# THE MILL NEWS LETTER

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Where will our hero next appear? No one, we think, could have predicted this citation. In Kingsley Amis's <u>Jake's Thing</u>, the protagonist (in this case a well-chosen term) is having problems with what his unfriendly psychiatrist calls his "lib-eedo"; he hasn't lost the ability to perform sexually, but has lost all interest in act and fact. Sent to a sex clinic, he is subjected to various experiments to test his arousal-reactions, and to keep the different tests from contaminating each other, he has to be brought down to ground-zero or thereabouts between experiments. The devlce chosen for this purpose is a book, from which Amis gives extracts without identifying the source. Alas, it is all too readily recognized: there are three passages, beginning, respectively, "Apart from the peculiar tenets of individual thinkers, there is also in the world at large an increasing tendency to stretch unduly the powers of society over the individual . . ."; "If all mankind minus one were of one opinion . . ."; and "We take care that, when there is a change, it shall be for change's sake . . ." (Jake's Thing, pp. 82-5 of the Penguin ed.; On Liberty, Collected Works, XVIII, 227, 229, 273). On the assumption that the passages have the effect attributed to them, we have come to three conclusions: it appears incontrovertible that (a) On Liberty should be seen as part of the covert campaign for Neo-Malthusianism, (b) the British birthrate began to drop in 1859 (and not in 1876, as has been thought), and (c) Harriet Taylor Mill was indeed a joint author of On Liberty.

This issue features an article by David Levy (National Planning Association, Washington, D.C.) on the place of Malthusianism, and its relation to libertarian communism, in Mill's thought. Also included in this number is a list prepared by Gunter Heismann (Marburg/Lahn, West Germany) of dissertations on Mill completed at German, Austrian, and Swiss universities. We continue with recent publications and conclude with three book reviews and a progress report ou the Collected Works.

#### LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISTS, MALTHUSIANS AND J. S. MILL WHO IS BOTH

#### David Levy

J. S. Mill's social philosophy has been obscured by failure to come to grips with the issues in the debate between William Godwin and T. R. Malthus over the desirability of private property, familial responsibility, marriage, and kindred social justitutions. The debate seems to begin with a thesis advanced by David Hume. As part of his dispute with John Locke, Hume puts forward a theory of property establishing that property exists, and only exists, in conditions of limited benevolence and scarcity. That is, in situations either with benevolence or without scarcity we do not observe property. What if, Godwin argues, as if in opposition to part of Hume's argument, scarcity is artificial, a creation of property itself? If the rest of Hume's analysis were correct, would not aholishing property create general benevolence? This is the Godwinian challenge to a system of private property, the claim that an egalitarian distribution of income and an other-regarding morality are co-determining.

There is an interesting problem denoting Godwin's social philosophy since it does not fit neatly into any of the modern "isms." Since Godwin's proposal ro share communal resources equally without regard to production is advanced to free people from the constraints both of government and of property, perhaps it is not inappropriate to characterize his philosophy as "libertarian communism." An alteruarive characterization, "philosophical anarchism," requires a supplementary proviso that Godwin opposes property as well as government. Making his case against property to unbind the constraint he sees to human development, Godwin has no brief even for redistribution which is not accompanied by a corresponding change in the motivation of individuals.

Malthus attacks Godwin on the grounds that scarcity is natural because human motivation is not a policy variable, that human wants are insatiable, and caunot be bound by social concern. Waiving consideration of communism's reduction of the incentive to labour, Malthus bases his attack on what we know about the sexual passions of men and women and about the potential of agricultural production. A libertarian communism abolishes the material responsibility for marriage by making each responsible for everyone's children. If the insatiability of human wants is a given, the constraints to appropriation of resources to support children provided by a moral law are ephemeral without the supplement of the constraints inherent in a system of private property.

The fascinating paradox of Mill's social philosophy is that, as the great spokesman for Malthusianism in the latter balf of the nineteenth century, he defends a libertarian communism on the Godwinian grounds that the abolition of private property would bring with it a moral law strong enough to provide the requisite constraints to appropriation. The burden of Mill's argument is to snow that a successful libertarian communism would inculcate an altruistic moral motivation replacing self-regarding motivation. He defends liber-

tarian communism by denying the foundations of economic reductionism-the approach to social theory which posits that the goals to which individuals aspire are constaut.

The Malthusian hackground is vital to an understanding of why the institutional framework for Mill's proposed reform of public opinion has such a strong religious cast. After we see Malthus showing that Christianity encourages the sort of irresponsibility which would doom a liberrarian communism, we can understand Mill's argument that Christianity must be replaced or reformed to serve as the moral basis for the new order. Mill looks for a day in which individuals are motivated only by general benevolence, the constraints of property becoming obsolete. 5

Arthur Lovejoy has called attention to the vast amount of original work which is fundamentally a selection and rearrangement from the common stock of ideas. Mill's response to Malthus is an example of such combinatory originality. He secularizes theological utilitarianism by specifying the infinite importance of moral development. Seeing no reason that a competitive process would lead to such a development, Mill draws upon the theory of an endowed, culture-diffusing class to effect the motality of social unity. To allow these theories to guide reality, rather than he faisified by reality, Mill relies upon a developmental philosophy of social theory in an Aristotelian teleology. Combined with the technical contributions of Malthusian theory, these serve as the basis for Mill's defence of libertarian communism as an institutional reform to force moral, motivational development.

Although the issues in the Malthusian controversy seem to be of interest today mainly to historians of economic theory, the ramifications of this dispute are considerably wider. At its foundation the libertarian communist quarrel with Malthus is a quarrel with the economic-philosophical tradition of economic reductionism which posits that the goals to which people aspire are fixed. In the reductionist tradition differences in economic incentives are necessary and sufficient to explain differences in individual behaviour. 8 This fixed goal assumption allows theorists to distinguish sharply berween social theory and the reality which social theory describes. If goals are not assumed fixed, the social theory which is held by these individuals may be shown to influence their goals; hence, we could not separate social reality from rhe theory describing the reality. Mill's response to the reductionist tradition is important because the tradition is important and Mill's response is not marred by technical deficiencies.

There are two aspects of Malthus's work which provide an important background for Mill's work. First, Malthus shows that the traditional economic theory of population could he used to analyze the consequences of a state which abolished familial responsibility and private property without replacing them with some institution imposing responsibility on individuals for their decision to have children. Second, Malthus shows that the dictates of traditional Christianity conflict with the dictates of humanitarianism. 9

Malthus presents a cogent analysis of the relation between libertarian communism and population. The traditional economic theory of population derives the rate of population growth, other

things being equal, from the age of marriage. The earlier individuals marry, the more children they have to support.  $^{10}$  The costs of support. The costs of supporting children resulting from a marriage are considered the costs of marriage. Individuals adjust the age of marriage to vary the cost of the family. It occurred to Malthus that a society constructed on the principle of libertarian communism would alter the perceived costs of a family to parents. Under private property individuals are responsible for snpporting their children, so the extra cost of earlier marriage to society, the resources required to feed additional children, is borne by those making the decision to marry. The social costs of children--the resources required to support them--would not alter under a change from private property to libertarian communism. What would change dramatically, however, is the cost perceived by parents if libertarian communism were adopted. Each individual would receive an equal share of the communal income. Therefore, the private costs perceived by parents would fall almost to zero as an extra child, or rwenty, would only slightly reduce their share of the communal iucome. Malthus's objection to communism hinges upon the consequences of this divergence between the private and social costs of a family.

Malthus considers the fate of a communist experiment. All individuals would be encouraged to procreate and multiply by the lack of perceptible costs: "I cannot conceive a form of society so favourable upon the whole to population.... As we are supposing no anxiery about the future support of children to exist, I do not conceive that there would be one woman in a hundred, of twenty-three, without a family.' The fundamental instability of any liberrariau communism results from the divergence between the private and social costs of a family: while every mau felt secure that all his children would be well provided for by general benevolence, the powers of the earth would be absolutely inadequate to produce food for the population which would inevitably ensue; . . . some check to population therefore was imperi-consequences of a numerous family will not come so coarsely home to each mau's iudividual interest, as they do at present. It is true, a man in such a state of society might say, If my childreu cannot subsist at my expense, let them subsist at the expense of my neighbour."13

Malthus further claims that some forms of poor laws allow individuals to pass the costs of supporting a family to society, encouraging population growth. Malthus's analysis establishes the possibility of perverse poor relief: chose forms of poor laws which approximate a libertarian communistic income distribution encourage rapid increase of population; hence, they benefit the subsidized poor at the expense of the independent poor. However, he conjectures that it would be possible to design a poor law which did not produce a substantial divergence between the private and the social costs of children. If poor relief was imposed under stringent sumptuary controls, individuals would not marry expecting to receive poor relief. Halthus's conjecture was correct, it would be possible to provide some assistance for distress without financing poor relief by making independent labourers poorer.

Mill's Maltbusianism is shaped by Nassau Senior's contributions to population theory and policy. Senior's study leading to the New Poor Law of 1834 provides the cutting, empirical edge of later Malthusian policy proposals and theory. It advanced the view that a non-perverse poor law could be designed along the lines of Malthus's conjecture. Moreover, his study shows it possible to explain behaviour in different societies by variation in incentives. But Senior is hardly an uncritical disciple of Malthus. In his first exposition of classical population theory, he points ont that the terminology Malthus uses suggests hoth the empirically false propositions that wages could not above subsistence and that living standards have not risen in the course of economic development. This terminological confusion is are the exchange between Senior and Malthus, an exchange which hoth the empirically false propositions that wages could not persist however, does not jeopardize Senior's good standing as a Malthusian. Indeed, Malthns's conjecture is confirmed by Senior's investigation of the European and American experience with poor relief, which reveals that the British experience of rapidly increasing expenditure for poor relief is almost unique. 19 This intersocial difference could be relief is almost unique. explained by the private cost of availing oneself of poor relief in these different societies. Where poor relief is sufficiently unpleassocieties do not suffer the British experience. 26
The economic literature of the period following the New Poor Law's

The economic literature of the period following the New Poor Law's establishment stresses the importance of the quantitative divergence between the private and the social costs of a family for population growth. Social policy tying poor assistance to sumptuary controls forms the humane equivalent of the threat of starvation. Economists stress that there are quantitative issues involved in the poor-law controversy. For example, Mill uses Senior's findings to argue against Harriet Martineau's statement of David Ricardo's position that all forms of poor relief are perverse. Indeed, Mill's Principles contains a lengthy summary and exposition of the findings of Senior's study.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Malthusian position forms a stock objection to libertarian communism. 24 Alfred Marshall points out that the dispute between Godwin and Malthus has a classical analogy: "well-meaning enthusiasts, chiefly under French influence, were proposing communistic schemes which would enable people to throw on society the responsibility for rearing their children. . . . 1t is interesting to compare Malthus' criticism [of Godwin] with Aristotle's comments on Plato's Republic (see especially Politics, II, 6)."25

On the other hand, the moral issues raised in the Maithusian controversy are visible in Maithus's dispute with traditional Christian teaching. Christian imperatives prescribe that early marriage, regardless of consequence in terms of costs to parents or society, is desirable to prevent fornication. Hen who delay marriage out of prudence will characteristically not be chaste since they will avail themselves of the service of prostitutes. Halthus accepts the Christian characterization of extra-marital sex as vice. He will be emphatically does not accept the Christian judgment that sexual vice is the only vice to be considered. Halthus's term "moral restraint"—delay of marriage combined with strict chastity—shows his acceptance of Christian terminology. Neither Malthus nor his contemporary critics

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thought moral restraint possible.<sup>30</sup> Neo-Malthusians defend mechanical contraception, a step Malrhus refused, to allow individuals the possibility of both earlier marriage and higher income.<sup>31</sup>

Given fixed human motivation, Divine imperatives are in conflict. This means that individuals must choose between iuconsistent imperatives and explicitly bear ultimate moral responsibility. Malthus states this issue directly; other Malthusians attempt to evade it by identifying moral restraint—which is not possible—with prudential restraint which is. 33 If individuals must choose which Divine imperative to accept, then religion, and the Divinity which it manifests, must be judged with a deeper morality. 34 The anti-Christian potential in Malthusianism is developed eloquenry by Mill. 35 It bears some relation to his response to economic reductionism.

A defining characteristic of economic reductionism is a claim that the goals to which all individuals aspire are constant. Variation in incentives is thus necessary and sufficient to explain variation in behaviour. To analyze the future course of society, reductionists presume that human motivation (the goals to which individuals aspire) is the one stable feature. The Malthus locates himself in this tradition when he criticizes Condorcet's conjecture of the forthcoming organic perfectibility of man:

"It may perhaps be said that the world is yet so young, so completely in its infancy, that it ought not ro be expected that any difference should appear so soon.

If this be the case, there is at once an end of all human science. The whole train of reasonings from effects to causes will be destroyed. We may shnt our eyes to the book of nature, as it will no longer be of any use to read it. The wildest and most improbable conjectures may be advanced with as much certainty as the most just and sublime theories, founded on careful and reiterated experiments. We may return again to the old mode of philosophising and make facrs bend to systems, instead of establishing systems upon facts." <sup>37</sup>

Godwin's and Mill's defence of libertarian communism operates within an opposing philosophy of social theory where indeed "facts bend to systems." In his first tesponse to Malthus, Godwin asserts that under libertarian communism moral, morivational development would occur spontaneously, but he provides no reason to believe this would be the case. 38 Mill provides, if not a reason, at least an elaboration of the issues.

The issue between the reductionists and the libertarian communists is whether it is probable that under libertarian communism individuals would act out of social concern in their family-forming decisions. Senior's study indicated that individuals had shown no sign of doing so. The empirical issue is whether human motivation is set or whether it can be expected to "develop" in response to social change. Although standard accounts characterize Mill as an empiricist, his approach to social philosophy and economics is much closer to Aristotle's teleology than to Hume's Newtonianism. Teleology specifies a goal independent of observed choice; moreover, it specifies that evidence cannot falsify the theory. That is, divergences between theory and reality may be the fault of the reality, not the theory.

telian would not regard the observation of an irrational individual as falsifying the proposition that all men are rational. The irrational individual is defective; he has not attained his potential. $^{4.0}$ 

Mill finds in Coleridge a technique to defend the <u>potential</u> of social institutions, in this case an established culture-diffusing class: "That such a class is likely to be behind, instead of hefore, the progress of knowledge, is an induction erroneously drawn from the peculiar circumstances of the last two centuries, and in contradiction to all the rest of modern history." It is a shock to note the teleological confidence with which Mill dismisses the evidence of two centuries. But Mill is concerned with the potential of social institutions, not what is actually observed: "If we have seen much of the abuses of endowments, we have not seen what this country might be made by a proper administration of them. . . ."42

The importance of the methodological prescriptions in the <u>Logic</u> for understanding Mill's social philosophy has been rightly insisted upon by Robson. Mill regards the laws of the formation of charactet as critical; nonetheless, they "cannot be ascertained by observation and experiment." Although Mill proposes an approach which Karl Popper would make famous, that a deductive model be constructed which generates implications which are then compared to reality, 44 Mill simply frees his speculations on character development from any empirical constraint. If humans develop, what we learn from observation now may not be applicable tomorrow. 45

We learn from everything Mill writes the importance he assigns to moral development. In sharp contrast to the reductionist claim that effective morality only redirects the means to satisfy given passions, 6 Mill looks for morality to change human desires. 47 The reductionists examine observed morality, whereas what Mill considers morality is not subject to empirical constraints. What Mill considers morality is vital to his defence of libertarian communism.

Mill's explicit statement of the Greatest Happiness Principle in Utilitarianism contains a distinction between "higher" and "lower" pleasures. 48 Although acute critics have asserted otherwise, this distinction is not made on the basis of observed choice, 49 but on the basis of the judgment of the most developed creatures. Mill cerrainly writes in places as if individuals who can attain both will actually choose the higher pleasure over the lower. 50 It is unduly harsh to read Mill as making this vital distinction on the basis of actual observation, the absurdity of which he could have learned from any number of philosophers who write with their eyes open. 51 In fact, he admits that even more highly developed individuals do not behave the way their judgments would suggest. This revealed non-preference does not, at least for Mill, prove their judgments false:

"Ir may be objected, that many who are capable of the higher pleasures, occasionally, under the influence of temptarion, postpone them to the lower. But this is quite compatible with a full appreciation of the intrinsic superiority of the higher. Men often, from infirmity of character, make their election for the near good, though they know it to be the less valuable; and this no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures, than when it is between bodily and mental. They

pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good." $^{52}$ 

Indeed, if Mill were arguing that we know what is moral by observing what moral men do, then he would be advancing a transparent circularity. <sup>53</sup> Mill defines "higher" pleasure in terms of the <u>judgments</u> of fully developed individuals, regardless of how they themselves behave

The "higher"/"lower" distinction has consequences for Mill's social philosophy which must be explored. Indeed, in a nutshell, Mill's normative social philosophy is how to induce individuals to choose the "higher" pleasure. Equivalently, how do we produce moral, motivational development?

Mill's hope for social unity, like Godwin's, is the heart of his support of communism:

"Mankind are capable of a far greater amount of public spirit than the present age is accustomed to suppose possible. History bears witness to the success with which large bodies of human beings may be trained to feel the public interest their own. And no soil could be more favourable to the growth of such a feeling, than a Communist association, since all the ambition, and the bodily and mental activity, which are now exerted in the pursuit of separate and self-regarding interests, would require another sphere of employment, and would naturally find it in the pursuit of the general benefit of the community." 54

The Malthusian challenge is acknowledged; if libertarian communism eontinues to exist, it must produce moral, motivarional development:

"Another of the objections to Communism is similar to that, so often urged againsr poor-laws: that if every member of the community were assured of subaistence for himself and any number of children, on the sole condition of willingness to work, prudential restraint on the multiplication of mankind would be at an end, and population would start forward at a rate which would reduce the community, through successive stages of increasing discomfort, to actual starvation. There would certainly be much ground for this apprehension if Communism provided no motives to restraint, equivalent to those which it would take away. Bur Communism is precisely the state of rhings in which opinion might be expected to declare itself with greatest intensity against this kind of selfish intemperance. . . . The Communistic scheme, instead of being peculiarly open to the objection drawn from dangers of over-population, has the recommendation of tending in an especial degree to the prevention of that evil." 55

Since libertarian communism requires moral, motivational development, we cannot say what the future organization will be like. <sup>56</sup> This may explain why Mill does not worry over the details of the future communistic organization.

Mill has relied upon his teleology to "prove" the vital issue. That is, given that a libertarian communism is stable, then moral development must occur. What if libertarian communism is not stable? What if moral development does not occur? What if the Malthusian nightmare comes to pass? To consider the gains and losses from a com-

munist experiment, it is necessary to consider the importance which Mill assigns to social unity.

Under libertarian communism the Greatest Happiness Principle, with its distinction of higher and lower pleasures, might be taught as a religious imperative, since Mill believes that religion has the ability to mould character. The doctrine of this new religion is that the highest of all pleasures is unity with one's fellow-creatures:

"In an improving state of the human mind, the influences are constantly on the increase, which tend to generate in each individual a feeling of unity with all the rest; which feeling, if perfect, would make him never think of, or desire, any beneficial condition for himself, in the benefits of which they are not included. If we now suppose this feeling of unity to he taught as a religion, and the whole futce of education, of institutions, and of opinion, directed, as it once was in the case of religion, to make every person grow up from infancy surrounded on all sides both by the profession and by the practice of it, I think that no one, who can realize this conception, will feel any misgiving about the sufficiency of the ultimate sanction for the Happiness morality."57

We note that both in <u>On Liberty</u> and elsewhere Mill explicitly considers moral development a higher order good than liberty itself:

"It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that this doctrine is meant to apply only to human beings in the matnrity of their faculties. . . . we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered in its nonage. . . . Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end. Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of rhings anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne, if they are so fortunate as to find one." 58

The gamble which Mill is willing for society to take is to free society from all constraints other than the new morality. If the gamble fails, nothing important has been lost, since moral, motivational development is a higher order good than anything which might be lost. Mill has secularized Pascal's wager; any gamble to attain the infinite good is worthwhile for any finite probability of success. Any costs of the gamble vanish because of the hierarchy of his moral universe.

Now we can understand the paradox of Mill's Malthusianism. Mill's

Now we can understand the paradox of Mill's Malthusianism. Mill's Principles serves as an important forum to diffuse Senior's view that variation in self-regarding incentives across societies is necessary and sufficient to explain variation in the effects of poor relief. When behaviour can be reduced to considerations of self-regarding incentives, people are in a deplorable state of development. They behave as Malthusian theory describes. However, if libertarian communism is to survive, humans must improve to transcend Malthusian theory. Humans are not now suited for libertarian communism; <sup>59</sup> under libertarian communism the choice is develop or die. Given Mill's hierarchical morality, this is for him an acceptable gamble.

A Treatise of Human Nature, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford, 1888); 494-5. Hume's attack is directed at a vital link in Locke's theory of property, the assumption now known as the "Lockean proviso," that appropriation does not reduce the amount left in common for others (Second Treatise in Locke's Two Treatises of Government, ed. Peter Laslett, 2nd ed. [Cambridge, 1970], #33). The general context of Hume's dispute with Locke is discussed in David Levy, "Rational Choice and Morality: Economics and Classical Philosophy," History of Political Economy, forthcoming.

Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, ed. K. Codell Carter

(Oxford, 1971), 294-5.

Basil Willey, The Eighteenth Century (New York, 1940), 230-1.

"Political Justice, 285.

51 agree with John M. Robson, The Improvement of Mankind (Toronto, 1968), x, that Mill's ethical concerns unify his work. The construction below will show why Himmelfarb's charge of massive inconsistency Gertrude Himmelbetween On Liberty and Mill's other works is false. farb, On Liberty and Liberalism (New York, 1974), 139: "It was not only the socialist mode of organization that was at variance with On Liberty; it was also the reform of human nature required by the new social organization." As 1 will argne, even in On Liberty Mill considers moral development a higher order good than liberty, and socialism is simply a means to attain this moral, motivational development.

The Great Chain of Being (Cambridge, 1936), 3. This is the subject of an important article by John M. Robson, "Rational Animals and Others," in James and John Stuart Mill: Papers

of the Centenary Conference, ed. John M. Robson and Michael Laine (Toronto and Buffalo, 1976), 143-60.

<sup>6</sup>A modern exposition of this tradition can be found in George J. Stigler and Gary S. Becker, "De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum,

American Economic Review, 67 (1977), 76-90. More technical discussions of these propositions can be found in David Levy, "Ricardo and the Iron Law: A Correction of the Record,"
History of Political Economy, 8 (1976), 235-51, and "Some Normative
Aspects of the Malthusian Controversy," ibid., 10 (1978), 271-85.

10 Benjamin Franklin, Observations Concerning the Increase of Man-

Benjamin Franklin, ed. Albert Henry Smyth 3-4: "For People increase in Proportion to the in The Writings of (New York, 1970), III, 63-4: Number of Marriages, and that is greater in Proportion to the Ease and Convenience of supporting a Family. When families can be easily supported, more Persons marry, and earlier in Life." Franklin's descrip tion of the American experience is characteristic of much later work: "Hence Marriages in America are more general, and more generally early than in Europe. And if it is reckoned there, that there is but one Marriage per Annum among 100 persons, perhaps we may here reckon two; and if in Europe they have out 4 Births to a Marriage (many of their marriages being late), we may here reckon  $8 \dots$  (65). Hume notes tnat the practice of infanticide could trick people into marrying earlier, thinking that they would be able to destroy their children (Essays: Moral, Polítical and Literary [Oxford, 1963], 398: see also

Robert Wallace, A Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind [1809], Reprints of Economic Classics [New York, 1969], 8). Adam Smith, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, Moderu Library (New York, 1937), 71: "The value of children is the greatest of all encouragements to marriage. We cannot, therefore, wonder that the people in North America should generally marry very young . . [producing] the great increase occasioned by such early marriages." Godwin, Political Justice, 304: "It is impossible where the price of labour is greatly reduced, and an added population threatens a still further reduction, that men should not be considerably under the influence of fear, respecting an early marriage, and a numerous family." T. R. Malthns, An Essay on the Principle of Population (1798), ed. Anthony Flew, Penguin Books (London, 1970), 264: siderable number of persons of marriageable age never marry, or they marry comparatively late, and . . . their marriages are consequently less prolific than if they had married earlier."

11 Malthus, Principle of Population (1798), 136.

<sup>12</sup><u>Ibid</u>., 141.

iu Political Justice (Oxford, 1971), 332.

14T. R. Malthus, An Essay on the Principle of Popularion (1803), ed. T. H. Hollingsworth, Everyman Library (London, 1973), II, 48: "A poor man may marry with little or no prospect of being able to support a family without parish assistance. They may be said, therefore, to create the poor which they maintain. . . ." David Ricardo's analysis of poor relief is discussed in Levy, "Ricardo." David Ricardo's analysis

<sup>15</sup>Malthus, <u>Principle of Population</u> (1798), 102.

16 Nassau W. Senior, Two Lectures on Population . to which is added a correspondence between the author and the Rev. T. R. Malthns

(Londou, 1831), 35-49.

<sup>17</sup>Senior, Population, 78-9: "Nothing can be more accurate than your statement, that population is always ready and inclined to increase faster than food, if the checks which repress it are removed. But many, perhaps the majority of your readers, adopt the proposition without the qualification." A letter from Malthus, in Seaior's Population, 65, states: "In no old country that I have yet heard of, have the wages of labour, so determined, been for any length of time such as to maintain with ease the largest families. Consequently, in all old states there will always be a coastant pressure specifically arising from the tendency of food to increase not being so great as the tendency of population ro increase." Archbishop Whately, quoted in Nassau W. Senior, An Outline of the Science of Political Economy (Loadon, 1938), 47, emphasizes the verbal issues in the use of "tend-ency." Hence, J. S. Mill: "Others have attached immense importance to a correction which more recent political economists have made in the mere language of the earlier followers of Mr. Malthus" (Principles of Political Economy, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works, Vols. II-III [Toronto, 1965], II, 353).

"Senior's Malthusian reputation troubles the Quarterly Review. Before the Poor Law Commission report is issued, G. P. Scrope protests Senior's role in the Poor Law inquiry: "He had declared nimself, ex cathedra, as a professor of political economy, of the opinion of Mr.

Malthus and Mr. Ricardo, that the only effective way of improving the poor-law is to abolish it in toto" ("The Poor-Law Question," Quarter Quarteri

Review, 50 [1834], 349-50).

15 Nassau W. Senior, Statement of the Provision for the Poor (London, 1835), 84: "We have now given a very brief outline of the institutions of those portions of the Continent which appear, from the returns, to have adopted the English principle of acknowledging in every person a right to be supported by the public. It will be observed that in no country, except, perhaps, the Canton de Berne, ha observed that in no country, except, permaps, and compulsory relief produced evils resembling, either in intensity or in extent, those which we have experienced; and that in the majority of the nations which have adopted it, the existing system appears to work <sup>20</sup>Senior, <u>Provision</u>, 88.

21 Mountifort Longfield, Four Lectures on Poor Laws (1834), in The Economic Writings of Mountifort Longfield, Reprints of Economic Classics (New York, 1971), 19-30, 75-9, contrasts the right to a minimum income with the perversity of the English practice. A particularly acute discussion is found in William Forster Lloyd, Lectures on Population, Value, Poor-Laws and Rent (1837), Reprints of Economic Classics

to us as conclusive in support of the <a href="mailto:principle">principle</a> of a poor-rate, as they are in condemnation of the existing practice" ("Miss Martineau's Summary of Political Economy," in Essays on Economics and Society, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works, Vols. 1V-V [Toronto, 1967], 1V, 227-8).

73Principles, CW, III, 1135 has the index of citations to Senior's

study in the <u>Principles</u>.

2 Henry Sidgwick, <u>The Principles of Political Economy</u> (London, 1883), 522: "The objections above stated apply with increased force, if we suppose--what experience shews to be most probable--that the increase through equalisation of the incomes of the poorer classes will cause the population to increase at a more rapid rate than at present; so that ultimately the increment of an average worker's share

will be partly spent in supporting a larger number of children. . . . Alfred Marshall, <u>Principles of Economics</u>, Ninth (Variorum) Edition, ed. C. W. Gnillebaud (London, 1961), 177, 177n. In fact, Aristotle presents an early analysis of the public-goods problem: "And totle presents an early analysis of the public-goods problem: there is another objection to the proposal. For that which is common to the greatest number has the least care bestowed upon it. Everyone thinks chiefly of his own, hardly at all of the common interest; and only when he is himself concerned as an individual. For besides otherconsiderations, everybody is more inclined to neglect the duty which he expects another to fulfill. . . . Each citizen will have a thousand sons who will not be his sons individually, but anybody will be equally the son of anybody, and will therefore be neglected by all alike. Politics of Aristotle, trans. Benjamin Jowett, rev. ed. [New York, 1899], II, 4.)

26 The basic text is 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, 7-9.

<sup>27</sup>There is a considerable literature in the eighteenth century dealing with the desirability of eliminating prostitution both to increase state power and wealth and to moralize the population. Bernard Mandeville, for example, in his A Modest Defence of Publick Stews

(London, 1725), 4, states: "Whoring . . . evidently binders the Propagation of the Species. How many thousand young Men in this Nation would turn their Thoughts toward Matrimony, if they were not constantly destroying that Passion, which is the only Foundation of it?" And Josiah Tucker in A Brief Essay . . . with Regard to Trade, 2nd ed. (Londou, 1750), 90-1, observes: "The marriage State also is not sufficiently encouraged among Us; . . . 10,000 common Whores are not so fruitful as fifty healthy young married Women, that are houest and virtuous: By which Means, the State is defrauded of the Increase of upwards of 199 Subjects out of 200, every year." Rohert Wallace's recommendation to reform marriage itself to prevent fornication has heen the subject of au excellent article by Norah Smith, "Sexual More in the Eighteenth Century: Robert Wallace's 'Of Venery,'" Journal of "Sexual Mores the History of Ideas, 39 (1978), 419-34.

Z8Malthus, Principle of Population (1798), 76: "[prudential] considerations are calculated to prevent, and certainly do prevent, a very great number in all civilized nations from pursuing the dictate of uature in an early attachment to one woman. And this restraint

almost necessarily, though not absolutely so, produces vice.

29 Malthus, Principle of Population (1803), II, 175.

30 <u>Ibid</u>., I, 14.

Population (London, 1822), 176-8; James Mill, Selected Economic Writings, ed. Donald Winch (Chicago, 1966), 238-9; Mill, Principles,

11, 372-3; Annie Besant, The Law of reputation (London, 1891). The Law of reputation (London, 1890). 560: "it from the last edition revised by the author (London, [1890]), 560: is our duty to defer marriage till we can feed our children; and . it is also our duty not to indulge ourselves in vicions gratifications; but I have never said that I expected either, much less both, of these duties to be completely fulfilled. In this, and a number of other cases, it may happen that the violation of one of the two duties will enable a man to perform the other with great facility." Unfortunatel modern reprints usually omit Malthus's replies to critics which are Unfortunately, appended to the editious published during his lifetime.

33 John Bird Summer, A Treatise on the Records of the Creation and on the Moral Attributes of the Creator, 3rd ed. (London, 1825), II, 224-31; Richard Whately, Introductory Lectures on Political Economy, 4th ed. (London, 1855), 109, 166. Malthus, Principle of Population

(1890), 585, is not satisfied with Sumner's solution.

34Malthus, Principle of Population (1803), II, 257: "Universally, the practice of maukind on the subject of marriage has been much superior to their theories; and however frequent may have been the declamations on the duty of entering into this state, and the advantage of early unions to prevent vice, each individual has practically found it necessary to consider of the means of supporting a family hefore he ventured to take so important a step. That great vis medi catrix reipublicae, the desire of bettering our condition, and the fear of making it worse, has been constantly in action, and has been constantly directing people into the right road, in spite of all the declamations which tended to lead them aside." Mill, Principles, CW, II, 367-8: "Civilization in every one of its aspects is a struggle

against the animal instincts. . . . If it has not brought the instinct of population under as much restraint as is needful, we must remember that it has never seriously tried. What efforts it has made, have mostly been in the contrary direction. Religion, morality, and states manship have vied with one another in incitements to marriage, and  $t_0$ the multiplication of the species, so it be but in wedlock. Religion has not even yet discontinued its encouragements. The Roman Catholic clergy (of any other clergy it is unnecessary to speak, since no other have any considerable influence over the poorer classes) everywhere

think it their duty to promote marriage, in order to prevent fornication."

35An Examination of Sir William Hamllton's Philosophy, ed. J. M.
Robson, Collected Works, IX (Toronto, 1979), 103: "I will call no being good, who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not

so calling him, to hell I will go."

36Bernard Mandeville, Fable of the Bees, ed. F. B. Kaye (Oxford, 1924), I, 39; Hume, <u>Treatise</u>, <u>xix-xx</u>; <u>Smith</u>, <u>Wealth of Nations</u>, 15.

37Malthus, <u>Principle of Population</u> (1798), 126.

38Godwin, Thoughts, 332.

39Aristotle, The Physics, trans. Philip H. Wicksteed and Francis M. Cornford, Loeb Library (London and New York, 1929), II, 8, 199a, 199ab. Such a teleology is responsible for charges of methodological inconsistency levelled at Mill by modern philosophers. H. J. McCloskey, John Stuart Mill (London, 1971), 138-9, notes that Mill's argument for communism follows rules different from those which are formally laid down in his Humean analysis of cause.

"OAristotle, Politics, I, 2.

""Coleridge," in Essays on Ethics, Politics on

""Coleridge, in Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works, X (Toronto, 1969), 150.

<sup>42</sup>CW, X, 150. Here Mill parts company with Codwin's anti-

establishment opinion in Political Justice, 236.

Robson, Improvement, 168.

44A System of Logic, ed. J. M. Robson, Collected Works, Vols. VII-

VIII (Toronto, 1973), VIII, 865-71.

\*SCW, VIII, 913: "It is one of the characters, not absolutely peculiar to the sciences of human nature and society, but belonging to them in a peculiar degree, to be conversant with a subject matter whose properties are changeable. I do not mean changeable from day to day, but from age to age; so that not only the qualities of iudividuals vary, but those of the majority are not the same in one age as in another."

<sup>46</sup>Evidence is provided in David Levy, "Adam Smith's 'Natural Law' and Contractual Society, "Journal of the History of Ideas, 39 (1978), 665-74, and "Rational Choice and Morality."

"Examination, CW, IX, 453: "The difference between a bad and a good man is not that the Latter was a second man in not that the Latter was a second man in not that the Latter was a second man in not that the Latter was a second man in not that the Latter was a second man in not that the Latter was a second man in not that the Latter was a second man in not that the Latter was a second man in not the latter was a second man in the latte

good man is not that the latter acts in opposition to his strongest desires; it is that his desire to do right, and his aversion to doing wrong, are strong enough to overcome, and in the case of perfect virtue, to silence, any other desire or aversion which may conflict with them. . . . The object of moral education is to educate the will: but the will can only be educated through the desires and aversions; by

eradicating or weakening such of them as are likeliest to lead to evil; exalting to the highest pitch the desire of right conduct and the aversion to wrong. . . ."

48 Utilitarianism, CW, X, 211: "there is no known Epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments, a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mete sensation."

49 Jacob Viner, The Long View and the Short (Clencoe, Ill., 1958),

325-6.

50 Utilitarianism, CW, X, 211.

51 Mandeville, Fable, I, 151: "how can I believe that a Man's chief
The Embellishments of the Mind, when I see him ever employ'd about and daily pursue the pleasures that are contrary to them?" Immanuel Kant, <u>Critique of Practical Reason</u>, trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis, 1956), 22: "As the man who wants money to spend does not care whether the gold in it was mined in the mountains or washed from the sand, provided it is accepted everywhere as having the same value, so also no man asks, when he is concerned only with the agreeableness of life, whether the ideas are from the sense or the understanding; he asks only how much and how great is the pleasure which they will afford him over the longest time."

52Utilitarianism, CW, X, 212.

<sup>53</sup>So charges Robson, <u>Improvement</u>, 157.

54Principles, GW, I1, 205.

55 CW, II, 206. The critical issue of self-interest and community interest is first raised by Mill iu a letter to Harriet Taylor, 19 February 1849, discussing the revisions of the <u>Principles</u>. He wrote to her (<u>Principles</u>, Appendix G, <u>CW</u>, III, 1028): "Then again if the sentence 'the majority would not exert themselves for anything beyond this & unless they did nobody else would &c' is not tenable, then all the two or three pages of argument which precede & of which this is but a summary, are false, & there is nothing to be said against Communism at all--one would only have to turn round &

advocate it--which if done would be better in a separate treatise.... \* <sup>56</sup>For example, when Mill discusses the effect of communism on incentives to labour (Principles, CW, II, 205): "To what extent, therefore, the energy of labour would be diminished by Communism, or whether in the long run it would be diminished at all, must be considered for

the present an undecided question."

Utilitarianism, CW, X, 232. But Mill admits, in the same paragraph, that use of the religious imperative poses dangers: "I entertain the strongest objections to the system of politics and morals set forth in [Comte's] treatise; but I think it has super-abundantly shown the possibility of giving to the service of humanity, even without the aid of belief in a Providence, both the psychical power and the social efficacy of a religion; . . . the danger is, not that it should be insufficient, but that it should be so excessive as to interfere unduly

with human freedom and individuality."

58 J. S. Mill, On Liberty, in Essays on Politics and Society, J. M. Robson, Collected Works, Vols. XVIII-XIX (Toronto, 1977), XVIII, 224. Here Rimmelfarb's inconsistency argument has considerable difficulty (On Liberty and Liberalism, 107): "The primary goods in UtiliLiberty were liberty and individuality." To preempt such an obvious counter-example to her inconsistency thesis, Himmelfarb argues (21) that this passage refers only to the distant past of the human race. The fact that Mill means his restriction to be of contemporary relevance is clear from a longer, parallel discussion in Representative Government, CW, XIX, 377: "Again, a people must be considered unfit for more than a limited and qualified freedom, who will not co-operate actively with the law and the public authorities, in the repression of evil-doers. A people who are more disposed to shelter a criminal than apprehend him; who, like the Hindoos, will perjure themselves to screen the man who has robbed them . . . like some nations of Europe down to a recent date . . . require that the public authorities should be armed with much sterner powers of repression than elsewhere, since the first indispensable requisites of civilized life have nothing else to rest

 $^{59}$ A very strong statement of this is found in the preface ro the third edition of Mill's <u>Principles</u>, <u>CW</u>, II, xciii.

\*Thanks are due to C. Griswold for careful comments on several craft

## AUSTRIAN, GERMAN, AND SWISS DISSERTATIONS ON JOHN STUART MILL

Gunter Heismann of Marburg/Lahn, West Germany, has submitted the following bibliography of dissertations to the News Letter. He writes:

"The bibliography is intended to be a complete list of 'Doktorarbeiten' and 'Habilitationsschriften' on J. Stuart Mill, or any aspect of his thought, submitted to German, Austrian, and Swiss universities. It was organized with the help of the bibliographies described in <u>Handbuch der bibliographischen Nachschlagewerke</u>, ed. Wilhelm Totok, Karl-Heinz Weimann, and Rolf Weitzel, 4th ed. (Frankfurt [Main]: Klostermann, 1972).

Most of the listed dissertations appeared in print. The librariea of the greater German universities will lend them to interested scholars. The handwritten or typewritten dissertations are in many cases available from the graduating institutions."

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Kohn, Benno. Untersuchnngen über das Causalproblem auf dem Boden einer Kritik der einschlägigen Lehren J. St. Mills. Wien: Gerold's Sohn, 1881. Philos. Diss. (Univ. Strassburg, 1881).

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Reuter, Johannes. Das Induktionsverfahren auf dem Gebiete des Werdens in der Natur, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung und Kritik von John Stuart Mill's induktiver Logik. Bonn: Hauptmann, 1882. Philos. Diss. (Univ. Bonn, 1882).

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Vogel, Karl. Darlegung und Beurteilung des Verhältnisses der Grundlehren von David Ricardo und J. St. Mill über den Arbeitslohn zu der Gesetzgebung des deutschen Reiches, betreffend die Unfall- und Krankenversicherung der Arbeiter. Rastatt: Vogel, 1889. Philos. Diss. (Heidelberg, 1889).

Kriegel, Friedrich. J. St. Mills Lehre vom Wert, Preis und der Bodenrente. Ein Beitrag zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie Mills. Berlin, 1897. Philos.-hisror. Diss. (Univ. Basel, 1897).

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Finkelstein, Fanja. Die allgemeinen Gesetze bei Comte und Mill. Heidelberg-Marburg: Hamel, 1911. Philos. Diss. (Univ. Heidelberg,

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Wust, Peter Joseph. John Stuart Mills Grundlegung der Geisteswissenschaften. Bonn: Hauptmann, 1914. Philos. Diss. (Univ. Bonn, 1914).

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Randenborgh, Elisabeth van. Die Theorie der religiösen Wertung bei J. St. Mill, James, F. A. Lange und Vaihinger. Manuscript. Philos. Diss. (Univ. München, 1919).

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Aeschelmann, Alfred. John Stuart Mill und die Frauenfrage. Type-written. Philos. Diss. (Unlv. Tübingen, 1923).

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Iting, B. F. "Lockwood and Mill on Connotation and Predication,"

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### Work in Progress

Snsan Pollitt (Birkbeck College, University of London) is preparing a thesis on early Victorian ideas of the future. It will be an analytical survey of social expectations and systems of the future from the passing of the Reform Bill to the publication of the Origin of Species in 1859, examining the ideas of selected groups from the middle and working classes. John Stuart Mill is among the figures examined; others include Herbert Spencer, Henry Buckle, George Combe, and probably George Eliot.

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#### REVIEWS

The Lights of Liberalism: University Liberals and the Challenge of Democracy, 1860-86. By Christopher Harvie. London: Allen Lane, 1976. 343 pp.

Brains and Numbers: Elitism, Comtism, and Democracy in Mid-Victorian England. By Chrlstopher Kent. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978. 212 pp.

These two works usefully complement one another. Each is founded upon a doctoral thesis; neither author seems to have been aware that the other was working within the same area. Harvie's book is more richly descriptive, more open to the variety of possible interpretations of mid-Victorian thought and politics, than Kent's Brains and Numbers, which is more concerned with the application of the theory of elites to the English scene and with the connections between the university liberals and Comtism. The principal difference of interpretation between the two books, one Kent notices in a footnote, is rhat Harvie attributes, in the forming of the academic liberals, more importance to a still powerful Evangelical impulse than to what Kent calls "the Coleridge-Arnold-Maurice-Carlyle line of elitist thought. This kind of difference is perhaps impossible to overcome; Evangelicalism may be thought to have produced the steam in the boller even though the direction to be taken by the locomotive wasn't set by Charles Simeon.

John Morley relates a remarkable story, a reminiscence of Gladstone's about a political discussion with one who stood on the far side of a great social and intellectual gulf. "To corroborate my doctrine I said, 'Why, look at the revolutions in foreign conntries.'
. . . The man looked hard at me and said these very words, 'Damn all foreign countries, what has old England to do with foreign countries?'"

(John Morley, The Life of William Ewart Gladstone [London, 1905 (1903)], I, 72.) I was reminded of this when I tead in Ratvie's book Frederic Harrison's remark that "our people are ignorant below the standard of any civilized race north of the Alps." Many, like Harrison, felt themselves isolated, not only from the people, but also from the barbarian aristocracy and the philistine middle class. Matthew Arnold felt, almost as an aching wound, the superiority of the Prussians and the French in their public esteem for the life of the mind, and in some degree all the educated of his generation felt thus and were impelled to hunt for a role and a function.

Some, among them the authors of the Essays on Reform of 1867, looked to European styles of thought--Hegel or Comte--for their models. These --Dicey, Goldwin Smith, Frederic Harrison, Leslie Stephen, Bryce, and others--were none of them thinkers or imaginative writers of great stature, such as were Carlyle, Arnold, Mill, and George Eliot. But they were the nearest thing Britain had ar that period to an intelligentsia and they were the counterparts on the "democratic" side of such spokesmen of "reaction" as Roherr/Lowe and Bagehot. It is a good idea to look at them as a group, to give some account of their political and social theories, and to estimate their weight in hringing about reforms, especially in higher education. As well as those names I have already mentioned there are others, such as T. H. Green (the Grey of Robert Elsmere), Benjamin Jowett, Mark Pattison, the moral philosopher Sidgwick, who are also members of this loosely connected group. They are all university men, some of them active as teachers and scholars in universities, and in their direct preoccupation with higher education and with the questions arising out of the stare of the universities they represent something new in England (not in Scotland): that awakening of the universities brought about, first by the Evangelical and Tractarian movements--new standards of seriousness and diligence were set--and then by the changes that followed a series of internal reforms of the college and university systems.

Those who went through these exciting transformations are not always the best authorities on what was happening. Harvie cites Pattison's remark that with the secession of Newman and the collapse of Tracrarianism iu its original form, "Oxford repudiated at once sacerdotal principles and Kantian logic"; and adds "there is truth in this." It seems to me wholly untrue. None of the Tractarians was a student of Kant; they had all read their Aristotle, their Locke, and their Butler. The most systematic of the Tractarians was Ward and he was strongly influenced by Mill (as was Newman after his conversion). The triumphs of Kant and of a somewhar watery Hegel (as in T. H. Green) were still to come and were a direct consequence of the secularizing of Oxford. A sober and watchful empiricism was much more characteristic of Newman than it was of the religiosity of T. H. Green or the Comtist votaries of the religion of humanity. (Kent, incidenrally rells us that Commist religion "was in many respects quite sensible" without telling us what these respects were. This is like saving that Pythagoreanism was morally bracing without telling as whatdoing sums? eating beans "-- was likely to have this effect.)

Politically the liberal intellectuals, who stood for a number of constituencies in 1868, were stunningly defeated, and on the whole

were then convinced that their job was to influence the life of politics indirectly. They remained "democrats"; that is, they were for the extension of the franchise to the masses, though they were nervous over the prospect that the masses might, innocently and brutally, take independent action and disregard the advice of their middle-class mentors. For the Comtists among them the workers were the nation; and the sacerdotal intelligentsia were forbidden to have any direct political role, something that always made Frederic Harrison a bit queasy. But it is clear that for Comte speculation was incompatible with political activity; and politics ought in principle to give way to administration. Adam Smith and William Pitt are ideal types: Smith elaborating his social theory without having to attend to the demands of politics, Pitt applying the theory to the actual problems of society. Nothing, as Frederic Harrison saw, could have been more distant from the outlook of the philosophical radicals. Harrison, writing to Morley, attacked Mill for over-emphasizing the place of reason in politics:

"You ought not to reason about politics. The part of the intelligence is very small. It is only to enable you to express articulately your passions. [Is there a vague recollection of Hume on reason and the passions here?] Politics is a matter of feeling. Right feeling, trained, intelligently trained feeling I grant, but not of syllogism. Mill teaches you all to chop logic in politics, very good logic no doubt, but you ought to feel with the mysterious force of nature."

This is poor stuff and at bottom Harrison knew he was involved in a paralogism. The Comtian scheme of development and the Comtian proposals for a secular ecclesiastical establishment in the present age are commeuded by elaborate arguments and rightly struck pragmatic Englishmen as excessively intellectualized. Kent puts it well when he says of Harrison that he "preferred implicit to explicit Comtism, and constantly tried to show how closely it accorded with what any reasonable, intelligent English gentleman must think." Harrison is indeed the most typicaily English of the Positivists of that generation. Kent gives us a wonderfully emblematic anecdote. Harrison wrote to Morley to say that his friend Henry Ponsonby (the Queen's private secretary) had invited him to dinner at Windsor, and exclaimed: "Imagine Mazzini dining with the Pope's chamberlain," and adding, "But then, I am not Mazzini."

Some of the liberal intellectuals of the 'sixties and 'seventies survived to be intellectual powers well into the twentieth century. When the present reviewer was an undergraduate Dicey and Bryce were still cited as high authorities and their works, in particular Dicey's The Law of the Constitution and Law and Opinion in England, were still commended as indispensable guides by tutors in politics. Morley will always be remembered for his close association with Gladstone, on the whole, and despite all irritations, the intellectuals' favourite politician. Others, such as Goldwin Smith and T. H. Green, are known now only to specialists. And who today remembers Richard Congreve? Harvie cites Mark Pattison's verdict on the Oxford liberals:

 $^{\prime\prime}\Lambda$  philosophy must be the concentrated expression of the life of a

period. [It is interesting that Pattison takes such a disputable proposition to be a truism; he is of course talking about Weltanschauung, not about philosophy.] The thinking of these men did not amount to a philosophy, for they could not grasp in its totality the self-consciousness of their generation. . . They wanted a knowledge of the past, a knowledge of the present, and of the thread by which the present is tied to the past. They were imperfectly acquainted with the condition of their own England."

This assessment seems reasonable in that Partison is judging them by the standards they themselves set. Many of rhem--not, I think, Bryce or Dicey or John Morley--exemplified the English vice of amateurism, and at botrom they thought that being a gentleman mattered enormously.

All great movements of the mind in politics diffuse a faint atmosphere of humbug. Demands for consistency and system, for clear first principles and respectable chains of argument, these are hard to sustain without cheating in the complex and obscure world of human society. There is the humbug of the historians: Freeman extolling the democracy that has come to the Teutonic peoples from "the free forests of Germany." (Ir was the same Freeman, no doubt overcome by the forest breezes, who wrote from the United States in 1881: "This would be a grand land if only every Irishman would kill a negro and be hanged for it!") Ireland was perhaps the greatest cause of humbug. The liberal inrellectuals were to a man partisans of the Risorgimento. It is pleasant to conremplate from a distance the wickedness of others and the virtues of those they oppress. Ireland, though, was a different matter. Many of the liherals here studied broke with Gladstone over Home Rule and moved over to the Unionists. Dicey recognized that a principal cause of a certain unreality in their political life was simply that the relatively luxurious way of life of most of them made it hard for them to comprehend how life was for many of their fellowcountrymen. The only workers they knew reasonably well were the artisans, a well-educated and articulate aristocracy of labour almost as removed from the labouring masses of the town and the countryside as were Dicey aud bis friends.

Both Harvie's and Kent's books are useful, full of interesting matter and iugenious argument. I list some difficulties and (as it seems to me) errors.

Harvie is given to the fashionable use of "to relate," e.g.: "How, then, did they relate to political agitation between June and November 1866 . . .?" The problem seems not a matter of usage, the authority of which I don't dispute; the fact Is that ignorance and indifference are also relational concepts, and it is therefore unsuitable to use "to relate" as though it were an acriviry people could go in for. He thinks such concepts as "sovereignty" and "natural rights" are derived from something he calls "individual ethics" (p. 15)—I can make nothing of this. On p. 11 there is a theological bowler; he tries to turn Evangelicals into Pelagiaus. He uses "iutuitionism" (e.g., p. 39) in an unclear sense. There is a curions remark (p. 220) that relations between those who took different views over Home Rule "had to be [cordial], as divisions ont through families, departments and colleges." Why had to be? One thinks, for instance, of the divisions in France

over Dreyfus, where there was certainly no question of "had to be" within families or public institutions.

Kent presents us with a new verbal horror, "presentist": "A strongly relativistic, idealistic, and presentist approach to history . . ." (p. 57). On p. 116 there is a printing muddle. On p. 119 the sentence, "He therefore attempted . . . Comtist redefinition," needs reorganizing to make sense. We have "simplisticly" (p. 146). Kent's bibliography is curiously selective. There is nothing by Bryce, nothing by Dicey; among Mill's works the Logic is not cited—this is like omitting the Critique of Pure Reason from a list of Kant's works—and there are other strange omissions, and inclusions.

Neither author makes anything of Herbert Spencer, and there is no particular reason why they should; hut in books in which virtually all possible intellectual influences are cited his omisaion is curious. Neither mentions W. H. Mallock. His The New Republic strikes me as an imporrant and apposite work.

Both books are, by modern standards, respectably bound and printed.

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The Idea of the Clerisy in the Nineteenth Century. By Ben Knights. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978. Pp. ix, 274.

An appropriate subtitle for this book might be "and Its Implications for the Twentieth Century," for it is both a study in intellectual history and a tract for the times. Knights discusses the implications of the idea of clerisy in the thought of that familiar nineteenthcentury quintet, Coleridge, Carlyle, Arnold, Mill, and Newman, with additional extended references to such less canonical luminaries as Francis Newman, Mark Pattison, and Henry Sidgwick. He maintains that the defining purpose of the clerisy is chiefly epistemological, and that intrinsic to its existence is an allegiance to idealism, both in the historiographical sense that ideas are the dominant force in history, and in the platonic sense that there exists some higher, transcendent level of reality where it is possible to escape coutin-gency--where intellectuals may dwell as "the active mind of society," imposing their ordering powers of thought upon the chaos of experience. But such an escape has its price, Knights warns. The clerisy's search for a static order of trnth necessitates throwing a "tight conceptual net over reality" and repressing the creative imagination so as to maintain a tennous intellectual control. The price is paid in the educational system which the clerisy dominates: their limited conception of what constitutes appropriate subject matter, their compulsiou to establish a hierarchy of knowledge, their self-perpetuating standards of judging academic ability--all serve to sustain their closed system of epistemological values right to the present day.

This is very forcefully argued. Yet one has doubts. These are raised initially by the very terms of the title. An "idea," Coleridge

says in On the Constitution of Church and State, is "that conception of a thing . . . which is given by the knowledge of its ultimate aim."

Surely, the ultimate aim of the Coleridgean clerisy is not epistemological as Knights claims, but in the broadest sense political. What is original and remarkable about Coleridge's particular formulation of an intellectual order is that it is an established order, bound to the state by endowment (the "nationalty"), yet given independence by the permanence and security of its endowment. Revolutionary France gave a frightening vision of the dangers to the polity of uprooted, alienated intellectuals. The organization of the clerisy would overcome this danger. Coleridge's famous definition of the clerisy is very broad: "the learned of all denominations," whose place is "to be distributed throughout the country so as not to leave even the smallest integral part or division without a resident guide and instructor"--a stabilizing and civilizing force in the community. That Coleridge was fascinated by the epistemology of German idealism goes without saying, but Knights' extensive (and interesting) discussion of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling leaves the historian wondering what all this has to do with England and the fortnnes of the clerisy (which even Knights admits was specifically English and without German counterparts). Knights does not even claim to discuss influences explicitly; as he says at one point, "typological affinities" interest him more than "questions of genesis, influence or reaction" (p. 18). Yet as Robert Preyer and others have shown, German scholarship may have become dangerously enamoured of the absolute, and German academics may have been politically emasculated by their obsession with the higher claims of the state, but such was not the case among the clerisy. Coleridge the homo politicus deserves more attention than he receives here: the new edition of the prose works gives us the means of restoring this aspect of him to its proper perspective. Admittedly Knights did not have the advantage of John Colmer's edition of the Constitution of Church and State, or David Erdman's three volumes of Essays on His Times, which shows an engaged political journalist not so given to escape into the noumenal as Knights suggests.

Perhaps this book would more appropriately have been titled "The Idea of a Spiritual Anthority" since this is really what the anthor seems to be talking about much of the time—the notion of an elite with intellectual authority to impose and maintain order in the higher mental realms during a time when "the symbolic universe had, so to speak, got out of control," a time of social, economic, technological, and scientific upheaval. This is by no means entirely distinct from the idea of a clerisy, but the difference in intention is snrely crncial in a book such as this. Nor is Knights entirely nnaware of the distinction. Occasionally he notices it; more commonly he ignores it.

Nevertheless Knights' treatment of his chosen nineteenth—century

Nevertheless Knights' treatment of his chosen nineteenth-century intellectuals is always intelligent, if rarely unfamiliar. Predictably, Carlyle fits his argument best, but then was not Carlyle the nprooted outsider par excellence—a man of letters with no other footing in society? Coleridge had warned in the <u>Biographia Literaria</u>: "never pursue literature as a trade," recommending that those with literary inclinations should first assure themselves of a profession, so as to avoid the stigma and isolation of being "a mere literary man.

This is hardly a prescription for flight from the phenomenal world, or even the naked intellectual elitism that characterizes Knights' psychological portrait of the clerisy—a portrait that best fits Carlyle, because he was not of the clerisy. Significantly, Mill was a senior employee of the East India Company, Arnold was a school inspector, and even Newman was a priest and academic; none were "mere literary men."

The links between Arnold and Coleridge are obvious, though the author is not interested in tracing them through Thomas Arnold, Rugby, or Oxford--admittedly not a very satisfying exercise and the sort of influence-hunting of the older type of intellectual history which he He shows his awareness of what seems to me the proper funceschews. tion of the clerisy when he rightly remarks that Arnold did not seek to endow his version of the clerisy (p. 102), or more debatably when he states that Arnold gives us no clue as to the sociological position of his "remnant" (p. 105). Turning to Mill, Knights dwells on the tersious created by his loyalty to his utilitarian background by the attraction of the Coleridgean clerisy to which he was drawn explicitly an endowed class for the cultivation of learning and for diffusing" the results among the community" (Mill's own formulation), and by the more absolute <u>pouvoir spirituel</u> of Auguste Comte. In discussing the well-documented intellectual "affaire" between Comte and Mill, he offers some interesting observations on how Mill managed, rather ingeniously, to flnd in Comte support for his theory of progress through opposition. The support, however, was very tenuous, and its collapse eventually brought down the relationship. The less wellcollapse eveutually brought down the relatiouship. documented attraction of the clerisy leads to Mill's inrerest in university reform. But the university deserves and gets a separate chapter. Here, if auywhere, was the proper home of an eudowed intellectual ellte. Knights, however, is insufficiently familiar with the debate on university reform to appreciate that the prize fellowships which both Pattisou and Sidgwick opposed ou Coleridgean grounds, from the standpoint of professional academics, could equally be defended on Coleridgean grounds, since prize fellowships facilitated the dispersion of the clerisy in the community and supported the amateur ideal which is also implicit in the clerisy idea, though it is never meutioned by Knights.

The book ends with a flourish of potent names: Barthes, Buber, McLohaa, Gramsci, and Marx are all invoked to support Knights' disenchantment with the mid-twentieth-century clerisy. The son of L. C. Knights, and an extra-mural university tutor in the Leavisite tradition of cultural missionary work, Dr. Knights might be called a secondgeneratiou Leavisite. He is also a member of the clerisy, by any significant criteriou, and testimony that the trammels of the clerisy are not so constricting as he would claim. Granted, it is unfair to review the book an author did not write, but surely what we want to know about the clerisy is not so much what its "idea" is, but who its members are. And not just Newman, Carlyle, Arnold, etc., but the lesser figures who tried to realize the Coleridgean idea by taking culture and its civilizing influence to the nation, promoting social harmony and--dare one say it?--preventing revolution. This sort of prosopography is beginning to emerge in the recent work of Christopher Harvie on the mid-Victorian university elite, and the works of Peter

Allen and Paul Levy which at last identify that famous elite-within-the-clerisy, the Apostles (which we now learn from Andrew Boyle included Guy Burgess and Anthony Blunt--further, if less reassuring, evidence that the clerisy is not entirely an agency of indoctrination in establishment attitudes).

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Pleasures and Pains: A Theory of Qualitative Hedonism. By Rem B. Edwards. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979. Pp. 163.

"So far as I know," says the author, "this book is the only snstained attempt to make sense out of John Stuart Mill's claim that pleasures and pains differ qualitatively as well as quantitatively. . . ." I know, however, of at least three others, though only one is "snstained," and it is an unpublished dissertation, so the claim is perhaps true as it stands. The question is whether what emerges is a clearly successful attempt, and whether the theory as explained is plausible. The distinction is intriguing, but puzzling; I believe that the main puzzle remains, after reading this rather pleasant book. The question is: ls the advocate of the alleged theory of "qualitative hedonism" actually saying anything which a supposed "quantitative hedonist" would deny? My suspicion is that the answer is negative.

Hedonism is defined by the author, reasonably enough, as the normative theory that pleasure is the only thing which is intrinsically good. Happiness is defined as long-term positive surplus of pleasure over pain. The other substantive part of the theory is that we ought to act to maximize pleasure (happiness) and minimize pain or unhappiness (p. 19). Given this definition, of course, the question arises just how we are to understand maximization if the proposed theory is "non-quantitative." Now, 1 do not think the answer to this question is particularly difficult, in principle, at least at the formal level. Presumably what we will have, if the proposed theory goes through, is another variable besides the standard Benthamite ones of intensity, duration, etc. This variable is the "quality" variable. Of course, it is a quantitative variable: "quality" is variable in degree. If we hold this, then we can coherently speak of maximizing utility, quality heing one of the measures of utility. If we do not hold it, however, 1 do not see how we can speak in this way; at least, we would have a far more complex theory structurally than Utilitarianism is normally understood to be.

The theory of qualitative hedonism as explained above makes formal sense. But does it make real sense? And is it what Edwards is advocating? (Or Mill?) I have argued elsewhere that this theory is to be attributed to Mill. Whether Edwards accepts it is not entirely clear, however, for he does not seem to address himself to the crucial question: Are there kinds of pleasures of which any amount, no matter how tiny, is to be preferred to any amount of another kind, however great? Let us call an affirmative answer to this question the "lexicals"

doctrine." Edwards does say that "When qualitative hedonism says that some pleasures are superior to others, this means that they ought to be chosen in preference to their inferiors when it is impossible to choose both" (p. 118). Taken strictly, this would give us the lexical doctrine; but are we to take it strictly? One does not know. At another place, Edwards says that "Cardinal comparisons of intensities and durations properly take place when we are comparing two instances of the same quality of pleasure. . . . Cardinal comparisons of intensity and duration have no use, however, when we are dealing with two entirely distinct qualities of pleasure, and we must resort to ordinal rankings." (P. 70.) Unforrunately, it is not clear what he means by this remark. On the most reasonable face of it, what he says is just false. These comparisons  $\underline{do}$  have a use. One might reasonably prefer an entire evening's supply of a slightly inferior wine to one small glass of a slightly superior one, even granting that the superior one is qualitatively superior. One wonders what Edwards thought he was I suspect he simply fails to see the distinction between the lexical view and the other view, and hence does not realize the need to address himself to it. Once we do address ourselves to it, though, can rhere really he any doubt that the other view is much the more plausible? In any case, if he really wants to stick to the lexical view, then he ought to avoid talk of maximization.

This brings us to the more general question: Just what is at issue here? Edwards attributes to "quantitative" hedonism the thesis that "these words ["pleasure" and "pain"] have a univocal denotative meaning or reference. . . . That is, the referenr of the words is a single quality of feeling, though there may be quantitative differences in intensity and duration." (P. 34.) Thus he quotes Sidgwick, to the intensity and duration." effect that "all pleasures are understood to be so called because they have a common properry of pleasantness, and may therefore be compared in respect of this common property." To which Edwards replies, "Instead of possessing common properties of pleasantness and unpleasantness, our multifarious 'pleasures' and 'pains' probably have in common only that they are feelings which in the former case we wish to sustaln and repeat and in the latter we wish to eliminate and avoid" (p. 35). What is puzzling about this is that if we ask just what is meant by calling something "pleasure," the nearest we get to an answer from Edwards is that pleasures are "private feelings which we would naturally like to perpetuate." Why should he ascribe to the "quantitarive hedonist" a view any different from that? Why does the latter have to hold that all pleasures really feel the same, are indistinguishable except in intensity? guishable except in intensity? One must surely wonder whether hedonists have ever meant any more by this aspect of their view than that we desire more strongly to prolong certain sensations than others--that that is what their being "more pleasurable" really amounts to. If so, then I doubt that "qualitative hedonism" is a genuinely distinct theory from "quantitative hedonism." It must surely be absurd to ascribe to any theorist the view that doughnuts taste no different from Château Lafitte 1963, or for that matter produce the same feelings as those involved in contemplating a particularly beautiful sunset. But it is not absurd to say that we can compare all these very different things in point of the pleasure they bring us, if necessary.

And this brings us to another question, Edwards' answer to which is simply unclear. Does he want to say, namely, that of two possible lives between which a certain agent must choose,  $L_1$  might be happier, all things considered, than  $L_2$ , but nevertheless  $L_2$  is the better? Does he want to say, to take another example, that an hour's sexual pleasure might be more enjoyable than an hour's reading of some mildly interesting book, but nevertheless the latter is better? Unfortunately, we just do not know. The aforementioned confusion about the notion of qualitative differences probably infects these questions crucially, making them unanswerable on the basis of what Edwards says. But again, I submit that if the answer is in the affirmative, then the view is implausible and confusion results from classifying it as any version of hedonism.

Incidentally, Edwards' official view about how to manage the "lower pleasures" appears to have absurd implications. Suppose that in saying that if  $P_1$  is of a superior kind to  $P_2$ , we ought to choose  $P_1$ , he really does mean that we ought to choose it no matter how they compare Now, Edwards does say that his doctrine in intensity and duration. "does not mean that the inferior pleasures are not to be ehosen at all, only that they are to be avoided when their pursuit interferes with or is incompatible wirh the actualization of some higher pleasure." Luekily, they are often combinable: "The localized pleasures of a good meal can be combined with the nonlocalized ones of good conversation and companionship to form a total experience of sustained enjoyment which is of greater worth than the good meal all by itself" (p. 118). Well, suppose that we cannot combine them, and suppose that the pleasures of the palate are inferior to those of the intellect. does this not imply, then, that we ought never to eat when we can read instead? Or are we allowed to "combine" them by devoting some time to one, and some time to the other? But why is that allowable? After all, at any given moment, you are either (let us suppose) reading or eating, (If that example is not plausible enough, substitute engaging in sexual activity for eating.) Allowing them to be combined in serial fashion plainly implies that we sometimes are allowed to prefer an inferior to a superior type of pleasure. On the view I described at the outset, there is no problem: When the marginal utility of reading falls below that of eating, you eat, and vice versa, even granted that reading might be a "superior pleasure" to eating.

There are other issues arising from Edwards' treatment which we cannot pursue here, such as his treatment of the intentionality of pleasure, and his moral views, which are not entirely clear. (Is he advocating Utilitarianism, for instance, or not?) There is a treatment of Mill's proof which ascribes to him an implicit universalizability premise (as I too have done), and he presents some reasonable, if not new, suggestions about method in ethical theory.

The book reads well, is admirably printed and bound at its reasonable (by current standards) price, and is worth reading, even though it does raise important unanswered questions about its main theses.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Marshall Cohen, lutroduction to Modern Library ed. of works of Mill (New York, 1961); Jan Narveson, Morality and Utility (Baltimore:

Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 79-82; and Wendy Donner, "John Stuart Mill's Concept of Utility," Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1978.

2He also includes the clause that pain is the only thing which is intrinsically evil, which may raise a question about the status of death; but we will not pursue this, partly because we can assume that the injunction to maximize pleasure Implies that we should prolong our lives so long as they are pleasurable.

3Narveson, 81.

Narveson, 81. Lbid., 283-8.

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## Collected Works

Voi. IX, An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, with an Introduction by Alan Ryan, having been published in the spring of 1979, and Vol. I, The Autobiography and Literary Essays, introduced and edited by Jack Stillinger and John M. Robson, being now in galleys and scheduled for publication during the latter part of this year, our energies are currently absorbed in preparing for the press Vol. VI, Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire, Introduction by Joseph Hamburger. Work has also begun on Vol. XX, Essays on French History and Historians.

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