boston, many of the inhabitants lived in crowded and cramped quarters close by the Delaware River, near the wharves and warehouses. The distribution of the population depended upon the nature of the individual family head’s skill or craft. Residing closest to the docks were the shipwrights, sailmakers, sailors and stevedores, and mixed among their quarters were the homes of some of the city’s many merchants. Back from the dock areas were located the residences and shops of the artisans — tailors, tinsmiths, hatters, etc., while at the fringes of the city the weavers, dyers, tanners and distillery laborers lived. Beyond the crowded urban area and extending to the Schuylkill River were gardens, pastures and an occasional farmhouse. Most of the city streets were unpaved, water supplies were limited, while sanitary facilities left much to be desired. Since housing costs were quite high, living space was cramped, inadequately heated and, in many instances, involved both workshop and residence in one. The ownership of wealth was unequally distributed, with the upper tenth of the taxpaying households owning 89 percent of the taxable property. The general prosperity of the city, however, provided both artisan and shopkeeper good earnings, if not great wealth.

Income and Wealth Distribution

There is general agreement among scholars that the English standard of life, in this period, was high by contemporary measures. It is also generally recognized that the real wages of labor were higher in colonial America than in England. However, only a small fraction of the colonial labor force worked for wages — approximately 5 percent. One quarter of the American labor force was made up of bound or indentured laborers and at least half were slaves — bound for life. Most of the work force were farmers or fishermen whose income depended upon more than their labor — investment, skill and luck. But the level of wages of free labor did provide a floor below which incomes from farming probably would not fall since farmers had the option of hiring out their services. Unfortunately, this does not specify in quantitative terms the differences in per capita income of colonial and English citizens. Given the difficulty of estimating these variations in income levels, one finds a wide range of estimates of per capita income in the two economies. From among these, it seems plausible to conclude that between 1720 and 1770 per capita income in the colonies had increased about 1 percent per annum, a rate comparable to that in England and Wales. On the other hand, the distribution of this income was a bit more egalitarian than in England and social mobility was probably higher. By 1774, there appears to have been noticeable disparities developing in both wealth and income distribution in the colonies. There were, by that date, a few merchant and planting families who had accumulated considerable wealth and at the other extreme there was approximately one-quarter of the population that did not even have personal freedom. 7

One estimate of the distribution of wealth in the Middle Atlantic colonies in 1774 reflects a distribution in which the top 10 percent of the wealth holders held 36 percent of the physical wealth, i.e., land, slaves, livestock, clothing, furniture, business equipment, inventories, etc. The poorest 10 percent held only 0.4 percent of the wealth, while 50 percent of these wealth holders owned only 14 percent of such wealth. Other studies of wealth distribution in Boston and Chester County, Pennsylvania indicate a similar trend in ownership of wealth. The overall data suggests that wealth distribution tended to be more unequal in urban areas than in rural and more evenly distributed in new rural areas than in the older settled regions. 8

A Changing Economy

Some fifteen years after the Revolution the nation consisted of a gross area of 820,377 square miles of largely undeveloped land; settlement being contained in only 29 percent of the area. Overland travel was costly, thus the rivers and the ocean provided the main trade routes. Maps of the period indicate a few roads and many highways were such in name only. Bridges were few in number and stagecoach travel had not yet achieved its zenith but was being developed quite rapidly. It took four days to travel from Boston to New York and the journey to Philadelphia, from New York, required two days. Such an inadequate internal transportation system meant that the domestic economy consisted of many small scattered markets which proved to be a barrier to the expansion of manufacturing. Further, after the Revolution as before, the scarcity of both capital and labor, relative to the abundant supply of land, continued to provide the new nation a comparative advantage in the production of primary goods, shipbuilding, the provision of shipping services, and the cultivation of agricultural commodities. The overseas trade which flowed from this peculiar set of conditions continued to foster some increase in the specialization of production and possibly provided for some increase in productivity. 9

From that date to the present there has been a most
dramatic change in the structure of the economy, an amazing increase in production, rising levels of income, a decline in the relative importance of agriculture, and an expansion of what economists refer to as the service sector. There is increased leisure, a vast array of new goods, particularly consumer durables, and changes in technology which have made work easier, increased employment opportunities, and helped to extend every citizen’s life. During that same period, population has grown and has spread itself across a continent while in the process it has concentrated its population in urban areas, the size of such undreamed in 1776. To better appreciate this change one has to look at a map of population concentration in the 1770’s or think back on the fact that the largest colonial cities, New York and Philadelphia, had populations on the order of some 21,000 and 28,000 respectively; less than the number of spectators at a Red Sox baseball game at Fenway Park in 1976.

It is not the purpose of this short paper to explain how this change came to be, but rather to try to describe the change through a comparison of the economy in two different periods in its history. However, it would be helpful in understanding why such change has taken place, to review quite briefly the rather dramatic changes in technology which have been so instrumental in providing the means for this new way of life, if not the “good life.”

**Technological Innovations**

The first steps toward the modernization of the American economy commenced sometime in the first half of the 19th century, approximately 40 years after 1776. No attempt will be made to provide you a date when this “take-off” occurred since economic historians cannot agree among themselves as to any specific date. They do agree, however, that the particular variables which help to explain the transformation of what was basically an agricultural economy into an industrial economy began to make their effects recognizable in the period between 1830 and 1850.

During that period, industrial technology, most of it borrowed from abroad, began to make life and the manner of living different for a lot of people. This industrial development brought labor-saving machinery and a widespread use of new power sources to both transportation and industry. Most important it brought about the use of interchangeable parts in complex mechanisms which stimulated the further development of more complex machines utilized in the production of low cost standardized products. The expansion in the utilization of this type of machinery was extended in the early twentieth century with the introduction of the assembly line — an organization system that had its roots in grain mills and slaughterhouses. Its modern version, however, was inextricably linked to the work of Henry Ford and the production of the automobile.

As mechanization expanded, more and more modern technology was dependent upon scientific knowledge. That is, an increasingly larger number of technical changes came to depend upon prior advances in systematized knowledge. This movement toward a science-based technology is most noticeable from 1916 to the present. First utilized in ferrous metallurgy, it has had an impact upon agriculture and in the production of a wide variety of materials. There has also been a most dramatic revolution in the types and utilization of energy sources as the economy shifted from water and wood to coal and oil. Superimposed on these changing sources of power came electrification and the electric motor which provided a flexibility that made possible the reorganization of work arrangements.

**Structural Change**

If one looks about the economy two hundred years after the Revolution and the publication of Adam Smith’s *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, it might appear that the modern American business system is similar to that described by the Glasgow University professor. There are more than 10 million autonomous business firms in the domestic economy, most of them relatively small, i.e., having fewer than 100 employees. Many of these firms sell one or a few products or services and entry into such business activities is easy, while exit is quite common. But the first look is deceiving; the major and most important of the nation’s productive assets and the revenues they generate belong to a quite small group of giant corporations. About 500 companies, including among them General Motors, Exxon, U.S. Steel, IBM and RCA, produce almost 70 per cent of the nation’s industrial products.

Fifty of the largest firms reap a combined sales revenue of approximately $350 billion a year or about one-quarter of the gross national products. General Motors employs about 370,000 workers who help to produce sales in excess of $35 billion. A revenue that exceeds the gross national product of such nations as Denmark, Austria, Yugoslavia or the Union of South Africa is hardly the amount of revenue generated by a Philadelphia merchant of the 1770’s.

But what we recognize today as modern industry evolved only gradually. For example, the leading manufacturing industries in 1860, when ranked by the value added, i.e.,
the value of wages, rent, interest and profits earned by the industry, cotton textiles led the list, followed by lumber, boots and shoes, flour and meal milling, men's clothing, iron (cast, forged, rolled and wrought), machinery, woolen goods, carriage and wagon manufacturers. The production of cotton cloth had become the leading industry as early as 1840, and as the Census of Manufactures for 1860 noted, "The growth of the culture and manufacture of cotton in the United States constitutes the most striking feature of the industrial history of the last fifty years." 12

By 1900 the leading industries, again ranked by value added, were foundry and machine production, lumber products, printing and publishing, iron and steel, malt liquors, tobacco products and cotton goods. Then, as the development process continued with ever-changing technology, rising incomes and shifting tastes, the order of importance in industrial production also changed such that today the leading industries are automobile production, steel manufacturers, communications equipment, newspapers, aircraft production, pharmaceuticals, beverages and petroleum products. 13

When one looks at the nature of the work that American laborers performed in the 1700's and the activities they pursue today, the change is quite apparent and most dramatic. In the 1770's the major work effort of most people who labored was in agriculture. In 1860, only 20 percent of the labor force, which consisted of about 10.5 million gainfully employed laborers, were employed in manufacturing and another 20 percent worked in the service sector (wholesale and retail trades, government, personal services, transportation, public utilities, finance, insurance, etc.). The other 60 percent of the gainfully employed were working in agriculture, forestry or fishing. In 1770 it required approximately 90 percent of the work force to produce the essential foodstuffs and raw materials for the colonial economy.

Today, with a labor force of almost 94 million men and women, only 26.5 percent of them are engaged in manufacturing, a proportion that is down from the 30 percent in 1900. Now the modern mass production engaged in by large specialized firms has called for a much greater effort in distribution and financial management, while urbanization requires more in the way of government services. Consequently, where a relatively small part of the labor force was in the service sector in the 1770's, and only 20 percent so involved in 1860, today almost 65 percent of the nation's workers are employed in the provision of services, i.e., selling insurance, teaching, providing medical or government services, etc.

This restructuring of work activity is the product of modern technology and the impact of this change is most notable in the agricultural sector of the economy. Today it is possible for a mere 4 percent of the labor force to produce more than enough food and raw materials for the entire population. This transformation in the utilization of the labor force has been made possible through a dramatic increase in labor productivity resulting from technological change. Indicative of this change is the measure of man-hours required to produce three basic crops. First, in 1800 it required 373 man-hours of labor to produce 100 bushels of wheat; by the 1960's the same output required only 12 man-hours of labor. Second, a bale of cotton required, in 1800, over 600 man-hours of labor; 100 years later labor requirements had been reduced to 300 man-hours, but by 1963 they had been reduced to a mere 49 man-hours per bale. Finally, in 1800, 100 bushels of corn necessitated about 344 man-hours; 160 years later this same output can be produced with approximately 11 man-hours. 14

Population Trends

Between 1770 and 1900, the population increased from about 2.1 million souls to 76.1 million; an average annual rate of increase of approximately 2.6 percent. Initially, the birth rate was remarkably high, but during the 19th century it gradually declined. Over the same time span the death rate fell from approximately 23 per thousand to 13. This combination of a slowly declining birth rate and a rather rapid decrease in the death rate per thousand accounts, in large part, for the relatively rapid rise in population. There was, however, throughout this period a continuous stream of immigrants seeking new opportunities in the nation's expanding economy. Their numbers increased from about 10,000, in the very early 1800's, to 500,000 annually in the middle 1880's, and a million a year in the first decade of the 20th century. This influx of immigrants supplemented the natural growth rate and obviously provided many new hands for the expanding economy.

Since 1900, the population has increased almost threefold, increasing from 76.1 million to 213.4 million, which is an average rate of growth below 2.0 percent a year. The birth rate has continued to drop, though it did increase somewhat sharply during the 1950's, and today it is about 15 per thousand compared to 52 per thousand in 1820. Moreover the death rate has continued to fall and is about 9 per thousand compared to 23 per thousand in the early 19th century. Immigration, on the other hand, because of legislative restriction, gradually fell to a mere trickle in the 1920's and during the Great Depression. By 1950 the flow had risen to about 300,000 and over the most recent years, 1967-75, it has averaged about 400,000 per year. 15
As the population numbers have increased, the people of this country have moved across the continent in such a fashion that we now find the New England and Middle Atlantic regions contain only 24 percent of the total, while the South has 31 percent, the North Central 28 percent and the West 17 percent. Further, what was once a predominantly rural population is now an urban population, with three-quarters of the nation's citizens residing in urban areas. New York which was, in 1860, the largest city in the nation, still holds that pre-eminent position, but now Los Angeles is second, and Chicago is ranked third. Philadelphia which had been the premier city in 1776 is now fourth, while Boston and Baltimore have been replaced by Detroit and San Francisco. Newport and Charleston had lost their predominant status prior to 1860.

**Distribution of Wealth and Income**

As a consequence of the change in productivity of the national economy, today we have a society in which most people are well fed or fed too well and weight control is a thriving industry. Low cost and attractive clothing has made it difficult to discern the difference among income classes. Most families in the United States live in housing units with inside plumbing, electric lights and some heating facilities. Approximately 82 percent of all homes have telephones and 92 percent have refrigerators. A major number of those homes are single-family units, and most of those are owner-occupied. Further the housing stock seems to be so abundant, that old or badly situated units are simply abandoned, whereas in other societies they would be repaired.

But our present standard of living extends beyond the so-called basic necessities. Education is provided in a most generous fashion and medical care, probably for all but the poorest families, is above that of most of the world's population. Consumers have much more leisure time and income which enables them to indulge in a wide variety of recreational activities. About 98 percent of all households have TV sets, 82 percent have automobiles and nearly a third of those have two cars. Moreover, more public services are provided by police and fire departments, hospitals, schools and libraries as well as museums, parks and zoos. However, it is now becoming more apparent that with the good have come some bads: as our economy produces more goods, it also spews forth increasing amounts of pollutants in the process which creates a problem of environmental pollution.

Over these 200 years our society has constructed a wonderful machine which produces food, clothing, housing and machines — automobiles, spaceships, electronic devices and gadgets of all sorts in profusion. Some say that it produces too much junk and not enough good housing, and has a tendency to underutilize plant and equipment as well as labor, creating at the same time variations in economic welfare which are viewed as inequitable or unjust. As Henry George, economist and author of *Progress and Poverty*, expressed the problem in 1880, "The association of poverty with progress is the great enigma of our times."

As noted earlier in this paper, by 1774, according to the historical evidence, a trend has developed toward a greater inequality in the distribution of physical wealth than had been evident in the early 1700's. Since physical wealth is a source of income, such a distribution of wealth-holdings suggests a commensurate change in income distribution.

One study of the distribution of wealth in the 19th century suggests that the tendency for wealth to be distributed in this unequal fashion continued to 1860. According to the available records of that period, the richest 1 percent of the families in the United States held 24 percent of the wealth while the top 10 percent held about 72 percent of the wealth. This estimate reflects a higher concentration of wealth-holdings in the cotton planting South where a large number of people, largely slaves, held no wealth. In that region, 1 percent of the wealth-holders owned 30 percent of the wealth and 10 percent held 79 percent. But even greater inequality existed in the cities where 10 percent of the top wealth-holding families held 85 percent of the wealth.

A second study of wealth-holding in the 20th century suggests that by the middle of that century the share of wealth-holdings of the top wealth-holders may have diminished somewhat. According to this investigation, in 1922, the top 2 percent of the families held 33 percent of personal wealth, but by 1953 that share had fallen to 29 percent and the share of wealth held by the top one-half of one percent (0.5) had fallen from 29.8 percent to 25 percent.

Finally, according to a more recent investigation of present wealth-holders, the evidence indicates that roughly 25 percent of all personal and financial assets are held by the top 1 percent of the wealth-holders. Many families own houses, automobiles and other personal property, but few own income-producing wealth such as stocks, bonds, or real estate. What this study discovered was that about 72 percent of America's corporate stocks, 47 percent of the outstanding bonds, 24 percent of the mortgages and notes, and 16 percent of income-earning real estate was held by the top 1 percent of wealth-holders.

If we accept the evidence presented above, the degree of inequality in wealth-holdings has declined somewhat since 1922. Other things being equal, this shift in the concentration of wealth-holdings should tend to reduce the inequality in income distribution. Investigation of family income data suggests such a shift in income distribution.
has taken place. We find that in 1929 the top 5 percent of the households received about 8.5 times as much income as the lowest 20 percent of the households received. At that time, the top 5 percent received about 30 percent of the income. By 1947 that relationship had changed such that the top 5 percent received nearly 4 times as much income as the lowest 20 percent of the households received. Then, the top 5 percent received 20.9 percent of the income and the lowest 20 percent received 5 percent of the income. But these shares have been fairly constant since 1947, and the lowest fifth of the income recipients’ share has not increased at all. The relative gains in income redistribution have fallen to the middle group of income recipients.

This condition raises the question: why, despite prolonged prosperity and massive efforts to improve economic opportunity for our citizens, does our economy continue to distribute income in the same unequal pattern; a distribution which tends to produce social disparity and political conflict? In this Bicentennial Year, this is a disturbing issue of economic justice and equity. It would appear that the task for the future is to find some means or mechanism of distribution that will enable the various households in our society who have lagged behind the majority in sharing the benefits of our gross national product machine. Achievement of such a goal will probably be difficult because it may require a modification of values and institutions that seem to have become firmly established over these 200 years of history.

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Footnotes
3 This estimate of population was offered by J.B.D. DeRow, Superintendent of the Seventh Census (1850). Many experts have viewed the figure as "too generous," and have offered estimates for 1770 which suggest that the population, five years prior to 1776, was on the order of 2,148,076 or 2,205,000. Further, the estimates for 1780 were 2,780,369 and 2,781,000. Given these estimates, one might conclude that in 1775 the population was on the order of about 2,500,000. See Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, A Century of Population Growth in the United States 1790-1940, pp. 8-9 and Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 276.
4 In 1769 Philadelphia had an estimated population of 28,042, but in 1775 it was reported to be only 23,700. New York's population was 21,863 in 1771 and in 1770 Boston was supposed to have had a population of 15,520. In 1770 Charleston had a population of approximately 10,863 and in 1775 Baltimore had only 5,934 residents. In 1776 Salem had a population of 5,337 and Newport had some 5,299 residents. See Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, A Century of Population Growth in the United States 1790-1900, p. 11.
5 This description of Boston on the eve of the Revolution has been drawn from U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics The Colonial Worker in Boston, 1775 (Boston: New England Regional Office, 1975).
15 All population data has been drawn from Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States and Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1975.
FROM THE PRESS BOX:
A Look at the Henley Royal Regatta

By Nancy S. Nies

What is it like to be the only woman reporter among twenty staid gentlemen of the press at the Henley Royal Regatta, the shrine of international rowing competition? "Jolly good fun, that's wot!"

And jolly good fun it was indeed when on June 24, 1976, I flew to the picturesque town of Henley-on-Thames to report on the participation of four tough Trinity College crews for The Hartford Courant.

The Henley Royal Regatta is no minor rowing event. This year 218 crews, including 41 foreign entries, challenged each other for the twelve most sought-after rowing cups in the world. And when you are reporting on a winner — the Trinity College varsity heavyweights — that is no minor story.

From the press box, which stood on pilings about 30 feet offshore smack in the middle of the Thames, the view was superb. We — the gentlemen of The London Times, The Daily Telegraph, Associated Press, United Press International, The British Press Association, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and I — looked down the Henley Reach, a straight mile-and-550-yard course, to watch crews battle their way to the finish about 20 feet in front of the box.

Standing on the bank to our left, gentlemen clad in sharp, white flannel suits sported straw boaters, and ladies dressed in elegant, flowing summer gowns twirled their matching parasols. It was a scene out of My Fair Lady.

The best view, however, was not from the press box or the viewing stands but from the starter's launch. Reporters fought for a chance to ride in the long, whisper-quiet boats which slid effortlessly through the water behind the competing crews. The regatta staff doled out only one press pass for any race — and for some, no passes at all. Senior reporters got first crack at each pass. At the age of 21 and covering my first race, I came at the end of the line.

At first the other reporters weren't begging for passes. After all, they were squeezing Henley in between Wimbledon and the Olympics. They had to watch seventy races the first day, and they were bored. But the more races Trinity's crews won, the tougher the competition for passes to its races became.

One morning when I arrived at the race ground at about 10:30, I rushed in to George Lawson, the Press Officer who acts as the liaison between the regatta officials and the press, to see if, by chance, there was a press pass remaining for the Trinity race at 11:15. George beckoned me close and whispered that Desmond Hill of The Daily Telegraph had saved his press pass for me. Furthermore, he added that Hill had told The New York Times correspondent, who had been trying to get a Trinity pass for days, that the pass was "not available." Hill had reserved it especially for me!

The British reporters' gentlemanly concern for the "lady of the box" was often amusing. Both gents from the Times and Telegraph, rival English papers, outdid one another to help me. Once when I asked about a journalistic technique, they turned around simultaneously to offer their advice and ended up arguing heatedly about the point and forgetting me completely.

Often I unintentionally evoked a bout of laughter or teasing from the other press men with my partisan enthusiasm. It is an unwritten law of journalism that there be no shouting from the press box, especially in England. However, when a Trinity crew would race to yet another thrilling victory, I could never contain myself so would yell and wave wildly from the front of the box as our crew neared the line!

The experiences of a brazen CBS newscaster proved less heart-warming. The TV newsman, who had flown all the way to Henley to film the winning American crews, demanded that the Press Officer grant him and his television crew entry to the Stewards' Enclosure, the reserved viewing area. When George Lawson politely refused, he stomped and stormed... but to little avail. The Henley Regatta did not admit just anyone. Only stewards and their invited guests could sit in the elitist enclosure. And CBS, the Press Officer informed him coolly, did not fall into either category. (I entered the Stewards' Enclosure by the invitation of Norman Graf, the Trinity College coach and a Henley steward.) Ultimately, the entire camera crew was forced to film the oarsmen from just outside the carefully guarded enclosure barriers.

Everything about reporting at Henley was a challenge and filing stories proved no exception. Most of the reporters wrote and filed their stories directly from the box using portable typewriters and private phones. Since my deadline was 6:00 p.m. in the States or 11:00 p.m. British time, I found myself filing stories from all over the surrounding English countryside. One evening after a
supper at a pub with George, and Eric Brown of the British wire service, I ran out between beers to call the Courant from a pay phone about a mile down the lane from the thatch-roofed pub!

Other evenings as the sun turned the Thames into gold, I was typing away in the empty press box long after my colleagues had gone. Crews would slide past in the closing dark, out for a last evening practice. After I finished, I would hike a half mile into Henley to call from the nearest phone box.

The Henley Royal Regatta is indeed a “royal” affair. The Henley Regatta, which began in 1839, was renamed when Prince Albert became the first Royal Patron in 1851. This year, Princess Alexandra, cousin to the Queen, arrived on the final day of racing to award the 12 cups. She alighted from the royal launch on the royal landing pad which had been specially carpeted for the occasion in Leander pink. The Princess then strolled through the luxurious grounds of the Stewards’ Enclosure while leaning on the arm of Regatta Chairman John Garton.

Leander pink characterizes the Leander Rowing Club of England which carefully selects its members from the top international teams. To be chosen for membership, an oarsman must have won at Henley or have achieved some other international acclaim. The Leander trademark, a hot pink color, garnished every corner of the regatta from carnations to oarblades. Members sported flashing pink ties and matching socks, and some added a prominent carnation. Above the clubhouse which loomed at the far edge of the racecourse, a bright pink triangle flew. Nearby, in the shade of a large tree, a diehard oarsman, complete in his wheelchair.

During the regatta week, the temperatures soared into the nineties in an unusual heat wave. Daily, new records were set by both the rowers and the thermometer. On Friday, in an unprecedented announcement, John Garton broke a 137-year-old Henley rule when he said, “Gentlemen may remove their jackets in the Stewards’ Enclosure although shirts and ties must be worn.” The crowd cheered, and immediately the colors of shirts brightened the banks. Many men, however, refused to break the Henley tradition so continued to wear their jackets and their stoic lobster-red faces.

Rowers, too, had to remain fully clothed. Even during the pre-regatta practice days, tee-shirts were required. When I questioned an official as to why the men were not permitted to remove their shirts while rowing in such stifling heat, he replied stiffly, gazing down his aristocratic nose, “We do not like bare skin!”

As the temperatures rose, the champagne flowed faster than the Thames. In the Stewards’ Enclosure, stewards and their guests rushed for the relief of the bars. At the Fawley Bar, drinks ranged from warm pints of bitter shandy to the traditional Pimm’s, a fruity gin drink with a sprig of watercress, a slice of cucumber, and a section of lemon. Near the blue-and-white-striped cupola which sheltered the Royal Marines who were playing Bicentennial tunes, both iced coffee and cordials were served in delicate wine glasses. Next to the Champagne Bar, couples clustered at small, white tables enjoying dishes of fresh strawberries with cream. Every day at four the races ended for 45 minutes while people had their afternoon tea. Even in the tropical weather, ladies and gents would not give up their hot English tea and buttery scones.

At one o’clock the races ended for lunch for an hour and a half. Stewards and their guests dined on seafoods and cold cuts and salads in the elegant luncheon tents. At the Sunday luncheon I sat down with two gentlemen who were chatting over wine. They offered me a glass which I gratefully accepted, and the three of us talked for several minutes amicably. Then, noticing my press badge, one of them asked, “Who are you with?” I smiled and said, “Trinity/Hartford.” (The varsity crew was now a predicted contender for the finals.) The man glanced at my companion, and then the two of them laughed and said they were from Trinity/Dublin, our competitors in the semi-finals immediately after lunch! Just the same we clinked glasses and wished the best to the future winner.

The real pomp and ceremony at Henley is lunch in the parking lot. All over people were taking luncheon baskets out of their Rolls Royces. Out of one Rolls I saw two gentlemen pull a mahogany table with carved legs. A lady placed a fine linen tablecloth over it and began arranging her silver place settings and china plates. In a matter of minutes, fresh flowers were in place, the candles were lit, and 24 guests were dining on lobster and champagne!

After lunch, back to the river for more racing. As soon as the heats began, the Thames filled with pleasure boats crowded with spectators. Large, low-slung rowboats with smartly-dressed gentlemen rowing their lovely ladies slid by flatboats being punted past graceful weeping willows that leaned down to touch the Thames. Huge power boats glided courteously past ornate country houses with gingerbread balconies. On the far bank, finely-dressed onlookers fanning themselves beneath colorful lawn umbrellas crowded the expansive green lawns.

One day this sedate crowd burst into laughter when a rowboat en route to the photographer’s box capsized after being hit by an eight-man crew on its way to the start. Both the elderly man rowing and the photographer were dumped . . . only to be valiantly rescued by a quaint ten-foot police boat that threw them life rings like peppermint lifesavers!

Now that the racing has ended, the winners have been declared, and the elegant people of Henley have departed, how does one describe the Henley Royal Regatta? In the words of an old codger who shouted from the bank after every race, “JOLLY WELL ROWED!”

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"And That Is The Best Part of Us:" Human Being and Play

by Drew A. Hyland

I begin with a word of explanation about the title. The quoted phrase is part of a well-known passage from Plato's Laws, 803c. The entire passage is as follows:

"It is necessary to be serious with the serious, but not with the not serious. The divine alone is worthy by nature of all blessed seriousness. But human being, as we have said before, has been created as a plaything of the gods, and that is the best part of us. All of us, then, men and women alike, must live accordingly, and spend our lives making our play as noble and beautiful as possible — which is the very opposite of contemporary thinking."

One expression of the fundamental purpose of this paper might be that it attempts to make sense of this altogether perplexing passage — perplexing because on the one hand it is evidently not ironic, yet on the other hand it articulates a view which — at least on the usual conception of play — seems a bizarre component indeed in a famous philosophical position usually associated with a belief in the superiority of the afterlife to this life and an exceptionally austere view of the proper conduct and rights of human beings on this earth. In short, the passage by itself sounds like the view of a skeptic turned hedonist, and we all know that Plato was not that. What, then, could Plato have meant by play and playfulness such that he might seriously have propounded the teaching embodied in the above quotation?

I submit that none of the standard contemporary conceptions of play could even approach answering this question. To mention only a few of the more well-known, try "play is an escape from reality," or "play is a return to childhood," or "play is a civilized way in which we take out our aggressions," or "play is a way of refreshing us so that we may return to our work lives with renewed vigor." None of these or any others of which I am aware come close to according to play the fundamental significance for human being expressed in the quotation from Plato. I believe, however, that I am on the way to developing an understanding of play which does accord it such significance, and I would like to present at least the outlines of such an understanding here. I hasten to add, however, that my main attraction to the view of play forthcoming is not just that it accords with Plato — though I can hardly think of better philosophic company — but that it seems to be true.

To begin, I wish to suggest an understanding of play as a stance or orientation which human beings take from time to time toward the world and their fellow humans. To say that play is such a stance is immediately to imply that it is a phenomenon, a possibility, more primordial than, say, a sociological or historical phenomenon, a psychological state or a behavioral response to certain stimuli, although since it is more primordial than these it may be present in any of them and therefore easily confused with them. Rather, to say that play is a stance is to say that it is a way of comporting ourselves toward the world, a way of taking the world, of being in the world, and so most fundamentally, a mode of being. What, then, is this stance of play?

Scene I: I am going to work in the morning after a snowfall. I am forced to drive more slowly than usual and so I must get up earlier than I wish. Driving so slowly, and the traffic jams that ensue, make me frustrated. When I park my car I must slog through the stuff to my office. It makes me cold and wet. I try to resist all this by ignoring the snow as much as possible. The snow is for me — to use Sartre's apt term, a "not."

Scene II: I am skiing. As I glide down the mountain I must be especially aware of the minute changes in the quality of the snow, for subtle differences in the snow will elicit different movements and positions of my body. We skiers even have developed terms for these variations — powder, packed powder, hard-pack, loose granular, blue ice. Nor is my sensitivity directed only on the snow. The trees, which I hardly noticed on the way to work, now
function in at least three ways for my consciousness: as objects of beauty which I occasionally pause to contemplate, as guides which show me the way down the trail, and as threats which I must avoid skiing into.

Or alternatively, Scene Ia: This time I am taking the subway home from work. It is rush hour, and the streets and stations and subway cars are mobbed. People are passing me everywhere — in front of me, behind me, alongside me. In the subway car we are pressed up against each other, as if we were like alienated sardines. I deal with this uncomfortable situation, again, by ignoring it as much as possible. I try to read the newspaper.

Scene Iib: People are also passing behind me, in front of me, next to me, occasionally against me. But this time I am on a basketball court, and my whole attention is directed to being fully aware of the movements of everyone, both my teammates and the opposition. I dribble slowly toward my teammate, who pretends to come toward me but suddenly cuts behind the man defending him toward the low, and the other players would surely notice it. The opposing players have also anticipated the play and are moving to intercept the pass. Again it is not just the other players to which my heightened sensitivity is directed. I soon anticipate this and pass the ball to where he will soon be, watching out of the corner of my eye that none of the opposing players have also anticipated the play and are moving to intercept the pass. Again it is not just the other players to which my heightened sensitivity is directed. I notice the relative resilience of the floor and backboard, to ten-foot high basket were as much as a half-inch high or low, I and the other players would surely notice it.

With due apologies for the quality of the drama, I suggest that such contrasts, and I suppose hundreds of others like them, are reasonably accurate and common. Now in each pair, one situation is usually characterized as play, the other not. Taking them as paradigms, then, of play and non-play, I want to ask what is different about the stance taken toward our experience in the two play situations; what distinguishes it from the stances taken in the non-playful encounters.

To begin, I note that in the play situations I am called upon, or call upon myself, to have a heightened sense of openness toward my surroundings. Skiing, I must be far more aware than I usually am of subtle variations in the quality of the snow, steepness of the slopes, location of the trees and other people. Playing basketball, I am called upon to be constantly open to, aware of, the location and movements of the respective players, the quality of the floor and backboard, size of the floor, and whatever possibilities open up in the game as a result. Clearly, then, the play situations seem to demand an openness to my environment not called for in the non-playful situations.

But openness is not the whole of the distinction. It is hardly sufficient while skiing simply to be open to the various nuances I mentioned, to take notice, as it were, and leave it at that. Rather, I have to be capable of responding to that openness in a way called for by the situation, and my success as a skier depends in good measure precisely on my capacity to respond appropriately to each developing situation. Similarly, I would be a poor basketball player — indeed I could hardly consider myself to be playing basketball — if I merely noticed with extraordinary sensitivity the various movements of the players, etc. Again, my success as a player, indeed my very status as a player, demands that I respond as best I can to whatever possibilities my openness to the game elicits. Responsiveness, then, could be called a second "moment" in the stance of play, a second decisive characteristic of our orientation toward things exhibited in the two play situations.

Now I am aware that two instances does not make a sound inductive generalization. Nevertheless, I boldly suggest that other examples one may choose will reveal the same structure present in typical play situations and present to a far smaller degree in non-play situations, a structure which I shall call responsive openness, the meaning of which I hope I have made initially clear above. It holds, for example, for children playing house, for a hike in the wilderness, for a person fishing along a quiet stream, for someone playing the guitar, as well as for the standard games usually considered play. I would add that responsiveness and openness together are what bring about the well-known experience of immersion, the sense we often have in play of being totally involved in our activity, not abstracted or distanced in any way from what we are doing.

Any human activity is more or less playful according to the extent to which it is characterized by responsive openness.

Let me now depart briefly from the main course of my argument, hopefully to clear up in advance some potential ambiguities. First, it should be clear that the interpretation of play as the stance of responsive openness offered here does not admit of a rigid dichotomy between playful and unplayful activities, but rather places them on a continuum. Presumably anyone who is conscious is at least somewhat open and at least somewhat responsive to his or
To make a long interpretation short, human being is by version of a relational conception of human nature, which for the sake of coherence with my opening remarks, let me set out could be derived from instead, albeit in a necessarily attenuated way, an older conception and what are the most significant alternatives? The conception I have in mind might be expressed in its broadest sense as the view that human being is relational. This I hope accords with the intuitive sense most of us share that on a given football field, for example, some of the participants may be playing, others not.

Let me now return to the main line of my argument by elaborating on the view asserted above that the notion of play as a stance is more primordial, more fundamental, than psychological, sociological, or historical accounts of play. Why in particular would the notion of play as a stance of responsive openness be more fundamental? My suggestion is this, that play as responsive openness achieves such primordiality, and therefore that play is such a primordial human phenomenon, because this stance is a direct consequence of nothing less than the nature of human being itself, or at least of a certain conception of human being which I would espouse. What is that conception and what are the most significant alternatives? The conception I have in mind might be expressed in its broadest sense as the view that human being is relational. One of the most famous and succinct contemporary formulations of this view occurs in the opening lines of Martin Buber's I and Thou, where he says, "There is no I taken in itself, but only the I of the primary word I-Thou and the I of the primary word I-It." But if only for the sake of coherence with my opening remarks, let me set out instead, albeit in a necessarily attenuated way, an older version of a relational conception of human nature, which could be derived from Plato's dialogue, the Symposium. To make a long interpretation short, human being is by nature erotic, and eros has three dimensions, or perhaps better, moments, to its structure. First, it is incompleteness, partiality. Second, it is the experience of, or in its highest instances the self-conscious recognition of, its incompleteness, and third, it is the striving for completeness, the yearning effort to overcome our sense of incompleteness in any way we can. In short, it is our very nature that we are incomplete, we experience or recognize that incompleteness, and strive to overcome it as best we can. It is important to note, this is what we are. If I am a philosopher, husband, father and aging basketball player, this attests to the ways in which I have experienced my partiality and tried to overcome it. So it is with us all.

Now, why does this view make human being relational? Because as incomplete and striving for completeness, I as human am not "what I am and not another thing" but constantly becoming more than or at least other than what I was, in my effort to be a whole. Why, for example, would I have written this paper if not that I had experienced some incompleteness of understanding, of communication, or I add blushingly, of fame and glory, which I supposed this paper would in part overcome? Precisely because we are thus not "autonomous," because we do not have the ingredients of completeness within our own nature, we do and must seek fulfillment by reaching out towards that which is other than us, toward the world, toward things, perhaps most of all toward other humans. Hence the Platonic understanding of romantic love, but also of all other "loves" or strivings for completeness, love of wealth, love of power, and including certainly the love of wisdom, which paradigmatically exhibits the triadic structure of erotic human nature as incomplete, recognizing that incompleteness, and striving to overcome it. Because we are thus neither autonomous nor content with our partiality, because we must seek our completeness by directing our attention, our aspirations, toward what is other than us, we are literally by nature relational. We choose only the ways we shall relate, the objects with which we relate; we do not choose to be relational, for that is our nature.

Not all conceptions of human nature emphasize or even admit the fundamentally relational character of human being.

Given this conception of human being, or any variant on a relational conception of which I am aware, it is not difficult to see how play as responsive openness would be literally natural to human being, a consequence of our nature as relational. My natural striving for the overcoming of experienced incompleteness demands that I be open to the world and to what in the world can enhance my effort toward completeness. But my relative chances for success depends as well on my responsiveness to what possibilities arise. We experience "missed opportunities" as
missed because we feel that our lives would have been more complete, richer, had we responded when the opening was present. Thus the stance toward the world of responsive openness, which I suggest is present with special clarity and force in play, is called for by our very nature, that we may the better fulfill the project of being human.

But of course, not all conceptions of human nature emphasize or even admit the fundamentally relational character of human being. There is in particular one view of human being which has been dominant in modern culture and especially so in American experience, which runs very much counter to the view I have espoused. Let me give it as a generic title the term “nuclear individual.” This view denies, or at least denigrates to the periphery of human experience, relations with others. It emphasizes for example self-reliance, autonomy. It interprets friendship as a free gift only of the highest, most autonomous people, as an “overflowing” of those who are “overfull” (Nietzsche). It understands relations with others (e.g. love) not as means of fulfillment but as threats to individual autonomy (Sartre). It insists that if we are to be authentic, to be truly what we are, we must be so alone. Although it would take another paper or book to adequately defend it, I would suggest as some of the more famous modern spokesmen for the “nuclear individual” view, Nietzsche, Sartre, and in our own country certainly Thoreau. I daresay that the “frontier spirit” which has guided our destiny in so many ways is also founded on this view.

Now it is not difficult to see that such a conception of human nature will alter our attitude toward an understanding of play. To say the least, responsive openness, entailing as it does extensive involvements with others, will be less emphasized, accorded less fundamental significance to human nature, even possibly regarded as a danger to be avoided. It may well be that the relatively low status traditionally accorded to play in our culture is by no means unrelated to the dominance of some form of the “nuclear individual” interpretation of human being.

If I have been successful so far, then the reader will appreciate that implicit in my argument so far is a recommendation, commensurate with the teaching of Plato’s Laws quoted earlier, to be play-full in our lives as a whole. Responsive openness, that is, can be recommended as a stance toward the world because it is in accord with our nature as erotic beings. To be playful is to follow out and fulfill our nature. But precisely if, as I am, you are tempted by this somewhat sunny thesis, it is necessary to ask, why, if it is true, is it so rarely exhibited in our culture, and why does play continue to be accorded the relatively low status in the “serious business” of life that it is? I believe there is an answer to this. It is because there are in our culture contending stances, two in particular, which for a variety of reasons are at least as tempting, and have subsequently achieved a dominance which has discouraged the adoption of the stance of responsive openness and has reduced play to the subordinate status of aid to these more important projects. Let me call these stances the stance of mastery and the stance of submission. Because the stance of mastery is itself the most dominant, I shall begin with it.

For my purposes, the stance of mastery has two fundamental cultural facets, the effort to “master nature” and the attitude of mastery towards our fellow human beings, nowadays usually accorded the designation “alienation,” the ubiquitousness of which can be gleaned from a perusal of contemporary treaties on politics, economics, sociology, psychology, youth, race-relations, women, and, if Jack Scott and others are right, even sports. The attitude toward nature is perhaps best exhibited in the close relation that has been preserved since the 17th century beginnings of modern science between it and the mastery of nature. One can find in Descartes, Galileo, Bacon, Machiavelli, or again in Vico or Kant, explicit statements that reveal that they considered the project of modern science to be inseparable from the experience of nature as an enemy which we must either conquer or by whom we will continue to be victimized. This view continues to punctuate the vocabulary of science and of technology to this day.

As a recent poignant example, I would point to the speeches and comments which accompanied the recent landing of the first men on the moon, surely one of our most spectacular scientific and technological achievements. Again and again, commentators spoke of our “mastery” of the forces of nature, of our future “conquests” of outer space and other planets, even of the so-called “peaceful” uses to which the knowledge gained could be put, such as the “stamping out” of disease and the making of more comfortable and “secure” lives for us all. Few noted that midst our insistence on other fronts that we were interested only in peace and reconciliation between nations, the language used to describe this most stupendous scientific achievement was almost exclusively the vocabulary of war. Even the way in which we commonly refer to the fruits of the earth as “natural resources” suggests the element of exploitation which is our basic attitude toward nature, the dubious rewards of which are now becoming manifest in such phenomena as the ecological crisis, massive pollution of all sorts, and most recently, the depletion of fuel deposits and ensuing political tensions that accompany it. Suffice it to say, then, that the close connection which the 17th century founders saw and articulated between the development of science and the mastery of nature construed as our enemy has by no means been mitigated in our contemporary understanding.
On the level of human relations, the dominance of the stance of mastery is at least as obvious. We are fond of congratulating ourselves that we have left behind—at least in this country—perhaps the most blatant manifestation of this stance known to mankind, the institution of slavery. But that we have only made more subtle and rhetorically acceptable the dominion of this stance can be seen, as noted above, by the ubiquitousness of the experience of alienation in modern culture. It is instructive, for example that more and more of the relations between people and nations, on the political, economic, and social level, are construed not, e.g. as "justice" relations, but as "power relations." Every interest group that experiences the brunt of alienated power and attempts to escape its yoke invariably adopts as its slogan a reference to power desired. We thus hear of "black power," "feminine power," "student power," etc. Movements do not rally under what in a bygone era would have been considered the more legitimate banner of "black justice," or "feminine justice," etc. Even the ideal of democracy, an ideal at least as old as ancient Athens, has in our time received a novel and revealing formulation: power to the people. In the area of human relations, then, the stance of mastery continues to hold way to a remarkable, not to say depressing, degree.

The stance of submission is dominant in the widespread and much imitated flower child element of the hippie culture. . .

But there is another stance toward the world and other people that from time to time has played a significant role in our culture, a stance which may well be understood as the converse of the stance of mastery, adopted and recommended often by those who are unsuccessful at the project of mastery. I have called this the stance of submission. Philosophically, it is present in those views which emphasize the extent to which we must simply accept our place in the movement of history, a movement in which we unwittingly participate but which is finally outside of our control. We are told to accept "an idea whose time has come" because it has come, or as it is often put in the less technical but more colorful language of culture, "it's what's happening, baby"—usually spoken as a reason for accepting some phenomena or other. Again we have existential philosophers telling us that we must "wait" in silence the uncanny voice of being, that the most recent Seinsgeschick must be accepted because it is a happening of being. As the Beatles put a similar point in their own inimitable way, "Speaking words of wisdom, let it be." It is fair to say that this stance of submission is dominant in the widespread and much imitated flower child element of the hippie culture, not to speak of its more deplorable consequences for the so-called drug-culture. The stance of submission, then, might be said to work in a kind of dialectic with the stance of mastery so that together they hold a virtual hegemony over our cultural experience.

Now the guiding intention of this paper is to put forward the stance of play as an alternative and superior stance to mastery and submission, but my immediate purpose for introducing the latter two is to explain why responsive openness, presented I hope in an appealing way, is so rarely exhibited or even accorded significance by us. It is because our experience, not just as individuals but as a culture, is so often dominated by these other stances, stances which can be and are stated as desirable in themselves, that the climate has not been present for play to be taken seriously. Mastery and exploitation, whether of nature or of others, is a tempting possibility, even if for political reasons we repudiate one of its extreme instances, the enslavement of others. And the stance of submission can often bring with it a sense of comfort, peace, and acceptability in a world which is otherwise out of joint, a point which was recognized and developed in Oriental thinking long before it became popular in the west. Little wonder, then, that given this dominance play has remained on the periphery of our culture and its values. It is simply and literally not central to the prevailing ways of comporting ourselves toward the world.

But it will be helpful to make more precise the relation of play understood as responsive openness to the stances of mastery and submission. I suggest that in a way, responsive openness is the opposite not of one or the other but of them both, analogous to the way in which the Aristotelian virtues are means, and in that sense opposite to, both their extremes. Responsive openness, that is, occupies a precarious balance between mastery and submission in such a way that an excess of responsiveness easily devolves into mastery, an excessive openness into submission. A few examples should make my point clear. Return to the example of the basketball game used earlier in the paper. Suppose that instead of preserving the balance of responsiveness and openness there suggested, my responses become increasingly strong, domineering, and I become less and less open to possibilities of the game. Several things are likely. I will probably fail to see many of the openings my teammates may make, and thus cease to be as integral a participant in the game. More strongly, my excessive responsiveness is likely to emerge, given the physical nature of the game, as an alienating attempt to really "beat" my opposition; I may get into a fight, at which time, as we often say, the game falls apart, we are
no longer playing. Generally, then, the all too common talk about “killing the opposition,” hurting opponents, etc. is on my view a misconstrual of the very nature of play; it is literally to cease playing, to cease being responsively open.

Since most instances of playful games in our culture are founded on active response, it is difficult to think of examples of an excessive openness become submission which is not simply comic, but perhaps that is just as well. Consider yourself skiing down a mountain becoming less and less responsive to the snow, trees, etc., more and more passively open. I daresay you will be picturing yourself lying down on the snow, the object of laughter from other skiers not so intoxicated with open-mindedness.

Play as responsive openness stands in a precarious balance between mastery and submission.

My point, I hope, is more clear. Play as responsive openness stands in a precarious balance between mastery and submission. Mastery moderated by openness becomes responsiveness. Submission moderated by responsiveness becomes openness. Held together in a unity, they become the very spirit, the essence, the stance of play. Understood in this way, play becomes not merely an idle pastime but a transcendence out of one or another stances which are themselves seductive and even inertial.

Perhaps I can conclude the making of this point by observing that if — and possibly only if — play is understood as responsive openness can we make sense of another well-known Platonic view regarding play, namely the famous statement that the real opposite of play is neither work nor seriousness, but war. War is the genuine and complete opposite of play because it is not simply one or another of its poles but the radicalization of them both. In war, my activity is polarized in such a way that I either master or I submit, I am either victor or vanquished, a situation which because of the radicalization of the poles makes play, that precarious balance and unity of responsiveness and openness, nearly impossible.

I close with a final observation. It should now be obvious that the “intentional” characterization of play as responsive openness has a tendency to entail a somewhat different extension than some of the usual understandings of play. Some games for example — in which the players try to hurt each other — would not be play, and some activities not usually associated with play might now be so included. In particular, there is an activity which only the boldest thinkers of the past have associated with play, and of which most contemporary spokesmen would be insulted to consider play, and that is philosophy, or at least, a certain conception of philosophy. Let me close, then, by attempting to set out the sense in which, in particular, Socratic/Platonic philosophy could be understood as play. In order to do so, we must ask, in the spirit of the paper so far forth, what is the stance toward the world taken by Socratic/Platonic philosophy? To ask the question is immediately to be struck by the fact that there is a noteworthy difference between it and the stances held by most of the great philosophers in our tradition. Specifically, the vast majority of philosophers have expressed their views in treatises, written in the first person, in which the main intention is evidently to assert their views about the world which they believe to be, and believe they can prove to be, true. Most philosophy and most philosophic stances can thus be said to be fundamentally assertive; it is the effort to prove certain views about the world. To the dominance of this stance Plato and Socrates are notable, not to say astonishing exceptions. Socrates wrote nothing at all, and Plato wrote in such a way as to make it clear that whatever complex intentions he had, his principal concern was not to assert his own views about the world. The Platonic dialogues are rather reports of philosophic discussions, philosophic occasions, usually involving Socrates attempt to question a reputed wise man about what he or she knows. Let us examine the typical situation of the dialogues more closely.

First, I think it is accurate to say that nowhere does Socrates begin a discussion by asserting his views on the subject. He does not begin the Republic by asserting that he has just written a paper on a theory of justice which, if everyone will be quiet for ten hours or so, he will be glad to read to them, nor does he present a “theory” of courage, sophrosyne, piety, art, politics, love, religion or even metaphysics in any straightforward sense. If anything, the reverse is the case. Others with whom Socrates speaks think they know about justice, sophrosyne, piety or whatever, whereas Socrates’ famous stance is to disclaim such knowledge, to insist precisely that what wisdom is his is his recognition that he is not wise. The result of this recognition is that Socrates does not assert his own views, but rather questions others. To be sure, in the questioning, his own views often emerge, but that in no way denies that
Socrates' fundamental philosophic stance is one of questioning. Let us be struck by this, that the fundamental stance of philosophy for Socrates — and I would argue for Plato as well — is not assertive but interrogative. Why, and what does this mean?

To speak first in the terms of the Platonic dialogues themselves, it is not difficult to see that the interrogative stance of Socrates follows from his teaching concerning the erotic character of human nature. To assert a theory is also to assert at least implicitly a claim to wisdom, to a kind of completeness. But Socrates insists that our erotic nature means precisely that we are incomplete and striving for completeness. As he makes clear in the Symposium, philosophy, as the love of wisdom, entails the recognition that we are not wise and the striving to become wise. Philosophy, then, is a prime instance — in the Socratic/Platonic view the highest instance — of the erotic nature of human being. As such, it is altogether appropriate, because literally natural, that the philosophic stance be interrogative, for questioning itself attests both to the recognition of a lack and the effort to overcome that lack. From the Socratic standpoint, then, the assertive stance of philosophy which has dominated most of modern philosophy represents a claim to a wisdom hardly in accord with human nature. Moreover, it is not difficult to see a close connection between this assertive stance of philosophy and the project of mastery discussed earlier. One does not embark upon an effort to master someone or something by beginning in a tentative, questioning manner.

But I want now to turn explicitly to the relation between the Socratic stance of philosophy as interrogative and the notion I have developed of play as responsive openness. To do so, let us make a brief analysis of the experience of questioning. What do we do when we question, or more precisely, what is our stance toward things when we question? On the one hand, questioning attests to a kind of openness towards that which we question. If I am a fanatical exponent of a certain view, I do not question it, nor conversely if I am totally close-minded about a certain view will I seriously and honestly question it. The very act of questioning is thus a manifestation of openness towards that which is in question. At the same time, questioning is an exhibition of responsiveness. To be sure, Socrates' questioning of other views rather than dogmatically asserting his own testifies to his openness, his avoidance of the urge for mastery, but Socrates is also as far as possible from being submissive. Socrates questions other views; he does not merely accept them. Questioning, to repeat, thus exhibits a responsiveness to what we question as well as an openness.

My point is now obvious. Socratic philosophy as a stance of questioning, founded on the knowledge of ourselves as erotically incomplete but also erotically striving for completeness, is an example of the stance of responsive openness, which I have argued is the essential structure of play. Perhaps this affinity is what led the Greeks to adopt words for play and education so very close etymologically: paideia and paideia. The pursuit of knowledge altogether involves the same recognition of incompleteness and striving to overcome it which is manifested as a questioning stance toward the world, a questioning stance which is itself an exhibition of responsive openness, or play. In conclusion, Plato can tell us in all seriousness, as he does in the passage in the Laws with which I began this paper, to spend our lives making our play as noble and beautiful as possible because he knows that the most noble and beautiful play is no frivolous activity on the periphery of the seriousness of life, but philosophy.

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Footnotes

1 There is an excellent, but unfortunately unpublished paper on this topic — what amounts to a phenomenology of skiing, entitled "Dust of Snow" by a former student of mine, James Wolcott.


4 For a more extensive documentation of this and the following point, see the introduction to my forthcoming book, Plato's Charmides And The Nature of Philosophy.

5 Plato, Laws, 803d.
Edwin Arlington Robinson,
Otto Dalstrom,
and the Nobel Prize

My book is a slow traveler, and refuses, I fear, to be hurried. But don't think from this that I am in any sense indifferent to your generous efforts to make it known in other countries. All I mean is this experience has taught me not to expect too much and so not to be disappointed.

Thus wrote the American poet Edwin Arlington Robinson on July 17, 1922, to his friend Otto Dalstrom, resigning himself to the fact that his Collected Poems, published the year before, would not secure for him the Nobel Prize for Literature. The poet had long before learned the lessons of disappointment. For many years he had lived in obscurity, his poetry being read by only a few. In 1916 his fifth book of poetry began to earn him public recognition. Critics finally had accepted the fact that "modern poetry" was here to stay. In May of 1922, Robinson was awarded his first Pulitzer Prize, for the same book that was making the rounds of the Nobel Jury. To win that prize also would be a great honor. However farfetched the poet might have viewed the idea, he continued to encourage the friends who so actively sought it for him.

The poet Robinson began his acquaintance with Otto Dalstrom in 1921. They corresponded until 1928, when presumably Otto Dalstrom returned to his home in Sweden. That correspondence is now housed in the Watkinson Library at Trinity College, a part of the magnificent Robinson collection donated by the late H. Bacon Collamore of West Hartford. Despite the correspondence, and the importance of what Dalstrom corrected himself, explaining, "I thought there was an 'h' in your name, but apparently there isn't."

All the letters in the collection are by the poet, since he destroyed most of the letters that were written to him, with the explanation that he never had any place to store them. Much of his life he spent living out of a suitcase. These letters reveal much about the shy poet who could not speak easily with people, but wrote so eloquently in verse. The man Otto Dalstrom may remain a mystery, but in these letters Robinson reveals much about his own character both by the way he sought the Nobel Prize and by the way he dealt with erratic friends.

On April 11, 1921 he wrote to Otto Dalstrom from Boston:

At the request of Mr. French, I am sending to you four of my books, which I hope you may find to some degree interesting. Permit me to add that I am not responsible for the diction on the jacket of Lancelot. Fortunately my books are not very large, and if you receive one or two more, I shall hope that you will not have to change your quarters. When I get through the proofs of my forthcoming collected edition, what the Macmillans are to bring out in September, I should be very glad for the pleasure of meeting you.

Mr. Joseph Louis French was perhaps the most erratic of the friends of E.A. Robinson. This sometimes journalist, sometimes poet, sometimes critic was devoted in his affection for Robinson. Because of this he sought, through the aid of Otto Dalstrom, to win for his friend the Nobel Prize. Yet, despite this devotion, there existed an equally strong jealousy of Robinson both for his excellence as a poet and for any financial success. Indeed, the pudgy French was constantly borrowing money from the poet, money he never intended to pay back. Oftentimes, these interviews that left Robinson a few dollars poorer, were accompanied by barrages of strong language and verbal abuse. The borrowing habit of Joseph Louis French would never cease. While Robinson lay dying of cancer in a New York hospital in 1935, French slipped into his room under an assumed name and demanded money. Robinson, too weak to protest, sent him away with five dollars.

Robinson may well have been aware of French's problem when he met him in 1897, shortly after the appearance of his second book, The Children of the Night. French was a salesman for the firm of Richard G. Badger which had printed the book. He liked the poems and sought out the poet to tell him so. That was the only requirement Robinson placed on friendship. He soon became fascinated with the short, boisterous man who
could talk for hours on literary topics. That he suffered from paranoia may have become obvious to the poet from the start. French's addiction to alcohol did little to curtail his emotional handicaps. Because of his madness he could not make a living. When Robinson was told by his exuberant friend about the article, he was hurt, went to the editor in an attempt to withdraw the story which he had already submitted. The editor refused, providing the model for Count Pretzel Von Wurzburger, theObscene, a minor character in Robinson's third book of verse, Captain Craig, 1902:

"For example,

Do you think that I forgot, or shall forget,
One friendless, fat, fantastic nondescript
Who knew the ways of laughter on low roads, —
A vagabond, a drunkhard, and a sponge,
But always a free creature with a soul?

How much of him was earnest and how much
Fantastic, I know not, nor do I need
Profounder knowledge to exonerate
The squalor or the folly of a man
Than consciousness — . . .
That I get good of him."

French was both flattered and outraged by his inclusion in the poem. The sketch is one of the most delightful in the long title poem which recounts the life and ramblings of another failure. When he felt flattered, French decided to repay the kindness. From 1903 until mid-1904, Robinson worked as a timekeeper on the excavation of a tunnel for the New York Subway. The poet hadn't sought the job, but at the suggestion of a friend he took it. His poetry wasn't earning him any money (Captain Craig had not returned the cost of publication), and a man had to eat. In 1904 French decided to write an article for the New York World Sunday supplement describing how America's greatest poet was making a living. When Robinson was told by his exuberant friend about the article, he was aghast. No Yankee wants to see his private life bandied about by the public press. Robinson demanded the story be squelched. French, somewhat confused, and a little hurt, went to the editor in an attempt to withdraw the article which he had already submitted. The editor refused, remarking that the publicity certainly would not hurt the poet. Besides, the story had a great deal of appeal, and that's what sold newspapers. Thus, a horrified Robinson saw that Sunday, on a full page of the World, a grossly inaccurate story, complete with pictures, under the headline, "A Poet in the Subway — Hailed as a Genius by Men of Letters, Edwin Arlington Robinson Has to Earn His Living as a Time-Keeper." French was in immediate disfavor, even though the article did bring the poet more public notice.

The ill feeling disappeared eighteen months later, when in December of 1905 French wrote a favorable review of the second edition of The Children of the Night. The book reappeared through the efforts of President Teddy Roosevelt, who had recently become a reader of the poet's work. French's review pleased Robinson greatly. For once the essence of what the poet was trying to say had been recognized by a reviewer. All was forgiven for the 1904 article. Yet French continued to borrow and harass. Now it was clothes as well as money, although the poet was considerably taller. On several occasions Robinson returned to his small apartment to find the man asleep in his bed. French was not getting any better. In an effort to help him, Robinson arranged through another friend free treatment at S. Weir Mitchell's private sanatorium for nervous disorders. The "hospital" was actually a large mansion and catered only to the very rich. French stayed there three days, leaving in a huff because he was being spied upon. He continued his life of alcohol and borrowing, dying several years after Robinson, a confined patient in another sanatorium.

After Robinson's discovery by Roosevelt, things looked brighter for him. Financially he was more secure, due to the generous efforts of several wealthy friends. He had conquered his own dependence to alcohol, drinking only infrequently after 1919 as a protest against Prohibition. In 1916 he published The Man Against The Sky, perhaps his finest collection of shorter poems, and one the critics could not overlook. His genius had become recognized at last.

By the 1920's French was convinced that Robinson's recognition should be spread across the Atlantic. When he met Otto Dalstrom, he knew he had the means at hand. Dalstrom knew several members of the board of judges for the Nobel Prize. French introduced his new friend to the poetry of E.A. Robinson, and eventually to the poet himself. Still, French possessed that other personality which was capable of cursing and threatening the poet. Around this time Robinson began to tell his friends that he feared he would meet his death by French's hands. Once he even came with a gun to the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire, where the poet spent his summers. He claimed that the poet was plotting against him, and he vowed to shoot him. The gun was never fired. French confronted Robinson, swore at him for a while, took the "borrowed" money and left in a fury back to New York City. The poet had done his share of yelling, but with French it was useless to try to say anything to him, until he got his money.

Otto Dalstrom and Joseph Louis were good friends, the correspondence makes that abundantly clear. How they met is one of the mysteries. One letter in the collection sheds a little light on the situation. On February 11, 1922 the Literary Review of the New York Evening Post published a highly favorable review of Robinson's Collected Poems. The next day French wrote to the author of the article, William Rose Benet, the following letter:
Mr. Otto Dalstrom who will present this note is through his acquaintance with members of the Nobel jury, advancing the cause of our friend E.A.R. in that direction. He undertook at my suggestion last spring to send over various volumes and leading reviews and this fall several volumes of "Collected Poems" went over. The last number of the Literary Review is a very important one indeed in this movement what with your long review, the striking and powerful portrait, and last but by no means least, the resolution of the Author's Club as reported in the "Lobby," That ought to pretty nearly fetch 'em. Mr. Dalstrom would like a score of copies if that can be, compassed to send over at once — one for each of the 18 members of the jury and one for each of the two leading papers of Stockholm.

The committee was not "fetched," despite the collected efforts of the poet's friends. Robinson himself sent books and reviews to Dalstrom and was well aware of their purpose. However, throughout the entire correspondence, the poet does not mention the award by name. A passage from the letter of September 13, 21 will illustrate, "I am sure you understand that my gratitude to you for your friendly action in this matter is to be regarded as entirely independent of any tangible results. Whatever may or may not come of it, I shall never forget your kindness."

Again on November third, he writes, "my thanks again for your past good offices in regard to my books." On May 18, 1922, "If anything should come of the matter that he [French] mentioned to you, and you so kindly considered, I need hardly say that he would be properly remembered." Thirteen days later, the poet acknowledged that "Your disinterested kindness makes me glad that there are such men as you in the world." Continuing in the letter that begins this article, the poet explained, "You understand that I am rather helpless in the matter, as it would be altogether out of order for me to take any active part in it, though I don't mind sending you an occasional clipping."

For whatever reasons, the eighteen judges did not find Robinson's work meritorious of the Nobel Prize. This is not too surprising when one realizes that it took twenty years of publishing poetry before Robinson became recognized by the critics. In 1921 Anatole France won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Perhaps Dalstrom had started too late. Nonetheless, news of Robinson's Pulitzer Prize did not sway the jury. In 1923 the award went to William Butler Yeats. In the meantime, French's maddening condition was getting worse. He turned against all his friends, save Dalstrom, but that relationship soon deteriorated along with much of French's sanity. During this time Robinson wrote to Dalstrom entreating him to help the poor man. Dalstrom tried, but French turned on him also.

Otto Dalstrom himself began to run into financial difficulties. Robinson is subtle at first with the aid he received. The trouble may have come about because French was also being a fiscal drain on Dalstrom. The poet made certain that Dalstrom went to no unnecessary expense in sending his books abroad. It is not clear from the context of the letter of June 3, 1922, whether French or Dalstrom had asked for a loan from the Pulitzer Prize money. However, the poet writes, "The enclosed is the best that I can do just now, but I hope it may help a little. The prize money, when I get it, will be tied up and not available for some time, and in the meantime I haven't much to go and come on, as we say." More than likely Dalstrom had asked for the money on behalf of French. He was becoming more and more abrasive. There were no encouraging signs from Sweden. Perhaps French could not handle another defeat, for it had become a personal crusade with him.

On September 6, 1922, Robinson wrote Dalstrom, "I don't know that there is anything particularly new for me to say in reply to your last kind letter, except to assure you again how much I appreciate your efforts to bring my work to the attention of foreign readers. If I were to pretend that I was indifferent in the matter of my poetry being read, you would know that I was talking, or writing, the worst sort of nonsense; therefore I won't pretend anything of that nature."

Robinson was gracefully acknowledging the fact that the Nobel Prize would not be his. The next year, on April fifth, he still expressed his gratitude to Dalstrom, "In the meantime please don't imagine that I shall ever be in any danger of forgetting your kindness in sending all those books of mine abroad. If anything should come of them, you will naturally not be forgotten." Nothing became of the books, and for the next three years no letters passed between the two men. George Bernard Shaw was awarded the Prize for Literature by the Nobel jury in 1925. However, Robinson won his second Pulitzer Prize in 1924 for his book length poem, The Man Who Died Twice. The poet wrote to Dalstrom only three times between 1926 and 1928. The 1926 and 1927 letters further express thanks to Dalstrom for sending his more recent books to Sweden. The latter letter mentions the excellent sales of Tristram published that year. The poet now not only had his third Pulitzer Prize (a feat unprecedented at that time), but a best seller also. Still, Sweden was unresponsive awarding the prize for 1927 to Henri Bergson. In 1928, Dalstrom was in a difficult financial situation, and decided to return to Sweden. The last letter in the collection wishes the man well. There is no mention of Joseph Louis French in the last three letters. He made his split with Dalstrom final. As for his friendship with Robinson, the borrowing and the threats still continued. Most of the poet's friends encouraged him to avoid French.

Dalstrom needed money to return to Sweden. There can be little doubt that he sold the letters he had received from E.A. Robinson to finance the trip. Thus an important group of letters by one of America's greatest poets were preserved.

Not winning the Nobel Prize was not a crushing blow to the poet Robinson. His life of poetry had taught him long before to bear up under losses and to be grateful for the few successes. A great many people were reading his poetry, and that was important. It was more important than any prize he might win, or money he might earn. The mere fact that Otto Dalstrom could get eighteen men in Sweden to look at his poetry was satisfaction enough. The poet Robinson waits patiently in his poetry to be discovered and rediscovered. Anyone willing to seek him out will not go unrewarded.

The Other Dadourian

by Ruth M. Dadourian

The teacher Dadourian met the mountain climber Dadourian at a point some alumni will remember. He used to say, “To learn math and physics you must apply yourself as you do when climbing a mountain — don't take the second step until you are sure of the first. You can’t sit in an easy chair, turn on the radio and read the textbook. Sit down, take a pencil and a fresh sheet of paper and start with the first problem; when you have solved that go on to the second. I am not here to teach you but to help you over the rough spots in the trail, to show you an easier way around obstacles. You have to do the work.”

When we came within 50 miles of Randolph and the clear air of northern New England, when the first sight of the White Mountains etched a faint blue on the horizon — that was when my husband stepped on the gas. If I were driving he would say “What’s the matter? Why are you slowing down?” In those days the highway through Franconia Notch was narrow and winding. I used to tell him that the difference between us was that I expected a car to come head-on around the curve and he thought we were the only car on the road.

A companion after his heart was my overgrown Boston Terrier who barked his way from Cambridge, Massachusetts to Randolph, New Hampshire. Tommy was silent only when he skidded stiff-legged to the floor and climbed back up. Fortunately he didn't know about the gas pedal.

Dad had grown up in Everyk, a small town in central Asia Minor. Looming over the town, 13,000 feet high, Mt. Argeos, the highest peak in the Toros Mountains, rose from the Anatolian Plateau. It was a challenge to an active boy. Dad climbed it early, how often I don't know. Argeos had long since been denuded; great gullies marked by snow grooved its flanks. It must have been a long, hot, tedious climb.

Everyk was divided into three parts: Orthodox Armenian, Protestant Armenian and between them the Moslem Turkish section. The Turks governed. They collected taxes, drafted young men into the military. But they never armed the Armenians — they put them to work on the roads or as servants.

His first school bored him so he played hooky. The second school had an excellent teacher who realized that this was an unusual boy, one who wanted to learn; he helped him to go at his own speed.

His father, realizing that his son should not stop after elementary school, sent him to school in Tarsus and finally to Cesaria where he came under the influence of Dr. Cristie, the headmaster. Since there was no university to which he would be admitted, Dr. Cristie, whose son was at Yale, made the necessary arrangements, and Dad entered Sheffield Scientific School in October, 1900 — a month late because the Turks would not give him an exit visa. The trouble was that his father did not know how much to give as a bribe. It proved to be the equivalent of $2.00.

Since he landed in New York with only $80 in his pocket it was necessary to find work. He shoveled snow, tended furnaces, cleaned lamps, thus working his way through Sheff, then through the Yale Graduate School, where he earned his Ph.D. and then he was appointed instructor at Yale.

Dad and I both had hay fever, we both loved to climb; it was inevitable that we should meet. Ever since 1903, I had gone to Jefferson Highlands, first to the Mt. Adams House, then to a cottage. In order to reach the paths we got up at dawn, walked to the Boy Mountain station, flagged the train, got off at Appalachia; and to return, ran the last half mile, flagged the return train and again walked home.
Dad had come to the White Mountains at the suggestion of Bill Whiting, a student, who had heard the place was good for hay fever. "But" he said, "I hope you won't mind if I leave you below because I go to climb and I am pretty good." The result was that they climbed together. Bill Whiting had found his equal.

My parents had started to go to the Ravine House in Randolph in order to be near the base of the mountains. In 1917 Dad came to the Ravine House over the Labor Day weekend. He was working at Princeton with the U.S. Army Corps on a research project on sound ranging — the location of enemy guns. The Germans had brought Big Bertha close to the French border and were shelling Paris. It was vital for the Allies to put this powerful weapon, as well as others, out of business.

The following year Dad was back for a longer stay; he had convinced his superior officer that he could write the report as well in New Hampshire as at Princeton.

Dad arrived in Randolph the day an old man was lost on Crescent Mountain. The old man had gone for a walk that morning, telling his wife that he would be back for lunch. When he had not shown up by mid-afternoon we formed a search party. He had started in the direction of Mt. Crescent. We spent the afternoon going over the near side of the mountain, but, by dark, had to admit failure.

Next morning the search was resumed by a few men, including the foreigner, resolved to go up Crescent and down into the North Country. It was Vyron Lowe, a veteran guide and woodsman, who found the old man at Camp 19, an abandoned lumber camp, cold and hungry but uninjured. That evening some of us sat around the fire at the Ravine House talking with the gentleman with the foreign accent. The next morning he was gone.

The following year Dad was back for a longer stay; he had convinced his superior officer that he could write the report as well in New Hampshire as at Princeton.

Every time I had seen Mt. Carrigan from a distance it had been a charmed spot. Would I ever stand on the summit?

The next morning Dad went off to fetch dry wood, while I sat on the floor pulling on my boots. The sun had not yet come over the shoulder to the east, but it turned the western valley to sparkling gold; it lay along the polished railroad tracks, turned the windows of farmhouses to fire. A movement at my feet told me I had company. Out of the rocks behind the hearth a small creature flowed like a strip of brown velvet; long and flat with bulging ears, long whiskers and long tail, he crawled along the rocks at my feet licking bacon drippings and crumbs. He must have decided I was harmless. A weasel, a belligerent fighter, not a thing of beauty. He heard the wood-chopper and vanished into his shelter.
That was the start of two perfect weeks. We swung along the trails above timberline, climbed the summits when we chose, loafed in the sun and slept, I may say, uncomfortably on the ground or in an open shelter. No huts.

Every time I had seen Mt. Carrigan from a distance it had been a charmed spot. Would I ever stand on the summit? Though it is only 4627 feet above sea level, it stands almost alone above the valley, treed-covered and solitary. We made it twice; it was all I had hoped for. The 1907 Appalachian Mountain Club Guidebook describes the region as heavily wooded. But in the early twenties, alas, the area was already riddled by logging roads and the sound of the axe could not be escaped. In those days power saws were not used in these parts. Only the trunk of the tree was used; slash lay where it fell — hard on the walker but better for conservation, for it protected the seedlings, and the decaying leaves and branches enriched the soil. The stump was left to rot and fertilize the soil. Later everything was used: hence erosion and slower reforestation.

At times we took short cuts, usually above the treeline where the way was visible. But one day in the Albany-Intervale when we were headed for Mt. Guyot and the Twin Mountains we took a chance. On the map the path led toward the mouth of the valley, where it joined at an acute angle the path to Guyot. It made sense to aim across the valley to the base of Guyot. As we stood debating, a far-off whistle came from below and a puff of smoke indicated a narrow gage railway for hauling logs; those powerful horses that used to work at every lumber camp had gone out. The camp was up near the head of the valley.

We took bearings and headed for Guyot. Going down into the valley was not bad, but when we had crossed the railroad tracks, the going was tough.

Morning broke bright and warm. After a cold breakfast we started down what had been a path but was now a wide, leaping brook. To by-pass it we headed down through the woods. The railroad track provided a little clearing where we spread our clothes, stretched out in the sun and then walked to Bemis station for an easy train ride to the old Crawford House where, by going to the kitchen door, we could buy fresh food. Trampers in those days were not admitted to the dining room. As we went through the aisle to the front of the car a piping voice said, “Looky, Ma, looka the lady in pants!”

The last day of our final camping trip we had planned to go over the Chocorua Range and down into the Waterville Valley, where we had made reservations at the inn. We were to spend the night at a friend’s cottage in Chocorua. There was no room inside for us, so we spread sleeping bags on the porch, a downy bed by comparison, and hoped for an early start. The screen door, however, was not mosquito proof. And no early start, for courtesy required that I help with the housework and that Dad mend the screen and nail a sagging door in place.

There was a two-mile walk to the nearest path up Chocorua, but we did reach the summit in time for lunch. Then there was the long trek over the wooded humps of Paugus, the ascent of Passaconaway, then down and up Whiteface. Neither of us was familiar with the path up Whiteface and down to the Waterville Valley where we had reservations at the inn. We paused on top only for a good drink of water, which nearly emptied the canteen. Ahead was the prospect of a hot bath, a good dinner and a comfortable bed.

We started. We had gone at least three-fourths of a mile when the path petered out. A line of white blazes we had been glancing at was intercepted by another line, this one painted blue — obviously a boundary marker. Back up we went now in semi-darkness, which called for the acetylene lamp. The lamp was at the bottom of the knapsack, the crystals in a can. Water was needed to moisten the crystals, and we had drunk most of the water. We drained every drop — but where was the tip? No tip to be found. Why didn’t we pack a spare tip? Why indeed?

Back on Whiteface in the fading light, we located, behind a large boulder, the sign “Waterville.” Before plunging into the trees we lighted the lamp; the flame shot...
out of the open tube, but it did light the way but we heard the sound of running water. After that it was down hill all the way.

When we finally opened the door of the brightly lighted lobby of the Waterville Inn, it showed a typical scene: a bright fire on the hearth, women in bright summer dresses, men in white flannels, tables of bridge, picture puzzles, crossword puzzles, women knitting, men smoking. A friend came toward me, hand outstretched—but she stopped, turned back to her mother who dropped a few stitches and stared. Everyone stared. The desk clerk did a double take. We looked at each other; we were black; our faces, necks and hands were sooty black with only the whites of our eyes showing — like a minstrel show. They put us up that night in the servant’s wing and mercifully sent up a bottle of milk, sandwiches and a dish of fruit.

In the coals we roasted corn, broiled the steak and watched the sunlight fade over the valley and the stars come out.

Waterville Valley lies in a cirque of low mountains: Whiteface, Tripyramid, Osceola, Tecumseh and, blocking the valley to the east, Sandwich Dome. For two perfect weeks we climbed them all. Osceola was the best; it was at our door. We used to get the chef to cut us a steak, on our way through the garden we picked corn, tomatoes and lettuce, and, carrying a kerosene lantern to light the way back, we lit a fire on the bare summit of Osceola. In the coals we roasted corn, broiled the steak and watched the sunlight fade over the valley and the stars come out.

The slide on Tripyramid was a test of stamina and balance. Dad took it at a run and in a cloud of stones and pebbles reached the foot in no time. Looking back at my cautious approach, he shouted, “What’s the matter? Watch me.” He ran on tiptoe, raising his knees, paying small attention to the footing. He waited while I sat and slid.

His perfect balance was due in large part to the way he was built — short and stocky with broad, short feet. Also he had grown up in a place and time when children went barefoot until snowfall. His toes bore the scars of cuts and stubblings. Grown-ups did not have their feet jammed into ready-made shoes, but had them made to fit by the local cobbler. In wet weather they walked on clogs. Ever try to balance on clogs? Transportation was on foot and to snatch at branches for support. An old climbing companion tells me what happy memories she had of Dad — “one in particular is the trip up Garfield and down the Gale River which was swollen after heavy rains. Dad had to help us over the brook crossings: as we approached a crossing — there would be Dad, firmly installed on a rock in the middle of the brook waiting to give us a hand.”

He was a fast walker who did not boast of making a record. But he did time himself. “I did that ten minutes faster than last time,” he would say to himself. The craze that swept the climbing population for “doing all the 4,000-foot mountains in New Hampshire” (there are 46) made no sense to him. If he had known that dogs were to be rewarded by a citation — not even a bone — for scrambling up all 46, he would have been speechless. He himself had climbed most of the 46 more than once, as well as a good number in Maine and Colorado.

Although there were many opportunities for rock climbing on the Presidential Range, Dad was not interested in doing stunts. He did go up the Chimney on Mt. Katahdin which is considered to be dangerous (and is) to all but climbers who know the route, and when confronted with a hard spot he always solved it. Eventually he got tired of traveling the same trails and began to plan new and better routes.

King Ravine is a great glaciated bowl carved out of the north side of Mt. Adams. Until the mid-twenties there had been only one trail, up the head wall, exposed to sun with no water. This was a challenge. In those days you could cut new trails but the impulse was soon discouraged, then banned, partly out of conservatism, largely because, once opened, they had to be maintained.

Looking up from the floor of the ravine two routes suggested themselves: one up the east, or left wall to the knife edge to join a path up Adams, the other up the steeper, west wall to join the Gulfside Trail which runs the length of the range.

In addition to his trails in King Ravine, Dad had been scouting a new trail over the Mt. Crescent Range.

Dad had two things in mind when he explored routes — water and views. He achieved, after several years of back-breaking work, two trails: the one up the east wall which he called the Chemin-des-Dames, after the famous battle of World War I; the second and the more interesting, the Great Gully Trail, up the west wall. He marked his trails above timber-line with white quartz stones to make the course visible from a long distance. Unfortunately the Gully is subject to bombardment from big boulders and slides which have not only scarred that side of the ravine but obliterated the old Cascade Camp on the Israel Ridge path and sent frost-loosened boulders crushing down as far as Mossy Glen below the floor. Half way up the Gully trail there was a lovely pool bordered with small yellow daisies I have seen nowhere else except on Mt. Rainier. We used to stop there to bathe our faces and aching feet. One year we found balanced in the middle of the pool an enormous boulder. In spite of the hazards
In late August, a three-day rain set in, driving away many of the summer people. Clouds blanketed the summits down to the valley. After lunch on the third day the rain stopped. We stoked the fire, filled pots and pans, changed to woolens and headed for Carleton Notch to do a little more exploration. Arrived there, soaked to the knees from tall grasses, ferns and underbrush, we turned left, or south, and proceeded along a line already scouted out. Busy with our work we failed to notice that it was getting dark. We turned back to the Notch, prepared to turn right, on the path home. But the path had vanished. Though the rain had stopped the clouds were as thick as ever. Treetops were invisible, landmarks blotted out. We did all the things we knew better than to do; we tramped around, making the trail even more obscure . . . I shouted “Here it is!”

The path was clear, it went down hill — but it was the path to the Pond of Safety and the North Country. Now, however, it should be easy; for this trail went straight over the Notch to continue in a straight line with our path home. Or so we thought.

What to do? West lay the Pond of Safety. North was Mt. Crescent. East the Hill Road with lines of cottages and the hotel. We debated the feasibility of trying to hit that point in the dark. The whole east side had recently been lumbered, leaving only a fringe of trees along the path; the usual slash, stumps and holes had been left, which made it hard enough to get through by day — almost impossible at night. It would be only by chance that we hit the road; we might well end up in the valley or in the jumble of boulders in the Ice Gulch.

The alternatives: To sit on the wet ground all night and wait for morning — and if the clouds did not lift, what then? We had come without our usual small pack equipped with extra sweaters and socks, first-aid kit, matches, compass. We didn’t have even a jack knife. The other course: to go south, keeping to the height of land and ending up somewhere along the highway in the valley, it hardly mattered where. But which way was south?

As we stood there, remote as a boat becalmed in fog, that loneliest of all sounds, muffled by fog, came like a hoot owl’s cry: “Whoo, Hoo — Hoo-Hoo,” the six o’clock train from Berlin carrying pulp for the mills of St. Johnsbury. That would be east. Then nearer — “Hoo-hoooo,” the crossing at the foot of Gorham Hill. Again — the crossing of the Dolly Copp Road at Randolph Station. Then Appalachia, due south. Then Lowe’s Cabins and Filling Station. At last, only an echo at Bowman to the west. Now we had the time and the direction.

We faced south and an all-night job of crawling over, under, or through blow-downs, taking a chance on accidents, sticking to the height of land, no matter what.

The work took many months over several years. One episode that was not to be forgotten occurred in late August when days were growing short. The cottage we rented for several years was nearly the last up the lane. It had neither running hot water nor electricity. It had a small wood-burning cookstove, a bathtub and toilet, kerosene lamps and a large fieldstone fireplace. It was primitive even for those days, but it suited us; its inadequacies gave us an excuse to take our meals at the Mt. Crescent House, a quarter mile down the road.

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Once Dad fancied that I was ahead and told me to stay behind. We had only one near accident, when Dad exclaimed "Damn! I stepped off a ledge, must be six feet. Go easy, sit down, put your feet down, now give me your hand — now let yourself go; I'll catch you. Good girl." We were in the ledgey part of the area, which meant that we must keep west of Lookout Ledge where there is a sheer drop of 20 feet or more.

Suddenly between the trees we saw lights far below in the valley — probably at Lowe's Cabins.

As the night went on we felt all at once a change in the air, as if the barometer had shot up. Through a break in the clouds we could see a few bright stars. For safety we had been walking with eyes closed; since we could see nothing anyway. We should have been tired and hungry, but we were too busy.

Suddenly between the trees we saw lights far below in the valley — probably at Lowe's Cabins. We were on target, well to the west of the Ledge. We must have been on the side of Mt. Randolph for soon the ground led us down. At last the sound of running water; we followed the sound until it turned too far east. Then we ran into a rocky dry brook; it would be a freshet in spring. Here for safety we went backward on all fours — very restful. Now there was time to talk. If we could get back without being seen we decided to keep the misadventure to ourselves. If we appeared at the hotel for breakfast we would not have been assumed that we were with friends. We made it to the hotel before the dining room door closed. A bowl of hot cereal, bacon and eggs, two cups of coffee, buckwheat cakes with native maple syrup; then back to bed, sleep until noon, Sunday dinner at the hotel and the afternoon with the paper. We felt fine.

At the official opening of the trail, as we sat around the spring at the foot of Randolph Mountain, we told the story.

Often as we traveled this trail in the years to come, we never could understand how we failed to find the way home from Carleton Notch, nor could we follow the way we had gone that long, dark night.

As the trail was finally established it provided beautiful views. From the top of Randolph Mountain: looking east you could see Randolph Hill way below with the cottages hidden among trees, like doll houses; looking west you can watch the toy trains chugging up Washington and beyond, the sharp line of Lafayette, highest point in the Franconia Range.

At the base of Randolph Mountain, a low, swampy area is filled with the hum of bees and the flutter of butterflies — monarchs, swallowtails and smaller yellow moths — stocking up for the long trip to South America — from the fragrant pollens of Joe Pie Weed, blue asters, meadow rue and goldenrod. Farther along there would be a hive with wild honey in a hollow tree and scratches on the bark made by a hungry bear.

As we sat dangling our feet from the platform over that great scoop out of Mt. Adams, it seemed too bad to stop there.

At last we came abreast of the Ravine House, still asleep. We skirted the east end, ran up the half buried boulder that marks the Bee Line, took a ritual drink at Carleton Brook and swung into the needle-carpeted path to Randolph Hill. The morning was fragrant with rain-drenched hemlock and balsam. Chickadees chattered as we passed. After a mile the path widened into Grassy Lane. We were home.

At that time of day a bath in water straight off the mountain is not a cheerful prospect but there was no time for a fire. We shuddered, dried, set the alarm clock and hurried under the blankets. No one had seen us along the way; when we had not showed up for supper it would have been assumed that we were with friends. We made it to the hotel before the dining room door closed. A bowl of hot cereal, bacon and eggs, two cups of coffee, buckwheat cakes with native maple syrup; then back to bed, sleep until noon, Sunday dinner at the hotel and the afternoon with the paper. We felt fine.

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The night on Crescent was uncomfortable and risky because of the chance of accident — but never scary as some people imagined it must have been. However, there was a time years later. We had driven to Randolph for the Thanksgiving weekend to stay with the Boothmans at their farm in the valley. Thursday broke clear and mild with only a light frost on the summits. Resisting the smells of Thanksgiving: the big turkey which Mrs. Boothman was basting, the apple pie just out of the oven, we put up our
lunch, filled the thermos with hot tomato juice (no after-effect like coffee) and headed across the meadow intending to take the Spur Trail to Crag Camp which overlooks King Ravine — a nice easy trip.

But as we sat dangling our feet from the platform over that great scoop out of Mt. Adams, it seemed too bad to stop there. We would just go up a short way to the Gulfside Trail to get a view of Washington. When there, it seemed too bad not to go up the cone of Adams to the summit. Plenty of time. We ate lunch at the top.

The view was magnificent. We could look over the valley to the west, clear to the Vermont mountains. But the wind had risen and it was cold. It was one of those sudden changes that occur in these mountains. We were dressed for Crag but not for that wind. To return the way we had come would expose us to the full force of the wind. It was before the Weather Bureau had invented the wind-chill factor; had we known it we would have been even colder. (Later we learned that the temperature on Washington, only 500 ft. higher, had been 40° and the wind velocity 60 m.p.h.)

We started down the northeast slope. But the wind was everywhere. We crawled from icy rock to icy rock. That was when Dad's perfect sense of balance, both physical and mental, sustained us. He said later that he had never before seen me really scared. I had been but it was good to know it hadn't shown.

There was no trail until we hit the graded Gulfside again. We had seen no human being until we were near the Madison Huts. They merely said "Hi" and walked on. We looked after them — beautiful people clad in fur-lined parkas with hoods, warm gloves and high boots.

The door of the original stone hut was unlocked. There I had spent a boisterous night with a house-party at the age of 17 and even had the energy to climb Madison to see the sun rise. We closed the door on the empty bunks, the rusty iron stove and the leavings of porcupines, skirted the little pond with its fringe of frozen grasses and automatically headed for the Valley Way.

Down in the scrub we were out of the wind but the frozen soil had melted and the path had become its old self, muddy and slippery. Approaching darkness slowed us but this was one trail we could follow in the dark. As we came out of the woods we saw a bobbing light crossing the meadow — John Boothman out to look for the wanderers. He was even more relieved than we.

One of our last trips above timber-line took us into King Ravine and up the Great Gully. Dad led as usual and as usual busied himself in clearing and widening the trail, throwing aside rocks and chopping encroaching roots. We stopped for a while at the pool that had been, skirted the immovable boulder, pushed on to the gateway and found a sunny spot among the rocks and lichens where we could look west to Jefferson Highlands and the site of the old Mt. Adams House where I had stayed at the age of twelve. The big red barn had survived the fire; the crescent of sugar maples stood in front of the cellar hole.

Beyond, the spire of the chapel still pointed. The railroad tracks through the valley gleamed and the once dusty road snaked past the yellow postoffice to the west. With rolled-up shirts for pillows we lay baking. An eagle soared over the ravine. Seeing us he banked his wings our way so close that the blue sky showed between his feather tips. I waved and, his curiosity satisfied, he slipped away.

Trains no longer carry passengers through the valley. The Mt. Crescent House has gone. The Ravine House has gone, victims of the motor age. People no longer come with trunks to spend a month or more at a hotel or lodging house. The older people who ate lunch with us around the spring at the foot of Randolph Mountain at the opening of the Crescent Ridge Trail are gone. But their children, along with their children keep the trail clear. One of those who was there as a child at the opening writes that he and his daughter had gone last spring to clear the Crescent Ridge of fallen tree tops and to clip out the Lafayette View on Mt. Randolph "that your husband had so nice when the trail was new."

Mrs. Ruth M. Dadourian is the widow of Dr. Haroutune M. Dadourian who taught at Trinity for 30 years. At the time of his retirement in 1949, he was Seabury professor of mathematics and natural philosophy. A unique personality in her own right, Ruth Dadourian has long been active in the women's right movement, an interest that began during her undergraduate days at Radcliffe. She was an early member of the Connecticut League of Women Voters.
This is no mere book; it is a Cultural Event. Although dozens of books in recent years have dealt with one or another of the themes found here, they have all undergone the common experience of being read by special audiences: Jewish history specialists, sociologists, literary critics. Here, on the other hand, is a choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club and of the Jewish Publication Society; a book that — as of the time of writing — has been on The New York Times' best-seller list for 23 weeks; a book that the literary hipsters insinuate is more bought than read, more likely to be given to Bar Mitzvah kids than kept for oneself; finally, and most miraculous of all, a book well received by both organs of the New York intellectuals, Commentary and The New York Review of Books.

It is easy enough to come up with "reasons" for the book's success: vigorous promotion, including pre-publication excerpts; nostalgia, fake nostalgia, and the author's fame. In this case, it doesn't matter. The book is a masterpiece. It is a book for every literate American.

Moreover, it is a book that only Irving Howe could have written. I know of no one else who can write with such authority about the social history of the East European Jews, and the Yiddish culture they brought with them to America as well as the culture they produced, and their role in the labor and socialist movements. Howe has in a real sense been in training for this book all his life, not only as a scholar-writer, but as a participant. Aside from his literary studies (he has taught English at Brandeis, Stanford, and is now at the City University of New York) of Faulkner and Hardy and Sherwood Anderson, he has a solid knowledge of Yiddish (co-editor of three superb Yiddish anthologies), he is author, co-author, and editor of books about the U.A.W., the American Communist Party, American radicalism, and Trotsky, to name but a few. He has been an active democratic socialist all his life and has for years served as editor of Dissent. These are not simply formal credentials: they explain why he alone among his contemporaries could have pulled off such an ambitious project.

The story of the East European Jews who began coming to the United States in the 1880's to escape poverty and brutal persecution is in a superficial sense "generally" known. Nearly everyone has heard of the Lower East Side, of its peddlers and pushcarts; and nearly everyone knows that a good many of the children and grandchildren of the immigrant generation made it big in America, that they now live in Scarsdale and Bala Cynwyd and send their children to Trinity and Princeton. Certainly, that is an important part of the story, but Howe is concerned with something far more interesting: how the East European Jewish community organized itself and produced an immensely rich, exciting, vibrant culture for its members. Although, as Howe says, there is nothing glamorous about grinding poverty, the Russian Jews also had newspapers, theaters (when I was growing up in the '30's — unfortunately not in New York — there were still some 25 Yiddish theaters), the union movement, literary and musical organizations, charitable societies, landsmann-schaften, the marvelous device known as the free-loan society, synagogues, burial societies. And they had politics, politics of every description, but especially radical politics.

Virtually all of this took place within what Howe calls "the culture of Yiddish," and Howe's talents as literary critic make it possible for us to sense and understand what was going on. The portraits of writers, poets, actors, playwrights, Zionist and socialist editors are fascinating without being trivial. Most of all, he does for Yiddish literature what the late Maurice Samuel did for the language (and what Leo Rosten only succeeded in cheapening): it is/was indeed a pearl beyond price.

Meaning no disrespect, the book to this reviewer is like an old-time candy store. If one makes the mistake of flipping pages or reading the captions of things to come, all is lost. Who can read patiently when a section titled "Match-makers. Weddings, Funerals" begins on page 218, "The Self-Educated Worker" on page 244, "From Henry Adams to Henry James" on page 405, and "Tell Me, Dear Editor" on page 533? And if one does skip around, so much the better: it lends a kaleidoscopic effect to what is, after all, a kaleidoscopic subject.

Howe devotes a comparatively short section of the book to the post-Holocaust period, and most of it deals with Jews in the outside world. There is a first-rate treatment of comedians, ranging from Smith and Dale all the way to Lenny Bruce, as well as a chapter on contemporary novelists (Saul Bellow, Delmore Schwartz — Bellow's "Humboldt" —, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth). A final chapter tells about the suburban world, but it is disappointing in that it is entirely derivative and lacks the sense of immediacy that informs the rest of the book. The only other serious defect, the treatment of religion, is similarly derivative and remote. Hardly surprising, given the fact that Howe is an urbanite to the core and a life-long secularist.

In a book of political essays published a decade ago, Howe tells the delightful story of the poor man in the legendary village of Chelm who is hired by its elders to sit
at the gates and serve as lookout for the Messiah. When he complains to them about the ridiculously low wages, they reply: "You are right, the pay is low. But consider: the work is steady . . ." The tag not only expresses Howe's somewhat detached and ironic optimism; to him it also expresses one of the basic themes of Yiddish culture. It is not, according to Howe, simply a response to a structural situation: it is what Jewish and especially Yiddish culture is all about. He translates Aaron Zeitlin:

Being a Jew means running forever to God
Even if you are his betrayer,
Means expecting to hear any day,
Even if you are a nay sayer,
The blare of Messiah's horn.

The East European Jews never gave up their passion for social reform and social justice. To this day, Howe points out, Jews — alone among groups of comparable educational and occupational attainments — vote Democratic; they were disproportionately represented in the civil rights movement, in the anti-war movement, and in the New Left generally.

Agreed. One tends to disagree only when Howe, in a moving Epilogue, interprets even the anti-Semitic tantrums of the salvating Left as somehow part of the old tradition; but he may have a point.

Howe is no Miniver Cheevy. The world of our fathers was no paradise. But, unsentimental as he is, he makes it out to have been a pretty special world. When he ends his book by saying: "Let us now praise obscure men," he wants us not only to remember the line that follows in Sirach's version: "... and our fathers that begot us;" he means also to say that the East European Jewish immigrants deserve an equal place with other famous generations.

Will our grandchildren say as much about Scarsdale?

Reviewer Dr. Norman Miller is professor and former chairman of the Department of Sociology. He has been a member of the faculty since 1969.

PRAYER POWER

By J. Moulton Thomas
(Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1976)
Reviewed by Edmond LaB. Cherbonnier

When a skeptic once remarked to Archbishop Temple that so-called answers to prayer were nothing but coincidence, Temple replied, "All I know is that when I pray, the coincidences happen; and when I don't, they don't." In view of the considerable, documented testimony about the efficacy of prayer, it is remarkable how much skepticism still remains, not least among Christians themselves. Now that scientific rationalism is being challenged from within, however, and people are looking again at once-despised things like psychic phenomena, faith healing, and exorcism, perhaps they will also become more receptive to the evidence concerning prayer, such as the new book by The Reverend J. Moulton Thomas, former chaplain at Trinity.

Readers familiar with Chaplain Thomas's style will be pleased to find his usual wealth of amusing anecdote and apposite quotation, from sources as diverse as Seneca and Dr. Spock. The backbone of the book is a sequence of case histories about lives that have been changed and problems solved, not only at the deepest levels of human experience, but especially in the affairs of everyday life: marriages about to break down, clergymen at the brink of despair, labor-management disputes, the generation gap, even failing health. So impressive is the cumulative effect that the author does not hesitate to conclude that through prayer, God "... changes superiority and inferiority into mutual trust. He changes despair into hope, and sorrow into joy."

The author's special interest is a kind of prayer that he believes has been neglected by most Christian denominations; the kind undertaken in small, informal groups. The biblical warrant for such groups, he contends, is just as strong as it is for private prayer and for public worship. On the basis of a lifetime of first-hand experience, he offers detailed advice on how to begin such a group and keep it going, what obstacles may be encountered, and how to overcome them. The main prerequisite is that the members of the group become involved with one another through the "honest sharing" of intimate personal concerns, beginning with the frank unburdening of conscience.

This is the point at which some readers will need to be convinced. Is such mutual self-disclosure psychologically healthy, or does it covertly arouse the kind of morbid curiosity made sensational by movements like Moral Rearmament? Does public confession perform a kind of spiritual lobotomy on the individual, as it seems to do in Communist practice? Is the feeling of release which accompanies it a kind of "high" that results from collaborating in the violation of one's own privacy? Is it possible to avoid the smugness that often afflicts such groups; the assumption that theirs is a more authentic Christianity? The author is aware of these questions, which have always been provoked by evangelistic piety, but he does not deal with them directly. They belong, he says, not to religion, but to theology. The difference is that "... in theology, God is my problem. In religion, I am God's problem."

The book's approach is accordingly pragmatic. The author sticks to facts which he himself has observed, and lets the reader draw his own conclusions. To those who find this approach simplistic, he replies that the only way to evaluate his thesis is not to argue about it, but to test it for oneself. For readers willing to make the experiment, Chaplain Thomas not only tells them how, but gives them a strong incentive to try.

Author The Reverend J. Moulton Thomas was chaplain at Trinity from 1956 to 1964. Since then he has served as canon missioner in the dioceses of South Carolina and West Virginia. There, and in nine other states, he conducted conferences and workshops on Prayer Power.

Reviewer Dr. Edmond LaB. Cherbonnier is professor (part-time) and former chairman of the Department of Religion. He has been a member of the faculty since 1955.
sentiment, a needlessness to put before the reader the naked, raw, the played and blazing reality, coupled with a rather juvenile desire to shock the prime, middle-class sentimentality of those bred in the Victorian way of thinking and writing—all these flattering qualities continued to overthrow, or perhaps it would be better to say, to depose the standard of taste. By comparison with the stern realism of Tolstoy, Leo, Dostoevsky, Gonza and other novelists of ultra-modern tendency, the work of Dickens seemed to have paled, to have lost its freshness. Hence, as I have said, a reaction set in against him and so fickle is popular judgment in literary matters that he was attacked almost as unkindly as he had been praised before. It is scarcely necessary to say that his proper place is between these two extremes of criticism; he is neither the great chronicler, great-trained great-poet, writer in whose honor his devotees burn so much incense nor yet the common purveyor of sentimental domestic drama and emotional claptrap as he appears to the prejudiced eye of a critic of the new school.

He has been nicknamed "the great Cockney"; no epithet could describe him more nearly and more fully.