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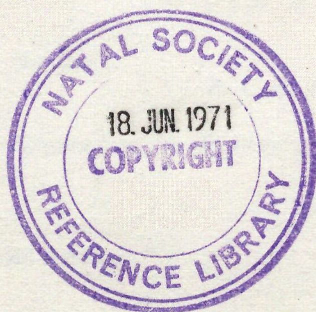

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We are pleased to find that an article in our last issue has sparked off comments in the form of a letter which we include in these pages. Discussion of this kind is a valuable part of our journal and recently the flashes of controversy have been too few and too short. We hope that readers will always feel free to exchange views through our postbag.

THE EDITORS.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN POLITICS*

by D. E. HURLEY

To say that religion and politics should be kept apart is right in one way and wrong in another. It all depends on the meaning we give to the two words. If 'politics' means party politics and 'religion' means the authority structure of religion, it is right enough to say that politics and religion should be kept apart. But politics means much more than party politics and religion means much more than the authority structure of religion.

Politics embraces all the ideas, attitudes, decisions, activities and arrangements that constitute or reflect concern for and participation in the corporate affairs of human communities constituted as states. In this sense, law-making, law-enforcement, administration, defence, international arrangements and all activities designed to influence them are politics.

Religion involves directly faith in and worship of a supernatural being or beings believed to be responsible in some way for the world and its events. The ethics of a believer is inseparable from his religion, for his whole ethical attitude is conditioned by his religious faith. There may be ethics without religious faith (though not without some kind of faith, for ethics supposes values inaccessible to science), but there is no religious faith without an accompanying ethic, that is, norms of behaviour inspired by religious beliefs.

This is undeniably true of all the great world religions. It is transparently clear in the case of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. The prophets were forever reminding Israel that worship without good works, that is, moral behaviour, was an empty shell.

We read in Isaiah:

> What are your endless sacrifices to me? says Yahweh. I am sick of holocausts of rams and the fat of calves. The blood of bulls and of goats revolts me. When you come to present yourselves before me, who asked you to trample over my courts? Bring me your worthless offerings no more, the smoke of them fills me with disgust. New Moons, sabbaths, assemblies — I cannot endure festival and solemnity. Your New Moons and your pilgrimages I hate with all my soul. They lie heavy on me, I am tired of hearing them. When you stretch out your hands I turn my eyes away. You may multiply your prayers, I shall not listen. Your hands are covered with blood; wash,

* Adapted from an address delivered to the South African Institute of Race Relations, Pietermaritzburg, on 11 August, 1970.

> make yourselves clean. Take your wrongdoing out of my sight. Cease to do evil. Learn to do good, search for justice, help the oppressed, be just to the orphan, plead for the widow. (Is. 1:11-17).

Jeremiah puts it this way:

> Yahweh Sabaoth, the God of Israel, says this: Amend your behaviour and your actions and I will stay with you here in this place. Put no trust in delusive words like these: This is the sanctuary of Yahweh, the sanctuary of Yahweh, the sanctuary of Yahweh! But if you do amend your behaviour and your actions, if you treat each other fairly, if you do not exploit the stranger, the orphan and the widow, (if you do not shed innocent blood in this place), and if you do not follow alien gods, to your own ruin, then here in this place I will stay with you, in the land that long ago I gave to your fathers for ever. Yet here you are, trusting in delusive words, to no purpose. Steal, would you, murder, commit adultery, perjure yourselves, burn incense to Baal, follow alien gods that you do not know? — and then come presenting yourselves in this Temple that bears my name, saying: Now we are safe — safe to go on committing all these abominations. Do you take this Temple that bears my name for a robbers' den? I, at any rate, am not blind — it is Yahweh who speaks. (Jer. 7:3:11).

The prophets were the conscience of Israel. They had the unenviable task of keeping Israel on the straight and narrow path of the worship of Yahweh, and of conduct befitting a true believer: justice, honesty, compassion, care for the widow and the orphan. They sometimes had the unenviable task of standing before kings and reprimanding them inYahweh's name, as Nathan did to David, after the dishonourable episode of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. The kings were not absolute monarchs, they were subject to the moral law, and it was the prophets who often reminded them of this.

They stepped right into the political arena at times, as the 30th chapter of Isaiah indicates. This chapter contains a warning against an alliance with Egypt.

> Woe to those rebellious sons! — it is Yahweh who speaks. They carry out plans that are not mine and make alliances not inspired by me, and so add sin to sin. They have left for Egypt, without consulting me, to take refuge in Pharaoh's protection, to shelter in Egypt's shadow. Pharaoh's protection

> will be your shame, the shelter of Egypt's shadow your confounding. For his ministers have gone to Zoan, his ambassadors have already reached Hanes. All are carrying gifts to a nation that will be of no use to them, that will bring them neither aid, nor help, nothing but shame and disgrace. (Is. 30:1-5).

John the Baptist was another prophet who spoke up to a king in the name of conscience — and lost his head in the process. The tradition continued into Christian times, and many an early bishop clashed with a temporal sovereign over moral issues, Ambrose of Milan, Chrysostom of Constantinople, Leo of Rome.

But something was to happen to Christianity which, to a large extent, robbed it of its prophetic power. It became heavily institutionalised and deeply involved in the establishment that emerged from the Dark Ages in Western Europe. Two basic attitudes seem responsible for the suppression of the prophetic function. The first one was the acceptance, implied in the expression 'Church and State', of the institutional church as a sort of equal partner with the political structure in the management of human affairs. Church and State emerged from the reconstruction of Europe as the two poles of the new establishment, two poles essential to one another, throne and altar locked in mutual support, yet often, also in intra-establishment rivalry. Neither side could imagine Christendom without the other, but there was no end of pulling and pushing to ensure that the opposition did not enjoy too large a share of the political, economic and cultural cake. The Emperor, Henry IV, standing in the snow at Canossa felt the cold blast of this rivalry. Beckett hacked to death in his Cathedral was another victim of it.

This rivalry within the establishment distracted the Church somewhat from its true prophetic function. It was too busy defending ecclesiastical rights against emperors and princes to be able to take in the whole picture and address itself to the conscience of rulers on broader issues. Preoccupation with Church rights led to a neglect of Christian duties.

The second attitude was a consequence of the first, namely, a too great insistence on the distinction between the temporal and the spiritual. If Church and State were two equal and complementary societies, providing for man's requirements, they had to have distinct spheres of operation if clashes were to be avoided. These distinct spheres of operation were designated as the spiritual for the Church and the temporal for the State. This distinction was a good one, as long as you did not think about it too carefully. If you did, you noticed that all human conduct in the temporal sphere had a moral aspect. It was good or bad, just or unjust.

And this by definition pertained to the spiritual sphere of the Church. Also the Church owned a good deal of the real estate of Europe, and ran a system of taxation as extensive as any temporal sovereign, and this by definition belonged to the temporal sphere. So in practice, the distinction between the spiritual and the temporal was not particularly helpful.

In one way it was a bit disastrous, because it created the impression that there were certain temporal concerns that had no spiritual implications, and were consequently outside the scope of the Church's prophetic witness.

This witness was hamstrung, therefore, firstly because the Church was so involved in the establishment and very definitely in its temporalities; and secondly, because the distinction between the temporal and the spiritual gave rise to the impression that religion and politics could be kept apart from each other.

Whatever the explanation, European Christianity reached the stage of condoning, almost without a murmur, the atrocities of the African slave trade for 3 centuries, and of accepting and often justifying colonial wars, occupation and exploitation. Worse still, it often associated its missionary effort with colonialism.

One can plead, of course, that the Christian corporate conscience was not yet sufficiently evolved to experience qualms about these excesses. They were taken as normal and natural developments. This is true in a way, but I think it does indicate how slow the Church's prophetic function was in reacting, due to its involvement in and identification with the European establishment.

But that identification is largely a thing of the past. Relics of it persist in the special position of the Roman Catholic Church in Italy and Spain, and of the Anglican Church in England. But these are no more than relics. They are bound to disappear in the not too distant future. Christianity will no longer seek to influence society directly through its political institutions, nor even perhaps its cultural and educational institutions. It will address its message to the conscience of people and leave to their free decision the question of how much Christianity seeps through to influence the institutional life of society.

This brings us to the present-day role of religion in politics. It should be a prophetic role, not an institutional one. It should not aim at utilising the structures of human society to christianize the hearts of men; but rather to influence the hearts of men to christianize the structures of society. And when I say, 'christianize the structures of society', I do not mean making them extensions of the Church's organisational life, but rather imparting to them, by the

influence of Christian hearts, the characteristics of a Christian outlook.

This, I think, is the great new possibility opening up before any faith capable of understanding its role in human society. Whereas in the past the great institutional religions tended to see their role in terms of preparing man for his future life, and controlling the structures of human society to achieve this, they now, relieved of an unnecessary and wasteful rivalry with the State, have a better opportunity of educating man morally and spiritually, not only for the life after death, but also for the life that has to be lived here and now in preparation for what is to come later.

To some extent, the great institutional religions have always done this, but they have not been aware of the social and political dimensions that could be given to their teaching. They have been more concerned with the implications of their teaching for man as an individual, rather than for man in society. This is what is meant when critics of Christian churches say that they were too 'pietistic' in the past and failed to promote in their adherents a true involvement in the political situation.

There are degrees of involvement of course, and it is quite obvious that any church that gets involved in party politics is going to suffer. A church that gets involved in party politics will be treated as a political party and will be on the receiving end of many of the hard punches and much of the mud that is thrown in party politics.

This is not the kind of political involvement I am referring to when I imply that it is something desirable. I am referring to the involvement which sees the Church imparting a very clear and compelling social conscience to its members, spelling out the social applications of its teaching.

This, of course, is not an absolute innovation. The social gospel always has been the concern of at least some people in the Church. What could be new is the proclamation of the social gospel as standard practice, the integration of the social gospel into the day-to-day preaching and catechising of the Church. It wouldn't be a new gospel. It would simply be the drawing out and application to present-day social, economic and political conditions of the values inherent in the eternal gospel — justice, love, respect for human dignity, concern for the common good, compassion for the less fortunate members of society. This programme of moral education would be tantamount to promoting and intensifying the moral resources necessary for sound social and political action.

Had the Church been ready and able to do this at the time of the Industrial Revolution, Karl Marx would never have enjoyed the success that has been his. Most of the leaders and thinkers of the

Church let the Industrial Revolution run away from them. They were not on the alert to judge and criticize the practices of laissez-faire capitalism and to campaign for a fair deal for factory workers. The defence of the exploited workers fell to the Socialists whose extreme wing evolved into Communism.

It is not for the teaching agencies of the Church to propose or promote any particular 'ism', leaning either to capitalism or socialism. But it is their function to keep themselves fully informed on what is going on, and to draw out of the gospel the moral teaching applicable to the situation and communicate it clearly, persistently and convincingly. An isolated statement from time to time is not enough. Moral teaching intended to stir the conscience of great numbers of people needs much more than that. It needs to be incorporated into the teaching programme of the Church, and to be communicated by every appropriate pedagogical method.

After that, it is the responsibility of Church members to carry their moral teaching into social, economic and political life. As individuals they may find this difficult. They may need the inspiration and encouragement of groups of like-minded people. In this regard Church leaders have the responsibility of helping to ensure that such groups come into existence and receive the backing and support of the institutional Church. My experience is limited to what goes on in my own Church in which on the world scene, several very effective group movements have emerged in the last fifty years, groups like the Young Christian Workers, various student movements, Young Christian Formers, Christian Family Movement and so on. Their great achievement has been to educate the conscience of their members to a sense of concern about questions of wages, industrial relations, health, family welfare and so on. They produce the alert and committed Christian lay men capable of recognising a social problem and doing something about it.

At present some of these movements are going through quite a crisis of development. It has arisen out of the tension between the desire of the movements to be totally responsible for their own affairs and the tendency of Church authorities to consider them official organs of the Church and, therefore, subject to the control of Church authority.

The situation can become quite acute and embarrassing when these movements have to decide on, or advise their members concerning strikes, protests and collaboration with Communists and other left-wingers in the pursuit of a common goal, which may lead to open conflict with bodies composed of people who are their co-religionists but do not share their social or political outlook.

These movements are important, but their very existence highlights the fact that the social gospel has not been, and as yet is not, integrated into the ordinary life of Church congregations. There have to be special movements to initiate people into the social gospel and sustain them in its promotion, because ordinary congregational life does not do that. Perhaps it can never be expected to do it entirely, but it could certainly play a more active and effective role in sensitizing the conscience of its members, pursuing what the South Americans call 'conscience-ization'.

Concentrating now our attention on our own country, I would suggest that, just as the Church let the Industrial Revolution run away from it, so it has let the South African racial problem develop without too much interference from the Christian gospel. There are many good explanations for this, and it is always easy to be wise after the event. It takes a great deal of insistence to stir a great number of people to be concerned about other people's problems, especially if that concern is going to imply quite a radical change in the way of life of the community to which you belong. This has been the problem of the White Christian community in South Africa. Its churches have identified themselves too much with its sectional interests to be able to carry out a prophetic role of constructive criticism. The Dutch Reformed Churches were too busy providing the spiritual inspiration for the life of the Afrikaner nation to notice whether or not the demands of this national life were infringing the rights of African, Indian and Coloured people and producing results incompatible with the Christian gospel. The so-called English-speaking churches, though to some extent concerned in principle, have been almost totally ineffective in communicating this concern to the vast majority of their members, with the result that few priests or ministers working with White congregations have any idea what they should be doing and most White parishioners resent any too close-to-the-bone treatment of the racial situation in the light of the gospel.

This means that there has been an almost total absence of effective prophetic witness in regard to the injustices of racial politics in South Africa. There have been some utterances and a little action here and there; but in proportion to what is required to bring Christian influence to bear, there has been hardly anything to talk about.

When you say this, people usually reply by asking: Yes, but what can we do? And I have got to admit that the answer to this question is not an easy one. It is not easy, because it is not just a matter of working out a programme of Christian education, to be followed in the pulpit, the Sunday school and the guild meeting,

it is necessary to provide along with the programme, the training necessary for those who have to implement it. It is not enough for a Church authority to require of all its ministers the preaching of sermons on the Christian implications of race politics. The authority must provide opportunities for the preachers to learn how to handle the topic — and how to handle the congregation after the service. Nor is it enough to supply a programme of Sunday school lessons opening the minds of children to Christian concern about racial questions; the Sunday school teachers must be taught how to handle the lessons — and how to handle the parents when the children start passing on the message at home. Children are sometimes the best prophets we have but, not unlike other prophets, they may not be honoured in their own homes.

Preaching and catechising, understood in the traditional manner, is not enough. A change of racial attitude for the White Christian in South Africa involves such a radical conversion that the traditional methods of Christian education are totally inadequate. Over and above these, opportunities must be created for White Christians to achieve a vivid realisation of the conditions in which their Black neighbours live; the degree of poverty, insecurity and humiliation; the incidence of disease, infant mortality and disruption of family life; the inevitable consequence in drunkenness, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, murder and every other form of crime and social disorder.

White Christians must be given opportunities of knowing the situation, of realising that those who are oppressed by it are human beings with intelligence and sensitivity, and the same crying need for recognition, acceptance, affection, domestic stability, economic security and opportunities to give expression to these gifts and abilities as any other group of human beings on this earth.

Given such realisation, there is some hope that the White Christian will experience the conversion of heart necessary to give up his prejudices and sink his fears for his own future in a truly Christian concern about the plight of his Black brothers in Christ.

But we must not deceive ourselves into thinking that it is an easy process. We are dealing with one of the ultimate instincts here, the instinct of group attachment and group survival — the human community instinct polarised on race. Enormous educational effort is required to bring about social change when so deep and powerful a human factor as race prejudice is involved.

Because of these difficulties and the inherent opposition to change, especially change that will rock the ecclesiastical boat, most Church authorities find it hard to push a programme of Christian education in social and racial questions through the various committees,

commissions, councils, conferences and synods that have a say in Church policy-making.

Yet we cannot go on drifting as we have been doing for so long. The racial situation in South Africa is the most important issue facing the churches. Unless the gospel has something loud and clear and compelling to say about it, it has scarcely the right to say anything at all in South Africa.

The problem of how to get across to great numbers of people so difficult a conviction as the need for a change of racial attitudes has been preoccupying the minds of many people in recent years. A number of committees and commissions have been giving their attention to the problem, but nothing really significant or substantial has resulted as yet. We have been so badly out of practice when dealing with certain social implications of the basic values of justice and love that we have floundered around rather pathetically in our search for a proper approach.

Please God, the time of floundering is nearing its end. South Africa is entering a very crucial time in its history. The economic development of the 1960's seems to have proved beyond all shadow of doubt that apartheid is impossible. The business community is being painfully reminded of this by the growing intensity of the labour problem. The country is faced with an inescapable choice between apartheid ideology and continued economic growth. The intellectuals and theologians who pinned their hopes on apartheid's being able to produce racial separation with justice are being more and more tortured with the evidence that apartheid is producing neither separation nor justice. The day of delusions is over, the decade of decision is with us.

What part will the Christian religion play in this decade of decision? Shall we be able to evolve a policy and a programme in time to bring Christian influence to bear on what could be a very painful situation for many. This is the practical problem that the leadership of the Christian churches faces in the immediate future.

Durban.

THEORIA

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A SUGGESTION

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'NO WORST THERE IS NONE,' AND *KING LEAR*: AN EXPERIMENT IN CRITICISM

by C. O. GARDNER

I

'Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past.' In this sentence from *Tradition and the Individual Talent,* and in the sentences which precede it, Eliot is particularly concerned about the relationship between a work of literature and the whole of the tradition that it adds to:

> . . . What happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the *whole* existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered . . .

These speculations of Eliot's are sweeping, daring and difficult. It would not be at all easy, even in the unscientific manner of literary criticism, to prove conclusively that he is on the whole either right or wrong. It is my conviction that, at least to a limited extent, Eliot is right — that most of us would admit (to take one detail of the large process he describes) that not only is our understanding and appreciation of, say, Keats subtly affected and enriched by our understanding and appreciation of Chaucer and Spenser and Milton, but that our response to the earlier writers is, even more subtly and indefinably, enlarged and perhaps slightly altered by our knowledge of the later one.

* * *

If Eliot is indeed correct, or partly correct, in thinking that 'the past [is] altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past', it should perhaps be possible to isolate in the history of literature some specific moments at which the creative interchange of past and present is peculiarly intense. Such moments, I think,

we can without much difficulty find. One thinks, for example, of the afternoon when Dorothy Wordsworth read to her brother the sonnets of Milton.

> I had long been well acquainted with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion by the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony that runs through most of them, — in character so totally different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakespeare's fine Sonnets. I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and produced three Sonnets the same afternoon . . .[1]

The healthy, dynamic relationship which exists between Milton's sonnets and Wordsworth's, especially his earlier political sonnets, is something that should be as fascinating and important to the student of Milton as to the student of Wordsworth.

> Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
> And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
> Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
> Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
> Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
> So didst thou travel on life's common way,
> In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
> The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

These lines are illuminating — perhaps more so than Wordsworth realized — not only in what they actually *say* about Milton but in the precise nature of their moral emphasis and even in their distinctive movement. Wordsworth's sonnet throws a new light upon the nobility of Milton's character at its best, upon the admirable firmness and coherence of personality that lies behind such varied lines as these:

> All is, if I have grace to use it so,
> As ever in my great task Masters eye. (Sonnet VII)

> If ever deed of honour did thee please,
> Guard them, and him within protect from harms,
> He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
> That call Fame on such gentle acts as these . . . (VIII)

> I did but prompt the age to quit their cloggs
> By the known rules of antient libertie . . . (XII)

They also serve who only stand and waite. (XVI)

Her face was vail'd, yet to my fancied sight,
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
So clear, as in no face with more delight. (XIX)

Yet I argue not
Against heavns hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward.
(To Mr. Cyriack Skinner upon his Blindness)

In both poets we notice the unaffected mingling of dignity and humility, a mingling that is perfectly expressed by words and rhythms that are simple and powerful:

So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness;

but still bear up and steer
Right onward.

Wordsworth achieves a 'majestic harmony' remarkably similar to Milton's. And yet, of course, Wordsworth's verse is as fresh and alive as the lines written a hundred and fifty years earlier. Wordsworth is original; and his place in time *is* significant. In his words we feel a somewhat more sophisticated awareness of the beauty and order of the universe, and of the profound 'correspondences' between the outer and inner worlds:

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens . . .

Between Milton and Wordsworth lie Newton, Hartley, Kant and Coleridge. But Wordsworth's formulations not only put Milton's sonnets (and indeed his other poems) into a new perspective but articulate meanings that are half-present in Milton. The line 'As ever in my great task Masters eye', for example, has a slightly richer resonance — it is less sternly puritanical — when it is seen in the light of Wordsworth's vision of Milton.

In some respects, then, the two poets seem to have reacted upon each other almost in the same way as Wordsworth and Coleridge interacted; Wordsworth, bringing with him the sensibility of a

distant age, almost for the moment became Milton's contemporary. And that a partial transcendence of the merely temporal should be able to take place was, I think, an aspect of what Eliot was implying when he talked of the 'feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order'.

* * *

Another instance of the creative interaction of past and present is to be found, of course, in the poetry of Eliot himself. It is surely not fanciful to assert that our sense of a part of the meaning of (say) *The Tempest*, certainly that our sense of the significance of the play in the tradition of English literature and in the evolution of the English imagination, is extended by Eliot's use of it in *The Waste Land*. *Marina,* too — partly the result, it would seem, of a fellow critic's fresh probing of Shakespeare's imaginative material — undoubtedly gives us a new insight into *Pericles*.[2]

II

Wordsworth knew that his sonnets had been influenced by Milton's, that they were in some living relationship with them — though there is little to suggest that he kept Milton constantly and consciously in mind. Eliot's references to and reworkings of the literature of the past are always deliberate, sometimes rather too deliberate. The relationship between some of Hopkins's later sonnets and the tragedies of Shakespeare is a less immediately obvious one.

We can tell from his note-books and letters that Hopkins knew his Shakespeare well. It is clear, too, that in innumerable ways his imagination and his style had been profoundly nourished by Shakespeare. But he was on the whole so concerned with the particular things that he wished to say and with the ways in which he wished to say them, and so concerned with his religious life and dedication, that he left few precise clues to the deepest workings of his poetic mind. Perhaps he could not have provided such clues even if he had wished to. (I am not suggesting of course that he was not in various ways extremely articulate about poetry and poets.) And in regard to some of the later sonnets, Hopkins's spiritual stress and distress made him more than usually reticent. In a letter written to Bridges on May 17th, 1885, we find him saying:

> I have after long silence written two sonnets, which I am touching: if ever anything was written in blood one of these was.[3]

And on September 1st he tells Bridges:

> I shall shortly have some sonnets to send you, five or more. Four of these came like inspirations unbidden and against my will. And in the life I lead now, which is one of a continually jaded and harassed mind, if in any leisure I try to do anything I make no way — nor with my work, alas! but so it must be.[4]

These are Hopkins's only recorded comments on this remarkable group of poems.

It was the late Professor W. H. Gardner who pointed out that 'an *underthought* derived from *Job* and from the highly charged world of Shakespearian tragedy helps to give poignancy and universality to Hopkins's intensely personal later sonnets':

> But just as great representative characters like Job, Jeremiah, Hamlet and Lear seem to endure and epitomize in their little world of man a whole macrocosm of suffering, so these sonnets . . . are welded by the evocative quality of their imagery into a great disjointed soliloquy, the utterance of a protagonist comparable in tragic significance to those mentioned above . . . Like Hamlet, he is worried about the definition and performance of his heaven-appointed duty. It is the lot of both men 'to seem the stranger', partly through intellectual idiosyncrasy, partly through religious or moral persuasion . . . As Macbeth murdered sleep, so Hopkins suffered night-terrors for what seemed, to his scrupulous mind, commensurate crimes . . . Small wonder if Hopkins, like Lear, felt the approach of madness. Lear, sublime even in his failure to reach the stability of Job, cries out: 'You heavens, give me patience, patience I need!' and again: 'No, I will be the pattern of all patience.' Similarly Hopkins . . . tries to win Patience ('hard thing!') . . . In the old king's distraction it was the Fool who, with his wry jests, tried to give his master that sense of proportion which would save him from the worst results of his own actions. The parallel here has already been drawn by Professor Abbott: 'In a mood that recalls the Fool in *Lear*,' he says, Hopkins . . . begs a truce to the self-torment of the preceding sonnets.[5] 'Prithee, nuncle, be contented' . . . 'come, poor Jackself' . . .[6]

And it was Professor Gardner, too, who first showed the especially close link between 'No worst, there is none' and *King Lear*:

> . . . After his encounter with the world, and bruised by God's buffeting, thwarting hand, he must look downwards into a

bottomless pit of evil, doubt and despair:

O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
May who ne'er hung there.

Obsessed with the thought of human vice, the deranged Lear cries:

There's hell, there's darkness, there is the sulphurous pit;

but a more significant association of height and danger begins when Gloucester says to Edgar:

There is a cliff whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep;

and the amazing visual efficacy of Edgar's description of the vertiginous height as seen from the brink is among the unforgettable things in all poetry. So Keats testified, when he spoke of himself as 'one who gathers samphire, dreadful trade!'[7] The spiritual counterpart of such a precious occupation is easily imagined . . . The life-line attaching man to God cuts across the horizontal of his daily needs, at the point of contact (and greatest tension) he must gather his 'samphire', perform his pre-ordained task. With Keats it was to glean his brain, to express himself through poetry; with Hopkins it was the more complex task of self-expression in art and self-effacement in his vocation . . .

It is noteworthy that Lear also, in his entirely different character and circumstances, is torn between self-expression and self-effacement . . . It is this suffering which seems to provide the *underthought* of the last two lines of Hopkins's sestet — a sub- or un-conscious reference to the storm, the wretched half-clad condition of the three outcasts, the hovel on the heath. Kent exclaims, 'Alack! bare-headed!'

Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest;

and Lear replies:

. . . Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.

Four times, however, must Kent say, 'Good my lord, enter' before the king complies:

In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty—
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

In this powerful scene, almost every detail is of symbolic import. Such vicarious experience is as natural a source of reference for a later poet as the facts of his own life. Thus with a sudden change of metaphor (indicating a

> temporary failure to endure the trial of patience and faith) Hopkins shows the strange art of his own necessities:
>
> Nor does long our small
> Durance deal with that steep or deep. Here! creep,
> Wretch, under a comfort serves in a whirlwind: all
> Life death does end and each day dies with sleep.
>
> The last line, in which the poet falls back upon the most elemental physical consolations for his loss of spiritual health, anticipates the equally desolate conclusions of two of the other late sonnets . . .[8]

I have quoted at such length from Professor Gardner because it seems to me that any treatment of my theme must be based fairly and squarely upon what he has said. But the parallel, the intercourse, between *King Lear* and Hopkins's sonnet appears to be even fuller and more interesting than Professor Gardner has suggested.

> No worst, there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief,
> More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring.
> Comforter, where, where is your comforting?
> Mary, mother of us, where is your relief?
> My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief-
> Woe, world-sorrow; on an age-old anvil wince and sing—
> Then lull, then leave off. Fury had shrieked 'No ling-
> ering! Let me be fell: force I must be brief'.
> O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
> Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
> May who ne'er hung there. Nor does long our small
> Durance deal with that steep or deep. Here! creep,
> Wretch, under a comfort serves in a whirlwind: all
> Life death does end and each day dies with sleep.

In all of the 'terrible sonnets', as in so many of Hopkins's poems, there are verbal echoes of Shakespeare, echoes especially of the tragedies and of the last plays. But the number of memories or half-memories of *King Lear* in 'No worst, there is none' appears to be remarkable. It is not easy to say how much importance can be attached to each one of these coincidences, for a number of the words in question are simple words in everyday use and many of them are to be found in other Shakespeare plays. But taken as a whole they seem to me to have considerable significance. I propose to give an account of the verbal echoes that I have found. (A fairly full enumeration of these is included in the notes at the end of the article.)

One of the most striking reminiscences occurs in the opening words of the poem — 'No worst, there is none'. (It was first noticed, after the publication of his *Study,* by Professor Gardner himself.) Hopkins is clearly recalling, consciously or unconsciously, Edgar's anxious meditation in Act IV scene i:

> Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
> Than, still contemn'd and flatter'd, to be *worst.*
> The lowest and most dejected thing of Fortune,
> Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
> The lamentable change is from the best;
> The *worst* returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
> Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace:
> The wretch that thou hast blown unto the *worst*
> Owes nothing to thy blasts. (1-9)[9]

Edgar is confronted by his blinded father, and his partial complacency is utterly shattered:

> O Gods! Who is't can say 'I am at the worst'?
> I am worse than e'er I was . . .
> And worse I may be yet; the worst is not
> So long as we can say 'This is the worst.' (25-28)[10]

A number of the words that Hopkins uses appear many times in *King Lear* and contribute significantly to the themes of the play.

'Grief' (line 1) is very common in the play, and occurs at some memorable moments — for example,

> You see me here, you Gods, a poor old man,
> As full of grief as age; wretched in both! (II. iv. 274-275)

> The grief hath craz'd my wits. (III. iv. 174)

> . . . then away she started
> To deal with grief alone. (IV. iii. 32-33)

> . . . but his flaw'd heart,
> Alack, too weak the conflict to support!
> 'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
> Burst smilingly. (V. iii. 196-199)

'Woe' and 'sorrow' (line 6) are found frequently too. There are two points in the play at which all three words of intense sadness

appear within the space of a few lines.[11] Hopkins uses 'comfort' to represent the antithesis of grief ('comforter', 'comforting' in line 3, and 'comfort' in line 13), and the word has a similar rôle in *King Lear*; for example, immediately after he has been blinded, Gloucester cries:

> All dark and comfortless; (III. iv. 84)

and later, in the scene in which the imaginary cliff-face is so vividly described, he says:

> Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit
> To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,
> When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
> And frustrate his proud will. (IV. vi. 61-64)[12]

Another of the words in the sonnet which rings through *King Lear* — a word which embodies the universality of the play's concerns — is 'world' (line 6). When Edgar meets his blind father, he exclaims:

> My father, poorly led? World, world, O world! (IV. i. 10)

Here are a few more instances of the word:

> I will have such revenges on you both
> That all the world shall . . . (II. iv. 281-282)

> Strives in his little world of man . . . (III. i. 10)

> This great world
> Shall so wear out to naught. (IV. vi. 136-137)

> . . . yet you see how this world goes. (IV. vi. 149)

> . . . he hates him
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer. (V. iii. 313-315)[13]

'Mind' (line 9) is important in the play too: it contributes subtly to our impression that the whole drama is partly internal and psychological — enacted within the 'little world of man'. I give some notable instances:

> When the mind's free
> The body's delicate; this tempest in my mind

Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there . . . (III. iv. 11-14)

Who alone suffers, suffers most i' th' mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind;
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip . . .
(III. vi. 107-109)

My son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him. (IV. i. 33-35)

I fear I am not in my perfect mind. (IV. vii. 63)

Another very significant word is 'all' (line 13). Like 'nothing', it helps to suggest the intensity of the experiences and the feelings that the play presents to us, and the absoluteness of their import. Here are a few of the more striking uses of the word:

Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all. (I. i. 103-104)

I gave you all — (II. iv. 252)

. . . unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all. (III. i. 14-15)

Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. (IV. vi. 167)

'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all. (IV. vii. 41-42)

Ripeness is all. (V. ii. 11)[14]

These echoes might not seem very important, however, if they were not reinforced by a large number of verbal coincidences. The following words from the sonnet are to be found in *King Lear*: 'school' and 'wild' (line 2), within the space of five lines;[15] 'cries' (line 5), as a verb, in several notable instances;[16] 'heave' (line 5), twice;[17] 'age' and 'old' (line 6), frequently; 'fury' (line 7);[18] 'fell' (line 8);[19] 'force' (line 8);[20] 'brief' (line 8;)[21] 'fall' (line 9), frequently; 'fathom' (line 10);[22] 'hold' (line 10), which occurs three times in exactly Hopkins's sense;[23] 'cheap' (line 10);[24] 'hung' (line 11);[25] 'deal with' (line 12);[26] 'steep' (line 12);[27] 'wretch' (line 13), several

times;[28] 'serves' (line 13);[29] 'whirlwind' (line 13);[30] 'life,' 'death,' 'end' and 'sleep' (line 14), all of which are important in the play.[31] Also, though 'relief' (line 4) does not occur, 'relieve' does, twice;[32] 'sing' (line 6) may be associated with the challenging, painful songs of the Fool; 'frightful' (line 10) may well contain memories of 'fearful' and 'dreadful', which occur within five lines of each other in the description of the cliff;[33] and 'durance' (line 12) is connected with 'endure', which appears frequently and memorably.[34]

It seems safe to conclude that in this sonnet Hopkins is expressing experiences that are so similar to and reminiscent of the experiences of *King Lear* that many of the words that he uses come from the same forge, have been shaped on the same 'age-old anvil'.

Yet it would be quite wrong to assume that the evidence that I have adduced has the effect of calling into doubt Hopkins's essential originality. There can be no question of the profound *reality* of the poet's experiences, both in the actuality of the poetry and, surely, in the actuality of his life. His use of the words that I have drawn attention to is utterly and triumphantly his own, as is the manipulation of his material and the moulding of it into the form of a tightly-packed, energetic, extraordinarily dramatic sonnet. Besides, of course, there are many words in the poem that we cannot link directly with *King Lear* at all — pitched, pangs, wring, herds-long, huddle, chief, anvil, wince, lull, shrieked, lingering, mountains, sheer, creep. To most experienced readers of English poetry, the originality and the power of 'No worst, there is none' are unassailable.

Interestingly enough, Hopkins was very aware of the dangers of pastiche and imitation in general, and of the influence of Shakespeare in particular. In response to Bridges's observation that Doughty's style was free from the taint of Victorian English, Hopkins wrote eloquently:

> H'm. Is it free from the taint of Elizabethan English? Does it not stink of that? for the sweetest flesh turns to corruption. Is not Elizabethan English a corpse these centuries? No one admires, regrets, despairs over the death of the style, the living masculine native rhetoric of that age, more than I do; but ' 'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone'.[35]

In an earlier letter to Bridges — the very letter, indeed, in which he mentioned the sonnet 'written in blood' — he had said:

> I hold that by archaism a thing is sicklied o'er as by blight. Some little flavours, but much spoils, and always for the same

> reason — it destroys earnest: we do not speak that way; therefore if a man speaks that way he is not serious, he is at something else than the seeming matter in hand, *non hoc agit, aliud agit* . . . The example of Shakspere . . . has done ever so much harm by his very genius, for poets reproduce the diction which in him was modern and in them is obsolete.[36]

We do not feel that Hopkins in our sonnet is employing Elizabethan or Shakespearian 'diction'; the words that he takes over from Shakespeare, whether consciously or unconsciously, are simple and lively words — words that are robustly in use or that we feel *ought* to be in use, embodiments of what he called (when talking of Dryden) 'the naked thew and sinew of the English language'.[37]

T. S. Eliot said (again in *Tradition and the Individual Talent)*:

> . . . We shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of [a poet's] work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously.

We cannot tell whether Hopkins would have been prepared to assent to that. But undoubtedly he would have agreed that

> To conform merely would be for the new work not really to conform at all; it would not be new, and would therefore not be a work of art.

III

I offer now a brief analysis of the sonnet.

One of the most remarkable features of the poem, taken in isolation, is the manner in which the reader is indeed 'pitched' *in medias res.* The speaker is undergoing a profound sorrow which is not explained to the reader and is therefore, presumably, inexplicable to himself. The powerful brevity of the opening sentence (a little similar in its impact, perhaps, to the opening notes of the Fifth Symphony), the rich alliteration, assonance and repetitions in the next line-and-a-half, the atmosphere of turmoil, convey forcefully and subtly the feelings of agony and perplexity.

The pleading, questioning, desperate prayers in the next two lines are the utterances of a man who can find no comfort, no answer to his problem and his grief, within himself. Clearly he is a man of religious faith and hope — or at least he has been so until this moment. He cannot understand how or why the spiritual powers should permit such unmitigated distress as he feels.

With the weird hallucinatory detachment that may be produced by nightmare or fever, the speaker watches his own cries, the embodied representatives of his anguish: like cattle in a storm, they crowd together confusedly and pathetically. The uneven rhythm of the line and the alliteration seem to contribute to the impression of animal-like bewilderment.

In line 6, with the heavy stresses upon 'woe' and upon 'world-sorrow', the poem's feeling and meaning take on a new dimension; or rather, these stressed words articulate something that the intensity of the poetry has already implied. Not only does the speaker's sorrow cover the whole of his world: he sorrows at and for the world, and his sorrow is one that the world itself shares. His pain and bewilderment are in some sense, he feels, the pain and bewilderment of all men in what Wordsworth called 'all this unintelligible world'. A number of critics have seen, not unjustifiably, an analogy with the passion of Christ: the speaker seems to have become — though not deliberately, as Christ did — a type of suffering humanity.

The next lines evoke the bitter details of the suffering — the hammer-blows, the lulls, the fearful suspense. The protagonist feels himself to be tormented by an objective force, a mysterious emanation from a mysterious universe. The Fury seems a figure of wild, coarse cruelty; yet there remains the possibility that, like the Erinyes or the 'blind Fury' of 'Lycidas', it is a spirit with an ineffable (but no less terrifying) divine purpose.

The pregnant repetition of the word 'mind' in line 9 has the effect of thrusting us even more deeply into the innermost recesses of the speaker's thoughts and feelings. Arrived there, we are confronted by the remarkable image of the cliff-face:

> O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
> Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
> May who ne'er hung there. Nor does long our small
> Durance deal with that steep or deep.

Professor Gardner, seeing the poem in the context of the other 'terrible' sonnets and of what we know of Hopkins's life, emphasizes the moral aspect of the protagonist's dizziness:

> The spiritual counterpart of such a precarious occupation is easily imagined: it is the tension between the upward pull of high principles and aims and the downward pull of physical and moral weakness — the flesh and the Devil.[38]

I don't disagree with this interpretation. When the poem is considered by itself, however, an even more striking meaning of these lines appears: the protagonist, deprived of emotional consolation and of religious or philosophical explanation, is thrown back upon his own resources, or lack of resources; and, his vision sharpened by pain, he becomes aware of a mental landscape, a frightening abyss, that were never previously located or even suspected. Left utterly to himself, man can only despair or go mad. The agony induced by the sight of the meaningless chasm seems to me not incompatible with the tension suggested by Professor Gardner: guilt and despair are indeed closely akin. The protagonist feels that he is on the brink of becoming (in Lawrence's words)

> a god-lost creature turning upon himself
> in the long, long fall, revolving upon himself
> in the endless writhe of the last, the last self-knowledge
> which he can never reach till he touch the bottom of the abyss
> which he can never touch, for the abyss is bottomless.[39]

The cliffs give way, in phantasmagoric fashion, to a whirlwind, a violent blast that scatters the mind's order; and the speaker — a fierce Kent to his own sad Lear — offers a consolation:

> Here! creep,
> Wretch, under a comfort serves in a whirlwind . . .

The 'comfort' is useful, it *serves*; and yet it is a last resort — we are reminded of the phrase 'it will have to serve'. And indeed what is offered is a desperate and ambiguous remedy:

> all
> Life death does end and each day dies with sleep.

The sharp monosyllables, reinforced and unified by daring alliteration, have a ring of authority, a rhythm of finality. But what conclusion has been reached? The collocations 'life death' and 'day dies' may suggest final despair, a mere weary yearning for death. The last word, 'sleep', on the other hand, may perhaps indicate the sudden recognition of an unexpected bounty on the part of the universe; indeed there may even be a memory of Macbeth's

> Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care,
> *The death of each day's life,* sore labour's bath,
> Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
> Chief nourisher in life's feast. (II. ii. 38-41)

Yet again, Hopkins's impassioned acquiescence in sleep could perhaps be taken as an inability to face reality, or even as a half-formed desire for suicide —

> To die: to sleep;
> No more; and by a sleep to say we end
> The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
> That flesh is heir to . . .

But then, once more, 'sleep', in its last reverberations, seems not to suggest quite so drastic a solution to the problem . . . The poet has expressed his experience and his insight truly and beautifully; the truth of his utterance is made complete by the perfection of the poetic form. Ambiguity is an essential part of the poet's feeling and of the poem's meaning. The poet-protagonist cannot finally assess his experience: he cannot be sure whether he is in the hand of God, whether he is guilty, whether he is on the edge of madness or suicide.

In this brief analysis I have said almost nothing about the mystical interpretation that some critics have given to the 'terrible sonnets' — the interpretation which sees Hopkins's desolation as an expression of that grimmest part of the soul's journey to God which is known as the dark night of the soul. And I have said nothing about the psychoanalytical approach, according to which this sonnet and the other similar sonnets manifest feelings and thoughts that can be described as neurotic. Both of these approaches to the poem seem to me to be limited but — where they are made with sufficient delicacy — quite valid: I believe them to be, in the end (paradoxical as it may seem), complementary to one another and to an interpretation such as the one that I have put forward.

IV

'Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past.' But — it may be asked — no matter how fully and valuably 'No worst, there is none' is 'directed' by *King Lear,* is it possible that *King Lear* should in any way be 'altered' by the sonnet?

In one sense, certainly, *King Lear* is not susceptible of either 'alteration' or enrichment. The play is — to use Dr. Leavis's phrase — magnificently *there*: it is wholly achieved, perfected; it carries within itself all the reasons why it is so and not otherwise.

There is no question of a later poet's having an insight that Shakespeare himself lacked or failed to embody. Yet with a play as huge, complex and many-faceted as *King Lear,* there remains always the problem, the difficulty, of a full response; and this problem presents itself differently in each generation. It is possible that new works of art may take their place in the same mountain range as the great peak, and thus both present new points of view from which the peak can be examined and give geologists a fresh opportunity of investigating the stuff of which it is made. And in this way a later work of art, like a work of criticism, may provide an illumination of an earlier work, a new light that even the author of the older work might well have found interesting and valuable. In this special sense, then, the past — existing as it does within the eyes of the beholders — may be said to be *altered* by the present.

But, it may be further asked, what illumination can be provided by a mere sonnet, even if it is seen in the context of the group of poems of which it forms a part? Moreover, does not 'No worst' show Hopkins turning his rich Shakespearian material to a somewhat narrow, even a sectarian purpose? Indeed, a sceptic might demand, is there any *real* relationship between the wild but essentially ordinary and 'human' sufferings played out in *King Lear* and the strained and in many ways strange frustrations and yearnings of a Jesuit priest? Is not Shakespeare's play one of the supreme masterpieces of what we think of as the British imagination? And does not Hopkins's sonnet seem in some ways akin to the exotic works of Spanish mystics?

In my view the value of 'No worst' in relation to *King Lear* lies to a large extent precisely in its religious emphasis and affiliation. The poem can help us to bring one of the play's many facets into sharper focus. Hopkins does not distort the material that he has taken from Shakespeare; he develops it in a particular and fruitful direction. For *King Lear* is partly, and profoundly, a play of religious questioning and probing, a cry of agony thrown out to the Gods; and it issues in an artistic perfection and an intellectual and emotional ambiguity that are in some ways similar to what we have found in the sonnet. Hopkins's Christianity and his kinship to the mystics establish, then, it seems to me, a perhaps unexpected relationship between Shakespeare and the mystical tradition: our 'idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature' is enriched accordingly.

In saying these things, I am not subscribing to the view that *King Lear* is 'ultimately' a Christian play. I have said that the play has many facets, and that what Hopkins's sonnet throws some

light on is but one of these facets, albeit an important one. Besides, the sonnet itself can hardly be said to be Christian in the usual sense of the word: it is distinctly not a poem of doctrinal affirmation; the Christ that it calls to mind (in so far as it calls Christ to mind at all) is the person who said, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' *King Lear* seems to me to be neither a religious play nor a 'pagan' play, nor yet a play of complete scepticism and despair; or perhaps it is all of these things simultaneously. In it we are strongly aware of moral forces at work in the universe, but we are equally aware of vast injustices, of cosmic disproportions: the play is a tragedy. Neither a simply religious play nor a play depicting man's life as meaningless could have produced the true tragic *frisson.*[40]

* * *

Many people would reject my view that the religious connotations of *King Lear* are important and that the viewpoint afforded by Hopkins's sonnet is useful. Some would hold that lines 3 and 4 of the sonnet —

> Comforter, where, where is your comforting?
> Mary, mother of us, where is your relief? —

so far from being helpful for a fuller comprehension of *King Lear,* are not even relevant to the true theme of the sonnet.[41]

That there are in the play many references to the Gods is undeniable. Cordelia, Kent, Edgar, Albany, the King of France, all utter prayers and 'pious ejaculations' that can hardly be regarded as casual. Lear himself is at first extremely egocentric in his invocation of supernatural forces, while Gloucester is rather feebly superstitious; but when they begin to feel piercing mental and physical pain they both express an intuitive sense of divine powers above and beyond them:

> You Heavens, give me that patience, patience I need! —
> You see me here, you Gods, a poor old man,
> As full of grief as age . . . (II. iv. 273-275)

> Let the great Gods,
> That keep this dreadful pudder o'er our heads,
> Find out their enemies now. (III. ii. 49-51)

> By the kind Gods, 'tis most ignobly done
> To pluck me by the beard. (III. vii. 35-36)

O cruel! O you Gods! (III. vii. 69)

Then Edgar was abus'd.
Kind Gods, forgive me that, and prosper him! (III. vii. 90-91)

Hopkins's two pleas are explicitly Christian and Catholic, of course; but they arise from just the same sort of desperation as Lear and Gloucester (on their different levels) experience. In fact Hopkins's explicitness serves to underline the fact that his cries are not empty apostrophe or vague exclamation: they are personal appeals to personal powers. And so, it seems to me, are the prayers in *King Lear.*

It has often been pointed out that most of these prayers receive either no answers or answers that display a grim dramatic irony. Tragic blankness and grimness are most concentratedly present in the sonnet too. Hopkins's 'lament' is, as he says in another of the sonnets,

cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away.

But if (as I have maintained) the ending of the sonnet is ambiguous, then there is in it some suggestion of a possible consolation. Is there such a suggestion, such an ambiguity, in *Lear*? And is the 'religion' in the play more than merely emotional and verbal? Are there any indications that the Gods possess in fact that benevolent power that Hopkins and several of the dramatis personae believed and hoped they could show? Harry Levin has said:

> Edgar has proved to be as good a stage manager as Edmund, and in a better cause. Yet, unless his presence in the vicinity is the result of stage management on the part of the gods — unless it is providential, that is to say, rather than coincidental — we must admit that his miracle is more truly a pious fraud; and we must conclude that the gods help those who help themselves, or else those who are so fortunate as to be helped by their fellow men.
>
> Man stands on his own feet in *King Lear.* There is no supernatural soliciting; there are no ghosts or witches or oracles; and the only demons are those which Edgar imagines while enacting his demonic role. Man takes his questionings directly to nature.[42]

The problem is not an easy one. But I don't think Levin is justified in assuming, as he seems to, that 'providence' is necessarily a less

acceptable explanation than 'coincidence'. Do we not feel that the goodness of Cordelia, Kent and Edgar is perhaps partly an expression of providential powers of goodness, just as Goneril and Regan and Edmund at his worst are manifestations, partly, of Evil itself? Edgar's words to his father,

> Thy life's a miracle, (IV. vi. 55)

and

> Think that the clearest Gods, who make them honours
> Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee, (IV. vi. 73-74)

strike us as having more value and authority than is suggested by the phrase 'pious fraud'. Admittedly he is trying by a ruse to prove to his father that life is preferable to death; but the real evidence with which he supports his arguments — his own loving presence — is solid evidence indeed. Similarly when Lear says to Cordelia,

> Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
> Upon a wheel of fire, (IV. vii. 46-47)

we surely feel that his words, for all their incorrectness, have a strangely haunting resonance. The notion that virtuous people are the incarnate representatives of the hidden will of the Heavens is expressed by the King at one of his moments of fine insight:

> Take physic, Pomp;
> Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
> That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
> And show the Heavens more just. (III. iv. 33-36)

Hopkins's sonnet, then, seems to me to provide a rich retrospective introduction to the religious theme in *King Lear*.

* * *

In so far as it can be read in terms of the play, the poem brings together, in its pregnant and dramatic brevity, the sufferings of Lear, Gloucester and Edgar. The sonnet may perhaps help us to realize how closely related these different sufferings are, and how superbly unified, therefore, the whole play is. After their initial chastening, Lear and Gloucester, like Edgar, suffer undeservedly; their cries 'heave' bewilderedly, and gather into a 'world-sorrow'.

The personality of Lear himself seems to pervade the sonnet. His presence is sensed especially, perhaps, in the rugged power of the diction, the furious energy of the rhythm. Further, the poem focuses our attention very clearly upon the importance of the 'comfort' in the storm — of rest and patience in a context of wildness and despair. And the last line of the sonnet perhaps gives a fresh insight into the play by suggesting a link between Lear's restorative sleep in Act IV and his death at the end of Act V.

The bitter tension between hope and despair that lies at the heart of the sonnet is particularly associated in our minds with Gloucester, who within the space of fifty lines can say

> Kind Gods, forgive me that, and prosper him! (III. vii. 91)

and

> As flies to wanton boys, are we to th' Gods;
> They kill us for their sport. (IV. i. 36-37)

Gloucester's wretchedness is specifically conjured up, of course, by the image of the cliff-face. The scene in which Edgar cures his father's despair, by making him imagine that he has survived a dreadful fall, has often been misunderstood or regarded as queer. What Edgar does, in effect, is to persuade Gloucester to confront the harsh facts of a loss and a fall from his previous state of life, and in patience and humility to reawaken his faith. Hopkins brings out a further meaning, a meaning which we see to be implicit in Act IV scene vi if we consider the play as a whole: the cliff, like the tempest, is partly in the mind; when we are thrown in despair upon our own resources we are made to realize (to use the words of Marvell's poem)

> That mine own Precipice I go.

The first part of Act IV scene vi, then, so far from being freakish, presents a memorable enacted metaphor for a considerable part of the play's experience: Gloucester, Lear, Edgar in his way, all survive a fall and a despair, and are indeed, in many respects, more alive immediately afterwards than they were before.

Edgar is a vital presence in the sonnet too. As I have shown earlier in this essay, a large number of the words and thoughts of the poem echo Act IV scene i and the first part of Act IV scene vi, passages in which Edgar seems almost to preside or at least to act as a participating chorus. Hopkins's poem may in fact encourage

us to recognize the great importance of Edgar, to whom critics have often been somewhat unjust. So far from being merely a 'moralizer', he is very fully alive; he is also one of the central and profound means by which Shakespeare gives the play structural and intellectual coherence. I don't think it is far-fetched to suggest that at times something like the voice of the dramatist himself may be heard in Edgar's perplexity and his compassion. Like Lear and Gloucester he suffers shocking deprivations; many of the statements that he makes as Poor Tom are in fact deeply true of his real situation:

> Who gives any thing to Poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew . . .Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. (III. iv. 50-61)

He is indeed pursued by an evil spirit. It is impossible to think of his madness as in every respect simulated: in playing his part he finds an image for his own — and maybe mankind's — strain and distress. Yet of course he is neither protagonist nor shadow-protagonist: like Cordelia and Kent and the Fool (in so far as the latter can be considered to be a being wholly separate from Lear), he retains at almost every moment something of the serenity of a temperament calmly committed to virtue.

In Act IV scene i we find him nearly in despair:

> O Gods! Who is't can say 'I am at the worst'?
> I am worse than e'er I was . . .
> And worse I may be yet; the worst is not
> So long as we can say 'This is the worst'. (25-28)

But immediately after this he allows himself to become wholly absorbed in his father's plight; his own despair is cured in his generous attempt to cure his father's. It is of course Edgar who gives the vivid description of the cliff-face in the later scene: in his more detached way, he goes through the experience of the fall beside Gloucester. It is perhaps hardly surprising that Hopkins, the priest-poet, should have taken the cue for his opening words and for many other things in his sonnet from the character who evinces both the noble suffering of the good man and a sympathetic, imaginative observation which is closely akin to that of an artist.

There is a further respect in which Hopkins's poem throws some light upon Edgar. As a firm believer, Hopkins was naturally in

the habit of making humbly confident statements about the bounty of God (one remembers, for example, 'God's Grandeur'); yet at the end of 'No worst' we find him having to take refuge in a most perilous hovel of an ambiguity. Edgar, similarly, even after his moments of despair speaks confidently, almost with the precision of a theologian, of the goodness of the Gods:

> Think that the clearest Gods, who make them honours
> Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee. (IV. vi. 73-74)

> The Gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
> Make instruments to plague us . . . (V. iii. 170-171)

These statements seem to me to be both powerful in themselves and deeply relevant to the play's meaning. But they are not Edgar's final utterance. The fearful deaths of Cordelia and Lear upset his optimism, throw him back into doubt and bewilderment:

> Kent: Is this the promis'd end?
> Edgar: Or image of that horror? (V. iii. 263-264)
> Albany: He knows not what he says, and vain is it
> That we present us to him.
> Edgar: Very bootless. (293-294)

Kent, an older man, has a fuller knowledge that he of life's extremity:

> Edgar: He faints! My Lord, my Lord!
> Kent: Break, heart; I prithee, break!
> Edgar: Look up, my Lord.
> Kent: Vex not his ghost: O! let him pass; he hates him
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer.
> Edgar: He is gone, indeed.
> Kent: The wonder is he hath endur'd so long:
> He but usurp'd his life. (311-317)

Like Hopkins — like all of us, especially those of us who have formulated beliefs of any kind and are therefore constantly in danger of becoming complacent — Edgar has to learn that there appear to be more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in his philosophy:

> The weight of this sad time we must obey;
> Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say. (323-324)

Our beliefs must again and again be subjected to the facts of our experience. Perhaps indeed, Edgar feels finally, the value of our beliefs depends in the end upon the magnitude of our experience:

> The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
> Shall never see so much, nor live so long. (325-326)

Hopkins's sonnet gives a moving account of the *weight* of painful transforming experience.

* * *

I have spoken of the ambiguity of the play's ending. There can be no doubt that in the last moments of the play 'all's cheerless, dark and deadly'; we are overwhelmed by the fate of Cordelia and Lear. And yet our feeling is not without complexity: there must be some doubt about the nature of the perceptions and the emotions that lie beneath the immediate and pervading grief. Are we ultimately to focus our attention mainly upon the beauty, the permanent value, of the relationship achieved by Lear and Cordelia, or are we bound to be aware above all of the bitter dissolution of this relationship? Does the love of Lear and Cordelia tend partly to negate the sting of their death, or does the death almost negate the value of their love?

> O which one? is it each one?[43]

And as for those memorable words of Kent's,

> O! let him pass; he hates him
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer,

do they suggest primarily the *relief* of death or merely its horror? These, certainly, are some of the questions that *King Lear* leaves in our minds.

Professor Maynard Mack has suggested a way of resolving the ambiguity, or perhaps of restating it:

> Tragedy never tells us what to think; it shows us what we are and may be. And what we are and may be was never, I submit, more memorably fixed upon a stage than in this kneeling old man whose heartbreak is precisely the measure of what, in our world of relatedness, it is possible to lose and possible

> to win. The victory and the defeat are simultaneous and inseparable.[44]

The complexity of attitude and feeling embodied in the last line of Hopkins's sonnet serves, I believe, to confirm Professor Mack's interpretation.

V

In both *King Lear* and 'No worst, there is none' the peculiar ambiguity of tragedy is dominant. But we know from Hopkins's other poems, even from some of the 'terrible sonnets', that he believed ultimately that God is merciful, that a loving inscrutable wisdom informs even the cruellest blows of fate:

> But ah, but O thou terrible, why wouldst thou rude on me
> Thy wring-world right foot rock? lay a lionlimb against me? scan
> With darksome devouring eyes my bruisèd bones? and fan,
> O in turns of tempest, me heaped there; me frantic to avoid thee and flee?
> Why? That my chaff might fly; my grain lie, sheer and clear.
> . . . That night, that year
> Of now done darkness I wretch lay wrestling with (my God!) my God.

The tempest, then — though we may often be unable to believe it — is somehow a scourge, a purge, sent by God.

It is interesting to notice that in Shakespeare's last plays, when the dramatist has passed out of his strictly tragic phase, a somewhat similar view of hardships and of tempests is to be found. *The Tempest* itself begins with an extremely vigorous evocation of a storm at sea. The experience of the storm's victims is in some respects familiar:

> What cares these roarers for the name of king? (I. i. 16-17)

> All lost! to prayers, to prayers! all lost! (I. i. 50)

In the next scene we see the compassion of Miranda:

> O, I have suffer'd
> With those that I saw suffer: a brave vessel,
> Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,

> Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
> Against my very heart! Poor souls, they perished.
> Had I been any god of power, I would
> Have sunk the sea within the earth, or e'er
> It should the good ship so have swallow'd and
> The fraughting souls within her. (I. ii. 5-13)

And then we are invited to see the same disaster through the eyes of Prospero, who in one of his aspects is indeed a god of power, and, as his name suggests, a benevolent one:

> Wipe thou thine eyes; have *comfort.*
> The direful spectacle of the wrack, which touch'd
> The very virtue of compassion in thee,
> I have with such provision in mine art
> So safely order'd, that there is no soul —
> No, not so much perdition as an hair,
> Betid to any creature in the vessel
> Which thou heard'st *cry,* which thou saw'st sink.
> (I. ii. 25-32)

In noting these similarities, however, I am not suggesting that the vision of *The Tempest* should (or could) blot out for us the vision of *King Lear* — or that Hopkins's other poems reduce the tragic grandeur of 'No worst, there is none'.

VI

I have talked of Hopkins's sonnet as an eminence within the mountain range which has *Lear* as its loftiest peak. But it might be objected that, however interesting the view of *Lear* that can be obtained from the height of Hopkins's sonnet, the sonnet does not in fact form a part of any important mountain range. Hopkins is something of a freak, a sport — a Donne or a Herbert born in the wrong century. The main tradition, especially in the last two hundred years, has lain elsewhere. Hopkins was a devoted Christian; the English-speaking world is becoming more and more completely agnostic.

Such an objection obviously has considerable force. My own view is that — in so far as such matters can valuably be discussed in these terms (and I apologize for extending my metaphor so quaintly) — there can be said to be two or more traditions, two or more almost parallel ranges of mountains or hills, each connected as it were to a part of *Lear,* and with many ridges linking them.

The religious tradition is by no means defunct in the English-speaking world: the poetry of Eliot, some of the poems of Yeats, some aspects of the work of Lawrence, a good deal of recent Shakespeare criticism (and notably that of Professor Wilson Knight) — to take only some of the most striking instances — indicate that the notion of divinity is still important for many people.

Besides, even if the poems of Hopkins represented a lone hill, or, to abandon that image, even if the religious tradition were in many ways extremely weak (as perhaps indeed it may be), it would yet be valuable to recognize the relationships that this essay has endeavoured to explore. We must beware of allowing a part of Shakespeare's mind to slip away from us. Moreover neglected traditions have often in the past had unexpected resurgences.

Perhaps it could be said that it is at those points where two or more mountain ranges seem to flow into each other — as, to take a recent example, in some of the poetry of Yeats — that high peaks are thrown up.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. From the notes Wordsworth dictated to Isabella Fenwick in 1843.
2. See G. Wilson Knight, 'T S Eliot: Some Literary Impressions,' in *T. S. Eliot. The Man and his Work,* ed. Allen Tate (London, 1967), p. 247.
3. *The Letters of G. M. Hopkins to Robert Bridges,* ed. C. C. Abbott (Oxford, 1935), p. 219.
4. ibid., p. 221.
5. ibid., p. xxxix. (Professor Gardner's reference).
6. *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Study of Poetic Idiosyncracy in Relation to Poetic Tradition,* Vol I (London, 1944), pp. 175-177.
7. *Letters,* ed. M. B. Forman, vol. i, p. 30. (Professor Gardner's reference).
8. op. cit., pp. 177-179.
9. I have used the Arden *King Lear,* ed. Kenneth Muir (London, 1952).
10. 'Worst' appears also at V. iii. 4. (Another apparent variation upon Edgar's thought in IV. i. occurs at the end of 'I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day'.)
11. IV. vi. 283-286 and V. iii. 198-205. Further significant instances are III. vi. 105-110 and IV. iii. 24.
12. 'Comfort' is found also at IV. i. 16 and V. ii. 4. 'Comfortable' occurs several times too. ('Comfort' plays an important part in two other late sonnets, 'Carrion Comfort' and 'My own heart let me more have pity on'. Lines 5-7 of the latter seem to contain a distinct memory of Gloucester's plight.)
13. Another important instance is found at IV. vi. 35.
14. See also III. iv. 64 and V. iii. 290.
15. II. iv. 306-310.
16. III. ii. 58, IV. vi. 76 and 180-185. ('Cries' appears memorably, too, in 'I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day'.)

[17] I. i. 91 and IV. iii. 26.
[18] III. i. 9. The 'Fury' is rather like Poor Tom's 'foul fiend'.
[19] II. i. 50.
[20] I. iv. 307.
[21] V. iii. 245.
[22] IV. vi. 50. The word 'fathom' is found also at III. iv. 37.
[23] Perhaps the clearest instance is at I. i. 196.
[24] II. iv. 269.
[25] IV. vi. 15.
[26] IV. iii. 33.
[27] IV. vi. 3.
[28] III. ii. 51, III. iv. 28 and 35, and IV. i. 8. The word 'wretched' occurs too. ('Wretch' appears also in the last line of 'Carrion Comfort'.)
[29] The word 'serve' is particularly associated with Kent; it was he, of course, who persuaded the King to enter the hovel. See I. iv. 23-27.
[30] III. iv. 59. The word 'wind' occurs often, and of course evocations of the storm dominate the play.
[31] See, for example, III. vi. 100, IV. vi. 62, IV. vii. 21, and V. iii. 263 and 317.
[32] I. i. 119 and III. iv. 20.
[33] IV. vi. 11-15.
[34] III. iv. 3 and 18, V. iii. 9 and 316.
[35] *Letters*, p. 284.
[36] ibid., p. 218.
[37] ibid., pp. 267-268.
[38] op. cit., p. 178.
[39] 'Abysmal Immortality', lines 8-12.
[40] In the letter of May, 1885, that I have twice referred to, Hopkins talked of 'the background of distance and darkness and doom which a tragedy should always have' (*Letters*, p. 217). The word 'doom' seems to suggest that Hopkins believed that a tragedy should represent the universe and human life as having a definite meaning, however dark.
[41] In one of the exercises in his book *Reading and Discrimination* (London, 1934), Denys Thompson prints the sonnet but omits lines 3 and 4.
[42] 'The Heights and the Depths: A Scene from *King Lear*', in *More Talking about Shakespeare,* ed. John Garrett (London and New York, 1959); quoted in the Signet Classic edition of *King Lear,* ed. Russell Fraser (New York, 1963), p. 276.
[43] 'Carrion Comfort', line 13.
[44] *King Lear in our Time* (London, 1966), p. 117.

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INTER-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENTS IN AN ESKIMO CLASSROOM

by R. M. KINZEL

Innoucjuac is a small settlement of about 150 Eskimos and a shifting population of perhaps 30 Southerners. It is surrounded by a number of smaller camps which bring the total Eskimo population served by the settlement up to 450. It is situated on the coast of Hudson's Bay in Northern Quebec, well above the tree line. Communication is by aircraft, and is cut off twice a year for about six weeks as the river freezes and thaws. There has been contact with the South for 60 years.

I spent a year and a half teaching the intermediate class in the Federal Day School. The school had been started nine years previously so that the children were nearly all first generation students.[1] One of the most general complaints about them throughout the North is that they have a very short attention span. It was also very noticeable from the many classrooms I visited on my way up the coast, that the level of tension in the schools was very high — though a few rooms were beautifully harmonious exceptions. While the work that was being done on the tools in use in the classroom seemed to me very valuable — it is ridiculous to expect any lively child to be excited by Dick and Jane[2] — I felt that a major source of the attention problem lay in this tension. I therefore started to search for its causes. In the following pages I have discussed only the tensions that seemed to interfere with attention, and have neglected the nature of the stimulus except insofar as it was a direct cause of tension.

General tensions of the community

The level of tension in the community as a whole was markedly high. Of a population of 450 people, all but two under the age of 45 and the great majority of them children, three were in mental hospitals in the South and a number of others had spent time in mental institutions. The women were given to intense but shifting jealousies and friendships. Devotion to the church verged on the fanatic; four times on Sundays and twice during the week every member of the settlement would attend services; silent prayer was intense accompanied by rocking and moaning. Christmas and Easter were cathartic carnival affairs and the rate of alcohol consumption was high.

It is difficult to locate cause and effect in an alien culture but there did seem to be some factors that contributed fairly obviously towards tension. The harshness of the environment and the limitations it set on activity was one. The long hours of darkness and intense cold restricted especially the women to their small, chilly houses and tents. Gambling, films and the church offered the only outlets. Overcrowding was serious. Improved health services had resulted in large families and a single tent might house a dozen people of three generations, most of them sleeping in one double bed. There was no privacy; news travelled, incredibly, before it had even been made.

There is a serious conflict between the new culture of the White man and the old. Minor modifications have had unexpectedly far-reaching results; the substitution of the skidoo for the long range dog-team was affecting the entire pattern of hunting. The dead are buried according to Christian rites, but the mourners disperse in all directions to avoid leading the fearful spirits back to the settlement. In school the children cheerfully draw ghosts at Hallowe'en time, but the older ones will not translate the word into Eskimo for the younger ones, and demonstrate considerable fear if the suggestion is made. In the old culture a man shared what he had and could not immediately use; the new has brought a stock of less essential goods and no clear philosophy of distribution. The children are usually very generous with their traditional possessions but fight over store-bought goods.

There is great mistrust of the White man, and ambivalence towards his culture. News broadcasts and movies show him to be violent and destructive. The abuse of their women by members of church, government and trading companies has caused much bitterness, and with increasing sophistication many are becoming aware of the power of the Hudson Bay Company. Misunderstanding of the White man's actions leads to uncertainty and fear. Once a war scare swept the settlement. I found the classroom in an uproar. 'Man says they going to kill us!' 'Who says so?' 'I don't know. Man say — on radio. Soldiers will come, kill us.' It took the entire afternoon, a world map and a potted history of all the wars since 1914 to calm them down.

Stresses caused by the home

a) Parents are uncertain in their attitudes to the school. Most are anxious for their children to learn to cope with the white society, but justifiably complain that the school makes the children disrespectful of their parents. Many pull their children out of school when they become old enough to be useful at home, and some

refuse to let their children go to the high school (grade 4 and up) in Churchill. The children are uncertain of the value of what they are doing at school.

b) The health of the family relationships plays an important but puzzling roll in the tensions the children bring with them into the classroom. Lizzie (8) would come visiting and act out with gusto her father being drunk, then beg to play 'bear' without giving any indication that the game had in any way changed. When her father switched to the wrong brand of hair-conditioner, terrorised the community for two days and was taken out in a straight-jacket, I expected her finally to show signs of tension, but she arrived at school as cheerful as ever. Evie (10) showed no signs of minding that her parents came in from the camp time and time again without looking her up in the hostel. On the other hand Petie (9) masturbated continuously for weeks after his mother was sent to the hospital with T.B. Georgie (12) was rejected by his mother in favour of her daughters. He would cope quite nicely through the morning, but for months would cry through the afternoon until he finally explained himself to himself (see below).

Cultural conflict in the classroom

a) The physical apparatus and plant: Many of the children lived in tents so that even the building was alien. All were used to sitting on the floor. Books and pencils were unfamiliar.

b) The teacher: The teacher was white, large, differently dressed, lived in a large 'empty' house and spoke a strange language.

With a good beginner teacher most children got over their fear within the first year, but some never did. Maggie (12) still sat in her desk afraid to move after four years.

c) Discipline: Parental discipline seems to be limited and the rules seem to be dictated very clearly by the harshness of northern life. A child is cared for and protected until it is about four when it begins to join its older siblings and fairly soon achieves considerable independence. Most seem to be allowed to eat and sleep when and where they are tired and hungry, with not too many questions asked. Bennie (10) was out hunting with two men when the skidoo broke down twenty miles out of the settlement. The faster walking adults soon left him behind and his disappearance was not noted till the following evening. The avoidance of dogs, the carrying of water, the wearing of adequate clothing — these are all necessities for survival, not rules laid down from above.

Classroom discipline, Southern style, is thus a new and bewildering experience. The only other place where noise, movement and gum are forbidden is the church because God is there — is he

here too? Punishment is foreign and also associated with God.

d) Attention: The kind of attention demanded in the classroom was foreign. They all knew about paying attention for immediate purposes like aiming a gun or carving a figure. But purposeful attention for a less immediate object they had no models for. Adults at meetings of all kinds came and went as they pleased, talked and listened as they wanted to. Small children and babies interrupted without causing displeasure. Only in church did one sit quietly and listen. Olga (12) in a fit of rebellion drew a large cross on the blackboard because the classroom was 'like church'.

e) Materials: The books and charts provided are almost entirely middle-class, 'white' material. Apart from being very inadequate as a stimulus, this results in a number of specific conflicts. While they have little difficulty in accepting both Spot and the vicious sled dogs as 'dogs' — they rationalise Spot as a puppy — the White mother disturbs a number. Reactions range from apparent acceptance to 'Why don't my mother give me cookie all time?' or to a refusal to read about her because 'She not my mother'. This refusal lasted until a reading lesson especially written about his mother appeased him. Another word that gave endless trouble was 'fun'. 'Funny' they understood immediately but 'fun' was another matter. In the book Sally sits for four pages with cream on her nose while her mother and grandmother tell her 'This is fun'. Some children became very insistent about it, 'What is fun? You tell.' 'When you slide down a snowbank that is fun; when Charlie puts on a skirt and says he is an old woman that is fun.' 'No, not same as Sally.' Eventually I told them fun was a silly word they did not have to learn, but I wondered whether the fact that White children accept this as fun because they can identify with Sally had anything to do with their difficulty later on in life in deciding whether they are enjoying themselves or not.

New information is often strangely interpreted. Emmie (12) had evidently been taught hygiene. When she absented herself from school in anger, one of the reasons given in her letter was that school was full of germs. She had never heard of germs out of school so school was obviously the danger spot.

f) Loss of cultural self-respect: While few teachers have openly attacked the Eskimo culture, many have taught on the assumption that the White culture is superior and this has not escaped the children. Even without this the total neglect of the Eskimo culture in school would be enough suggestion of inferiority. Nearly all the older children are to some degree defensive about local customs. Olga (12) poured scorn on my head for suggesting Eskimos lived in igloos. 'You silly. Eskimo live in house. Igloo is for hunting.'

But the fact that she chose a house rather than the equally common tent showed that even she had adopted the White man's values.

This loss of respect for their culture often causes serious conflict between loyalty to parent and to school. Nellie (13) whose parents were among the finest people in the settlement, latched on to the very unremarkable fact that she was adopted (adoption is very common). 'My mother no good; she can't do anything. She not my real mother.'

g) Competition of the White children: The White children were all taught at home by correspondence course but three joined the class in the afternoon to prevent their becoming too isolated. By far the most confident in the use of English, they tended to monopolise all the exchanges; they also had more background for answering questions. Unless this was carefully controlled by squashing attempts to show off and alternating with questions about the North it led to great resentment among the Eskimo majority. On the other hand, the White children were trying to establish a place for themselves and in turn felt insecure.

Cramped conditions

The classroom was a converted office, 30′ by 13′ by 8′ high, which meant a space 3′ by 5′ per child, minus the area occupied by a large oil burner, a toilet built into the back corner, a washstand and watertank, and the teacher who quickly got rid of her desk. Consequently desks had to be placed right against each other and the walls, with one central isle, a small clear space behind the stove and a clear 4′ between the blackboard and desks. The most urgent organisational problem was separating the small girls from the big boys, which meant arrangement of seating by size and sex rather than level of work.

The children, who were used to overcrowding, accommodated themselves remarkably well, putting what floor space was available to good use for reading, drawing, playing games and other self-devised activities. However during the cold months the confinement began to tell. Evie (9) would push all the desks around her away with little concern for those sitting in them. She complained of 'too many people' and eventually granted herself a week's leave to recover. There was no way to release pent up energy conveniently — even Simon Says, played with enthusiasm, meant a finger in somebody's eye — and when the weather made it impossible to go outside at lunch or playtime it was sometimes necessary to abandon arithmetic, pile the desks in a corner and spend the afternoon dancing or playing games.

Confusion of work because of split groups could be overcome

by careful instructions, but this was certainly a source of anxiety to the teacher.

The wide range of age and educational abilities

The wide range in ages — from 8 to 16 — meant an equally wide range of interest, ability and size. Bullying, which only reached significant proportions within the confined space of the classroom, remained a problem even after the class had coalesced into a good-humoured and generally co-operative unit. The smaller boys seemed to be able to go about their very involving private affairs with impunity, but some of the little girls appeared more concerned with human relationships. They found it necessary to re-explore continuously the limits of interaction between themselves and the other sections of the class, and their provocative sallies into the big boys' corner usually resulted in tears.

Even with considerable freedom of activity and the constant use of action and blackboard illustration it was almost impossible not to involve people in tasks ill-suited to their range. Mattie (9) could listen to the less complicated stories but anything else was beyond his reach; as enforced idleness made him tense and unhappy it became necessary 'not to see' when he decided he was no longer interested and busied himself under his desk. Evie (9) wrote beautifully and resented the writing lessons which freed the teacher for reading groups. Too intelligent to accept the bribe of an advanced book she did not need, she let her writing deteriorate badly and finally scribbled all over the book.

Health

Health was a fairly serious problem. Childhood diseases struck hard and diarrhoea was common. Both resulted in tiredness and irritability. Nothing was done for Paulie (11) who was both near-sighted and partially deaf, though he regularly saw the doctor every time she came to the community. He lived in a dream world of his own in the front row and would show by turns alarm and a slow beaming smile when aroused from it. Bennie (10) came from one of the poorest families and looked thin and nervous. An excuse to send him to the house where he knew the location of the cookies frequently helped when he looked particularly unsettled.

Seasonal cycle of activity

The rapid changes in the length of daylight and darkness make even the newcomer aware of the swing of the earth. The seasons influence mood and way of life deeply, and any attempt to ignore this in the classroom leads to trouble. September to January are

the best teaching months. By February a deep sluggishness, closely akin to hibernation, sets in. The Department of Northern Affairs recognises this and closes the schools for a week, while the teachers are rounded up by plane and taken to some Southern town with a bar, a hairdresser, a nightclub and stores for a 'conference'. The concern with which each makes sure that his particular bag of lettuces and green-onions is not left behind by the return plane can only be a sign of deep neurosis. Absenteeism rose among the children and tempers were touchy, energy low. With the first signs of spring spirits would rise until with the arrival of the first flight of geese they erupted right out of the classroom. From then until July it was so obviously desirable to be outside that every moment in the classroom had to be clearly justifiable.

Individual pupils had their own rhythms. Maggie (12) still found the life of the classroom a strain after four years; on Mondays she would read in a low voice if encouraged, but by Fridays the words would be mouthed soundlessly. Evie (9) was one of the brightest pupils, the best creative writer, the most avid listener. But at one point the stresses of the winter and a small classroom became too much for her. She became increasingly irritable and rebellious, finally took off for the camp for a week, and then returned of her own accord to work in her usual cheerful manner. Where pressure was applied despite these rhythms severe tension resulted; Maggie, especially, cried violently if pushed when she was tired.

Uncertainty of direction

Perhaps the most severe source of tension was uncertainty about where the teacher wanted to go. I took over from an unusually dictatorial teacher who ruled by the rod, the sharpness of her tongue, and frequent parties to buy loyalty (a contradiction that seems bound to cause conflict). My first introduction to the class was the sight of a small girl who had been shouted into hysteria and was now vainly being shouted back into silence, an incident that was explained by 'You have to keep your thumb on these kids or they'll be all over you.' Routine was stressed and ritualised and teaching was formalised with emphasis on the right answer. Especially the older girls, who had been in the class for a long time, considered the making of a mistake a sin.

I was horrified and made the serious mistake of changing things much too rapidly. The children, some of whom had known no other teacher, became confused and frightened. They tried to find what would please me and could not read the signs. Expected to show some initiative in occupying themselves between assignments, in working without detailed direction and in behaving sensibly, they

demanded constant rulings and rebelled when they were made. Others said they were not being taught because the answers were not written on the board and they made mistakes. The struggle for order became so severe that there was little time or energy left for providing stimulus, and boredom increased the ill-feeling.

I had about given up when a point of agreement was found in the daily telling of stories, started as an attempt to widen the range of language and experience they had to draw on, and to extend their limited capacity for quiet attention. In the shared telling, acting, drawing and responding — sometimes for forty minutes at a time — a centre of harmony, of liking and common experience, was found which gradually extended to the whole day, as the stories increasingly forced their way into other lessons, from art to arithmetic. The change was slow and painful but by the end of five months there was a new order with only three rules: 1. There was to be no bullying. 2. The noise was not to go beyond the level where the teacher speaking loudly could be heard. 3. Instructions (of which there were as few as possible) were to be followed immediately — or as immediately as would not ruin whatever project was in process. It was an order which their former teacher would probably not have recognised as such, but it was known, understood, accepted and generally abided by. The only punishment, expulsion from the class, was necessary only twice in the last year, and the tension dropped as dramatically as the struggle for direction.

Need for self-esteem

These children were extremely sensitive to any attack on their self-respect. Many were fully involved in adult work. Niki (14) could earn 40.00 dollars a week at carving any time he felt the need for money; he carried considerable status as the best-dressed cowboy in town and co-ordinated his affairs with a walkie-talkie; Olga (13) was responsible for five younger brothers and sisters while her mother was away with tuberculosis; Mattie (9) was his grandfather's valued assistant in filling the gap left by the death of his father in a large family; some had guns for hunting, all fished, hauled water, cared for younger siblings.

Their pride and independence made it very difficult for them to take orders and they deeply resented slights. Olga destroyed the shoes of the principal's wife because Mrs. Johnson told her she did not have the 'movie' Olga asked for when she did in fact have the slide projector Olga wanted. Eliassie (8), when I insisted he re-do some deliberately messy arithmetic, turned the stove on to high overnight and melted everything from the crayons to the electric clock.

Treated with respect they were generally happy, co-operative, energetic about their activities and full of ideas. But if they said 'We know!' it was necessary to let them discover for themselves that they did not know before giving the needed explanation. Unnecessary instruction was always vigorously refused. Personal commands of the 'You do what you are told' variety could be resisted with great obstinacy. Niki refused to recite poems with the rest of the class, an activity they all loved, after I had exceeded the number of people he could tolerate reciting ahead of him. Only after I had explained that my instructions to him were part of a larger scheme of order — 'You have to do what I say, and I have to do what Mr. Johnson says, and Mr. Johnson has to do what Ottawa says.' — did he respond, though relations remained strained. Eventually we worked out a very successful joking relationship. In explaining a word in a story I might say 'If Niki says two and two is five, Niki is a bobo', and Niki would shoot back 'And if you say snow is hot you are bobo' and then relax and grin as I accepted the joke against myself. As Niki was the unofficial leader of the class and thus a representative of them all, the rest of the class seemed to get a kind of satisfaction out of this equal relationship too; at least they always paid keen attention to it.

Closely allied to this was their hatred of making mistakes. This interfered seriously with learning processes at times; work which they found unsatisfactory would be torn up before completion and, unless a second attempt was a marked improvement, they would often refuse obstinately to continue. This was probably at least partially the result of the attitude of the former teacher.

Need for affection

Like all children they needed affection. This caused no problems with most of the girls — all one had to do was respond as warmly when they flung their arms around you — but with some it was very difficult to judge where the need for affection ended and the need for respect began. Mattie (9), sobbing his heart out about some injustice, would cling to you tightly, but if you held him a moment too long he would push you away and avoid you for the rest of the day. Georgie (12) needed affection more than anyone else; he would blossom at a face pulled in affection or a hand on his shoulder, but fled from anything that threatened his privacy more than that.

The desire to learn

A number of children evinced an urgent need to know more. In the early confusion of the change from one order to another Emmie

(12) became disgusted. She absented herself for three days and sent a note saying she was not coming back because 'we don't learn anything in school'. Evie (9) lived for 'information' classes. Every morning she would ask 'Are we going to have "ships" today?' or whatever the current topic was, and if I said no would demand 'Why not? Why not today?' For these children the limitations imposed by language, the diversity of the class and the poverty of materials were a severe frustration. There were repeated complaints that they had read all the books, and occasionally an often read book would be flung across the room in anger. The imposition of silence was another limitation on learning which I soon dropped as it became clear that I could not insist on it without putting a stop to considerable learning activity.

Left to themselves they showed much ingenuity in using what materials were available — some excellent linocuts were made. Sadie (10) copied out and illustrated all her favourite verses and Lazarussie (10), an amiable little nitwit, produced an astounding series of historical ships. Nevertheless, by the end of the year most of them had exhausted their inventiveness within the imposed limitations and many spent their undirected time on a mindless game called 'Question'. They paged through a reading book and the first person to spot a particular question mark got a point. Played at first with gusto, the game soon became a device for passing time and was accompanied by an unusual amount of quarrelling.

Difficulties in communication

Language difficulties caused serious problems.

With the smaller children it was often necessary to use an interpreter. In cases of solitary misery or difficulty an older pupil could usually be relied on; in a case of conflict the interpreter would often pick sides and make the matter worse.

The wide range of age and skill in the class made it difficult to find language which one group would understand without boring the other. Elassie (8) interrupted my first attempt to lecture after five minutes, 'Enough talk now. Time for colour.'

Often the children satisfied the need for communication by talking to each other on subjects for which they did not have enough English, but once we had established a good relationship it became a matter of great importance to know the right words. Mattie (9), the dunce of the class through mismanagement rather than lack of brains, came in glowing because his dogteam, which he had been training from puppyhood, was finally pulling as a unit. 'My puppies, four, pull kamotik.' 'That's very clever. Did you teach them?' 'Yes, I teach.' 'How did you teach them?' It was the first time he had

voluntarily spoken to me, but now his delight turned rapidly into distress. Fortunately an older child mentioned the dog calls and he shouted out the calls in glee, showing with his hands what they meant.

In writing, too, they showed great need to say exactly what they wanted to. They would spend half an hour searching through the reading book for a word they needed, and refuse all suggestions that were not the right word.

Georgie (12) was a startling example of the power of 'the right word' in some circumstances. A big boy who cried often because his mother gave him all the work and none of the affection, Georgie avoided contact with the other children and spent hours all alone in my spare bedroom; I suspect he slept there sometimes all night. One evening I sent him to the classroom for a record he wanted. He refused. I asked why. 'Because — there's big gorilla in the classroom.' I dismissed this, thinking he did not have the language to explain, but the next day he was back. 'There's big gorilla in the classroom. I will fight him.' 'How will you do that?' 'I will learn fight. Fight boys first,' clenching his fist. 'Maybe the boys won't like that. Maybe you better play with Niki and Lennie when they are playing and fighting.' 'Yes, I play with Niki and Lennie. I get strong like cowboy. . . . I need good food . . . You have good food . . .' So Georgie became a regular supper guest and began increasingly to take part in the rough play of the other boys. References to the gorilla, frequent at first, came less and less often, till it was no more than an occasional private joke. Change came slowly, but by the end of fifteen months, he had become the comic of the class, an innovator in acting and writing who punched his sisters only when they got right under his feet.

I am not suggesting that the teacher should play the amateur psychiatrist — there was no way to guess that what Georgie needed was a gorilla to fight — but unless a teacher provides children with a large range of language and experience to draw on, and listens when they make their selection, he is seriously limiting that verbal communication with self and others which is one of the most effective routes to integrity.

Concentration

There was a widespread confusion between concentration and muscular tension which certainly interfered with attention. Mattie (9) was the most striking example. Tell him to 'think' and he would wrinkle his forehead, screw up his eyes and, the instruction obeyed, wait for the answer to be supplied. Others, who did appear to try to think in this twisted attitude, did little better than he.

Tension was also generated by trying to force a child into a specific purposeful direction of attention before he was ready for it. The children seemed to start with a pure attention, unguided by purpose. They would watch clouds because they were delightful, not because they wanted to find pictures or tell the weather. A comment like 'Maybe it will snow' would spoil their pleasure and they would stop. Paulie (9) spent all his free time creating great vivid splashes of colour. In directed art lessons he would make a half-hearted attempt to follow instructions, then cover everything up with brilliant colour. Any attempt to prevent this resulted in a cessation of activity.

Ignorance

Ignorance was a source of anxiety. I found a scribbled note 'Please tell what means baby inside'. When I asked the sewing class about it they all signified with slight movements that they wanted to know more but not one would suggest anything specific they wanted to know. The resulting classes were received with rapt attention but still no-one would question or comment. After school a number came to the house to page through the pictures and discussed them in excited Eskimo.

One afternoon I found the classroom unnaturally quiet and unresponsive. Asked what the matter was they said 'Policeman come. Catch us. Put us in jail we bad'. It was just the police officer from Great Whale River on his annual visit, but they took considerable convincing before pandemonium was happily re-established.

Competition

The anxiety involved in minor competition acted as a stimulus to most children especially if it involved team work, but fiercer individual competition placed a restraint on them. Faced with I.Q. tests a number were distressed and Maggie wept without even taking up a pencil. They had picked up some ideas about the nature of tests from the former teacher, and the printed forms that came from Ottawa gave these an aura of grave importance.

Tensions between pupils

The children seemed to get on well and easily with each other; interpersonal friction seemed to have mainly external causes. When the weather was especially confining or many were suffering from diarrhoea, squabbling and bullying increased. Emily cut off relations with her best friend just before running away to camp.

Teaching assistants

Eskimo teaching assistants are employed to help overcome the

cultural and communication difficulties especially among the younger children. The children adored Anna — there was a regular 'We love Anna' cult — and tried with acumen to play their affection for her off against the 'outsider' teacher. It was very noticeable that with her appearance in the afternoon discipline and work fell off sharply, and interpersonal friction increased in all sections of the class as the children vied for affection and the teacher strove for order. When it became clear that she would not co-operate — she insisted on drawing people instead of teaching them arithmetic — I rather hesitantly got rid of her. The expected angry repercussions did not appear; despite their affection for her the children seemed happy to relax their fierce competition for notice.

A later more responsible assistant proved a real help in the classroom, and her insistence on work did nothing to dampen the 'We love Martha' cult.

The teacher

The ways in which a teacher contributes to classroom anxieties has already emerged from the previous discussion. However I will try to sum it up by listing the qualities it seemed necessary to have in order to keep this anxiety to a minimum.

1. Willingness to innovate, to discard unsuitable ideas of classroom organisation and lesson content, and the sensitivity to discover from the children themselves what they needed to learn.
2. Despite this flexibility, a clear sense of direction and the ability to communicate it.
3. Self respect and detachment. Their affectionate natures and pride made these children especially vulnerable to any teacher who tried to use them to satisfy a need for power or affection.
4. Respect and affection for the children.
5. Enough energy to be able to direct their considerable energy rather than try to dam it up.
6. A sense of humour and willingness to laugh at self.
7. Gentleness with the shy and frightened.
8. Patience in understanding and in explaining.
9. Respect for and interest in the Eskimo culture, and the sensitivity to tread gently in areas of possible misunderstanding.

This classroom may seem to have been riddled with an unusual number of tensions — I do not think this is so. The tensions were perhaps more obvious because they took place in an unfamiliar setting, but I think that most of those mentioned would be found in some degree or form in most classrooms. These tensions deserve close examination because the power of attention is probably the

most abused faculty in the schools; it is probably also the most important, in all its range from the passive reception of an object in its essence and entirety into the mind, to the specific centring on a particular aspect to solve a particular problem. The artist who pays full attention to a chair will be limited only by his muscular co-ordination in expressing its essence; the schoolboy who pays attention to the six and seven balls will know which is the greater number before the one who sets out laboriously to count them; the man who has paid attention to another man will not stick a bayonet into his belly; the people who have paid attention to a river will not choke it with filth. It is strange that the schools generally seem to be concerned with destroying rather than nurturing it.

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NOTES

1. To protect individuals, fictitious names have been used.
2. A series of reading books about an insipid, perpetually happy middle-class family. Its cultural strangeness would not necessarily make it unacceptable to Eskimo children, who get a lot out of some fairy tales, if only it touched on the deeper concerns of children that transcend cultural boundaries.

SIR GAWAIN'S ANTI-FEMINISM

by P. C. B. FLETCHER

After Sir Gawain has recognised his fault and made a full 'confession' to the Green Knight, we are given what may at first seem to be a rather futile attempt on Gawain's part to exonerate himself by an attack on women:

> But hit is no ferly thagh a fole madde
> And thurgh wyles of wymmen be wonen to sorwe.
> For so was Adam in erde with one bygyled,
> And Salamon with fele sere, and Samson eftsones—
> Dalyda dalt hym hys wyrde — and Davyth therafter
> Was blended with Barsabe, that much bale tholed.
> Now these were wrathed wyth her wyles, hit were a wynne huge
> To luf hom wel and leve hem not, a leude that couthe.
> For thes wer forne the freest, that folwed alle the sele
> Excellently of alle thyse other under hevenryche
> that mused;
> And alle thay were biwyled
> With wymmen that thay used.
> Thagh I be now bigyled,
> Me think me burde be excused.[1] (ll. 2414-2428)

Should one regard this as anything more than a fit of pique in which Gawain, bitterly ashamed of his own failure, takes refuge in conventional medieval anti-feminism? The words may seem to be unworthy of the Gawain whose high standards of personal excellence lead him to accuse himself of 'cowarddyse and covetyse', 'trecherye and untrawthe' and to accept the girdle from the Green Knight as a badge of shame rather than honour. And yet I believe that the words do relate to an important theme of the poem as a whole and should be taken seriously. What is involved here is the conflict between two quite distinct, although related, ideals of chivalry.

These two ideals may be illustrated by turning to Chaucer, an exact contemporary of the anonymous Gawain poet, and considering briefly his portraits of the Knight and the young Squire in the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales. The Knight, soberly dressed, his tunic stained with the rust of his armour, is a dedicated crusading knight with an impressive list of battles to his credit. After his duties as a Christian come his feudal obligations, and he fights worthily 'in his lordes werre'. Although his courtesy is un-

failing it has no flavour of gallantry, and one feels that the generally acceptable view of the medieval knight as 'the champion of God and the ladies'[2] would be a strangely inappropriate description of Chaucer's Knight. The inappropriateness lies in that one word 'ladies'. Champion of God he may be, but ladies seem not to figure in his life except as the weaker sex with a claim on his protection that is shared by any defenceless creature. In other words he represents what one might term the masculine ideal of chivalry with its roots in the monastic dedication of the early Hospitalers and Templars, or, if one cares to trace its ancestry even further back, in another exclusively masculine and military institution, the German *comitatus*.

This early ideal of knighthood underwent a radical change with the development of courtly love. 'Chivalry . . . came to be also the cult and practice of gallantry',[3] and the duty of the knight becomes not merely to protect but to serve the lady. Chaucer's Squire differs from his father not simply because he represents youth and gaiety as opposed to sober maturity, but because he is an example of this new ideal of chivalry. His battles are the gay tournaments of high chivalry and he fights:

> In hope to stonden in his lady grace.

He has all the accomplishments and social graces of the courtly lover, and one might without too much distortion be justified in saying that he represents the feminine ideal of chivalry. Chaucer sees with remarkable clarity the difference between these two concepts, but he does not see them in conflict and the harmony between the two is suggested in the simple detail of the Squire's dutiful service to his father:

> Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
> And carf biforn his fader at the table.

But there may be situations in which it is impossible for a Knight to serve both God and the ladies; when the demands of the masculine ideal are directly opposed to those of the feminine, and it is this possibility that is explored by the Gawain poet.

Sir Gawain, as his personal symbol of the pentangle suggests, pursues the ideal of total perfection. He attempts, one might say, to combine these two ideals and the various trials that he undergoes are carefully balanced to test both aspects.

At first Gawain is tested in a very straightforward manner. His

courage, honour and endurance of physical hardships, all particularly masculine attributes, are on trial from the moment he responds to the Green Knight's fierce challenge, and he emerges from the ordeal of the winter journey with the high ideal of knighthood unspotted. The poet suggests the quality of his courage by the casual manner in which he almost passes over adventures which in themselves might form the basis of an epic poem:

> Sumwhyle wyth wormes he werres, and with wolves als,
> Sumwhyle wyth wodwos that woned in the knarres,
> Bothe wyth bulles and beres, and bores otherquyle,
> And etaynes that hym anelede of the heghe felle. (ll. 720-723)

His physical courage is taken for granted in a manner that should make us wary of too easily identifying Gawain with 'civilization' or a slightly over-ripe 'culture' that needs to be tested by 'nature' in the form of the Green Man. The hunting scenes, in which we see Bercilak's magnificent vigour displayed, should not blind us to the fact that Gawain has already killed his 'bulles and beres, and bores'.

It is with this achievement solidly behind him that Gawain reaches Sir Bercilak's castle, and at this point the whole nature of the test changes radically. For one thing it goes underground, as it were, so that Gawain, invited to relax in congenial surroundings, is unaware that he now faces the most rigorous challenge in which the two aspects of his knightly code, what I have termed the masculine and feminine ideals, are brought into conflict. What is at stake in the castle is not merely Gawain's chastity or even his honour towards his host; it is nothing less than the whole masculine ideal. This is emphasised by the soft luxury of the castle into which Gawain is plunged after the hardships of his winter journey. The attempted seduction of Gawain begins from the moment he is so flatteringly welcomed at the drawbridge by the inmates of the castle, who 'kneled doun on her knes upon the colde erthe'. It continues through the luxurious comfort of his chamber, hung with 'cortynes of clene sylk wyth cler golde hemmes', the costly and splendid garments in which he is now arrayed, and the abundance of good food and drink. Moreover the attitude of the courtiers towards Gawain is in itself a part of this seduction:

> 'Now schal we semlych se sleghtes of thewes
> And the teccheles termes of talkyng noble.
> Wich spede is in speche, unspurd may we lerne,
> Syn we haf fonged that fyne fader of nurture.

God has geven uus his grace godly for sothe,
That such a gest as Gawan grauntes uus to have,
When burnes blythe of his burthe schal sitte
and synge.
In menyng of maneres mere
This burne now schal uus bryng.
I hope that may hym here
Schal lerne of luf-talkyng.' (ll. 916-927)

The concept of knighthood implied here, the kind of interest shown in Gawain, is surely meant to be seen as slightly provincial, even vulgar. There is an excessive concern for the trimmings of chivalry, for manners and fine speeches. The ideal of knightly conduct is trivialised and reduced to 'the cult and practice of gallantry' so that what they chiefly desire to learn from Gawain is 'luf-talkynge'. He is for them the 'fyne fader of nurture' and it is, I think, clear that their view of him is one that is fraught with danger for Gawain. It is a view that is, significantly, shared by the lady and given expression in the bedroom scenes:

'And of alle chevalry to chose, the chef thyng alosed
Is the lel layk of luf, the lettrure of armes;
For to telle of this tevelyng of this trwe knyghtes,
Hit is the tytelet token and tyxt of her werkkes,
How ledes for her lele luf hor lyves han auntered,
Endured for her drury dulful stoundes,
And after wenged with her walour and voyded her care,
And broght blysse into boure with bountees hor awen —
And ye ar knyght comlokest kyd of your elde,
Your worde and your worchip walkes ayquere,
And I haf seten by yourself here sere twyes,
Yet herde I never of your hed helde no wordes
That ever longed to luf, lasse ne more.
And ye, that ar so cortays and coynt of your hetes,
Oghe to a yonke thynk yern to schewe
And teche sum tokenes of trweluf craftes.
Why! ar ye lewed, that alle the los weldes,
Other elles ye demen me to dille your dalyaunce to herken?
For schame!' (ll. 1512-1530)

What is being threatened here is, as I have stated, not so much Gawain's chastity as his whole concept of chivalry, and his real danger lies in the fact that he partly concurs with the lady's views. Her ideal knight is one who practises the sport of love, risking his

life and sacrificing his honour to bring 'blysse into boure'. He is the teacher of 'trweluf craftes'. This is a parody of the ideal of knightly courtesy which Gawain himself holds, but the lady's attempt to use Gawain's courtesy as a weapon to destroy him fails, in spite of her descent to Lady Macbeth tauntings in the last few lines quoted above. With exquisite courtesy Gawain parries her attack, pleading his unworthiness to teach what she desires:

> But to take the torvayle to myself to trwluf expoun,
> And towche the temes of tyxt and tales of armes
> To yow that, I wot wel, weldes more slyght
> Of that art, bi the half, or a hundreth of seche
> As I am other ever schal, in erde ther I leve —
> Hit were a folé felefolde, my fre, by my trawthe. (ll. 1540-1545)

Beneath the elaborate politeness of the speech is a firm rejection of her concept of knighthood. 'Luf-talkyng' is the lady's province and Gawain's words 'Hit were a folé felefolde' strongly express his sense of the unworthiness of her ideals. So far Gawain has managed, with great skill, to keep his own ideal of knighthood intact; to reconcile what are now the conflicting claims of honour and courtesy. But there comes a point when he is forced to choose between the masculine and feminine sets of values:

> For that prynces of pris depressed hym so thikke,
> Nurned hym so neghe the thred, that nede hym bihoved
> Other lach ther hir luf other lodly refuse.
> He cared for his cortaysye, lest crathayn he were,
> And more for his meschef, yif he schulde make synne
> And be traytor to that tolke that that telde aght.
> (ll. 1770-1775)

Gawain is quite clear about his priorities. Important as courtesy is to him, he cares 'more for his meschef' and his final rejection of the lady's love is almost brutal in its clarity:

> The knyght sayde: 'Be sayn Jon,'
> And smethely con he smyle,
> 'In fayth I welde right non,
> Ne non wil welde the quile.' (ll. 1788-1791)

His words here, in spite of the gentle smile, have a masculine directness that is, in general, markedly absent from his discourse with her. He rejects the easy lie that she offers him, that he is unable to accept her love because of a previous commitment. Such

an excuse would preserve him as a 'feminine' knight, serving a lady and the ideal of love, even if that lady were not Bercilak's wife.

Although Gawain has so firmly asserted his loyalty to the higher ideal he is nevertheless tricked by the lady, who immediately changes her tactics, into a small betrayal of that ideal. His acceptance of the girdle represents a failure of both courage and loyalty on his part, excusable because it springs from his love of life, but viewed very seriously by Gawain himself precisely because it is a betrayal of the higher ideal of knighthood. The lady has forced him to assess the relative importance of the two ideals, and his outburst of anti-feminism, partly illogical though it is, should be seen in terms of a recognition on Gawain's part that he must reject the 'feminine' wherever it is in conflict with the 'masculine'. His attitude to women will be to 'luf hom wel and leve hem not'.[4] It is an attitude which preserves a courtesy towards them but does not allow them in any way to dominate the knightly code. The knight must protect women rather than serve them. This is an attitude that is given expression in that other representative of chivalry, Mr. Knightley, whose perfect courtesy is blended with firm admonition in his treatment of Emma. It even has something in common with the rather more cynical formulation given to the idea by Enobarbus:

> 'Under a compelling occasion let women die.'

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1. All quotations from *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* are taken from the Everyman edition, Dent, 1966, ed. by A. C. Cawley.
2. Thompson and Johnson: *An Introduction to Medieval Europe.* Allen and Unwin, 1937. p. 321.
3. Ibid., p. 323.
4. Modern readers may need to be reminded that 'leve' in this context means 'believe'.

WELTANSCHAUUNG AND ONTOLOGY IN SARTRE'S WORK AND THOUGHT

by PETER ROYLE

In his *Panorama de la nouvelle littérature française* (Paris, 1949) Gaëtan Picon says that Sartre's work 'doit reconnaître qu'elle est une vision du monde plus qu'un message de vie', (p. 95); for 's'il existe entre ce que Sartre pense (ou veut penser) et ce qu'il sent une contradiction, il vaut mieux que cette contradiction se développe entre l'œuvre romanesque et l'œuvre philosophique; en s'établissant dans l'œuvre romanesque elle-même, elle risque de fausser son authenticité et de paralyser en voulant l'élargir son idéniable puissance' (p. 96).

Now, on the one hand, this proposition reverses the real relationship between Sartre's philosophical work and his fiction: for it is in his philosophy that is expressed, in the ordinary and strictly non-existentialist sense of the term, his vision of the world; while his literary work, the concrete expression of his moral sentiments, can present itself only as a message of life.[1] And on the other hand, to accept 'qu'elle est une vision du monde plus qu'un message de vie', is exactly, given the fundamental principles of Sartre's philosophy, what it cannot do. For life is never seen except in the light of our project; and in giving us his view of life an author is, of necessity, referring us to *his* project. If this project is the liberation of mankind the view of life which goes with it must be a message of life. 'Je ne fais pas de différence', writes Sartre in a letter to Francis Jeanson published as a preface to the latter's *Le Problème moral et la pensée de Sartre,* 'entre l'attitude morale qu'un homme s'est choisie et ce que les Allemands appellent sa *Weltanschauung*'. Moreover, since 'toute perception s'accompagne d'une réaction affective',[2] any view of life will have an emotional charge which will stand in the way of its presenting itself as an object of pure contemplation to the reader. This is, indeed, the meaning of *La Nausée.* If one has no project, like Roquentin at the moment when 'le voile se déchire', things will have no meaning, there will be no world. How can this be taken except as meaning that the organization of things into a world is accomplished in the light of a project? And that it is this project which confers on things the coefficients of utility or adversity which will enable us to classify them? 'Même quand je regardais les choses, j'étais à cent lieues de songer qu'elles existaient: elles m'apparaissaient

comme un décor. Je les prenais dans mes mains, *elles me servaient d'outils*, je prévoyais leurs résistances.'[3]

So for someone who has no project, things will be *de trop*. They will simply *be there*, indigestible.[4] Or rather, *things* will no longer be there, since a gummed-up consciousness is incapable of positing them: nothing will remain but phenomena related to each other purely externally. And just as indigestible food provokes nausea, so will it be provoked by a universe overburdened with objects which can be put to no use. The emotional reaction accompanying such a perception will naturally be one of disgust.

But if we can see things only in the light of our project, should we then, in order to see things as they are, try to strip ourselves, as Roquentin does, of any project whatsoever? This is perhaps what would be said by a partisan of 'scientific' objectivity. But that is exactly what the moral of *La Nausée* is *not*, since this book, on the contrary, constitutes a *reductio ad absurdum* of objectivism. For human reality *is* 'pro-jet', and so we cannot not have goals. Jeanson writes that 'ce que Roquentin trouve à opposer à la contingence de l'existence, ce n'est que la gratuité de sa négation. L'opération qui nous est décrite ici sur le plan psychologique est rigoureusement l'homologue de l'opération de réduction à laquelle se livre la phénoménologie en suspendant toute affirmation concernant le monde, en mettant le monde entre parenthèses'.[5] This is true. Only this operation effected by Roquentin is not meant to serve as a model. For when we said that he had no project, what should have been said is that, *being* a project, he is obliged to choose for himself a new goal and so go beyond this view of contingency, however liberating it may be. Or else, if he does not go beyond it, his new goal will be not to have a goal, which would already be to have one: and since nausea would be the inevitable correlative of such a goal, and since it is, by definition, unpleasant, this choice would be a perverse one: well-balanced men do not choose to be disgusted.[6] Roquentin's intuition occurs at a special moment, the moment that sees the collapse of his project; but such a collapse cannot logically constitute the object of an undertaking.

Thus an author's view of life is dependent on his project, and cannot be separated from it. Does this statement itself escape this law? In other words, isn't it the result of a project to relativize everything? Obviously not. Or, if it were, by placing ourselves on that plane of pure reflexion which must be that of philosophy and philosophic criticism, we could denounce it as such. We must, then, distinguish between *Weltanschauung* and philosophy; and it is the task of the latter, or more precisely ontology, to criticize the former. This is the reason for stating, in relation to the above-mentioned

passage from Picon, that it is in Sartre's philosophy and not in his literary work that we find expressed a 'vision of the world' (let us now call it an ontology) in which moral concern has no place. And as far as the literary work is concerned, besides *La Nausée,* it is in *Huis clos* and, perhaps less exclusively, *Les Mouches* that this ontology is affirmed; which perhaps explains Picon's remark that *Huis clos* is one of the least significant of Sartre's works and perhaps for that very reason one of the most successful (op. cit., p. 94). For it is a fact that in attempting to escape the relativity inherent in any *Weltanschauung, Huis clos* presents itself for that very reason not as a 'message of life', theatre of *praxis,* but as a window opening out on to the most mysterious regions of being.

Now, *L'Etre et le néant* is described as a 'phenomenological ontology'. And in reading it, we find that everywhere the question Sartre is asking is: what *must* human reality be for such or such a thing to be possible? 'Que doivent être l'homme et le monde pour que le rapport soit possible entre eux?'[7] 'Que doit être l'homme en son être pour que par lui le néant vienne à l'être?'[8] 'Que doit être la liberté humaine si le néant doit venir par elle au monde?'[9] 'Que doit être la conscience dans son être pour que l'homme en elle et à partir d'elle surgisse dans le monde comme l'être qui est son propre néant et par qui le néant vient au monde?'[10] 'Que doit donc être la conscience dans l'instantanéité du *cogito* préréflexif, si l'homme doit pouvoir être de mauvaise foi?'[11] And so on.

Such questioning immediately implies the whole phenomenological programme: first, description of the phenomena demanding explanation (but this already requires concepts, which will have to be supplied by eidetic intuitions) — this is the regressive moment; next the ontogical unveiling which will make these phenomena intelligible — the progressive moment. After showing the deficiencies of empirical psychology, Sartre declares: 'Sans toutefois renoncer à l'idée d'expérience (le principe de la phénoménologie est d'aller "aux choses elles-mêmes" et la base de sa méthode est l'intuition éidétique), au moins faut-il l'assouplir et faire une place à l'expérience des essences et des valeurs; il faut reconnaître même que seules les essences permettent de classer et d'inspecter les faits.'[12] He will therefore proceed in the following manner: first he will describe shame;[13] then will come the question: what must human reality be for shame (as he has described it) to be possible? *A priori* laws will thus unify 'experience', but that experience will be first and foremost that which supplies apodictic evidence (the prereflexive *cogito,* which, of necessity, refers to the world, the *être-objet* which refers to the existence of others), that is, the *Erlebnis,* the experience which escapes all intentional colouring

because it is not a cognition but a relation of being. (For knowledge, *le connaître,* there are only empirical *objects*: and 'Qui dit *objet* dit probable'.[14] *L'Etre et le néant* is, in other words, what it claims to be: not only an ontology, which furnishes us with truths which are necessary *a priori*, but also a phenomenological study, supplying us with necessities of fact. For 'il faut . . . entendre que la phénoménologie est une science de *fait* et que les problèmes qu'elle pose sont des problèmes *de fait*'.[15] As Sartre says when speaking of others:

> L'existence d'autrui a la nature d'un fait contingent et irréductible. On *rencontre* autrui, on ne le constitue pas. Et si ce fait doit pourtant nous apparaître sous l'angle de la nécessité, ce ne saurait être avec celle qui appartient aux 'conditions de possibilité de notre expérience', ou si l'on préfère, avec la nécessité ontologique: la nécessité de l'existence d'autrui doit être, si elle existe, une 'nécessité contingente', c'est-à-dire du type même de la *nécessité de fait* avec laquelle s'impose le *cogito*. Si autrui doit pouvoir nous être donné, c'est par une appréhension directe qui laisse à la rencontre son caractère de facticité, comme le *cogito* lui-même laisse toute sa facticité à ma propre pensée, et qui pourtant participe à l'apodicticité du *cogito* lui-même, c'est-à-dire à son indubitabilité.[16]

In telling us then that 'le conflit est le sens originel de l'être-pour-autrui',[17] Sartre sets out from a necessity of fact (the existence of others) revealed by the evidence of shame and then proceeds to describe what 'mon rapport d'être avec son être'[18] must be. It is therefore for ontology to say what human reality must be, and consequently what it indubitably is; and it is for metaphysics in its turn to furnish a possible explanation of the data of ontology.[19] As Jeanson says, 'l'ontologie est dans le prolongement de la description, elle *explicite*; la métaphysique est dans le prolongement de la science, elle voudrait *expliquer*'.[20] Thus while phenomenological description and ontology supply us with certainties, metaphysics cannot go beyond the probable, any more than can non-phenomenological science.[21] In fact, since metaphysics is beyond all confirmation, its hypotheses will be, so to speak, less probable than those of science; whereas ontology will be, if that is possible, even more certain than that phenomenological description of which it is an extension.

But if it supplies us with certainties, how is it that we have so much difficulty in accepting them? It is because 'la caractéristique

de l'être d'un existant, c'est de ne pas se dévoiler *lui-même,* en personne, à la conscience'. And although consciousness can be called 'ontico-ontologique, puisqu'une caractéristique fondamentale de sa transcendance, c'est de transcender l'ontique vers l'ontologique',[22] in fact in our day-to-day life we live generally on the plane of 'la compréhension préontologique, c'est-à-dire qui ne s'accompagne pas de fixation en concepts et d'élucidation'.[23] And when we reflect, we generally choose to place ourselves on the level of impure or conniving reflexion.[23] To open our eyes by means of a play, the author of *Huis clos* must then choose a situation in which everything will take place with the greatest verisimilitude — so that our bad faith cannot protest — much as things must happen (and so do happen) in life; and this he must do without destroying the universal import of his play. What can he do but have recourse to a myth? And what more normal, given the apocalyptic nature of a play which is attempting to get us to pierce through phenomena and initiate us into the ultimate secrets of being, than that he should choose a fable concerning the dead?

But one can quite well understand Sartre's ontology without knowing what is to be done in order to see things 'as they are'. And by virtue of what, exactly, can we say that one *Weltanschauung* is superior to another? The fact is that the 'as it is' does not pertain to being.

> Ce n'est pas dans sa qualité propre que l'être est *relatif* au Pour-soi, ni dans son être, et par là nous échappons au relativisme kantien; mais c'est dans son 'il y a', puisque dans sa négation interne, le Pour-soi affirme ce qui ne peut s'affirmer, connaît l'être *tel qu'il est* alors que le 'tel qu'il est' ne saurait appartenir à l'être. En ce sens, à la fois le Pour-soi est présence immédiate à l'être et, à la fois, il se glisse comme une distance infinie entre lui-même et l'être . . . Il ne s'agit là ni d'un scepticisme — qui suppose précisément que le *tel qu'il est* appartient à l'être-ni d'un relativisme. La connaissance nous met en présence de l'absolu et il y a une vérité de la connaissance. Mais cette vérité, quoique ne nous livrant rien de plus et rien de moins que l'absolu, demeure strictement humaine.[24]

In order to see things as they are, we must then try to see them through the eyes of the socialist man of the city of ends. 'A ce moment, l'humanisme révolutionnaire apparaîtra non pas comme la philosophie d'une classe opprimée, mais comme la vérité elle-même, humiliée, masquée opprimée par des hommes qui ont intérêt à la fuir et il deviendra manifeste pour toutes les bonnes volontés que

c'est la vérité qui est révolutionnaire'.[25] And that is why, as Simone de Beauvoir says, vouloir le dévollement du monde, se vouloir libre, c'est un seul et même mouvement'.[26] It is for this reason also that we sympathize with Oreste in *Les Mouches*: for he is the only one in the play fully to adopt the revolutionary perspective. Obviously, in our effort to *understand* the play we sympathize with him because we see Sartre wishes us to. But after this initial effort we must put Sartre's world in parentheses and *judge* the characters according to other criteria. And our sympathy must still go to Oreste. For every prose work being an appeal to the liberty of the reader or the spectator — and here I am accepting the theory of 'Qu'est-ce que la littérature?' — in order to appreciate a play, in order to allow the play to exist by breathing our life into it, we must place ourselves on the plane of the universally human. And in our effort of universal sympathy we cannot but approve of those characters who display a similar sympathy.

Now, in *Les Mouches*, it is Electre who first shows this sympathy. She is touched by the idea that in Corinth there are happy people; and we feel that her contempt for the 'jeu des confessions publiques' springs from a nobility of soul which completely rejects all hypocrisy ('Je suis princesse, en vérité? Et vous vous en souvenez une fois l'an, quand le peuple réclame un tableau de notre vie de famille pour son édification? Belle princesse, qui lave la vaisselle et garde les cochons!' I, 5). When we see her for the first time, she is secretly desecrating the statue of Jupiter, and the fact that this is done in private, assures us that, in contrast with the other inhabitants of the town, who always want their most illustrious deeds to be seen, Electre is an authentic being.

In fact, however, her sacrilegious act is seen by Oreste and the Pedagogue. And our instinctive sympathy for Electre is identical with that of Oreste, whose relationship to his sister is the exact counterpart of ours: for just as in the theatre, where the audience views acts performed with it in view, but where everything must take place as though no one were there, it is the truth of a solitary character or the truth of a relationship which we see (a truth which is generally denied us in ordinary life because our real presence completely alters the situation), in the same way it is the real Electre who is observed by Oreste. And from this moment on we demand that he rid Argos of the tyrants who are responsible for this reign of death, and who have reduced to slavery the one living creature in the town.

However, true though it is that we must place ourselves in the theatre on the plane of the concrete universal, that in nowise means that we must condemn those characters who do not fulgl all the

requirements of existentialist morality. Not for a moment do we think of condemning Electre when she repudiates her brother's act— any more than we condemn young François in *Morts sans sépulture*, when he shows he cannot resist torture. For in our own person, it is true, we realize concrete humanity — but it is a humanity which remembers its origins, and whose judgments are softened by the memory of what we are outside the theatre.

We are now, I think, in a position to explain the sombre aspect of Sartre's work. The data of experience ought to help us, in pure reflexion, to construct an ethic. But the *emotional colouring* of our experience partly depends on our concrete ethical judgments. What happens in the Sartrian description of being-for-others is this: the author's ontology, of which the notion of conflict is an integral part, gives rise to an ethic based on the idea of the city of ends; and this ethic, in the light of which he will judge events, colours in turn his view of life.[27] For if one aspires to true human fraternity, it is very likely that one will be profoundly disappointed by the spectacle of inhumanity which seems to prevail in the world, a spectacle whose gloominess one will then be tempted to exaggerate. In particular, the Sartrian description of being-for-others sometimes seems to leave the domain of ontology proper, and to express that vision of the world which seems in part to stem from it. And this, far from reinforcing the author's philosophy, contaminates it. What makes this all the more true is that his 'pessimism', however natural it may be to a man with his project, is not its rigorous consequence, but seems rather to be peculiar to socialists of his class, who perhaps feel themselves to be isolated from their fellows.

The most fundamental direction of Sartre's philosophical undertaking seems to me, then, to be the following: first he has placed himself on the plane of pure reflexion to construct his ontology; next, taking this as a foundation, he has constructed a rudimentary abstract ethic; next — the indispensable practical moment — he has tried to regulate his conduct by this ethic, and to make it the basis of his concrete judgments; and finally, in the light of this project, he has arrived at a new vision of the world.

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NOTES

[1] I shall modify this statement later.
[2] *L'Imaginaire* (Paris, 1940), p. 44.
[3] *La Nausée* (Paris, 1938), p. 161. My italics.
[4] Note the allusions in this passage to the digestive process: 'un homme roux qui digérait sur un banc: toutes ces somnolences, toutes ces digestions prises ensemble offraient un aspect vaguement comique' (p. 162).
[5] *Le Problème moral et la pensée de Sartre* (Paris, 1947), p. 121.
[6] Sartre has been often reproached with wallowing in nausea. This criticism seems to me to be unacceptable. Insofar as he shows an interest in the seamy side of life, surely it is because he rightly thinks that it is in extreme situations that human reality most clearly reveals itself.
[7] *L'Etre et le néant* (Paris, 1943), p. 38.
[8] Ibid., p. 60.
[9] Ibid., p. 61.
[10] Ibid., p. 83.
[11] Ibid., p. 84.
[12] *Esquisse d'une théorie des émotions* (Paris, 1963), p. 12.
[13] *L'Etre et le néant,* pp. 275-277.
[14] Ibid., p. 309.
[15] 'La Transcendance de l'ego', in *Recherches philosophiques,* VI (1936-1937), p. 87.
[16] *L'Etre et le néant,* p. 307.
[17] Ibid., p. 431.
[18] Ibid., p. 277.
[19] Ibid., p. 715.
[20] *Le Problème moral et la pensée de Sartre,* p. 179.
[21] Cf. L'Imaginaire, p. 76: 'Il nous faut donc quitter le terrain sûr de la description phénoménologique et revenir à la psychologie expérimentale. C'est-à-dire que, comme dans les sciences expérimentales, nous devrons faire des hypothèses et chercher des confirmations dans l'observation et l'expérience. Ces confirmations ne nous permettront jamais de dépasser le domaine du probable.'
[22] *L'Etre et le néant,* p. 30.
[23] V. ibid., p. 201.
[24] Ibid., p. 270.
[25] 'Matérialisme et révolution', in *Situations, III* (Paris, 1949), p. 224.
[26] *Pour une morale de l'ambiguïté* (Paris, 1947), p. 34.
[27] It would perhaps be more accurate to say that this ethic tends to darken still further his *Weltanschauung* which appears always to have been somewhat gloomy.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editors,
THEORIA.

Dear Sirs,

Professor Harding's essay in *Theoria* 35[1] contains a well-documented study of the development in Jane Austen's handling of dialogue during her career as a writer. This study is all the more valuable because Professor Harding acknowledges that the improvement in craftsmanship is more than an advance in mechanical expertise: it is related to the deepening and refining of Jane Austen's preoccupations as a novelist. One could point to the parallel of Shakespeare's development.

If Professor Harding's approach has a fault, it is that the idea of development is pursued too simply, since what he is discussing is in some respects an uneven development. He also (unwittingly, I think) allows his argument to work somewhat invidiously in the case of *Sense and Sensibility*.

Professor Harding says (which is quite true) that the dialogue in *Sense and Sensibility* is 'least skilful' and that it is 'furthest from the modern conception of what dialogue should be and do.' He also says 'This kind of dialogue . . . is not of course to be judged as a poor attempt at conversation. It is a convention . . . etc.' True again. But after quoting a passage spoken by Elinor, Professor Harding goes on to say: '. . . Marianne . . . is given even longer and more stilted speeches than this.' This is where a line must be drawn: stilted dialogue is *bad* dialogue. (There are a few special ironical uses of stilted speech, naturally. The speech of Mary Bennett is obviously deliberately stilted, though Jane Austen can hardly be said to have got beyond the germ of a portrayal in her case.) The passage Professor Harding quotes from Elinor is (given the convention, which he accepts) a perfectly 'natural', adequate, and even moving defence of Edward. It conveys in its tone the unhysterical, sober dignity of Elinor's temperament, her characteristic courage, and her emotional engagement, which is so different in kind from Marianne's. It cannot in any meaningful sense be called 'stilted'. Professor Harding, I am sure, knows this, but the developmental thesis has betrayed him into a slight carelessness of expression. Later he refers to Edward as 'prosy'. There is more truth in this, and Jane Austen fails to interest us very deeply in Edward on his own account. But it is necessary to discriminate between the good and the less good within the *same* mode: that is the critical test in *Sense and Sensibility*. Professor Harding allows

us to forget (at least for some of the time) that long, articulate speeches must be adjudged successful or otherwise, not by their length on the page, but by their effect on our finely tuned inner 'ear'. A comparison between a longish speech from Elinor and one of comparable length from one of (say) Walter Scott's characters brings out the difference between living speech and dead speech within the same convention.

Professor Harding also remarks on the emerging 'briskness' in one of the Elinor-Willoughby exchanges, and shows this development leading up to — and beyond — the exchange in the garden between Elizabeth Bennett and Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Of course, this *is* a development, and we are grateful to Professor Harding for hinting at the influence of the 18th century theatre behind it, but again there is a discrimination to be made.

Elinor's defence of Colonel Brandon against Willoughby and Marianne is much more *real*, and engages our moral concern much more strongly, than does Elizabeth Bennett's quarrel with that old paper tiger, Lady Catherine. 'Theatrical' is a word that all-too-easily sums up the latter exchange, though, Jane Austen being what she is, it is more than merely theatrical.

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NOTE

[1] *Two Aspects of Jane Austen's Development.*