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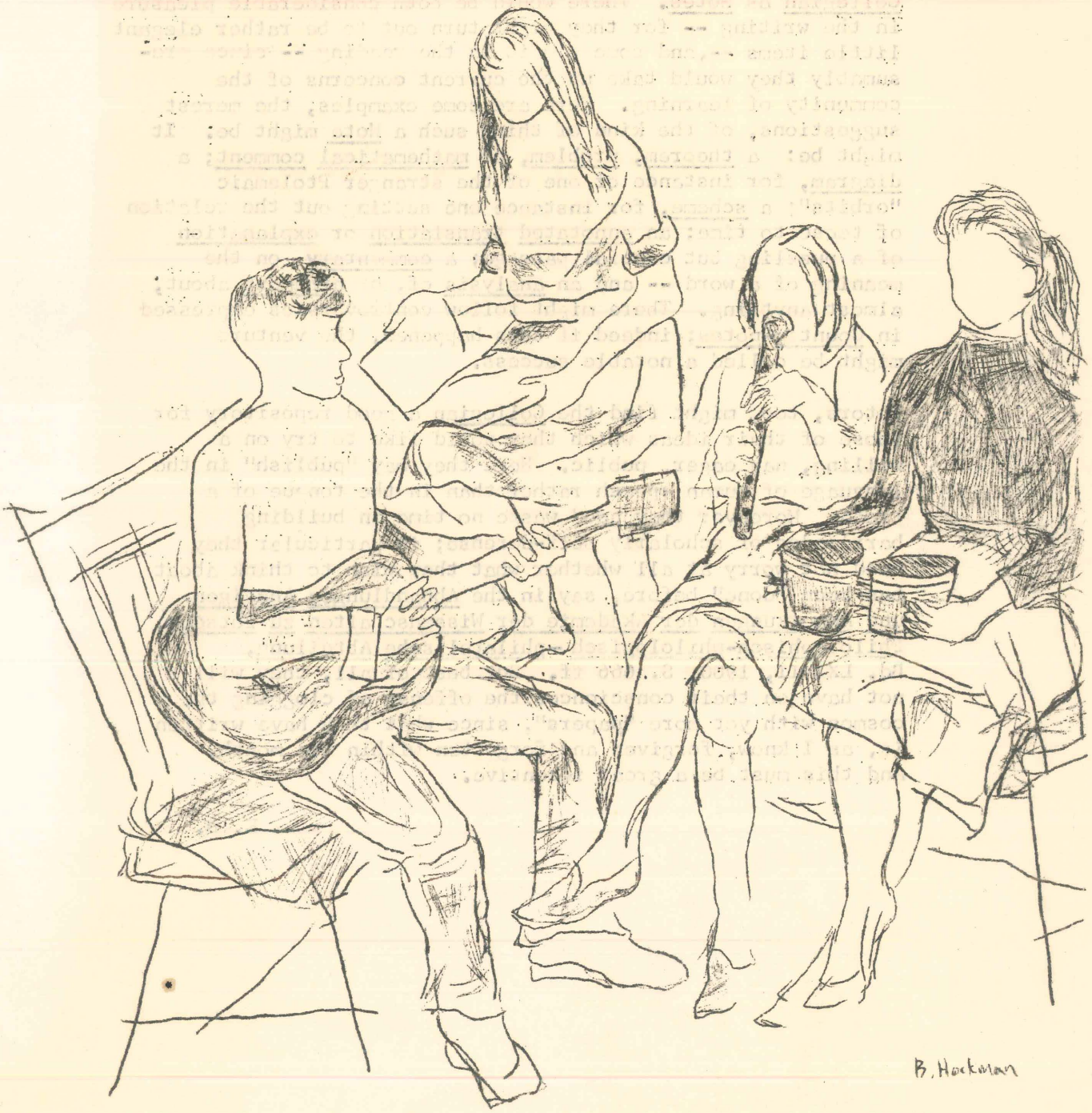

A Note on Notes

There is good hope that the Collegian will continue to appear decently, frequently and regularly through the year. Its mainstay will naturally continue to be poetry, stories and essays. May I, however, suggest another kind of offering which would, I think, be very acceptable to the whole College community, namely the Note.

In the course of the year's study students come, as is well known, on many good ideas which the pace of the program forces them to abandon shapeless and unproved. Many of these might be given some sort of finish so that they could appear in the Collegian as Notes. There would be both considerable pleasure in the writing -- for they might turn out to be rather elegant little items --, and some profit in the reading -- since presumably they would take up the current concerns of the community of learning. Here are some examples, the merest suggestions, of the kind of thing such a Note might be. It might be: a theorem, problem, or mathematical comment; a diagram, for instance of one of the stranger Ptolemaic "orbits"; a scheme, for instance one setting out the relation of tense to time; an annotated translation or explanation of a puzzling but crucial passage; a commentary on the meaning of a word -- and an analysis of, or argument about, almost anything. There might follow controversies expressed in Counter-notes; indeed if this happened, the venture might be called a notable success.

Tutors, too, might find the Collegian a good repository for those of their ideas which they would like to try on a willing, nay eager, public. Here they may "publish" in the language of human speech rather than in the tongue of a trade. Moreover they need waste no time in building barricades of scholarly self-defense; in particular they need not worry at all whether what they wish to think about has been "done" before, say in the Abhandlungen Anzeigen und Anmerkungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Potsdam, Philosophisch-philologisch -philatelische Abteilung, Bd. LXXVII, 1900, S. 666 ff. But best of all, they will not have on their consciences the offense of clogging the cosmos with yet more "papers", since what they have written is, as I know, forgiven and forgotten within the month. And this must be a great incentive.

E. B.

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COMEDY AND THE DIVINE

by
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John Milton, a religious man and a poet, invoked many shades to attest to the dignity "of that sort of Dramatic Poem which is call'd Tragedy."[1] One of those shades was an excellent precedent in every way for Milton's attempt to fuse religion and poetry into a form of tragedy. St. Gregory Nazianzen, whose orthodoxy was unquestionable, nevertheless "thought it not unbeseeming the sanctity of his person to write a Tragedy, which he entitl'd Christ Suffering."[2] Surely, here would be the true model of Christian tragedy.

There is indeed much suffering in Christ Suffering; St. Gregory did not hesitate to adopt the style and, in some cases, even the lines of Euripides, whom Nietzsche called "the poet of the beating heart."[3] The play is filled with cries of distress and sorrow. But they are not uttered by the titular hero. Instead, Christ's mother, whom St. Gregory carefully refers to as the Theotokos, is the true sufferer. Christ Suffering, despite its name, is a record of the sorrows of Christ's mother.

Why does St. Gregory's tragedy not fulfill the promise of its title? I believe the reason is that the promise cannot be fulfilled. The elements Christian and tragedy are, at least in the central case of the God-man, incompatible. For tragedy contains elements of pity brought about by the suffering of the hero. But if that hero is Christ, is pity really possible? To put the question in another way, can the author of a tragedy of Christ suffering be both sentimental and honest; can he recount the pain and sorrow undergone by his hero without making sure his audience is aware that the hero is truly God? Nor is Christ a vulnerable Homeric god, but the one of Job. Can a tragic poet expect his audience to shed tears for God, to pity the omni-

potent deity? Surely this is too much to expect of any audience. Those among the listeners who are also believers of the play's message will, no doubt, see the presentation as a mystery. But for those who have no eyes of faith, what can the reaction be? Can they honestly say anything other than,"Is it not comic?"

What is comedy? One philosopher calls it "an imitation of men worse than the average; worse, however, not as regards any and every sort of fault, but only as regards one particular kind, the Ridiculous, which is a species of the Ugly. The Ridiculous may be defined as a mistake or deformity not productive of pain or harm to others; the mask, for instance, that excites laughter, is something ugly and distorted without causing pain."[4] Another philosopher, with the possible benefit of a two-thousand year age difference, criticizes the first in a gentle but firm manner. Kierkegaard says that Aristotle's definition fails to "leave entire families of the comical secure in their ludicrousness," with the result that "it becomes doubtful whether the definition, even in relation to the part of the comical that it covers, does not bring us into collision with the ethical."[5] According to Kierkegaard, the definition is deficient "in so far as it conceives the ludicrous as a something, instead of recognizing that the comical is a relation, the faulty relation of contradiction, but free from pain."[6]

The ugly and distorted mask is a good point of departure for discussion of Christian comedy: not only is it a rather simple form of comedy itself, but it also bears a parallel to the God-on-the-cross. For the mask is wholly against the natural order of things; yet it is incapable of causing the pain usually connected with such a breach of order. Where does the comic aspect lie in the mask-situation? This is an important question, for the answer should apply to the analogous situation of the

God-on-the-cross. One should note that not all comic situations are necessarily parallel to the basic Christian one. In talking about the mask, then, I am talking about Christian comedy, and not about comedy in general.

Where is the comic aspect of the humorous mask? The ugliness and distortion suggest a sin against the natural order. But where is that order to be found? If we assume that Kierkegaard's criticism is just, Aristotle believed the order inhered in the objects of perception. But the Danish philosopher puts the comical in relation. In other words, the comical is not something looked at, but it exists in the process of looking. But if the particular aspect is in the object, and the comical is in the relation between object and perceiver, then the order must inhere in the perceiver. Thus does Kierkegaard put himself into the tradition of Hume and Kant.

One may say this in a slightly different way. A comical situation may be said to have two distinct terms, which relate to each other in a comical way. One term is a universal, the other a particular; they may be ideas or actions; but they are, as comical, in contradiction. The particular inheres, of course, in the object of thought. The universal then must lie within the observer, if comedy is a relationship between not only universal and particular but also observer and observed.

In the case of the mask, and of its analogue, Kierkegaard is quite likely correct. Suppose that a sculptor chisel a statue of a hero, but finish by giving the nose a slight, almost imperceptible twist to one side. The reaction of most men would be that the statue didn't look quite right. For some reason, the sculpted figure did not conform to a common judgment of how a hero should look. Now the hero may have had a twisted nose; the sculptor may have been quite accurate. But the word "hero" calls up a multitude

of details in the listener, such as strong, handsome, and straight-nosed. The statue offends not the natural order of things, but human judgment.

As with the slightly distorted statue, so with the mask of true grotesqueness. For the mask is a true human or animal face, but with one or two features deformed to a truly inhuman degree. It is the normal, as men judge normality, with an exaggerated deformity, that is truly grotesque; without such a reliance on common judgment, the maker of masks would be creating merely odd shapes. Likewise, the humor of the God-on-the-cross is greatest when Christ acts most as a man, thirsting, despairing, even dying -- but never for a moment ceasing to be God.

But Kierkegaard is not content to call the comical a relation. He insists that it is a faulty relation, that of contradiction. But if it is faulty, where does the fault lie? In terms of what has been said, it must lie in the inability of the particular to be subsumed under the universal -- although this inability must not be too pronounced, or the grotesqueness is lost. The mask as a whole must be recognizably human, as well as recognizably non-human. "When a German-Danish clergyman says from the pulpit: 'The word became pork' that is comical,"[7] because the Danish word for pork is so close to the German for flesh, but the two are so different in spirit. To use Bergson's image, a human acting as a machine would be comic, but the machine itself would not be at all humorous.[8] The fault in the relation between universal and particular must be pronounced, but not to the extent of blocking from public view the otherwise perfect fit.

The word "fault", however, is unclear. Is it a mere description of the inability of universal and particular to jibe harmoniously, or does it involve a moral condemnation? Is a faulty relation as blameworthy, for instance, as a bad infinity?

To answer this question a long exposition of the nature of the "universal" in each comic situation is necessary. I would maintain that there are two sorts of such universals: the habitual in action and the habitual in thought.

When a pianist's fingers "have rippled through a shower of notes,"[9] while he is considering, perhaps, a conversation of the previous evening, and when, after five minutes of this, he awakens to find himself repeating the same few bars of music for the twelfth time, he has acted comically. His habitual action failed to jibe with the actual situation. This is the case of the much-overworked man-slipping-on-a-banana-peel. What was so well learned as not to need thought -- the ability to walk -- has suddenly become of no avail in a particular situation. Such is the habitual in action.

When, on the other hand, the clever detective bests the stupid police by noticing a fact their routine has blinded them to, he is entitled to laugh at them. Their thought was so habitual that it tried to catalogue what should not have been catalogued. Similarly, the mask fails to conform to what we think is recognizably human. This is the habitual in thought.

The habitual in general is the great source of comedy. Nothing could please the possibly perverse taste of the humorist more than the following lines from William James: "Habit is thus the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conservative agent. . .it holds the miner in his darkness, and nails the countryman to his log-cabin and his lonely farm through all the months of snow; it protects us from invasion by the natives of the desert and the frozen zone. It dooms us all to fight out the battle of life upon the lines of our nurture or our early choice, and to make the best of a pursuit that disagrees. . . it keeps different social strata from mixing. . .the more of the details of our daily life we can hand over to the effortless

custody of automatism, the more our higher powers of mind will be set free for their own proper work."[10] But what is the reaction to the cry to move onward and upward through habit? When a top-hatted banker of the early movies yelled to a pie-wielder, "you can't do that!", nothing could be surer than that the banker would, in a very few frames of film, have custard over his face. But habit taught the poor banker that no one could dare hit him with a pie. After all, habit "keeps different social strata from mixing" -- especially so violently. But, unfortunately for the banker, the comic spirit feeds on nothing so greedily as on habit.

The God-on-the-cross, like its analogue the mask, is an offense against the habitual in thought. The affront surely is to a concept -- that of the infinite, eternal, unchangeable, omnipotent being. But one might object that the universal in this instance, the concept of God, is considered as having reality apart from the thinker. It would then exemplify a third sort of comic situation, in which the universal has to do not with habit but with reality.

But this third type of comic situation is really reducible to the habitual in thought. For we make judgments as to the essential nature of objects by means of two devices: our observation of objects in themselves and in action; and our reception of whatever information the objects may freely choose to communicate. If we make ill use of the first device, we form faulty concepts of objects; the humor then depends not on the object conceived but on the concept itself. If, however, an object, whether person or god, has volunteered the information that he is indeed such, and if we discover that he is not-such, there is no fault in us; but neither is there any humor from the employment of the improper concept, because the object has played liar. But neither situation applies to the communication of certain truths about God. Although God freely volunteered information

about himself, such statements never pretended to express the whole of his nature. Statements God made as to his essential being are true; he is no liar. But these statements only appear to contradict the notion of the God-man. Lacking the whole truth, men form imperfect concepts. God could be both omnipotent and true man, because he was so. The faulty universal lies in human thought. This does not mean that human thought could in fact see the God-man as anything but an impossibility; for it might lack not only the knowledge but also the ability to understand such knowledge. But, at any rate, the human concept of God is such that, according to ordinary human logic, he could not be man. So the God-on-the-cross is an offense against a habitual mode of thought.

With the notion of habit in mind, we are able once more to look at the nature of the fault concerned in comic contradiction. If this fault involve a moral judgment, then morality must be concerned with the habitual as such. For humor is concerned with habit only insofar as it is habit, now with regard to a former conscious intent. It attacks the conventional action, the conventional understanding, without questioning what the basis of that convention might have been. Although the banker may recite a long list of moral reasons for his superiority in manner, all the comic is concerned with is that he is acting stuffily and should be taught a good lesson. But how can a moral judgment adhere to the failure of a machine -- for what else is the non-reflective habitual act but the machinelike? -- unless morality itself is not a function of consciousness? If the fault of comic contradiction is immoral, then morality must be concerned with the habitual only as habit.

But such an equation of the virtuous and the mechanical is almost incredible. Even Aristotle, who often is said to make such an equation, was not unaware of a connection between virtue and consciousness. He goes to great pains to distinguish virtue in

the man from virtue in the act. The repetition of virtuous acts makes the man virtuous. But virtue, in the strict sense, is "the state that implies the presence of the right rule. . .and practical wisdom is a right rule about such matters."[11] Unless a man is conscious of his obeying the dictates of practical wisdom, his act is not virtuous. He may be a virtuous man, but his actions are virtuous only through his awareness of the right rule. Again, Aristotle asserts that "we must take as a sign of states of character (virtues) the pleasure or pain that ensues on acts."[12] A repetition of an act, done mechanically, gives neither pleasure nor pain, which are signs of consciousness and attention. Therefore, the virtuous action is not the merely habitual.

Certainly Christian discussions of morality do not equate the virtuous with the mechanical. One may take as an example the words from the Bible which Dostoyevsky quotes twice in The Possessed: "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth."[13] The praiseworthy action is not the blindly repeated one, for "the letter killeth."[14] Rather, one should praise the act done in full knowledge, the man who is either cold or hot. As the first few chapters of Genesis make clear, man can be damned only after he has gained knowledge of good and evil; by the same token, only with such knowledge and resultant fervor can he be saved.

And so we have an answer to the question of whether the faulty relation of contradiction involves a moral judgment; the answer is "no". Morality and the comic contradiction, from the standpoint of the Christian and even the Aristotelian traditions, stand on different grounds. The moral is concerned with conscious motive, the comic with mechanical habit. The two are not in contradiction.

The implications of this lack of contradiction for the comic situation of the God-on-the-cross are as evident as they are important. For that spectacle was, as is shown by its comic nature, no affront to the moral law. Instead, it is altogether independent of morality and free from the condemnation of the ethical man.

Nor are the means of which comedy is composed alone praiseworthy. For while they free comedy from the stigma of anti-moralism, the ends of comedy may present a sufficient case, even to the sternest moralist, for not only the toleration but even the fostering of the comic. But I can only say "may present". For the ends of what may be provisionally termed high comedy are not always the same. Specifically, I consider that, whereas the Old Comedy of Aristophanes was justified by edification, by the intended cultivation of moral habits (although not qua habits), the Christian comedy, taking its lead from the absurd spectacle of the God-on-the-cross, is bent on communication, on saying what cannot otherwise be said. Christian comedy is the form of non-apostolic Christian communication.

Let us start with the Old Comedy, which I have called justified through edification. Now the word "edification" has been, at least since Hegel, a pejorative term to attach to any body of sentences. But I use the word as one of approval, denoting an attempt to instill a consciousness of the moral, with the end of moral action. This element was surely present in Aristophanes, whose genius alone rescued him from appearing nothing but that prince of edifiers, the scold.

Consider that strange jest known as The Clouds. One has the choice of two methods of approach to the play. As the story of Socrates and his fantastic Phrontisterion, it is enjoyable in a whimsical way. As the story of the cheated Strepsiades, beset

even by his son, gaining vengeance finally by a wholesale destruction of college property (not to mention faculty), it has many of the elements which, by Aristotle's reckoning, make up a tragedy. In The Clouds, the bitterest enemies do not "walk off good friends at the end, with no slaying of anyone by anyone".[15] Instead, Aristophanes brings to his listeners the message that evil deeds produce evil effects, which react against the wrongdoer. It is this strictly moral doctrine of responsibility which the poet's own cloud of humor hides, and by hiding accentuates.

The Clouds is, of course, an extreme case, by virtue of its clear delineation of the effects of evil action; most comedy could not bear such a direct statement. Yet in other works of Aristophanes, the same theme is at least implicit. Take a section of the next-to-last chorus of The Frogs: "Right it is and befitting, not by Socrates sitting, idle talk to pursue, stripping tragedy-art of all things noble and true. Surely the mind to school fine-drawn quibbles to seek, fine-set phrases to speak is but the part of a fool!"[16] The same chorus hymns the virtues of a "keen intelligent mind".[17] That mind is not engaged in hair-splitting, but in conscious, proper right-action. The splitter of hairs, Euripides, remains in Hades.

The truly intelligent man and the moral man are then one, because intelligence is a reasoning from effect to cause and vice versa; the intelligent man is therefore able to draw lessons from past evil actions and to avoid doing evil himself. This seems to be the message of Aristophanes, although as thinker, not as comic poet.

But that last qualification, differentiating poet from thinker, is only apparently correct. In fact, Aristophanes as poet is inseparable from Aristophanes as moral thinker. Comedy is comic only because the ludicrous is presented as ludicrous -- which means that the relation which is comic needs some fixed ground to

which it can attach itself. This was the case of the mask, which was recognizably human in all details but one or two, which were monstrous. It is the recognizably human, in the case of the mask, which provides the ground on which fantasy may be based. In Aristophanes, the presentation of the strange thought of Socrates is effective as comedy only if the spectator is convinced that this thought is "wrong logic" -- or at least that it is different from what good men usually engage in. Aristophanes is comic when and only when he is morally edifying.

Now not all that is comic is edifying, in that its ground lies in the practical reason. Indeed, most comedy seems to arise from the breaking of a fixed order of physical action, rather than of thought. But this suggests a definition for a term introduced so far only provisionally: high comedy. That humor which takes as its ground the physical is low comedy, that which takes the practical reason is high comedy. Aristophanes could have been comic without being moral, but his humor would have been of another kind altogether. It might have been based on neither the moral nor the strictly physical, but on the habitual act. But this form, exemplified in the comedy of manners, is nothing more than the physical as such, for its ground is a lack of consciousness as machinelike as the laws man imposes on nature. The comedy of the habitual act is really the comedy of any event according to nature.

The provisional use of the term "high comedy" included the God-on-the-cross within its scope. This must be questioned. For the ground of the God-on-the-cross lies in that which is inert and as such is strictly logical: the concept. As such, considered as unrelated to Aristophanes' practical wisdom in matters of cause and effect, it lacks the moral nature necessary to high comedy. To put the case in a somewhat different manner, any connection between the term <u>God</u>, as it is humanly understood, and the term

on-the-cross is illogical, for the two have different modes of being. That which is an on-the-cross is a finite, purely material substance; to equate such a substance with infinite spirit is a confusion of categories and an offense to logic. But if the contradiction lies in the province of logic, there is no movement of the mind, no cause and effect, no appeal to responsibility. Without movement and consequent morality, there is no true high comedy.

But neither is the God-on-the-cross strictly speaking low comedy. For the term God, as has been said, represents something of a mode of being not to be found in the physical world. Therefore, the God-on-the-cross is of a third type of comedy, which may bear resemblances to high and low comedy, but is in fact neither. I shall refer to it as Christian comedy.

As suggested earlier, the Christian comedy of the God-on-the-cross is not an offense against morality, with which it has nothing to do, but an affront to logic. There is little difference between Aristophanes' morality and that of the Hebrews; the added term in the world-view of the latter, their God, served simply as a term in the consideration of the interrelation of cause and effect, or morality. This was possible for the Hebrews because they saw God as of an order with his creation in the realm of cause and effect, however sui generis their concept of God may have portrayed him. Hence, St. Thomas Aquinas can write that "the rational creature is subject to divine providence in a more excellent way, insofar as it itself partakes of a share of providence, by being provident both for itself and for others. Therefore it has a share of the eternal reason, whereby it has a natural inclination to its proper act and end; and this participation of the eternal law in the rational creature is called the natural law".[18] Or, working the other way, the Hebrews saw the natural law in themselves and analogically worked out the nature of the eternal law; the

first being reasonable, the second and greater must be much more so.

But another current ran in pre-Christian thought among the Hebrews: faith in the promise. This faith was not anti-moral; it was, as has been suggested, independent of morality and rarely, if ever, clashed with it. The reason lies in the end to which this faith was apportioned: "It may be an intelligible and heavenly good, and to this, man is ordained by the New Law".[19] A belief which regards actions as of no importance as causes will not conflict with a morality concerned with those actions only as causes. For faith in the promise regards actions as worthy of consideration only as effects of particular volitions -- and not even as the main effects. The primary effects of such volitions are registered, for faith, with God. Therefore, St. Thomas adds, "To his supernatural end man needs to be directed in a yet higher way. Hence the additional law given by God, whereby man shares more perfectly in the eternal law".[20]

So far we have considered the situation of the God-on-the-cross almost as though it never happened. Its humorous aspect lies in the realm of logic, so that a discussion of the humor of the spectacle, lacking a need for movement, can easily do without the actual existence of the event. But this affront to logic was a historical event. It had effects in history, and it can be viewed through those effects.

The contradiction implicit in the humorous aspect of the God-on-the-cross, although a failing of logic, expresses itself historically, as well as logically. Dante attests to the historical expression, through the words of Beatrice: "As for the penalty, then, inflicted by the cross -- if it be measured by the Nature taken on, never did any other bite so justly; and, in like manner, ne'er was any so outrageous if we look to the Person who endured

it, in whom this nature was contracted. So from one act issued effects apart; God and the Jews rejoiced in one same death; thereat shuddered the earth and heaven opened".[21] Dante points up a contradiction in terms of justice; it is not the only one. God crucified is the sharpest form of the union of God and man: the cross means suffering and death, those attributes of human existence which signify man's separation from God, according to the Biblical tradition. But, by the same token of bringing death, the cross means an end to that same God-man union which is a scandal to logical thought. Therefore, separate effects follow from the same event. A good Jew, looking at the illogical God-on-the-cross, would be most horrified and gratified. The effect of logical paradox on men is as double as the components of that paradox.

How is one to communicate the spectacle of the God-on-the-cross? For the situation is comic; it can have the double effect of gratification and horror on men only if the contradiction is, to some degree, believed as truth. Otherwise, the effect will be simply comic. St. Paul claims to know and preach "Christ only, and him crucified";[22] but these words only show the importance of the problem of communication, without answering it in any way.

One could, of course, manage to slide over the words so that the enormity of the God-on-the-cross remains hidden. But this would hardly be communication, but rather concealment of the essential contradiction. If the contradiction is not manifested as such, then either one gains an inferior conception of God or an over-developed regard for nature. At any rate, the central paradox of the God-on-the-cross is missing, and without it, the doctrine to be communicated changes into something other than it had been and should be considered.

Or one could present the situation directly, without attempting

to conceal the contradiction. Then the problem would appear to be how one should depict a basically comic event as true and important. That is, how can the comic aspect be annulled? Two ways present themselves: either one can remove the relation of contradiction by explanation or transposition; or one can affirm the validity of the doctrine embodying the contradiction to such a degree of vehemence that not only does the comic nature become of secondary importance to the truth of the doctrine, but even one's notion of the terms of the contradiction may shift to include the possibility of the doctrine, without in any way removing the actuality of the contradictory relation. Now the method of explanation, of defining terms so that there is no contradiction, is inapplicable here, for the terms of the God-on-the-cross are logically incompatible. Nor, for the same reason, can one term be transposed to a different level of meaning. But the method of affirmation remains possible; it is that of a witness.

It is insisting on the reality of the contradiction that, in Kierkegaard's opinion, makes an essentially religious author "always polemical; and hence he suffers under or suffers from the opposition which corresponds to whatever in his age must be regarded as the specific evil".[23] The witness is a polemical man; if necessary, he is the martyr. "Here is another result of the fundamental mistake; that Christianity is not proclaimed by witnesses, but by teachers. What is a witness? A witness is a man who immediately supplies proof of the truth of the doctrine he is proclaiming -- immediately, well, partly by there being truth in him and blessedness, partly by at once offering himself and saying: see now whether you can compel me to deny this doctrine. As a result of that fight, where the witness perhaps succumbs physically -- dies -- the doctrine triumphs. The opponents have no such doctrine for which they are prepared to die. That is a continued proof of the doctrine."[24]

In other words, if one wishes to communicate the God-on-the-cross directly and effectively as true, he must be able to back his words with such conviction that only the doctrine has meaning for him. If he does not have this power of affirmation, he is doomed to be ineffective as a witness, a polemicist, a martyr: he will be either misunderstood or laughed at. But what regard we should have for the man who can affirm! Let us call him, for the sake of the argument, a Christian.

But is not the case somewhat overstated? The small band of witnesses does not exhaust the total number of those who are Christians. Kierkegaard's infinitely resigned men -- Johannes de Silentio, Johannes Climacus -- see the knight of faith as essentially silent, savoring inwardness, and communicating indirectly, if at all. For that matter, when Kierkegaard reveals that his entire pseudonymous literature was a clever snare to trap people into Christianity,[25] has he been acting as a witness? Consider Johannes de Silentio's example of the silent Abraham.[26] Look at Johannes Climacus' instance of Mary, who hid the words in her heart.[27] And the latter author can even ask, "Is it permissible, for example, as we say, to win a man for the truth? If he who has any truth to communicate also has some persuasive art, some knowledge of foresight in catching men slowly, is it permissible for him to use this in order to gain adherents for the truth? Or ought he not rather, in humility before God, loving men in the feeling that God does not need him, convinced that every human being is essentially spirit, use these gifts precisely to prevent the establishment of a direct relationship?"[28] Surely it is permissible to win a man for the truth, provided that one is a witness. But the action of a witness is a peculiar reliance on power to establish the truth of the unnatural; few men, even few Christians are able to do this.

What shall the man say, who is a believer in the truth of the God-on-the-cross, who wishes to convince others, but who has no power of witness to enforce his exposition of illogic? He must present the situation directly, or rather, without hiding its true nature. But such a presentation is bound to be comic. We therefore see that the comic is the form of non-apostolic Christian communication (taking the word "apostle" as synonymous with "witness").

The question remains, of course, of how efficacious such a means of communication may prove. In this regard, the Christian comic poet has a weapon at hand common to all good comic poets. Comedy is able to hold the attention of its audience for a period of some time; the length of time depends on the skill of the poet. This obvious truth is the greatest weapon in the hands of the comic poet with a serious purpose. In Aristophanes, the behavior of the sophist crew is so amusing that we can pay enough attention to discover how Socrates and his friends are corrupting the youth and the state. Likewise, insufferable as Jane Austen's Mr. Woodhouse would be in reality, as a character in a book he is drawn with such comic imagination that gaining a fuller knowledge of his rather senile person is a pleasure.[29] The comic poet's power to propagandize lies in his ability to hold certain qualities or actions before a public which would, without laughter, never pay such things attention. The whole matter becomes one of accent; with his hold over the attention of his audience, the comic poet can lead it to place values in a different order from the customary. He can make a man say "This is dangerous" or "This is worth knowing better" -- when such thoughts would ordinarily be furthest from that man's mind.

The Christian poet does not have much to employ his art upon, when he confronts the basic situation of Christianity: the God-on-the-cross. For the comic art is that of heightening the ludicrous element, which is to say sharpening the contradiction

inherent in the situation under consideration. How to sharpen the absurdity of the God-on-the-cross, which offends against logic, is quite a difficult problem, if not an insoluble one. Rather, the comic poet can only adopt the tones of realism or sentiment, painting in great detail the story of the cross -- but incessantly breaking off to remind his listeners that he is talking about God. By thus keeping the audience aware of the terms of the contradiction, he is allowing the inherent comic aspect to speak, as it were, through him. He is then effective at presenting the spectacle as it is, at making his audience familiar with the God-man paradox, without sacrificing the true nature of that paradox. To make people believe the contradiction as true would seem to be a duty reserved for the witness.

The God-on-the-cross may be the basic and, one might say, the paradigmatic situation for Christian comedy to communicate, but it is not the only one. A second major theme is the often painful Christian comedy of autobiography. That is, the Christian comic poet may choose to present the story of a Christian who is not an apostle -- his own situation. This is a Christian comedy, in that the incongruity subsists between the ordinary concept of a man as a worldly, rational being, and the actuality of the Christian man as a creature to some extent unworldly and irrational. The comedy of the imitation of Christ is a Christian comedy because it, like the God-on-the-cross, mixes the human and the divine.

I say the Christian man is unworldly and irrational "to some extent" for the Christian is a man, after all. And it is this "to some extent" which not only gives rise to the comic, but also allows the Christian comic poet to display his art, as well as his faith. He can make an ordinary situation more comic than life by drawing more clearly the lines between ordinary man and Christian. At the same time, he can employ his powers as poet

to propagandize on behalf of the man of faith. By continually presenting the Christian, the poet makes the fantastic qualities of his subject appear as possible, or at least self-consistent. The painless contradiction of Aristotle can be made quite painful in this way. For the man of faith is not just an aberration from the genus man, but is a being in his own right, a human rather than a mistake. Yet this fact does not in any way annul the possibility of comedy in the situation of the Christian facing his fellows. All that shifts is the accent. Men of two sorts are made to confront each other -- men of different standards, different manners of reckoning -- and the result is complete misunderstanding. When the poet has so kept the attention of his audience that his Christian character has changed into a man in the eyes of the viewers, he has begun to succeed in changing completely the direction of his comedy. This movement in Christian comedy I term comic reversal.

In Aristophanes, the old Marathonian morality of Athenian citizens in former days, buttressed by practical reason, provides the background and ground for the comedy of Socrates, the sophist. Socrates is continually measured against this ground and found wanting. A Christian comic poet also must begin by measuring his hero against accepted standards for and concepts of man. As such, to recapitulate for a moment, the Christian is only a mistake. When he becomes a man to the audience, then the accent of the comedy shifts. The poet is able to measure common activity against this one man, the Christian; for he has become the standard. Indeed, as a standard he has a great advantage over the ordinary man: his strength is a single thing, whereas the ordinary man and morality prove complex affairs.

One may object that the person presented is not a witness, so that he should lack that total single-mindedness characteristic of that sort of Christian. But the art of the comic poet is to

heighten contradiction. When he presents a Christian on the stage or printed page, he presents the Christian in his most complete, and for that reason most ludicrous, form -- the single-minded man. The poet's purpose is to arouse discontent in his audience, which, he assumes, is composed of non-Christians. He accomplishes this aim by presenting the listeners with themselves, as seen through the eyes of a man of faith. Again, this is painful, but it is nonetheless comic.

Reversal takes its sharpest form when the poet allows his audience to view people making fun of his hero -- through the eyes of that hero. This is painful to the spectator, because it is not only a mistreatment of a person whom he has been brought to admire, but also because it is a reminder of his earlier attitude toward the hero. Yet even here, the situation remains comic. The gap between Christian and non-Christian is, for that matter, most pronounced; the total lack of understanding and resulting incongruity of action lead to the most complete comedy.

Christian comedy should not be rejected as comedy merely because it causes pain. Why does Aristotle insist that the ridiculous does not cause pain? Perhaps, he was noticing what Bergson calls "the absence of feeling which usually accompanies laughter. It seems as though the comic could not produce its disturbing effect unless it fell, so to say, on the surface of a soul that is thoroughly calm and unruffled. . .In a society composed of pure intelligences there would probably be no more tears, though perhaps there would still be laughter".[30] But Bergson's cautious "usually" and "seems as though" are not without meaning. He points to "something like a momentary anesthesia of the heart,"[31] such that the comic appeals "to intelligence, pure and simple".[32] Unfortunately, intelligence is rarely pure and simple, nor is the heart easily anesthetized. The incongruity in Christian comedy, we have noted, is at its highest when the pain it causes is

greatest. The effect on the intelligence does not go unnoticed by the emotions. The ludicrous in Christian comedy, the illogical, may cause pain. but it is no less ludicrous merely because the mental state has repercussions in the heart.

Nor should Christian comedy be rejected by the Christian as something blameworthy. Kierkegaard, in his exposition, draws back: "If one were to say: repentance is a contradiction, ergo it is comical, it would at once be apparent that this is nonsense. Repentance belongs in the ethico-religious sphere, and is hence so placed as to have only one higher sphere above it, namely, the religious in the strictest sense. But it was not the religious it was proposed to make use of in order to make repentance ridiculous; ergo it must have been something lower, in which case the comic is illegitimate, or something only chimerically higher, as for example the sphere of abstraction".[33] A man tries to repent; what is he doing? Kierkegaard would say that he is trying to annul a past reality. Is not a man who attempts to annul past events by use of present thoughts and words comical? But this comic spirit may be illegitimate. But what does that mean? Kierkegaard seems to think it means that the comedy only exists for the lower person looking at the higher, that it does not exist in the higher himself. But is not the God-on-the-cross illogical in the same way as the man who is also a Christian and as the man who tries to annul reality? These situations are absurd to all men, but only the lower beings laugh. Is the God-on-the-cross then illegitimate humor? Is Christian comedy "illegitimate"? The pejorative adjective does not constitute an argument against comedy in religious (or even ethico-religious) matters. And comic reversal, the shift in viewpoint in the comedy reflected in a corresponding shift in the attitude of the audience -- is this most Christian process to be rejected because of an adjective?

No, Christian comedy is something to be accepted gladly by the

religious man. The man who seeks to avoid the comic, the man who says, "I fled from this exaggerated sense of the comic into theology, in the hope that it would give relief to the tickling -- only to find there too a perfect legion of ludicrous absurdities",[34] -- is his religion anything other than a continuation of his flight? By flinching from the comic, does a man not try to evade the fact that Christianity is not a "normal" way of life? The man who will not see comedy will not see paradox; God-On-the-cross is for him only another term in his ordinary world, a scandal dutifully hushed up. He is only a mechanical man, and as such has only one connection with laughter: he is the perpetual butt of others' jokes.

But the man who sees the comedy of Christianity and yet believes it as true -- is he not the man who can say "Yes" even to fear and trembling? Does he not have possession of both of those most sought-after treasures: understanding and joy? And, if he is a poet as well, is not his immortality assured "on earth as it is in heaven!"

An exposition of the Christian comedy of the man of faith is best found in a far longer and far more humorous work than this: The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote de la Mancha. For Don Quixote is a most Christian tale of a man who had faith, in a world which rejected such a notion.

What is the religion of Don Quixote himself? He refers numerous times to his divine mission to free the world from evil-doers and to publish the fame of knight-errantry. He specifically names God as the author of a mission.[35] But this seems more a way of speaking than a conviction; it is a way of speaking compounded from the piety and goodness of a country gentleman and the nominal allegiance to the church paid by many of the knights of the story-books. Don Quixote insists at one point that a knight-errant must be a "theologian in order

that, whenever it is asked of him, he may give a clear and logical reason for his Christian faith".[36] Yet less than twenty pages later, when Sancho Panza sums up all the theology he knows in one succinct statement, "He preaches well who lives well",[37] his master approves this smug bit of piety as all the theology Sancho needs to know. Cervantes puts the opposite doctrine in the mouth of the duchess: "Works of charity that are performed lukewarmly and halfheartedly are of no merit but are, indeed, worthless".[38]

But Don Quixote does in fact give a good theological exposition for the benefit of the combatants in the war of the braying aldermen. He expounds the theory of the just war in a thoroughly orthodox, not to say scholastic, manner. During this he makes his first reference to Jesus Christ, "who is God and true man and our legislator, who neither lies nor could lie".[39] This is how he mentions the central fact of his religion, if that religion is the good Catholic Christianity he claims![40] He places Christ within a chain of scholastic reasoning about just war. Indeed, this is being a theologian -- with all one's head. But the practical command to live a good life as Sancho understands that life is probably closer to Don Quixote's actual views of Christianity.

Nor does the knight's true Catholic belief seem to run much deeper than good works and magic. When Don Quixote calls himself a Catholic Christian, he is using the words only as a charm to conjure the soul of his faithful squire, who has tumbled into a pit and is calling as though from the depths of Hell. The knight asks Sancho whether he has died, and if so, whether devils took him under the earth to -- not Hell, but Purgatory. Then it is that Don Quixote invokes "our holy mother, the Roman Catholic Church", with which he will intercede for Sancho's soul "in so far as my worldly substance will permit".[41] Is this not the attitude of a superstitious country gentleman,

who hears a voice from a pit and is at once off to the priest to buy a round number of indulgences? For it is Don Quixote's worldly substance which will save Sancho, not the knight's prayers.

To take another example of Don Quixote's attitude toward the official religion of his day, consider his attitude toward the chattering ape of Master Pedro. The ape could supposedly make rational statements about any company assembled to listen -- but only its master heard what the animal had to say; the others only saw chattering teeth. But what does the Knight of the Mournful Countenance say? "It is my personal opinion that Master Pedro, his owner, must have a pact with the devil, either tacit or express. . .he must have made some bargain with the devil for Satan to put this power into the ape so that he, Master Pedro, can earn a living by it; and then, when he is rich, he will give the devil his soul, which is the thing that the enemy of mankind is after".[42] Don Quixote, unable to fathom a palpable fraud, has recourse to talk about pacts with the devil. Is he a good Catholic Christian -- or only a superstitious countryman?

In short, Don Quixote's relation to "our holy mother, the Roman Catholic Church" seems to be a compound of book-learning recited as duty and peasant customs recited as charms. There is an ingredient missing in this odd mixture; shall we call that ingredient belief in the Absolute Paradox?

But I have called Don Quixote a man of faith; and he was just that. His religion was not that of the ordinary person (if the religious and ordinary ever could co-exist). In his words, "We cannot all be friars, and there are many paths by which God takes His own to Heaven. Chivalry is a religion in itself, and there are sainted knights in glory".[43] Who are the sainted

knights? According to Don Quixote,[44] they include not only such men as the charitable St. Martin and the learned St. Paul, but also such as St. James the Moor-killer and St. George the rescuer of damsels. The latter two, so far as Don Quixote is concerned, are saints by virtue of their being knights, for he gives no other account of them but that of their feats of arms. They are precedents for him to follow in his holy profession of knight-errantry.

"Chivalry is a religion in itself"; Don Quixote surely is an ardent devotee of this faith. His religion is no easy one to follow. The knight calls it even more rigorous than that of the Carthusian monks, who "in all peace and tranquility, pray to Heaven for earth's good". For "We soldiers and knights put their prayers into execution. . .thus we become the ministers of God on earth".[45] As ministers of God, knights-errant have little time for ordinary prayer, even before combat. Instead, a knight must commend himself to his lady before battle, and during its course, if he can, to God.[46] Is there not here a sort of contempt for the religion of the religious, and a dedication to an austere new faith?

Not only is Don Quixote's religion rigorous; it is also, for the spectator, incredible. The age of knight-errantry is past, if it ever really existed. For a man even to profess chivalry is ridiculous. But that is not the half of the problem. As the knight says, when speaking to his squire, "How is it possible for you to have accompanied me all this time without coming to perceive that all the things that have to do with knights-errant appear to be mad, foolish, and chimerical, everything done by contraries?"[47] And the adventures of Don Quixote bear out his words. The knight carefully explains that the work of knights-errant is not really so "mad, foolish, and chimerical"; "it is simply that there are always a lot of enchanters going about

among us, changing things and giving them a deceitful appearance, directing them as suits their fancy, depending upon whether they wish to favor or destroy us".[48] But the only person, other than the then-naive Sancho, who will believe such an explanation is Don Quixote himself. To him, his religion makes sense; but it makes sense only because he believes. This order is not unimportant: because he has faith, he can understand events within terms of his faith. If this is not quite credo ut intelligam, it is at least credo et intelligo.

Don Quixote is not too concerned over facts. If he cannot interpret them according to his faith, he will have recourse to imagination. Talking of Dulcinea, he says, "I am content to imagine that what I say is so and that she is neither more nor less than I picture her and would have her be, in comeliness and in high estate".[49] Is this not the statement of a highly religious man? The objective truth of his belief does not concern him so much as the fact that he believes passionately; he can even sacrifice reality to his belief. The internal order is far more important than the external. "And let anyone say what he likes; if for this I am reprehended by the ignorant, I shall not be blamed by men of discernment."[50]

In short, I consider the Quixotic quest analogous to the Christian quest; the Quixotic belief analogous to the Christian belief; the Quixotic fate at the hands of men analogous to the Christian fate. The comic poet Cervantes is employing Christian comedy correctly to depict the condition of the man of faith and his reception in the world.

That reception is, of course, a hard one. Don Quixote was so seemingly rational on many points, so insane on one. He could give a discourse on the relative merits of arms and letters (favoring the former, of course) which found great favor among

listeners. When he did so, "it was quite impossible for the moment for any of those who heard him to take him for a madman".[51] Why should this be, for this discourse was wholly consistent with the knight's mad doctrine? The answer is simple: most of the listeners were "gentlemen to whom arms were a natural appurtenance".[52] In other words, the world into which Don Quixote rode was not altogether a stranger to his pretensions; it was only unused to a thorough belief in such a delusion with the consequent attempt to put the mad doctrine into practice. Enough people were willing to grasp at side effects of Don Quixote's religion that, when he displayed those effects, they thought him quite sane. But when he displayed the root belief from which the various subsidiary doctrines sprang, the people could only laugh at him as a most rare sort of madman. For who is more logical than the madman who has recognized rational bounds and then overstepped them? Surely not the ordinary man, who will pick and choose from various doctrines without a care in the world for consistency.

And, as Cervantes often remarks, it was just this semblance of ambivalence between sanity and insanity that made Don Quixote so amusing to the people whom he met on his travels. Wherever he goes, he is tricked by a host of clever people. For Don Quixote is fixed in his behavior, being even rather predictable. What better person to jest with than a logical madman! Cervantes' proverb, that "jests that give pain are no jests at all",[53] was evidently unfamiliar to his characters. For the crude dwellers at inns and the utterly refined duke and duchess were alike in their cruelty -- except that the latter pair was far more cruel.

So Don Quixote remains more or less fixed, a figure for clever people to taunt with lances, verbal and mental. He grows in the reader's estimation, through his frailties and human failings

as well as his great faith, into a recognizable human being. In other words, Cervantes is attempting comic reversal. Don Quixote ceases to be a caricature; the reader begins to see events in a Quixotic manner.

Although my main concern is with Don Quixote, I should mention Sancho Panza here. For Sancho changes in one's estimation from a low-comedy buffoon into a man of genuine, if humble, wisdom. He is a character undergoing reversal; so that what is said of Sancho applies to master and man alike: "Each day new things are seen in this world, jests are turned into earnest and the jesters are mocked".[54] These words might almost serve as a motto for the book.

And so, in the first part of Don Quixote, the memorable scenes deal with the knight in battle with things: windmills, fulling hammers and the like. Such people as he encounters are rather crude; they serve, as do the things, to set off the humor of Don Quixote himself. For Cervantes uses the first part to allow his readers to acquaint themselves with his hero's madness. This sort of humor palls; one gets tired of the madness of one man. So Cervantes resorts to the expedient of inserting material which has only the slightest connection, if any, to the thread of the story. Such a story as the "Curious Impertinent" serves as a break in the rhythm of the book.

In the second part, the situation is quite different. Don Quixote is known, both by the reader and by the other characters (who have read the first part). The emphasis is on people, not things; on clever pranksters, not boors. The extravagances of the duke and duchess provide the real humor, not the knight whom the two taunt. Cid Hamete's remark, "that the jesters were as crazy as their victims and that the duke and duchess were not two fingers' breadth removed from being fools when they went to

so much trouble to make sport of the foolish",[55] is almost unfair in its leniency toward Don Quixote's tormentors. They were not fools, but clever people, with all the intolerance of the clever for the consistent. Yet they were, as Cid Hamete says, crazy, for only a form of madness could have caused them to inflict such pain as they meted out to Don Quixote. But if that madness resembled the knight's monomania by its singleness of purpose, this was only a reaction. That the duke and duchess were mad is but a tribute to the power of Don Quixote's religion; his faith was attested to by the vehemence with which it was opposed.

But although the tenor of the second part concerns itself with the follies of ordinary men as seen by the measure of Don Quixote, that measure itself is not fixed. Even before his humiliating defeat by the Knight of the White Moon, the Knight of the Lions has begun to lose his faith. Cervantes gives a sign of this when, after leaving the new Arcadia, Don Quixote rides to an inn -- and calls it an inn![56] This would never have happened in the earlier days of his pilgrimage.

And at the end, Don Quixote gives up all the trappings of his chivalric faith. He becomes Alonso Quijano the Good. This Quijano was, no doubt, good -- with the goodness of a country gentleman. But Alonso Quijano the Conventionally Good -- what a comedown from the knight-errant who went about the world righting wrongs! Nor did he even die a knight-errant: "The notary who was present remarked that in none of those books had he read of any knight-errant dying in his own bed so peacefully and in so Christian a manner".[57] And what was the Christian manner? "He received all the sacrements. . .and thus, amid the tears and lamentations of those present, he gave up the ghost".[58] With such a death, is it hard to forgive Sancho for assuaging his sorrow with the comfort of inheriting property? After all, there was nothing unusual; it was just a

normal, Christian, village death. Sancho had probably seen many of those before.

What went wrong? Why did Don Quixote degenerate into Alonso Quijano the Good? He lost his faith. But surely his faith was once strong enough to remain under all conditions. Or did he never have such faith? He did not, if in the duke's house he first "really and wholly believed himself to be a true knight-errant".[59] But is this not an exaggeration? Would a lack of faith spur the knight on to the windmills? or to the lions? No, he truly believed in knight-errantry and in himself as a knight-errant. His faith was strong. But he recanted. Is not the explanation that the object of faith proved too small to bear such a burden? Don Quixote was ready to believe the most paradoxical things -- but chivalry failed to give him such objects. The "reality" of the world around him could not batter down such faith as his; whether his faith conformed to reality was, as we have seen, of little consequence to him; the failure must lie in the ideal, not the real. The change from Don Quixote to Alonso Quijano the Good is, as it were, the author's removing the mask from knight-errantry. No longer is knight-errantry a symbol of Christianity, of the logically impossible. Only Christianity is of sufficient strength to maintain the burden of belief. Cervantes, by pointing to the failure of knight-errantry, is performing the last duty of a Christian comic poet: dispelling illusion.

Such are the two main themes of Christian comedy. The primary theme, that of the God-on-the-cross, needs no poet to accentuate its ludicrous quality. The secondary theme, that of the individual believer in conflict with himself and the world, has found at least one profound poet in Cervantes. In these two themes of the thing believed and the believer, there are numerous smaller subjects for a poet to work upon. In the first, he can

recite as sentimentally as he will different sections of the story of Christ -- perhaps now dwelling on the peasant upbringing, now on the rude companions, now on the humble wanderings -- but never forgetting to interject constantly the remark that the subject of converse is God. In the second, the poet may concentrate on, to take an example given earlier, repentance; or he may talk about misfortunes resulting from a zealous believer's works of love. But in any event, these two main streams make up the whole of Christian comedy.

The whole of Christian comedy is not to be despised -- unless Christianity is to be despised. If that religion is true, even if, as with Don Quixote, it is held with such passion that the objective truth becomes unimportant, then Christian comedy, the form of non-apostolic Christian communication, is a holy speech; then the ludicrous is not a species of the ugly, as Aristotle would have it, but of the divine. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."[60] But, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men".[61] Thus does Christian comedy justify itself.

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FOUR POEMS

By Ken Butler *

Wind shakes
The spider's thread,
The sunlight slips and breaks.
Then sunlight out of broken sunlight breaks,
Windsped.

SHADOWS

That summer was lifted limb by limb
Up into the tree outside my window,
Up into the leaves. And from each night,
Over dandelion distances
Completed in a breath by bees,
Each day was lifted into morning.

My mother gave her grocery list,
And the birds threw parties in the air,
Yelling their names across in notes
To new and old acquaintances.
And then at noon a string of ants,
Strung into families of feet,
Went somewhere up or down the tree,
One step and brother at a time.
The wind in the leaves above my window
Set shadows moving over the grass,
Over the green leaves on my cup.
To Benny, our gardener, who drank,
And drove a beautiful red bike
With blue streamers on the handlebars,
Shadows were a bother, like the lawn;
He turned the sprinklers on both of them,
The water ringing in the pipes
Under our house, and in the air,
Until my mother told him, Wait,
You come back and water when they're gone . . .

They struck the passing cars, struck fire
Instantly, and fell in the evening.
I hid my face and cried, afraid,
Until the lion of our company
Slapped me, and kissed me bravely,
Lifting me up from the deep grass.

"At sea there is nothing to be seen close by . . ."
Sarah Orne Jewett, The Country of the Pointed Firs

There was nothing to be seen close by,
the distances were pointless blue,
until the captain took to drinking
imagination, like a fool;
and as he sailed beyond himself,
described the islands and the fish,
until his ship encircled him.

And yet the captain sailed beyond,
if not beyond where he had been,
nor traveling in terms of wind,
yet beyond knowing where he was;
he could not say how this was so,
except to say he was at sea,
with nothing to be seen close by.

WE THE HONORED OF A GREEN LAND

"and, behold, there was a swarm of bees
and honey in the carase of the lion."
Judges, Chap. 14, 8

We the honored of a green land attend this Birth.
We who were fed with the cracked bones of birds
Have this report from a people of the desert,
A flowing of spears in the angles of a river.
And the lion murdered this evening with joy
Swells like a river in rain of great sweetness,
The spears in our hands are trembling yet with bees.
And the women paint their thighs a thousand times,
Maddening breathless men with the smell of eagles.
Unclosed sores are comforted with seamless cloth,
A land of green stones is washed with the spit of children.
We the living and the dead attend this Birth.

* Mr. Butler, an alumnus, attended the college in 1957-59.

NOTE ON ARISTOTLE, DE CAELO BOOK TWO, CHAPTER TWELVE

by
David Lachterman

(In the supplement to Ptolemy's Theory of the Planets, published by the Bookstore, there is a reference to Aristotle's De Caelo, On the Heavens, Book Two, Chapter Twelve. Since this section is omitted from the Random House edition of Aristotle's Works, I decided to undertake a translation. Miss Brann later brought to my attention the Commentary of Simplicius on this chapter of the De Caelo, a part of which I have translated to serve as a commentary on 'saving the phenomena' in Greek astronomy. After reading the De Caelo, I became interested in a more general question of the nature of Aristotelian science and in the reasons for its failure in the field of astronomy. My speculations on these questions are appended to the translations.)

I Translations

De Caelo 291b24 - 293a14

Since there are two difficulties that anyone might find perplexing, we must try to explain what is clear (λέγειν τὸ φαινόμενον)[1], considering an eagerness to do so more like modesty than rashness if someone, athirst for philosophy, is content with even slight solutions to questions of the greatest difficulty.[2]

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1) The phrase τὸ φαινόμενον is difficult to render into English. The sense of the words is not that the appearance must be explained or 'saved', but rather that despite the difficulty of the questions about to be raised, we must nonetheless try to bring to light what can be learned about these things.

2) The sentence in Greek exhibits a parallelism that is not easily reproduced in English: μικραὶ εὐπορίαι ... μεγίσταις ἀπορίαις

Among these questions there is one that is by no means the least astonishing: why in the world are the bodies further from the primary movement (i.e., movement of the sphere of fixed stars) not always moved by more motions, but, instead, the intermediate bodies have the greatest number of motions?[3] For it would seem reasonable, since the primary body (i.e., sphere of the fixed stars) has only one movement, (φορά) that the body nearest to it be moved with the fewest motions (κινήσεις) for instance two, the next by three, or in some similar order. But, in fact, just the opposite is the case; for the sun and the moon are moved by fewer motions than some of the planets, even though these (i.e., the planets) are further from the center (i.e., the earth) and closer to the primary body. This has even been quite visible in some cases; for the half-moon has been seen approaching[4] the planet Mars which is first hidden behind the moon's dark side, then reappears alongside its bright and radiant side. And the Egyptians and Babylonians, who made such observations long ago over a great span of time and from whom we have many reliable accounts of each of the planets, also say the same thing about the other planets.

Anyone would rightly be confused both by this and by the question why there is such a great multitude of stars involved in the primary movement, so that the whole order seems innumerable, while each of the others (i.e., the

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3) Aristotle sees the Universe as a nest of concentric spheres, bounded by the sphere of the fixed stars. Each of the planets as well as the sun and the moon is governed by a certain number of these spheres even though it is attached only to the last of these.

4) Literally, 'going under'. The perspective here is vertical, so that in the plane of sight from the earth upwards to the Heavens, the moon appears beneath Mars.

spheres of the planets) involves only one by itself, and two or more [planets] are evidently not tied to the same movement.

It would indeed be well to seek a fuller understanding of these matters, even though we have slight resources to begin with (μίκραι ἀφορμαί) and are at such a great distance from the objects of our inquiry.[5] Nonetheless, to those who carefully observe and draw their conclusions from such things what is puzzling to us at present will not seem anything unaccountable (ἄλογον). Now we are thinking of the planets as we do of mere bodies, that is, as units, having an order (τάξις) that is entirely lifeless, whereas we must conceive of them as participating in action (πράξις) as well as in life (ζωή); for in this way what happens will not seem unreasonable (παράλογον).

Now it is likely that the Good will belong to what is in the best state without any action [on the part of the latter], but to the things nearest to the best [it will belong] through a few actions or even one, and to the things more distant through more; just as in the case of bodies one is healthy even without exercise; another, when it has walked around a bit, however a third must run and wrestle and exercise in the palaestra while a fourth, despite violent exertion, will still not possess the good (i.e., health), but something different.

Success in many things or on many occasions is difficult;

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5) Lit., 'from the things that qualify them' or 'that happen to them.' A. means here their motions, I imagine.

for example, to throw 'snake-eyes'[6] on the dice a thousand times is impossible, but to do so once or twice is easy. Again, when one thing must be done for the sake of a second, the second for the sake of a third, and this, in turn, for the sake of something else, it is easy to succeed with one or two, but each additional step makes it that much more difficult.

Wherefore we must also think that the action of the stars is of the same sort as the action of animals and plants. For 'here'[7] the actions of man are the most numerous since he can achieve many good ends, with the result that he does many things and does them for the sake of still others.

Now what is in the best possible state requires no action, for it is its own final cause, whereas action always takes place when there is both the end and the means to that end. Among the other animals, then, there are fewer [actions], and in the case of plants perhaps some trifling one; for there is either one thing that someone might achieve, just as with men,[8] or else his many actions all put him further on the way towards the best.

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6) τὸ χίος is the worst throw on the dice in Greek.

7) Here equals on the earth, as opposed to 'in the heavens'; the word is simply ἐντεῦθα.

8) This does not conflict with Aristotle's previous argument that man has a variety of ends; it simply refers to the fact that man has a highest good to which all of his other actions are related.

One thing then possesses and shares in the best; another comes directly to it through a few actions; a third, through many actions; and a fourth does not even try but is satisfied to come to what is close to the highest. For example, if health is the end, one body is always healthy; another is so by dieting; a third, by running as well as dieting; some other does something else for the sake of running (e.g., exercise), so that it performs more motions; and another has not the power to achieve health at all but only the ability to run or to diet, and one of these is the end for bodies such as this. Certainly it is best for all things to achieve that highest end, but, if one cannot, then the closer it gets to the highest the better it is. And therefore the earth is not moved at all, while the bodies near it are moved by a few motions -- for they do not attain to the highest but reach as far as they are able to participate in the most divine principle. On the other hand, the first heaven reaches it straightaway through a single motion; and the bodies in between the first heaven and the outermost bodies (i.e., the earth, sun, and moon) do reach it, but reach it through more motions.

There is one consideration that would first make the difficulty -- that quite a multitude of stars are involved in the primary movement, although it is one, while each of the others (i.e., the planets) has received motions peculiar to it alone -- seem reasonable to someone; for we must think that in the case of each living creature and principle that the first or primary one has great preeminence over the rest which would be in keeping with our doctrine (λόγος). For the primary movement, itself one, moves many of the divine bodies; the others being many move only one apiece, for any one of the planets is moved by several movements.

In this way then Nature both equalizes and creates a kind of order (τάξις), assigning to one movement many bodies and to one body, many movements. And, furthermore, for the following reason the other movements have only body: the movements before the last, which holds the one star (i.e., planet), move many bodies, for the last sphere is moved in conjunction with many spheres and each sphere is a body. Therefore the work of that one (i.e., the innermost sphere) will be carried on in common; for there is a movement peculiar to each by nature, while this one has been added, so to speak. However, the power of every limited body is limited.

Simplicius, In De Caelo 219a 19 - 44

In this way then Aristotle has rendered a solution (λύσις) to the problem (ἀπορία), giving in to the difficulty (ἐνδούς τῇ ἀπορίᾳ) and conceding that the planets are moved by many kinds of motion, because of the appearances not only of progressions or direct motions but also of retrogressions and stations and different phases and elongations in both directions and diverse anomalies. Because of this they undertake to save (σώζεσθαι) the majority of these motions individually, some hypothesizing eccentrics and epicycles, others, the concentric circles named 'counter-acting' (ἀνελίττουσαι lit., wobbling).

But the true reasoning, accepting neither stations nor retrogressions nor additions to or subtractions from the number of their motions, and rejecting hypotheses that maintain such things, demonstrates simple and circular and regular and orderly heavenly motion judging from the signs of their essence (ἀπὸ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτῶν τεκμαιρόμενος).

But those who cannot grasp precisely how there is only an appearance (φαντασία) of their dispositions and that their attributes or contingencies (τὰ συμβαίνοντα) are untrue, love to discover by what hypotheses of regular and orderly and circular motion they may be able to save the phenomena of the planetary motion.

And Eudoxus was the first of the Greeks, (as Eudemus recollects in the second book of his Astronomical Investigation, and Sosigenes says, taking the information from Eudemus,) to set to work on hypotheses of this sort when Plato, as Sosigenes says, gave the following problem[1] to those who had been seriously concerned with these things -- by what hypotheses of regular and orderly motions may the phenomena of planetary motions be saved?

II Commentary

On Aristotelian Science

The enemy of Greek thought can turn with delight to the De Caelo: here is unqualified evidence of classical philosophy's disservice to science. Whether or not we share this enmity towards the Greeks, the undeniable fact about Aristotle's theories of the heavenly bodies is that they are wrong. For almost twenty centuries Aristotle's erroneous views were accepted by scientist and layman alike, and unlike the Ptolemaic system that yielded important information to its opponents, nothing could be salvaged from his notion of concentric 'crystal' spheres

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1) Cf. Republic, Bk. vii, 530B for a discussion of such problems and the role they play in the study of astronomy.

It is fair, I think, to say that Aristotle's cosmology impeded the progress not only of astronomy but of the science of nature generally until the overthrow of that cosmology by Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo.

Alexander Koyre, in his book From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe, reduces the 'crisis of European consciousness' in the sixteenth century to a frontal attack on the two central ideas of the De Caelo:

> "(It) seemed to be reducible to two fundamental and closely connected actions that I characterized as the destruction of the cosmos and the geometrization of space, that is, the substitution for the conception of the world as a finite and well-ordered whole, in which the spatial structure embodied a hierarchy of perfection and value, that of an indefinite or even infinite universe no longer united by natural subordination, but unified only by the identity of its ultimate and basic components and laws; and the replacement of the Aristotelian conception of space -- a differentiated set of inner-worldly places -- by that of Euclidean geometry -- an essentially infinite and homogeneous extension -- from now on considered as identical with the real space of the world."[1]

However, the De Caelo is not simply an unfortunate chapter in the history of science; it is an excellent illustration of the practice of science as conceived by one of the great minds of antiquity. A study of that practice and the possible reasons for its failure will, I hope, aid in the understanding of the aims of Aristotle's science and thought.

Since the De Caelo is unfamiliar to most readers of Aristotle, I will begin with a brief and undetailed resume of the major arguments of the text. Let it be understood first that Aristotle's world-picture is not the same

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1) Koyre, A. From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe, p. viii.

as Ptolemy's; Aristotle seems to have appropriated and adapted the scheme of Eudoxus who saw the universe as a nest of concentric spheres bounded by the sphere of the fixed stars. To each of the planets and to the sun and moon he assigned a certain number of 'counter acting' (ἀνελίττουσαι) spheres that account for observed irregularities in the body's motion.[2] The planet itself is attached to the innermost sphere; however, it is governed by the motion compounded of all its spheres. In short,Aristotle has no use for Ptolemaic epicycles, eccentrics, and equants.

The first two books of De Caelo incorporate a closely argued and comprehensive account of the nature and activity of the heavenly bodies. To explain the difference between bodies in the sublunary world and the heavenly bodies (and the spheres to which they are fixed) Aristotle introduces a fifth primary element, prior to and more divine than the other four, that he calls aithēr.[3] It is of this substance, ungenerated and indestructible, that the stars and the so-called crystal spheres are constructed.

Aristotle then addresses himself to what is surely one of his favorite topics -- the actual infinite. Here, as in the Physics (Bk. 3, Ch.8), Aristotle refutes the doctrine of a cosmos of infinite extent, although his argument in De Caelo is based on the necessity of eternal circular motion that could only occur in a body of limited dimensions.[4]

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2) cf. Metaphysics Lambda, Ch. 8 for Aristotles discussion of the number of these spheres.

3) Aristotle derives the word from ἀεὶ θεῖν --'runs always'-- De Caelo 270b23.

4) De Caelo 271b28 - 273a6.

Following the discussion of the infinite, Aristotle turns his attention to the uniqueness of this world. His treatment of the subject is particularly illuminating in view of the obscurity that surrounds the concept of physis in the <u>Physics</u>. Nature, in the sense that we customarily understand that term, is the totality of beings that have within themselves the power of motion and rest. This totality, however, is for Aristotle a cosmos, an ordered whole. Order in this section of the <u>De Caelo</u> is the inalterable disposition and relationship of the primary elements; earth, fire, water, air, and aither. If there does exist another world (that is, another universe), its constituent elements and their interactions must be the same as in our world. If this is not the case, then this second world will be a cosmos in name only -- το πᾶν ὁμωνύμως (The fact that Aristotle identifies physis with cosmos will take on a greater importance when we look at his 'scientific method'.) He rejects the possibility of another world on the basis of his doctrine of natural motions.[5]

The concluding chapters of Book One are devoted to a series of elaborate proofs that the world is ungenerated and indestructible. Aristotle's invisible antagonist in this argument is Plato who maintained in the <u>Timaeus</u> that although the world came into being it is nonetheless imperishable.

The second book is a collection of short accounts of specific problems associated with the heavenly bodies -- their shape, motion, and position. After a terse synopsis of his previous conclusions, Aristotle explains why there

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5) <u>De Caelo</u> 276a18 - 277a12.

is a difference between the eternal and perfectly regular revolution of the sphere of the fixed stars and the irregular motion of the planetary spheres; it is a wonderful example of an Aristotelian argument that manages to prove the necessity of just about everything in the world from a single theory -- in this case the sphericity of the first heaven.

The subsequent arguments are as follows: the outermost heaven is spherical (iv), the motion of this sphere is perfectly uniform (vi), the stars are made of aithēr (vii), and are spherical (xi), and move because of their attachment to the heavenly spheres (viii). Aristotle also finds time to refute the Pythagorean doctrine of the harmony of the heavens on the ground that there is no empirical evidence for their assertion.

The twelfth chpater, which I have translated, is followed by an elaborate discussion of the earth. Aristotle proves, contrary to the theories of the Pythagoreans, Plato, Anaximander and others, that the earth is at the center of the universe, that it is always at rest, and that there cannot be a counter-earth, a fanciful invention of the Pythagoreans.

In the third and fourth books Aristotle deals with the sublunary world and its constituent elements. Although these books are quite interesting, they need not concern us here.

The De Caelo does not present any explicit statement of its author's intentions or goals; the subject matter of the inquiry is vaguely defined as 'bodies and magnitudes and the principles (ἀρχαί) of these beings'. Indeed, I would argue that the De Caelo is not meant to be self-sufficing; it must be read in the light of the Physics

and, perhaps, On Generation and Corruption. The temper of the work is indicative of its nature: Aristotle is by turns polemical and defensive, rhapsodical and coldly logical. There is nothing of the almost haughty confidence of De Anima, the Metaphysics and others. Aristotle is well aware of both the difficulties inherent in the subject matter and his own inadequate resources.[6]

However, it is clear that Aristotle is not examining the problems as a professional astronomer or mathematician. In the sections of the De Caelo where mathematical reasoning or astronomical evidence would be essential, Aristotle simply drops the matter and leaves it in the hands of others more qualified than he.[7] Nevertheless, Aristotle is no mere layman imprudently interfering in a business in which he has no part. Astronomy is a branch of physics,[8] and Aristotle considers himself a well-qualified physicist. The physicist does not separate the mathematical properties of bodies from the bodies themselves: he studies the sphere of the fixed stars as that particular sphere and not as an indifferent geometrical sphere. Hence, the form of his inquiry will be determined not only by mathematical relationships but by the nature of the bodies under consideration, i.e., their material constituents and proper motions, as well. Now the general laws of motion had been set out in the Physics and the relationships

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6) In the translated passage see 291b27 and 292a16

7) For example, in Bk. II, Ch. 10, the questions of the order, position and relative distances of the planets are entrusted to the astronomers and their mathematical relationships to the mathematicians.

8) Cf. Physics, Bk. II, Ch 2, 193b25

between the elemental forms of matter, even if they had not been fully elaborated in On Generation and Corruption,[9] were certainly a part of Aristotle's thought at the time; in the De Caelo Aristotle applies the general laws of the motion of natural bodies to the specific case of the heavenly bodies.

The Heavens (ὁ οὐρανός) are often called the Whole (τὸ πᾶν) inasmuch as all time, all matter, and all place are included within them.[10] Consequently, the transition from the general to the particular takes on here added significance. The order and perfection of the Whole have their source in the essence of its parts (the sphericity of the heaven allows for its eternal circular motion; the stars and their spheres are made of indestructible aithēr, etc.), and the essence of a thing is its form (εἶδος), that is to say, its activity, what it does. For Aristotle the form exists in the thing itself and not outside it in some transcendental realm. If, then, the De Caelo is successful, at one stroke Aristotle establishes the validity of his general physical laws and furnishes further evidence for his doctrine of imminent form.

(This argument may appear to attribute the composition of the De Caelo to Aristotle's opposition to Platonism: it is certainly true that it was written with the Timaeus in mind -- Aristotle makes frequent reference to it both directly and indirectly. I shall postpone any discussion of the importance of Aristotle's anti-Platonic thought to the final section of this paper. For the moment, I shall only say that Aristotle regarded himself as a

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9) Most students of the evolution of Aristotle's thought agree that De Caelo and De Gen. et Corrup. were written about the same time. Cf. Jaeger, Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of His Development.

10) De Caelo, 279a18

better scientist than Plato: perhaps he hoped that a critical comparison of his teacher's Timaeus with his own work would confirm his opinion.)

The De Caelo then is fundamentally an attempt to understand the Whole. This Whole is not, for Aristotle, simply the sum of its parts; everything that exists is to some extent determined by its pre-assigned role in the activity of the Whole (thus, in Bk. ii, Ch. iii, the necessity of generation and corruption stems from the circular motion of the outermost sphere), and influences, in turn, the character of the totality in which it participates (thus, also in Ch. iii, if the heaven is a sphere it must have a centre -- hence, the earth must exist). Therefore, all the scientific disciplines are interlocking and an understanding of the world (ὁ κόσμος) that does not draw upon them all is incomplete. This implies, of course, that the same principles are operative in every realm of Nature -- an implication that will be of service when we analyze Aristotle's scientific method.

At the beginning of Chapter five, Book two, Aristotle makes a confession that is of unquestionable value in understanding the character of his thought and work as a whole.

> "Perhaps it might seem that the attempt to give an explanation of everything and to omit nothing, is a sign either of excessive simplemindedness or excessive audacity. However, this charge is not just in every case, for we must see why the speaker is saying what he does and in what he believes -- in something suited to man or in something more exalted. When someone comes across more precise and necessary proofs, then our thanks is due to these discoverers; now, however, we must state what is clear (τὸ φαινόμενον ῥητέον)."

Aristotle is defending here his ambitious attempt to understand every aspect of the Whole, and at the same time assuring his readers. (or listeners) that he would willingly step aside if someone else brings to light more compelling ideas. In other words, Aristotle's sole interest is the truth. This passage illuminates the phrase 'athirst for philosophy' (διὰ τὸ φιλοσοφίας διψῆν) in the translated chapter: philosophy is, for Aristotle, nothing less than the attempt to understand everything. We can be sure that he is characterized by the second alternative that he offers -- belief in 'what is more exalted'. Philosophy and its subject matter are equally implied by this description.

It remains for us to examine the form of Aristotle's cosmological inquiry. Remember that we are looking for a possible explanation of Aristotle's failure in that field; an examination of his method should be most instructive.

I should like to begin with a passage from On Generation and Corruption that is applicable to all of Aristotle's scientific writings.

> "Lack of experience diminishes our power of taking a comprehensive view of the admitted facts. Hence those who dwell in intimate association with nature and its phenomena grow more and more able to formulate, as the foundations of their theories, principles (ἀρχάς) such as to admit of a wide and coherent development; while those whom devotion to abstract discussions has rendered inobservant of the facts are too ready to dogmatize on the basis of a few observations. The rival treatments of the subject (viz., the atomic theory of matter) now before us will serve to illustrate how great is the difference between a scientific (φυσικῶς) and an abstract or dialectical (λογικῶς) method of inquiry."[11]

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11) De Gen. et. Corr. 316 a 5 - 14 translated by Joachim.

The intimate association with nature of which this passage speaks is an apt description of Aristotle's scientific career: the accuracy of his observations in his biological works is evidence of the extent of his personal contact with the variegated world of nature. Scientific reasoning (φυσικῶς) and abstract reasoning (λογικῶς) are in Aristotle's view incompatible when the object of inquiry is Nature. In the De Caelo he continually rebukes his predecessors and contemporaries who 'tried to bring the appearances into line with their own theories and opinions (πρὸς τινας λόγος καὶ δόξας αὐτῶν).'[12]

With this statement of method in mind, we can examine the argument of the twelfth chapter. We suppose the world to be ordered; the sequence of the complexity of planetary motion is unordered -- how can the assumption and the fact be reconciled, or in other words, how can the 'appearances be saved'?

Aristotle achieves a reconciliation of the presupposed order and the observed irregularity on teleological grounds that apparently have nothing to do with astronomy itself -- he uses an analogy with bodily health to prove his point. It is curious that Aristotle introduces an astronomical observation (the eclipsing of Mars by the moon) to confirm the fact that there is disorder, but nowhere else. The heavenly bodies act in accordance with an all-powerful principle of reality: everything that exists seeks to imitate or to participate in the Highest Good.[13] The peculiarities of planetary motion can be

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12) De Caelo 293a26.

13) Since in this passage the first heaven itself is subordinate to what Aristotle calls the Highest Good, it may be thought that the idea of the Prime Mover has already found its place in Aristotle's philosophy. This is by no means certain; the Prime Mover is eternally at rest while first heaven, which achieves the highest good in a single motion, is eternally in motion. It would then be the earth that most easily achieves what is best. For a fuller discussion of the question see Guthrie's introduction to the Loeb edition of De Caelo.

traced to their relative ability to reach this telos. Thus the earth, which can never achieve the Highest Good, is always at rest, while the first heaven achieves it with a single motion. (Here in the De Caelo the Highest Good seems to be eternal circular motion which is characteristic of what is most divine. Despite the obscurity that surrounds it, it is clearly representative of eternal activity in accordance with the essence or form, that is to say, the eidos eternally realizing itself.)

This argument can serve a dual purpose; it can, on the one hand, allow us to see how Aristotle interpreted the problem of 'saving the phenomena', and on the other help us to decide whether Aristotle has abandoned at this critical juncture his resolution never to vitiate scientific argument by abstract reasoning.

Aristotle's approach to the problem of saving the phenomena seems to me fundamentally the same as Ptolemy's, although its form and motive are different. Ptolemy presupposes regular circular motion for each of the planets; the conflicting appearances must somehow be re-interpreted according to this initial principle: hence, the epicycles, eccentrics, and equants. Ptolemy's re-interpretation involves an elaborate mathematical treatment that is absent in Aristotle's account, and in addition his motive is the 'setting out of many beautiful theorems'. Aristotle presupposes an ordered whole hierarchical and value-determined, informed throughout by the desire to achieve what is best. Here again, however, when the hierarchy breaks down in the light of appearances, the latter (and not the former) must be reinterpreted and restored to their proper place in the system. For Aristotle saving the phenomena means 'reintegrating' the appearances with the Order, or, according to the Latin derivation of the word, 'making whole again '.

Plato's notion of saving the phenomena is a far cry from Aristotle's, yet this disparity represents an essential difference in their thought. Simplicius, who must surely be a Platonist, provides us with the necessary clues to Plato's view of the matter.[14] To save the phenomena is to display the appearances in their character as φαντασίαι, that is, mere appearance, or fantasies. Rather than assimilate the appearances to an unassailable order, the Platonist must scrupulously deny them any place in his system of reality. This is what Simplicius meant when he remarked that'Aristotle had solved the problem by giving in to it.'

I am reminded in this context of Plato's discussion of the study of astronomy in the Republic Bk. vii. He says to Glaucon, who has just maintained that astronomy 'compels the soul to look upward . . . to those higher things!'

"Thus these sparks that paint the sky, since they are decorations on a visible surface, we must regard, to be sure, as the fairest and most exact of material things; but we must recognize that they fall far short of the truth, the movements, namely,of real speed and real slowness in true number and in all true figures both in relation to one another and as vehicles of the things they carry and contain. These can be apprehended only by reason and thought (λόγῳ καὶ διανοίᾳ) but not by sight. . .[15] do you not suppose that he (the true astronomer) will regard as a very strange fellow the man who believes that these things go on forever without change or the least deviation -- though they possess bodies and are visible objects -- and that his unremitting quest is the realities

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14) Cf. also Theon of Smyrna, Exposition of Mathematical Knowledge Useful for the Study of Plato, ed. Dupuis in French, p. 323.

15) Republic 592c-d

of these things?"[16] The motions of the heavenly bodies are imitations of the real motion, the form, I suppose, of such motion. Therefore, no one should attempt to discover in the imitation the perfection of the model. The order and perfection that Aristotle finds in the visible bodies themselves, Plato places beyond the world of sense.

At first sight, Aristotle's arguments in Chapter twelve seem abstract (λογικῶς) rather than scientific (φυσικῶς). Is this really the case? Was Aristotle forced to turn to dialectic for an answer to these difficulties that engaged the attention and industry of every Greek astronomer? If we understand what Aristotle means by physis I think we shall have to answer 'no'. Physis is not merely the sum of observed facts about beings that move, or beings that are generated and destroyed; the world of tā physikā is the cosmos and, consequently, the student of physis is a student of the cosmos. The facts of nature, then, from which Aristotle proposes to argue, are both the things that he has seen and the ordered whole in which they exist. Whenever there is conflict between the two, it is always the former that are brought into question, as the translated passage illustrates.

The structure of this ordered whole is determined by the end, the telos, that its parts are striving to achieve; its parts are disposed according to their power to realize the ultimate end. To reason φυσικῶς means to argue from this incontrovertible conviction about the nature of reality, which is exactly what Aristotle has done. To argue λογικῶς means to ignore this order, out of

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16) Republic 530 G

fondness for one's own notion of the structure of the Whole. When Aristotle upbraids the Pythagoreans in Chapter xiii for their theory of the central fire, he is in effect criticizing the order that they devised. (The Pythagoreans deemed fire the most honourable of the elements; hence, they placed it at the center of the universe. Aristotle considers 'that which encloses and limits more honourable than what is limited; for the one is the material (ὕλη) the other the being (οὐσία) of the structure'. Their values differ, hence the structure of the cosmos that they propose differs.) In any case, it is clear that Aristotle is reasoning in the way that he set out to do; he is bringing the appearances into line not with a logos of his own but with physis itself.

From what I have said, it should appear that there are three possible explanations of Aristotle's failure to come up with the right answers in the De Caelo. The first is perhaps the least probable yet at the same time the most provocative: Aristotle failed because of his defection from Platonism; he misunderstood the meaning of saving the phenomena when he insisted that the perfection of the world be within the world itself. Of course, this argument necessarily assumes that Plato's view of reality is correct, and that is surely open to discussion! Nonetheless, we should be conscious of the fact that Plato's idea of the actual irregularity of the motions of the stars and planets is correct, whereas Aristotle's idea of regular circular motion is incorrect.

A second suggestion is that cosmology -- a reasoned account of the immutable order of the universe -- is impossible; there is no cosmos as Aristotle understood it. This seems to be the substance of Koyre's remarks quoted in the

beginning of this paper as well as of the discoveries of modern-day astronomy. On this view the fault is not entirely Aristotle's; had he been more suitably equipped (with, say, a 200" refractory telescope), he might have discovered the true facts about the heavens so far as they are available to man. The quotation from Book two, Chapter five (Aristotle's 'confession') should persuade us that Aristotle would have believed the telescope.

For Aristotle, the true scientific enterprise is the investigation of the structure and activity of natural beings as they are determined by their participation in an unchanging order, the investigation, that is of why things are as they are. Today we understand science differently: the essential subject matter of science is the 'what' and the 'how' of things rather than the 'why'.[17] It is in this difference of attitude that our third possible explanation is to be found. Aristotelian science gives priority to metaphysical conviction -- to what is not empirically verifiable; -- whereas modern science believes that it begins with purely empirical data -- with what is given.

While it is true that an hypothesis is prerequisite to a fruitful scientific investigation[18] (no scientist merely juggles test tubes and compounds without having some idea of what he is looking for), it is also necessary that an uncomfirmed hypothesis remain a tool, and not an unshakable doctrine. (Thus, even Lavoisier, the arch-enemy of premature theorizing, could use the caloric hypothesis as a valuable tool.) 'Nature does nothing in vain', 'whatever exists and has a function, exists for the sake of that functioning', and 'all things seek to achieve the highest

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17) Cf. Auguste Compte, A General View of Positivism for the arguments against metaphysics and theology that perhaps gave birth to this idea of science.

18) Cf. Theon of Smyrna, op. cit. p. 323 (Dupuis, ed.)

good' are convictions that should come after the data for which they account have been thoroughly analyzed in themselves. As Ptolemy writes at the beginning of the Almagest, "Those who have been true philosophers . . . seem to me to have very wisely separated the theoretical part of philosophy from the practical. For even if it happens that the practical turns out to be theoretical prior to its being practical, nevertheless a great difference would be found in them . . .". Might it not be that this characteristic of Aristotle' scientific method, -- or one could say this flaw -- is responsible for his erroneous conclusions?

Aristotle's failure does not force us to sacrifice metaphysics to empirical science; on the contrary, it opens our eyes to the truth of Ptolemy's warning that metaphysics must follow mathematics.

Горные Вершины

Горные вершины
Спят во тьме ночной;
Тихие долины
Полны свежей мглой;
Не пылит дорога,
Не дрожат листы...
Подожди немного,
Отдохнёшь и ты.

М. Лермонтов

QUIET PEAKS

Quiet peaks slumber
Slumber in the darkness of night;
Hushed valleys
Are filled with cool mist;
No dust rises from the road,
No leaves are moving . . .
Wait awhile,
You too will rest.

M. Lermontov

Зимнее Утро

Мороз и солнце; день чудесный
Ещё ты дремлешь, друг прелестный —
Пора, красавица, проснись:

...

Вечор, ты помнишь, вьюга злилась,
На мутном небе мгла носилась;
Луна, как бледное пятно,
Сквозь тучи мрачные желтела,
А ты печальная сидела, —
А нынче ... погляди в окно:
Под голубыми небесами
Великолепными коврами,
Блестя на солнце, снег лежит;
Прозрачный лес один чернеет
И ель сквозь иней зеленеет,
И речка подо льдом блестит.

...

А Пушкин

A WINTER MORNING

Frost and sun; a wondrous day
And still you doze, delightful friend --
It is time, my lovely, wake up:

.....

Do you remember, in the evening a snowstorm raged,
Mist hovered in the cloudy sky;
The moon, like a pale splash,
Grew yellow through the dark clouds,
And you sat, sad one, --
But now . . . look through the window:
Under the azure heavens
The snow is lying, magnificent carpets
Glistening in the sun;
Only the transparent forest is darkening
And the fir is turning green through the hoar-frost,
And the brook gleams under the ice.

.....

A. Pushkin

Молитва

В минуту жизни трудную,
Теснится ль в сердце грусть:
Одну молитву чудную
Твержу я наизусть.

. . .

С души как бремя спадется
Сомненье далеко —
И верится и плачется,
И так легко, легко.

М. Лермонтов

PRAYER

In difficult moments of life,
Whenever grief crowds in my heart:
I repeat one wonderful prayer
I know by heart

. . . . . .

How burdens fall away from the soul!
Doubt is far away --
And one believes and one weeps
And one is eased.

M. Lermontov

OUT OF LINE

by
Charles G. Bell

Jeff Bryan stood, a loose-jointed mountain stand, and squinted at the stone steps leading to that depressing door: Romanesque-Byzantine, the holiest and heaviest of styles. "Lord," he thought, "they should save it for prisons."

Over heavy-arched windows, a door crowned with mosaics and reliefs, gray stone walls rose to a steel-girder roof, a builder's compromise for closing the vast ugly space. It was armory and gym and Legion headquarters, exam-post now for the pre-induction physicals.

Jeff stared, his eyes red with day work and night reading, weakened, but not enough. All right, it was his country; he was ready to serve it -- in his proper place.

He did not know when the others would come. He was at that stage of life when he could not sit around wasting time. Under his arm was a Spinoza and a notebook of his own writings. But first he would try to get through. He entered the bascilica. The vacancy was roped off in lanes and compartments. Men in uniform were sitting at desks checking records; others were going around distributing forms. One of the walking kind came toward him.

"Whaddya want, feller?"

Jeff stood six feet four. He looked down with the whimsical astonishment of one come from high mountains.

"I want my draft exam."

"What the hell? Where's your officer? Where's your contingent?"

"They'll be along. They gave us the address and our tickets. I came ahead."

He stopped. Why tell the reasons? That it had become impossible, herded together in the town auditorium while the fat Legionnaire of old days and decorations addressed them on the imagined threat of invasion, the world-conquering Nazis and little Yellow-bellies, impossible to sit there while the brave ass, spouting what others had fed him, lathered himself up to a confusion of the national good with his own badly-worded passion, impossible not to rise and shout: "You of the conspiracy of self-deception, why this insistence on debauching the brain as well as drafting the body?"

It was to avoid this that he had slipped away, had ridden to the city and found the armory, and whether his contingent was still listening to the old Legionnaire, or when they would arrive, he had no notion.

"Can't I start in?" he said. "You must have my name on the list. Jeff Bryan."

"My God, feller, d'ya think this is a private hotel? You wait for your contingent. Whatja ever leave 'em for? Goin' off alone that way. Don'cha know this is the army?"

"As if anybody had any doubt about that," said Jeff.

He turned and looked around. By the entrance was a section of folding chairs, a hundred maybe, set up and roped off with a cord. Nobody was in them. His long legs stepped over. He sat down and opened Spinoza:

"Concerning the Power of the Intellect, or Human Freedom." A loud voice roused him. "Hey, you damned idiot. You can't sit there. Don't you see the ropes?"

"Sure I see the ropes, and I see the chairs. What are they for? I won't do them any harm."

Words among sputterings: "By God, get out of there. You think you've come to ask questions? Get out on the steps,

willya, and wait for your contingent."

Jeff wrapped his coat around him and sat down. The steps were gray granite, and cold. He opened the book. "The Stoics, however, were of the opinion that the emotions depend absolutely on our free will and that we have complete command over them," Spinoza would qualify that, but only a little. . .

* * * * * * * * * * * *

And now at last, straggling up the sidewalk behind the uniformed leader, skylarking a bit, like boys going to school, came the lost contingent. Jeff rose, let them come up past him, was swallowed by the crowd. He had not even been missed. So once again, but fortified, he entered the void sanctum of Byzantine and steel, while the officer yelled: "Get in line. And hurry up. This is the army."

Sure. Hurry up and wait. They got papers. Then it was an elbowed cue that stretched out between ropes, bent at right angles and hugged the wall. Jeff was at the bend. The leader had disappeared with the muster-call into a back room. The desk they waited at was empty, A quarter of an hour passed. Jeff closed his eyes and leaned against the wall. . .

The mountain air dark with the beat of wings . . . The imagined eagle. He was lifted in space and time, as the rocket they guided with circuits and vacuum tubes, telemetering and radar. He had seen the film, that ultimate vision out of the mechanical reduction of man -- fragmentation of persons, and eye for a gauge, a rheostat hand, inhuman focusing of subjugated powers, trains and planes, trucks converging, research from distant places, an engine design, the automatic feedback pilot, to this nodule of flesh and steel, the timing clock, the scanning parabola -- and out of it all, with the impulse of upward soaring, on the beat of the bell the bird of flame, climbing into vision. He had seen the

film, the automatic eye in the whirling tail -- beyond the column of fire on which it rose toward the sun, the middle-earth shrinking like a pricked balloon, the desert contracted, mountains and streams, a third of the nation, under the pale mist of air, its astronomical shelter, visibly curving. We have bought it too dear, the upward thrust of nature that has lashed us on -- self-perceiving life, with mind and memory and all. How could these things arise in the first warm basins of seas? Divine analogy: even as thoughts rose in him now. For all things partake of the all.

He took his pen, opened the notebook, sat down on the floor leaning against the wall, his lanky legs drawn up, his lips pursed, sucking at the immaterial pap of the world. He wrote:

> "As molecules moved and shifted in the primeval seas, trying each against each the combinations they were subtle in, probing, joining, weaving, building with the chains they had built, linking as parts and realizing the descent of the latent gathering whole, so . . ."

As he wrote of organic phenomena, he had become the center of one. The next man had looked at him a while, then slumped down and sat against the wall. Others followed, including two Negroes. They did not read, they had no books; they did not write, they had no paper; perhaps even their thoughts would not have justified the relaxation of army rigor; but after forty minutes of standing, it seemed the sensible thing to sit. Not, however, to a sergeant keeping official stride in the hall. He was from Alabama, and it may have been the Negroes, their heads flopped on their shoulders as if they had spent the night there, that roused him. At any rate, he came over cursing and waving his arms.

"Get up from there. Get the hell up. What do you bastards

think this is, a Pullman car? Stand up straight and put that line in order."

The two Negroes jumped as if they had been shot. "Yassuh, yassuh." The rest struggled to their feet. All but Jeff. One could not say he had failed to hear. Concentration is not so profound. But he was in the middle of his sentence and had no intention of breaking it off. His eyes met the sergeant's. There was a tangling of wills, Bryan raised the determination of his look like advancing the throttle of a machine. Then the opposition broke. Motives are hard to assess. The sergeant turned away. He had got most of them up. Let the queer one alone. There would be time to operate on him later.

Bryan's thought had not been interrupted but suspended. His glance resumed its place on the page. The pen moved: ". . . so on the perpetual loom of the mind, ideas, like living things, weave and are woven, unknowing of the end, yet consentaneous to the directive thought they frame. From this working nature we have drawn from nature emerges as by revelation the symbolic shape. Here is a new essence born to the world."

* *

At last the group moved. Their papers were checked. They filed out to the dressing room. It was off with everything but their shoes. So there they were, the whole rout of them, milling around like skinned frogs, or bodies risen from the earth on the last day. Jeff would not abandon his books. With the big loose-leaf, the Spinoza opened on it, the papers clutched beneath, and a fountain pen in his other hand, he moved along with the line.

It was a comical sight, that expanse of raw-boned strength, slats of ribs showing through hard muscles, the freckled skin, faintly red with its body hair -- a powerful hill-billy nude, incongruously grown at the top to a philosopher's head, the

face obliviously contemplative turned to that heap of books gripped in the hands like a salvage from a lost world. It was something to astonish deeper wits than were there. He went through the rooms a provocation to question and laughter.

He had got used to that long ago, as one must, living in Arkansas and part of a small town. His father had taught it -- a strange man, who closed in mountain retreat a life he seldom talked of: the wild adventuring, Scotch out of Ireland, foreign service in India, British soldier of empire fighting rebellion, deserting at last north into the Himalayas to live with a native tribe, then fleeing over the mountains, through Russia, to England again to join the navy, until his past was discovered, his desertion, and he slipped a second cable, left the navy and sailed in the merchant marine. At New Orleans he jumped ship and swam ashore, simultaneous deserter from three services -- serving only his independence. He went by canoe up the Mississippi and the Arkansas to the Petit Jean country, settled down, started a newspaper, married and became successful, the liberal stay of his community, though retaining to the last under lovable humanity the heart of some mystery.

His mother had taught it, the dreamy self-educated girl of a numerous Ozark family. She had discovered somehow, and blended them with the voices of her native mountains, Wordsworth and Thoreau, patron saints of her worship. Winters in the town and tedious school had taught it, with no choice but to live your life or surrender; summers in the backwoods: the mountains, the giant spring in the valley, the unexplored onyx cave, most of all the sky, dawn and sunset from the lichened, lizard-crawling rock, the stars clustered in the warm night like grapes, that wine of strangeness, the idea of worlds in space.

This was the lure that had drawn him, of universal knowledge, through astronomy, mathematics, geology, to physics, that had trapped him at last in a cage of the war he opposed -- after yearlong nights

of weighing conscience, whether to answer the draft at all, whether to be a C. O. -- that had trapped him in the evasion of what was called vital research, telemetering used in jets and rockets and therefore aimed at destruction, though from his fragmented view of the electronic undersides as harmless and piddling as repairing radios -- all this, while the deepest principles of science were unknown to him, not to mention philosophy, history, poetry even -- the voice calling as to a creative destiny.

If they could only know what it cost, the arrogation of will and judgment. That hernia man who groped him below saying; "O.K., O.K., no hernia", and then, as he marked on the card, joined the chorus: "Whyja bring all those books, fellow, ya wantta be different?" To let them know once and for all: (O vos omnes) This is my share of the war.

For he had chosen -- not the pacifist camp and not the jail, but just to give up that messing with vacuum tubes. He had left the proving ground and come to the University, studying and writing and waiting for the call. If they took him that was their business. But not of his own will would he conspire any longer to do what he ought not to do and neglect what he ought to do.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

This was a barefoot room. Each room had its little rules. His heart had a false murmur. The assistant was in doubt. The doctor had stepped out. Could he go on with the next room and come back when he had finished? He went. The next room, of course, was a foot-shod room. Not that it made any difference to the examined mouth and throat if the feet were in shoes or bare. But the sign told them to put on their shoes before leaving room nineteen for twenty, and he had left his shoes in nineteen because he was going back there. The soldiers by now were replicas, stamped from a single mold. A little one was rattling in front of him: "What the hell . . . and why the damnation . . . shoes off . . . shoes on . . . Read the sign instead of your bitchin' book."

He had read the sign. His smile took hints of a knife blade, his voice harder than the words: "See here, friend. They told me to come back to that room, and that's a barefoot room, so if it's all the same to you, we'll leave them off in here."

The man was reared up, more violently rattling, while Jeff smiled down, the dagger smile: "Why don't we be sensible about this. Suppose you give me one reason why the shoes should be on in here and off in there."

"You're a goddam smart bastard. I don't like you; I don't like the way you part your hair. And we don't give reasons. You do it because by God I say do it, and you do it fast."

Bryan looked another minute, then shrugged. "All right, I'll do it. But let me ask you something. Suppose you'd come to the men who set up this country and made it a democracy, and told them the way you told me where to put on their shoes and where to take them off, and they better by God do it or get hell, what do you think they'd have said? You don't answer, but I'll tell you. They'd have said: beg pardon; we thought the problem was freedom, and if this is a sample of your freedom, we'd better stop fighting, at least while you're playing at leader."

Then he went to room nineteen for his shoes.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

He wasn't reading now. He was ready to boil. They had passed the heart, of course, checked the papers; he was standing in line for the next to the last room. It was three o'clock. He had got up early and had no breakfast or lunch. He began to wonder if there was any human being at all in the army. The romance of war had been stirring to a boy.

It was too bad, truly. They should get you when you were younger and of a mind for such things, when he was a scout and swore to respect all duly constituted authority (though even then he would

miscall it, "dully constipated"), or in the summer camps not so long ago; then he would have made a soldier. Maybe not their kind, but a minuteman or sharp-shooter, a scout in the old wars. In his Ozarks . . .

He was a leader of the charity cabin of what they called tough kids, some almost as big as he was, and not wanting to play tyrant, but obliged to keep order, he had taken them mountain climbing to teach them who was who. And when he had outwalked and outclimbed them and brought them winded and tired, but too proud to say so, on the last crag, thrown himself down at the hanging edge and looked off dreaming to the sunset (a worship one could afford, could draw them into, having taken control in their bodily realm) until the flaring clouds darkened, and they went down like goats leaping from rock to rock -- they were with him then, had minded like sons; he had taught them woodcraft, nature, the stars, some poetry even -- all but one, Boots, the toughest, the would-be boss. He sulked, brought it to a fight and then disappeared, in a region of unbroken forests, outcropping cliffs, rattlesnakes and copperheads. It was almost worth it for the chance to risk and run, to put oneself to use. They were all searching; but Bryan could trot thirty miles and climb and leap; he knew the mountains from old time. He was at it most of the day, springing over the ridges, crying into the valleys, running down for water and up on the opposite side. Now he was hurrying along Razorback, pushing through scrubby laurel, jumping down from a large rock to a smaller one six feet away, then up to a big one five feet beyond. The left foot was in the air, the right pushing off, not hard, they were in his stride. Then he caught the sound, the moment eternal present -- on the rock between, where his foot was aiming for, coiled and the head lifted, the tail in the middle blurred with rattling, the noise dry and hard (he in his summer clothes, sneakers and shorts and the foot descending), a gray wraith of venom. Can you dodge a bullet? It was not by decision. In the

beginning is the act. The leaping right leg gave a desperate thrust, a long spring outward, for the taller rock more than ten feet beyond -- a bare toehold clutching, then another leap and another, no thought to stop, no wish to investigate . . . About dusk he found Boots in the third valley behind the camp, hobbling in the wrong direction, tough guy, too young, having struggled all day, and his ankle sprained. They went back through the dark together, Boots limping, half-carried, Jeff beating ahead of them with a stick, especially as they crossed Razorback, some distance from the place he did not mention, Boots in the woods and the dark taking everything for a snake. They came before midnight to a worried camp, for the celebration of what had been called a rescue.

If they had only got him then and blessed him with danger and told him to make a hero of himself, he would not have asked for anything better. Now he was too old and had other things on his mind.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

It was the psychiatrist in the next to the last room. Jeff saw an owl-faced gray-haired man, his whole history written on him: Dug out of a junior college and set up to judge what was normal according to his lights. Shifting eyes swung round with the alarm of a herding animal that scents the wolf.

Jeff looked him over: -- here he was, the analyst, the symbolic center of this standardizing of the psyche. This was the progressive educator whose theories had turned on themselves, whose jargon of initiative and individuality, applied in a folly that cursed tension and defied well-being, had led down the opposite road to a brave new world of limp adjustment and mass mind. And here was this analyst, putting on a long face and clinical air, to ask like all the rest why he read in the halls and how he could concentrate. Allright, he would tell him. It was only justice to them both. He would tell him why he read in the halls and how he could concentrate and what he planned to do with his life.

"Listen," he said, "anybody who's born to a creative destiny has to concentrate. When you've learned to write through lectures and classes, to write nights after working all day, or in a dormitory where you are counselor and the boys are sitting around bulling, or in a physics lab where you have to make a reading every ten minutes -- by that time you can live in two worlds and keep them apart."

The psychologist was scribbling in red: "Creative destiny. Live in two worlds. That's how I concentrate. (Probably schizophrenic)." He looked up again, stroking his face with his hands. "Well, well, so that's how you do it? But why? Why drive yourself?"

"I told you why. I've got no choice. It's what I'm born to. Besides, it's important; you understand that?"

"You say you write", said the examiner. "Do you publish anything?"

"I never have".

The next question was sudden: "Have you been in any asylums?"

It was one thing Bryan could afford to joke about. He was almost too stable. "Not yet," he said.

The psychologist started. "Do you call yourself a well-adjusted individual?" So there it was. The secret was out, and the words as he mouthed them gave him the smug look of a man who has an edge on truth.

"My lord!", said Bryan. "Was Milton what you call adjusted? It's time you people learned the secret of growth is creative instability."

The fellow was scribbling again: "Irrational tendencies. Not adjusted. Delusions of grandeur. Thinks of himself as Milton."

He raised his head. "Aren't you married?"

"No", said Bryan, "I've fought clear of that."

They were watching each other like circling dogs. But as Bryan looked at the stuffy pedantic face, now more and more gray and gasping, like somebody who had just been keel-hauled, the absurdity caught him. What a doddering old idiot he had got there. But the man was determined to find a ground of normalcy somewhere. "I guess you have hobbies, anyway", he said.

Some playful devil twitched Bryan by the ear. "Yes", he replied, almost eagerly, "I like old music, especially of the fifteenth century, and Gothic art".

"But what about modern music, dance music?"-- it was the voice of alarm.

"I'm sorry", said Bryan, "I don't dance."

"But you surely listen to the radio".

"I took the radio out of my set. It was a nuisance. I kept the phonograph".

"Well at any rate, you must play games, tennis, golf? You're a big, strong fellow".

"I'll tell you", said Jeff, "I don't play any of these social games where you have to follow a ball around. But I'll walk twenty miles of an afternoon, I like swimming, especially alone and for long distances, and I find no sport superior to climbing trees".

It was the finish. The analyst added a few wild flourishes to the notes he had made, gave Bryan his papers marked all over in red, closing with the designation "potential maniac". Bryan took the papers and walked toward the last room.

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The filled-in forms came down on top of his other books. They had had not interested him before. But that frenzy of red over the

whole page, like a net of social accusation, brought him with a jolt to where he was. He could be rejected by the army and be free to work, but under that scarlet web and the stigma it implied. It was the symbol of freakish and irresponsible cult. But he was a man and thinker, not crazy at all. Better to go into the army and take what came, which would at any rate be no imputation against his will. As he read those scribblings: "Creative destiny. Lives in two worlds. That's how I concentrate", his face burned. -- as if he had planned the whole thing. Why had he talked to the old man at all? Why not say nothing and pass through like the rest?

He entered the last room, still caught in the forms. At that moment he saw stamped at the foot of the first page, also in red: "Deserter from essential employment". It was the last straw. He grabbed the first doctor that came to hand, violent at last, the accumulated rage of the day breaking through. "See here, I'm sick and tired of this business, being made a freak of from morning until four o'clock by a bunch of curious chuckleheads, and no dinner, and then to be marked up for a maniac by an insufferable old ass. But look at this stamp. That's the limit. I want to know who put that on there and why. What if I did leave the lab? They called it essential, but what I was doing there was a waste of time, and what I've done since is of some value. But let them twist it any way they please (who can question them?), what's it got to do with this examination, and why has it got to be stamped like a felony on the papers forever? I'm going to talk to the head man here before I go any further."

"I am the head man, if you call it that. I'm the first officer, and the doctor, too". The voice was modulated. Jeff blinked and saw eyes large and quiet, over thin cheeks, under graying hair, a refined Jewish face, looking at him with sensitive concern. It was all one needed, a single person to build community on. Standards came back like a firmament of land. "As for the stamp

you object to, we have nothing to do with it. The draft board puts that on if they choose".

It was clear now. He saw the men, that first Arkansas board, the lumber-crook Legionnaire, his father's enemy, to whom he had declared his conscientious scruples. It was luminous and fitting.

"As for the other problem, I want to talk with you about that, but you should have something to eat. Why didn't you eat at noon? They've closed the cafeteria; I'll stir them up for you. Put on your clothes and we'll go together".

"Don't do that", said Bryan, "I'll manage. You've got plenty to do".

It was the first pleasant laugh of the day: "Sure", the man said, "but sometimes I do as I please". He walked down with Bryan, gave orders to the cook. "Now you eat and rest up a bit, but before you go out to those last desks in the gym, stop at my office -- not where you saw me, but my own office" (he gave a room number) "and we'll straighten this thing out".

"Thanks", said Jeff, "thanks a lot. I'm sorry I blew up. But I didn't know".

"That's nothing", said the officer. "I do it myself. Take your time, and don't forget to look me up".

As Jeff ate the soup his hands were trembling. Slowly they calmed. He read a little Spinoza. When he got up to leave, he had forgotten the room number and didn't know the man's name. So he was thrown back on the old maze. As he went up the hall he passed the opening into the gym. At one of the desks was a soldier. He could ask him, anyway.

But the question was necessarily obscure: "Do you know where the chief doctor's office is?"

"Chief doctor? Never heard of any chief doctor. What's his name?" Jeff couldn't say, and he had to admit that he rather deserved the reply: "Well, if you don't know who he is, or where he is, how do you expect to find him?"

Yes, he deserved that much, but the man didn't stop there. He looked at Bryan suspiciously: "You're the bugger that's been running around with the books, aren't you. What's the matter with you? And what in hell do you want to come botherin' me with a fool question like that for?"

"Well, I'll tell you", said Jeff; "if I don't know the man's name, I can describe him. First he had some intelligence, and second, he was a man of feeling; and in this company he shone out like a star".

"Head doctor", said the flunky, "you've been seeing things". He tapped his forehead. "Here, gimme your papers" -- he snatched them from Bryan's hand.

"You don't have to go back anyway. These papers are O. K. You're ready to go into the army. You just walk over to that last desk, and you'll be through" -- He waved his arm.

No doubt that would be the simplest . . . In fact it was what Bryan had wanted. But it had become impossible. He had to prove that doctor was real, that he, Jeff Bryan, was sane, even if that meant seeming crazy. "I'm sorry", said Jeff, "but the gentleman of whom I speak was an officer, and he told me to see him before I went on, and I intend to do it."

"I don't care what anybody told you; I'm tellin' you to go over to that desk -- understand?"

"And I don't care what you tell me, I'm going back this way, do you understand?" And Bryan wheeled and walked off with his loose stride. In the unconcern of what he had dismissed behind him, he heard the man at the desk shout to a soldier, "Get that guy, will you!" and

then immediately, "Oh, what the hell, let him go". For indeed, he was gone already.

"God have mercy", thought Bryan, "they're harder to deal with than mules. If they were the enemy now, I think I'd make a soldier". He was thrusting back up the steps, scattering a line of fellows coming down. It was his contingent. They stared at him: crazy fool! He took a deep breath; his shoulders went knocking through about the level of their heads. With a set frown on his face he began pushing into offices, swinging back doors, striding past or through, answering no questions, stopping for nothing, hunting the face that was already as dim as something he had made up, merely from his need.

But in the fifth office the doctor appeared. As Jeff broke in, he rose from his desk. "Good", he said, "I've been waiting for you".

"I almost didn't get here. I forgot the number".

"How'd you find it then?"

"I walked through the offices".

"Through the offices! That's amazing. Sit down. Rosenwald's my name, Erich Rosenwald. You don't smoke?"

"Thanks", said Jeff, "I've given up the minor vices".

"I see", said Rosenwald. Pride is major. You're the kind that gives them trouble around here. Not like everybody else we get. I've been talking with some of the doctors. I guess we never had anybody like you before. What I'd like to know is, whether you want to go into the army, and if you do, can you adapt yourself?"

"That depends on what you mean by adapt", said Jeff. "That psychiatrist of yours is pretty much of a fool. He thinks I'd have a nervous breakdown. Don't worry about that. People don't

get on my nerves. I get on theirs. In Arkansas they used to call me ornery. And now I'm worse, because I'm going to study and write. As for adapting, I don't know what it means, unless there's leeway. What I mean by adapting is to live my life and take the consequences. If I run into many fools in the army like some I've struck here, I'd be in the guardhouse before long. I'll adapt myself to the guardhouse, I promise you; there'll be no collapses. But whether the army would call it adapting, I don't know".

"I doubt it", said Rosenwald. "What's your name? Jeff? Look, Jeff, you've got better things to do than mess around in the army. I'm in it and I know. Besides, you'd make trouble for yourself and for us. It'll be a lot simpler if I just write you down psychologically unfit".

"What's crazy, isn't it?" asked Jeff.

"More or less, -- except there's no reason to put it like that".

"But I don't want to get out of it by being crazy".

"Look, Jeff, you may be as sane as I am, but it's in your special way, and that means you'll always be crazy around here. Why don't you admit it and do your work? The army's no place for you".

Jeff squinted at him. "What are you doing in it then?"

Rosenwald shrugged, "I was drafted, like everybody else."

"Sure you were drafted", said Jeff. "So am I. I mean how'd you stick it?"

"I'm a doctor". Rosenwald hesitated. "Besides we're refugees. I owe that much".

"It's my country, too", said Jeff. That's why I don't want to be crazy.

"Then why act so they think you're crazy?"

"Act?", said Jeff. "I'm not acting. I'm being myself. That's how I serve the country, but I want to do it with the rest, not off somewhere being crazy".

"You don't have to go off somewhere. We just say you're unfit, and you do your work".

"That hurts the work. We had enough arty freaks in the last generation. A man who thinks wants to be a part of it. He's got his place, too, but as a man who says what he thinks. That's what democracy needs. I don't want to be cut off from things".

"But we aren't set up that way. You've been through here and you've seen it. Look, Jeff. You've got your choice. Either join the army and be like other people; or if you want to be crazy and write, then be crazy and write. I'll fix it either way, but you can't have it both ways. That's just how things are. As for me, I'd rather rule you out. I can honestly say you're not fit, and I can't very honestly say you are".

Jeff's eyes fell. They lit on his papers there on the desk, webbed with red. "Probably schizophrenic". A poor way out, but all ways looked poor. The old summers at camp broke in a remembered wave across him. It was participation there and life, running, talking, leading, with others of his kind.

Suddenly it happened. He had no warning it could, having never wept since he was a child, not even through his father's death, that long dry suffering; but a sob stabbed and flickered, like lightning, through him; his eyes swam. Then he put his youth and its dreams of the whole man behind him.

Allright," he said, "I'll be crazy. And I'll write".

"Good", said Rosenwald. "It's the best thing. I'll take care of

the papers. You just walk through the gym and leave. And say, Jeff" -- the older one took him by the hand -- "good luck. I used to wish I was crazy too, but I guess I don't have what it takes".

As Jeff Bryan walked out, his contingent was standing in line at the final desk. He strode past them and away, under the common stare of their eyes.

JULIUS CAESAR

Review of a Dramatic Reading
by the
King William Players

by David Castillejo

A public recitation of Shakespeare requires skillful preparation, as each reader must learn to convey, with every inflection of the voice, the gestures, passions and hurly-burly of a full performance.

The art of reading Shakespeare is in itself complicated: the range of language, the rhythm, and the syntax all present serious problems. The reader must first find that mysterious region between rhetoric and ordinary speech, where he can pitch his voice with equal naturalness into a line such as

> Did Cicero say anything?

and

> So he is now in execution
> Of any bold or noble enterprise
> However he puts on this tardy form.

To achieve naturalness on both these occasions is difficult. Then, the reader must avoid using the rhythm directly in order to support his meaning, or we should be hearing

> However he puts on this tardy form

which is nonsense. He must, instead, learn to draw the meaning out by fighting against the rhythm, by slowing it down or hastening it on, as a rider would do with a galloping horse. The greatness of a performance will largely consist in a wide handling of speed. Brutus in action speaks with flourish and vigor; but Brutus in soliloquy must pace out the meaning with introspective silences. The thoughtful lines

> that what he is, augmented,
> must run to these and these extremities

must be spoken as though by Hamlet:

> that (tiny pause) what he is (pause) augmented (large pause)
> Must run to these and these extremities

if they are to convey any meaning. Last, but not least, the reader must avoid those mannerisms of intonation which have wrecked many professional performances, and given us grand false lines like "give me my rooobe, for I must gooo".

Most of these problems were mastered by the King William Players who gave us a complete reading of Julius Caesar last Friday, and handled the play with great vigor and gusto.

The main question, however, is how to handle the work as a whole. Julius Caesar is Shakespeare's most simple and classical play (barring perhaps Coriolanus). It portrays the greatness of Caesar, the plot against his life, his murder, and the dispersal, downfall and death of the conspirators. In last weeks reading we were made to feel the unity and simplicity of this plot. The reading,however, did not sufficiently bring out the internal variety of texture, which would have given the performance greater depth. This failing was reflected in an absence of rests within the text, and in an insufficient contrast between the public and the private scenes. Most of the scenes in Julius Caesar are either definitely public or definitely private, and the dramatic tension consists in the interplay between these two.

The first act starts with a portrayal of Caesar's greatness. After a preparatory scene between two tribunes and the populace, Caesar himself arrives, and a soothsayer calls out to him from the crowd. Caesar turns:

> Who is it in the press that calls on me?
> I hear a tongue shriller than all the music
> Cry 'Caesar'. Speak; Caesar is turn'd to hear.

This is a dramatic moment, but we miss the expectant silence before the soothsayer's private warning which transforms this public scene:

> Soothsayer: Beware the Ides of March,
> Caesar: What man is that?
> Brutus: A soothsayer bids you beware the Ides of March.
> Caesar: Set him before me; let me see his face.

Caesar then leaves the stage, but the following scenes continue the theme of his greatness, as Cassius recalls stories of Caesar's past, and other speakers describe the terrible portents in nature which foretell his coming fall.

We heard Cassius say that Caesar

> had a fever when he was in Spain,
> And when the fit was on him, I did mark
> How he did shake; 'tis true, this god did shake

But since the theme is Caesar's greatness, surely the full force of the meaning requires the reader to say

> 'tis true, this god did shake.

Too much internal meaning of this kind was sacrificed for the sake of speed. However, Cassius (Mr. Rottner), was the first to break through the even reading of the lines into a really dramatic rendering, thus giving a new dimension to the whole performance.

The second section of the play centers round the meeting of the conspirators, their plotting, and Caesar's murder. This section was read with gusto, and the readers managed to express the urgency, haste, and bungling of the conspirators. The women were also fine. Miss Hoffman, as Calpurnia, put great feeling into such simple words as

> O Caesar! these things are beyond all use,
> And I do fear them.

And the scene with Portia (Miss Stockard) standing anxious

and alone before her own house was beautifully conveyed.

The scene leading up to the murder, and the murder itself, were most dramatically handled. At this point in the play an extraordinary thing happens. Marc Antony appears among the conspirators.

Mr. Meixner, as Marc Antony, conveyed all the dignity and feeling of Antony before Caesar's dead body in the Capitol; in fact his reading of these speeches formed the most dramatic part of the evening. But he failed, in the funeral oration, to convey Antony's high intelligence.

The funeral oration is really the climax of the play. Just at the moment when the conspirators appear to have achieved success, a friend of Caesar appears from above, and slowly descends over the crowd, delivering one of the most effective political speeches ever written. Brutus's attempt to achieve public dignity is foiled, because a higher intelligence appears over the crowd; and insists, as it comes down, that "Brutus is an honourable man".

Antony: Shall I descend? and will you give me leave?
All: Come down.
Second Citizen: Descend.
Third Citizen: You shall have leave.

And Marc Antony comes down the steps, holding Caesar's will in his hand. This is one of the most remarkable scenes in all drama. It is as though Caesar's own intelligence were descending over his dead body; and Brutus flees as the word "honourable" descends upon him.

The latter half of the play has none of the classical clarity of the first half. Indeed, it might have been written at a different time. It is made up of panting little scenes, and quarrels and disagreements, such as we are to be shown later in Antony and Cleopatra. We watch the conspirators slowly

dispersing, and being hounded down to their separate suicides. The reading at this point became much more dramatic and came close to achieving the effect of a full performance. In fact, it was curiously disturbing to see Antony and Brutus standing so close together during the parley scene.

However, the most beautiful reading of the whole evening came in the tent scene when Lucius had fallen asleep over his music, and Brutus (Mr. Harrison) lowered his voice to say:

> O murderous slumber
> Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
> That plays the music? Gentle knave, good night;
> I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee:
> If thou do'est nod, thou break'st thy instrument;
> I'll take it from thee; and, good boy, good night.
> Let me see, let me see; is not the leaf turn'd down
> Where I left reading? Here it is, I think.

Mr. Harrison read these lines with such delicacy, that we suddenly understood something new about Brutus. This man who had so hopelessly confused his public and his private life -- even to the point of pretending to a stoical coldness at the death of his wife -- this same man was now gently removing the instrument from a sleeping boy. Mr. Harrison made us understand that Brutus had at last disentangled public and private life, and as he came to accept failure in his public life, his private life had become rich and peaceful and free of all harm.