Understanding Media

by

MARSHALL MCLUHAN

1/The Medium Is the Message

In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting and dividing all things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of shock to be reminded that, in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium—that is, of any extension of ourselves—result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology. Thus, with automation, for example, the new patterns of human association tend to eliminate jobs, it is true. That is the negative result. Positively, automation creates roles for people, which is to say depth of involvement in their work and human association that our preceding mechanical technology had destroyed. Many people would be disposed to say that it was not the machine, but what one did with the machine, that was its meaning or message. In terms of the ways in which the machine altered our relations to one another and to ourselves, it mattered not in the least whether it turned out cornflakes or Cadillacs. The restructuring of human work and association was shaped by the technique of fragmentation that is the essence of machine technology. The essence of automation technology is the opposite. It is integral and decentralist in depth, just as the machine was fragmentary, centralist, and superficial in its patterning of human relationships.

The instance of the electric light may prove illuminating in this connection. The electric light is pure information. It is a medium without a message, as it were, unless it is used to spell out some verbal ad or name. This fact, characteristic of all media, means that the "content" of any medium is always another medium. The content of writing is speech, just as the written word is the content of print, and print is the content of the telegraph. If it is asked, "What is the content of speech?," it is necessary to say, "It is an actual process of thought, which is in itself nonverbal." An abstract painting represents direct manifestation of creative thought processes as they might appear in computer designs. What we are considering here, however, are the psychic and social consequences of the designs or patterns as they amplify or accelerate existing processes. For the "message" of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs. The railway did not introduce movement or transportation or wheel or road into human society, but it accelerated and enlarged the scale of previous human functions, creating totally new kinds of cities and new kinds of work and leisure. This happened whether the railway functioned in a tropical or a northern environment, and is quite independent of the freight or content of the railway medium. The airplane, on the other hand, by accelerating the rate of transportation, tends to dissolve the railway form of city, politics, and association, quite independently of what the airplane is used for.

Let us return to the electric light. Whether the light is being used for brain surgery or night baseball is a matter of indifference. It could be argued that these activities are in some way the "content" of the electric light, since they could not exist without the electric light. This fact merely underlines the point that "the medium is the message" because it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action. The content or uses of such media are as diverse as they are ineffectual in shaping the form of human association. Indeed, it is only too typical that the "content" of any medium blinds us to the character of the

medium. It is only today that industries have become aware of the various kinds of business in which they are engaged. When IBM discovered that it was not in the business of making office equipment or business machines, but that it was in the business of processing information, then it began to navigate with clear vision. The General Electric Company makes a considerable portion of its profits from electric light bulbs and lighting systems. It has not yet discovered that, quite as much as A.T.&T., it is in the business of moving information. The electric light escapes attention as a communication medium just because it has no "content." And this makes it an invaluable instance of how people fail to study media at all. For it is not till the electric light is used to spell out some brand name that it is noticed as a medium. Then it is not the light but the "content" (or what is really another medium) that is noticed. The message of the electric light is like the message of electric power in industry, totally radical, pervasive, and decentralized. For electric light and power are separate from their uses, yet they eliminate time and space factors in human association exactly as do radio, telegraph, telephone, and TV, creating involvement in depth. A fairly complete handbook for studying the extensions of man could be made up from selections from Shakespeare. Some might quibble about whether or not he was referring to TV in these familiar lines from Romeo and Juliet:

> But soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
> It speaks, and yet says nothing.

In Othello, which, as much as King Lear, is concerned with the torment of people transformed by illusions, there are these lines that bespeak Shakespeare's intuition of the transforming powers of new media:

> Is there not charms
> By which the property of youth and maidhood
> May be abus'd?
> Have you not read Roderigo,
> Of some such thing?

In Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida, which is almost completely devoted to both a psychic and social study of communication, Shakespeare states his awareness that true social and political navigation depend upon anticipating the consequences of innovation:

> The providence that's in a watchful state
> Knows almost every grain of Plutus' gold,
> Finds bottom in the uncomprehensive deeps,
> Keeps place with thought, and almost like the gods
> Does thoughts unveil in their dumb cradles.

The Increasing awareness of the action of media, quite independently of their "content" or programming, was indicated in the annoyed and anonymous stanza:

> In modern thought, (if not in fact)
> Nothing is that doesn't act,
> So that is reckoned wisdom which
> Describes the scratch but not the itch.

The same kind of total, configurational awareness that reveals why the medium is socially the message has occurred in the most recent and radical medical theories. In his Stress of Life, Hans Selye tells of the dismay of a research colleague on hearing of Selye's theory:

> When he saw me thus launched on yet another enraptured description of what I had

> observed in animals treated with this or that impure, toxic material, he looked at me with desperately sad eyes and said in obvious despair: "But Selye, try to realize what you are doing before it is too late! You have now decided to spend your entire life studying the pharmacology of dirt!" (Hans Selye, The Stress of Life)

As Selye deals with the total environmental situation in his "stress" theory of disease, so the latest approach to media study considers not only the "content" but the medium and the cultural matrix within which the particular medium operates. The older unawareness of the psychic and social effects of media can be illustrated from almost any of the conventional pronouncements.

In accepting an honorary degree from the University of Notre Dame a few years ago, General David Sarnoff made this statement: "We are too prone to make technological instruments the scapegoats for the sins of those who wield them. The products of modern science are not in themselves good or bad; it is the way they are used that determines their value." That is the voice of the current somnambulism. Suppose we were to say, "Apple pie is in itself neither good nor bad; it is the way it is used that determines it value." Or, "The smallpox virus is in itself neither good nor bad; it is the way it is used that determines its value." Again, "Firearms are in themselves neither good nor bad; it is the way they are used that determines their value." That is, if the slugs reach the right people firearms are good. If the TV tube fires the right ammunition at the right people it is good. I am not being perverse. There is simply nothing in the Sarnoff statement that will bear scrutiny, for it ignores the nature of the medium, of any and all media, in the true Narcissus style of one hypnotized by the amputation and extension of his own being in a new technical form. General Sarnoff went on to explain his attitude to the technology of print, saying that it was true that print caused much trash to circulate, but it had also disseminated the Bible and the thoughts of seers and philosophers. It has never occurred to General Sarnoff that any technology could do anything but add itself on to what we already are.

Such economists as Robert Theobald, W. W. Rostow, and John Kenneth Galbraith have been explaining for years how it is that "classical economics" cannot explain change or growth. And the paradox of mechanization is that although it is itself the cause of maximal growth and change, the principle of mechanization excludes the very possibility of growth or the understanding of change. For mechanization is achieved by fragmentation of any process and by putting the fragmented parts in a series. Yet, as David Hume showed in the eighteenth century, there is no principle of causality in mere sequence. That one things follows another accounts for nothing. Nothing follows from following, except change. So the greatest of all reversals occurred with electricity, that ended sequence by making things instant. With instant speed the causes of things began to emerge to awareness again, as they had not done with things in sequence and in concatenation accordingly. Instead of asking which came first, the chicken or the egg, it suddenly seemed that a chicken was an egg's idea for getting more eggs.

Just before an airplane breaks the sound barrier, sound waves become visible on the wings of the plane. The sudden visibility of sound just as sound ends is an apt instance of that great pattern of being that reveals new and opposite forms just as the earlier forms reach their peak performance. Mechanization was never so vividly fragmented or sequential as in the birth of the movies, the moment that translated us beyond mechanism into the world of growth and organic interrelation. The movie, by sheer speeding up the mechanical, carried us from the world of sequence and connections into the world of creative configuration and structure. The message of the movie medium is that of transition from lineal connections to configurations. It is the transition that produced the now quite correct observation: "If it works, it's obsolete." When electric speed further takes over from mechanical movie sequences, then the lines of force in structures and in media become loud and clear. We return to the inclusive form of the icon.

To the highly literate and mechanized culture the movie appeared as a world of triumphant

illusions and dreams that money could buy. It was at this moment of the movie that cubism occurred, and it has been described by E. H. Gombrich (Art and Illusion) as "the most radical attempt to stamp out ambiguity and to enforce one reading of the picture—that of a man-made construction, a colored canvas." For cubism substitutes all facets of an object simultaneously for the "point of view" or facet of perspective illusion. Instead of the specialized illusion of the third dimension on canvas, cubism sets up an interplay of planes and contradiction or dramatic conflict of patterns, light, textures that "drives home the message" by involvement. This is held by many to be an exercise in painting, not in illusion.

In other words, cubism, by giving the inside and outside, the top, bottom, back, and front and the rest, in two dimensions, drops the illusion of perspective in favor of instant sensory awareness of the whole. Cubism, by seizing on instant total awareness, suddenly announced that the medium is the message. Is it not evident that the moment that sequence yields to the simultaneous, one is in the world of structure and of configuration? Is that not what has happened in physics as in painting, poetry, and in communication? Specialized segments of attention have shifted to total field, and we can now say, "The medium is the message" quite naturally. Before the electric speed and total field, it was not obvious that the medium is the message. The message, it seemed, was the "content," as people used to ask what a painting was about. Yet they never thought to ask what a melody was about, nor what a house or a dress was about. In such matters, people retained some sense of the whole patter, of form and function as a unity. But in the electric age this integral idea of structure and configuration has become so prevalent that educational theory has taken up the matter. Instead of working with specialized "problems" in arithmetic, the structural approach now follows the lines of force in the field of number and has small children meditating about number theory and "sets."

Cardinal Newman said of Napoleon, "He understood the grammar of gunpowder." Napoleon had paid some attention to other media as well, especially the semaphore telegraph that gave him a great advantage over his enemies. He is on record for saying that "Three hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets."

Alexis de Tocqueville was the first to master the grammar of print and typography. He was thus able to read off the message of coming change in France and America as if he were reading aloud from a text that had been handed to him. In fact, the nineteenth century in France and in America was just such an open book to de Tocqueville because he had learned the grammar of print. So he, also, knew when that grammar did not apply. He was asked why he did not write a book on England, since he knew and admired England. He replied:

> One would have to have an unusual degree of philosophical folly to believe oneself able to judge England in six months. A year always seemed to me too short a time in which to appreciate the United States properly, and it is much easier to acquire clear and precise notions about the American Union than about Great Britain. In America all laws derive in a sense from a simple principle. One could compare America to a forest pierced by a multitude of straight roads all converging on the same point. One has only to find the center and everything is revealed at a glance. But in England the paths run criss-cross, and it is only by traveling down each one of them that one can build up a picture of the whole.

De Tocqueville, in earlier work on the French Revolution, had explained how it was the printed word that, achieving cultural saturation in the eighteenth century, had homogenized the French nation. Frenchmen were the same kind of people from north to south. The typographic principles of uniformity, continuity, and lineality had overlaid the complexities of ancient feudal and oral society. The Revolution was carried out by the new literati and lawyers.

In England, however, such was the power of the ancient oral traditions of common law, backed by the medieval institution of Parliament, that no uniformity or continuity of the new visual print culture could take complete hold. The result was that the most important even in English history has never taken place; namely, the English Revolution on the lines of the French Revolution. The American Revolution had no medieval legal institutions to discard or to root out, apart from monarchy. And many have held that the American Presidency has become very much more personal and monarchical than any European monarch ever could be.

De Tocqueville's contrast between England and America is clearly based on the fact of typography and of print culture creating uniformity and continuity. England, he says, has rejected this principle and clung to the dynamic or oral common-law tradition. Hence the discontinuity and unpredictable quality of English culture. The grammar of print cannot help to construe the message of oral and nonwritten culture and institutions. The English aristocracy was properly classified as barbarian by Matthew Arnold because its power and status had nothing to do with literacy or with the cultural forms of typography. Said the Duke of Gloucester to Edward Gibbon upon the publication of his Decline and Fall: "Another damned fat book, eh, Mr. Gibbon? Scribble, scribble, scribble, eh, Mr. Gibbon?" De Tocqueville was a highly literate aristocrat who was quite able to be detached from the values and assumptions of typography. That is why he alone understood the grammar of typography. And it is only on those terms, standing aside from any structure or medium, that its principles and lines of force can be discerned. For any medium has the power of imposing its own assumption on the unwary. Prediction and control consist in avoiding this subliminal state of Narcissus trance. But the great aid to this end is simply in knowing that the spell can occur immediately upon contact as in the first bars of a melody.

A Passage to India by E. M. Forster is a dramatic study of the inability of oral and intuitive oriental culture to meet with the rational, visual European patterns of experience. "Rational," of course, has for the West long meant "uniform and continuous and sequential." In other words, we have confused reason with literacy, and rationalism with a single technology. Thus in the electric age man seems to the conventional West to become irrational. In Forster's novel the moment of truth comes in the Marabar Cave. Adela Quested's reasoning powers cannot cope with the total inclusive field of resonance that is India. After the Caves: "Life went on as usual, but had no consequences, that is to say, sounds did not echo nor thought develop. Everything seemed cut off at its root and therefore infected with illusion."

A Passage to India (the phrase is from Whitman, who saw America headed Eastward) is a parable of Western man in the electric age, and it is only incidentally related to Europe or the Orient. The ultimate conflict between sight and sound, between written and oral kinds of perception and organization of existence is upon us. Since understanding stops action, as Nietzsche observed, we can moderate the fierceness of this conflict by understanding the media that extend us and raise these wars within and without us.

Detribalization by literacy and its traumatic effects on tribal man is the theme of a book by the psychiatrist J. C. Carothers, The African Mind in Health and Disease (World Health Organization, Geneva, 1953). Much of his material appeared in an article in Psychiatry magazine, November, 1959: "The Culture, Psychiatry, and the Written Word." Again, it is electric speed that has revealed the lines of force operating from Western technology in the remotest areas of bush, savannah, and desert. One example is the Bedouin with his battery radio on board the camel. Submerging natives with floods of concepts for which nothing has prepared them is the normal action of all our technology. But with electric media Western man himself experiences exactly the same inundation as the remote native. We are no more prepared to encounter radio and TV in our literate milieu than the native of Ghana is able to cope with the literacy that takes him out of his collective tribal world and beaches him in individual isolation. We are as numb in our new electric world as the native involved in our literate and mechanical

culture.

Electric speed mingles the cultures of prehistory with the dregs of industrial marketeers, the nonliterate with semiliterate and the postliterate. Mental breakdown of varying degrees is the very common result of uprooting and inundation with new information and endless new patterns of information. Wyndham Lewis made this a theme of his group of novels called The Human Age. The first of these, The Childermass, is concerned precisely with accelerated media change as a kind of massacre of the innocents. In our own world as we become more aware of the effects of technology on psychic formation and manifestation, we are losing all confidence in our right to assign guilt. Ancient prehistoric societies regard violent crime as pathetic. The killer is regarded as we do a cancer victim. "How terrible it must be to feel like that," they say. J. M. Synge took up this idea very effectively in his Playboy of the Western World.

If the criminal appears as a nonconformist who is unable to meet the demand of technology that we behave in uniform and continuous patterns, literate man is quite inclined to see others who cannot conform as somewhat pathetic. Especially the child, the cripple, the woman, and the colored person appear in a world of visual and typographic technology as victims of injustice. On the other hand, in a culture that assigns roles instead of jobs to people—the dwarf, the skew, the child create their own spaces. They are not expected to fit into some uniform and repeatable niche that is not their size anyway. Consider the phrase "It's a man's world." As a quantitative observation endlessly repeated from within a homogenized culture, this phrase refers to the men in such a culture who have to be homogenized Dagwoods in order to belong at all. It is in our I.Q. testing that we have produced the greatest flood of misbegotten standards. Unaware of our typographic cultural bias, out tester assume that uniform and continuous habits are a sign of intelligence, this eliminating the ear man and the tactile man.

C. P. Snow, reviewing a book of A. L. Rowse (The New York Times Book review, December 24, 1961) on Appeasement and the road to Munich, describes the top level of British brains and experience in the 1930s. "Their I.Q.'s were much higher than usual among political bosses. Why were they such a disaster?" The view of Rowse, Snow approves: "They would not listen to warnings because they did not wish to hear." Being anti-Red made it impossible for them to read the message Hitler. But their failure was nothing compared to our present one. The American stake in literacy as a technology or uniformity applied to every level of education, government, industry, and social life is totally threatened by the electric technology. The threat of Stalin or Hitler was external. The electric technology is within the gates, and we are numb, deaf, blind, and mute about its encounter with the Gutenberg technology, on and through which the American way of life was formed. It is, however, no time to suggest strategies when the threat has not even been acknowledged to exist. I am in the position of Louis Pasteur telling doctors that their greatest enemy was quite invisible, and quite unrecognized by them. Our conventional response to all media, namely that it is how they are used that counts, is the numb stance of the technological idiot. For the "content" of a medium is like the juicy piece of meat carried by the burglar to distract the watchdog of the mind. The effect of the medium is made strong and intense just because it is given another medium as "content." The content of a movie is a novel or a play or an opera. The effect of the movie form is not related to its program content. The "content" of writing or print is speech, but the reader is almost entirely unaware either of print or of speech.

Arnold Toynbee is innocent of any understanding of media as they have shaped history, but he is full of examples that the student of media can use. At one moment he can seriously suggest that adult education, such as the Workers Educational Association in Britain, is a useful counterforce to the popular press. Toynbee considers that although all of the oriental societies have in our time accepted the industrial technology and its political consequences: "On the cultural plane, however, there is no uniform corresponding tendency." (Somervell, I. 267) This is like the voice

of the literate man, floundering in a milieu of ads, who boasts, "Personally, I pay no attention to ads." The spiritual and cultural reservations that the oriental peoples may have toward our technology will avail them not at all. The effects of technology do not occur at the level of opinions or concepts, but alter sense ratios or patterns of perception steadily and without any resistance. The serious artist is the only person able to encounter technology with impunity, just because he is an expert aware of the changes in sense perception.

The operation of the money medium in seventeenth-century Japan had effects not unlike the operation typography in the West. The penetration of the money economy, wrote G. B. Sansom (in Japan, Cresset Press, London, 1931) "caused a slow but irresistible revolution, culminating in the breakdown of feudal government and the resumption of intercourse with foreign countries after more than two hundred years of seclusion." Money has reorganized the sense life of peoples just because it is an extension of our sense lives. This change does not depend upon approval or disapproval of those living in the society.

Arnold Toynbee made one approach to the transforming power of media in his concept of "etherialization," which he holds to be the principle of progressive simplification and efficiency in any organization or technology. Typically, he is ignoring the effect of the challenge of these forms upon the response of our senses. He imagines that it is the response of our opinions that is relevant to the effect of media and technology in society, a "point of view" that is plainly the result of the typographic spell. For the man in a literate and homogenized society ceases to be sensitive to the diverse and discontinuous life of forms. He acquires the illusion of the third dimension and the "private point of view" as part of his Narcissus fixation, and is quite shut off from Blake's awareness or that of the Psalmist, that we become what we behold.

Today when we want to get our bearings in our own culture, and have need to stand aside from the bias and pressure exerted by any technical form of human expression, we have only to visit a society where that particular form has not been felt, or a historical period in which it was unknown. Professor Wilbur Schramm made such a tactical move in studying Television in the Lives of Our Children. He found areas where TV had not penetrated at all and ran some tests. Since he had made no study of the peculiar nature of the TV image, his tests were of "content" preferences, viewing time, and vocabulary counts. In a word, his approach to the problem was a literary one, albeit unconsciously so. Consequently, he had nothing to report. Had his methods been employed in 1500 A.D. to discover the effects of the printed book in the lives of children or adults, he could have found out nothing of the changes in human and social psychology resulting from typography. Print created individualism and nationalism in the sixteenth century. Program and "content" analysis offer no clues to the magic of these media or to their subliminal charge.

Leonard Doob, in his report Communication in Africa, tells of one African who took great pains to listen each evening to the BBC news, even though he could understand nothing of it. Just to be in the presence of those sounds at 7 P.M. each day was important for him. His attitude to speech was like ours to melody—the resonant intonation was meaning enough. In the Seventeenth century our ancestors still shared this native's attitude to the forms of media, as is plain in the following sentiment of the Frenchman Bernard Lam expressed in The Art of Speaking (London, 1696):

> 'Tis an effect of the Wisdom of God, who created Man to be happy, that whatever is useful to his conversation (way of life) is agreeable to him . . . because all victual that conduces to nourishment is relishable, whereas other things that cannot be assimulated and be turned into our substance are insipid. A discourse cannot be pleasant to the Hearer that is not easie to the Speaker; nor can it be easily pronounced unless it be heard with delight.

Here is an equilibrium theory of human diet and expression such as even now we are only striving to work out again for media after centuries of fragmentation and specialism. Pope Pius XII was deeply concerned that there be serious study of the media today. On February 17, 1950, he said:

> It is not an exaggeration to say that the future of modern society and the stability of its inner life depend in large part on the maintenance of an equilibrium between the strength of the techniques of communication and the capacity of the individual's own reaction.

Failure in this respect has for centuries been typical and total for mankind. Subliminal and docile acceptance of media impact has made them prisons without walls for their human users. As A. J. Liebling remarked in his book The Press, a man is not free if he cannot see where he is going, even if he has a gun to help him get there. For each of the media is also a powerful weapon with which to clobber other media and other groups. The result is that the present age has been one of multiple civil wars that are not limited to the world of art and entertainment. In War and Human Progress, Professor J. U. Nef declared: "The total wars of our time have been the result of a series of intellectual mistakes . . ."

If the formative power in the media are the media themselves, that raises a host of large matters that can only be mentioned here, although they deserve volumes. Namely, that technological media are staples or natural resources, exactly as are coal and cotton and oil. Anybody will concede that society whose economy is dependent upon one or two major staples like cotton, or grain, or lumber, or fish, or cattle is going to have some obvious social patterns of organization as a result. Stress on a few major staples creates extreme instability in the economy of limited staples. For a society configured by reliance on a few commodities accepts them as a social bond quite as much as the metropolis does the press. Cotton and oil, like radio and TV, become "fixed charges" on the entire psychic life of the community. And this pervasive fact creates the unique cultural flavor of any society. It pays through the nose and all its other senses for each staple that shapes its life.

That our human senses, of which all media are extensions, are also fixed charges on our personal energies, and that they also configure the awareness and experience of each one of us, may be perceived in another connection mentioned by the psychologist C. G. Jung:

> Every Roman was surrounded by slaves. The slave and his psychology flooded ancient Italy, and every Roman became inwardly, and of course unwittingly, a slave. Because living constantly in the atmosphere of slaves, he became infected through the unconscious with their psychology. No one can shield himself from such an influence (Contributions to Analytical Psychology, London, 1928).

20/The Photograph

The Brothel Without Walls

A photograph of "St. Peter's at a Moment of History" was the cover feature of Life magazine for June 14, 1963. It is one of the peculiar characteristics of the photo that it isolates single moments in time. The TV camera does not. The continuous scanning action of the TV camera provides, not the isolated moment or aspect, but the contour, the iconic profile and the transparency. Egyptian art, like primitive sculpture today, provided the significant outline that had nothing to do with a moment in time. Sculpture tends toward the timeless.

Awareness of the transforming power of the photo is often embodied in popular stories like the one about the admiring friend who said, "My, that's a fine child you have there!" Mother: "Oh, that's nothing. You should see his photograph." The power of the camera to be everywhere and to interrelate things is well indicated in the Vogue magazine boast (March 15, 1953): "A woman now, and without having to leave the country, can have the best of five (or more) nations hanging in her closet-beautiful and compatible as a statesman's dream." That is why, in the photographic age, fashions have come to be like the collage style in painting.

A century ago the British craze for the monocle gave to the wearer the power of the camera to fix people in a superior stare, as if they were objects. Erich von Stroheim did a great job with the monocle in creating the haughty Prussian officer. Both monocle and camera tend to turn people into things, and the photograph extends and multiplies the human image to the proportions of mass-produced merchandise. The movie stars and matinee idols are put in the public domain by photography. They become dreams that money can buy. They can be bought and hugged and thumbed more easily than public prostitutes. Mass-produced merchandise has always made some people uneasy in its prostitute aspect. Jean Genet's The Balcony is a play on this theme of society as a brothel environed by violence and horror. The avid desire of mankind to prostitute itself stands up against the chaos of revolution. The brothel remains firm and permanent amidst the most furious changes. In a word, photography has inspired Genet with the theme of the world since photography as a Brothel-without-Walls.

Nobody can commit photography alone. It is possible to have at least the illusion of reading and writing in isolation, but photography does not foster such attitudes. If there is any sense in deploring the growth of corporate and collective art forms such as the film and the press, it is surely in relation to the previous individualist technologies that these new forms corrode. Yet if there had been no prints or woodcuts and engravings, there would never have come the photograph. For centuries, the woodcut and the engraving had delineated the world by an arrangement of lines and points that had syntax of a very elaborate kind. Many historians of this visual syntax, like E. H. Gombrich and William M. Ivins, have been at great pains to explain how the art of the hand-written manuscript had permeated the art of the woodcut and the engraving until, with the halftone process, the dots and lines suddenly fell below the threshold of normal vision. Syntax, the net of rationality, disappeared from the later prints, just as it tended to disappear from the telegraph message and from the impressionist painting. Finally, in the pointillisme of Seurat, the world suddenly appeared through the painting. The direction of a syntactical point of view from outside onto the painting ended as literary form dwindled into headlines with the telegraph. With the photograph, in the same way, men had discovered how to make visual reports without syntax.

It was in 1839 that William Henry Fox Talbot read a paper to the Royal Society which had as title: "Some account of the Art of Photogenic Drawing, or the process by which Natural Objects may be made to delineate themselves without the aid of the artist's pencil." He was quite aware of photography as a kind of automation that eliminated the syntactical procedures of pen and pencil.

He was probably less aware that he had brought the pictorial world into line with the new industrial procedures. For photography mirrored the external world automatically, yielding an exactly repeatable visual image. It was this all-important quality of uniformity and repeatability that had made the Gutenberg break between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Photography was almost as decisive in making the break between mere mechanical industrialism and the graphic age of electronic man. The step from the age of Typographic Man to the age of Graphic Man was taken with the invention of photography. Both daguerreotypes and photographs introduced light and chemistry into the making process. Natural objects delineated themselves by an exposure intensified by lens and fixed by chemicals. In the daguerreotype process there was the same stippling or pitting with minute dots that was echoed later in Seurat's pointillisme, and is still continued in the newspaper mesh of dots that is called "wire-photo." Within a year of Daguerre's discovery, Samuel F. B. Morse was taking photographs of his wife and daughter in New York City. Dots for the eye (photograph) and dots for the ear (telegraph) thus met on top of a skyscraper.

A further cross-fertilization occurred in Talbot's invention of the photo, which he imagined as an extension of the camera obscura, or pictures in "the little dark room," as the Italians had named the picture play-box of the sixteenth century. Just at the time when mechanical writing had been achieved by movable types, there grew up the pastime of looking at moving images on the wall of a dark room. If there is sunshine outside and a pinhole in one wall, then the images of the outer world will appear on the wall opposite. This new discovery was very exciting to painters, since it intensified the new illusion of perspective and of the third dimension that is so closely related to the printed word. But the early spectators of the moving image in the sixteenth century saw those images upside down. For this reason the lens was introduced-in order to turn the picture right side up. Our normal vision is also upside down. Psychically, we learn to turn our visual world right side up by translating the retinal impression from visual into tactile and kinetic terms. Right side up is apparently something we feel but cannot see directly.

To the student of media, the fact that "normal" right-side-up vision is a translation from one sense into another is a helpful hint about the kinds of activity of distortion and translation that any language or culture induces in all of us. Nothing amuses the Eskimo more than for the white man to crane his neck to see the magazine pictures stuck on the igloo walls. For the Eskimo no more needs to look at a picture right side up than does a child before he has learned his letters on a line. Just why Westerners should be disturbed to find that natives have to learn to read pictures, as we learn to read letters, is worth consideration. The extreme bias and distortion of our sense-lives by our technology would seem to be a fact that we prefer to ignore in our daily lives. Evidence that natives do not perceive in perspective or sense the third dimension seems to threaten the Western ego-image and structure, as many have found after a trip through the Ames Perception Laboratory at Ohio State University. This lab is arranged to reveal the various illusions we create for ourselves in what we consider to be "normal" visual perception.

That we have accepted such bias and obliquity in a subliminal way through most of human history is clear enough. Just why we are no longer content to leave our experience in this subliminal state, and why many people have begun to get very conscious about the unconscious, is a question well worth investigation. People are nowadays much concerned to set their houses in order, a process of self-consciousness that has received large impetus from photography.

William Henry Fox Talbot, delighting in Swiss scenery, began to reflect on the camera obscura and that "it was during these thoughts that the idea occurred to me . . . how charming it would be if it were possible to cause these natural images to imprint themselves durably, and remain fixed on paper!" The printing press had, in the Renaissance, inspired a similar desire to give permanence to daily feelings and experience.

The method Talbot devised was that of printing positives chemically from negatives, to yield an exactly repeatable image. Thus the roadblock that had impeded the Greek botanists and had defeated their successors was removed. Most of the sciences had been, from their origins, utterly handicapped by the lack of adequate nonverbal means of transmitting information. Today, even subatomic physics would be unable to develop without the photograph.

The Sunday New York Times for June 15, 1958 reported:

TINY CELLS "SEEN" BY NEW TECHNIQUE

Microphoretic Method Spots Million-Billionth

of Gram, London Designer Says

Samples of substances weighing less than a million-billionth of a gram can be analyzed by a new British microscopic technique. This is the "microphoretic method" by Bernard M. Turner, a London biochemical analyst and instruments designer. It can be applied to the study of the cells of the brain and nervous system, cell duplication including that in cancerous tissue, and it will assist, it is believed, in the analyses of atmospheric pollution by dust. . . .

In effect, an electric current pulls or pushes the different constituents of the sample into zones where they would normally be invisible.

However, to say that "the camera cannot lie" is merely to underline the multiple deceits that are now practiced in its name. Indeed, the world of the movie that was prepared by the photograph has become synonymous with illusion and fantasy, turning society into what Joyce called an "allnights newsery reel," that substitutes a "reel" world for reality. Joyce knew more about the effects of the photograph on our senses, our language, and our thought processes than anybody else. His verdict on the "automatic writing" that is photography was the abnihilization of the etym. He saw the photo as at least a rival, and perhaps a usurper, of the word, whether written or spoken. But if etym (etymology) means the heart and core and moist substance of those beings that we grasp in words, then Joyce may well have meant that the photo was a new creation from nothing (ab-nihil), or even a reduction of creation to a photographic negative. If there is, indeed, a terrible nihilism in the photo and a substitution of shadows for substance, then we are surely not the worse for knowing it. The technology of the photo is an extension of our own being and can be withdrawn from circulation like any other technology if we decide that it is virulent. But amputation of such extensions of our physical being call for as much knowledge and skill as are prerequisite to any other physical amputation.

If the phonetic alphabet was a technical means of severing the spoken word from its aspects of sound and gesture, the photograph and its development in the movie restored gesture to the human technology of recording experience. In fact, the snapshot of arrested human postures by photography directed more attention to physical and psychic posture than ever before. The age of the photograph has become the age of gesture and mime and dance, as no other age has ever been. Freud and Jung built their observations on the interpretation of the languages of both individual and collective postures of everyday life. The physical and psychic gestalts, or "still" shots, with which they worked were much owing to the posture world revealed by the photograph. The photograph is just as useful for collective, as for individual, postures and gestures, whereas written and printed language is biased toward the private and individual posture. Thus, the traditional figures of rhetoric were individual postures of mind of the private speaker in relation to an audience, whereas myth and Jungian archetypes are collective postures of the mind with which the written form could not cope, any more than it could command mime and gesture. Moreover, that the photograph is quite versatile in revealing and arresting posture and structure wherever it is used, occurs in countless examples, such as the analysis of bird-flight. It was the photograph that revealed the secret of bird-flight and enabled man to take off.

The photo, in arresting bird-flight, showed that it was based on a principle of wing fixity. Wing movement was seen to be for propulsion, not for flight.

Perhaps the great revolution produced by photograph was in the traditional arts. The painter could no longer depict a world that had been much photographed. He turned, instead, to reveal the inner process of creativity in expressionism and abstract art. Likewise, the novelist could no longer describe objects or happenings for readers who already knew what was happening by photo, press, film, and radio. The poet and novelist turned to those inward gestures of the mind by which we achieve insight and by which we make ourselves and our world. Thus art moved from outer matching to inner making. Instead of depicting a world that matched the world we already knew, the artists turned to presenting the creative process for public participation. He has given to us now the means of becoming involved in the making-process. Each development of the electric age attracts, and demands, a high degree of producer-orientation. The age of the consumer of processed and packaged goods is, therefore, not the present electric age, but the mechanical age that preceded it. Yet, inevitably, the age of the mechanical has had to overlap with the electric, as in such obvious instances as the internal combustion engine that requires the electric spark to ignite the explosion that moves its cylinders. The telegraph is an electric form that, when crossed with print and rotary presses, yields the modern newspaper. And the photograph is not a machine, but a chemical and light process that, crossed with the machine, yields the movie. Yet there is a vigor and violence in these hybrid forms that is self-liquidating, as it were. For in radio and TV-purely electric forms from which the mechanical principle has been excluded-there is an altogether new relation of the medium to its users. This is a relation of high participation and involvement that, for good or ill, no mechanism had ever evoked.

Education is ideally civil defense against media fall-out. Yet Western man has had, so far, no education or equipment for meeting any of the new media on their own terms. Literate man is not only numb and vague in the presence of film or photo, but he intensifies his ineptness by a defensive arrogance and condescension to "pop kulch" and "mass entertainment." It was in this spirit of bulldog opacity that the scholastic philosophers failed to meet the challenge of the printed book in the sixteenth century. The vested interests of acquired knowledge and conventional wisdom have always been by-passed and engulfed by new media. The study of this process, however, whether for the purpose of fixity or of change, has scarcely begun. The notion that self-interest confers a keener eye for recognizing and controlling the processes of change is quite without foundation, as witness the motorcar industry. Here is a world of obsolescence as surely doomed to swift erosion as was the enterprise of the buggy- and wagon-makers in 1915. Yet does General Motors, for example, know, or even suspect, anything about the effect of the TV image on the users of motorcars? The magazine enterprises are similarly undermined by the TV image and its effect on the advertising icon. The meaning of the new ad icon has not been grasped by those who stand to lose all. The same is true of the movie industry in general. Each of these enterprises lacks any "literacy" in any medium but its own, and thus the startling changes resulting from new hybrid and crossings of media catch them unawares.

To The student of media structures, every detail of the total mosaic of the contemporary world is vivid with meaningful life. As early as March 15, 1953, Vogue magazine announced a new hybrid, resulting from a cross between photograph and air travel:

This first International Fashion Issue of Vogue is to mark a new point. We couldn't have done such an issue before. Fashion only got its internationalization papers a short time ago, and for the first time in one issue we can report on couture collections in five countries.

The advantages of such ad copy as high-grade ore in the lab of the media analyst can be recognized only by those trained in the language of vision and of the plastic arts in general. The copy writer has to be a strip-tease artist who has entire empathy with the immediate state of mind

of the audience. Such, indeed, is also the aptitude of the popular novelist or song writer. It follows that any widely accepted writer or entertainer embodies and reveals a current set of attitudes that can be verbalized by the analyst. "Do you read me, Mac?" But were the words of the Vogue writer to be considered merely on literary or editorial grounds, their meaning would be missed, just as the copy in a pictorial ad is not to be considered as literary statement but as mime of the psychopathology of everyday life. In the age of the photograph, language takes on a graphic or iconic character, whose "meaning" belongs very little to the semantic universe, and not at all to the republic of letters.

If we open a 1938 copy of Life, the pictures or postures then seen as normal now give a sharper sense of remote time than do objects of real antiquity. Small children now attach the phrase "the olden days" to yesterday's hats and overshoes, so keenly are they attuned to the abrupt seasonal changes of visual posture in the world of fashions. But the basic experience here is one that most people feel for yesterday's newspaper, than which nothing could be more drastically out of fashion. Jazz musicians express their distaste for recorded jazz by saying, "It is as stale as yesterday's newspaper."

Perhaps that is the readiest way to grasp the meaning of the photograph in creating a world of accelerated transience. For the relation we have to "today's newspaper," or verbal jazz, is the same that people feel for fashions. Fashion is not a way of being informed or aware, but a way of being with it. That, however, is merely to draw attention to a negative aspect of the photograph. Positively, the effect of speeding up temporal sequence is to abolish time, much as the telegraph and cable abolished space. Of course the photograph does both. It wipes out our national frontiers and cultural barriers, and involves us in The Family of Man, regardless of any particular point of view. A picture of a group of persons of any hue whatever is a picture of people, not of "colored people." That is the logic of the photograph, politically speaking. But the logic of the photograph is neither verbal or syntactical, a condition which renders literary culture quite helpless to cope with the photograph. By the same token, the complete transformation of human sense-awareness by this form involves a development of self-consciousness that alters facial expression and cosmetic makeup as immediately as it does our bodily stance, in public or in private. This fact can be gleaned from any magazine or movie of fifteen years back. It is not too much to say, therefore, that if outer posture is affected by the photograph, so with our inner postures and the dialogue with ourselves. The age of Jung and Freud is, above all, the age of the photograph, the age of the full gamut of self-critical attitudes.

This immense tidying-up of our inner lives, motivated by the new picture gestalt culture, has had its obvious parallels in our attempts to rearrange our homes and gardens and our cities. To see a photograph of the local slum makes the condition unbearable. The mere matching of the picture with reality provides a new motive for change, as it does a new motive for travel.

Daniel Boorstin in *The Image: or What happened to the American Dream* offers a conducted literary tour of the new photographic world of travel. One has merely to look at the new tourism in a literary perspective to discover that it makes no sense at all. To the literary man who has read about Europe, in leisurely anticipation of a visit, an ad that whispers: "You are just fifteen gourmet meals from Europe on the world's fastest ship" is gross and repugnant. Advertisements of travel by plane are worse: "Dinner in New York, indigestion in Paris." Moreover, the photograph has reversed the purpose of travel, which until now had been to encounter the strange and unfamiliar. Descartes, in the early seventeenth century, had observed that traveling was almost like conversing with men of other centuries, a point of view quite unknown before his time. For those who cherish such quaint experience, it is necessary today to go back very many centuries by the art and archaeology route. Professor Boorstin seems unhappy that so many Americans travel so much and are changed by it so little. He feels that the entire travel experience has become "diluted, contrived, prefabricated." He is not concerned to find out why

the photograph has done this to us. But in the same way intelligent people in the past always deplored the way in which the book had become a substitute for inquiry, conversation, and reflection, and never troubled to reflect on the nature of the printed book. The book reader has always tended to be passive, because that is the best way to read. Today, the traveler has become passive. Given travelers checks, a passport, and a toothbrush, the world is your oyster. The macadam road, the railroad, and the steamship have taken the travail out of travel. People moved by the silliest whims now clutter the foreign places, because travel differs very little from going to a movie or turning the pages of a magazine. The "Go Now, Pay Later," formula of the travel agencies might as well read: "Go now, arrive later," for it could be argued that such people never really leave their beaten paths of impercipience, nor do they ever arrive at any new place. They can have Shanghai or Berlin or Venice in a package tour that they need never open. In 1961, TWA began to provide new movies for its trans-Atlantic flights so that you could visit Portugal, California, or anywhere else, while en route to Holland, for example. Thus the world itself becomes a sort of museum of objects that have been encountered before in some other medium. It is well known that even museum curators often prefer colored pictures to the originals of various objects in their own cases. In the same way, the tourist who arrives at the Leaning Tower of Pisa, or the Grand Canyon of Arizona, can now merely check his reactions to something with which he has long been familiar, and take his own pictures of the same.

To lament that the packaged tour, like the photograph, cheapens and degrades by making all places easy of access, is to miss most of the game. It is to make value judgments with fixed reference to the fragmentary perspective of literary culture. It is the same position that considers a literary landscape as superior to a movie travelogue. For the untrained awareness, all reading and all movies, like all travel, are equally banal and unnourishing as experience. Difficulty of access does not confer adequacy of perception, though it may involve an object in an aura of psuedo-values, as with a gem, a movie star, or an old master. This now brings us to the factual core of the "pseudoevent," a label applied to the new media, in general, because of their power to give new patterns to our lives by acceleration of older patterns. It is necessary to reflect that this same insidious power was once felt in the old media, including languages. All media exist to invest our lives with artificial perception and arbitrary values.

All meaning alters with acceleration, because all patterns of personal and political interdependence change with any acceleration of information. Some feel keenly that speed-up has impoverished the world they knew by changing its forms of parochial preference for those pseudo-events that happened to enter into the composition of society just before the electric revolution of this century. The student of media soon comes to expect the new media of any period whatever to be classed as pseudo by those who have acquired the patterns of earlier media, whatever they may happen to be. This would seem to a normal, and even amiable, trait ensuring a maximal degree of social continuity and permanence amidst change and innovation. But all the conservatism in the world does not afford even a token resistance to the ecological sweep of the new electric media. On a moving highway the vehicle that backs up is accelerating in relation to the highway situation. Such would seem to be the ironical status of the cultural reactionary. When the trend is one way his resistance insures a greater speed of change. Control over change would seem to consist in moving not with it but ahead of it. Anticipation gives the power to deflect and control force. Thus we may feel like a man who has been hustled away from his favorite knot-hole in the ball park by a frantic rout of fans eager to see the arrival of a movie star. We are no sooner in position to look at one kind of event than it is obliterated by another, just as our Western lives seem to native cultures to be one long series of preparations for living. But the favorite stance of literary man has long been "to view with alarm" or "to point with pride," while scrupulously ignoring what's going on.

One immense area of photographic influence that affects our lives is the world of packaging and

display and, in general, the organization of shops and stores of every kind. The newspaper that could advertise every sort of product on one page quickly gave rise to the department stores that provided every kind of product under one roof. Today the decentralizing of such institutions into a multiplicity of small shops in shopping plazas is partly the creation of the car, partly the result of TV. But the photograph still exerts some centralist pressure in the mail-order catalogue. Yet the mail-order houses originally felt not only the centralist forces of railway and postal services, but also, and at the same time, the decentralizing power of the telegraph. The Sears Roebuck enterprise was directly owing to stationmaster use of the telegraph. These men saw that the waste of goods on railway siding could be ended by the speed of the telegraph to reroute and concentrate.

The complex network of media, other than the photograph that appears in the world of merchandising, is easier to observe in the world of sports. In one instance, the press camera contributed to radical changes in the game of football. A press photo of battered players in a 1905 game between Pennsylvania and Swarthmore came to the attention of President Teddy Roosevelt. He was so angered at the picture of Swarthmore's mangled Bob Maxwell that he issued an immediate ultimatum-that if rough play continued, he would abolish the game by executive edict. The effect was the same as that of the harrowing telegraph reports of Russell from the Crimea, which created the image and role of Florence Nightingale.

No less drastic was the effect of the press photo coverage of the lives of the rich. "Conspicuous consumption" owed less to the phrase of Veblen than to the press photographer, who began to invade the entertainment spots of the very rich. The sights of men ordering drinks from horseback at the bars of clubs quickly caused a public revulsion that drove the rich into the ways of timid mediocrity and obscurity in America, which they have never abandoned. The photograph made it quite unsafe to come out and play, for it betrayed such blatant dimensions of power as to be self-defeating. On the other hand, the movie phase of photography created a new aristocracy of actors and actresses, who dramatized, on and off the screen, the fantasia of conspicuous consumption that the rich could never achieve. The movie demonstrated the magic power of the photo by providing a consumer package of plutocratic dimension for all the Cinderellas in the world.

The Gutenberg Galaxy provides the necessary background for studying the rapid rise of new visual values after the advent of printing from movable types. "A place for everything and everything in its place" is a feature not only of the compositor's arrangement of his type fonts, but of the entire range of human organization of knowledge and action from the sixteenth century onward. Even the inner life of the feelings and emotions began to be structured and ordered and analyzed according to separate pictorial landscapes, as Christopher Hussey explained in his fascinating study of The Picturesque. More than a century of this pictorial analysis of the inner life preceded Talbot's 1839 discovery of photography. Photography, by carrying the pictorial delineation of natural objects much further than paint or language could do, had a reverse effect. By conferring a means of self-delineation of objects, of "statement without syntax," photography gave the impetus to a delineation of the inner world. Statement without syntax or verbalization was really statement by gesture, by mime, and by gestalt. This new dimension opened for human inspection by poets like Baudelaire and Rimbaud le paysage intérieur, or the countries of the mind. Poets and painters invaded this inner landscape world long before Freud and Jung brought their cameras and notebooks to capture states of mind. Perhaps the most spectacular of all was Claude Bernard, whose Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine ushered science into le milieu intérieur of the body exaxtly at the time when poets did the same for the life of perception and feeling.

It is important to note that this ultimate stage of pictorialization was a reversal of pattern. The world of body and mind observed by Baudelaire and Bernard was not photographical at all, but a

nonvisual set of relations such as the physicist, for example, had encountered by means of the new mathematics and statistics. The photograph might be said, also, to have brought to human attention the subvisual world of bacteria that caused Louis Pasteur to be driven from the medical profession by his indignant colleagues. Just as the painter Samuel Morse had unintentionally projected himself into the nonvisual world of the telegraph, so the photograph really transcends the pictorial by capturing the inner gestures and postures of both body and mind, yielding the new worlds of endocrinology and psychopathology.

To understand the medium of the photograph is quite impossible, then, without grasping its relations to other media, both old and new. For media, as extensions of our physical and nervous systems, constitute a world of biochemical interactions that must ever seek new equilibrium as new extensions occur. In America, people can tolerate their images in mirror or photo, but they are made uncomfortable by the recorded sound of their own voices. The photo and visual worlds are secure areas of anesthesia.

28/The Phonograph

The Toy That Shrank the National Chest

The phonograph, which owes its origin to the electrical telegraph and the telephone, had not manifested its basically electric form and function until the tape recorder released it from its mechanical trappings. That the world of sound is essentially a unified field of instant relationships lends it a near resemblance to the world of electromagnetic waves. This fact brought the phonograph and radio into early association.

Just how obliquely the phonograph was at first received is indicated in the observation of John Philip Sousa, the brass-band director and composer. He commented: "With the phonograph vocal exercises will be out of vogue! Then what of the national throat? Will it not weaken? What of the national chest? Will it not shrink?"

One fact Sousa Grasped: The phonograph is an extension and amplification of the voice that may well have diminished individual vocal activity, much as the car had reduced pedestrian activity.

Like the radio that it still provides with program content, the phonograph is a hot medium. Without it, the twentieth century as the era of tango, ragtime, and jazz would have had a different rhythm. But the phonograph was involved in many misconceptions, as one of its early names-gramophone-implies. It was conceived as a form of auditory writing (gramma-letters). It was also called "graphophone," with the needle in the role of pen. The idea of it as a "talking machine" was especially popular. Edison was delayed in his approach to the solution of its problems by considering it at first as a "telephone repeater"; that is, a storehouse of data from the telephone, enabling the telephone to "provide invaluable records, instead of being the recipient of momentary and fleeting communication." These words of Edison, published in the North American Review of June, 1878, illustrate how the then recent telephone invention already had the power to color thinking in other fields. So, the record player had to be seen as a kind of phonetic record of telephone conversation. Hence, the names "phonograph" and "gramophone."

Behind The immediate popularity of the phonograph was the entire electric implosion that gave such new stress and imprtance to actual speech rhythms in music, poetry, and dance alike. Yet the phonograph was a machine merely. It did not at first use an electric motor or circuit. But in providing a mechanical extension of the human voice and new ragtime melodies, the phonograph was propelled into a central place by some of the major currents of the age. The fact of acceptance of a new phrase, or a speech form, or a dance rhythm is already direct evidence of some actual development to which it is significantly related. Take, for example, the shift of English into an interrogative mood, since the arrival of "How about that?" Nothing could induce people to begin suddenly to use such a phrase over and over, unless there were some new stress, rhythm, or nuance in interpersonal realations that gave it relevance.

It was while handling paper tape, impressed by Morse Code dots and dashes, that Edison noticed the sound given off when the tape moved at high speed resembled "human talk heard indistinctly." It then occurred to him that indented tape could record a telephone message. Edison became aware of the limits of lineality and the sterility of specialism as soon as he entered the electric field. "Look," he said, "it's like this. I start here with the intention of reaching here in an experiment, say, to increase the speed of the Atlantic cable; but when I've arrived part way in my straight line, meet with a phenomenon, and it leads me off in another direction and develops into a phonograph." Nothing could more dramatically express the turning point from mechanical explosion to electrical implosion. Edison's own career embodied that very change in our world, and he himself was often caught in the confusion between the two forms of procedure.

It was just at the end of the nineteenth century that the psychologist Lipps revealed by a kind of

electric audiograph that the single clang of a bell was an intensive manifold containing all possible symphonies. It was somewhat on the same lines that Edison approached his problems. Practical experience had taught him that embryonically all problems contained all answers when one could discover a means of rendering them explicit. In his own case, his determination to give the phonograph, like the telephone, a direct practical use in business procedures led to his neglect of the instrument as a means of entertainment. Failure to foresee the phonograph as a means of entertainment was really a failure to grasp the meaning of the electric revolution in general. In our time we are reconciled to the phonograph as a toy and a solace; but press, radio, and TV have also acquired the same dimension of entertainment. Meantime, entertainment pushed to an extreme becomes the main form of business and politics. Electric media, because of their total "field" character, tend to eliminate the fragmented specialities of form and function that we have long accepted as the heritage of alphabet, printing, and mechanization. The brief and compressed history of the phonograph includes all phases of the written, the printed, and the mechanized word. It was the advent of the electric tape recorder that only a few years ago released the phonograph from its temporary involvement in mechanical culture. Tape and the l.p. record suddenly made the phonograph a means of access to all the music and speech of the world.

Before turning to the l.p. and tape-recording revolution, we should note that the earlier period of mechanical recording and sound reproduction had one large factor in common with the silent picture. The early phonograph produced a brisk and raucous experience not unlike that of a Mack Sennett movie. But the undercurrent of mechanical music is strangely sad. It was the genius of Charles Chaplin to have captured for film this sagging quality of a deep blues, and to have overlaid it with jaunty jive and bounce. The poets and painters and musicians of the later nineteenth century all insist on a sort of metaphysical melancholy as latent in the great industrial world of the metropolis. The Pierrot figure is as crucial in the poetry of Laforgue as it is in the art of Picasso or the music of Satie. Is not the mechanical at its best a remarkable approximation to the organic? And is not a great industrial civilization able to produce anything in abundance for everybody? The answer is "Yes." But Chaplin and the Pierrot poets and painters and musicians pushed this logic all the way to reach the image of Cyrano de Bergerac, who was the greatest lover of all, but who was never permitted the return of his love. This weird image of Cyrano, the unloved and unlovable lover, was caught up in the phonograph cult of the blues. Perhaps it is misleading to try to derive the origin of the blues from Negro folk music; however, Constant Lambert, English conductor-composer, in his Music Ho!, provides an account of the blues that preceded the jazz of the post-World War I. He concludes that the great flowering of jazz in the twenties was a popular response to the highbrow richness and orchestral subtlety of the Debussy-Delius period. Jazz would seem to be an effective bridge between highbrow and lowbrow music, much as Chaplin made a similar bridge for pictorial art. Literary people eagerly accepted these bridges, and Joyce got Chaplin into Ulysses as Bloom, just as Eliot got jazz into the rhythms of his early poems.

Chaplin's clown-Cyrano is as much a part of a deep melancholy as Laforgue's or Satie's Pierrot art. Is it not inherent in the very triumph of the mechanical and its omission of the human? Could the mechanical reach a higher level than the talking machine with its mime of voice and dance? Do not T. S. Eliot's famous lines about the typist of the jazz age capture the entire pathos of the age of Chaplin and the ragtime blues?

> *When lovely woman stoops to folly and*
> *Paces about her room again, alone,*
> *She smoothes her hair with automatic hand,*
> *And puts a record on the gramophone.*

Read as a Chaplin-like comedy, Eliot's Prufrock makes ready sense. Prufrock is the complete

Pierrot, the little puppet of the mechanical civilization that was about to do a flip into its electric phase.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of complex mechanical forms such as film and phonograph as the prelude to the automation of human song and dance. As this automation of human voice and gesture had approached perfection, so the human work force approached automation. Now in the electric age the assembly line with its human hands disappears, and electric automation brings about a withdrawal of the work force from industry. Instead of being automated themselves-fragmented in task and function-as had been the tendency under mechanization, men in the electric age move increasingly to involvement in diverse jobs simultaneously, and to the work of learning, and to the programming of computers.

This revolutionary logic inherent in the electric age was made fairly clear in the early electric forms of telegraph and telephone that inspired the "talking machine." These new forms that did so much to recover the vocal, auditory, and mimetic world that had been repressed by the printed word, also inspired the strange new rhythms of the "the jazz age," the various forms of syncopation and symbolist discontinuity that, like relativity and quantum physics, heralded the end of the Gutenberg era with its smooth, uniform lines of type and organization.

The word "jazz" comes from the French jaser, to chatter. Jazz is, indeed, a form of dialogue among instrumentalists and dancers alike. Thus it seemed to make an abrupt break with the homogeneous and repetitive rhythms of the smooth waltz. In the age of Napoleon and Lord Byron, when the waltz was a new form, it was greeted as a barbaric fulfillment of the Rousseauistic dream of the noble savage. Grotesque as this idea now appears, it is really a most valuable clue to the dawning mechanical age. The impersonal choral-dancing of the older, courtly pattern was abandoned when the waltzers held each other in a personal embrace. The waltz is precise, mechanical, and military, as its history manifests. For a waltz to yield its full meaning, there must be military dress. "There was a sound of revelry by night" was how Lord Byron referred to the waltzing before Waterloo. To the eighteenth century and to the age of Napoleon, the citizen armies seemed to be an individualistic release from the feudal framework of courtly hierarchies. Hence the association of waltz with hierarchic deference. The waltzers were all uniform and equal, having free movement in any part of the hall. That this was the Romantic idea of the life of the noble savage now seems odd, but the Romantics knew as little about real savages as they did about assembly lines.

In our own century the arrival of jazz and ragtime was also heralded as the invasion of the bottom-wagging native. The indignant tended to appeal from jazz to the beauty of the mechanical and repetitive waltz that had once been greeted as pure native dancing. If jazz is considered as a break with mechanism in the direction of the discontinuous, the participant, the spontaneous and improvisational, it can also be seen as a return to a sort of oral poetry in which performance is both creation and composition. It is a truism among jazz performers that recorded jazz is "as stale as yesterday's newspaper." Jazz is alive, like conversation; and like conversation it depends upon a repertory of available themes. But performance is composition. Such performance insures maximal participation among players and dancers alike. Put in this way, it becomes obvious at once that jazz belongs in that family of mosaic structures that reappeared in the Western world with the wire services. It belongs with symbolism in poetry, and with the many allied forms in painting and in music.

The bond between the phonograph and song and dance is no less deep than its earlier relation to telegraph and telephone. With the first printing of musical scores in the sixteenth century, words and music drifted apart. The separate virtuosity of voice and instruments became the basis of the great musical developments of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The same kind of fragmentation and specialism in the arts and sciences made possible mammoth results in industry

and in military enterprise, and in massive cooperative enterprises such as the newspaper and the symphony orchestra.

Certainly the phonograph as a product of industrial, assembly-line organization and distribution showed little of the electric qualities that had inspired its growth in the mind of Edison. There were prophets who could foresee the great day when the phonograph would aid medicine by providing a medical means of discrimination between "the sob of hysteria and the sigh of melancholia . . . the ring of whooping cough and the hack of the consumptive. It will be an expert in insanity, distinguishing between the laugh of the maniac and drivel of the idiot. . . . It will accomplish this feat in the anteroom, while the physician is busying himself with his last patient." In practice, however, the phonograph stayed with the voices of the Signori Foghornis, the basso-tenores, robusto-profundos.

Recording facilities did not presume to touch anything so subtle as an orchestra until after the First War. Long before this, one enthusiast looked to the record to rival the photograph album and to hasten the happy day when "future generations will be able to condense within the space of twenty minutes a tone-picture of a single lifetime: five minutes of a chile's prattle, five of the boy's exultations, five of the man's reflections, and five from the feeble utterance of the deathbed." James Joyce, somewhat later, did better. He made *Finnegans Wake* a tone poem that condensed in a single sentence all the prattlings, exultations, observations, and remorse of the entire human race. He could not have conceived this work any in other age than the one that produced the phonograph and the radio.

It was radio that finally injected a full electric charge into the world of the photograph. The radio receiver of 1924 was already superior in sound quality, and soon began to depress the phonograph and record business. Eventually, radio restored the record business by extending popular taste in the direction of the classics.

The real break came after the Second War with the availability of the tape recorder. This meant the end of the incision recording and its attendant surface noise. In 1949 the era of electric hi-fi was another rescuer of the phonograph business. The hi-fi quest for "realistic sound" soon merged with the TV image as part of the recovery of tactile experience. For the sensation of having the performing instruments "right in the room with you" is a striving toward the union of the audile and tactile in a finesse of fiddle that is in large degree the sculptural experience. To be in the presence of performing musicians is to experience their touch and handling of instruments as tactile and kenetic, not just as resonant. So it can be said that hi-fi is not any quest for abstract effects of sound in separation from the other senses. With hi-fi, the phonograph meets the TV tactile challenge.

Stereo sound, a further development, is "all-around" or "wrap-around" sound. Previously sound had emanated from a single point in accordance with the bias of visual culture with its fixed point of view. The hi-fi changeover was really for music what cubism had been for painting, and what symbolism had been for literature; namely, the acceptance of multiple facets and planes in a single experience. Another way to put is to say that stereo is sound in depth, as TV is the visual in depth.

Perhaps it is not very contradictory that when a medium becomes a means of depth experience the old categories of "classical" and "popular" or of "highbrow" and "lowbrow" no longer obtain. Watching a blue-baby heart operation on TV is an experience that will fit none of the categories. When l.p. and hi-fi and stereo arrived, a depth approach to musical experience also came in. Everybody lost his inhibitions about "highbrow," and the serious people lost their qualms about popular music and culture. Anything that is approached in depth acquires as much interest as the great matters. Because "depth" means "in interrelation," not "in isolation." Depth means insight, not point off view; and insight is a kind of mental involvement in process that makes the content

of the item seem quite secondary. Consciousness itself if an inclusive process not at all dependent on content. Consciousness does not postulate consciousness of anything in particular.

With regard to jazz, l.p. brought many changes, such as the cult of "real cool drool," because the greatly increased length of a single side of a disk meant that the jazz band could really have a long and casual chat among its instruments. The repertory of the 1920s was revived and given new depth and complexity by this new means. But the tape recorder in combination with l.p. revolutionized the repertory of classical music. Just as tape meant the new study of spoken rather than written languages, so it brought in the entire musical culture of many centuries and countries. Where before there had been a narrow selection from periods and composer, the tape recorder, combined with l.p., gave a full musical spectrum that made the sixteenth centure as available as the nineteenth, and Chinese folk song as accessible as the Hungarian.

A brief summary of technological events relating to the phonograph might go this way:

The telegraph translated writing into sound, a fact directly related to the origin of both the telephone and phonograph. With the telegraph, the only walls left are the vernacular walls that the photograph and movie and wirephoto overleap so easily. The electricfication of writing was almost as big a step into the nonvisual and auditory space as the later steps soon taken by telephone, radio, and TV.

The telephone: speech without walls.

The phonograph: music hall without walls.

The photograph: museum without walls.

The electric light: space without walls.

The movie, radio, and TV: classroom without walls.

Man the food-gatherer reappears incongruously as information-gatherer. In this role, elecronic man is no less a nomad than his paleolithic ancestors.

An Ancient Quarrel in Modern America

Hutchins and Adler--Sofphists, Grammarians and Dialecticians--Cicero vs. John Dewey-- South vs. North--Athens to Chicago

THE BATTLE OF the books has broken out again. The splenetic interchanges of educators and scholars, beside which the wrath of Achilles or the ire of Republicans against the New Deal is a puerile business, are shrieking across the no-man's land of the curriculum. Hutchins, Adler, and Van Doran have made commando raids deep into enemy territory, and the rage of the immobilized battalions of standard and progressive education is uttering itself in howls against them as "reactionary," "obscurantist," "metaphysical," "unscientific."

Hutchins and Adler are news. Education is news. The great books are talked about, and the "great man's fat book club" (euphemism for "the fat man's great book club") numbers some prominent Chicago millionaires in the adult education division of the University of Chicago. Even the most innocent of bystanders might suppose that Hutchins has "got something" when he sees Midas and Croesus arriving for class with notebook in hand. The ancient Sophists promised to teach men how they could acquire wealth. What does Mr. Hutchins tell those who have already acquired it?

Viewed as an episode in a dispute which began in ancient Athens, the present quarrel over the Chicago Program becomes not only more interesting but more intelligible. I shall state briefly what seems to me to be the origin and history of this quarrel before proceeding to fill in the outline with a few facts which will enable the reader to investigate the business more completely than it can be shown here.

The end of education as described by Hutchins is the making of the citizen. The citizen is rational man equipped for social and political life by means of encyclopedic (non-specialized) training in the arts and sciences (the great books program). Special skill in the arts of reading and writing are paramount. The citizen must be fluent, even eloquent, on all subjects. The citizen must know all things which concern the welfare of the group.

The opponents of Hutchins, whether scientists, progressive educationalists, positivists, or experimentalists, (1) are all agreed in a specialist notion of human activity. Scientific knowledge and method are the ultimate bases of social and political authority for men like Professor Dewey. (2) Liberals like Alexander Meiklejohn working with Rousseau's basic assumption that the state is a moral person conclude that "Teacher and pupil are not isolated individuals. They are both agents of the state." (3)

Education as conceived by the liberal opponents of Hutchins is more concerned with making the individual useful to the state than with making the individual potentially a ruler of himself and of the state. Whereas Hutchins' program would make every citizen a potential ruler, the "liberals" conceive rather of the individual as a technologically functional unit in the state. Meiklejohn employs the analogy of the individual as a note in the musical score of society, whereas Hutchins thinks of each person as a complete musical work. Again, Hutchins adopts the classical view of man as a rational animal and hence a political animal. The state from this point of view is an association of autonomous persons. Opposed to this, a conventional representative of nineteenth-century social thought, such as Dewey or Meiklejohn, regards the collectivity as the basic thing. The individual has no nature which is not conferred on him by the collectivity. Man is not a rational animal.

Behind this contrast in basic postulates between Hutchins and his opponents there is a long history. What make the explanation of the conflict rather difficult is the fact that while the position of Hutchins is recognizably that of Isocrates and Cicero, the position of men like Dewy is not like that of Plato and Aristotle. Nevertheless, I think it can be shown that Dewey and the

experimentalists are lineally descended from Plato and Aristotle via William of Ockham and Peter Ramus. My explanation of the modern quarrel is in terms of the old quarrel between the grammarians and rhetoricians on the one hand and the dialecticians on the other hand. It is the quarrel begun by Socrates against the Sophists, from whose ranks he came. However, the Church Fathers, notably St. Jerome and St. Augustine, made Ciceronian humanism basic training for the exegetist of Scripture. Patristic humanism subordinated dialectics to grammar and rhetoric until this same quarrel broke out afresh in the twelfth century when Peter Abelard set up dialectics as the supreme method in theological discussion. Abelard's party was opposed by the great Ciceronian humanist John of Salisbury, whose Metalogicus, as the name implies, was aimed against the logicians, who were called the Schoolmen, or moderni. (4)

After four centuries of triumphant dialectics, the traditional patristic reaction, heralded by Petrarch, had gathered sufficient head under Erasmus to supplant a scholasticism weakened from within by bitter disputes. But by many channels mathematical, philosophical, theological, and scientific dialectics has persisted. Particularly strong was the scholastic current in New England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries where the influence of dialectics through Calvinistic theology made of Harvard a little Sorbonne. Meantime, the southern states had received a class of small English gentry which had been reared in the Ciceronian encyclopedism that was then standard training in all the secularized schools and colleges of England. Humanistic, legalistic, forensic, southern education has followed Ciceronian lines to this day, as the case of an eminent Kentuckian such as Robert Hutchins illustrates. On the other hand, the North has followed scholastic lines, showing more concern for abstract method and technology than for the res publica. It is no accident that nearly all American political thought is Southern. In short, the cultural cleavage of North and South reflects the broad divisions of the age-old quarrel between Socrates and the Sophists in the past and between science and "the great books program" in the present. (5)

Referring to Plato's account of Hippias of Elis, M. Robin observes: "He was an encyclopaedic virtuoso of the picturesque type produced by the Italian Renaissance." (6) My problem is to sketch in the historical facts which made it possible for a Greek Sophist to become the ideal of Renaissance humanist education. By so doing it is possible to highlight the significance of, and the opposition to, the great books program. The Sophists advertised for pupils by promising wealth and power, and they demonstrated their verbal and dialectical skill at great festivals. They gave oratorical displays on all the themes of art, science, and philosophy. To manipulate this encyclopedic knowledge it became necessary to organize it around basic "commonplaces" or loci of argument; and in order to retain this knowledge "Hippias' system of mnemonics was of great importance." (7) Naturally, the Sophists made logic subordinate to rhetoric or persuasion, since their end was political. And this it was which raised against them the opposition of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, who were all agreed that dialectics should control rhetoric, that knowledge was superior even to prudential action. (8)

It is unfair to suppose that the Sophists were merely cynical power and money gluttons. They claimed also to teach the means to wisdom; for wisdom, as well as eloquence, was thought by them, as by Cicero, to be the by-product of erudition. It was this claim which most annoyed Plato and against which he directs his dialectical refutations in the Gorgias and elsewhere. (9) (I think that this is admittedly the claim of the Chicago program also.) But Plato and Aristotle were far from successful in severing rhetoric from wisdom. Isocrates proved a most formidable exponent of the doctrine that eloquence and wisdom are one, and he compelled Plato and Aristotle to make practical compromises. (10)

It is necessary to spend some time in showing how this identity of eloquence and wisdom enters into the work of Cicero, since he, more than any other individual, was responsible for the concepts of humanism which prevailed in the twelfth, the sixteenth, or the twentieth centuries.

He who would understand how in the thought of Jefferson, Woodrow Wilson, or in the great books program, all knowledge is subordinated to the development of political prudence, must understand the nature and influence of Cicero. When this is seen it is easy to define the opposition which always rises against the Ciceronian program from the camps of technology, science, or philosophy.

The origin of this important claim for the inseparable character of eloquence and wisdom would seem to lie in the familiar doctrine of the Logos, which may be supposed to have arisen with Heraclitus. (11) Society is a mirror or speculum of the Logos, as, indeed, are the external world, the mind of man and, above all, human speech. Society, ideally the cosmopolis or perfect world state, claimed the devotion of every virtuous man. And just as Zeno considered wisdom or prudence "not only as the first of the virtues, but as the foundation of all," so political prudence is the noblest sphere in which to exercise this virtue. (12) The Stoics deduced from this doctrine the corollary that "The bond of the state is the Logos (ratio atque oratio)." (13)

Viewed from the standpoint of the doctrine of the Logos, man is distinguished from the brutes by speech, and as he becomes more eloquent he becomes less brutish. (14) As he becomes less brutish he becomes more wise. There is thus no conflict between eloquence and wisdom; and since eloquence is the means to political power, the great orator, the great statesman, and the great philosopher are one and the same. (15) Boccaccio could hail Petrarch as "him whose heart was the abode of the Muses, and the sanctuary of philosophy and eloquence." (16)

If there is one word which is oftener used by Cicero, or one which better describes his position than another, it is humanitas. (17) When we speak of the humanities today as opposed to technology, the physical sciences, or highly specialized disciplines such as logic, we mean what Cicero and Scipio meant: "Scipio . . . introduced into Roman society the atmosphere of Stoicism, known as humanitas: this included an aversion to war and civil strife, an eagerness to appreciate the art and literature of Greece, and an admiration for the ideals depicted by Xenophon, of the ruler in Cyrus, and of the citizen in Socrates." (18) For Cicero the complete orator, the doctus orator, is the ideal philosopher, ruler, citizen. (19) Moreover, "whatever the theme, from whatever art of whatever branch of knowledge it be taken, the orator, just as if he had got up the case for a client, will state it better and more gracefully than the actual discoverer and the specialist." (20)

Just precisely what is implied in this last statement can best be found in the pioneer investigation done by M. Marrou on the education and work of St. Augustine. (21) Even earlier, de Labriolle had shown how the encyclopedic equipment of the classical grammarian who was competent to give an explication of a poet (22) was likewise required by the exegetist of Scripture. (23) Confronted with the inexhaustible riches of a passage of Scripture, St. Augustine wishes for an ideal theologian who combines all the virtues of Quintilian's grammarian and Cicero's orator: O utinam doctissimum aliquem, neque id tantum, sed etiam eloquentissimum . . . de hoc ambo (de vi et potentia animae) interrogare possemus! (24)

St. Augustine, who was the educator of the entire Middle Ages, was himself just this sort of writer. He wrote treatises on the liberal arts. He had become acquainted with the beauty of philosophy by reading the Hortensius, the lost treatise of Cicero. There was no eloquence without philosophy in St. Augustine. He also became an historian in the best tradition in his De Civitate Dei; and his De Doctrina Christiana is the charter of Christian education, laying down a Ciceronian basis for all teaching in the next centuries. (25)

After this brief indication of the opposition of Plato and Aristotle to the ideal of knowledge subordinated to the service of action or political prudence, followed by a reference to Cicero's consolidation of the political ideal, and the way in which Cicero's program became the basis of patristic humanism, it remains to sketch quickly the subsequent stages of this development.

The cultivation of rhetoric and eloquence in the Middle Ages was primarily for exegesis and homiletics, but increasingly it became associated with the law faculties. (26) The authoritative statement of L. J. Paetow will clarify the confused notions which are generally held on these subjects: "There is abroad a generally erroneous notion about religious instruction in the Middle Ages. Any close inspection of the work of medieval schools reveals the rather startling fact that they offered extremely little religious instruction. It is equally surprising to find that theology was taught in comparatively few universities of the Middle Ages, whereas a faculty of law was lacking in not a single one of them." (27)

An important fact for the history of the Ciceronian tradition is that grammar and rhetoric (everything we today know as "humanism") were not supplanted by dialectics in Italy as they were in France, Germany, and England. Italy's great legal tradition kept grammar and rhetoric in the foreground, so that there is nothing strange in the fact that Petrarch got his literary training at the Bologna law school. (28) However, most of the Italian monks who would ordinarily have been studying Cicero and Quintilian at Monte Cassino and such places, had gone off to Paris to study logic. Thus Petrarch's complaint about the state of classical studies in Italy at this time was well founded. (29)

Thus the Goths and Huns of learning (of whom Petrarch and Erasmus never tire to speak) were the logicians of the Sorbonne and Oxford. The logicians were the moderni. The humanists called themselves the antiqui theologi, because they were sponsoring the revival of the old patristic methods in exegesis against the new speculative and systematic theology. (30)

In traversing so many centuries with a view to setting up fingerposts for those interested in the ancient quarrel of rhetoric and dialectics, only the sketchiest methods are feasible. I must now assume that the existence, at least, of this quarrel between humanism and something which has been variously designated as "scholastic philosophy," "dialectics," and the "scientific spirit," has been indicated. For the purpose of rounding off the paper it is necessary to observe that stage of the battle which occurred in the sixteenth century, since every historian of modern literature and thought is accustomed to take his bearings from that century. No more impressive evidence of the continuity of the "Ciceronian" tradition could be given here than that of L. K. Born in his preface to Erasmus' Education of a Christian Prince. Discussing the numerous manuals of this class, he says: "That there is a continuous line of succession at least from the time of Isocrates with his Ad Nicoclem to the twentieth century is beyond question." (31) The Gargantua of Rabelais is likewise a treatise on humanistic education for the prince just as much as More's Utopia, Castiglione's Courtier, Aschams's Scholemaster, and Spenser's Faerie Queene. (32)

As one reads the early eighteenth-century Byrd of Westover (33) one is in contact with a Ciceronian humanist who began every day with reading in Greek and Latin, a man whose training was legalistic and whose interests were political. "For some reason," says L. B. Wright, "Southern colonists were less introspective . . . than their contemporaries in New England." (34) The reason for this dichotomy lies in the divergent education of the two sections of America. Whereas the Southerner pursued the linguistic and legalistic learning of sixteenth-century humanism, the New Englander was nourished on logic and speculative or systematic theology. (35) Whereas the Southerner had the practical political and social bias of the Renaissance gentleman and tended to study letters and law, the New England was absorbed in the most recondite theological problems of human depravity, grace, foreknowledge, and free will. The stages by which he made the transition from high theology to high finance have analyzed in R. H. Tawney's classic Religion and the Rise of Capitalism. (36)

Without proceeding into the kind of detail possible only in a book, I have done what I could to suggest that behind the immediate controversy about the great books program lies not only the basic cleavage of American culture but a quarrel whose roots are in ancient Greece. Between the

speculative dialectician and scientist who says that "the glory of man is to know the truth by my methods," and the eloquent moralist who says that "the bliss of man is good government carried on by copiously eloquent and wise citizens," there need be no conflict. Conflict, however, will inevitably arise between these parties when either attempts to capture the entire education of an age or a country. It would seem to be a matter of distributing time for these studies. The Ciceronian, particularly in a democracy, could reasonably have charge of all education until graduation from college (whether that occurs at eighteen or twenty-one). Intimate association with the scientific spirit, whether inculcated by logic and dialectics or by the physical sciences, can very well afford to be postponed to the stage of graduate study. It would seem, however, that some knowledge of the history of the present dispute would serve to diminish the fog and the passions aroused at present, and would substitute some light for much heat. Of course, no human difficulties ever seem inevitable to the historical gaze. Reasonable inquiry would deprive us of that major distraction from boredom which is invariably sought in hasty accusation and warm rejoinder where both parties raise convenient inconsequence to the level of an intellectual virtue.

NOTES

1 The attack of Sidney Hook on the Hutchins-Van Doren program puts the objections of the experimentalist camp in the conventional way. ("God, Geometry, and the Good Society." Partisan Review [Spring, 1944] 161-167).

2 Sidney Hook: John Dewey (New York, 1939), 155, 175, 220. "The process and method of constructing goods is the only thing that can be called the good." (180)

3 Education Between Two Worlds (New York, 1942), 279. On p. 84 Meiklejohn shows that not the individual but the state is personal. Hence all men have their freedom not in their own natures but in and from and by the state.

4 Basic for an understanding of how the classical disciplines were focused for subsequent centuries is Saint Augustin et la Fin de la Culture Antique by H. I. Marrow (Paris, 1930). Lectures given by Etienne Gilson at the University of Toronto (1939-40) traced the Ciceronian tradition to the time of Erasmus, explaining the precise nature of the quarrel between the rhetoricians and dialecticians from the twelfth century onwards. The quarrel between Abelard and St. Bernard, between Petrarch and the Huns of the Sorbonne, between Erasmus and the Schoolmen, between Swift and the "moderns," is basically the quarrel.

5 The curious way in which this dichotomy illuminates the work of Poe in contrast to the work of the New England literati I have tried to show in "Edgar Poe's Tradition" (Sewanee Review, Winter 1944, 24-33).

6 Leon Robin, Greek Thought and the Origins of the Scientific Spirit (London, 1928), 136. CF. Werner Jaeger's Paideia (New York, 1939), 294.

7 Robin, op. cit. (see not 6), 139.

8 Robin, 143. Since everybody is familiar with the claims of Socrates and Plato for dialectics, I give here the less well-known text of Aristotle from the Topics (101a). Dialectics "has a further use in relation to the ultimate bases of the principles used in the several sciences. For it is impossible to discuss them at all from the principles proper to the particular science in hand, seeing that the principles are the prius of everything else: . . . dialectics is a process of criticism wherein lies the path to the principles of all inquiries." (Trans. of W. A. Pickard-Cambridge.)

9 Richard Robinson, Plato's Earlier Dialectic (New York, 1941), 73-74.

10 W. Rhys Roberts, Greek Rhetoric and Literary Criticism (New York, 1928), 46. Cf. Cicero's

De Oratore 3.35, and Orator 51.172.

11The best account is that of E. V. Arnold in Roman Stoicism (Cambridge, 1911), 37 et passim.

12 Ibid., 275.

13 Ibid., 306. Cf. Jaeger, op. cit. (see note 6), 274, 318, 323.

14 De Oratore 1.8.

15 It was not until the time of Seneca that the Stoics turned their back on the world and abandoned the burdens of political office, Arnold, op. cit. (see note 11), 116.

16 T. Campbell, Life of Petrarch (second ed., London, 1843), vol. II, 315.

17 De Oratore 2.37. One of the most interesting things in the De Oratore is Cicero's history of philosophy (3.15-23). His aim is to show how it came about that Socrates and the rest could ever have claimed that there was any separation between eloquence and wisdom. Cicero says this began as a division of the heart and head. Francis Bacon repeats these arguments from Cicero in his Novum Organum (1.63-88). Both Cicero and Bacon evaluate arts and knowledge in utilitarian or political terms.

18 Arnold, op. cit. (see note 11), 381

19 De Oratore 3.25.

20 Ibid., 1.12. Quintilian (2.21) gives a lengthy development and illustration of this position. This ideal dominated the humanism of the Renaissance as can be seen in Castiglione's Courtier, Elyot's Governour, and in such Shakespearean portraits as Hamlet and Henry the Fifth. See especially the latter play, Act I, sc. i. Early Christion piety sculpturally represented Christus orator, (Christopher Dawson, The Making of Europe [New York, 1938], 64.)

21 H. I. Marrow, op. cit. (see note 4), 11ff.

22 Quintilian 1.4.6; 2.1.4-7

23 Pierre de Labriolle, History and Literature of Christianity (New York, 1925), 6.

24 De Quantitate Animi, Migne, Patrologia Latina, Vol. xxxii, c. 1075. Book vi of Clement of Alexandria's Miscellanies contains a discussion of the true gnostic's need for encyclopedic learning in approaching the Scriptures.

25 Of its four books, three are given over to the linguistic and liberal arts necessary to the interpreter of Scripture. The fourth book is devoted to persuasion, rhetoric, and style. He quotes (4.12) Cicero's dictum that the eloquent man must teach, delight, and persuade. (Oratore 21.) See also E. K. Rand's Founders of the Middle Ages (Cambridge, Mass., 1928), 49-64, 102-134).

26 R. P. McKeon's "Rhetoic in the Middle Ages," Speculum 17.1-32. This highly compressed study supplants C. S. Baldwin's work. 27 The Battle of the Seven Arts (Berkeley, 1914), 19-20. Paetow's preface to this remarkable poem is as basic for these matters as his Arts Course at Medieval Universities (Urbana-Champaign, 1910). Henri D'Andeli's French poem about the battle of the arts at Paris in the twelfth century describes the war between the logicians and the humanists that is, between the Schoolmen and the grammarians and rhetoricians. It is the same quarrel which occurred in fifth-century Athens, seventeenth-century France, and twentieth-century America.

28 President Hutchins complains that the only place in America where one can get a humanistic training in the arts of speech is a law school, Education for Freedom (Baton Rouge, 1943). It is true that in the past century the abstract cadres of German scholasticism have completely disoriented American school and college organization away from humanistic ends, bringing our

education into line with industrial technology. All industrialist organization of society is necessarily technological and abstract. New England and the northern states embraced abstractions readily. The southern tradition, however, is resistant with legalistic humanism.

29 Paetow, op. cit. (see note 27), 12: "Now the lowest ebb in the study of ancient classical literature occurred in the century which preceded Petrarch. So low it was that he and his contemporaries believed that the dry and barren period on which they had fallen must have extended back for centuries to the last days of classic Latin literature."

30 Erasmus refers to Colet, his inspirer, as "the vindicator and assertor of the old theology" against "this modern school of theologians who spend all their time in mere quibbling." J. J. Mangan, Life of Desiderius Erasmus (New York, two vols., 1927), 1.109, 114-115..

31 Education of a Christian Prince (New York, 1934), 99. See also the Italian treatises published by W. H. Woodward in Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators (Cambridge, 1921).

32 Cf. Ruth Kelso's Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century (Urbana, 1929). This work gives a complete picture of the primarily political aims of humanistic education which so strongly influenced English education and also southern education in America. Thomas Jefferson is the virtuoso of the Italian Renaissance in eighteenth-century dress. He is Ciceronian in all respects.

33 The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-12 (Richmond, 1941), ed. L. B. Wright and Marion Tinling.

34 Ibid., p.v.

35 Perry Miller's The New England Mind (New York, 1939) is the book which fully reveals the scholastic and dialectical bias of Calvinist theology as pursued in England, France, and New England.

36 Perhaps even more important as showing the basis of the economic as well as the cultural cleavage between North and South is the well-known work of Werner Sombart in the history of capitalism. He derives both industrial technology and the capitalist spirit from the great scholastic effort of abstraction during the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries.

The Southern Quality (The Sewanee Review, Summer, 1945)

THERE IS A sense in which at least literary and artistic discussion may benefit from the advent of the atom bomb. A great many trivial issues can now, with a blush, retire from guerrilla duty and literary partisans can well afford to cultivate an urbane candor where previously none had been considered possible. Perhaps Malcolm Cowley's recent appraisal of William Faulkner may be viewed as a minor portent of even happier events to come. *La trahison des clercs* may come to an end since the atom bomb has laid forever the illusion that writers and artists were somehow constitutive and directive of the holy zeitgeist. In colossal skyletters the bomb has spelt out for the childlike revolutionary mind the fact of the abdication of all person and individual character from the political and economic spheres. In fact, only the drab and deluded among men will now seek to parade their futility and insignificance in public places. This is more than the very vigorous and very human egotism of artists and writers is prepared to swallow. It was one thing to indulge in the lyrical megalomania of being a "revolutionary" writer when mere political affiliation absolved one from a too strenuous artistic discipline and assured reputation and audience. How easy it was then to concoct or to applaud a plastic or poetic bomb designed to perturb the unyielding bovines, and, at the same time, to feel that the metaphysics of human welfare were being energetically pursued.

It is quite another thing to look around today. The destructive energy postulated by the revolutionaries is here, and it is vastly in excess of any available human wisdom or political ingenuity to accommodate it. Of course, Marx had always pointed to the revolutionary process as technological rather than political or literary. His austere concept of "man" and the universe was rigorously monistic and technological a perfect expression of the cynical sentimentality of an era. Like the affirmations of Calvin and Rousseau those of Marx are rooted in the negation of the human person. But technology hath now produced its masterpiece. The Brick Bradford brains of modern laboratory technicians, the zanies of big business, fed on the adventures of Tarzan and detective thrillers, have finally given adequate physical form to the romantic nihilism of nineteenth-century art and revolution. Every human cause has now the romantic charm of a "lost cause," and the irrelevance of proposed human ends is only equaled by the likelihood of the annihilation of human begins. Even the "lost" cause of the South begins to assume intelligible and attractive features for a great many who formerly assumed that it was more fun to be on the side of the big battalions. In fact, the "Southern cause" is no more lost than that of the present-day left-wingers, whose literary production, for that matter, has been dependent on the creative efforts of men like Hopkins, Eliot, and Yeats, whose own allegiance was in turn given to the seemingly most forlorn of causes.

Perhaps the point of this can best be illustrated by the case of Henry James, whose current vogue is by no means related to a commensurate improvement in the general level of literary discrimination. A primary postulate of James' world is that it enjoys an enormous material ascendancy with its consequent euphoria. Correlative with the elaborate and tenuous sensibility of his created world there is the even more elaborate structure of abstract finance, and the ethereal technology which that finance called into being. Wherever this abstract structure exists and triumphs James can manipulate his puppets, for both are completely inter-animated. It is no accident, of course, that in this area feminine life should be dominant and luxuriant, and masculine beings timid and meager. It is a big, safe nursery world on its material side. There are no financial worries. (Almost everybody in his novels is a tourist, forever engaged in a pilgrimage not from this world to the next but from one part of the Old World to the next.) But the moment James steps beyond the confines of this abstract materialism, as he did once, he is helpless. The eye of the "restless analyst" grows dull and evasive. It sees nothing. gone are all familiar and, to him, indispensable groups of human motives and energies. It does James no harm to smile at his chapters on the South in The American Scene. They force him to show his

hand, a very strong hand, though not so strong as he thought it.

Henry James belonged to a society suffering from the last stages of elephantiasis of the will. In fact, he could bear to contemplate only its peripheral products dominant women and effete men. The pivotal figures of the Jamesian ethos are never obtruded in his work the morbid tycoons whose empty and aimless wills served a power-appetite as lovely as a tapeworm's. This is not for a moment to suggest that James is complacent about these remote figures. His composure in the presence of the diabolical, his "quiet desperation," produces the maximum tension in his work its coordinates are clearly theological, delicacy of nervous constitution being both the means and sign of grace. (The eighteenth century had earlier substituted lachrymose sensitivity for sectarian religious enthusiasm.) And yet, that society was riddled with negation and timidity. A philosophy of action is always bankrupt of thought and passion, and "nothing is more timid than a million dollars." Against the lurid background of such an ethos there is bathos rather than pathos emergent in Lambert Strether's exhortation in The Ambassadors ". . . it doesn't much matter what you do in particular, so long as you have your life. If you haven't had that what have you had? . . . . Live, live!" A society held together by a tense will and evasive bustle can never produce a life-style with all that implies of passion. It can and does produce abundant tourists, museums, and houses like museums. And with these James is completely at home.

For, after all, a "business civilization" (a contradiction in terms), with its elaborate subterfuges and legal fictions, produces equally intricate and subtly aimless characters. Such a society requires endless action and hence motivation of its members. And character is strictly constituted by motive. Passion constitutes character only negatively. The "lover the madman and the poet" only become characters in the degree to which the ruling passion conflicts with another passion, or with some rational end. Likewise, passion makes for the tragic in art and life just as character tends toward satire, comedy, and the play of manners. The sharp division between these two worlds is, for example, the heart of Wuthering Heights the Earnshaw-Linton clash being an analogue of the modern world's intolerance of passion, thus forcing passion into the monstrous outlaw forms which occur in Faulkner, as well as in the Brontës. As Lockwood symbolically says to Mrs. Dean, who is the narrator of Wuthering Heights, when she tries to put him into the story: "I'm of the busy world and to its arms I must return. Go on. Was Catherine obedient to her father's commands?"

Passionate life does not produce subtle characters. Heathcliff is less complex than Edgar Linton. And the nature of simply agrarian society, for example, is such as to produce men who are primarily passionate in the strict sense. They understand the severe limits of mere human motives and habitually feel the fatality of the larger forces of the life that is in them as well as outside them. A sense of the ineluctable dominates the memories and loyalties of such a people. Character in passionate societies is consequently simple, monolithic, and, when occasion requires, heroic. There is unconscious irony, therefore, in James' stricture: "I caught the wide-eyed smile of the South, that expression of temperamental felicity in which shades of character, questions of real feature, others marks and meanings, tend always to lose themselves." This hardly exhausts the passions of the South, but it provides a comment on James' own characters. Had they chosen to live passionately, the restless analyst would not have been interested in them. When James' world did try, with its head, to go passionate and dithyrambic, D. H. Lawrence took over. But not even Lawrence could make a Heathcliff of Edgar Linton. Passion obliterates differences rather than makes them, as the Civil War illustrates. Witness the removal of deep economic and class divisions, both sectional and political, as a result of that conflict. And the primarily non-introspective and passionate character of Southern life speaks from every product of Southern writers. At the same time that this passion defines the Southern writer it baffles the Northern critic, who is of purpose all compact. But this is to arrive too quickly at the problem.

To the merely rationalist and revolutionary mind of the social "planner" or engineer there is never

any way of grasping the nature of politics or of art. Rilke makes the same point as Eliot in "Tradition and the Individual Talent": "Add to this that neither can I in any respect imagine the artist, obedient, patient, fitted for slow development as he is, among the insurrectionists." However, the true traditionalist will always agree with the revolutionary on the facts. But only the traditionalist can be radical. He isn't content merely to cut the shrubbery into new shapes. The essential impatience and rebellion of the New England mind disqualifies it for political and artistic functions, so that the defection of Henry James and T. S. Eliot was a trauma necessary to the preservation of their talents. It was not primarily the meager texture of the American scene which attached them to the English aristocracy and the Anglican Church. On the other hand, it is worthy of prime consideration that the Southern man of letters, while always feeling a considerable affinity for English and European tradition, has never felt any need to expatriate himself either in the nineteenth or twentieth century. Whereas the Northern writer in the twenties was engaged, as Malcolm Cowley says, in discovering that "people in Dijon and Leipzig and Edenburgh were not very different from people in Zenith and Gopher Prairie"; and while he was spending his main energies in defying the old lady from Dubuque, the Southern writer on the other hand was not tortured by this need for revolt. One reason for this striking divergence of attitude may be indicated by an observation of W. B. Yeats. The quality which he isolates and contemplates in his own experience is variously present in all Southern writing of the present day, just as clearly as it is absent in the world of Henry Adams and Henry James:

> Considering that Mary Battle received our thoughts in sleep, though coarsened or turned to caricature, do not the thoughts of the scholar or hermit, though they speak no word, or something of their shape and impulse, pass into the general mind? Does not the emotion of some woman of fashion, pass down, although she speak no word, to Joan with her Pot, Jill with her Pail and, it may be, with one knows not what nightmare melancholy to Tom the Fool? . . . Was not a nation, as distinguished from a crowd of chance comers, bound together by this interchange among streams or shadows; that Unity of Image, which I sought in national literature, being but an originating symbol? From the moment when these speculations grew vivid, I had created for myself an intellectual solitude, most arguments that could influence action had lost something of their meaning. How could I judge any scheme of education, or of social reform, when I could not measure what the different classes and occupations contributed to that invisible commerce of reverie and of sleep, and what is luxury and what necessity when a fragment of old braid or a flower in the wall paper may be an originating impulse to revolution or to philosophy?

It would be easy to show an identical awareness with this of Yeats in The Fathers, So Red the Rose, Night Rider, or a dozen more novels. It is the theme of Donald Davidson's Attack on Leviathan, and it is the product of a profound political and social passion—a common attitude to a common experience. Behind this passionate vision there is, of course, a major human tradition which did not originate in the South, any more than the totally non-political and "theological" solitude of the characters of Henry James is rooted in a tradition that originated in New England.

To grasp the implications of this passage from Yeats, as of the preceding one from Rilke, is to see the specific disease of modern "politics." Whereas Yeats passionately and humbly sets himself to watch and listen for the hints and promptings of a corporate wisdom far richer than his merely individual perception can invent, the social planner arrogantly identifies his own impulses and perceptions with social good. Contrast with Yeats' awareness of the nature of culture the ad hoc note of Van Wyck Brooks when he says that we need "a race of artists profound and sincere" who will bring us "face to face with our own experience and set working in that experience the leaven of the highest culture." That Kaltenborn tone would be recognized anywhere as that of a pedagogic engineer. Moral fervor is made a substitute for patient thought and perception, and good intentions become the excuse for enslaving men for their own good. Perfectly analogous with Brooks' engineer-culture is Sinclair Lewis' proclamation in his Nobel Prize speech: The aim of the American writer should be "to give to the America that has mountains and endless prairies, enormous cities and lost far cabins, a literature worthy of her vastness." The pulps have taken

care of that order.

As Guizot put it: "Even the best revolutionaries have a vain confidence in themselves, and in all they think and all they desire, which urges them to rush head foremost along the path they once have chosen. . . . Modesty is a great light; it keeps the mind open and the heart ready to listen to the teachings of truth." And it is precisely this kind of intellectual modesty which is to be found disseminated throughout the social comments of Southern men of letters, a freedom from that note of political rectitude and absolutist contempt for the person which is inherent in the "progressive," for whom things and persons are just so much energy to be harnessed for virtuous purposes.

Just how much of the latent insurrectionist and moral aggression of the social planner lurked in the make-up of Henry James emerges amusingly in his contact with the South. In his tour he has never once to make his perpetual Northern complaint about "the air of hard prosperity, the ruthlessly pushed-up and promoted look worn by men, women and children alike." On the contrary: "I was to find myself liking, in the South and in the most monstrous fashion, it appeared, those aspects in which the consequences of the great folly were, for extent and gravity, still traceable." In other words James senses some dangerous depravity in his own admiration for the cultural vestiges of an alien and defeated nation—the "great folly" being the presumption of a people in having established a mode of life distinct from the North. It is as though a too successful missionary were for a moment to see a commercialized China through the eyes of a Coomaraswamy. But complacency soon returns. James had a basic respect for success which could never forgive failure. The Southern cause was in his eyes predestined to fail. Therefore it was damned.

Something must be said at this point to place the divergent traditions of North and South in a wider historical frame, if only to relax some of the factional tensions which develop whenever representatives of these dissenting parties begin discussion. Something of the scope of the human issue is finely caught in Tate's poem "Aeneas at Washington." The Civil War and the Trojan War merge:

> Stuck in the wet mire
> Four thousand leagues from the ninth buried city
> I thought of Troy, what we had built her for.

It is no mere attempt to glamorize the defeated South by hinting that Negro slavery was like the rape of Helen, a wrong avenged by an army backed by superior force and calculating guile. It is rather Tate's very Southern feeling for the mysterious unity of history and art alike, which blends these events. Homer's Greeks are actually endowed with the prosaic virtues and vices of the active life. The Trojans are given all the sympathetic qualities of dignity, pathos, and romance. The wrath of Achilles is a passion which is first turned against the Greeks and then against the Trojans This passion which is the decisive force and the dramatic pivot of the poem, when omitted alike by the medieval versions and by Shakespeare in Troilus and Cressida, provides a remarkable analogue of Civil War itself.

But what is important, for the moment, is Tate's sense of the historical dimensions of the Southern attitude. (It occurs equally in John Peale Bishop's "The Burning Wheel.") A merely commercial society (like Carthage) has no historical sense and leaves few traces of itself. (In his research into the origins of American technology Sigfried Giedion was astonished to encounter an almost total absence of records or models of early activity in major industries. Ford, for example, while spending millions on his museum, had no records of the initial production process of his firm.) Jefferson, on the other hand, shows, like Aristotle, a strong historical sense concerning the material and intellectual factors which govern the development of societies.

William Gilmore Simms, well in advance of the Civil War, displays an historical perspective and even nostalgia for the early South Carolina, that South which frankly and often too boastfully claimed for itself the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome. A perfectly justified insistence, however, on direct connection with the taproot of classical humanism and Ciceronian humanitas and eloquence occurs in every kind of Southern writing from the time of William Byrd of Westover to the present.

Now these claims were never made in the North. Moreover, the reason why New England never laid claim to Ciceronian and Erasmian humanism is abundantly clear from the evidence gathered by Perry Miller in The New England Mind. The author of Jurgen feels historical affinities of life-style which enable him to move easily and unchallenged among classical myths and medieval legends with a sense of continuity and contemporaneity which is marred only by a self-protective whimsy. But Henry Adams' groping around Chartres, "stirring the cold breasts of antiquity" with worshipful awe, provide merely the spectacle of artificial respiration. However, this is a sight entirely acceptable to the academic mind when it would simulate a passionate perception which it cannot feel. In a word, Perry Miller's research presents us with a dialectical mind in seventeenth-century New England, just as John Dewey represents the same mind today. Two things most important for an understanding of the quarrel between North and South are not shown by Miller: first, the violent European opposition of the humanist to the dialectical mind in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and, second, the age-old quarrel between these minds in fifth-century Athens, twelfth-century France, and fourteenth-century Italy. This is not the place to provide such an historical picture. But were the New England mind as capable of perceiving its own roots in the dialectics of Abelard and Ockham (striving to settle the problems of metaphysics, theology, and politics as though they were problems in logic) as the South has been able to feel and to focus its own forensic tradition of Ciceronian humanism, then some qualifying modesty might have got into the dispute a great deal earlier.

In short, the trouble with the New England mind has always been its ignorance of its own history. It has always assumed that it was Mind per se rather than the fractious splinter of scholastic tradition that it is. Once Ramus had welded Ockham's theories into a tool of applied theological controversy, he and his followers laid about them heartily. Ramus was strictly interested in the fray, not the weapon. However, that dubious weapon was the main intellectual equipment that the Cambridge divines brought to Harvard during the time when James I and Charles I had made life intolerable for them by favoring the patristic or humanist party at Cambridge.

The tool of Ramistic scriptural exegesis proved very destructive of Scripture, naturally; for it was rationalistic and nominalistic. That is, it made all problems logical problems and at the same time destroyed ontology and any possibility of metaphysics, a fact which accounts for the notorious anemia, the paralyzing skepticism of New England speculation. Already in the seventeenth century Harvard had designated technologia as the true successor of metaphysics—an absurdity, with all the practical consequences, which is piously perpetuated at this hour by Dewey and his disciples. For this mind there is nothing which cannot be settled by method. It is the mind which weaves the intricacies of efficient production, "scientific" scholarship, and business administration. It doesn't permit itself an inkling of what constitutes a social or political problem (in the Burke or Yeats sense) simply because there is no method for tackling such problems. That is also why the very considerable creative political thought of America has come only from the South—from Jefferson to Wilson.

For the Ciceronian program of education, as outlined in the De Oratore of Cicero (and no less in the Courtier of Castiglione), looks primarily to man in his social and political aspect. In fifth-century Greece this had been the aim of the Sophists, whose work we know through the hostile medium of Plato. Cicero received it via the great Stoic tradition, and having consolidated and exemplified it, provided the Church Fathers with their charter of Christian education which held

the field undisputedly until the time of Anselm and Abelard in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. (It is only recently that Gilson has shown that until the twelfth century the tradition of classical humanism is unbroken, unabridged, and unchallenged in the Church.) Scholastic theology was the anomalous innovation, not the characteristic mode of Christian theology.

Against this background, the humanistic reaction of a John of Salisbury or a Petrarch against what they called the barbaric dialectics (the Goths and Huns of the Sorbonne) is, like the similar reaction of Erasmus, Colet, More, the reassertion of the central classical and Christian humanism against an upstart party of vermiculate disputationists. Unfortunately for simplicity of subsequent retrospect, the two intellectual parties in theology (the humanists or patrists and the schoolmen) were not split in accordance with the Protestant-Catholic divisions. Both Protestant and Catholic camps were in turn divided. Each had its partisans of patristic and scholastic theology. (The ratio studiorum of the Jesuits attempted to combine both modes.)

The great dispute within the Anglican Church under Elizabeth was over this question. And it was of the greatest possible significance for the cultural and political future of North America that the patristic party finally won out in the Church of England—a victory celebrated by the sudden flourishing under royal patronage of patristic eloquence in Andrewes, Donne, Crashaw, Taylor, and King. This victory finally settled English Public School education in the Classical grooves of linguistics, history, and manners, and just at the time when the Episcopal Church early gained social and political predominance among the planters. The Ciceronian program of education, because of its social prestige and utility, was readily accepted by all—even by the Presbyterians who in the North pursued very different modes.

Wherever this classical and forensic education spread, it carried with it the full gentlemanly code of honor, dignity, and courtesy, since that was inseparable from the reconstituted program as it was propagated by Castiglione, Sidney, and Spenser. It was no mere archeological revival. It had the full vitality of medieval chivalry and courtly love in every part of it. However, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England saw such a powerful upsurge of the trading spirit that its gentlemanly code was swiftly modified. Dueling, obviously, is not compatible with commercial equipoise, nor middle-class comfort. In the South there was very little of the trader's self-abnegation about personal honor, and no curtailment of the full Renaissance flavor of the gentlemanly code. In fact, with the strong Celtic complexion of Southern immigration (Scotch-Irish) there was, if anything, an intensification of the cult of personal honor and loyalty to family and patriarch.

In such a society, uniformly agrarian, possessing homogeneity of education and population, the aristocratic idea was democratic. It is obvious, for example, that Jefferson's concept of democracy would have every man an aristocrat. The prevalence in all classes and places of the aristocratic idea was, of course, out of all proportion to the number of planters who could incarnate it with any degree of effectiveness. It certainly got into Whitman. But there need be no mystery about how a small yeoman farmer could overnight, almost, blossom out as an aristocratic planter. It was altogether less superficial and comic than the way in which Thomas Arnold of Rugby plausibly transmogrified the sons of grocers, mechanics, and patent medicine quacks into haughty young bloods. The vigor of the aristocratic idea in the nineteenth-century South probably explains how Poe, alone of his age, forecast the effect of the machine on the forms of human life, on the very notion of the person.

One main condition of aristocratic life was present in the South and not in the North—personal responsibility to other human beings for education and material welfare. (A Carnegie or a Ford, like a bureaucracy, molds the lives of millions without taking any responsibility.) Perhaps even more decisive, at any time or place, in the creation of the aristocrat is absence of private life. To live always in the presence of family and family servants subtly changes the most average of

beings. Formality becomes a condition of survival. Moreover, to represent one's family first and oneself second in all social intercourse confers a special impersonal character on human manners and actions. A social code will always emerge very swiftly under such conditions. And where there is a code, all classes will share and interpret it for themselves in the way in which Yeats has shown in the passage quoted earlier. Striking evidence of this occurs in Faulkner's Light in August. Joe Christmas the octoroon lives and dies by a code which is never mentioned but which is perfectly defined by his tenue as well as by his relations with the other characters in the novel. Clearly an "outlaw" only because he lives among lawless folk that is, among men and women of endless conniving, average confusion, ordinary egotism, and avocation he acquires by his detachment and suffering a weird dignity in his full acceptance of fatality. No shadow of mediocrity, vulgarity, or self-pity ever falls on him. He judges nobody, but all the rest are judged by his proximity.

> He nothing common did or mean
> Upon that memorable scene.

In a world of private lives, skeptical ambitions , and cynical egotisms, the aristocrat or the man of passion is helpless. In a world of merely material appetites his role is to suffer. That is why the world portrayed in the novels of the South is one of violence, passion, and death. Joe Christmas is a genuine symbol in the proper sense of being occasioned by an actual and particular spiritual condition not just a Southern but a universal human condition today. And this power of symbol-making is not possible for those who conceive of the inner life as being in a perpetual state of flux. For they are incapable of separating spiritual from physical objects. By a rigorous contemplation of his own local experience, Faulkner has moved steadily towards universals statements.

Probably no more discriminating evocation of all the facts of such a society has ever appeared than The Fathers of Allen Tate. In that novel the dominant character of George Posey (peripheral Southerner of unstable poise), who had "the heightened vitality possessed by a man who knew no bounds," explains more than a library of sociological investigations:

> I should say that the Poseys were more refined than the Buchans, but less civilized. I never saw a letter written by George Posey; he must have written letters, but I cannot imagine them. In the sense of today nobody wrote personal letters in our time: Letters conveyed the sensibility in society, the ordered life of families and neighborhoods. George Posey was a man without people or place; he had strong relationships, and he was capable of passionate feeling, but it was all personal and disordered, and it was curious to see them together: the big powerful man of action remained the mother's boy. What else could he have been? What life was there for him in the caverns of the Posey house? What life was there for him outside it? That was what, as I see it, he was trying to find out.

The Ciceronian ideal reaches it flower in the scholar-statesman of encyclopedic knowledge, profound practical experience, and voluble social and public eloquence. That this ideal was perfectly adapted to agrarian estate-life with its multiple legal problems and its need for direct (republican) political representation is obvious to anybody who has considered the South. Moreover, within such a society, literary ability is quite naturally drained off into legal and political channels, to say nothing of highly developed social conversation. So that in assessing the intellectual quality of such a life one is obliged to turn to semi-public documents and the correspondence of people like Washington and Jefferson.

But since the defeat of the South it may be asked whether the Ciceronian program has any further relevance. That question is usually put in a hostile manner by people who regard Ciceronian humanism as inseparable from feudalism or slavery. One abrupt way to answer it would be to say that whereas the Ciceronian humanism of the South represented the main current of European and Western culture, the technology of the North (with its epiphenomenal art and belles lettres)

was built on the most destructive aberration of the Western mind autonomous dialectics and ontological nominalism. The fact of the matter is that one phase of the Civil War is being fought over again in the North today. President Hutchins is merely the most vociferous member of a large party which is embattled against the dialectics and educational technology of John Dewey and Sidney Hook. All the old features of the quarrel have re-emerged. Hutchins wants education for citizenship in a limited society, whereas Dewey wants education for a functional absolutist society absolutist because the society rather than the person is constitutive of value. Hutchins wants encyclopedic training; Dewey wants training in methods and techniques know what vs. know how. That the "cause of the South" is quite independent of geography needs no urging.

An answer to the question about the value of traditional Southern life and education could, however, to some extent be based on a scrutiny of present-day letters in the South. If some quality or characteristic excellence has emerged in current Southern letters not to be duplicated elsewhere, some testimony or exploration of human experience not attempted by others, then some sort of "answer" to the hostile critic will have been given. For the historian's questionwhat the South was is included in the question: what is Southern literature today?

Meanwhile, it is worth pondering the plight of many Southern writers whose works are hooted, or admired for the wrong reasons, in Northern journals. In this respect the position of the Southern writer is not unlike that of an Irish writer forty years ago. When a Galway country editor saw in a London paper that an Irishman had just produced a book about the people of Galway in which at last even the Irish might see the irremediable if picturesque depravity of their stubborn race, with its impractical and morbid brooding over the wrongs done by Cromwell, then the Galway editor would denounce the Irish traitor to his readers. All Irish writers were soon hated in Ireland as wretches who had sold the misery and poverty of people for a price in the Sassenach market. It was partly this which made Joyce so bitter about the old sow that eats her own farrow. But in the present condition of the centralized publishing and marketing of books in New York and London there is no escape from this stultifying situation. What is more natural than that provincial newspaper editors should be more concerned about what a Northern critic says than what he himself thinks about a Southern book? The Northern critic holds in abeyance his habitual moral aggression just as long as he feels sure a Wolfe, a Caldwell, or a Faulkner is ripping up the South in manner which squares with Northern convictions.

It has already been suggested that the Southern writer does not feel impelled to technical experiment as other writers simply because he doesn't think of art as a means to *épater les bourgeois*. For good or ill he has never been of the ardent Kreymborgs and Millays who

> lust uncomforted
> To kiss the naked phrase quite unaware.

The South, on the other hand, may be said to have confronted Philistia in 1861.

Again, letters in the South enjoy a degree of autonomy not envisaged by those who have pitched their wares into the cause of revolt. Literature is not there conceived of as "an inferior kind of social will" as in Axel's Castle. In fact, it may be one weakness of Southern writers as writers that they are so concerned with living their own lives that they resist that absorption and annihilation which is expected of the modern writer. The gentlemanly code in a Byron works also in a Thomas Wolfe to produce a rebellious man but a conventional artist. Moreover, the Southern writer shares most of his experience with the majority of Southerners, who never have heard of him—there is not the split between educated and "uneducated" which occurs in an atomized industrial community. In conversation, the Southerner delights to report, without condescension, the fine remarks and shrewd perceptions of quite illiterate folk. But the main reason for this solidarity is the universal acceptance of a passionate view of life. Not only is there no fatal

division between educated and uneducated, but there is not the familiar head-heart split of the North, which became glaring in Europe and England in the eighteenth century. The South escaped that because it had no sizable urban trading class until after the Civil War. So it has been able to preserve to a degree the integrity of thought and feeling much as we find it in Conrad and the Russion novelists of the nineteenth century, with whom recent Southern novelists have a strong affinity.

The passionate and tragic sense of life as opposed to the life of multiple and divergent purposes is already discernible as a basic life-style long before the Civil War, as the work of Poe strongly testifies. The ominous sense of fatality which was already haunting that life comes out in all his work, and nowhere more strangely than in "The Man Who Was Used Up," which may have inspired Ransom's "Captain Carpenter." And today the moral aggression of Uncle Tome's Cabin has been more than canceled by the great popularity of Gone With the Wind in the North. Even so crude a work as Margaret Mitchell's caught something of the style and passion of the South in a way which compelled a wide response. The power of a life-style to mold future imagination and life is incalculable where the spectacle of mere brute power is stupefying. The chivalric South, it has been said, wanted the whole horse, whereas the North wanted only to abstract the horsepower from the horse.

But the huge material achievement of a Boulder Dam evokes another kind of "passion" which it may be well to look at here. There is the passion of a civilized person for whom action is repugnant or unthinkable unless the whole man is involved; and there is the passion or suffering of the little sub-men, Hollow Men, of Dos Passos, Fitzgerald, and Hemingway. In all the Civil War novels, whether Young's, Tate's, Stribling's, or Faulkner's, the characters are full-size, social beings, because in 1860 men still counted. Not only war but the causes of war, and the problem of evil, both in individuals and societies, are frankly faced. So the South met physical destruction but never felt spiritual defeat at all. However, spiritual defeat came to the North within a few decades. The characters of Hemingway are men of pathos in the limited sense only—they are pitiable, clownlike dwarfs. Their actions have no context. They go to wars they don't understand. Their love is despair. Their speech is little more than a grunt or a haussement des épaules. There is no problem of evil and tragedy in this world because there is no human dignity nor responsibility.

It is the same in Fitzgerald. We are not given any workaday motives or actions in The Great Gatsby because it is, in its way, a novel of passion. There is no introspective analysis. But the figures are Hansel-and-Gretel-like. Pathetic, irresponsible waifs, subject of the Emperor of Ice Cream, whose little interlude of life is played out on the Great Rock-Candy Mountain. One thinks of Gershwin's "Do, do, do what you done- done- done before, baby" as being at the same level as Fitzgerald's "gold-hatted, high-bouncing lover." Ironically, the little sub-men of the great cities best express their own sense of helplessness by means of Negro music. While ostensibly setting about the freeing of the slaves, they became enslaved, and found in the wailing self-pity and crooning of the Negro the substitute for any life-style of their own. They destroyed or rejected the best things in the South and took the worst. Even the characters of Erskine Caldwell are free at least from self-pity. Contrast the pseudo-innocence of the people of Hemingway and Fitzgerald with the frank perception of Faulkner:

> She was a waitress . . . she was slight, almost childlike. But the adult look saw that the smallness was not due to any natural slenderness but to some inner corruption of the spirit itself: A slenderness which had never been young. . . .

One of the most persistent naïvetés of Northern criticism of the South has concerned the Southern representation of genuine human evil and tragic violence. It has been supposed again and again that this feature of Southern literature was not a vision of human life but just the

natural result of a bad conscience about impenitent Negro-baiting or general political backwardness. That is part of the legacy of Rousseau in the doctrinaire North. As Philip Rahv says of Henry James, he "was always identifying his native land with innocence and 'simple human nature,' an idea which his European critics have not found it easy to swallow." There is never any historic sense any more than there is any innocence, where this illusion of innocence prevails. A passage from Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom! may help us to see the contrast:

> It was a summer of wistaria. The twilight was full of it and of the smell of his father's cigar as they sat on the front gallery after supper until it would be time for Quentin to start, while in the deep shaggy lawn below the veranda the fireflies blew and drifted in soft random—the odor, the scent, which five months later Mr. Compson's letter would carry up from Mississippi and over the long iron New England snow and into Quentin's sitting-room at Harvard, (It was a day of listening) too—the listening, the hearing in 1909 mostly about that which he already knew, since he had been born in and still breathed the same air in which the church bells had rung on that Sunday morning in 1833 and, on Sundays, heard even one of the original three bells in the steeple where descendants of the same pigeons strutted and crooned or wheeled in short courses resembling soft fluid pain-smears on the soft summer sky.

To this as exegesis one may append Tate's remark: "The Southerner can almost wish for his ease the Northern contempt for his kind of history; he would like to believe that history is not a vast body of concrete fact to which he must be loyal, but only a source of mechanical formulas." For the pragmatist there can be no question of a passionate and loyal contemplation of history. For him it is explicitly an armory from which he draws the weapons to advance whatever conviction he may, at the moment, entertain.

Why has it never occurred to anybody to consider the reason why every Southern novelist is a teller of tales? This is true not only of Poe, Simms, and of even Mark Twain, but of Katherine Anne Porter, Mildred Haun, Andrew Lytle, Ellen Glasgow, John Peale Bishop, Robert Penn Warren, William Faulkner, Caroline Gordon, T. S. Stribling, Stark Young, and James Branch Cabell. The tale is the form most natural to a people with a passionate historical sense of life. For in the tale, events march on, passing sometimes over and sometimes around human lives. Individual character is interwoven with the events but is subordinate. That is why the Southern novel is, at first glance, so very deficient in the portrayal of human character. As Lacy Buchan, the narrator of The Fathers, says: "I have a story to tell but I cannot explain the story. I cannot say: if Susan had not married George Posey then Susan would not have known Jane Posey and influenced her." This sense of the fatality and impersonality of events would be upset at once by elaborate character analysis. Instead of sharply defined motives, therefore, and clear-cut frames around people, their individual potential, the charge of spiritual energy that is in them, is indicated from time to time as the narrative proceeds. "He was a hatchet-faced, impassive young man, quite honest—said my father—of the small-farming class for generations: if he never entered our front door, we never entered his simply because we were not wanted." The impersonal social code which permits a formal expression of inward emotion makes it quite pointless for people to interpret one another constantly, as they do in most "realistic" novels. There is thus in the Southern novel a vacuum where we might expect introspection. (It is quite pronounced even in Huckleberry Finn.) The stress falls entirely on slight human gestures, external events which are obliquely slanted to flash light or shade on character. Thus John Erskine notes that a sharp difference between the scouts of Cooper and Simms is that Cooper insists that the success of his scouts is dependent on skill and character whereas Simms makes the success of his a matter of happy circumstances, irresistible as Cuchullain's luck. There is a world of difference in life-style here which holds for all Southern writers. The work of Thomas Wolfe, for example, partakes fully of this character, except that in his experience the impersonal attitude born of formalized social symbols, which finally left each person entirely locked up in his own passionate solitude, was intolerable:

> He understood that men were forever strangers to one another, that no one ever comes really to know anyone, that imprisoned in the dark womb of our mother, we come to life without having seen her face, that we are given to her arms a stranger, and that, caught in the insoluble prison of being, we escape it never, no matter what arms may clasp us, what mouth may kiss us, what heart may warm us. Never, never, never, never, never.

Wolfe has all the passion without any of the formal means of constraint and communication which make it tolerable. He was a Southerner by attitude but not by tradition. Thus he stretches himself dramatically over that abyss of personalism which is the negation of every civilized agreement and effort. The same can be said of the frantic puppyism of the early Byron. But Byron had the energy and luck to achieve a quite impersonal poise, finally; and Wolfe might very well have done the same, in time. By contrast, in Stark Young, emotional intensity focuses sharply in the shape of a house, a room, or the movement of hands. "They were long hands, white and shining . . . . As a child I used to watch her hands and used to think she lit the candles my merely touching them." There is nothing here for the analytical mind to seize on. Here is rather "skill of the interior mind to fashion dignity with shapes of air." Once the social symbol of an interior order of intense personal life has been evoked for contemplation, the writer passes on without comment. Mr. Young's deep sympathy with Italian society (one recalls his fine appreciation of Duse) is as natural as Bishop's for France or Andrew Lytle's for Spain. It is clear that De Soto, the Conquistador in At the Moon's Inn, is no mere historical figure but the symbol of some personal and contemporary pressure: "We went for days and weeks at a time lacking any society, and what we had was of men of our own calling, silent and contemplative men given at moments to passionate action."

The teller of tales like these may provide a great deal of conventional description, as a Lytle or a Faulkner does. Description of physical environment is after all of prime importance to the author of passionate narrative whether Scott or Poe, Wordsworth in "Michael," or Twain in Huckleberry Finn. It is a major means of controlling emotion response, as the first page of A Farewell to Arms illustrates. In Southern writing external nature is usually a major actor or player in the narrative, as for example the heath in Hardy, the sea In Conrad, or the river itself in Huckleberry Finn. But for all that, the Southern story-teller takes a great deal for granted in his readers. He assumes a large stock of common experience and a set of basic attitudes which make the surface simplicity of Southern fiction rather deceptive. The surface complexity of Henry James is less difficult in a way, because James is forever explaining everything. One has merely to be patient. That is because his people are elaborately motivated characters, not men of passion. There is really no paradox in the fact that intensely self-analytical and introspective people are the ones for whom endless action is the only catharsis, passionate natures are not at all self-analytical yet seem to be broodingly contemplative and lazy. In The Beast in the Jungle James has finally this to say of the life-long esthetic calculations of John Marcher: "No passion had ever touched him . . . . He had seen outside of his life, not learned it within, the way a woman was mourned when she had been loved for herself; . . . he had been the man of his time, the man, to whom nothing on earth was to have happened."

In contrast, Caroline Gordon's Aleck Maury, Sportsman says at the end of his life:

> "I sat there until nearly midnight and during those four or five hours I engaged, I imagine, in more introspection than in all the rest of my life put together. I knew suddenly what it was I had lived by . . . . I had known from the first that it was all luck; I had gone about seeking it, with, as it were, the averted eyes of a savage praying to his god . . . . Delight . . . I had lived by it for sixty years. I knew now what it was I had always feared: that this elation, this delight by which I lived might go from me . . . . Well, it had gone and it might never come again . . . . When I awoke in the morning—and I believe this is the strangest thing that has ever happened to me—I had a plan . . . . I would set myself definite problems . . . ."

Passion at an end, Aleck, as it were, becomes a "Yankee" overnight. Tate refers to this sort of planned, lost life:

> Think of tomorrow.
> Make a firm postulate
> Of simplicity in desire and act
> Founded on the best hypotheses;
> Desire to eat secretly, alone, lest
> Ritual corrupt our charity.

The whole history of this Northern confusion is in a line or so of Anderson's "The Egg": "She was a tall silent woman with a long nose and troubled grey eyes. For herself she wanted nothing. For Father and myself she was incurably ambitious." A more viciously disintegrating formula is unimaginable.

What has been said so far may serve as a means to get a reader into some intelligible relation to Southern literature. However, it cannot properly be said to be an introduction to the numerous writers themselves. The reason for stressing what all Southern writers have in common, rather than the individual notes an idioms, has been to draw attention to the nature of that civilized tradition in which they all share. That is why it may not be amiss to conclude these observations by pointing out some further interests shared by Southern writers as result of their passionate attitude to life. In none of them is there any discernible effort to evade the very unpleasant limits and conditions of human life—never any burking of the fact of evil. Perhaps Wolfe is, in this respect, least satisfactory al all:

> Health was to be found in the steady stare of the cats and dogs, or in the smooth vacant chops of the peasant. But he looked on the faces of the lords of the earth—and he saw them wasted and devoured by the beautiful disease of thought and passion . . . . The creatures of romantic fiction, the vicious doll faces of the movie women, the brutal idiot regularity of the faces in the advertisements, and faces of the young college men and women, were stamped in a mould of enamelled vacancy, and became unclean to him.

The sense of belonging to a great chain of person and events, passive yet responsible, is everywhere in Faulkner: "I seem to have been born into this world with so few fathers that I have too many brothers to outrage and shame while alive and hence too many descendants to bequeath my little portion of lust and harm to at death . . . ." Likewise in John Peale Bishop:

> This is my blood, my blood that beats
> In blithe boys' bodies
> And shall yet run (O death!)
> Upon a bright inhabited star.

Equally in T. S. Stribling: "Through what obscure channels his blood had flowed since that distant hour in his father's barn . . . . It was like strangling a python at night . . . the chain of wrongs and violences out of which his life had been molded . . . ."

"Blood" is, of course, a symbol as well as a fact in Southern writing. It is intensely related to the loyalty to historical fact, tradition, family, name. As Cabell says: ". . . one trait at least the children of Lichfield share in common. We are loyal. We give but once; and when we give, we give all that we have." Symbolically associated with this passionate blood loyalty in all Southern fiction goes its disease—the shadow of incest, the avarice of the affections, as St. Thomas calls it. While it may suggest great Ph.D. possibilities, it is actually very complex and, artistically, symbolical. In no instance is it sentimentally exploited, as in Ford, the dramatist. Rather, in Tate, Stribling, and Faulkner, it is incidental to the tragic fatality of the larger theme.

Inseparable from the profound acceptance of the destiny of one's blood and kin goes a contemplation of death which pervades all Southern writing. It goes always with the passionate contemplation of transient beauty, as in the light poise of Ransom's "Blue Girls":

> For I could tell you a story which is true;
> I know a lady with a terrible tongue,
> Blear eyes fallen from blue,
> All her perfections tarnished—and yet it is not long
> Since she was lovelier than any of you.

The conqueror worm haunts Cabell's Jurgen:

> Nessus tapped with a forefinger upon the back of Jurgen's hand. "Worm's-meat! this is the destined food, do what you will, of small white worms. This by and by will be a struggling pale corruption, like seething milk. That too is a hard saying, Jurgen. But is a true saying."

Finally, there is basic in any tradition of intellectual and social passion a cult of feminine beauty and elegance. A feeling for the formal, civilizing power of the passionate apprehension of a stylized feminine elegance, so obvious in Southern life and letters, stems from Plato, blossoms in the troubadours, Dante, and the Renaissance Platonists, and is inseparable from the courtly concept of life. There is a strong secular vein in this tradition, despite its affinity with some forms of Christian mystical expression, which was excluded entirely from that branch of scholastic speculation which flourished in New England. Perhaps no further explanation of the bearings of this matter need be given than to say that in this, as in so many things, Southern writers are at one with Yeats in his vision of things:

> The cloud-pale unicorns, the eyes of aquamarine,
> The quivering half-closed eyelids, the rags of cloud or of lace,
> Or eyes that rage has brightened, arms it has made lean,
> Give place to an indifferent multitude, give place
> To brazen hawks. Nor self-delighting reverie,
> Nor hate of what's to come, nor pity for what's gone,
> Nothing but the grip of claw, and the eye's complacency,
> The innumerable clanging wings that have put out the moon.

Edgar Poe's Tradition

POE IS MUCH in need of an evaluation which will relate him to the American culture and politics of his day, for Poe was the only American man of letters in the nineteenth century who displayed, unequivocally, a mode of awareness at once American and cosmopolitan. That is to say, Poe felt his time, but none the less wrote with a sense of the past in his bones. He objectified the pathetic cleavages and pressures of the age in a wholly unprovincial way. When he died in 1849 there was no writer in England or America who was not, in comparison with him, exploiting a merely local awareness and a merely local response to the psychological tensions of the time. However, the organization of his sensibility, with its dislocations and inadequacies, is never derivative but authentic and firsthand. Thus he and Byron are in the same tradition, but he is not Byronic.

The problem here is not to evaluate Poe's work in relation to the often vital, but always provincial, New England products. But it is evident that Poe's writing had a fitness, an immediacy of impact, and a relevance to European consciousness wholly unlike that of Emerson, Hawthorne, or even Henry James. Indeed, everything about Poe (including his strikingly symbolic private life) was strictly relevant to the problems of his age. And this faculty for relevance confers on him that air of infallible aesthetic efficiency which makes integral the man and the writer. He has no loose ends. He left no unfinished experiments. He uttered himself.

The erudition of Lowell and Longfellow was not his, but neither did he partake of their vagueness and uneasy professorial eclecticism. They read and ruminated while he was seizing with the gusto of pre-ordained certitude on facts, symbols, images, and ideas which became the vehicles of his sensibility. However, Poe's equipment was far from flimsy. He read widely, and with the intensity of the craftsman. Moreover, he had the craftsman's contempt for verbiage masquerading as expression. Poe's literary criticism was the best of his time in America, simply because his own artistic discipline had given him an infallible eye and ear for whatever had been born of a sincere and vital sensibility in immediate contact with its own age. Mr. Hervey Allen says that time has confirmed all of Poe's judgments save his condemnation of Carlyle. Nothing, however, could be more to Poe's credit (and in this one can see the nature of the superiority he enjoyed over Emerson) than his easy penetration into the provincial confusions and over-emphasis of the great Calvinistic mystagogue.

Beside Poe, Emerson is in many ways a mere local sage. For Poe's tones and accents are those of a man conscious of possessing a European and cosmopolitan heritage. Poe cannot be understood apart from the great Byronic tradition (which extends at least back to Cervantes) of the aristocratic rebel fighting for human values in a sub-human chaos of indiscriminate appetite. It is no mere accident that Poe, like Byron, won a European recognition denied to such a great but autochthonous sensibility as Wordsworth's.

I propose here to suggest how Poe's achievements are to be understood in the light of a great tradition of life and letters which he derived from the South of his day. This tradition has been a continuous force in European law, letters, and politics from the time of the Greek sophists. It is most conveniently referred to as the Cieronian ideal, since Cicero gave it to St. Augustine and St. Jerome, who in turn saw to it that it has never ceased to influence Western society. The Ciceronian ideals as expressed in the De Oratore or in St. Augustine's De Doctrina Christiana is the ideal of rational man reaching his noblest attainment in the expression of an eloquent wisdom. Necessary steps in the attainment of this ideal are careful drill in the poets followed by a program of encyclopedic scope directed to the forensic end of political power. Thus, the doctus orator is, explicitly, Cicero's sophistic version of Plato's philosopher-king. This ideal became the basis for hundreds of manuals written by eloquent scholars for the education of monarchs from the fifth century through John of Salisbury and Vincent of Beauvais, to the famous treatises of

Erasmus and Castiglione. (The Prince of Machiavelli stems from a totally distinct tradition of scholastic speculation, though it still tends to be confused with Ciceronian tradition.)

The encyclopedic ideal of "Renaissance man" was consciously and explicitly that of Cicero's orator, whether exemplified in a fourteenth-century Italian humanist, or a sixteenth-century Spenser, Sidney, or in Shakespeare's Hamlet or Henry V. This meant that the new gentry were educated along the aristocratic-forensic lines of Cicero's De Oratore, as anybody can determine from considering the ingredients of gentlemanly education in any European country of the sixteenth century. So far as America is concerned, this was a fact of decisive importance, since Virginia, and the South in general, was to receive the permanent stamp of this Ciceronian ideal. This is the highly practical and gentlemanly ideal in which knowledge and action are subordinated to a political good. It is thus no accident that the creative political figures of American life have been molded in the South. Whether one considers Jefferson or Lincoln, one is confronted with a mind aristocratic, legalistic, encyclopedic, forensic, habitually expressing itself in the mode of an eloquent wisdom. This is a fact of the utmost relevance to the understanding of Poe, as we shall see.

To focus the facts about Poe, it is necessary to understand a tradition wholly alien and repugnant to him, namely that of New England. The reader of Mr. Perry Miller's The New England Mind will know what is meant when it is said that New England is in the scholastic tradition, and profoundly opposed to "humanism." Briefly, the theocratic founders of Harvard and rulers of New England were Calvinist divines, fully trained in the speculative theology which had arisen for the first time in the twelfth century the product of that dialectical method in theology which is rightly associated with Peter Abelard. Unlike Luther and many English Protestants, Calvin and his followers were schoolmen, opposed to the old theology of the Fathers which Erasmus and humanist-Ciceronians had brought back to general attention after the continuous predominance of scholastic theology since the twelfth century. To the humanists nobody could be a true interpreter of Scripture, a true exponent of the philosophi Christi, who had not had a full classical training. So Catholic and Protestant schoolmen alike were, for these men, the "barbarians," the "Goths of the Sorbonne," corrupting with "modernistic" trash (the schoolmen were called moderni from the first) the eloquent piety and wisdom of the Fathers. (The Fathers were called the "ancients" or antiqui theologi.)1

It need hardly be said that this alignment of tradition throws a startlingly vivid light on the relations between learning and religion in the sixteenth century, which subsequent stages of the original quarrel have obscured. In fact, it means nothing less than this: that from Petrarch to Ramus the violent quarrels about the relative claim of different sorts of learning originated in the conflicting claims of grammar and dialectic to be the exclusive method in theology. The sectarian fogs which, from the beginning, involved the basic intellectual struggles of the Renaissance, have likewise prevented American historians from seeing clearly the most important intellectual fact about America the fact that, geographically separated for the first time in their age-old struggle, there exist, profoundly entrenched in this country, the two radically opposed intellectual traditions which have been warring since Socrates turned dialectics against the rhetoric of his Sophist teachers. Socrates turned from rhetoric to dialectics, from forensics to speculation and definition, raising the issue which pitted Plato and Aristotle against their formidable rival Isocrates, and which pitted the forensic Cicero against Carneades and the Stoics. The same quarrel as to whether grammar and rhetoric, on the one hand, or dialectics, on the other, should have precedence in organizing the hierarchy of knowledge is the key to understanding the Renaissance from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries. Just when the quarrel, both within the Catholic Church and outside it, was reaching its term, representatives of both parties in the quarrel migrated to America. The schoolmen went to New England, the quasi-humanist gentry to Virginia. (At this time, moreover, the Anglican Church had, with the accession of the patristic

and Ciceronian James I, suddenly thrown its weight against the Calvinist party, in favor of the eloquent divines of humanist bent. That is why Andrewes and Donne were able to get royal approval for their patristic rhetoric and grammatical theology. Anyhow, this fact contributed indirectly to directing Southern education along classical-Ciceronian lines.)

Harvard, then, originated as a little Sorbonne, where in 1650 the scholastic methods of Ockham and Calvin, as streamlined by Petrus Ramus, were the staple of education. Logic a dialectics were the basis of theological method, as of everything else at Harvard. Here rhetoric was taught, not for eloquence, but in order to teach the young seminarian how to rub off the cosmetic tropes of Scripture before going to work on the doctrine with dialectical dichotomies. Ramus taught a utilitarian logic for which he mad the same claims as pragmatists do for "scientific method." In fact, Peirce, James and Dewey could never have been heard of had they not been nurtured in the Speculative tradition of the scholastic theologians Calvin and Ramus.2

This helps greatly to explain a most puzzling fact namely, that New Englanders have felt a perennial congeniality for one strand of French culture. (This is also true of Scotsmen, and for the same reasons.) French universities, that is to say, saw to it that part of France remained scholastic. And Descartes is unthinkable without the Schoolmen (especially the Ockhamists), as Pierre Duhem and Etienne Gilson have demonstrated. Thus, not in spite of Calvinism but because of it, the New Englander finds himself able to communicate with part of European culture. It is not otherwise that we can account for that rich cross-fertilization of seemingly distinct cultures, which occurred when Henry James and T. S. Eliot came into contact with France. Superficially, however, there could be no greater anomaly than that of two provincial Puritans returning English letters to the main channels of European culture.

But what of Poe's affinities with France? If the Calvinistic, scholastic, and academic New Englander has natural roots in the Cartesian traditions of academic France, so has the Ciceronian South maintained relations with Ciceronian and encyclopedist France. For one main current of French letters in the seventeenth century is that of Cicero an eloquent wisdom politically inspired, and based on universal learning. Whether it is Bossuet and Corneille or Voltaire and Diderot, one has to deal with the forensic, political eloquence of a great tradition whose well-defined roots can easily be examined in the schools of that age. Thus, the American South naturally finds a congenial milieu in France of the eighteenth century the France of the encyclopedists who rebelled against Descartes. These men proclaimed the Ciceronian origins of their aristocratic republicanism in the very name they bear. And Erasmus, More, Bacon, Swift, Bolingbroke, Burke, or Voltaire would have alike approved the linguistic and forensic program which Jefferson drew up for his university.

Poe must how be focused in relation to this dichotomy of European and American culture. Thus, merely to mention The Autocrat at the Breakfast Table is to summon up a type of man and a type of writing which are antithetical to Poe's mode of being. The New England ethose naturally finds its highest level of expression in the scholastic man, and the result is that the New England professor is autocratic. There is no social life co-extensive with him, nor one able to embody and criticize his thought and actions. Brought up amidst this social nudity and pedagogical earnestness, T. S. Eliot confronted the situation directly in "Tradition and the Individual Talent." Here it was that he exploded the heresy of "self-expression," of "message," and of artistic isolation and futility, which had found such congenial soil in New England. On the other hand, vividly aware of the defects of his immediate social environment, Poe is yet naturally and unaffectedly cosmopolitan. Because he understood profoundly the nature of his artistic dependence on that society, he was its vigorous and unremitting critic, scrutinizing its dress, its manners, its reading, its furniture and science; and he utilized these things as the basic materials of his prose. For he is the master of a prose whose lucidity and resilience are unmistakably owing to society in which good talk is common.

All his life Poe fought with eloquence and versatility of learning to maintain serious standards in current literature, to extend the scope of American letters, and to banish parochial habits of mind. To the end he maintained the need and practicality of a critical review which would transform the taste of society at large. Thus, unlike the New England academicians and recluses, Poe was the man of letters in society. He was not professorial but professional in the forensic tradition of Dr. Johnson and Macaulay.

This is not the place in which to proceed to a careful study of Poe's writings in relation to his tradition. However, the kind of importance which essentially social and political problems have in an understanding of his work must be indicated briefly. For it was from the experience of the Virginia of his day Poe was able to project those symbols of alienation and inner conflict which won the immediate assent of Baudelaire himself. (Baudelaire was also an aristocratic dandy, and his devotion to Silver Age and patristic rhetoric has implications which relate him decisively to the Ciceronian tradition which has been described.) That Baudelaire should have hailed Poe as he did has a meaning totally unlike that which belongs to the recognition of Emerson by Carlyle. To appreciate the full significance of this event remained for us to discover today; for English poetry had to wait another seventy years for T. S. Eliot finally to incorporate Baudelaire's sensibility and eloquence. No more striking testimony could be asked for Poe's central location European tradition. And yet he won that place by the uncompromising integrity with which he dealt with his local American experience. While the New England dons primly turned the pages of Plato and Buddha beside a tea-cozy, and while Browning and Tennyson were creating a parochial fog for the English mind to relax in, Poe never lost contact with the terrible pathos of his time. Coevally with Baudelaire, and long before Conrad and Eliot, he explored the heart of darkness.

Within this perspective of deep-lying cultural dichotomy it becomes possible for the critic to show that "the heart of darkness" for Byron, Baudelaire, and Poe is quite distinct from what it is for Hawthorne and Melville. Evil is a fact, perhaps the most important fact, in the New England consciousness. But the evil which Poe and Baudelaire experienced had very different roots from that of the North. It is the evil which led Byron to evoke endless Satanic heroes as objective correlatives in his poems, the evil, not of Calvinistic depravity, but of the split man and the split civilization. The psychological exploration of uneasy conscience as carried on by Hawthorne or Melville could only regain contact with European consciousness after James and Eliot had visited the founts of French Culture. But Poe lived in a community which had never breached its relation with the original traditions of its culture. And let us remember that these traditions were, long before the sixteenth century, strongly antipathetic to those which were brought to New England.

Considering this cultural dichotomy now in a new perspective, it is possible to approach even closer to a solution of a major Poe problem: Why is Poe essentially preoccupied with symbols and situations of horror and alienation? Or it can be put this way: Why did the split consciousness of an aristocratic-seigneurial society express itself in symbols of Satanism, sadistic horror, of fear, violence, and desolation? Byron, Baudelaire, and Poe are here together in a literary tradition which stretches back at least to Cervantes, and which is much alive today, even in such degenerate forms as crime fiction with its, significantly, dandified sleuths.

Without considering Corneille and Racine, the matter is obvious enough in Milton's Satan, and even more in the cult of literary diabolism associated with that Satan in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The issues are strikingly defined by Marvell in his Horatian Ode, where he explains how the aristocratic ideals of noble being have been swept aside by the vulgar Cromwell, whose genius is for destructive action rather than for harmony of thought and feeling. Tradesman Richardson offers an obvious incarnation of the same conflict in his Clarissa Harlowe. This time it is from the "Cromwellian" point of view. Thus Lovelace, the prototype of the aristocratic villain, provides us with the pattern of the Byronic hero and the villain of

Victorian melodrama, to say nothing of Dupin, Sherlock Holmes, Lord Peter Wimsey, Rhett Butler, and the Hollywood pantheon. The characteristic pose is that of the man "beautiful but damned," the man who scorns the ignoble conventions and petty, calculating bustle of commercial society. This man is wholly alienated from society, on one hand, and feared and admired by the commercial members of society, on the other hand. The entire conflict is perfectly dramatized in the relations between Edgar Poe and his guardian, John Allan. John Allan secretly admired Poe quite as much as Richardson revered Lovelace. Allan despised himself in the presence of Poe, and Poe in turn pitied and scorned him.

A figure of great interest, who can best be seen in relation to what has here been said of Poe, is Whitman. Many people have mistaken him for another variety of Thoreau or the noble savage of the frontier. Actually, as Sidney Lanier very clearly saw and explained long ago, Whitman is an inverted Byronic dandy. His tradition is that of the aristocratic and political South. He has nothing in common with the dons of New England. The inverted Byronic dandyism of Whitman is evident enough as soon as one applies the cipher of reversal. Put uncritical embrace of all social facts in place of fastidious scorn and withdrawal. Put pose of noble and omnivorous yokel for pose of satiated aestheticism of the worldling. Put tones of "barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world" for the elegant scorn of a Byronic hero excoriating mankind from a midnight crag. Put boisterous adolescent athleticism for the world-weary flaneur, and the pattern is complete. That is why Whitman was so eagerly accepted by the aesthetes who had only to make one simple adjustment that of reversal in order to fraternize with him. Perhaps this also explains his very considerable failure to convince us of his own sincerity. He is faux naif. He is often like a man flapping his arms and stamping his feet to restore circulation. More important than this implied valuation is the fact that America's political poet belongs to the aristocratic Southern tradition, a representative of the Ciceronian and forensic ideal of eloquent wisdom.

Without at present pursuing this theme further, it can be maintained that whereas Poe's art is political, in that its vehicle and dramatic organization concern those symbols which express a basic split in society and personality, the art of Hawthorne, Melville, and James is wholly non-political in its concern with the laceration of merely individual conscience even when this conscience is typical of a certain type of community. For the fact which confronts this individual conscience is, finally, not political dislocation but the theological problem of moral deprivation. Distinct from this type, and within the coordinates of a thoroughly rational sensibility, Poe brought morbidity into focus, gave it manageable proportions, held it up, not for emulation, but for contemplation.

In his own fashion, then, Poe had as great a working faith in civilization as Jefferson himself, and by defining and projecting the inner emotional drama of his time he probably did as much as Jefferson to energize American life. For there is intense vitality in his "morbidity."

NOTES

1 The best published account of the ancient quarrel between the grammatical and dialectical methods in theology is in R. P. McKeon's paper, "Renaissance and Method," Studies in the History of Ideas, vol. III.

2 R. M. Weaver ("The Older Religiousness in the South," Sewanee Review, Spring, 1943) provides a good deal of incidental documentation for the present paper. He contrasts the speculative, New England theology with the practical, "political" piety of the South. The work of Werner Sombart, on the economic plane, makes the same point: Scholastic philosophy and theology provided the indispensable viewpoint and technological abstraction which brought about the rise of industrial capitalism. The Southern resistance to technology and industry is

inherent, just as the Northern passion for machinery and bureaucracy is inherent in age-old but divergent intellectual traditions. H. J. Ford (Rise and Growth of American Politics, pp. 141-142) makes the same contrast between political views of North and South.