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THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

OF AMERICAN SATIRE: 1630-1895

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ABSTRACT

THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN SATIRE

The American predilection for 'soft satire' is well known. From Benjamin Franklin onwards American satirists have demonstrated a tolerance for human frailty unthinkable in the satires of the great Augustans. This thesis traces the growth and development of American satire from its beginnings in the Colonial period to the end of the nineteenth century. The period encompasses both a change in the understanding of the word 'satire', and therefore the type of satire written, and a change in world view which inevitably influenced content. The approach is chronological and historical and follows the growth of American culture as it is manifested in the satires in terms of content, form and language.

Early American satires, infused with religious language, imagery, and modes of thought, took their structure from the optimistic American Jeremiad, and asserted the possibility of an 'ideal America'. This influenced later secular satires which asserted an 'ideal America' using a providential frame, forging a link between sacred and secular values. During the course of the American Revolution satirists incorporated essentially secular and humanistic values within the providential frame and continued to assert the possibility of an 'ideal America'. The effect of the providential frame was two-fold. It ensured, in God's time, an eventual favourable outcome. rendering the satires optimistic and therefore corrective rather than destructive. Secondly it allowed for the suppression of realistic

detail which could threaten the stability of what was in effect a realistic ideal, an 'ideal America'.

As American millenialism gave way to the humanistic ideals of the enlightenment in American satire the essentially religious view of an 'ideal America' gave way to a humane and secular view. The providential frame was dropped and optimism came to depend upon human will. This rendered the value system of the satires unstable. Satire underwent a crisis of authority and Jacksonian democracy was accompanied by works in which the gross materialism of the mob depicted in the attack undermined the democratic ideals the satires asserted. This was accompanied by an increasing Americanization of language, character and content in satirical works which usurped the satiric *persona* of an authoritative 'man of letters' in favour, in some cases, of the man of no letters. The logical dilemma created by notions of a realistic ideal is apparent in satires written immediately before and after the Civil War, so that these satires demonstrate a tendency toward the 'tragical satire' seen in the Jacobean period.

However, Puritan influence manifested itself elsewhere in American satire in the form of the exemplary figure which, typically, journeys like Franklin, along the path to improvement. These figures, like the Providential frame, serve to forge a link between the ideal and therefore absolute, and the real. The figures travel a realistic rather than ideological landscape and in early satires invariably have their share of human faults. They are characterized by an ability to cling to the ideal despite all evidence to the contrary, or by an

ability to learn moral and, in the post-Revolutionary satires, essentially Federalist values, including those of the 'Men of Letters' who founded the early Republic.

In Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, this figure becomes wholly American. The moral growth of Huck in the course of the novel is well known, as are the realistic aspects of his character, but Huck is also intelligent. He demonstrates a facility with language which in earlier satires characterized the satiric *persona*. It is suggested that as the American absurd hero develops, that figure absorbs the characteristics of the authoritative satiric *persona* of the 'man of letters' , creating satire from within, rather than beyond the text - in effect, a democratic satire.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		page
	INTRODUCTION	vii
1.	THE COLONIAL PERIOD	1
2.	THE SOT-WEED FACTOR	59
3.	WILLIAM BYRD AND BENJAMIN FRANKLIN	94
4.	THE PROGRESS OF DULNESS AND FATHER BOMBO	137
5.	THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD	177
6.	THE CRISIS OF AUTHORITY	237
7.	FEDERALISM	306
8.	MATERIALISM	367
9.	IDEALISM	432
	AFTERWORD	500
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	508

INTRODUCTION

In a preface to a collection of American satire an editor remarks that in view of the American passion for invention it was perhaps inevitable that Americans 'would invent a particular kind of satire that doesn't satirize.'[1] American literary history has produced devastating satires, from Hawthorne's 'The Celestial Railroad' to West's *The Day of the Locust*, but the American prediliction for what might be called 'soft satire' is well known. This is not to suggest that such satires do not satirize but, from Benjamin Franklin onwards, American satire has demonstrated a tolerance of human frailty unthinkable in the satires of the great Augustans. The Americans developed satire of this type despite the fact that, at a time when American literature was emerging, the contemporary models, read and enjoyed in America, were those of Butler, Dryden, Swift, Pope, Pindar, Addison, Steele and others; in short the great Augustan satirists. Their influence can be traced throughout the literature of the American Revolution and the early National Period. It is not the purpose of this thesis to reiterate this fact. Satire is inevitably an expression of the society from which it comes, and American satire is no exception, so that American satire is best read in the context of America and other American satires, because specifically American satiric norms and metaphors can only emerge alongside national identity.

The period from America's colonial beginnings to the closing of the American West - the period, historians suggest, when the greater part of the Americanization process took place - saw a number of

changes with a potential to affect satire. Enlightenment thinking engendered radical alterations in the way in which the world was viewed - a fact which of itself has the propensity to engender change in satire. Equally, for the purposes of this thesis, it is a period during which Dryden discounted notions which had associated the word satire with satyrs, and suggested that the correct etymological associations were with the feminine singular of satur. Satura literally meant 'a full dish'. The period from 1630 - 1895 saw a change in the type of satire being written, and encompassed a change in world view. Any examination into the growth and development of a particular type of satire therefore, must be conducted within a theoretical frame as to what constitutes satire.

The concern of satire lies with the values of a given society which are reflected in its institutions. A notion of justice is conceived, and so laws and judges are evolved. Gentleness and consideration are valued, and so evolve good manners. People create ritual, form, and symbol to serve their gods, and this human capacity for creation is perhaps matched only by an equivalent capacity for self-deception. It is assumed by the satirist that society should reflect the values it professes to embrace and when this is no longer the case, the satirist is given purchase. A gap may be said to have occurred between fact and idea. Similarly if values become outmoded and no longer reflect the experience of a given society and are no longer believed a similar gap is created between fact and idea which the satirist can exploit and accentuate. This is the essence of the satiric attack, for, by exaggerating difference between concept and reality, a condition is created in which error becomes recognizable.

In Nathaniel West's *Miss Lonelyhearts* the physical world develops a malevolent force of its own, as a surfeit of objects becomes impossible to order. Miss Lonelyhearts has a dream:

> The physical world has a tropism for disorder, entropy. Man against nature...Miss Lonelyhearts plunged into the fray. First he formed a phallus of old watches and rubber boots, then a heart of umbrellas and trout flies, then a diamond of musical instruments and derby hats, after these a circle, triangle, square, swastika. But nothing proved definitive...he moved it to the shore of the ocean. There every wave added to his stock...His labours were enormous. He staggered...loaded down with marine refuse bottles, shells, chunks of cork, fish heads, pieces of net.[2]

In this extract the material world is brought into direct opposition with our ability to conceptualise it. The motifs of sexuality, love, wealth, and the political motifs of circles, triangles, squares and swastikas seem as nothing compared with the vast numbers of material objects there are to be organized. West's attack here is twofold. On one level he exposes the impossibility of maintaining values in the face of gross materialism, but at another, and perhaps deeper level, West satirizes our attempts to order experience at all. To do this he exaggerates the effort. His 'man against nature' is alone in his efforts, his enormous labours seem puny compared to the might of the ocean, so, having 'plunged into the fray', he 'stagger(s)...loaded down,' with objects, piles upon piles of them. The effect of this crowding of the satiric scene, noted by Alvin Kernan[3] is to widen the gap between what is thought to have been achieved, and that which is in fact the case. It would seem that what artifice has created, it may also destroy.

The notion has been more eloquently expressed by Swift, in 'A Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit'.

> I desire the curious reader to distinguish, First between an effect grown from Art into Nature, and one that is natural from its Beginning; Secondly between an Effect wholly natural, and one which has only a natural Foundation, but where the Superstructure is entirely Artifical. For, the first and last of these, I understand to come within the Districts of my Subject.[4]

To begin with Swift's latter point. It may be said that in order for society to function, power and prestige are conferred upon a variety of groups: the army, the politicians, or perhaps the professions. When the power or prestige conferred is wholly in keeping with an ability to accomplish what is expected, then satire has no purchase. Purchase is gained by the satirist when the power or prestige, or, to use Swift's words, when the 'artificial superstructure' surrounding an individual or group is at odds with their fundamental nature. This is to suggest that even when the ostensible target of satire is a specific and named individual, the true target of satire is the reputation of that person, which, because it is a thing of artifice, may be destroyed by the same. Northrop Frye makes a similar point in *The Anatomy of Criticism*:

> If a satirist presents...a clergyman as a fool or hypocrite, he is, qua satirists, attacking neither a man nor a church. The former has no literary or hypothetical point, and the latter carries him outside the range of satire. He is attacking an evil man protected by his church, and such a man is a gigantic monster: monstrous because not what he should be, gigantic because protected by his position and by the prestige of good clergymen. The cowl might make the monk if it were not for satire.[5]

Thus, when a politician forgets that it is good government which is revered, and himself only because he serves that concept, and becomes,

as a result, self-important and, protected by the prestige of good politicians, gains power and prestige of which he is quite unworthy, the satirist can work. Concept and reality can be forced further apart so that the error in judgement may be perceived. The gap may be widened by exaggerating the amount of prestige or power conferred upon the politician. He may be depicted by the seashore, complete with kingly robes, bidding the sea to cease its advance, obviously more power and prestige than any human can assume without appearing ridiculous. The gap may be widened yet further, if the human frailties of the politician are also exaggerated. He may be depicted as owning more chins than the average neck will allow, or as having a sagging stomach and a mouth which takes on the proportions of a ventilation shaft, so that the politician appears to be not merely human, the natural foundation of an artificial superstructure, but as something rather less than human. In short, the politician has himself become a concept, but of an opposite kind from that preferred. It seems that, in spite of the close ties which satire can have with events fixed in time and place, the experience must be ordered into artistic coherence in order for the satiric attack to take place. The politician is declared, simultaneously super-human and sub-human. What is changed by this is not the man, but our opinion of him. The man can be stripped of his office as a result, but this is only to take from him an artificial superstructure for which he was unfitted. He may lose income and friends and in this respect satire can be said to promote action in the real world, but satire, as an art, can only attack that which is essentially an artifact. Thus those groups which traditionally carry the artificial superstructure associated with our most treasured concepts, lawyers, clergymen, government

representatives and the like, have been the perennial subjects of satire throughout the ages.

Swift however, suggests another category in which satire can work. That is when an effect is 'grown from Art into Nature', for which Swift's own example might be taken.

> For, in the Age of our Fathers, there arose a Generation of Men in this island call'd Roundheads, whose Race is now spread over three Kingdoms, yet in its Beginning, was meerly an Operation of Art, produced by a pair of Cizars, a squeeze of the Face, and a black cap. These heads, thus formed into a perfect Sphere in all Assemblies, were most exposed to the view of the Female Sort, which did influence their Conceptions so effectually, that Nature, at last took the Hint, and did it of herself; so that a Roundhead has been ever since...a familiar...Sight among us.[6]

It is to Swift's purpose here to exaggerate the power of concepts to produce physical reality. It may be conceded that first there was concept, which, when materialized, became the physical fact of the Roundheads. The dangers inherent in the materialization of concepts is that the concept may be reduced to its merely physical aspects. The religious impulse reduced to the wearing of sombre clothes and regular attendance at church makes it an apparently simple matter to decide who is religious and who is not. That the religious impulse cannot be so simply defined is emphasized by Swift, not by widening the gap between concept and reality, but rather by declaring that none exists.

> These heads, thus formed into a perfect Sphere in all Assemblies, were most exposed to the view of the Female Sort, which did influence their Conceptions so effectually, that Nature, at last took the Hint, and did it of herself...[7]

This is obviously arrant nonsense, for on the whole, some difference is insisted upon between the letter of the law and the spirit of the

law. The material symbols of a concept are not the thing in itself, so that whilst it may be simpler to define poetry as a 'morbid secretion of the brain',[8] or to see 'Tribulation Wholesome' personified as in Jonson's *The Alchemist*, such material definitions are inevitably reductionist, and just as inevitably, open to abuse. A person judged to be religious on the grounds that sombre clothes are worn and church attended regularly, need not be so, and the way is left open for hypocrisy. As Northrop Frye remarks, 'The cowl might make the monk if it were not for satire.'[9]

The exposure of corruption in satire however, entails a standard by which the same can be judged. There are of course human failings which appear to remain constant throughout the ages: pride, dishonesty, hypocrisy and the like which give a universality to the work of satirists. Nevertheless satirists must work within the value system of the society of which they write, or the satiric attack will be inexplicable. Satires in this respect can be a useful gauge to current concepts and values. Further during an age when concepts and values are clearly defined, the role of the satirist is similarly well defined. Dryden is in no doubt that a satirist is to 'correct the vices and follies of his time, and to give the rules of a happy and virtuous life.'[10] The great Augustan satirists may have found themselves in 'a mighty maze', but on the whole that maze was thought to be 'not without a plan'.[11] This is not to suggest that the age of Pope, Dryden and Swift was without problems, or that the Augustan allegiance to the idea of a 'great chain of being' was a universal panacea to be applied as directed. On the contrary, dogma is so often tested against reality in, for instance, Pope's 'An Essay on Man',

with Pope's vivid sense of reality so clearly elucidating the opposing point of view, that the poem insists upon a complexity which dogma does not. Nevertheless, the age is characterized by a touching faith in the ability of humanity to solve its problems, and the satirists of the times would certainly have felt that there were rules which could be offered, and that it was possible for morality to mediate between the reasoning mind and the animal state. This is not always the case. Byron for instance, on occasions, attacks the very order which Dryden wished to preserve, and the battles between ancients and moderns are so perennial in satire. Clarity does not always exist, and attitudes undergo change.

Frye, writing from the greater perspective of the twentieth century, distinguishes between three major attitudes taken by satirists towards the values and concepts of the society in which they find themselves. The first attitude towards their society's values is found in what he calls the 'satire of the low norm. It takes for granted a world which is full of anomalies, injustices, follies and crimes, and yet is permanent and undisplacable.'[12] Conversely, the conceptual conventions of a given society are, Frye has suggested, 'largely invented by dead cranks'.[13] Notions become outmoded, so that a new attitude is needed by the satirist.

> Hence the logic of satire itself drives it on...to a second phase in which the sources and values of conventions themselves are objects of ridicule.[14]

Nathaniel West's *Miss Lonelyhearts* is just such a work.

> Life for most of us, seems a terrible struggle of pain and heartbreak, without hope or joy. Oh, my dear readers, it only seems so. Everyman, no matter how poor or humble, can teach himself to use his senses. See the cloud-flecked sky, the foam decked sea...Smell the sweet pine and heady

> privet...Feel of velvet and of satin...as the popular song goes, "The best things in life are free." Life is...He could not go on with it...[15]

The conceptual conventions and values of West's society in this novel are continually brought up against the misery of those lives they are intended to explain, and are shown to be worn out clichés. Their ability to endow meaning or purpose disintegrates before the random nature of life in West's novel, until finally Miss Lonelyhearts dies because a gun accidently goes off. When conceptual conventions have become no more than jaded clichés in this way, the satirist may take up yet a third attitude. This, Frye calls 'the satire of the high norm'.[16] In work of this type, even common sense and the reality of the senses, taken for granted in former attitudes, now becomes suspect. The real world is shown to be fragmented, disordered, and grotesque. Of such a world is the very end of Pope's 'The New Dunciad':

> Lo! thy dread Empire, CHAOS! is restored;
> Light dies before thy uncreating word;
> Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
> And Universal Darkness buries All.[17]

Of such a world is the utter corruption of ideals which takes place in Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

The satirist then, may uphold the conceptual conventions of the times, may show them to be so corrupted as to no longer serve any useful purpose, or may take a view that humanity by its very nature, is incapable of halting the downward slide into disorder. In order to take up any of these attitudes however, the satirist must attack. It is this which most distinguishes the work of satire from other literary genres. Tragedies, comedies or romances may attack, but a

true work of satire must attack. The exact nature of the satiric attack however, is difficult to specify. Like the other attributes of satire, the attack partakes of the ideas of mixture and fulness present in the etymology of the word. It may be general and varied, or may target the particular and be fixed in both time and place. The tone may vary, from the harsh declamatory tone of Juvenal, to the smiling ironies of Chaucer. It is never static, for, in spite of Dryden's admonition to try where possible only to 'treat of one subject; to be confined to one particular theme'[18] the satirist is ever inclined to give what Dryden called a 'transient lashing', to anything that might be considered remotely lashable. Further, the attack may have a ripple effect, so that an attack which is at first localized may spread. In this way an attack upon the hypocrisy of a clergyman may, by mere implication, extend to incorporate hypocrisy in the church as a whole.

The nature of the satiric attack however, requires much of art. Satire has long been associated with rhetorical and literary device, but it is not necessarily a literary form exclusive to sophisticated societies. R.C. Elliot has used folklore, myth, and anthropology to show that a type of satire flourished even in primitive societies.[19] The flytings of the Eskimos were songs of derision, intended to shame the wrongdoer and the story of Archilochus is well known. He is said to have written such terrible invective when his betrothal to Lyambes' daughter was broken, that she and her father hanged themselves. It would seem that the word had the power to precipitate action in the real world, and was used accordingly. Indeed, the word has long been associated with magical properties. The ancient Irish bards could not

only rhyme rats to death, but, aided by superstition and suggestibility, could also cause injury or death to humans. In such curses Elliot suggests, lies the origin of satire. Dryden too, suggests that satire has its beginnings in nature. Man, he claims, has a natural instinct to quarrel, and to use invective as a weapon. Of the conjugal dialogue in the third chapter of Job he says: 'This original, I confess, is not much to the honour of satire but here it was nature, and that depraved: when it became an art it bore better fruit.'[20] Dryden does not specify how this was achieved, but for Elliot, the art of satire emerges when, owing to fear of retribution, the perpetrator of invective and curses begins to distance himself from the attack. In short, when the satiric *persona* becomes precisely that, a literary device. American satire might be said to have developed when the satiric *persona* is an American, conducting an attack on American institutions, from an indisputably American set of assumptions, in a demonstrably American way.

NOTES

1 See *American Satire in Prose and Verse*, ed Henry C. Carlisle Jnr., Random House, New York, 1962, p.xv.

2 West, Nathaniel. 'Miss Lonelyhearts', *The Collected Works of Nathaniel West*, Penguin, 1957, p.211.

3 See Kernan, Alvin, *The Plot of Satire*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1965.

4 Swift, J. 'A Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit', *A Tale of a Tub and Other Works*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1965, p.176.

5 Frye, Northrop. *An Anatomy of Criticism*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1971, p.228.

6 Swift, 'A Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit', p.176.

7 Ibid.

8 Wordsworth, William, 'Preface to Lyrical Ballads' (1802), *Romntic Poetry and Prose*, ed. Harold Bloom & Lionel Trilling, Oxford University Press, London, p.594.

9 Frye, *An Anatomy of Criticism*, p.228.

10 Dryden, John. 'The Original and Progress of Satire'.

11 Pope, 'An Essay on Man', l.6.

12 Frye, *An Anatomy of Criticism*, p.226.

13 Frye, *An Anatomy of Criticism*, p.229.????

14 Ibid.

15 West, N. *Miss Lonelyhearts*, p.239.

16 Frye, *An Anatomy of Criticism*, p.234???

17 Pope, 'The New Dunciad', l.653.

18 Dryden, John. 'The Original and Progress of Satire', p.44. *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W.P. Kerr, Vol.II, Russell & Russell, New York, 1961, p.102.

19 Elliot, R.C. *The Power of Satire*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1960.

20 Dryden, John, 'The Original and progress of Satire', p.44.

I

COLONIAL PERIOD

American society in its early stages was not the result of organic growth. An already sophisticated society, transplanted, had to come to terms with a new environment. As Stephen Fender among others has noted, the pioneers' descriptions of the New World display features common to other idealizing strains in Western culture. A long line of European mythology associates sleep, death, rest and eternity with some unknown land in the west, and there are the magical lands of Renaissance pastoral poetry as well as those of Avalon, Lyonesse and Atlantis. The artificial and idealized rural settings of these magical lands are remote from the corruptions of city and court. They share an ideal climate, an agrarian economy, and a life based on natural processes which allow no war, no commercial competition, and no harsh laws or private property. Their perfection, as Fender says, is marred by "none of the usual imposition of fallen man when he forms a government in cold climates."[1] Thus in John Smith's 'A Description of New England' life appears to be idyllic. Virginia was simply a fruitful and delightsome land. Nevertheless, Smith's idealistic prose promises, not Utopia exactly, but rather a fair return for labour expended.

> ...that each ... village in city or country that will but apparel their fatherless children of thirteen or fourteen years of age, or young married people that have small wealth to live on, here by their labour may live exceeding well...[2]

The good things of the New World are to be had only by labour and diligence, and so a element of realism is introduced into an otherwise euphoric description.

Smith's descriptions, like those collected by Richard Hakluyt before him,[3] were, in part, propaganda motivated by a colonialism which sought to populate the New World. His language goes beyond the terminology of Utopian Literature to blend the real with the ideal.

> The waters are most pure, proceeding from the entrails of rocky mountains; the herbs and fruits are of many sorts and kinds, as askermes, currants, or a fruit like currants, mulberries, vines, rasberries, gooseberries, plums, walnuts, chesnuts, small nuts, &c...[4]

Fender and others have shown that the catalogue which appears here, and later becomes a trope of American literature, had a literary relative in the "mixed forests of classical literature."[5] Smith's lists are not mixed, and consist only of what might conceivably be found growing in the same place, and achieve an overall effect of great abundance which, unlike the 'mixed forests of classical literature', actually exists. Smith's list remains open, and while this may have been due to a genuine inability to put a name to everything that was encountered, the unclosed list also suggests abundance too great to enumerate. Despite Smith's references to the rewards of labour, early American settlers might have been forgiven for thinking that they were going to some sort of Arcadia, and indeed some appear to have found it. Francis Higginson writes:

> The fertility of the soil is to be admired at, as it appeareth in the abundence of the grass...it is scarce to be believed how our kine and goats, horses and hogs, do thrive and prosper here...But the abundant increase of our corn proves this country to be a wonderment.[6]

As Fender and others remark, "for all the influence of European prototypes, these accounts seldom lack an element of factual

description,"[7] The America described by Smith and others of the period is both geographical place and literary idea.

Utopian notions of Classical and Renaissance literature were not the only concepts imposed upon the New World. The Puritans came to America with their own expectations. The millennial fervour with which many settlers embarked upon their adventure to the New World has been well documented in recent times, most notably by Sacvan Bercovitch.[8] He, and others, have shown that the Puritan settlers believed that a New Jerusalem was to be established in America, drawing this conclusion from a typological reading of the Scriptures. Bercovitch, in *The American Jeremiad,* makes a distinction between the mode of the traditional European Jeremiad, which decried the sins of the people and was a lament over the ways of the world, and that mode of Jeremiad used by the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay.

> ...from the start they sounded a different note. Theirs was a peculiar mission, they explained, for they were a "peculiar people", a company of Christians not only called but chosen, and chosen not only for heaven but as instruments of a sacred historical design. Their church-state was to be at once a model of Reformed Christianity and a prefiguration of New Jerusalem to come. To this end they revised the message of the jeremiad...In their case, they believed, God's punishments were corrective, not destructive...In short their punishments confirmed their promise. The Puritans did not seek out affliction, but where they found it they recorded it zealously, and almost as gratefully, as they recorded instances of God's mercies towards them. The two kinds of "providences" were mutually sustaining, together they opened out into the grand design of New England's errand into the wilderness.[9]

Many of the writings of the Puritan period in American history reflect a belief that these people were latter-day Israelites, called from the English Egypt, to take possession of a second Promised Land. John

Winthrop, arguing in a series of documents designed to persuade himself and others to emigrate to the New World, is shrewd enough to offer sound economic reasons for the enterprise. In England, he says, a man was hard pressed to "keep sayle with his equalls".[10] Nevertheless, his most powerful arguments for going to the New World rest on the notion of the immigrants as a chosen people, and on the forthcoming millennium.

> All other Churches of Europe are brought to desolation and it cannot be, but the like Judgment is comminge upon us: And who knows, but that God hath provided this place, to be a refuge for manye, whom he means to save out of the general destruction.[11]

The immigrants who arrived on the Mayflower, it "...being the depth of winter, and wanting houses and other comforts; being infected with the scurvy and other diseases...So as there died some times two or three of a day..."[12] may well have thought tales of the New World had been greatly exaggerated and would need all the spiritual fortitude they could muster.

William Bradford's description of America in 'Of Plymouth Plantation' is bleak when compared with the abundance promised by Smith's description. Bradford arrived in winter, when travel along the unknown coast was dangerous.

> ...and they that know the winters of that country know them to be sharp and violent, and subject to cruel and fierce storms, dangerous to travel to known places, much more to search an unknown coast. Besides what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men - and what multitudes there might be of them they knew not. Neither could they as it were, go to the top of Pisgah to view a more godly country to feed their hopes; for which waysoever they turned their eyes (save upward to the heavens) they could have little solace or content in respect of any outward objects. For summer being done, all things stand upon them with a weatherbeaten face,

> and the whole counry full of woods and thickets, represented a wild and savage hue.[13]

Bradford tells of the hardships encountered by the early settlers, but his descriptions of America, no less than Smith's, are the result of an interaction between an early settlers' conceptual expectations of the New World, and what in fact was there. A sense of mission pervades Bradford's description. The landscape is not merely bleak, but in true biblical fashion "a hideous and desolate wilderness". Bradford does not know what multitudes of "wild beasts" are to be found in the New World. Although their numbers, one suspects, could well equal the number of animals found by Smith to provide "the delicacy of their bodies for food". Nevertheless Bradford's view is not just a pessimistic counterpoint to Smith's optimism, for it is not wholly pessimistic. The ambiguities of the Jeremiad, noted by Miller[14] and emphasized by Bercovitch, are present in Bradford's descripton. Bradford offers for instance, a typological parallel for the immigrants in that the settlers cannot "as it were, go to the top of Pisgah to view a more godly country to feed their hopes." It is true that the promised land to which these wanderers have been summoned is "wanting houses and other comforts", but if there is "little solace or content in respect of any outward objects" these immigrants can, it is implied, turn their eyes "upward to the heavens", to sustain their hopes. The capacity of the New Englanders to do exactly this is well documented.

Millennial notions often sustained immigrants through hardships encountered in the New World. This is particularly true of those women unfortunate enough to be captured by Indians. In 1676 when Mary White Rowlandson describes her time spent in captivity with the Indians, she

entitles her story 'A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs Mary Rowlandson'. Echoes of the Jews' Babylonian captivity are amplified by biblical parallels:

> And we may see the wonderful power of God, in that one passage, in that there was a great number of Indians together, and so greedy of a little good food; and no English there, but Mr Moor and myself: that they did not knock us in the head, and take what we had...But instead of doing us any mischief, they seemed to be ashamed of the fact, (that they had stolen the greatest part of the provision) and said, it were some machit Indian that did it. Oh, that we could believe that there is nothing too hard for God! God shewed His power over the Heathen in this, as He did over the hungry lions when Daniel was cast into the den.[15]

Rowlandson in common with other early settlers was sustained by belief in God, and by the notion that her people were to be an example to all. They were to "rebuild the most glorious edifice of Mount Sion in a wilderness, and as John the Baptist...must cry, 'prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight', for behold He is coming again...".

The New World then, in addition to its legendary past, had imposed upon it an apocalyptic future. Nor are these two concepts or types entirely unrelated. Fender quotes from Seneca's *Medea* (ll.375-9) etc.

> Venient annis, saecula seris,
> Quibus Oceanus, vincula rerum
> Laxet et ingens poteat tellus
> Tiphysque novas detegat orbes
> Nec sit terris ultima Thule.

> [In the last days there will come an age in which the Ocean shall loosen the bond of things; the vast globe will lie open; another Typhus (the first was Jason's pilot in the Argo) shall make known new worlds, and Thule (the frozen north) shall no longer be the extremity of the world.][16]

He shows that these lines were not unknown to the Renaissance chroniclers of American exploration, and suggests that classical myth

like Christian belief, has its apocalyptic vision. Further, essentially secular messages which use the classical model, like those of John Smith, are not altogether different from those of the Puritan origin. Fender has shown that even the plainest parts of Smith's description recall a verbal model.

> The English Bible not only stems from the same vernacular roots as Smith's 'New England', but is also a direct source for it. The kinship of the two texts can be seen not only in their common diction, but in their fondness for redundant double constructions like 'sorts and kinds; 'ropes both great and small'...Sometimes the biblical echoes in Smith's words and phrases are allusions conveying information. 'Yet worthy is that person to starve that here cannot live, if he have sense, strength and health, for their is no such penury of these blessings...' borrows the 'Blessed are ...for...' formula of the Beatitudes. The apparently neutral - indeed reportorial - cataloguing of the New England landscape which begins 'The herbs and fruits are of many sorts and kinds' suggests the account of creation in the Geneva Bible ...Most striking of all, perhaps, is the echo of the exhortation to the Apostles in Acts 20:28 'to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood' in 'Who can desire more content...than to tread, and plant that ground he hath purchased by the hazard of his life?'[17]

He goes on to suggest that despite Smith's claim to present things as they are "Smith buries a providential plot beneath the hard material reality of his surface argument: New England is also a new Eden in which the planter, having redeemed his individual worth from the false values of a fallen social and economic system, is blessed to live, to tend as a new church and for which to hazard (but this time not sacrifice) his life."[18]

The secular and religious writings of the New World share a providential thrust, and an apocalyptic vision of the future. These expectations, for the Puritans at least, went far deeper than mere hopes and wishes. By interpreting their own role in history

typologically, the Puritans had become persuaded that the Johannine prophecy of a heavenly kingdom on earth for God's new Israel was applied directly to themselves, and was about to be realised. Thus, what seemed to some a secular enterprise, financed by English entrepreneurs, became, for the Puritans a God ordained mission for the general restoration of mankind from the curse of Adam. In this the American Puritans differed from European Protestants who, in general, thought them mad, and some, as Bercovitch points out, attempted to argue the American Puritans out of their folly.

> One of these was Roger Williams who addressed his appeal to John Cotton in a series of lengthy letters and treatises, which (Williams correctly said) set forth the elementary truths of the faith. That God once summoned His people to a Holy land, Williams pointed out, had no bearing whatever on the Puritan migration. The Old Testament differed from all other histories in two respects: first it pertained exclusively to sacred history; and second, its heroes and major events were above all prefigurations of Christ. So understood, the story of the Hebrews applied to Christians only in spiritual terms, as stages of the saints' pilgrimage to heaven. The wilderness now meant the world, Jerusalem the celestial city, Canaan the Kingdom of God. These and other sacred places were by definition confined to sacred history - to the Bible, the true believer, and the progress of the church. By definition, therefore, anything outside that sphere - any person excluded from the church, any place that lay temporally or geographically beyond the boundaries of Scripture chronicles - was profane...For Williams the entire issue was as plain as it was incontrovertible "America (as Europe and all places) lies dead in sin:...How dared they "mingle Heaven and Earth, the church and worldly state together," as though the Incarnation had not separated those areas once and for all!"[19]

Williams argument here is wholly traditional,[20] and yet John Cotton was unconvinced. Whilst he accepted Christ's 'antitypal' role, and all that this implied about the "wilderness of the world" and "the heavenly Canaan" he refused to relinquish the correspondence between Canaan and New England.

> As a 'Nationall Civil State' he wrote, adhering to the Mosaic laws out of faith in Christ, the colonists fulfilled 'the type of Israel materially'.[21]

John Cotton had formulated an ambiguous compromise. The flaws in Cotton's reasoning did not become immediately apparent. The Puritans believed, with other Christians, that what the Old Testament described as material rewards were to be understood as spiritual blessings. Nevertheless, the case was different in the New Canaan, as Bercovitch shows.

> One of its most remarkable aspects is the expansion of Cotton's and Winthrop's ambiguities into a cultural commonplace. Over and again the colonial Jeremiads portray the settlers as a people of God in terms of election, the body politic, and the advancing army of Christ. Their descriptions of the "temple-work" in progress refer alternately, and sometimes simultaneously, to the soul, the actual flourishing plantations, and the work of redemption. Recurrently, their allusions to wilderness, vineyard, Canaan, and Zion blur the distinction between historical, moral, and spiritual levels of meaning... God's American people had His pledge that the desert would blossom like the rose. It was "rare" the ministers acknowledged, for "religion and profit (to) jump together," but New England was a rare place.[22]

New England was indeed a rare place. On the one hand there was sufficient cause for wonderment, sufficient natural bounty to reinforce the notions that America really was some sort of Utopia, a New Eden given by God for the sake of humanity's redemption, as Francis Higginson attests.

> First therefore of the earth of New England...The form of the earth here in the superflicies of it is neither too flat in the plains nor too high in the hills, but partakes of both in a mediocrity, and is fit for pasture or for plow or meadowground as men please to employ it...a man may stand on a little hilly ground and see divers thousands of acres of ground as good as needs be.[23]

On the other hand, there was also, in the early settlers' experience, that which invoked a sense of the alternative to an enterprise pervaded by spirituality. Beyond the tiny and vulnerable settlements lay a vast continent, containing dangers, wild beasts and wild men, hitherto unheard of. The alternative, that the hardships they suffered were for nothing, that beyond the settlements lay only the emptiness of a material world, that the enterprise had no meaning at all was ever present. If the early immigrants preferred to grasp the notion that this was a New Eden, that the wild men were devils, that their enterprise was part of God's design, it was not surprising. Early American writing suggests that, for these early settlers material enterprise, idealistic expectations, and spiritual design were, in effect, yoked together, and if this is so, then the implications for American satire are interesting. Satire must reflect the values and concepts of the society from which it springs. A satire which will encompass both idealistic and realistic expectations is an intriguing prospect, and in order to consider the development of American satire, some comparison between British and early American satire, from the seventeenth century, may be useful. A useful comparison is available because anti-Puritan satire was so prevalent in the early part of the seventeenth century in Britain.

Anti-Puritan satire abounded in England during the seventeenth century. Raymond Macdonald Alden remarks in *The Rise of Formal Satire in England* that dissatisfaction with the established church had given rise to a number of dissenting sects who in turn became the object of satiric attack, and that these attacks became more numerous during the late sixteenth and seventeenth century:

> ...until at length the Puritan - the living protest against the objects of earlier satire - himself becomes the central object of the satirist's wrath.[24]

This is not to suggest that the Puritans were universally reviled throughout the seventeenth century. Samuel Pepys in 1668, remarks of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* '...it is an excellent play; the more I see it, the more I love the wit of it, only the business of abusing the Puritans begins to grow stale, and of no use, they being the people that, at last, will be found to be the wisest,'[25] so that one of the reasons for the sustained satiric attack on the Puritans between approximately 1570 and 1642, may not so much rest with the dislike of their religious opinions, as with the threat they posed to civil order. Their eccentricities threatened cultural, moral and religious uniformity, and consequently the very establishment to which many writers looked for patronage. Orthodoxy commonly controls press, pulpit and theatre, and, because there is no logical reason why God should be more present in dour surroundings than in the cathedral, the Puritans' apparent reduction of the religious impulse to physical appearance, made them vulnerable to satiric attack. There were charges of self-love and hypocrisy, and Puritanical opposition to any sort of pleasure attracted much opprobrium. Ananias in Jonson's 'The Alchemist' epitomises the way in which hypocritical corruption and religious zeal may reside within one character. In a conversation about whether or not the holy conscience can approve of counterfeiting, Ananias approves the morally dubious project, before denouncing the innocuous wearing of gay apparel as evil.

> ANANIAS. Casting of dollars is concluded lawful.
> ...
> KASTRIL. Is he the constable?
> ANANIAS. They are profane, lewd, superstitious,
> and idolatrous breeches ... Avoid Satan!
> Thou art not of the light: That ruff of pride

> About thy neck, betrays thee: and is the same
> With that which the unclean birds, in seventy seven,
> ere seen to prank it on divers coasts:
> Thou look'st like antichrist, in that lewd hat.[26]

Here, the false morality of sombre clothes is asserted at the expense of the true morality which would denounce the counterfeiting. The crime however is against the state, rather than God, thus Ananias gets mistaken for the Constable, and Jonson does not appear to assert an Anglican view at the expense of Puritanism; rather Puritanism is disruptive, a nuisance, and more seriously perhaps for Jonson, lacking in moderation.

The Puritans were attacked for their hysterical extremism in all its forms,[27] and Gibbon remarks of *Bartholomew Fair*:

> The main satiric force is directed towards Puritanical attitudes to art and life: the didactic purpose of Jonson is to show that here, in 1614, these attitudes are more of a threat to the Commonwealth than even the crassest stupidity, fashion-following or pretentiousness which he had ridiculed in the comical satyres of 1599-1601.[28]

The spurious morality which stems from a Puritan insistence on a sober demeanour, the self-deceiving hypocrisy with which the Puritans rationalised even the most ordinary of acts finds its finest form in the person of Zeal-of-the-Land-Busy in "Bartholomew Fair". Busy is called upon to decide whether or not the company will partake of roast pig. Busy is caught between a 'natural' desire to eat his fill, and the notion that Bartholomew's pig is idolatrous, and, thinking to make it as lawful as he can, he proclaims:

> BUSY. ... In the way of comfort to the weak, I will go and eat. I will eat exceedingly, and prophesy, there may be a good use made of it too, now I think on it: by the public eating of swine's flesh, to profess our hate and loathing of Judaism, whereof

> stand tax'd I will therefore eat, yea, I will eat exceedingly.[29]

In Jonson the Puritan is a victim of his own extremism, and the cure is not some other religious code, but rather moderation which, if it removes some of the joys of partisanship, might yet supply the Puritan with a disinterested eye with which to view all claims to knowledge of God's will and, while Jonson's plays have been used as an illustration examples might have been drawn from Shakespeare, Massenger, Beaumont and Fletcher, or Decker and a variety of poets and pamphleteers. In America however the case was different. There, as a member of a tiny settlement, confronted by the vastness of the wilderness, and numbers of Indians, the joys of partisanship were more apparent and the prospect of belonging not so easily relinquished. Thus, while the British satirists attacked Puritanism from without, in America, satirists worked from within Puritanism. While Jonson and Bacon and their like offer moderation as an ideal, the American satirist offered an ideal based upon the Puritan errand into the wilderness.

The American Puritans had taken to heart John Milton's statement of 1641 that laughter "hath oft-times a strong and sinewy force in teaching and confuting",[30] but placed the accent rather more firmly on the side of teaching and confuting, than on the laughter. Their satires were often sombre affairs, so that the underlying seriousness of Puritan satire tends to overtake any good-natured forebearance on the part of the author, but occasionally a wry sense of humour, in spite of hardship, can be detected. The following anonymous poem is a case in point, which is reproduced in full.

Our Forefather's Song

New England's annoyances you that would know them,
Pray ponder these verses which briefly doth show them.

The place where we live is a wilderness wood,
Where grass is much wanting that's fruitful and good:
Our mountains and hills and our valleys below,
Being commonly covered with ice and with snow:
And when the northwest wind with violence blows
Then every man pulls his cap over his nose:
But if any's so hardy and will it withstand,
He forfeits a finger, a foot, or a hand.

But when the spring opens we then take the hoe,
And make the ground ready to plant and to sow;
Our corn being planted and seed being sown,
The worms destroy much before it is grown;
And when it is growing some spoil there is made,
By birds and by squirrels that pluck up the blade;
And when it is come to full corn in the ear,
It is often destroyed by racoon and by deer.

And now our garments begin to grow thin,
And wool is much wanted to card and to spin;
If we can get a garment to cover without,
Our other in garments are clout upon clout:
Our clothes we brought with us are apt to be torn,
They need to be clouted soon after they're worn,
But clouting our garments they hinder us nothing,
Clouts double, one warmer than single whole clothing.

If fresh meat be wanting, to fill up our dish,
We have carrots and turnips as much as we wish:
And is there a mind for a delicate dish
We repair to the dam banks, and there we catch fish.
Instead of pottage and puddins and custards and pies,
Our pumpkins and parsnips are common supplies;
We have pumpkins at morning and pumpkins at noon;
If it was not for pumpkins we should be undone.

If barley be wanting to make into malt,
We must be contented and think it no fault
For we can make liquor to sweeten our lips,
Of pumpkins and parsnips and walnut tree chips.

Now while some are going let others be coming,
For while liquors boiling it must have a scumming;
But I will not blame them, for birds of a feather,
By seeking their fellows are flocking together.
But you whom the lord intends hither to bring,
Forsake not the honey for the sake of the sting:
But bring both a quiet and contented mind,
And all needful blessings you surely will find.[31]

A comic insistence that America really is a wonderful place creates the satire in this poem. 'Clouts double' are much warmer than 'single whole clothing', and there is always an abundance of pumpkins to be relied upon. Robert D. Arner suggests that this poem presents:

> the first poeticized list of absent things - no food, no liquor, no money, no clothes - in American literature (though both William Bradford and Captain John Smith beat him to it in prose). In so doing, he distantly anticipates Henry James, who in his famous study of Nathaniel Hawthorne identified the extraordinary blankness of America, the distance between expectation and emptiness, as the locus classicus of the great American joke.[32]

This distance between expectation and emptiness has implications for American satire too. Satire often employs blatant exaggeration in order to emphasize the distance between concept and reality. In America the rhapsodic reports of Captain Smith and other early accounts of the New World which claimed to be nothing less than true, had engendered at least sufficient belief to persuade immigrants to embark upon a difficult and often dangerous journey. Hyperbole had been usurped by the promotional literature and the would-be American satirist could hardly use it as a tool. Given the vast reality of the American landscape the difficulty is obvious: hyperbole had an inherent danger of being mistaken for fact. In this poem the way in which the abundance of the New England landscape is diminished can be noted:

> The place where we live is a wilderness wood,/Where
> grass is much wanting that's fruitful and good.

A diminished landscape, when juxtaposed with the promotional literature of the time, imbues the poem with a satiric effect which exists beyond the scope of the work itself. The satire works, in effect, via local knowledge. Promotional writing about America was

plentiful, and the poem creates an atmosphere of honesty, amid the blatant hyperbole of the other accounts with which the readers would have been familiar. This early satire about the specifically American experience of discovering that America is not quite how the pamphlet described it functions, not by crowding, as such, the satiric scene, which, as Kernan[33] says, is typical, but by solemnly listing all the things that are not present and by emptying the satiric scene of everything. The American experience has demanded a new trope in satire.

The target of the poem however, is not ultimately the promotional literature. The real target of the satire is those who come to America, and are too feeble to stay. The author does not intend to put people against the idea of coming to the New World. The last stanza specifically enjoins that "while some are going let others be coming", and the poem is clearly written to tempt new settlers to come. The hardships, if anything are underestimated, and rendered harmless by the notion that these are controllable hazards, which can be counteracted by good sense:

> And when the northwest wind with violence blows,
> Then every man pulls his cap over his nose
> But if any's so hardy and will it withstand,
> He forfeits a finger, a foot or a hand.

The negative list is countered by a positive list:

> If fresh meat be wanting, to fill up our dish
> ...We repair to the dam banks, and there we catch fish.

The author does not break into true satire, until he turns his attention to those unable to withstand the physical hardships, owing to a lack of spiritual fortitude. Here good-natured forebearance on

the part of the author is overpowered by a scathing attack on those who are not of the American Puritan persuasion.

> Now while some are going let others be coming
> For while liquors boiling it must have a scumming
> But I will not blame them, for birds of a feather
> By seeking their fellows are flocking together.
> But you whom the lord intends hither to bring,
> Forsake not the honey for fear of the sting:
> But bring both a quiet and contented mind,
> And all needful blessings you surely will find.

The image of America as a 'melting pot', to become a cultural commonplace, is here, a process in which people are the ingredients. The notion that those who leave are merely scum, who can only serve to spoil the eventual concentrate is as effective as it is unpleasant. The author's assertion that "he will not blame them" suggests they are not of the type who should stay, that they are not among those whom the Lord intended to be brought to America. Birds of a feather 'are flocking together' and the Lord's chosen will stay, whereas those who do not remain, and also seek to be with their own kind, are obviously not of the elect.

The attack of this satire seems to be polarized. Those who stay, it is implied, have certain spiritual and physical virtues while those who leave do not. The latter group fails by comparison with the former, so that the "ideal" or "norm" of the work is no simple matter of asserting virtue as opposed to vice. It is rather more specifically American. There is to be material evidence of virtue and it is to be tested by experience. The poem demands both spiritual and physical fortitude from the settlers in order to embark upon an adventure watched over by God himself. A failure to cope with what are, after all, physical hardships is evidence of a feeble soul.

Those satirized for going home are, by implication, not part of God's plan for America. A specifically American cultural norm is beginning to make itself felt in American satire, and is expressed in the specifically American trope, the negative list.

Not all satires written about America at this time embraced God's plan as a cultural norm and it may be that one of the greatest problems for God's plan in America was Thomas Morton (1590?-1647). It is difficult to know whether Morton was so disliked because of the pleasure he took in the company of Indian maidens, and for his general carousing, or because he was an Anglican who successfully competed with the Pilgrims and Puritans for the Indian fur trade. Bradford's treatment of Morton is ambiguous. There is the perceived threat:

> About some three or four years before this time, there came over one Captain Willaston, a man of pretty parts, and with him three or four more of some eminency, who brought with them a great many servants, with provisions and implements for to begin a plantation, and pitched themselves a place within the Massechusets...[34]

The threat is essentially to trade, for Morton did good trade in furs with the Indians, but Bradford passes on to reveal a catalogue of misdeeds.

> At this they fell to great licentiousness and led a dissolute life, pouring out themselves into all profaness. And Morton became the Lord of Misrule.[35]

The language Bradford uses here is some indication of the readiness with which the Puritan mind associated those who incurred its displeasure with the devil and his works. The licentiousness is 'great', and the newcomers pour themselves into profanity whilst Morton himself becomes the devil incarnate, the 'Lord of Misrule'. In

these circumstances it is justifiable to remove Morton, whose behaviour, rather than merely disturbing trade, appears to have direct bearing upon the providential plan. That catastrophe should befall him becomes inevitable:

> ...they saw there was no way but to take him by force...So they mutually resolved to proceed and obtained of the Governor of Plymouth to send Captain Standish and some other aid with him to take Morton by force - the which accordingly was done.[36]

The fiasco which followed the taking of Morton by force whereby Morton was sent back to England but not charged, Bradford says on account of the "fool of the messenger",[37] is well documented. Morton came back to America and then in 1630, when once again returned to England, and this time imprisoned, he wrote his *New English Canaan* which was published in 1637. In this work Morton tells of his side of the quarrel.

The satire, although written about America by one who had been there, makes an interesting contrast to those satires which sprang from a belief in God's plan for America. Morton calls Miles Standish, the leader of the attack upon him, Captain Shrimp, and the pages on which they wage war are ridiculous. The mock heroic battle scenes stigmatize Governor Endicott as 'Captain Littleworth' and anticipate the burlesque battles in Washington Irving's *History of New York* and Thoreau's *Walden*.[38] The work is interesting not only because Morton satirizes the Pilgrims, although of course he does, but because it attacks from without something that was becoming an American cultural norm. Inherent in the very title *New English Canaan* is an ironic reflection on God's plan for America, and Morton's work is more

typical of the English attack on the Puritan in a variety of ways. Morton describes Puritan reaction to the erection of a Maypole.

> This harmless mirth made by young men, (that lived in hope to have wives brought over to them, that would save them in labor to make a voyage to fetch any over,) was much distasted of the precise Separatists, that keep much ado about the tithe of meat and cumin, troubling their brains more than reason would require about things that are indifferent: and from that time sought occasion against my honest Hart of Merry Mount, to overthrow his undertakings and to destroy his plantation quite and clean ...[39]

The Puritans are attacked in this passage, for their implacable opposition to any sort of pleasure, together with that cast of mind which kept them bound to a slavish observance of the physical aspects of their religion, while failing to consider the spiritual worth of their actions. Although the Puritans term the Maypole "idol" and "Calf of Horeb" and "Mine Host ... a great monster," the reader is left in little doubt as to the real reason for the Pilgrims' attack on Merry Mount. They observed that the Indians "began to come forward, and to be in a good way for gain in the beaver trade".[40] The charge laid against the Pilgrims by Morton is one of hypocrisy, and the satire has more in common with a work like Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair" than it has with a work like "Our Forefather's Song". "Our Forefather's Song" is a satire from America whereas *New England Canaan* is a satire about America.

Morton goes on to show New England's revels about the Maypole did not entirely consist of pastoral bliss and its associated innocence, or even that Hymen was necessarily the goddess to whom the festivities should have been dedicated. The song which "to make their revels more fashionable was sung with a Chorus, every man bearing his part"[41]

begins well enough with a "Drink and be merry, merry, merry Boys:/ Let your delight be in the Hymen's joys", but ends on rather a different note. It forms a delightful parody of pastoral values.

> Give to the nymph that's free from scorn
> No Irish stuff nor Scotch over worn
> Lasses in beaver coats come away,
> Ye shall be welcome to us night and day.
> To drink and be merry, &c.[42]

Robert D. Arner has suggested that "The Songe - Let all your delight be in Hymen's joyes" in which Morton celebrates the fresh green world, has its counterpart in "The Poem: Rise Oedipus" which Morton affixed to his famous Maypole at Merrymount. It was, as Arner suggests

> ...a frankly phallic 'proclamation that the first of May/At Ma-re Mount shall be kept shall be kept hollyday' reminding us of the primitive origins of satire in classical Greek comedy and sexual festival. The maypole itself stands as the symbolic center of the New English Canaan, as the allusion in the title makes clear, for Morton not only means to extend and to make a jest upon the Puritans' own favourite metaphor for America of the New Canaan or The Promised Land but also to recall the Biblical story of the dispossession of a tree-worshipping people, the Canaanites, by the ancient Israelites.[43]

Arner goes on to suggest that the mythic greeness and sexuality of the American Arcadia in *New English Canaan* is 'reminiscent of late Renaissance comedy as in 'Midsummer Night's Dream' '[44] Thus, although Morton's satire alludes to America and a specifically American way of thinking, its normative values are based in the Old World. Like Jonson, he suggests that the Puritan opposition to pleasure is not only fanatical, but hypocritical, that the real reason for wishing Morton gone is one of material gain and finally it is a confusion between physical and spiritual ends which Morton derides. This is nowhere more apparent than in Morton's portrait of Doctor Samuel

Fuller, Plymouth physician, magistrate, and deacon (Book III Chapter XVIII).

Fuller, as a good New World physician, seems to make no distinction between spiritual and physical healing, and his ministrations largely consist of despatching his patients to heaven with all possible speed. Morton begins by solemnly noting the reasons why a doctor should be engaged.

> The Church of Plymouth, having due regard to the weal public and the Brethren that were to come over, and knowing that they would be busily employed to make provision for the cure of Souls, and therefore might neglect the body for a time, did hold themselves to be in duty bound to make search for a fitting man...[45]

The diligence with which the brethren pursue their duty is undermined by the man they choose for the job.

> He was born at Wrington, in the County of Somerset, where he was bred a Butcher. He wears a long beard, and a Garment like the Greek that begged in Paul's Church. This new made Doctor comes to Salem to congratulate: where he finds some one newly come from Sea, and ill at ease.[46]

The charge here is that the new-made Doctor is quite unworthy of the title he is given; that he should have been born a butcher is an added irony. The amateur status of those aspiring to the professions in the colonies is a perennial target for those who come from an old established culture, where if a man were born a butcher, he would remain a butcher, and suggests something of the egalitarian nature of the Plymouth colony. Nevertheless it might be allowed that the Plymouth Brethren were taking "upward mobility" somewhat too far. Not that the man was altogether lacking in qualifications. This man had "special gifts: he could write and read; nay, more: he had taken the oath of abjuration, which is a special step, yea, and a main degree

unto preferrment."[47] Morton goes on to imply that by making church rules a requisite for something which is clearly a secular calling, one ends up with a doctor who does not know the difference between the two.

> He takes the patient, and the urinal: eyes the state there; finds the Crasis Symptoms, and the altomi natantes; and tells the patient that his desease was winde, which he had ta'en by gaping feasting overboard at Sea; but he would quickly ease him of that grief, and quite expell the wind. And this he did perform, with his gifts he had: and then he handled the patient so handsomely, that he eased him of all the wind he had in an instant.

The pun on 'wind' here suggests that the patient died, and Morton enumerates other cases, all of whom he insists were cured by the doctor.

> And yet I hope this man may be forgiven, if he were made a fitting Plant for Heaven. How he went to work with his gifts is a question; yet he did a great cure for Captain Littleworth... he cured him of a wife ... and yet I hope this man might be forgiven, if she were made a fitting plant for heaven...

In Salem a full forty two were made 'fitting Plants for Heaven', and indeed the good brethren in their anxiety to do their duty by the body have achieved exactly the opposite. The satire is one of an older culture looking at the teething troubles of the new. The normative values which inform this satire suggest that physical and spiritual concerns are quite separate, and that religious fanaticism should not be exercised at the expense of common sense.

Morton, however, was an Anglican and a sophisticate in the ways of the world, so that differences between his satire and those of the Pilgrims could be thus explained. Nathaniel Ward (1578-1652) on the

other hand was an English-born Congregational clergyman who emigrated to Massachusetts in 1634 where he served as minister (1634-36) at Aggawan. He formulated the colony's first code of laws, 'The Body of Liberties' (1641) before returning to England in 1647 where he published his satire *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam.* Ward, unlike Morton, was a Puritan writing from within Puritanism, yet like Morton returned to Britain. If his satire can be shown to differ from satires written by those staying in America, and be shown to share similarities with Morton's satire, a case for the evolution of a type of satire based wholly on American cultural values, is strengthened.

Morton and Ward, in common with other satirists discussed in this chapter were writing prior to the "age of Dryden" when the word *satire* was commonly thought to have its etymology in the word *satyr.* Morton derived his poetic persona from Thomas Scogan, a fifteenth century English poet who wrote 'Scoggin's Jests', and, more mythically, from the Lord of Misrule who presided over Saturnalia and the Medieval Feast of Fools, as he was dubbed by Bradford. His connection with notions of satyrs, is well established. In order to establish Ward's links with satires of a British, rather than an American origin, however, this aspect of general satiric development warrants further consideration, and I am indebted to the work done in this area by Alden in *The Rites of Formal Satire in England under Classical Influence..*[48]

Alden notes that in the 1617 edition of George Wither's *The Scourge,* there appeared a picture of a Satyr, shaggy and naked, bearing a scourge in his right hand and a shepherd's pipe in his left. He goes on to say that the descriptive verses accompanying the picture

are so difficult of access to most persons, and of such interest as showing the use made of the mythological idea of the satyr, that it is worthwhile quoting them in full. They are entitled "Vices Executioner: Or the Satyrs selfe-description of himselfe."

Though in shape I seeme a Man
Yet a Satyr wilde I am;
Bred in Woods and Desert places,
Where men seldome shew their faces;
Rough and hayrie like a Goat,
Clothed with Dame Natures coate;
Eagle-sighted, quick of hearing,
Spying Vice at first appearing;
Barefoot like a silly Fry'r
Such a shoveling was my Sy'r
Chaste and holy as was that Nun,
Of whom the Pope begat a Son:
Ape-like fac't, Spaniell toyl'd,
Fawning till I have prevayl'd;
My pleasing left hand hath a pipe;
On which I play till Folly's ripe;
To careless Fooles in a Trance,
I doe pipe and they doe Dance;
Like mirth-full Syrens that doe charme,
Delighting those they meane to harme;
Teaching men to hold their way,
Not from their right course to stray:
The other hand a whip doth beare,
With which (provok't) I surely teare
Skin from flesh, and flesh from bone
Of such as I hap upon:
I'me sent abroad the World, to purge
Mans vile Abuses with my scourge;
Oft I make my Master sport,
When manne sinne to lash them for't.
An Execut'oner am I,
Of lust, and wanton Venery.
Thus are vices scourg'd by me,
Yet my selfe from vice not free;
Like to Summers that cite others,
When themselves defile their mothers.
They have warning had before,
Yet they'l not amend; therefore,
Such-ones as take delight in sin,
The bloud Ile drawe out from their skin:
Great and small are one to mee,
None shall bribe me with a Fee;
But if the Greatest dare offend,
Ile lash them still, till they amend.

Thus haveng shew'd my self at large,
I'l now attend my Masters charge.[49]

This poem is an excellent indication of the way in which the early satirist viewed his art. The satirist is outside of society, 'bred in Woods and Desert places,' and, since he only seems a man, is possessed of superhuman qualities with which to spy out vice and folly. He can appear harmless, 'fawning', and of course he is the consummate artist:

> My pleasing left hand hath a pipe
> On which I play till Folly's ripe

Notions of Folly's ripening gives some idea of the way in which vice and folly can be exaggerated by the satirist rendering it, on the one hand ridiculous and funny, but on the other ensuring that its all encompassing nature can be seen. The left hand, limb of artistry and concealment distracts attention from the whip held in the right hand until, too late, the true purpose of the satirist is revealed.

> ... sent abroad the world, to purge
> Mans vile Abuses with my scourge.

Finally the poem incorporates something of the ambiguity of the satirist's position. Humanity is to be scourged of vice to which the satirist himself is not immune.

> Thus are vices scourg'd by me
> Yet my selfe from vice not free:

Indeed, since the satirist only 'seeme a man', and given the satirist's inordinate ability to recognize vice, the relish taken in the scourging of it and his hairy goat-like demeanor, it is questionable whether the satirist be less, rather than more, than human. Thus, when the satirist tells us that

> haveng shew'd my self my self at large
> I'l now attend my Masters charge.

there remains a question of exactly who that Master is. Withers, (1588-1667), and other satirists of his type, were not troubled by such doubts. Goat-like and rough as his muse might be, his satires were to serve morality and religion generally, and, given that by 1623 Withers was a convinced Puritan, the emphasis in his satires was placed rather more on scourging than on the concealing properties of artistry. Nathaniel Ward's *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawan* bears a close relationship to this type of satire.

Like Withers, and indeed Morton, Ward was not an unsophisticated man. He took an MA in 1603 from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, was educated as a lawyer, and became a Puritan minister in England before being driven from his pastorate for non-conformity. Made homesick by the growing success of Puritanism in England, Ward left North America in 1646, taking the manuscript of *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam* with him, to be published in London in 1647. As Brom Weber suggests in *The Art of American Humor*:

> The Reverend Ward's fondness for verbal play also stemmed from his literary sophistication, his knowledge of what the best English poets and prose writers of the earlier Elizabethan and his own age were producing. He was, in fact, a worldly individual in more than a literary sense alone.[50]

Sophistication is not all that Ward shares with Withers. His satire, like Withers', is primarily satire of direct rebuke.

> I honor the woman that can honor herself with her attire: a good Text always deserves a fair Margent: I am not much offended if I see a trim, far trimmer than she that wears it: in a word, whatever Christianity or Civility will allow, I can afford with London the measure: but when I hear a *nugiperous* Gentle-dame inquire what dress the Queen is in this week: what the *nudiustertian* fashion of the court; I mean the very newest: with edge to be in it in all haste, whatever it be; I look at her as the very gizzard of a trifle, the product of a

> quarter of a cypher, the epitome of nothing, fitter to be kickt, if she were of a kickable substance, than either honor'd or humor'd.[51]

The rough and hairy nature of the satiric muse at this time is apparent as the satirist contemplates the offending female: 'the very gizzard of a trifle ... fitter to be kicked ... than either honor'd or humor'd'. Even this rebuke however is advisory, and when Ward turns to the reflective method he bids Englishmen to "be advised to love England, with your hearts and to preserve it by your Prayers."[52] Ward's reflective method however, is not used in the classical manner of Horace, but, as Alden remarks of Withers, the rebuke and reflective method are in the vein of the preacher, which Ward was. Ward frequently gives way to a general moral discourse and even when primarily concerned with the satiric attack, he seems to have viewed his satire as the servant of morals and religion. *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam in America* has a constantly recurring religious tone. "Either I am in Apoplexy, or that man is in a Lethargy, who doth not now sensibly feel God shaking the Heavens over his head, and the Earth under his feet..." begins one paragraph: "Satan is now in his passions...he loves to fish in roiled waters" [53] begins the next. Ward's satires then appear to be in keeping with those of Withers, and indeed those of other Puritan pamphleteers writing in Britain at this time. He shares with Withers a sophistication which distinguishes his satires from the more simple, and more American "Our Forefather's Song", and this sophistication gives his satires a certain affiliation even with those of Morton.

Ward writes from within Puritanism, and while Morton's satire is directed against Puritan fanaticism and intolerance, Ward directs his

satire against religious tolerance. On the surface their satires appear to be quite different.

> First, such as have given or taken any unfriendly reports of us New-English, should do well to recollect themselves. We have been reputed a Colluvies of wild Opinionists, swarmed into a remote wilderness to find elbowroom for our Fanatic Doctrines and practices: I trust our diligence past, and constant sedulity against such persons and courses, will plead better things for us. I dare take upon me, to be the Herald of New England so far, as to proclaim to the world, in the name of our Colony, that all Familists, Anabaptists, and other Enthusiasts, shall have free Liberty to keep away from us, and such as will come to be gone as fast as they can, the sooner the better...
>
> If the devil might have his free option, I believe he would ask nothing else, but liberty to enfranchise all false Religions, and to embondage the true: nor should he need: It is much to be feared, that tax Tolerations upon State pretences and planting necessities, will be the next subtle Stratagem he will spread, to distate the Truth of God and supplant the peace of the Churches...
> (Ward, Nathaniel, from *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam*)

One senses in this passage of Ward's however, a certain conservatism, a plea for moderation, not unlike that of the Anglican Jonson, or indeed Morton: "Extreme religious sects 'Familists, Anabaptists and other enthusiasts, shall have free liberty to keep away from us,' Ward says, and while a wholly American dislike of undue interference from the central governing body is apparent in the suggestion that "tax tolerations upon State pretences and planting necessities are a subtle stratagem of the devil, a man who chose to trade first with Indians, and live upon the fringes of society", this is not a view with which Morton would have wholly disagreed. To say that Ward works from within Puritanism, is not the same thing as saying that an author writes from within an American Puritan tradition. Ward's concern, as becomes a preacher, lies first and foremost with the spiritual welfare

of the settlers, but he does not suggest that America is anything like a New Eden.

> Here I hold myself bound to set up a Beacon, to give warning of a new-sprung Sect of Phrantasticks, which would persuade themselves and others, that they have discovered the Nor'West passage to Heaven. These wits of the game, cry up and down in corners such bold ignations of a new Gospel, new Christ, new Faith, and new gay nothings, as trouble unsettled heads... I desire all good men may be saved from their Lunatic Creed, by Infidelity; and rather believe these torrid overtures will prove in time, nothing but horrid raptures down to the lowest hell, from which he that would be delivered, let him avoid these blasphemers, a late fry of croaking Frogs, not to be endured in a Religious State, no, if it were possible, not an hour...
> (Ward, Nathaniel, *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam*)

Ward sees a Religious State, in terms which imply that its members should act in accordance with God's law. He does not suggest that by doing so, the colonists can fulfil "the type of Israel materially", as did John Cotton. On the contrary, this passage seems to indicate that such opinions should be viewed as nonsense, and the satires of both Morton and Ward, in spite of their American setting, are best seen within a British satiric tradition with all of the cultural norms implied. In America however, Cotton's view appears to have persisted. By the time of the Indian Wars of the 1670's, satires appear in America which take for granted the concept which saw America as part of an enterprise planned by God.

Peter Folger (1617-90), grandfather of Benjamin Franklin, was a member of the Rhode Island settlement, which provided sanctuary for those theologically to the left of the Massachusetts Bay Divines - the antinomian Anne Hutchinson went there, as did Roger Williams and a number of Quakers who were persecuted in Massachusetts Bay. In his

satire, Folger is concerned by the way matters of conscience are punished by secular law in the "Religious State". 'A Looking Glass for the Times', (1676) is interesting in that it takes for granted the typological status of the New World and berates the colonists for not adhering to this ideal. Folger begins by suggesting that the Indian Wars are directly attributable to New England persecution of Quakers, Anabaptists and other non-conformists.

> Who in the War have lost their lives,
> and fallen by our Foe.
> Our women also they have took,
> and Children very small;
> Great Cruelty they have used
> to some, tho' not to all.
> The enemy that hath done this,
> are very foolish Men;
> Yet God doth make of them a Rod
> to punish us for Sin.[54]

That Folger sees that the Indian wars are examples of God's wrath appeals to the Puritan on Puritan terms. It suggests secular history be seen in terms of sacred history. Folger does not think that the cause of the wars could be the heretics themselves.

> Yea some there are, as I have heard
> have lately found out Trials
> To put the Cause of all the War
> upon the Hereticks,[55]

Rather the wars are caused by the:

> ..."Sin of Persecution
> such Laws established;
> By which laws they have gone so far,
> As Blood hath touched Blood."
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

Folger then, appears to take for granted that secular history is but a reflection of sacred history, and that God is directly concerned in the affairs of America. This is not to suggest that he has nothing in common with the sort of attack that a British satirist might launch

against the American Puritans. He was, as has been remarked, a member of the more liberal Rhode Island settlement and he is adamant that the Persecution laws should be repealed, and Magistrates should administer only secular affairs.

> That I hereby do throw a Stone
> at Magistrates as such
> The rulers in the Country I
> do own them in the Lord;
> And such as are for Government,
> with them I do accord.
> But that which I intend hereby,
> is that they would keep bound,
> And meddle not with God's Worship,
> for which they have no ground.
> And I am not alone herein,
> there's many hundreds more
> That have for many year's ago
> spake much upon that Score,
> Indeed I really believe
> its not your Business
> To meddle with the Church of Christ,
> in Matters more or less,
> There's work enough to do besides,
> to judge in mine and thine,
> To succour Poor and Fatherless,
> that is the work in fine.
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

In short, Folger is arguing for a separation of secular and spiritual concerns, which has the appearance of a British attack on Puritan behaviour. The magistrates' work is secular, and they should not interfere with matters of conscience. Folger also accuses the Puritans of hypocrisy, and so again strikes from a British point of view. Men may not be as they appear.

> To carry Tales that may do hurt
> and Mischief to our Brother
> To live in such Hypocrisy,
> as Men may think us good.
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

In these respects Folger's attack is not unlike Morton's before him. It is when Folger turns to true satire however, rather than denunciation, that the American basis of the satire becomes clear.

Folger compares the American Puritans with the Jews. Recalling the prophet Jeremiah, he suggests that merely verbal compliance with God's wishes is useless.

> The Prophet Jeremy doth say,
> when War is threatened some,
> That if Men do repent and turn,
> God will afflict no more.
> But such a turning unto God
> as is but Verbally,
> When Men refuse for to reform,
> it is not worth a fly.
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

Then comes a scathing comparison which could only be directed at the American Puritans.

> New England they are like the Jews,
> as like, as like can be;
> They made large Promises to God,
> at home and at the Sea:
> They did proclaim free Liberty,
> they cut the Calf in twain,
> They past between the Part thereof:
> O this was all in vain!
> For since they come into this Land,
> they floated to and fro,
> Sometimes their Brethren may be free,
> while hence to Prison go,
> According to the times to go,
> and weather is abroad,
> So we can serve ourselves sometimes,
> and sometimes serve the Lord.
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

Folger is clearly accusing the Puritans of breaking their covenant, and inherent in this notion is another which sees the Indian wars occurring as a direct result. Folger presents a typological reading of the scriptures which sees the New England Puritans in the role of

the royal House of Judah,[56] when Jerusalem was under siege. Folger of course makes the comparison odious, by suggesting that the New Englanders resemble the Jews, not as God's chosen people, but in the ease with which they break their vows.[57] Folger's satire, unlike Morton's *New English Canaan*, or Ward's *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam*, is a satire from within the American Puritan tradition, and takes for granted God's plan for the New World as a cultural norm. It assumes that the Indian wars occur as a direct result of God's displeasure, and shares with the American Puritans a typological reading of American secular history. Further, Folger's satire shares with the Puritan Jeremiad, other features besides that of typology.

As Bercovitch states in *The Puritan Jeremiad*, the New England Puritans saw their punishments as corrective, not destructive...In short their punishment confirmed their promise."[58] A similar note is sounded by Folger when he declares:

> Now for the length of time, how long
> these Wars are like to be,
> I speak something unto that,
> if Men will reason see.
> The Scripture doth point out the time,
> and 'tis as we do chuse,
> For to obey the Voice of God,
> or else for to refuse.
> The Prophet Jeremy doth say
> when war is threatened sore,
> That if men do repent and turn,
> God will afflict no more.
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

Folger is offering a spiritual answer to what is essentially a secular problem, and insofar as he sees the Indian wars as an affliction sent by God to make the Puritans repent, Folger echoes the Puritan pulpit. Then, inherent in the suggestion that God has deliberately afflicted the tiny colonial settlements is confirmation of God's special

interest in the New England Puritans. Thus the very images used to castigate the population in fact confirm their promise. Folger, it can be seen, offers two different sorts of Godly Providence. There is an ideal which sees New England as a church state fulfilling its role as the pre-figuration of the New Jerusalem, and therefore fulfilling God's promise, or there is a New England which falls short of this ideal and is punished, not merely by the satirist's ridicule, but by a God who afflicts them in order that they "do repent and turn", and presumably, therefore, begin to fulfil God's promise. The system is a closed one, since the miseries suffered by the Colonists serve not to question the concept of God's plan for America, but to confirm it. The satirist, in these circumstances, becomes like the preacher, an interpreter of God's providence. For Folger the answer is plain; if the heretics cease to be hounded, the wars will stop, and it is this consideration which has driven him to satire.

> "I am for Peace, and not for War
> and that's the Reason why
> I write more plain than some Men do,
> that use to daub and lie."
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

The close relationship between American satire and preaching at this time can be further exemplified by examining the poetry of Benjamin Tompson.

Tompson (1642-1714) was born in Quincy, Massachusetts and graduated from Harvard (1662). His 'New England's Crisis. Or a Brief Narrative of New England's Lamentable Estate at Present...' is a satirical poetic sequence about the degeneracy of the period, 1676. 'Marylburyes Fate' which appeared in 'New Englands Crisis' has been identified as an 'Advice to a Painter Poem' by Edwin Fussell,[59] and is

some indication of the speed with which literary innovation was transported to the New World. Waller wrote 'Instructions to a Painter' in 1666 which, as a subtitle informs the reader, would explain to a painter how to draw "The Posture and Progress of His Majesty's Forces at Sea." The poem did not result in a painting, but it did provoke a number of satirical responses, the most famous of which was Andrew Marvell's 'The Lost Instructions to a Painter' (1668) satirizing the corruption of Charles II and his court. Waller's poem and subsequent replies, although not the first examples of the genre, nevertheless seem to have established its usefulness for panegyric and satire. Both Waller and Marvell use the genre for specific political debate, and Tompson's use of the genre is similar.

Like Folger, Tompson sees the Indian wars as a direct result of spiritual backsliding on the part of the Puritans. He specifies his theme in 'The Prologue' of 'New Englands Crisis': in earlier times the Puritans were protected by their faith.

> Freeness in Judgment, union in affection
> Dear love, sound truth they were our grand protection

In short, in the past, America had fulfilled its own promise. The New Eden, that composite of classical and biblical reference and of the abundance which America in fact possessed was, for a time, made real. This Golden Age of the 1630's was superseded by the Crisis of King Philip's war because the Puritans failed to hold true to their ideals.

> These golden times (too fortunate to hold)
> Were quickly sinn'd away for love of gold.

In these circumstances one might expect Tompson to use the 'advice to a painter' genre satirically, as an indictment of the New England

Puritans' spiritual failure. This does not occur, as Robert L. Pincus has pointed out in a comprehensive reading of the poem.

> Whereas Waller and Marvell firmly established the opposing loci of the genre - i.e. panegyric and satire - that later British practitioners would follow, 'Marlburyes Fate' fits neither modus operandi satisfactorily. Instead, his poem is elegia and castigatory; it attacks the pagan and satanic forces of Metacomet, derides spiritually deficient Puritans, and laments the destruction of a New England settlement; but all this detail is superseded by an eschatological perspective that hints at a favorable millennium to come.[60]

It is this eschatological perspective which prevents Tompson's satire from pushing its point to its logical conclusion.

If Folger's vision was circumscribed by the Puritan way of seeing things, then Benjamin Tompson's is more so. The Indians, of whom God had made a 'rod' with which to flay the Puritans in Folger's poem, become, in Tompson's work, devils incarnate.

> If painter overtrack my pen let him
> An olive colour mix these elves to trim;
> Of such an hue let many thousand thieves
> Be drawn like Scare-crows clad with oaken leaves,
> Exhausted of their verdant life and blown
> From place to place without an home to own.
> Draw Devils like themselves, upon their cheeks
> The banks for grease and mud, a place for leeks.
> Whose locks Medusaes snakes, do ropes resemble,
> And ghostly looks would make Achilles tremble,
> Limn them besmear'd with Christian Bloud & oild
> With fat out of white humane bodyes boil'd,
> Draw them with clubs like maules & full of stains,
> Like Vulcans anvilling New-Englands brains.
> (1.15-28)[61]

The Indians are depicted as 'blown/From place to place without an home to own', a reference to the Nomadic way of life which they in fact followed, but one imbued with resonance from the fate of Cain.

> Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth;... (Genesis 4:14)

The Indians are referred to overtly as "elves, thieves, scarecrows, devils and Vulcans" and all of which gives some indication of that interaction between type and particular which occurred as America was settled. The Indians may have been thieves, and some undoubtably inflicted a terrible toll on the early settlers during the wars, but they could not have been possessed of all the sub-human qualities embedded in the language of Tompson's poem. Rather, if the American myth of a 'New Eden' was a composite of classical and biblical reference plus an abundance and possibility which America in fact possessed, then the same may be said of an American anti-myth. The Indians have hair like 'Medusaes snakes', they look like 'ghosts', they are besmeared with 'Christian Bloud' and the fat from 'white humane bodyes' and their clubs are stained with New England's brains, but the Indians are a physical threat imbued with mythic expectations. As a part of God's design the Indians themselves are not the targets of the satire.

It is apparent that the true target of Tompson's attack is the Puritans. On describing the Indian devastation it is not in terms of a slaughter of innocents, but rather in terms of a judgement which none should escape.

> Let Morpheus with his leaden keyes have bound
> In feather-beds some, some upon the ground,
> That none may burst his drowsie shackles till
> The brutish pagans have obtain'd their will,
> And Vulcan files them off then Zeuxis paint
> The phrenzy glances of of[sic] the sinking saint.
> Draw there the Pastor for his bible crying,
> The souldier for his sword, the Glutton frying
> With streams of glory-fat, the thin-jaw'd Miser
> Oh had I given this I had been wiser.
> Let here the Mother seem a statue turn'd
> At the sad object of her bowels burn'd.
> Let the unstable weakling in belief
> Be mounting Ashurs horses for relief.
> Let the half Convert seem suspended twixt

> The dens of darkness, and the Plantes fixt,
> Ready to quit his hold, and yet hold fast
> By the great Atlas of the Heavens vast.
> Paint Papists muttering ore their apish beads
> Whome the blind follow while the blind man leads.
> (l.55-74)

The hapless Puritans are attacked during sleep, but the fearful afflictions are no less deserved on that account. They are not innocent victims, but gluttons, misers, half-converts, those weak in belief or papists. Their sufferings come as judgement but finally, if horrible judgement is present, then so is purpose. The poet continues:

> Let Ataxy be mounted on a throne
> Imposing her commands on every one,
> A many-headed monster without eyes
> To see the ways which wont to make men wise.
> (l.75-78)

The afflictions, in this case, are not punitive, but corrective: they are intended to make men wise. Thus Thompson is able to end his poem on a positive note in spite of the horrors he has depicted.

> Thus while confusion most mens hearts divide
> Fire doth their small exchecquer soon decide.
> Thur all things seeming ope or secret foes,
> An Infant may grow old before a close,
> But yet my hopes abide in perfect strength.
> (l.89-93)

The satire follows the pattern of the jeremiads. It must be said however that in this poem it does so in a way which disturbs the logic of the poem, and it betrays a profound disquiet with America. The affliction seems too terrible, and the affirmation hardly adequate. As Bercovitch has noted of the Puritan jeremiads

> not infrequently, their affirmations betray an underlying desperation - a refusal to confront the present, a fear of the future, an effort to translate 'America' into a vision that works in spirit because it can never be tested in fact."[62]

The unease with which Tompson views America may be one result of yoking the real and the ideal America. When viewing the present real America, the failure of ideal America can be too apparent. It would seem that as early as the 1670s it is reasonable to talk of American satire (as opposed to English, French etc. satire) which takes for granted cultural norms relating to God's promise for the New World and which are peculiarly American. The means of asserting this cultural norm is similar in all three American satires. In Folger's 'A Looking Glass for the Times' it is implied that a peaceful past has given way to present afflictions because of spiritual backsliding. This is made more explicit in Tompson's 'Marylburyes Fate' with direct reference to a 'Golden Age' of the 1630's. Not that reference to a 'Golden Age' is a new thing in satire. Juvenal constantly held before the Romans a vision of past glories which the contemporary Rome was failing. What is interesting about these three American satires, is their projection of this 'Golden Age' on into the future. 'Our Forefather's Song', although lacking a former 'golden age', satirizes those who lack the physical and spiritual fortitude to stay in America, and does not doubt that their departure will make for a good future. Folger seems confident that, since God has afflicted the settlements with Indian wars, repentance on the part of settlers will lead directly to the war's cessation, and for the future in Tompson's poem, his 'hopes abide in perfect strength.'

The assertion of a glorious future affects the satires in two ways. First it renders them hopeful, as befits New World satire, but secondly it has the effect of polarising it. There is threat to the cultural norm: Indian wars and being part of the devil's territory in

the case of Folger and Tompson, and in "Our Forefather's Song" the threatened failure of physical fortitude and therefore of not being one of the Lord's elect, one whom He intended 'hither to bring.' In all three cases the threat is temporal, but the damnation is eternal, and this possibility forms one of the satire's polarities. The other polarity is formed by the happier prospect of sacred history and secular history conspiring to create an 'ideal America'. Between these two poles is the present real America which must somehow be persuaded by the satirist to conform to the ideal. It is these polarities which mark a difference in the form American satire is taking, and can be further demonstrated by the early emergence of another polarity in the American literary tradition, that of the intellect in opposition to the stout heart.

In Folger, the intellect which was disliked was associated with Popery. Folger makes the distinction. Having suggested that the only crime the heretics have committed is to be "against our College Men"[63] ,he, then, some eight pages later decides to clarify the issue.

> Now Reader, lest you should mistake,
> in what I said before
> Concerning Minister's, I think
> to write a few Words more,
> I would not have you for to think
> that I am such a Fool,
> To write against learning, as such,
> or to cry down a School.
> But 'tis that Popish College way,
> that I intend hereby,
> Where Men are mew'd up in a cage
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

It may be that Folger makes this distinction out of caution, since far from being a brave attack on the Puritan scourging of heretics, it is possible that this work remained unpublished until 1763.[64] Certainly

by assigning his attack upon the 'college men', to those of the 'Popish College', he was doing nothing to offend the Puritan fathers. 'The Topical Verses of Edward Taylor', composed between 1671 and 1723 also include a scurrilous and bitter attack against the Catholic Church: that of "Verses made upon Pope Joan", and Tompson includes the Papists amongst the general suffering of God's backsliding Puritans in his satire.[65] Many Puritans shared with the Anglican Establishment a dislike of Catholicism, and Perry Miller remarks that many were just as patriotic as the Establishment they had left at home.

> They hated Spain like poison, and France only a little less. In their eyes, as in those of the Anglicans, the most important issue in the Western world was the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism.[66]

The attack upon Popery, in Taylor's and Folger's poem is then of less American interest than the more general attack upon the intellect which occurs when Folger suggests that the 'College Men':

> by their Wits, have spun so fair a Thread, That now themselves and others are Natives in a Dread.
> (Folger: 'A Looking Glass for the Times')

These lines suggests that the well-educated are not altogether to be trusted: a theme reiterated in a variety of forms, by a variety of American authors ever since and like the opposition between God's Kingdom and that of the devil, this debate is polarized. The attack could come from either the intellectual or the stouthearted with either side utilizing the apocalyptic vision of the Puritan Jeremiad.

John Richardson's 1670 almanac treated the rustic as ludicrous in a short poem entitled 'The Country-Man's Apocrypha'. The attack begins light-heartedly enough and plays upon the superstitious nature of the

unlearned country-bumpkins, their faith in God's providence, and the tendency to search nature for signs:

> If stars do Rule the World, then never fancy
> What's told from them is wrought by Necromancy
> The admiring Rusticks faith will (thrive?) perhaps,
> Hearing the tidings of Such After Claps,
> Who marvels not?[67]

The satiric muse in America has so far been seen to serve strictly religious moral ends, but the increasing subversion of religious language to the uses of what is, essentially, a secular satire, should perhaps be noted here. As the awe-struck rustics search nature for signs of God's providence, the rhetorical, 'Who marvels not?' would sound just as well sonorously intoned from a Puritan pulpit. The ensuing vision has an apocalyptic flavour and satirizes the Puritan capacity for prophecy. The Rustics envision human nature reduced to that of animals, and worse, since animals are not renowned for eating their own bodies:

> Hunger will so prevail for many years,
> Rather than famine, some will roast their Ears
> And Eat, while some (no doubt that very hour
> Their mothers Off-Spring gladly will devour.
> (Country-Man's Apocrypha)

The prophecy is ludicrous in one sense, but if these early American satires are polarized between threat and promise, then this passage seems to threaten an absolute materialism. The rustics envisage a famine so prevalent that people will cannibalize their own families and creates a difficulty which again stems from the yoking together of the real and the ideal. Hunger and famine were, no doubt, very real prospects for planters, and the satire could fail by virtue of the accuracy of the Rustics' predictions, however foolishly made. The dangers of the New World were like its abundance, very real; the

wilderness was always there, always waiting, and not therefore, easily satirized. Confronted with the enormity of the American wilderness it was perhaps too easy to believe that survival, in a material sense, was all. Only when the simple rustics go on to view even more remarkable events is the satire on firmer ground, emphasizing as the satire does, the difference between the Rustics' concept of a world awash with signs and what might possibly be the case:

> The Rural Men will many sights espy
> Trees walking with their Roots towards the Sky
> And if (as wanted) winters air be clear
> Men, nor a few with swine's heads will appear.
> (Country Man's Apocrypha)

These miracles are truly ridiculous, and one is free to draw conclusion by implication. An underlying idea that, in their simplicity and superstition, the rustics have already fulfilled their own prophecy by reducing their lives to those of mere animals presents itself. The last lines of the poem are quite specific:

> Lastly, all which you will finde
> Of Male and Female Planets (if you minde)
> Do tell of some great Changes to be wroughte
> Men to four-footed creatures will be brought.
> (Country Man's Apocrypha)

Again one recognizes the threat of a complete materialism, but one redolent with the biblical and apocalyptic language of the Puritan Jeremiad. The 'great Changes to be wrought', forms, like the other predictions in the poem, an intended parody of the dire predictions of the Puritan pulpit and perhaps of other, more serious satires, like Tompsons. 'The Country Man's Apocrypha' is a college bred satire, which, with a certain youthful exuberance, makes fun of the simple

rustic belief in signs, but in so doing, parodies all apocalyptic visions.

Samuel Bailey's reply came swiftly: "The College Ferula, Being a Reply to 'The Country-Man's Apocrypha'."[68] It is a poem which, in part, endorses a view of Richard Bridgman in 'Satire's Changing Target'. That article sets out to elucidate a number of reasons for the failure of satire to flourish in America. The article begs the question, but Bridgman's remarks on the yeoman farmer are helpful. He says that:

> In *The Cankered Muse* a study of English Renaissance satire, Alison Kernan points out that the satirist conventionally offers himself as a plain speaker, frequently one who emerges from a rural environment that has taught him directness. The plowman, the shepherd, the farmboy then are all familiar roles for the satirist, and they are all figures that America has readily furnished...(but) They come to town with the weight of American respect for the farmer-yeoman behind them and therefore need not apologise for their country ways.[69]

It is true, as Bridgman suggests, that the role of naive narrator who comments upon city corruption and iniquity from a standpoint of rural innocence has in part been usurped by the respect accorded the yeoman farmer in American society. This is not to suggest however, that such a figure cannot satirize from a position of strength and thus create the recognizable polarity between intellect and the stout heart. Bailey's is just such a poem.

The main thrust of the attack in Bailey's poem suggests that the colleges teach nothing of any practical value; on the contrary, Harvard it seems, was bent on doing the Devil's work.

Most learned academies, have your gowns,

> And college taught you to abuse the clowns
> In empty rhymes, trussed to an Almanac.
> Like Tom Thumb bound on erra Pater's back?
> The Devil, when at Delphos he did dwell
> And cheated men to death, did use to sell
> His mind, in speeches of a double sense;
> Yet there was often, wit and eloquence.
> They that at Harvard, now the trade do drive,
> For penny oracles would keep alive
> Those Grecian cheats, but cannot imitate
> The wit and language, yet equivocate
> As fast as he.[70]

In this poem, unlike Folger's 'A Looking Glass for the Times', the attack upon the college men is not associated with Popery, but rather suggests that the devil has found work for idle minds, a suggestion redolent of the religious aspects of the apocalpytic vision. Simultaneously, it is suggested that the college men are really too stupid for the devil's work for whilst "They ... at Harvard, now the trade do drive", (of selling the Devil's mind in speeches of double sense), they are apparently unable to "imitate the wit and language" of the Greek Classics they are supposed to be reading. On the contrary the empty rhymes, trussed to an Almanac, perhaps resemble nothing so much as "Tom Thumb bound on erra Pater's back?" The line is subtle, attacking as it does, not only the original poem, but also quality of the journal which published it. The word "erra" presumably, is a shortened version of erratum meaning an error in writing or printing. It reflects badly upon the standard of proof reading in the Harvard almanac or 'penny oracle.' This, together with the comic use of the word "Ferula" in the title, suggests that the satire is to be used quite literally as an instrument of punishment in the school, and it implies a countryman come to town, not only unapologetic for his simple ways, but with something more of wit than the college man who launched the original attack on rusticity.

This satire too, however, is imbued with religious, as well as satiric purpose. The Narrator, after carrying his attack right into enemy territory, deals the final blow by suggesting that, far from lifting the New World into the realms of culture and civilization, the college men are no better than heathens. Again one should perhaps remember that to the early settlers, the example which would spring to mind would be that of the Indians, from whom their tiny settlements and of course the New Eden were in constant danger.

> ...Like heathen jugglers they
> At hocus pocus with the stars can play.
> What will they sport with next, since they will creep
> Behind the glorious curtain and bo-peep
> With sacred mysteries, or if they grow
> More modest, they will jeer at powers below.
> These are grave sophisters, that are in schools
> So wise they think their agèd fathers, fools.[71]

Again, note the use of religious language: the college men sport not with ignorance, but with 'sacred mysteries', so that religious justification is brought to bear for Bailey's attack. Clearly, like heathens, the college men have no humility in the face of God's mysteries. Their arrogance stands in sharp contrast with the awe inspired in the poet Michael Wigglesworth for example.

> What Mortal man can with his Span
> mete out Eternity?
> Or fathom it by depth of Wit,
> or strength of Memory?
> The lofty Sky is not so high,
> Hell's depth to this is small;
> The World so wide is but a stride,
> compared therewithal.[72]

In this context the superstitious awe of the country bumpkin can be seen as wiser than the arrogance of those who mock it, although Bailey readily agrees that the college men's fathers are fools.

> ... they are indeed
> Or else they would not work so hard to breed
> Their boys to flout them.[73]

Then, with a parting shot in which he compares his activity in teaching the college man a lesson with the foddering of asses, the narrator leaves his versifying to attend to more practical concerns.

> ... I cannot stay
> Foddering of asses thus; I must away
> And give my sheep their breakfast, who I fear,
> Wait at the stack, while I write verses here.[74]

Having reduced the College men to mere animals, he has other animals to attend to.

A further interest in this poem lies with the normative values suggested by the last few lines. The poem, it is true, attacks pride, and as such seems to imply humility as a normative value. The narrative voice of the poem, however, seems to take more into account than an obvious idealistic concern. Like "Our Forefather's Song" before it, the poem asserts a concern with spiritual or idealistic values, and with that other element of American life, the physical fortitude required to settle a new country. Hunger and famine are real possibilities and the sheep must needs be fed. The tone of the poem then, is that of a wise father giving an unruly youngster a rap across the knuckles. The nonsense perpetrated in the original satire is hardly worthy of his attention, he has the sheep to feed. Yet he writes a wittier satire than the original attack, which gives the impression of a country man, who can not only beat the college men at their own game, but has the wisdom to retain his awe in the face of God's mysteries and further the wisdom not to despise the ordinary material concerns on which their joint futures must depend. It is this uneasy alliance of what is ideal and therefore eternal, and what is material and therefore temporal, seen also in the other American satires examined so far, which creates a certain ambiguity. It creates

a difficulty of identification as to the kind of satire with which one is dealing, and as to the normative values of that satire, and in part these difficulties are created by the use of religious language and imagery to promote satiric attack.

The way in which the language of religion noted in the 'Country Man's Apocrypha' and in the work of Samual Bailey is used increasingly for the purpose of satire can be further identified in the Journal of Sarah Kemble Knight. Her travels took her across an America which was both rural and urban, agricultural and commercial and her tendency, when she turns to satire is to create a secularized Hell, or wilderness territory where all meaning breaks down. Arner remarks of Knight that,

> as in Tulley's almanac verses, Hell is no longer a realm of everlasting flames where sinners suffer eternal torment but a New England household inhabited by termagant wives and drunken husbands or a country hostelry run by an inhospitable landlord named, appropriately, "Mr Devill".'[75]

The names Knight uses for characters are not always so apparently religious, but can often be the mark of a personal attribute, giving them the flat one-dimensional quality of the caricature. There is Bumpkin Simpers who opens his mouth 'like the creature Balaam Rode on' or Joan Tawdry, who enters the merchant's house 'dropping about 50 curtsies.'[76] But even in Bumpkin Simpers one notes a religious reference so that regardless of name, characters are placed into something wider than the immediate context, and when this is added to the tendency to expose and attack the vice and folly of her fellow Americans it gives a strong satiric flavour to many parts of Knight's journal. Knight's use of religious language tends to exploit a

difference between concept and reality and is well exemplified in the incident that takes place at Mr Haven's house where Knight was 'courteously entertained, in a clean comfortable house.' Knight's repose however is disturbed by a drunken dispute '... utter'd with such a Roaring voice and Thundering blows with the fist of wickedness on the Table,' that she falls to her 'old way of composing ... Resentments'. The prayer, when it comes however, is not to omnipotent God, but to potent Rum.

> I ask thy Aid, O potent Rum!
> To Charm these wrangling Topers Dumb.
> Thou hast their Goddy Brains possest -
> The man confounded with the Beast -
> And I, poor I, can get no rest.
> Intoxicate them with thy fumes:
> O still their Tongues till morning comes![77]

On one level this is a mild enough joke, but the religious language tends to emphasize the immoderate behaviour of the brawling louts, and their bestial behaviour has apparently placed them beyond the reach of reason, human or divine. Only the downward slide into torpor will calm them and so it is to rum she prays. These implications have the stamp of satire upon them, but as Robert D. Arner suggests:

> So far as American humor is concerned, the increasing availability of the vocabulary of religion and professed piety for the purpose of jests and jokes is a crucial development, as demonstrated by Johnson Janes Hooper's account of Captain Simon Luggs at a camp meeting, Mark Twain's tale (based on Hooper's story) of the Duke and the Dauphin at another camp meeting in *Huckleberry Finn*, and - better than both of these - George Washington Harris's 'Parson John Bullen's Lizards'.[78]

Arner's remarks however, are no less true of American satire and

> ... in comes a tall country fellow, with his alforjas full of Tobacco; for they seldom lose their cud, but keep Chewing and Spitting as long as their eyes are open, - he advanc't to the middle of the Room, makes an Awkward Nod, and spitting a large deal of Aromatic Tincture, he gave a scrape

> with his shovel-like shoe, leaving a small shovel full of dirt on the floor, made a full stop, Hugging his own pretty Body with his hands under his arms, Stood staring around him, like a cat let out of a Basket.[79]

That such a man should be 'constantly almost Indebted to' merchants, for a piece of 'Ribbonin' for Hatbands', as he eventually is, to satisfy the vanity of a Joan Tawdry, is as ludicrous as it is pathetic. The vice may not be so great, the vanity tawdry even, but there is that distance between concept and actuality, which suggests satire rather than comedy.

There is a problem of identifying American satire from its comedy however, and this may stem from the fact that at this early stage, the cultural values of America's satire seem poised to exist, like Hawthorne's fiction, in that neutral territory where the real may meet the ideal:

> neutral territory, somewhere between the real world and fairy land, where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet, and each imbue itself with the nature of the other.[80]

Satire, at least since the 18th century most usually promotes a universal ideal as a normative value, yet these early American satires seem to call for an 'ideal America'. The possibilities for a community aspiring to such a value are enormous. Not content with an ideal, absolute in its perfection and therefore untenable in the real world, they will be constantly challenged to carry their community forward in the march towards perfection and thus these early satires express hope, or a least the possibility of correction. The difficulty which arises from yoking the real and the ideal together in this way is, however, that if the real world fails, so does the ideal. The importance of the hope of a positive outcome in American satires can

thus be fully appreciated as can the unease with which the satirists seem to view their world. The real world is material and materialism, by its very nature, is corrupt. If, as Cotton Mather suggested, the colonists were to fulfil the "type of Israel materially", [81] then he brought into being a normative value for American satire which carried within it the seeds of its own destruction, and the ambiguities of this position could only become increasingly apparent.

NOTES

1. Fender, Stephen. *American Literature in Context, 1, 1620-1830*, Methuen, London & New York, 1983, p.3.

2. Smith, John. 'A Description of New England', *American Literature in Survey-Colonial & Federal to 1800*, ed. Milton R. Stern & Seymour L. Gross, Penguin, New York, 1975. p.8.

3. Fender, *American Lit. in Context, 1*. p.11.

4. Ibid., p.16.

5. Ibid., p.24.

6. Higginson, Francis. 'New England's Plantation', *America Begins* ed. Richard M. Dorson, Fawcett Publications inc., New York, 1966, p.83.

7. Fender, *American Literature in Context 1*, p.6.

8. For a complete treatment of this topic see Bercovitch, Sacvan, *The American Jeremiad*, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1978.

9. Ibid., p.7-8.

10. Quoted from Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Dilemma:The Story of John Winthrop* ed. Oscar Handlin, Little, Brown & Co. Boston, 1958, p.40.

11. Ibid., p. 40.

12. Bradford, William. 'Of Plymouth Plantation', *American Lit. Survey*, p.20.

13. Bradford, William. 'Of Plymouth Plantation', *American Lit. Survey*, p.13-14.

14. Miller, Perry, *Errand into the Wilderness*, Cambridge, Mass. 1958, pp.8-9.

15. Rowlandson, Mary White, 'A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs Mary Rowlandson'. *American Lit. Survey*, p.82-83.

16. Fender, *American Lit. in Context*, p.4.

17. Ibid., p.22-23.

18. Fender, *American Lit. in Context*, p.22-23.

19. Bercovitch, Sacvan. *The American Jeremiad*, p.41.

20. Bercovitch points to Augustine's 'Confessions' where Augustine directs man towards an indivisible present which includes past and future ..."Time in its absolute sense as it conforms to the heavenly chronometer, reveals every object or event as an emblem of eternity. In this light, the Old Testament prophecies type out

the believer's journey to God, the whole story of Israel becomes the background for the act of will which transforms geography into eschatology." Bercovitch pp.41-42.

21. Ibid., p.42

22. Bercovitch, p.46.

23. Higginson, Francis, 'New Englands Plantation' from *America Begins*, ed. Richard M. Dorson, Fawcett Publications inc., Greenwich, 1950.

24. Aldern, Raymond Macdonald. *The Rise of Formal Satire in England Under Classical Influence*, (series in Philology, Literature and Archeology), Norwood Edition, 1978 (published for University of Philadelphia, 1899).

25. Pepys, Samuel. *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Henry B. Wheatley (8 vol. Bell, 1923) 8,92 (4 September 1668). Quoted from Holden, William P. *Anti-Puritan Satire*, Archon Books, 1968 (Yale University Press 1954), p.148.

26. Jonson, Ben. 'The Alchemist', *The Complete Plays*, Vol. 2, Dent, London, 1963, p.71-72.

27. For a complete treatment of this subject see Holden, William P. *Anti-Puritan Satire 1572-1642*, Archon Books, 1968 (Yale University Press 1954).

28. Gibbon, B. *Jacobean City Comedies*, London, Hart-Davis, 1968, p.186.

29. Jonson, Ben. 'Bartholomew Fair' *The Complete Plays*, p.194-195.

30. Quoted from *The Art of American Humor* ed. Brom Weber, Thomas Y. Crowell Co. Inc., New York, 1962, p.1.

31. The author of 'Our Forefather's Song' is identified as Captain Edward Johnson, by Jantz's *First Century*, p.29. It is supposed to have been composed in the 1630's and may be the work of Edward Johnson, for it echoes his humorous spirit and style. This ballad was dictated in 1785 by an elderly lady of ninety-six, a fact explaining the absence of the last four lines of stanza V. See an anthology *The Art of American Humor*, ed. Brom Weber, Crowell Co. N.Y. 1962, p.13-14.

32. Arner, Robert D. 'Wit, Humor and Satire in Seventeenth Century American Poetry', *Puritan Poets and Poetics* ed. Peter White, Add. Ed. Harrison T. Meserale, Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, Univ. Park & London, 1985. p.227.

33. See Kernan, Alvin *The Plot of Satire*

34. From William Bradford's "Morton of Merrymount" (1628), *American Lit. Survey* p.28.

35. Ibid., p.29 - note here the association with the devil.

36. Ibid., p.32.

37. Ibid., p.33.

38. Hawthorne used these historical materials for his imaginative exploration of the 'New England character in *The Maypole of Merry Mount*.

39. Morton, Thomas. 'Of the Revels of New Canaan' from *New English Canaan, American Lit. Survey*, p.37.

40. Ibid., p.37.

41. Ibid., p.36.

42. Ibid., p.36 and 37.

43. Arner, Robert D. 'Wit, Humor, and Satire in Seventeenth-Century American Poetry', p.274.

44. Ibid., p.275.

45. Morton, Thomas, 'Of a Doctor Made at a Commencement in New Canaan' *The Art of American Humor*, ed. Brom Weber, Cromwell Co. New York, 1962, p.9-10.

46. Ibid., p.10.

47. Ibid., p.10.

48. For a full treatment of this subject see: Alden, Raymond MacDonald, *The Rise of Formal Satire in England under Classical Influence*, series in Philology, Literature and Archeology, vol. VII, No.2, Univ. Philadelphia, 1899, p.179.

49. Ibid., p.179-180.

50. *The Art of American Humor*, ed. Brom Weber, p.3.

51. Ward, Nathanial, *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam, Colonial and Federalist American Writing*, ed. George F. Horner, Robert A. Bain, Odyssey Press Inc., New York 1966, p.121.

52. Ibid. 121.

53. Ibid., p.119.

54. Folger, Peter. 'A Looking Glass for the Times of The Former Spirit of New England revived in this generation' printed in the year 1763 (dated April 23 1676). Pubishers note Sydney S. Rider, Providence Press Co. 1878, p.2. All further references to this edition.

55. Ibid., p.8.

56. Folger probably refers to Jeremiah 22 1:6. Jahweh said this, "Go down to the palace of the king of Judah and there deliver this

message. 'Listen to the word of Yahweh. King of Judah sitting on the throne of David, you, your servants too, and your people who go through these gates. Yahweh says this: practise honesty and integrity; rescue the man who has been wronged from the hands of his oppressor; do not exploit the stranger, the orphan, the widow; do no violence, shed no innocent blood in this place. For if you are scrupulous in obeying this command, then kings occupying the throne of David will continue to their entry through the gates of this palace mounted on chariots and horses, they, their servants and their people. But if you do not listen to these words, then I swear by myself - it is Yahweh who speaks - this palace becomes a ruin.' "

57. See Jeremiah 34.

58. Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad*, p.7-8.

59. Fussell, Edwin. 'Benjamin Thompson: Public Poet' *New England Quarterly*, 26, (1953): 494-511.

60. Pincus, Robert L. 'Pictures of New England's Apocalypse: Benjamin Thompson's Transformation of the British Advice-to-a-Painter Poem.' *Early American Literature*, v.19 no.8, p.268-278, Winter 1984-86.

61. Tompson, Benjamin. 'New Englands Crisis: Marlburyes Fate' *The Puritans:A Sourse Book of their Writings*, Vol.II, Ed. Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, Harper & Row, New York, 1963, p.636.

62. Bercovitch, Sacvan. *The American Jeremiad*, ch. XIV.

63. Folger, p.5.

64. 'From the statement made by Franklin that these verses were published in 1675, the opinion has hitherto been held that there was such an edition. It has now come to be doubted. In fact in one edition of the autobiography the words "published in 1675" were altered to "written in 1675". No copy is now known previous to that of 1763, from which this edition is reprinted.' From "Publishers Note" Rider, Sidney S. 'A Looking Glass of the times' Providence Press, 1878, 1883.

65. The so-called "Pope Joan" was a legendary female Pope of the ninth century, usually placed between Leo IV (847-855) and Benedict (855-858). She was said to have been born either in England or in Germany of English parents, and to have fled with a Benedictine monk to Athens, disguised as a man. On his death she is supposed to have gone to Rome under the alias of Joannes Anglicus, where she entered the priesthood, received a cardinal's hat, and finally ascended the papal throne under the title of John VIII. The accounts have it that she died in childbirth during a papal procession. This myth was widely circulated from medieval times down through the seventeenth century. Taylor could have received the account from any of several authors who circulated the story. Though undated, the verses bear every mark of late composition. They occupy the final pages among the topical poems, the

handwriting suggests the author to be advanced in years, and the substance and thought are at times quite difficult to follow. 'The Colonial Society of Massachusetts' v.34. Feb. 1942, p.551.

66. Miller, Perry & Johnson, Thomas M. (eds.) *The Puritans: A Source Book of Their Writings* 2 vols. Harper & Row, N.Y. 1963. Volume 1 p.8.

67. Richardson, John. "The Country-man's Apocrypha". *Early American Imprints 1639-1800*, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester. Mass. 1967. Evans Numbers 152-154.

68. Bridgman, Richard 'Satire's Changing Target', 'College Composition and Communication', May 1965 v.16. pp.85-89.

69. 'Nothing is known about Samuel Bailey, whose light-hearted 'The College Ferula, Being a reply to the Country-Man's Apocrypha' was found early in the nineteenth century hidden away among the dusty records of the Providence, Rhode Island, town clerk.' Weber Brom (ed.) *An Anthology the Art of American Humor.* Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York, 1962, p.25. The text for this poem is from *New England Historical and Genealogical Register IX (1855), 356*

70. *Ibid.*

71. *Ibid. 'The Puritans preserved in secondary education a humanistic standard - a classical training - which in England was being supplanted by courses with a more utilitarian end in view;' The Puritans* (v.2), Ed. Miller Perry and Johnson, Thomas M. Harper & Row, New York, 1963, p.695. And yet one senses in this line something of the problem faced by the Puritan conscience when confronted with the sensuality of rhyme and meter. These difficulties were expressed in the Preface of *The Bay Psalm Book* of 1640 by Richard Mather: "If ...the verses are not always so smooth and elegant as some may desire or expect, let them consider that God's altar needs not our polishing (Exod. 20). For we have respected rather a plain translation than to smooth our verses with the sweetness of any paraphrase: and so have attended to conscience rather than elegance." The college men, however, have clearly attended to neither. Miller, Perry *The American Puritans*, Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co. In., New York, 1956, p.322.

72. Wigglesworth, Michael. "A Short Discourse on Eternity" (1662) *Colonial and Federalist American Writing* ed. George F. Horner and Robert A. Bain. The Odyssey Press, Inc., New York. 1966, p.180.

73. Bailey, Samuel "The College Ferula, Being a Reply to the Country-Man's Apocrypha".

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid., p.283.

76. Knight, Sarah Kemble, 'Her Private Journal of a Journey from Boston to New York' *Colonial and Federalist American Writing* ed. George F. Horner & Robert A. Bain, Odyssey Press Inc. N.Y. 1966, p.361.

77. Ibid., p.360.

78. Ibid., p.283.

79. Ibid., p.361.

80. Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "The Custom House", *The Scarlet Letter*, Foreword Leo Marx, Signet Classic, N.Y. 1959, p.45.

81. Bercovitch, p.42.

II

THE SOTWEED FACTOR

There is an inherent difficulty in imposing an ideal framework upon a less than ideal world and this can be exemplified by a consideration of an early secular American satire. In 1708 "The Sot-Weed Factor" by Ebenezer Cooke was published in London. It is an early and sustained secular satire which makes use of the American mythological framework both in its religious northern form, and in its more southern classical form, and could well have originated in the more neutral state of Maryland. It employs many of the cultural norms so far discussed, religious language and imagery is pervasive, and a full appreciation of Cooke's satire depends upon some knowledge of the large body of promotional literature which describes America as some sort of New Eden. Little is known about Cooke, and whether he was merely an English visitor or a resident of Maryland, cannot be established. The name is mentioned in contemporary Maryland records, but they offer no clue as to whether or not that Ebenezer Cooke was the author of this poem.[1] The poem however suggests an American origin, and perhaps a specifically Maryland origin for the satire, and is interesting because satire had undergone change in the course of the seventeenth century, so that Cooke's use of a satiric *persona* in this poem allows us to glimpse some of the qualities which will become associated with the American absurd hero.

That the Factor's views are not necessarily those of Ebenezer Cooke is readily established if one considers, for instance, the

ludicrous figure cut by the Factor as he crosses the river in an Indian canoe.

> In this most noble fishing-boat,
> I boldly put myself afloat,
> Standing erect, with legs stretched wide,
> We paddled to the other side;
> Where being landed safe by hap,
> (As Sol fell into Thetis' lap) (1.65-70)

'Standing erect, with legs stretched wide' is not the safest posture to adopt when crossing a river in an Indian canoe. It renders any assistance with the paddling impossible and landing hazardous. Cooke's sophisticated use of distance between himself and his narrator can hardly be doubted and occurs perhaps as a result of the changes satire had undergone in the latter part of the seventeenth century. By the time Cooke was writing, Dryden had already published "Absalom and Achitophel" in 1681. Dryden's poem, Alden suggests, unites

> a witty criticism of contemporary events, a keen analysis of character, and classical dignity and compactness of style. By this time too, the limitations to the success of satire as a literary form, which had been felt in the Elizabethan Age, had largely disappeared. The drama was no longer a representation of real life, but itself a convention. The spirit of the age was primarily critical, and no longer demanded the imitation of its own spontaneity. Above all, the incapabilities of satire for poetic idealization were no longer felt to be grievous, for poetry had become the vehicle of subject-matter which in other periods had been chiefly reserved for prose. This was the time when the greatest poet of England could show his strength in satire. It was the Age of Dryden.[2]

Given the speed with which literary innovation crossed the Atlantic, as demonstrated in Tompson's 'Advice to a Painter' poem, it is unsurprising that America should have produced a more sophisticated satire at this time. Cooke's poem, characterized by its use of a satiric *persona*, has a satiric tone which, if lacking the dignity of

Dryden, is at least consistent. It is not characterized by direct denunciation, as was Folger's satire, or by lapses into preaching as was Ward's; it is secular, and has a formal structure insofar as the Hudibrastics are maintained. Further it has those elements of fulness which Dryden suggested were to be more correctly associated with the etymology of the word satire than notions of satyrs. Indeed Cooke may have been familiar with the work of Dryden. Lemay suggests in an article entitled "Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland", that Cooke's satiric sketch of the Quaker planter (l.613-22) may allude to Dryden's character of Shimei in 'Absalom and Achitophel' (ll.585 ff).[3] Then, the resounding curse at the end of "The Sot-Weed Factor", which constitutes a personal attack on the Colonists, occurs only when the hapless Factor can get no other reparation, a situation in which, Dryden suggests, personal satire is justifiable. In his 'Essay on Satire' Dryden remarks that there are only two such situations:

> the first is revenge, when we have been affronted in the same nature, or have been any ways notoriously abused, and can make ourselves no other reparation.

The second is when the particular person is "become a public nuisance". The personal attack upon the Colonists is clearly justified by the former category. Although the Factor of Cooke's poem ostensibly writes:

> That strangers well may be aware on
> What homely diet they must fare on;
> To see that shore where no good sense is found,
> But conversation's lost, and manners drowned.
> (l.52-55)

the curse at the end of the poem suggests otherwise. The Factor, from the beginning to the end of the poem, cannot forgive America for

failing to live up to his expectations. Indeed the naivety of his expectations sometimes borders on the asinine.

If Cooke's poem did no more than record the exploits of a "genuine ass" however, the work would be humorous, and not satiric. An ass is an ass is an ass, and as Northrop Frye has suggested has "no literary or hypothetical point".[4] In order to be the "butt" of Cooke's attack, the Factor must consider himself other than an ass. He must have a certain capacity for self-deception. Arner has suggested that

> Cooke's poem offers us an anti-hero who undertakes his quest for financial security in a mercantile middle-class, a form of the traditional quest for identity to be sure (Franklin's Autobiography would make this aspect of it unequivocally clear), but one which depends upon definitions of self far removed from the heroic ideals of, let us say, King Horn.[5]

One way to approach the undermining of the heroic in 'The Sot-Weed Factor', Arner says, is through Frye's comment that satire depends for its fundamental structure upon a "parody of romance: the application of romantic mythical forms to a more realistic context which fits them in unexpected ways."[6] Arner sees Cooke's satire as double-edged, in that it attacks America for failing to be what the promotional literature described, and it attacks the Factor for ever thinking that it would be. Arner's comments are helpful. They suggest a cluster of concepts and opinions held by the Factor which experience fails to verify, and suggest the mode in which he is self-deceived. He comes to America full of ideas, gained from promotional literature, and discovers to his sorrow that America is not, after all, a New Eden. Cooke was, Arner says "the first American author to transform completely the American Dream into a nightmare." This last however, may be to place too heavy a load upon what is, after all, a light

secular satire, and to take the Factor's status as an absurd hero, too seriously. Cooke's use of religious language gives impetus to the satiric attack, and serves to question the sense of an America associated with Eden, Classical mythology or anything else. 'The Sot-Weed Factor' may be a specifically Maryland satire which impartially pours scorn upon the Puritan North, the more aristocratic South, and the new immigrant alike.

Arner's view is not without difficulty in that it suggests a far more active anti-hero than we are given. Micklus in an article called 'The Case Against Ebenezer Cooke's Sot-Weed Factor' pointed out that the Factor spends a "good ninety per cent of his time in Maryland befuddled in one way or another,"[7] and it would seem that our hero is not one who actively seeks out adventure, or who travels around Maryland impressively tilting at windmills, but rather one to whom things happen. Almost everything that occurs in 'The Sot-Weed Factor' happens either by chance: "Where being landed safe by hap" or by luck, "By strange good luck I took a tree, Prepared by fate to set me free"; or by fate: "A favor at that time so great, I blessed my kind propitious fate." Even the actions of others are ascribed to the "fate" which follows the Factor about, and it gives the poem a curious "but then" sort of structure. The Factor crosses the river safely, but then "A ravenous gang, ... Of wolves for prey, began to howl." Or, having had his night's sleep disturbed, first by fighting farm animals, and then by a fox chasing the ducks and geese, the Factor decides to sleep outside, but then

> I to the orchard did repair,
> To breathe to cool and open air,
> Impatient waiting for bright day,
> Extended on a bank I lay
> But fortune here, that saucy whore,

Disturbed me worse, and plagued me more.
(l.204-10)

The pattern of the poem seems to be one of naive hope and expectation followed by comic disappointment, so that there is a patent absurdity in the Factor's continuing belief. Instead of a Factor undertaking a quest for financial security because he thinks it is a good idea in view of his financial circumstances, we have rather a Factor who thinks himself in the hands of some sort of Fate. Indeed, even his own falling into debt is viewed as part of the divine plan. The Factor seems to represent all of the worst aspects of a faith in God's Providence, so that subsequent disenchantment appears comic, rather than catastrophic as Arner seems to suggest. As the Factor's story unfolds, his desperate attempts to impose a mythic framework upon a recalcitrant America, must incorporate into the ripple effect of the satire all those who would do likewise.

The Factor is "condemned by fate", to the curses of unkind friends, to whom he probably owes money, to an empty purse, and to "plagues worse than filled Pandora's box." Thus is he "forced" to flee his native soil. If the tales of God's Providence still in evidence in the eighteenth century are to be believed, then the Factor should have been "called" and by God, not "condemned by fate", and in spite of his expressed concern and "heavy heart" at the thought of leaving the old world, the Factor manages to accept this "fate" philosophically.

...Heaven ordained it should be so,
And to repine is vain, we know (l.8-9)

The Factor, if taken at his own evaluation, is not vain and submits to his destiny. The ship on which he travels is loaded down "with fools", of which he is undoubtably one, and after a terrible three-month journey reminiscent of those of the early settlers, the ship arrives in Virginia, before anchoring at Piscataway, as was usual in Maryland. The Factor intends to open a store there, and if this is his intention, quite why he goes wandering about the countryside is never made plain. For the moment however, he manages to get himself and goods ashore, and receives his first inkling that this might not be the "heaven ordained" journey he supposed it to be. Attracted by the arrival of the ship, the colonists crowd the shore.

> In shirts and drawers of Scotch-cloth blue
> With neither stocking, hat, nor shoe:
> These sotweed planters crowd the shore,
> In hue as tawny as a Moor:
> Figures, so strange, no God designed
> To be a part of humankind:
> But wanton nature, void of rest,
> Molded the brittle clay in jest. (1.22-32)

Lemay, considering the British influence on Cooke's poem, has suggested that:

> The use of Drawyers, primarily meaning underpants or hose, ridicules the planters by suggesting that they are so poor and so barbarous that they do not have trousers. Also, calling their clothes "Scotch-cloth Blue", (Cook explains in a note that planters generally wear "Blue Linnen"), suggests that the planters are all Scotch Presbyterians, for eighteenth century readers knew that blue was worn by the Scotch Presbyterians in opposition to the Royalist red. This may also echo Butler's description of Hudibras's religion as "Presbyterian true blew" ('Hudibras' part 1, canto 1, l.189.)[8]

More important for American satire however, is Cooke's use of religious language and his play upon the notion of America as a New Eden.

These planters, the Factor continues, cannot be "God designed", rather they are the result of an overtired "wanton nature", who has "Molded the brittle clay in jest." This essentially secular satire gains resonance from a wholly religious view of the settling of America. The Factor goes on to imagine a typology quite other than that to which Cotton Mather would subscribe.

> At last, a fancy very odd,
> Took me, this was the Land of Nod,
> Planted at first when vagrant Cain
> His brother had unjustly slain.
> Then, conscious of the crime he'd done,
> From vengeance dire (he) hither run,
> And in a hut supinely dwelt,
> The first in furs and sotweed dwelt. (l.33-40).

Genesis 4.16 is not the usual point of typological comparison made by the early settlers, and the fur trade was supposed to have been the result of foresight on God's part. The Factor's account might be compared with that of Edward Johnson's "A History of New England" published in London in 1653 (dated 1654). This work is better known by its running title 'The Wonder-Working Providence of Sion's Savior in New England', a title which more nearly reflects the charismatic vision of Johnson, and perhaps is a more accurate reflection of the emotional import which lay behind the journey to the New World for the Puritans. In this work the discovery of the beaver trade is directly attributable to the works of Christ.

> ...the Indians by degrees made their approach nearer and nearer till they came to them, when beholding their vessels, which they had set forth before them, the Indians knocking them were much delighted with the sound, and much more astonished to see they would not break, being so thin, for altaining those vessels they brought them much beaver, fraughting them richly away according to their desires, this was the first working providence of Christ to stir up our English nation, to plant these parts in hope of a rich trade for

> beaverskins, and this made some of our countrymen make their abode in these parts, whom this army of Christ at their coming over found as fit helps to further their design in planting the churches of Christ, who by a more admirable act of his Providence not long after prepared for his people's arrival as followeth...[9]

The Factor on the other hand mischievously replaces one concept of God's providence with another type of Providence, and suggests that since the time of Cain, America has harboured a detested race.

> In hopes by flight they might prevent
> The devil, and his fell intent
> Obtain from triple-tree reprieve,
> And Heaven and Hell alike deceive. (l.45-48)

That the Factor's interpretations of American history are not to be taken altogether seriously is made apparent by the drollery with which they are proffered. It is too silly to imagine that getting into debt is God-ordained or that Cain could possibly have taken himself off to a hut in America and entered the fur and tobacco trade. Those who would similarly interpolate America as a God-ordained New Eden are thus caught up in the satiric attack, and this would, perhaps, constitute the likely local and contemporary reading of Cooke's satire. In terms of the development of American satire however, the tendency for Cooke's poem to conform to the patterns of the religiously based satires discussed in the previous chapter needs to be noted.

In the religious satires mythic and anti-mythic interpretations of American history were identified as forming polarities within those works, and the way in which the anti-myth served to confirm the myth was noted. Cooke's satire is secular, but the tendency for myth to confirm anti-myth is not altogether absent from his work. In part,

this is due to an almost inevitable eschatological perspective given to his work by his use of religious myth and terminology. In part, it is due to the nature of satire itself. One recognizes in ideas of a wanton nature moulding 'brittle clay in jest' the presence of the American wilderness, and with it a materialism so complete as to call into question the nature of satire itself. In a wholly material world an assertion of morality becomes absurd. One can do no more than merely rail against such a world. For a work to be satire a positive assertion, if only as an implied opposite, is necessary. There must be a moral framework, a standard of judgment, and in Cooke's poem the standard which most presses for compliance from both the Factor and America, is, if not exactly that America of the promotional literature, certainly of a type of ideal America. It is an America which, in addition to a natural plenty and opportunities for trade, incorporates ideals of honesty, generosity and fairness on the part of its citizens. The Factor and America are judged to fall short of this ideal, but the satire itself cannot call that ideal into question. The alternative offered, that America is merely the moulding of 'brittle clay in jest' would render any satire superfluous.

The Factor's failure to meet any sort of standard for desirable immigrants is very apparent in his judgement of the colonials:

> Who, when they could not thrive at home
> For refuge to these world's did roam,
>
> (l. 47-48)

If these lines describe the colonists, then it is true to say that they are an even better description of our narrator, who, apparently submitting to God's will, has in reality fled to the New World to

avoid his creditors. The best form of defence however is invariably attack and the Factor hastens to assure us otherwise.

> But e're their manners I display
> I think it fit I open lay.
> My entertainment by the way,
> That strangers well may be aware on
> What homely diet they must fare on;
> To see that shore where no good sense is found,
> But conversation's lost, and manners drowned.

The ostensible nature of the Factor's attack is that the diet is coarse, that there is no good sense to be found in America, that there is no conversation, and that all semblance of good manners have disappeared from the New World. The Factor's story disproves all of these accusations while reinforcing our suspicions as to the unreliability of our narrator. Having crossed the river, and foolishly mistaken a herd of cows for wolves, the Factor makes his first contact with a colonist.

> Cheered with the sight, I straight thought fit
> To ask, where I a bed might get?
> The surly peasant bid me stay,
> And asked, from whom I'd run away?
> Surprised at such a saucy word,
> I instantly lugged out my sword,
> Swearing I was no fugitive,
> But from Great Britain did arrive,
> In hopes I here might better thrive.
> To which he mildly made reply,
> 'I beg your pardon, Sir, that I
> Should talk to you unmannerly:
> But if you please to go with me,
> To yonder house you'll welcome be.' (1.81-95)

An examination of this encounter reveals that the Factor is immediately supposed to be running away from someone; an indication of the type of stranger the locals expected to meet. The surly young peasant accurately describes the Factor's condition, and the Factor driven to protest too much. The Factor's reaction is comically excessive: a more fitting hero would have drawn his sword, not "lugged" it out. Assured that the Factor has come from the Old

Country merely to seek his fortune, the youth's reply is the epitome of good manners. The youth's father is likewise cordial, and prepared to take his visitor at face value. The planters, clearly, do not lack manners.

> Whether you're come from jail, or college,
> You're welcome, to my certain knowledge. (l.98-99)

In comparison with the Planters' hospitality, the Factor is rude about the coarseness of the fare which "scarce an English dog would lap." Although this does not prevent the Factor from eating it.

> ...supper came upon the table,
> On which I fed whilst I was able;
> So after hearty entertainment,
> Of drink and victuals, without payment,
> For planters' tables, you must know
> Are free for all that come and go. (l.108-112)

The Factor stuffs himself, taking advantage of the Planters' hospitality, while able to do so "without payment", the last two lines of this extract casting an ironic reflection on the expectations of the newly arrived immigrants, who apparently neither knew nor cared how hard-won the Planters' food might be. On the other hand the Factor's ironic appeal to common experience suggests that the source of the Factor's expectations and the planter's reputation for hospitality, could well be something like Beverley's *The History and Present State of Virginia.*

> The Inhabitants are very Courteous to Travelers, who need no other Recommendation, but the being Human Creatures. A Stranger has no more to do, but to inquire upon the Road, where any Gentleman, or good Housekeeper Lives, and there he may depend upon being received with Hospitality. This good Nature is so general among their People, that the Gentry when they abroad, order their Principal Servant to entertain all Visitors, with every thing the Plantation affords. And the poor Planters, who have but one Bed, will very often sit up, or lie upon a Form or Couch all Night, to make room for a

> weary Traveler, to repose himself after his Journey.[10] Book III, Ch.21.

As Cooke has the sot-weed Factor remark, more succinctly:

> ...planters' tables, you must know
> Are free for all that come and go.
> (The Sot-Weed Factor, l.112-113)

The Planter for his part touches upon the hardships when, sensible of the Factor's delicate stomach, he says:

> I find...you don't much care
> For this our Indian country fare;
> But let me tell you, friend of mine,
> You may be glad of it in time,
> Though now your stomach is so fine:
> And if within this land you stay,
> You'll find it true what I do say:

That the Factor may be glad of humble food "in time", is an indication that America is not for the weak, and the Planter exhibits far more "good sense" than the Factor who, having passed a lewd remark about the length of the Planter's pipe, finds himself completely unable to stomach the very product he has gone to America to trade. He has to be half carried off to bed. Contrary to the Factor's assertions, the Planters are both sensible and well mannered, and, if the food be coarse, it has not prevented the Factor from eating his fill.

The Factor's remaining charge against America, that "conversation's lost", is later found to be without substance when the Factor and the planter's son fall into discourse about the origins of the Indians.

> Whether this race was formed of God,
> Or whether some malignant power,
> Had framed them in an evil hour...(1.302-4)

The Planter's son argues earnestly, that the Indians may be exiles of China or Central Asia, until the Factor is forced to smile.

> I smiled to hear my young logician,
> Thus reason like a politician;
> Who ne'er by father's pains and earning,
> Had got, at Mother Cambridge, learning.
> (l.320-23)

Ostensibly then these lines appear to denigrate the quality of learning found in the Colonies, but the lines go on to describe a Cambridge education.

> Where lubber youth just free from birch,
> Most stoutly drink to prop the church;
> Nor with gray groat had taken pains
> To purge his head, and cleanse his reins;
> And in obedience to the college,
> Had pleased himself with carnal knowledge.
> (l.324-29)

It seems that learning at "Mother Cambridge" was not all that it might have been, and so the Factor, while ostensibly ridiculing the New World, inflicts what Dryden would have called a 'transitory lashing' on the old, suggesting there is little difference between the conversation of either. The lines also mark the tendency of some American satire to boost America by asserting its negative virtues: the Planter's son may be raw and unlearned, but he has not learned to indulge in liquor, nor has he learned carnality. The Factor's explanation for the presence of Indians is hardly better than that of the Planter's son, favouring as it does, the Phoenicians and it is hardly surprising that, at the end of a lengthy conversation, the Factor concludes:

> We could not finish our dissention
> And when that both had talked their fill,
> We had the selfsame notion still.
>
> Thus Parson grave well read, and sage,
> Does in dispute with priest engage,
> The one protests they are not wise,
> Who judge by sense, and trust their eyes,
> And vows he'd burn for it at stake,
> That Man may God his maker make;
> The other smiles at his religion,
> And vows he's but a learned widgeon,
> And when they've emptied all their store,

From books and fathers, are not more
Convinced, or wiser than before. (l.361-75)

"Conversation", far from being "lost" in the New World, seems to result in speculation every bit as ridiculous as in the Old, and if one of Cooke's targets in this satire is the extreme nature of some of those speculations imposed upon America, then these lines offer something akin to a positive assertion. The assertion is admittedly an implied opposite, but it seems that they are wise "Who judge by sense, and trust their eyes," something the Factor has consistently refused to do since his arrival in the New World. As a normative value it is universal to colonists and British immigrants alike. The misconceptions carried to the New World by the Factor and the excesses of typology so consistently derided in the poem, are the result of a failure in common sense. Such people fail to "...judge by sense, and trust their eyes" (l.367) As a normative value for satire this appears somewhat pragmatic, but in this poem neither God's providence, nor the classical mythology associated with America, can be taken seriously. The emphasis is placed on that third component of the American myth, what was actually there. At a stage of American history, when tales of God's providence still abounded; when a failure to "judge by sense, and trust their eyes" had, in the previous decade resulted in the good people of Salem hanging several of their number and two dogs as witches; when the future of the colonies depended on an ability to trade, with all the possibilities for cheating and being cheated that trade entailed, then the warning was both timely and American.

This is not to suggest that the Factor forfeits our sympathy entirely. There is, even in the Factor's more petulant outbursts about America a certain naive charm. The outbursts come as a result

of disappointment, and the Factor is so perennially optimistic in his determination to impose the ideal upon America, that one does perceive something of the absurd hero. Our sympathy is engaged in spite of the uneven quality of his judgments. He is so persistently disappointed and so consistently expects things to be otherwise that both the source of his expectations and, ultimately, the nature of America itself is called into question. Thus, when the Factor is given a good bed by the Planter, and with a parody of the children's prayer, he lays him down "expecting rest,/To be in golden slumbers blest," and is, as usual, disappointed, the nature of this America is explored, again within the framework of the promotional literature.

> But soon a noise disturbed my quiet,
> And plaqued me with nocturnal riot.

The farm animals fight, and no sooner is this fracas settled with a stick, than a fox chases in after the ducks and geese. The Factor really comes into his own at this point.

> Raging, I jumped upon the floor,
> And like a drunken sailor swore,
> With sword I fiercely laid about,
> And soon dispersed the feathered rout,
> (l.194-8)

The vision of the Factor thrashing about with a sword after ducks and geese is no more edifying than his language. It is unsurprising that he behaves like "a drunken sailor", since drunk is exactly what he is. He has no head from the local brew, and so "fretting and hot" he repairs to the orchard. It is this scene which cuts to the very heart of the promotional literature which saw America as a New Eden. There, in the garden itself, the Factor finds not God's Providence, but a malevolent fate at work.

> But fortune here, that saucy whore,
> Disturbed me worse, and plagued me more
> Than she had done the night before
> Hoarse croaking frogs did 'round me ring,

> Such peals the dead to life would bring
> A noise might move their wooden king:
> I stuffed my ears with cotton white,
> And cursed the melancholy night, (l.210-217)

The similarity can only be noted between this extract and Nathaniel Ward's reference to the fanatics of the New World whom he pictured thus:

> These wits of the game, cry up and down in corners such bold ignotions of a new Gospel, new Christ, new Faith, and new gay nothings, as trouble unsettled heads...from which he that would be delivered, let him avoid these blasphemers, a late fry of croaking Frogs, not to be endured in a religious state...[11]

It cannot be known whether or not Cooke had read *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam*, but it may be suggested, in view of the reference to Isaiah 45:20: "They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save", that the target of Cooke's attack in this extract, like that of Ward's before him, is the religious fanatics of the New World. The Factor, afraid of being deafened by their noise, stuffs his ears, and wishes himself deaf, until the entry of the snake into the garden.

> But soon my vows I did recant,
> And hearing as a blessing grant,
> When a confounded rattlesnake
> With hissing made my heart to ache,
> Not knowing how to fly the foe
> Or whither in the dark to go,
> By strange good luck I took a tree,
> Prepared by fate to set me free,
> Where riding on a limb astride,
> Night and the branches did me hide,
> And I the Devil and snake defied. (l.225-35)

Better to hear the 'croaking frogs', than not to hear the rattlesnake, and any remaining doubts that the Factor is truly in the world of fallen man are by now dispelled. Ironically he is directed by fate to a tree, the very thing which brought about Adam's downfall, in order to be set free. The Factor hides amongst the trees of the garden, not

as Adam did, from God (Genesis 3:8), but from the Devil and the snake. The lines also cast an ironic reflection back to the beginning of the poem, when the Factor suggested that by coming to the New World the colonists had hoped "by flight they might prevent/The Devil and his fell intent" (l.44-5). It would seem that those who came to the New World to flee the devil, will find him every bit as present in the New World as in the Old. On the other hand those who came to America believing neither that their presence was God-ordained, nor that the Devil was after them, might only have seen natural hazards in the orchards.

> Not yet from plaques exempted quite,
> The cursed mosquitos did me bite. (l.230-1)

When deliverance does arrive, and he is from "night's terrors set...free", it is not by God, nor even the fate on which he so much depends, but by the usual arrival of "rising morn and blushing day." (l.232). Indeed the "night's terrors" appear to have given the Factor an appetite.

> I did to planter's booth repair,
> And there at breakfast nobly fare,
> On rasher broiled, of infant bear,
> I thought the cut delicious meat,
> Which ne'er did ought but chesnuts eat,
> Nor was young Orson's flesh the worse,
> Because he sucked a pagan nurse. (l.236-242)

As the Planter predicted, the Factor is glad enough of the local food now, and part of the interest of this poem lies in the way in which the Factor is gradually rid of the notions with which he arrives. He is, at this point, becoming a colonist, and is perhaps beginning to see America as it is.

The Factor obviously found the Planter convivial, and when he takes leave of "host so kind" he is lent a quiet horse and the

planter's son to guide him to Battle Town. He has his first encounter with an Indian *en route*. Having noted "His manly shoulders, such as please Widows and Wives" (1.271-2), the Factor's first point of comparison is with the Picts of Ancient Britain who lived in the Scottish Highlands. A view more natural and sensible than the Puritan view of the Northern settlements which saw the Indians as devils incarnate. One could consider for instance Cotton Mather's 'Decennium Luctuorum' (1699). In that work as Louise K. Barnett suggests

> Mather uses synonyms for Indian which range from animal to devil. They are wolves, tigers, dragons, serpents infesting the garden, horrid Sorcerers, and hellish Perjurers and such as conversed with Demons. When the word "Indian" is employed in 'Decennium Luctuorum', it is seldom without a qualifier in the order of fierce, formidable, furious, or terrible."[12]

The Factor's horse refuses to flee from the Indian.

> Seemed by his solemn step and pace,
> Resolved I should the specter face,
> Nor faster moved, though spurred and pricked,
> Than Balaam's ass by prophet kicked;
> "Kekientop", the heathen cried;
> "How is it Tom," my friend replied;
> Judging from thence, the brute was civil,
> I boldly faced the courteous devil. (1.285-93)

Balaam's ass, of course, stopped because he saw an angel, not a devil or indeed an Indian, but it seems that even the horses in the New World are gifted with more sense than the Factor. The line reverberates back to the night before when the Factor was so clearly occupying the devil's territory, not God's, but this devil is at least a "courteous devil", and the target of the satire is obviously not the Indian, but the foolish misconceptions of the Factor gained from Puritan literature. The final lines of this section see a comical Indian confirming the stereotype.

> ...lugging out a dram of rum,

I gave his tawny worship some;
Who in his language as I guess,
My guide informing me no less,
Implored the devil me to bless:
I thanked him for his good intent,
And forward on my journey went. (1.294-300)

As an encounter with a barbaric devil it is inordinately polite.

Cooke's satire darkens as the Factor and his guide arrive in town, suggesting both the greater opportunity for vice which occurs when humanity is clustered together, and the novelty of such occasions in early Maryland. Again this is not the city and country dichotomy which occurs in British satire, in which the naive country observer functions to criticize the foolish and extravagant manners of the city. Cooke's purpose is to present the yokel coming to town in numbers, taking over, and losing any semblance of common sense in the process. The reason for a loss of sense is immediately apparent.

But I espied the town before me;
And roaring planters on the ground,
Drinking of healths, in circle round: (.376-78)

The Factor joins in, as do the judiciary:

Carousing punch in open air,
Til crier did the court declare:
The planting rabble being met
Their drunken worships likewise sat (1.385-88)

The court is a travesty of justice. The lawyers argue with "nonsense, stuff and false quotations,/With brazen lies, and allegations" (1.93-4). They are reduced to the level of animals, using "such strange motions with their paws,/As shows their zeal was rather bent/In blows to end the argument" (1.396-8). In the ensuing fracas, hats and wigs are lost to the sheriff, lying hidden where he might seize such items "for the queen, as stray" (1.412) and the whole thing ends in "usual manner,/In battle, blood and fractious clamor." (1.413-4) It is in

the town scenes that those elements of fulness, associated with satire since Dryden, are most apparent. We are pressed on every side by senseless, drunken rabble, and it is these scenes which have led Robert D. Arner to suggest that

> by the time his speaker has lapsed into frustrated silence, having cursed the entire colony and all who reside there, Cooke has become the first American author to transform completely the American Dream into a nightmare.[13]

It would be true to say that if there is no evidence of God's plan for the New World in the surrounding countryside, then there is no evidence of any sort of plan in the towns. The apocalyptic vision of the Puritans is only as far away as the nearest inn,

> Where all things were in such confusion,
> I thought the world at its conclusion,
> A herd of planters on the ground,
> O'erwhelmed with punch, dead drunk we found;
> Others were fighting and contending,
> Some burned their clothes, to save the mending;
> A few whose heads, by frequent use,
> Could better bear the potent juice,
> Gravely debated state affairs,
> Whilst I most nimbly tripped up stairs,
> Leaving my friend discoursing oddly,
> And mixing things profane and godly. (1.420-430)

In spite of this however, Cooke's satire remains secular and social. It is only clothes which are being burnt, and the dead are only "dead drunk". This is not the dreadful vision of Benjamin Tompson. Cooke's view is not as terrible, nor is there any overt suggestion of a divine lesson, which, if unheeded, will result in utter devastation. The biblical parallels invoked by Cooke are comic, not divine. They are a good example of an early tendency of American satire; to subvert the language of religion to secular satire, giving the satire added impetus, but it may be noted that the Factor, having found himself a hay loft in which to sleep off the excesses of the day, loses only his

apparel. He is thus reduced only to the situation of the colonists whom he saw on arrival.

> ... for my apparel;
> For one whose mind did much aspire
> To mischief, threw them in the fire.
> Equipped with neither hat nor shoe,
> I did my coming hither rue... (1.454-8)

The Factor's friend and guide whom he thinks is dead, is not in fact "dead and cold", and the miracle achieved in waking him is hardly to be compared with that of Lazarus.

> ...wringing of his bloody nose,
> By fighting got, we may suppose,
> I found him not so fast asleep,
> Might give his friends some cause to weep:
> Rise Oronoko, rise, said I,
> And from this hell and bedlam fly: (1.466-71)

America is targeted in these lines. The drunken rabble of this town fail to meet the standard of even a decent human society, and Cooke's use of religious language and allusion ensures that some sort of reverse image of a New Eden is kept firmly in mind. One recognizes that America should come a little closer than this to fulfilling its promise, but if the Factor is indeed in "hell and bedlam" then it is obviously of a worldly sort.

The Factor suffers, as do newcomers anywhere. His horse, having been left tied up all night without fodder, has slipped its halter and wandered off. Not unnaturally the planter's son runs after his father's horse, and although the Factor's "disappointment is so great" it "Did only jest and mirth create:" (1.82-3). In short, the Factor is not condemned to terrible torment, merely to the laughter of the seasoned colonists, who had probably not left their horses tied up all night without fodder. The Factor suffers, as do newcomers everywhere,

through a lack of local knowledge. Thus, before it is agreed with Robert D. Arner that

> Through the comedy, we see, in the language of Northrop Frye's *Anatomy*, "deserts of futility open up on all sides," and we have, in spite of the humour, a sense of nightmare and a close proximity to something demonic[14]

it should be remembered that the curse at the end of the poem comes only from a petulant Factor, who seems determined to the last to render his story in epic proportions, and that at this particular point in the poem the Factor is saved from what he describes as "hell and bedlam" by the intervention of a kindly planter, sent to him as usual by "fate".

> ...one more civil than the rest,
> In conversation for the best,
> Observing that for want of roan,
> I should be left to walk alone,
> Most readily did me entreat,
> To take a bottle at his seat,
> A favor at that time so great,
> I blessed my kind propitious fate. (l.484-91)

When the Factor arrives at the home of a rich planter who lives in a cedar house,[15] he gets drunk yet again. The imagery however shifts from biblical to classical reference, as another component of the American ideal is tested against reality.

> ...Midnight in her sable vest/Persuaded gods and men to rest.
> (l.509-10)

The Factor is awakened by a combination of "Fierce Aethon" and bed bugs, eats as well as "Neptune's doxy", and imbues this entire episode with all of the wonders of a Bacchanalian respite.

> Madeira strong in flowing bowls.
> Filled with extreme delight our souls;
> 'Til wearied with a purple flood,
> Of gen'rous wine, the giants' blood,
> As poets feign, away I made
> For some refreshing verdant shade. (l.529-34)

The lines overstate the effects of the Madeira, which apparently does not make either the Factor or the Planter drunk, but fills their souls with "extreme delight". The Factor does not become sleepy, but "wearied with a purple flood", of a wine which is described as "giants' blood", casting an ironic reflection on the "...jury, lawyers, and their clients" who were fighting like "earth-born giants". (1.406-7) It suggests a reason for their strength other than that offered by Genesis 6:4.

> There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of man, and they bore children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

Wine, however, does not make our Factor contentious, merely poetic, and in these lines, the reason for the 'but then' structure of the poem becomes apparent. When things are going well for the Factor he imposes all of his wildest fancies upon the New World. "As poets feign, away I made/ For some refreshing verdant shade." When things go badly however, all of the Factor's darkest nightmares are imposed on the New World. Truth may exist somewhere in between, would he but 'judge by sense, and trust his eyes'.

The Factor reels from a ludicrous pagan dream to an even more ludicrous pagan nightmare, complete with witches of black designs.

> Near which a jolly female crew,
> Were deep engaged at Lanterloo,
> In Nighttrails white, with dirty mien,
> Such sights are scarce in England seen,
> I thought them first some witches, bent
> On black designs, in dire convent. (1.544-49)

That such sights are "scarce in England seen" is ironic. Eighteenth century England was not noticeably lacking in harpies, if Hogarth's

paintings are anything to go by, further, it becomes apparent that these women have in fact come from England.

> "D-m you," says one, "though now so brave,
> I knew you late a four years' slave,
> What, if for planter's wife you go
> Nature designed you for the hoe".
> "Rot you" replies the other straight,
> "The captain kisses you for his freight;
> And if the truth was known aright,
> And how you walked the streets by night,
> You'd blush, if one could blush for shame,
> Who from Bridewell and Newgate came" (l.560-69)

These women then, are not witches bent on some black design: they are prostitutes and by joining them the Factor has, once again, demonstrated his own lack of judgment. More interestingly however, even in this almost wholly secular part of Cooke's satire some evidence of a reversal of the American Dream, later to be propounded by Franklin, is apparent. These women have prospered in the New World not through the virtue of their labour, but through vice. It is suggested that their new-found wealth violates some natural, rather than social law. "What, if for planter's wife you go,/Nature designed you for the hoe". 'Upward mobility' may not have been universally admired in America at this time, and these colonists are still sufficiently British to use a person's point of origin as a form of abuse, so that, in the microcosm of the poem, as with the macrocosm, in this small section we see idealizing concept - 'planter's wife'. imposed on an inadequate reality - 'farm worker'. The women are variously referred to as 'witches', 'Indian fraus' and 'punk'. Their 'affected air' is juxtaposed with having 'nicely learned to curse and swear' so that concept and reality are forced further apart. The New World doubtless abounded with many such types, and as long as British social standards were imposed upon a group of Colonists attempting to create a society in far different conditions, satire would flourish.

On the other hand, however, such is the structure of Cooke's poem with its constant testing of the American mythic framework against the Factor's experiences in America, that inevitably, by the time the reader gets to this aspect of the poem, these women are ultimately judged, not by British social norms, but by their failure to meet American standards as described by people like John Smith for whom America was a place where:

> ...people that have small wealth to live on, here
> by their labour may live exceedingly well...[16]

Clearly, for the Factor, neither the myth nor the anti-myth is working. Having overcome the acclimatization process which all travellers suffer, but which in his case lasts some nine months from "March 'til cold December" (l.515) he finally recalls the reason for his visit.

> I then began to think with care,
> How I might sell my British ware,
> That with my freight I might comply,
> Did on my Charter Party lie. (l.608-12)

However, having decided that he must now do some trading, he parts with his goods to a planter he just happens to meet 'riding near a sandy bay; again exhibiting a complete lack of judgment. The Quaker planter, who is the target of the satire here, is a 'pious conscientious rogue':

> Who neither swore, nor kept his word,
> But cheated in the fear o' th' Lord;
> And when his debts he could not pay,
> From trusting fools he'd run away. (l.618-22)

The Quaker is a cheat and a hypocrite, but the Factor is a fool, and the double-edged nature of Cooke's satire is very apparent in this section. The lawyer to whom the Factor appeals is also a cheat:

> And with a stock of impudence,

Supplied his want of wit and sense
With looks demure, amazing people,
No wiser than a daw on steeple: (l.645-48)

But if the lawyer is a predator the Factor is a willing victim.

I stated the preceding case,
And of my money was so free
That he'd have poisoned you or me,
And hanged his father on a tree,
For such another tempting fee. (l.650-54)

The Factor cannot, this time, be excused on the grounds that he lacks local knowledge, for at this point he becomes the most foolish of all possible fools, the one who thinks he is being clever.

Resolv'd to plague the holy brother,
I set one rogue to catch another. (l.664-5)

The punishment meted out to the Factor, is in exact accordance with his foolishness. The city to which he travels is not situated on a hill, shining like a beacon to all the world, but is 'situate on a plain', and appears to compare badly with London, being 'not so large as Tottenham Court'. The bench is no better than the one the Factor experienced previously, being met mainly to eat and drink.

But as for justice right or wrong,
Not one amongst the numerous throng
Knows what it means, or has the heart,
To vindicate a stranger's part. (l.681-84)

In spite of the accusations of 'bribed quacks' and 'biased courts' however, the court does find in the Factor's favour. The difficulty for the Factor lies rather with the form of recompense offered.

The biased court without delay
Adjudged my debt in country pay
In pipe-staves, corn, or flesh of boar
Rare cargo for the English shore. (l.693-96)

As a Factor, our narrator is a complete failure, largely through his own shortcomings so that the curse he offers up at the end of the poem as 'raging with grief' he runs for the boats, should not be taken seriously. It is akin to the "friends unkind" on whom he blamed his departure from England at the beginning of the poem. If America has failed to live up to its myth, then it must be plunged into the realms of the anti-myth by the enraged Factor.

> May cannibals transported o'er the sea
> Prey on these slaves, as they have done on me...
> May wrath divine then lay those regions waste
> Where no man's faithful, nor a woman chaste.

The colonists were not only to be cursed by God however, but by men, for embedded in this vision of apocalypse, is an altogether more realistic curse which takes due account of America as it exists, dependent upon trade.

> May never merchants' trading sails explore
> This cruel, this inhospitable shore;
> But left abandoned by the world to starve
> May they sustain the fate they well deserve.

Even in these lines however, there is a double-edge, for if the colonists are to "sustain the fate they well deserve", it might be remembered that the Factor too was "condemned by fate", and in view of his performance, deservedly so. The second-ending to the poem of 1731 is more consistent with the lessons the Factor has failed to learn throughout his time in the New World. Youngsters are warned to proceed in trading with 'caution', making sure to receive 'each hogshead' before paying. The Planters are likewise instructed not to abuse traders. They should, in short 'judge by sense,/and trust their eyes'. This ending, as becomes a New World satire, is more hopeful. The Factor envisages an ideal trading nation; a vision quite in

keeping with the secular nature of the satire and, with an ironic aside at the true nature of planters' hospitality, the Factor expresses his hopes for the future:

> And may that land where hospitality
> Is every planter's darling quality,
> Be by each trader kindly used.
> And may no trader be abused;
> Then each of them shall deal with pleasure,
> And each increase the other's treasure.

It is in these endings that the affinity Cooke's poem has with the religious satires previously discussed can be fully realized. In spite of its secular nature, the alternative endings given to 'The Sot-Weed Factor' by Cooke confirm a close affiliation between the structure of his poem and the Puritan Jeremiad. In the Puritan sermons and in the religious satires the afflictions suffered by the colonists were God-ordained and were not destructive but corrective. Thus the Puritan Jeremiads and the religious satires which followed their structure could end on a hopeful note in spite of the horrors depicted, as in the prayer of Benjamin Thompson at the end of "Chelmsfords Fate":

> Let this dear Lord the sad conclusion be
> Of poor New-Englands dismal tragedy
> Let not the glory of thy former work
> Blasphemed be by pagan Jew or Turk:
> But in its funeral ashes write thy Name
> So fair all Nations may expound the same:
> Out of her ashes let a Phoenix rise
> That may outshine the first and be more wise.[17]

The end of Tompson's poem can be compared with the two endings of Cooke's. The first ending offered by Cooke takes the form of a resounding curse, and incidently demonstrates the close links that satire has with the curse, as Elliot contends in his book *The Power of*

Satire.[18] The point, however, as far as the satire is concerned, is that it is a curse. The Factor does not merely rail against a recalcitrant material world, he brings down the whole weight of a 'wrath divine [to] lay those regions waste.' In so doing he confirms belief in an authority which has some interest in seeing virtue rather than vice triumph. In short, he confirms a moral framework for the poem, and in so doing confirms its status as a work of satire. As in the Puritan Jeremiads, in Cooke's poem, the antithesis confirms the thesis. At the end of the work we do not have visions of wilderness with its threat of a wholly material world where 'wanton nature...molded the brittle clay in jest', in which territory any sort of satire would be simply absurd. Rather 'The Sot-Weed Factor' ends with a vision of an avenging God, whose presence in the poem suggests that virtue can triumph and this gives the satirist the right to curse. If then, as I am suggesting, Cooke's secular satire has taken not just its language, but its structure from the Puritan Jeremiads, and the religious satires which followed them, it can be seen that when Cooke wished to modify his satire he had only to replace one sort of providence with another, to retain the corrective nature of the work. The secular nature of Cooke's second ending to the poem, suggests something of the nature of the emerging normative values of American satire.

It seems that by the time Ebenezer Cooke wrote 'The Sot-Weed-Factor' in 1708 American satire was developing a normative value which was distinctly its own. Biblical and Classical concepts imposed upon a landscape abundant enough to allow credence to be given them, was bringing into being a normative value which might be loosely termed

'ideal America'. This was at once geographical place and visionary concept and an ideal which the present reality of America would inevitably and always prove false as 'The Sot-Weed Factor' demonstrates. The use of such a concept as an 'ideal America', as a normative value in satire, is then dependent upon certain criteria. One way of asserting this ideal is to present a nostalgic view of the past. 'Ideal America' may be deemed to have existed in the past, and present real America may be shown to be failing that ideal. For Benjamin Thompson, writing in the 1670s, the 'golden age' existed in the 1630s and 40s. The other way in which this ideal can be asserted is as a view of the future, a view of a perfect America which present America is failing to realise. Thus Cooke's poem ends with a wish:

> ...may that land where hospitality
> Is every planters darling quality,
> Be by each trader kindly used,
> And may no trader be abused;
> The each of them shall deal with pleasure,
> And each increase the other's treasure.[19]

These lines, like the prayer which concludes Tompson's 'Chelmsford's Fate', epitomise the possibilities for perfection, both spiritual and secular, in the future, but rendered unobtainable because of present corruption. For the satirist then, asserting an 'ideal America' as a normative value, the rule would appear to be, to quote the White Queen, 'jam tomorrow and jam yesterday - but never jam to-day'.

In conclusion, Cooke's 'The Sot-Weed Factor' demonstrates American satire developing in a number of ways. There is the subversion of religious language which gives impetus to the attack of Cooke's wholly secular satire. Then, as an early American satire it demonstrates that the America of the promotional literature was sufficiently a

cultural commonplace as to form a positive framework for American satire, an 'ideal America'. This ideal, a composite of idealistic and realistic values, may be said to exist only in the past and the future. Its opposite, in Cooke's satire, exists in the America of his day. This is not to suggest that Cooke's view showed the contemporary America in which he lived. His successful satiric attack occurs by widening the gap between concept and reality by imposing a biblical and classical framework upon an equally exaggerated present-day corruption, dangers which in fact existed but perhaps not in such profusion. Like Benjamin Tompson's Indians, the town-scenes in "The Sot-Weed Factor" form a wilderness territory in which all meaning breaks down. In this America the landscape is frightening. The satirist may present not only a moral wilderness, but a physical wilderness stretching out on all sides, and if not God's territory, then the devil's; if not America suffused with spiritual import, then America devoid of all meaning; so if not the march towards perfection, then the backward slide to dissolution. Cooke's abnormally bleak vision of contemporary America cannot be compared with a real America, with all of the possibilities for good and bad that that entails, and it cannot be confirmed by experience. The satire must then remain hopeful or the reader is driven to protest, as indeed they did about the resounding curse which constituted the original ending to the poem. The colonists had every reason to want their venture to succeed, and their satires needed to serve that end. Cooke's satire usurps not just religious language from the Puritan pulpit, but taking its structure from the Jeremiad, it is able to assert a prophetic view of the future and urge the Americans toward realizing that perfect America. Finally, the narrator of Cooke's poem clings so doggedly to

his 'ideal America' of the promotional literature, that one sees something of an emergent absurd hero.

NOTES

1 Text for this poem from *The Norton Anthology*, vol. 1, W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1979, p.174. It is also mentioned in the introduction to the poem in that work that "In 1934, however, Lawrence C. Wroth, writing in the 'Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society', conjectured that Ebenezer Cooke was the son of a London merchant and that he came to America in 1694 as an agent (or "factor") in the tobacco (or "sot-weed") trade, returning to London in 1708. Wroth suggested that Cooke resettled in America in 1717 and established a home, first in Cecil County, Maryland, and later, in Prince George's County, where he was a landowner, attorney, and the author of an elegy which appeared in the Maryland Gazette. Cooke's permanent residence in Maryland would explain some softening of tone in the final version."

2 Alden, Raymond Macdonald, *The Rise of Formal Satire in England* (Norwood ed. 1978), p.245.

3 Lemay, J.A.L. *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland* Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1972, p.88.

4 Frye, Northrop, *The Anatomy of Criticism*, Princeton University Press, 1951, p.228.

5 Arner, Robert D. "The Blackness of Darkness: Satire, Romance, and Ebenezer Cooke's 'The Sot Weed Factor' ", *Tennessee Studies in Literature*, University of Tennessee Press, 1976, p.1-10.

6 Frye, Northrop, *The Anatomy of Criticism*, p.226.

7 Micklus, Robert. 'The Case against Ebenezer Cooke's Sot-Weed Factor' *American Literature*, Vol.56, No.2. May 1984, p.258.

8 Lemay, J.A.L. *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland*, University of Tennessee Press, 1972, p.79.

9 Johnson, Edward. 'The Wonder-Working Providence...' *American Literature Survey*, ed. Milton R. Stern & Seymour L. Gross, Penguin Books, New York, 1978. p.47.

10 Beverley Robert. *The History and Present State of Virginia, Colonial and Federalist American Writing*, ed. George F. Horner, and Robert A. Bain, Odyssey press Inc. New York, p.266.

11 Ward, Nathaniel, *The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam, Colonial and Federalist American Writing*, (Horner, George F. & Bain, Robert A. eds.), Odyssey Press Inc., New York, 1966, p.120.

12 Barnett, Louise K. *The Ignoble Savage*, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1975, p.5.

13 Arner, Robert D. 'The Blackness of Darkness: Satire, Romance, and Ebenezer Cooke's "The Sot Weed Factor" '.

14 Ibid., p.2-3.

15 This could refer to Psalms 92:12 'The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.'

16 Smith, John. 'A Description of New England', *American Literary Survey*, p.8.

17 Tompson, Benjamin. "Chelmsfords Fate" *The Puritans* vol. two, Ed. Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, Harper & Row, New York 1963, p.640.

18 For a full treatment of this tpic see Elliot, Robert C. *The Power of Satire, Magic, Ritual, Art*, Princeton University Press, 1960.

19 Cooke, Ebenezer. "The Sot-Weed Factor", (1931) *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, W.W. Norton & Co. New York, 1979, p.190.

III

WILLIAM BYRD AND BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

If a type of 'ideal America' was beginning to emerge as a normative value for American satire by the beginning of the eighteenth century, it was a normative value broad enough to encompass a variety of opinions as to what might constitute the type. Responses to the New World varied, and the response of Virginians differed from that of New Englanders. Lewis P. Simpson remarks:

> The Virginians of the post-Virginia Company era made a different kind of response to modern history from that of the New Englanders, defining their mission not as an errand into a howling wilderness, in the midst of which as God's regenerate band they would make a pleasure garden for Him, but as an errand into an open, prelapsarian, self-yielding paradise, where they would be made regenerate by entering into a redemptive relationship with a new and abounding earth. The vision of Virginia as a paradise, in contrast to a wilderness, as a matter of fact, appears in the writings of the Virginia Company days, notably in the writings of Captain John Smith. But the appearance of such a vision in a developed form does not occur until nearly a century later, when it becomes a major aspect of Robert Beverley's remarkable work *The History and Present State of Virginia.*[1]

This Virginian vision of paradise was used by Cooke in "The Sot-Weed Factor". Cooke's ironic reflections on planter's hospitality could have had their source in Robert Beverley's *The History and Present State of Virginia*, and could have structured the adventures of the sot-weed Factor around the explanation offered by Beverley as to why some might curse the country.

> That which makes this Country most unfortunate, is, that it must submit to receive its Character from the Mouths not only of unfit, but very unequal Judges; ... Many of the Merchants and others that go thither from England, make no distinction between a cold, and a hot Country: but wisely go sweltering about in their thick Clothes all the

> Summer, ... and then unfairly complain of the heat of the Country. They greedily Surfeit with their delicious Fruits,... they imprudently fall to drinking cold Water, or perhaps New Cider, which in its Season, they find at every Planter's house;... and so fall into Fluxes, Fevers, and the Bellyache; and then, to spare their own Indiscretion, they in their Tarpawlin Language, cry, God D.. the Country.[2]
>
> (Book III, Ch.19)

Cooke's poem however, in spite of its unreliable narrator, makes nonsense of a variety of accounts of the New World. The Sot-Weed Factor finds Beverley himself and others like him, 'very unequal Judges', and the overall importance to the development of American satire of the promotional literature which did so much to stimulate a local and American satire should not be underestimated.

At times *The History and Present State of Virginia* is a panegyric to America's beauties, and if Beverley's sincerity is not in doubt, the complete fidelity of his descriptions is.

> Here they enjoy all the benefits of a warm Sun, and by their shady Groves, are protected from its Inconvenience. Here all their senses are entertain'd with an endless Succession of Native Pleasures. Their Eyes are ravished with the Beauties of naked Nature. Their Ears are Serenaded with the perpetual murmur of Brooks, and the thorough bass which the Wind plays, when it wantons through the trees;...[3]

The paradise Beverley presents, unlike that of the Puritans, is entirely one of the sense, a pagan landscape rife with sexuality. The native pleasures are 'endless': a 'naked Nature' ravishes the eyes; ears are serenaded, not by a wind that merely whistles or moves through the trees, but a wind which 'wantons'. Nor do the plantations desecrate this natural paradise, but blend easily with their

surroundings. Beverley's prose slides easily from a description of one to a description of the other.

> Have you pleasure in a Garden? All things thrive in it, most surprisingly; you can't walk by a Bed of Flowers, but besides the entertainment of their Beauty, your Eyes will be saluted with the charming colors of the Humming Bird, which revels among the Flowers, and licks off the Dew and Honey from their tender Leaves, on which it only feeds. Its size is not half so large as an English Wren, and its color is a glorious shining mixture of Scarlet, Green, and Gold. Colonel Byrd, in his Garden, which is the finest in that country, has a Summer-House set round with the Indian Honey-Suckle, which all the Summer is continually full of sweet Flowers, in which these Birds delight exceedingly. Upon these Flowers, I have seen ten or a dozen of these Beautiful Creatures together, which sported about me so familiarly, that with their little Wings they often fann'd my Face.[4]

Both natural landscape and plantation are described in idyllic terms and, since ideal plantations probably entail ideal planters, Beverley's descriptions of plantation managers' lives likewise, border on the panegyric.

The importance of the emergence of this type of ideal planter to nostalgic views of the 'Old South' in American literature is well documented. As Simpson remarks:

> The glimpse of a planter like a Beverley or a Byrd seated pleasantly amid the honeysuckle and the humming-birds in that faraway summer, foreshadows the evocation in literary imagining of a pastoral plantation situated in a timeless "Old South," a secure world redeemed from the ravages of history, a place of pastoral independence and pastoral permanence... [5]

The emergence of this figure is important to the development of American satire. In Cooke's poem the Factor's continued insistence on an 'ideal America' rendered the Factor absurd, but also somewhat

heroic in his resolute clinging to the ideal in spite of experience. On the other hand, as instances of the Factor's disappointments compounded a growing awareness that America was failing to meet the ideal, gave the satire a distinct double edge. Ultimately Cooke's satire depends upon future promise in order to assert an 'ideal America', but just as a nostalgic view of the past or a glorious view of the future can serve as a standard in satire by which all is judged, so too can a character who clings to an ideal in spite of the corruption and vice depicted elsewhere in the satire. The nostalgic views of America's past and the glorious views of America's future serve to forge a link between the present real America and the ideal. A character of ideal type, similarly can embrace the ideal without losing all links with common humanity. In an America which was at once geographical place and spiritual ideal such a figure is of use to the satirist and one recognizes in Cooke's Sot-weed Factor a certain propensity to fulfil the type. The promotional literature, which did so much to stimulate early attempts at satire in America, is serving, in part, to set the standard which America fails.

Given the euphoric descriptions of America in the promotional literature, it is small wonder that Pat Tailfer, Hugh Anderson, David Douglas (F. 1741) and others were driven to protest that their settlement was not like this. Patrick Tailfer, an original settler of Georgia, quarreled with Governor Oglethorpe, and was forced to flee to Charleston. There, with assistance from Hugh Anderson, David Douglas and other Georgia settlers, he published a carefully documented early history of Georgia, the primary purpose of which was to satirize Oglethorpe's administration. Oglethorpe was an English general who

had obtained a charter for the colony of Georgia as an asylum for the debtor class and persecuted Protestants of England. The satire by Tailfer and his associates, "A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia in America" (1741) is directed at two types of readers: those in Britain who are unable to understand why the authors are unsatisfied when so much in the way of a pleasant climate and general benefactions are given: and those in America who would be equally surprised to find numbers of people considered foolish enough as to be expected to live in Georgia without Negroes and without title to their lands.

As with other satires of this type, the authors gain some resonance from the title, since other 'true' accounts of the province were at best only tenuously linked to reality, and at worst bore no relation to the facts at all, the purpose of promotional literature being to entice settlers to America. The authors excuse their own credulity.

> The Mind of Man is naturally curious and enterprizing; we easily feed our Wishes into Realities, and affect and look upon every Novelty in the most favourable Light, how easy then is it, for Cunning and Artifice to lay hold the weak Sides of our Fellow-Creatures, as we catch fish with a Hook baited to their particular Goat.[6]
>
> (Preface xiii)

The point is of course that people emigrating to America hoped for a better life than the one they had left. Given that expectations are inclined to grow in proportion to the difficulty of achieving them, the precarious nature of the American enterprise for new settlers ensured a real sense of outrage if hopes went unfulfilled. To prove that accounts of America sent to Britain were largely hyperbole, the authors of 'A True and Historical Narrative...' suggest they need only

"transcribe some Passages from a piece of Prose, and some from a piece of Poesie." The extract used is from a pamphlet printed in London in 1732 entitled "A New and Accurate Account of the Provinces of South Carolina and Georgia."

> Such an Air & Soil can only be described by a Poetical Pen, because there is no Danger of exceeding the Truth; therefore take Waller's "Description of an Island in the Neighbourhood of Carolina" to give you an Idea of this happy Climate.
>
> The Spring which but salutes us here,
> Inhabits there, and courts them all the Year:
> Ripe fruits and blossoms on the lime Tree live;
> At once they promise what at once they give,
> So sweet the Air, so moderate the Clime,
> None sickly lives, or dies before his Time,
> Heaven sure has kept this Spot of Earth uncurst,
> To show how all Things were created.
>
> (Preface xiv)[7]

The original pamphlet had been written by Governor Ogelthorpe to raise money for his asylum for persecuted Protestants. Pat Tailfer and the others render the eulogizing pamphlet ludicrous not by parody but by the flat and unemotional prose in which they describe the same landscape.

> Georgia lies in the 30 and 31 Degrees of North Latitude. The Air generally clear, the rains being much shorter as well as heavier than in England; the Dews are very great...

or

> Five Miles South West of Savannah, on a small Rise, stands the village of Highgate: Twelve families were settled here in 1733, mostly French, now reduced to Two. A Mile Eastward of this is Hampstead, where several German Families were settled in 1733, and some others since, now reduced to none.[8]

The flat style of concrete description, and the mathematical attention to detail has a twofold purpose. It renders the information gleened from promotional literature suspect in the mind of the reader, and

simultaneously establishes the credentials of the authors of 'A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia in America', lending credence to the satiric attack. The unsentimental prose style will be used to good effect by other American satirists and this trait is notable, from 'Our Forefather's Song' onwards, as a reaction to the promotional literature, foreshadowing the style of Mark Twain.

Although poor government, in the person of James Ogelthorpe whose colonial policy led to his permanent return to England in 1743, is the true target of the satire, in the Dedication the authors begin their attack on flamboyant prose. Dedication and flattery, they insist, are synonomous, and the dedicator 'concludes himself fortunate, if he can discover a less trite and direct Method of flattering than is usually practised.'[9] The authors of the present dedication, however,

> are happily prevented from the least Intention of this kind, by the repeated offerings of the Muses and News-writers: Twere presumptuous even to dream of equalling or encreasing them... .[10]

Credentials for plain speaking thus established, the authors go on to render James Ogelthorpe ridiculous. It is true that the state has matured quickly under Ogelthorpe but:

> Your Excellency lives to see (what few Founders ever aspired after) the great Decline and almost final Termination of it.[11]

Ogelthorpe, in true comic fashion, has achieved the reverse of what was intended, and has done so by over-governing on a grand scale: 'such a copious Jumble of Power and Politicks'.

> We shall content ourselves with observing that all those beauteous Models of Government which the little States of Germany exercise, and those extensive liberties which the Boors of Poland enjoy, were designed to concenter in your System, and were we to regard Modes of Government, we must have been strangely unlucky to have missed of the

> best, where there was the Appearance of so great a Variety; for under the Influence of our Perpetual Dictator, we have seen something like Aristocracy, Oligarchy, as well as the Triumbirate, Decembirate and Consular Authority of famous Republicks, which have expired many Ages before us: What wonder then we share the same Fate? ...our Publick-Works...are dignified like theirs with the same venerable Desolation. The hogg-House indeed is like to be the last forsaken Spot of your Empire.[12]

Ogelthorpe is attacked in more concrete manner in the main body of the work. Something of a despot, he was known to threaten juries. He made people afraid to speak their minds, by a show of force in the presentation of firearms at court everyday. Public works did not prosper and the planting of mulberry trees failed because of a poor choice of ground.

> Wells and Forts, in different Places, were all set about, but as is evident from the Event, with no Design to serve the Publick, but only to amuse the World...for few or none of these things were ever brought to Perfection.[13]

The concrete nature of the complaints against Ogelthorpe suggests the Governor was guilty of mis-management, and indeed the work ends with a petition. Like the sot-weed Factor, Tailfer and his co-authors had been badly disappointed by their experiences in the New World and Beverley's vision of the independent planter happily ensconced on his plantation has apparently been dismissed as mere hyperbole. This dismissal of the vision of the promotional literature however, may be more apparent than real. There is, in this satire, that which suggests that if Beverley's vision has been thrown out by the front door, then it has come creeping in through the back.

Tailfer's satire judges the Georgia colony a failure because it does not fulfil the promise of the promotional literature. The authors expected to prosper in America and their satire complains that

they did not. This, they suggest ironically, was because of the Governor's concern for their spiritual well-being.

> They fondly imagin'd it necessary to communicate such young Settlements, the fullest Rights and Properties, all the Immunities of their Mother Countries, and Privileges rather more extensive: By such Means indeed these Colonies flourish'd with early Trade and Affluence; but Your Excellency's Concern for our perpetual Welfare could never permit you to propose such transitory Advantages for us...[14]

Nor is a greater independence all that the authors are prevented from attaining. They are kept from riches by the altruism of a governor who knows that riches are inclined to 'inflat weak Minds with Pride.' For similar reasons Ogelthorpe protects them from 'all Earthly Comforts', and they have to toil so hard that they are 'effectively defended from any further ambition.' They are kept from owning properties, which doesn't 'beget contention; so we are not puzzled by any System of Laws to ascertain and establish them.'[15] Given the attack of this satire, the authors obviously did expect to become rich, independent and property owning in America. It seems that they hoped to become a member of the leisured class, for one of the major charges levelled against Ogelthorpe is his refusal to allow the introduction of slaves.

> The valuable Virtue of Humility is secured to us, by your Care to prevent our procuring, or so much as seeing any Negroes, (the only humane Creatures proper to improve our soil) lest our simplicity might mistake poor Africans for greater Slaves then ourselves.[16]

It seems that if this satire is directed against the hyperbole of promotional literature, then the authors nevertheless expected to realise the ieals. After reprinting the Royal Charter in full, they insist 'the country was laid out as an earthly paradise.' And how could it fail,

> when the Nation was so bountiful; the king so gracious; the Trustees so disinterested and honourable, who had, for the Benefit of Mankind, given up that Ease and Indolence to which they were entitled'?[17]

The authors are being ironic, but in writing their satire, they so clearly expected the type to be fulfilled, so obviously desired an 'earthly paradise', that a normative value is created from the very promotional literature they dismissed as hyperbole in their Preface.

The type of ideal plantation and ideal plantation owner is embraced more wholeheartedly in the work of William Byrd (1674-1744). Simpson remarks that when Beverley wrote his account the significance of the individual plantation as a symbol of independent dominion was only beginning to emerge:

> The translation of paradise into the 'paradise improved' desired by Beverley occurs specifically in the imagination of William Byrd II, or as he is best known, William Byrd of Westover.[18]

Simpson goes on to quote a letter written by Byrd to the Earl of Orrery in 1726, in which one finds epitomised all of the possibilities implied by Beverley in his vision. There is of course 'the advantage of pure air', and, Byrd tells his friend, 'we abound in all kinds of provisions without expense.' By this, Byrd hastens to add, he means 'we who have plantations,' and it is small wonder that Messrs Tailfer, Anderson and Douglas, wished to add their names to that number for Byrd writes:

> I have a large family of my own, and my doors are open to everybody, yet I have no bills to pay, and half a crown will rest undisturbed in my pockets for many moons together. I live in a kind of independence on everyone but Providence. ...we sit securely under our vines and our fig trees without any danger of our property. We have neither public robbers nor private, which your Lordship will think very strange when we have often needy governors and

> pilfering convicts sent amongst us...Thus, My Lord we are very happy in our Canaans if we could but forget the onions and fleshpots of Egypt.[19]

In this extract Byrd also identifies himself with the patriarchs, and sees his role in terms of ensuring that everyone 'draw his equal share to carry the machine forward.' He is proud of his 'independence'. Money is become unnecessary, and the happy plantation owner sits securely under his fig trees, presumably because those dubious characters sent by Britain reformed upon their entry into a paradise where so much was given.

It must be allowed that, of all 'southern gentlemen', William Byrd II exemplified the type. He had inherited and improved the family home of Westover, and his hospitality was renowned. His library of over 4,000 volumes was reputed to be the largest in the English colonies, and his cultural interests included membership of the Royal Society. He was a cosmopolitan intellectual, devoted to public service. His commission as a surveyor of Virginia-North Carolina border resulted in a *History of the Dividing Line* which shows him a capable and graceful writer, while *The Secret History of the Dividing Line*, a variant of the first work, shows a ready wit. William K. Boyd remarks in an introduction to the first edition of *Histories of the Dividing Line*:

> He is the best type of Virginia gentleman of the Eighteenth Century; few, if any, were his equal in personality and wealth of ideas until the days of the Revolution.[20]

When we turn to Byrd's satire, *The Secret History of the Dividing Line* we find that it is dominated by the very American values embodied in the type of the ideal plantation owner.

In his *Secret History of the Dividing Line*, Byrd gives himself the name of Steddy. This is in contrast with names given to other members of the expedition: Firebrand (Richard Fitz-William), Meanwell (William Dandridge), Judge Jumble (Chief Justice Gale), Shoebrush (John Lovick) and Puzzlecause (William Little). Names are intended to denote aspects of character, and Steddy no less than the others. In the course of the narrative it becomes apparent that Steddy is better tempered than Firebrand.

> Then they past for several Miles together by the North Side of the Great Dismal, and after a Journey of 25 Miles, arriv'd in good Order at May. Crawfords over against Norfolk Town. Just before they got hither, the Log Commissioners over took them, and all the Men were drawn up to receive them. Meanwell was so Civil as to Excuse his not meeting Steddy at Mr Allens as had been agreed; but Firebrand was too big for Apology.[21]

The 'southern gentleman' it seems, is gracious even when inconvenienced, and nor is his graciousness merely a matter of form. Where Steddy is out-going and convivial, Firebrand is deemed to be ludicrously formal and stiff.

> Our good Landlord entertain'd Steddy, and the Chaplain at Dinner, but Firebrand refused, because he was not sent to in due form.[22]

Where the 'southern gentleman' pays due regard to his religious devotions, Firebrand and indeed the Virginian surveyor William Mayo show no such compunction.

> This being Sunday we were edified at Church by Mr Marston with a good sermon. In the Mean time Firebrand and Astralabe not having quite so much regard for the Sabbath, went to the N.W. Landing to pepare Vessels for our Transportation to Coratuck.[23]

And where the 'southern gentleman' adapted to the rough circumstances of their trek, Firebrand, inflated with the idea of his own

importance, insists protocol be observed even in regard to his servants.

> Firebrand had taken Care to Board his Man Tipperary with Capt. Wilson, because by being the Squire of his Body he thought him too much a Gentleman to diet with the Men we left behind.[24]

Throughout *The Secret History of the Dividing Line* one discovers that whereas other members of the expedition are satirized the voice of Steddy maintains an Horatian tone, is constant and aloof from displays of temper and vulgarity. In his introduction to a recent edition of the work Percy Adams suggests that Byrd, on this expedition, was aware of his position as cultured aristocrat and statesman.

> ...even though Byrd recorded it all, one fact stands out about his frank exposé of the sex life of the surveyors: He never admitted that he himself was guilty of any sex act or of any offense against good manners. The only admission he made was that on a rainy morning he might lie in bed late and indulge in licentious thoughts. ... Not only did he bring along a minister ...he was the leader who was not going to stoop to vulgarities of any kind.[25]

On this expedition Byrd's behaviour may have been exemplary, but there is in the 'Secret Diary' which Byrd kept and in his journals and letters much which suggests a healthy concern with sex and perhaps a less than an exemplary character. In his 'Secret Diary' the entry for 30 July, 1710 reads:

> In the afternoon my wife and I had a little quarrel which I reconciled with a flourish. Then she read a sermon in Dr Tillotson to me. It is to be observed that the flourish was performed on the billiard table.[26]

The mischievous nature of this extract suggests that the voice of Steddy is, at least in part, a satiric *persona*. Even in *The Secret History of the Dividing Line* one discovers, embedded in the narrative, hints that to equate Byrd's behaviour with that of Steddy is too

simplistic. It can be noted, for instance, that the Southern Gentleman's chivalry toward women did not extend to society's lower orders.

> I retir'd early to our Camp at some distance from the house, while my Collegues tarry'd within Doors, & refresh't themselves with a Cheerful Bowl. In the Gaity of their Hearts, they invited a Tallow-faced Wench that had sprain'd her Wrist to drink with them, and when they had rais'd her in good Humour, they examined all her hidden Charms, and play'd a great many gay Pranks. While Firebrand who had the most Curiosity, was ranging over her sweet Person, he pick't off several Scabs as big as Nipples, the Consequence of eating too much Pork. The poor Damsel was disabled from making any resistance by the Lameness of her Hand; all she cou'd do, was, to sit still, & make the Fashionable Exclamation of the Country, Flesh live & tear it, & by what I can understand she never spake so properly in her Life.[27]

It is true that Steddy does not participate in this perverted act, but the tone of the prose appears to condone it. Firebrand and the others are clearly drunk, and are the target of the satire: they conceive of the act in the 'Gaity of their Hearts,' and it is included amid a 'great many gay Pranks'. Firebrand comes under further attack: he has the 'most curiosity' and, it is pretended, this is sufficient reason for the casual infliction of pain on one unable to resist. Nevertheless when the satire shifts to the 'poor Damsel's ...'fashionable exclamation of the Country', she becomes the target of the satire who 'never spake so properly in her life'. The act seems condoned, and the narrative voice, on this occasion, betrays an attitude at odds with the cultured aristocrat and statesman which Steddy purports to be. Further, Byrd describes the scene so graphically may well have been present, rather than 'retir'd' as is claimed for Steddy, in which case Steddy cannot simply be a substitute

for William Byrd. He becomes something in the nature of a satiric *persona*, behaving on occasions perhaps better than Byrd in fact did.

If Steddy is something in the nature of a satiric *persona* then it can be suggested that the normative values in this satire, seem embodied in his character. Steddy fears the slide into barbarism, as did Byrd, and is, above all, a cultured man. In addition to stemming the bad behaviour of other expeditioners, he is far above them in matters of culture and wit and despises barbarism in all its forms as is apparent when the uncultured rural types are satirized.

> The truth of it is, these People live so much upon Swine's flesh, that it don't only incline them to the Haws, and consequently to the downfall of their Noses, but makes them likewise extremely hoggish in their Temper, & many of them seem to Grunt rather than Speak in their ordinary conversation.[28]

Then quality of the prose has a conscious artistry which bespeaks a cultured man. Puns are common: his 'good Father intended him for the Mathematics, but he never cou'd rise higher in that Study than to gage a Rum Cask.'[29] The work abounds in biblical and classical allusion: 'I halted as bad as old Jacob, without having wrestled with any thing like an Angel,'[30] and like the other neo-classicists of his day he employs parallel structure to great effect. Thus in addition to Steddy's religious observance, impeccable good manners, and general decency one must add culture and wit. Steddy also exhibits qualities of leadership and, for the most part, chivalry towards women.

> Shoebrush was smitten at the first Glance, and examined all her net Proportions with a critical Exactness. She struggled just enough to mke her Admirer more eager, so that if I had not been there, he wou'd have been in Danger of carrying his Joke a little too far.[31]

Steddy possesses enough virtue to form the normative values for a number of satires, but the embodiment of so many values in a satiric *persona* suggests an interesting and important difference between this satire and, for instance, one written by Pope.

In Pope's work the attack is general and the normative values, humility, honour, virtue, honesty and the like, allowed to remain pure and abstract. Pope declares:

> Know then this Truth (enough for man to know)
> VIRTUE alone is Happiness below.
> ('An Essay on Man' Ep. IV. 309-10)

Virtue in Pope's work is an ideal which all of humanity should strive to embrace. In Byrd's satire, on the other hand, the ideal qualities of virtue, honour, honesty and the like are so completely embodied in the character of Steddy, that one is inclined to accept this human manifestation of the 'ideal plantation owner' as that to which we should aspire. It is as if Pope had created the character of the perfect Augustan gentleman, complete with lands and title, and placed him in the middle of 'An Essay on Man' as a standard for judgment. In effect of course, the Augustan gentleman does exist in 'An Essay on Man', but not complete with material accoutrements. He exists only in the Horation tones of the satire, and such is Pope's control that this satiric *persona* is never allowed to take flesh and become a character. In Byrd's work, Steddy, complete with human form and human needs, is constantly before us, and cultured, gracious Southern Gentleman that he is, becomes himself the standard or normative value of the satire. It is against Steddy that we judge, not only the failings of the other expeditioners, but also our own.

The exploits of the other expeditioners are, in addition to bickering and quarrelling, by and large sexual. If the natural garden of Virginia, was supposed to become the garden improved via the order imposed by the patriarchal plantation owner, then in Firebrand and the others we find only untrammelled nature unimproved. The most offensive sexual episode, that of plucking scabs from a helpless victim, was reserved for Firebrand,[32] Other expeditioners are almost as bad and abuse the laws of hospitality with their licentiousness.

> But it seems they broke the Rules of Hospitality, by several gross Freedoms they offer'd to take with our Landlord's Sister. She was indeed a pretty Girl, and therefore it was prudent to send her out of harm's Way.[33]

Even the Parson is not exempt from innuendo: 'The Parson lay with Puzzlecause in the Tent, to keep him honest, or peradventure, to partake of his diversion if he shou'd be otherwise,'[34] but always the poor behaviour of others is judged by the behaviour of Steddy.

> I was more concern'd at this unhandsome Behaviour, because the People were extremely Civil to us, & deserv'd a better Treatment. The Surveyors came to us at Night, very much Jaded with their dirty work, and Orion Slept so Sound that he had been burn't in his Blanket, if the Centry had not been kinder to him than he deserv'd.[35]

It becomes apparent, as one sexual episode after another is exposed in the 'Secret History' and as the expeditioners quarrel their way along the dividing line, meeting Indians and 'Lubberlanders' as they go, that not only can an 'ideal America' form an acceptable satiric normative value, but so can the 'ideal American' who lives there.

The potential use of a type of ideal American in works of American satire is threefold. Most obviously such a figure can be used to

promote the values with which the satire is concerned, and unlike visions of America's glorious future or nostalgic views of America's past, can serve as an exemplar in the satirist's present real America. Such a figure can retain links with common humanity and thereby function as a mediator between what is ideal and therefore abstract, and the real. Finally it can be recognized that this figure has the capacity to reconcile other contradictions. In the figure of an ideal planter, for instance, the keeping of slaves can be offset by a kindly patriarchal attitude or the mercenary business of acquiring land can be offset by the chivalry, honour and culture of the man who acquires it. The development of this figure in American satire is important. For a satirist wishing to urge his fellow Americans toward perfection in an imperfect world, the figure represents a possible perfect life, and seems to exist in that hinterland where the real and the ideal meet. William Byrd, Southern Gentleman, has become one such type, but it would be fair to say that the more famous exemplar of the type was living in the North.

Benjamin Franklin (1706-90) seems to have been far more aware than Byrd, who after all did not live to see the American Revolution, that he was living through a period of a tremendous change in human values. He sems, probably because of the Puritan influence on the writing of his *Autobiography*, more consciously aware of his role as exemplar, and in that work constructs a role for himself which, he suggests, can be emulated by others.

> Having emerg'd from the Poverty and Obscurity in which I was born & bred, to a State of Affluence & some Degree of Reputation in the World, and having gone so far thro' Life with a considerable Share of Felicity, the conducing Means I made use of, which, with the Blessing of God, so well succeeded, my Posterity may like to know, as they may find some

> of them suitable to their Situations, & therefore fit to be imitated.[36]

Franklin's *Autobiography* is not of course a work of satire, but the work does give an indication of the way in which an exemplary figure is created, and is worthy of consideration here, for Franklin of the *Autobiography* is not precisely that of the Franklin of history. Robert F. Sayre has argued that Franklin readily slipped into poses because he lived in a fluid world.

> If no strict and dogmatic religion exactly defined man's role in respect to Heaven and no rigid social structure exactly defined his role on earth, then man's role could be whatever he chose to make it.[37]

It might be added that this fluidity was perhaps nowhere more apparent than in America where immigrants expected to create their own destinies, which must have included becoming the sort of person they wished to be. Sayre goes on to suggest that Franklin's day-to-day identities approached poses, and certainly in the first part of the autobiography there is a Franklin which is in part, a fictional *persona*.

> Franklin was writing to himself as well as about himself, developing correspondences between the past and the present. It is the changes, the lack of coherence which another sensibility might have found alarming, which Franklin works upon to find dramatic and striking. The famous arrival in Philadelphia "eating my Roll", is recognized to have enormous emblematic value, and the elder Franklin does all he can to bring out the contrast, "that you may in your Mind compare such unlikely Beginnings with the Figure I have since made there."...The penniless waif is built up as the opposite yet the origin of the gentleman "expecting a Weeks uninterrupted Leisure in my present Country Retirement."[38]

The Franklin of history was not quite the penniless waif he appears in *The Autobiography*. He had arrived tired from the boat journey down

the Delaware River, he had spent his last pocket money, and he had no change of clothes, but his luggage was coming around from New York by ship. Yet the idea of a poverty-stricken waif who through virtuous industry and effort becomes rich and famous in America has been immortalized by Horatio Alger and is become so much a part of the "American Dream" that it does not needs reiteration. The point, in terms of the development of American satire, is that industry was supposed to be virtuous, that virtue was to be rewarded in material as well as spiritual terms, and that the quest for riches was not to be for their own sake. Given an inherent contradiction between the pursuit of virtue and the pursuit of mammon, a need for an exemplary figure can be recognized.

For Franklin, acquiring riches was a means, not an end in itself and the correlation in Franklin's mind between wealth and virtue has been adequately defined by Stephen Fender.

> Franklin's materialism was more profound...for he tried to be rich in order to be good.[39]

To be sure, Franklin's goodness was inclined to take a utilitarian turn, but the founding of hospitals and nations needs a financial base. For Franklin acquiring riches meant he could leave a successful printing business in the hands of his business partner in 1748 in order to pursue interests in science and diplomacy. Money was not pursued for its own sake, but for the sake of improvement, personal, moral, social or national. "Improvement", as Fender remarks, "was what mattered",[40] and in pursuit of this end the Franklin of the *Autobiography* becomes another of the type of "ideal American", in whom

the values of an "ideal America" are apparently reconciled. In the words of Sacvan Bercovitch:

> From Mather through to Emerson, American autobiography served rhetorically to resolve the conflicts inherent in the very meaning of "free-enterprise": spiritual versus material freedom, private versus corporate enterprise, the "cultural idea" expressed by the country's "purest minds" versus the "cultural fact" embodied in a vast economic-political undertaking.[41]

It seems that these early Americans created not only their country in the image of their expectations, but also a pattern for their lives.

These early 'ideal Americans' were comprised, as was the ideal America, of a synthesis of spiritual and secular aspirations. If such figures were to serve as exemplars it was necessary that they should at least remain likeable, and retain some small share of human imperfections which paradoxically served only to render the 'ideal' desirable. Absolute perfection is not only impossible in human terms; it may not even be desirable, as the double-edged characteristic of American satire often demonstrates, and neither Byrd, nor Franklin present themselves as perfect. In Byrd's *History of the Dividing Line*, a tale is told of the Nottoway Indians whose custom it was to provide female bedfellows for male visitors.

> We were unluckily so many, that they cou'd not well make us the Complement of Bedfellows...tho' a grave Matron whisper'd one of the Commissioners very civily in the Ear, that if her Daughter had been but one year Older, she should have been at his Devotion.[42]

In *The Secret History of the Dividing Line*, Steddy admits that it was into his ear that the Matron whispered, thus rendering Steddy's character human and more lovable, while the notion that Steddy is sexually attractive to women does not exactly detract from the wish to

emulate such a character. Franklin too remains human, and is well aware of the difficulties of perfection.

> ...something that pretended to be reason was every now and then suggesting to me that such extreme nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which if it were known would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself to keep his friends in countenance.[43]

The narrative voices created by these two writers are 'ideal' in that they suggest the kind of life one might aspire to, but 'real' in the sense that they retain human imperfections, forging a link between the real and the ideal. In satire they enhance the possibility of our objectively recognizing what Bercovitch has called that "disproportion between (a man's) intention and the reality he will encounter".[44] This function is the hallmark of the 'absurd hero' in American fiction. Such figures are never perfect but they are of the sort of possible life that one might invent for oneself, and America, in the eighteenth century the possibilities for re-creating the self were manifold.

An interesting feature of Byrd's writing, and to a greater extent that of Franklin's is the notion that one's life is a plastic unformed substance which can be moulded according to a concept or an idea. Even one's faults, it seems, are a matter of conscious choice, and the freedom to choose between a large number of interests and careers is a feature in the lives of both men. Byrd in addition to his public service, plantation management, business interests and obvious culture, was a keen herbalist doctor and observer of wild life. The breadth and range of Franklin's interests are legendary. It is

perhaps unsurprising in these circumstances that the writing methods of these two men should include a conceived role for themselves as authors, even when apparently relating facts. Further, the two men were writing at a time when the dominant literary model was satiric and it has been suggested by Robert F. Sayre that:

> The poses and masks which Franklin came across in his reading - not only in Bysshe's eighteenth-century translation of Xenophon, but in Addison, Swift, Defoe, Arbuthnot, Gay, Dryden, Pope and other Augustan satirists - were more than literary ones to be assumed in his scores of hoaxes and pieces of satiric journalism; there were 'real' ones to be tried out in life as well. This is evident in Franklin's tireless affection for pranks, for practical jokes, and disguises. Franklin readily slipped into poses in the Autobiography because he had lived in a fluid world. His day-to-day identities approached poses.[45]

Franklin's writing suggests he was well aware of the ironies implicit in posing as an exemplary figure. Franklin's preface of 1758 to the *Poor Richard's Almanacs* gives an insight into the basis of Poor Richard's "improved character". The first person narrative allows Poor Richard himself ironically to reveal the failure of his didacticism and utilitarian wisdom. Poor Richard, in the 'Preface of 1758', listens to a sermon based on his own sayings, and at its conclusion is driven to remark:

> The People heard it, and approved the Doctrine, and immediately practised the contrary, just as if it had been a common sermon.

As Cameron C. Nickels remarks of the *Poor Richard's Almanacs*:

> Although perhaps useful by themselves, the contents of the almanacs are made part of a larger complex prose narrative. If the theme of that narrative seems to prefigure the archetypal American success story, Franklin's rendering of the theme is more closely akin to the stories of Fitzgerald's rich boys than to the stories of Horatio Alger's poor boys.[46]

Poor Richard's ambitions remain unfulfilled, and as Poor Richard has spent many years urging a philosophy that is eventually revealed as impractical, the characteristic double-edge of American satire is recognizable. The Poor Richard of the later almanacs must be seen as an ironic *persona*, not as Benjamin Franklin, for as D.H. Lawrence once said of Franklin, 'He knew what he was about, this sharp little man, he set up the first dummy American.'[47]

Franklin and Byrd lived in a rapidly changing world, but it would be true to say that the role-playing so vigorously embraced in America as a means of exercising freedom of choice, was the subject of satiric attack on the other side of the Atlantic, where social forms were more fixed. A variety of literary works as far apart as Jonson's *Volpone* and Austen's *Mansfield Park* demonstrate this. Society became more fluid in the course of the eighteenth century, even in Europe, consequently offering greater opportunity for both social advancement and accusations of role- playing. How large a part this played in the emergence of satire as a dominant literary form in eighteenth century Britain, is a matter of some interest. One recognizes, for instance, in the '...every-way-industrious Moderns, [who] both in the Weight of their *Writings*, and in the Velocity of their *Judgments*, do so infintely excel the said Ancients,'[48] whole groups of would-be writers who saw no need to come to their craft via what a Pope or a Swift would have considered a proper study. Thus, while one recognizes with Sayre, the influence that the predominance of satiric writing may have had on the role-playing of Franklin, and even Byrd, one also recognizes that a social system which is beginning to loosen, allowing greater opportunity for role- playing, provides much in the way of

grist to the satirist's mill. Satire was the predominant contemporary model at a time when American literature was beginning to emerge, and Franklin encapsulates this fact in his writing, not only in terms of his role-playing, but also in terms of his style.

Like Byrd, Franklin was the author of many satirical articles and sketches, and came to his style with conscious effort. His writing, as with other attributes was the result of a determined 'endeavor at improvement'.

> About this time I met with an old volume of the Spectator. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my 'Spectator' with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them.[49]

Franklin continued at his task for some weeks, writing his articles in verse to improve his 'stock of words'; turning them back into prose again, and always comparing his work with the original in order to discover and amend his faults, until at last he had:

> sometimes the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious.'[50]

Franklin was obviously aware of style and had the satirist's ability to recognize components of style for the purpose of parody. This is nowhere more apparent than in the letter from Silence Dogood printed

in *The New England Courant* on 25th June, 1722 which attacked New England funerary verse.

> It has been been the Complaint of many Ingenious Foreigners, who have travell'd amongst us, *That good Poetry is not to be expected in New England.* I am apt to Fancy, the Reason is, not because our Countrymen are altogether void of a Poetical Genius, nor yet because we have not those Advantages of Education which other Countries have, but purely because we do not afford that Praise and Encouragement which is merited, when any thing extraordinary of this kind is produc'd among us: Upon which Consideration I have determined, when I meet with a Good Piece of New England Poetry, to give it a suitable Encomium, and thereby endeavour to discover to the World some of its Beautys, in order to encourage the Author to go on...[51]

What Silence Dogood in fact encouraged was a number of other satirical critiques of funerary verse, and a number of attacks on Harvard learning,[52] but the whole of this piece is some measure of the success with which Franklin had captured Addison's satiric style, and some measure of Franklin's talent for parody.

One might note the firm opening sentence of Franklin's piece, which allows of no argument:

> It has been the Complaint of many Ingenious Foreigners, who have travell'd amongst us, *That good Poetry is not to be expected in New England.*

Addison begins his essay on Physiognomy:

> There are several Arts which all Men are in some Measure Masters of, without having been at the Pains of learning them.[53]

There is the apparently reasonable tone, which reserves the presentation of nonsense to the last phrase of a sentence that has predisposed the reader to expect a logical outcome.

> I am apt to Fancy, the Reason is, not because our Countrymen are altogether void of a Potential Genius, nor yet because we have not those

> Advantages of Education which other Countries have, but purely because we do not afford that Praise and Encouragement which is merited...

Addison on Physiognomy remarks:

> We are no sooner presented to any one we never saw before, but we are immediately struck with the Idea of a proud, a reserved, an affable, or a good-natured Man; and upon our first going into a Company of Strangers, our Benevolence or Aversion, Awe or Contempt, rises naturally towards several particular Persons, before we have heard them speak a single Word, or so much as know who they are.[54]

There is the naive and absolute enthusiasm with which the concept is embraced, in the typical manner of the satiric *persona*.

> Upon which Consideration I have determined, when I meet with a Good Piece of New England Poetry, to give it a suitable Encomium, and thereby endeavour to discover to the world some of its Beautys...

Addison is equally enthusiastic about the possibilities of physiogomy.

> For my own Part, I am so apt to frame a Notion of every Man's Humour or Circumstances by his Looks, that I have sometimes employed my self from *Charing Cross* to the *Royal Exchange* in drawing the Characters of those who have passed by me. When I see a Man with a sour rivell'd Face, I cannot forbear pitying his Wife; and when I meet with an open ingenuous Countenance, think on the Happiness of his Friends, his Family, and Relations.[55]

Such extreme enthusiasm inevitably leads to the concept being carried to such lengths as to break its tenuous links with reality, and render it ridiculous.

> I remember in the Life of the famous Prince of *Conde* the Writer observes, the Face of that Prince was like the Face of an Eagle, and that the Prince was very well pleased to be told so. In this Case therefore we may be sure, that he had in his Mind some general implicit Notion of this Art of Physiognomy which I have just now mentioned; and that when his Courtiers told him his Face was made like an Eagle's, he understood them in the same Manner as if they had told him, there was something

> in his Looks which shewed him to be strong, active, piercing, and of a royal Descent...[56]

That the Prince's looks should be compared to an eagle's is an obvious irony: the reader is forced to consider the ugliness of the bird in a sentence balanced by the assumption of an intended compliment. So too Silence Dogood's wholehearted approbation for New England Poetry leads her to remark that she finds

> ... no English Author, Ancient or Modern, whose Elegies may be compar'd with this, in respect to the Elegance of Stile, or Smoothness of Rhime; and for the affecting Part, I will leave your Readers to judge, if ever they read my lines, that would sooner make them *draw their Breath* and Sigh, if not shed Tears, than these following.
>
> *Come let us mourn, for we have lost a Wife,*
> *a Daughter, and a Sister,*
> *Who has lately taken Flight, and greatly we have*
> *mist her.*[57]

Franklin's obvious flair for parody here is enhanced by the enthusiasm of the *persona*. Just as Addison's *persona* stressed the physical outcome of looking like an eagle, by insisting that the Prince's face was 'made like an Eagle's' once too often, so too does Silence Dogood become over-concerned with the mathematical aspects of her poem and its material bulk.

> But the Threefold Appellation in the first line
> *a Wife, a Daughter, and a Sister,*
> must not pass unobserved. That line in the celebrated Watts, is nothing Comparable to it. The latter only mentions three Qualifications of *one* Person who was deceased, which therefore could raise Grief and Compassion but for *One*. Whereas the former, (*our most excellent Poet*) gives his Reader a Sort of an Idea of the Death of *Three Persons*, viz.
> *a Wife, a Daughter, and a Sister,*
> which is *Three times* as great a loss as the Death of *One*; and consequently must raise *Three Times* as much Grief and Compassion in the Reader.[58]

The young Franklin's capacity to emulate good prose was equalled only perhaps by his capacity to recognize those elements of style which most readily contribute to the truly awful:

> A Receipt to make a New England Funeral ELEGY
>
> *For the Title of your Elegy.* Of these you may have enough ready made to your Hands; but if you should choose to make it your self, you must be sure not to omit the Words Aetatis Suae, which will Beautify it exceedingly.
> *For the Subject of your Elegy.* Take one of your Neighbours who has lately departed this Life; it is no great matter at what Age the Party dy'd, but it will be best if he went away suddenly, being *Kill'd, Drown'd,* or *Froze to Death.*
>
> Having chose the Person, take all his Virtues, Excellencies, &c. and if he have not enough, you may borrow some to make up a sufficient Quantity: To these add his last Words, dying Expressions, &c. if they are to be had; mix all these together, and be sure you strain them well. Then season all with a Handful or two of Melancholy Expressions, such as, *Dreadful, Deadly, cruel cold Death,* unhappy Fate, weeping Eyes, &c. Have mixed all these Ingredients well, put them into the empty scull of some *young Harvard,* (but in Case you have ne'er a One at Hand, you may use your own,) there let them Ferment for the Space of a Fortnight, and by that Time they will be incorporated into a Body, which take out, and having prepared a sufficient Quantity of double Rhimes, such as, *Power, Flower; Quiver, Shiver; Grieve us, Leave us; tell you, excel you; Expeditions, Physicians; Fatigue him, Intrigue him* &c. you must spread all upon Paper, and if you can procure a Scrap of Latin to put at the End, it will garnish it mightily; then having affixed your Name at the Bottom, with a *Mastus Composuit,* you will have an Excellent Elegy.[59]

The crop of imitations inspired by this piece has been noted, for Franklin embraced a satiric style at a time when American literature was just beginning, and at a time of increased literacy and ever increasing dissemination of the written word. 'Prose writing' Franklin once said, 'has been of great use to me in the course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement.[60] Given that Franklin's style lent itself to satire, and given the contemporary popularity of Franklin's work, the effect on American letters must have been prodigious.

Something of the effect of the contemporary satiric mode can be identified in the tone of Franklin's prose, which often appears ironic, even when reporting facts.

> From Newcastle we hear that on Tuesday the 8th Instant, the Lightning fell upon a House within a few Miles of that Place, in which it killed 3 dogs, struck several Persons deaf, and split a Woman's Nose in a surprizing Manner.[61]

The use of the word 'surprizing' in this report reflects not only upon the 'Manner' in which the lightning struck, but upon the manner of the woman, lending to the disaster a comic incongruity. On another occasion an incongruous incident in Franklin's life allows him an opportunity for word play, which if altogether satiric, constitutes an element of satiric style as it emphasizes a difference between concept or word, and thing or reality.

> Thursday last, a certain P___ ('tis not customary to give Names at length on these Occasions) walking carefully in clean Cloaths over some Barrels of Tar on Carpenter's Wharff, the head of one of them unluckily gave way, and let a leg of him in above his knee. Whether he was upon the latch at that time we cannot say, but 'tis certain he caught a *Tartar*. 'Twas observ'd he sprung out again right briskly, verifying the common Saying, *As nimble as a Bee in a Tarbarrel*. You must know there are several sorts of *Bees*. 'Tis true he was no *Honey Bee*, nor yet a *Humble Bee*, but a *Boo Bee* he may be allow'd to be, namely B.F.
> NB. We hope the Gentleman will excuse this Freedom.[62]

Even when delivering a serious homily, Franklin's heavily ironic tone is never far away. In an essay published in 'The Pennsylvania Gazette' July 12, 1733, Franklin sets about publicly correcting 'certain malicious Troublers of good natured Conversation'. The piece is too overtly didactic to be considered truly satiric, but is permeated by a scathing irony.

> These ill-natur'd People study a Man's Temper, or the Circumstances of his Life, merely to know what disgusts him, and what he does not love to hear mentioned; and this they take Care to omit no Opportunity of disturbing him with. They communicate their wonderful Discoveries to others, with an ill-natur'd Satisfaction in their Countenances...*Say such a thing to such a Man, and you cannot mortify him worse.* They delight (to use their own Phrase) in *touching gall'd Horses* that they may see'em *winch.*[63]

The 'Care' taken by these malicious troublers of good natured conversation 'to omit no Opportunity of disturbing' is a complete misapplication of the Protestant work ethic, and the 'Discoveries' made by them are clearly anything but 'wonderful'. Thus Franklin was ever ready with the tools of satire, to render his message memorable. As John Adams once remarked:

> 'He had humor that, when he pleased, was delicate and delightful. He had satire that was good-natured or caustic, Horace, Swift or Rabelais, at his pleasure. He had talents for irony, allegory, and fable, that he could adapt with great skill to the promotion of moral and practical truth'[64]

Lewis Leary has said that Franklin 'stands confidently at the head of any native literary procession', [65] and an effect on American literature of Franklin's consciously satiric style must be acknowledged. His contribution to American satire however, is more far-reaching. In addition to his conscious development of Addison's style, and the potential represented by an exemplary figure, which although used by William Byrd and exploited by the Franklin of the *Autobiography*, would not be fully utilised in an American satire for a hundred and fifty years, there is a practical and pragmatic thrust to Franklin's satires which enhances the tendency of American satire to assert a realistic ideal.

Silence Dogood is not ostensibly an 'ideal American' and possesses more than a share of human frailties. To begin with, she is a woman, and as a widow her position in life carries with it all the given comic implications of a woman without a man. Her name of Silence is ridiculously inappropriate, for she loves to gossip and the outspoken New England widow admits to 'a natural Inclination to observe and reprove the Faults of others.'[66] She is only too pleased to dedicate this remarkable facility to the public good. Nevertheless one recognizes in this Franklin persona, as in Poor Richard, something of the characteristic double edge of American satire, for in spite of human frailties she is firmly on the side of virtue:

> *Know then*, that I am an Enemy to Vice, and a Friend to Vertue. I am one of an extensive Charity, and a great Forgiver of *private* Injuries: A hearty lover of the Clergy and all good Men, and a mortal Enemy to arbitrary Government and unlimited Power. I am naturally very jealous for the Rights and Liberties of my Country; and the least appearance of an Incroachment on those invaluable Priviledges, is apt to make my Blood boil exceedingly.[67]

It is perhaps churlish of the reader to question exactly what the New England widow means when she professes to be a 'hearty lover of the clergy', given that she has lived happily in the 'Heighth of conjugal Love and mutual Endearments, for near Seven Years' with one clergyman, and is at present allowing the 'ingenious Minister of our Town'[68] to board with her. Dogood intends to comment upon Boston society in much the same way as British essayists commented upon London life and manners. There, however, the similarity with contemporary British satire ends. One notes, for instance, the way in which the satire is intended to serve the country, and its 'Rights and Liberties' in much the same way that Ward's satires of direct rebuke were intended to serve God, giving further indication of the close affiliation between

satire and preaching in American satire. Then, Silence Dogood speaks 'by Way of Warning'[69] in a native accent full of local idiosyncracies suggesting a more wholly American character. Her very name is comically suggestive of Cotton Mather's 'Essays to do Good', and while one would not wish to emulate such a figure, the *persona* creates a sufficiently double-edged satire to say that in spite of Franklin's conscientious emulation of Addison's style, the satires could only be American.

It is the widow's clergyman boarder who occasions Silence Dogood's first truly satiric letter, 'Silence Dogood No. 4' attacks Harvard College, a fact which of itself places the satire firmly within an emerging American satiric tradition. The good widow has been advised by her 'Reverend Boarder' to send her son to college, and while considering the possibilities, she falls asleep and has a dream. In her dream the 'Fame of the Temple of LEARNING' had spread throughout the country and every 'Peasant who had the wherewithal, was preparing to send one of his Children at least to this famous Place',[70] regardless of their ability. One senses here some extension of Samuel Bailey's theme, for in his poem the children of such peasants were attacked for failing their hard-working parents. Franklin, for whom learning was hard won, extends the theme by suggesting that intellectual ability rather than the ability to pay should gain entrance to the college, and yet:

> The Passage was kept by two sturdy Porters named *Riches* and *Poverty*, and the latter obstinately refused to give Entrance to any who had not first gain'd the Favour of the former.'[71]

In such circumstances LEARNING is engaged only in the production of 'The New-England Courant', and the faces of the Classics are kept veiled by *Idleness* and *Ignorance*. Surprisingly, it is not these specific vices which are attacked in the Harvard graduates, so much as their incongruity. Franklin appears to regard them as good peasants ruined, for in her dream Silence Dogood perceives that some:

> took to Merchandizing, others to Travelling, some to one Thing, some to another, and some to Nothing; and many of them ... liv'd as poor as Church Mice, being unable to dig, and asham'd to beg, and to live by their Wits it was impossible.'[72]

This emphasis, placed upon the need to earn a living, the need as it were to be a good citizen, gives the satire a peculiarly pragmatic thrust. The college men, it appears, leave Harvard unequipped to earn a living, 'unable to dig, and asham'd to beg,' and one senses here something of the stress placed on physical fortitude in the normative values of Bailey's poem 'The College Man's Ferula', or earlier in 'Our Forefather's Song'. In Franklin's work the physical fortitude required to settle a new country has given way to the more urban necessity of earning a living, but he treads a thin line of paradox by his insistance upon the value of practicalities. This is made clear if one considers the theology students of Silence Dogood's dream.

> But the most Part of the Crowd went along a large beaten Path, which led to a Temple at the further End of the Plain, call'd *The Temple of Theology*. The Business of those who were employ'd in this Temple being laborious and painful, I wonder'd exceedingly to see so many go towards it; but while I was pondering this Matter in my Mind, I spy'd *Pecunia* behind a Curtain, beckoning to them with her Hand, which Sight immediately satisfy'd me for whose Sake it was, that a great Part of them (I will not say all) travel'd that Road.[73]

The practical matter of earning a living is to be valued then, but not at the expense of other values. A good living for the theology

student should be incidental to the religious impulse, and, just as Samual Bailey accused Harvard of doing the devil's work for him, so Franklin accused Harvard of undermining the vocation of clergymen by making Riches the keeper of its entrance. The pecuniary vice of some of the students, however, rests upon the folly of rich parents, as Silence Dogood reflects.

> I reflected in my Mind on the extream Folly of those Parents, who, blind to their Childrens Dulness, and insensible of the Solidity of their Skulls, because they think their Purses can afford it, will needs send them to the Temple of Learning, where, for want of a suitable Genius, they learn little more than how to carry themselves handsomely, and enter a Room genteely, (which might as well be acquir'd at a Dancing-School,) and from whence they return, after Abundance of Trouble and Charge, as great Blockheads as ever, only more proud and self-conceited.[74]

These foolish parents render their dull children even less useful by bestowing a Harvard education upon them. In true satiric fashion they have achieved the very opposite of their intentions. Franklin's work, however, does not end on a note of universal dulness. The satire, as befits the New World, remains hopeful. The true target of Franklin's satire is not idleness, ignorance, pride or even the plagiarism of the students, all of which are mentioned. These vices, Franklin suggests, occur because parents fail to recognize their children's true capacities, and it is this foolishness which the satire attacks most consistently. In essence Franklin offers a practical means of ridding America of vice, that of sensible parenting, rather than an idealistic means, that of the pursuit of virtue. As asserted by Brackenridge in *Modern Chivalry* some seventy years later 'The cobbler should stick to his last,' for it is, as Silence Dogood's third letter informs us, 'the Duty of all Persons to serve the Country they live in, according to their Abilities'.[75]

Silence Dogood is just as vigorous in berating other aspects of social foolishness and offers similarly practical solutions. As becomes a woman, she lays 'Female Idleness, Ignorance and Folly'[76] together with pride, firmly at the door of men and quotes from Defoe's 'An Essay on Projects' (London 1697):

> I have ... often thought of it as one of the most barbarous Customs in the World, considering us as a civiliz'd and Christian Country, that we deny the Advantages of Learning to Women. We reproach the Sex every Day with Folly and Impertinence, while I am cnfident, had they the Advantages of Education equal to us, they would be guilty of less than our selves.[77]

Here again, the notion is suggested that a social inequity is the cause of vice and folly - women are uneducated and therefore foolish and prone to vice. A similarly practical note is sounded when Silence Dogood attacks the 'State Hypocrite'.[78] She quotes from Thomas Gordon.

> Upon the whole we must not judge of one another by their [sic] best Actions; since the worst Men do some Good, and all Men make fine Professions: But we must judge of Men by the whole of their Conduct, and the Effects of it. Thorough Honesty requires great and long Proof, since many a Man, long thought honest, has at length proved a Knave. And it is from judging without Proof, or false Proof, that Mankind continue Unhappy.[79]

This passage emphasizes the effects of conduct, and the need for proof. That Dogood confines her attack to the "State Hypocrite" of itself suggests a greater concern with the effects of hypocrisy, than with the absolute. The passage likewise suggests a possible means of limiting these effects, rather than the reform of the hypocrite. In a manner reminiscent of 'The Sot-Weed Factor', it is suggested that we would all be happier if we judged from sound proofs, that we should perhaps 'judge by sense and trust our eyes.' Silence Dogood is full

of good practical advice. The "Vice of *Drunkeness'* in the Silence Dogood letter No. 12, similarly brings forth a plea for moderation reinforced by practical reasoning.

> But after all it must be consider'd that no Pleasure can give Satisfaction or prove advantageous to a *reasonable mind,* which is not attended with the *Restraints of Reason.* Enjoyment is not to be found by Excess in any sensual Gratification; but on the contrary, the immoderate Cravings of the Voluptuary, one always succeeded with loathing and a palled appetite.[80]

Even pride, that vice so abhorred by the European eighteenth century satirists, is confined in 'Silence Dogood No. 6', to its physical manifestation of "Pride of Apparel", and Hoop-Petticoats in particular. Good practical reasons are put forward for their relinquishment:

> ...I have but little Hopes of persuading my Sex, by this Letter, utterly to relinquish the extravagant Foolery...but I would at least desire them to lessen the Circumference of their Hoops, and leave it with them to consider, whether they, who pay no Rates or Taxes, ought to take up more Room in the King's High Way, than the Men, who yearly contribute to the Support of the Government.[81]

It has been remarked that Franklin treads a thin line of paradox in his insistence on practical reform. His concern with the effects of pride, rather than pride itself in this piece, however, leads him to an interesting aberration.

> ...the *Pride of Apparel* has begot and nourish'd in us a *Pride of Heart*, which portends the Ruin of the Church and State.[82]

That 'Pride of Apparel' should portend the 'Ruin of the Church and State', is perhaps no more outrageous than Pope's suggetion in 'The Dunciad' that bad writing portended the end of civilization as it was known. For Pope however, bad writing is but the symptom of the

culpably muddled thinking and general dulness which is the true target of the satire. Franklin's tendency to target the effects of vice, rather than the vice itself, and to oppose these effects with a normative value which is in essence a practical or possible means of reform, lies fully exposed in this passage. He was corrected by 'Hypercarpus' in the following issue of the 'Courant' who asserted pride of heart to be 'the cause of pride of apparel, not a consequence of it.'[83]

Hypercarpus was undoubtedly correct in his assertion, and although it might be suggested that a post-existentialist generation would find fewer difficulties with Franklin's original proposition, than did he. An examination of the Dogood letters reveals a Franklin less interested in exposing vice, than in the practical improvement of his society. Often the Dogood *persona* fades in favour of Franklin's own voice; as he suggests 'an Office to be Erected, to be call'd *An Office of Ensurance for Widows*[84] , for example, or when he endeavours to show that 'an indiscreet zeal for spreading an Opinion, hurts the Cause of the Zealot.'[85] Franklin seems to believe, as he states in 'Silence Dogood, No. 12' that a 'true and natural Representation of any Enormity, is often the best Argument against it and Means of removing it.' Thus the normative values of the Dogood satires lie with the means of removing vice, rather than with any Cardinal virtue. It lends to the satires an air of hopefulness and possibility, and renders them, like the Puritan Jeremiads, corrective, not destructive. They offer a view of society in which improvement will occur as a result of an appeal to practical reason and vice will disappear

because, in an 'ideal America', it will lack its physical manifestations.

NOTES

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63 Ibid., p.327.

64 Leary, Lewis. 'Benjamin Franklin', *The Comic Imagination in American Literature*, ed. Louis D. Ruben, Jr. Voice of America, Forum Series, Washington, 1974, p.34.

65 Ibid., p. 33.

66 Franklin, Benjamin. 'Silence Dogood, No.2', *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 1, ed. Leonard W. Labaree, Yale University Press, 1959, p. 13.

67 Ibid., p. 13.

68 Ibid., p. 12.

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid., p. 15.

71 Ibid.,

72 Ibid., p. 17.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid., p.13.

76 Ibid., p. 18.

77 Ibid., p. 20.

78 Ibid., p. 30.

79 Thomas Gordon (d.1750) and John Trenchard (1662-1723) began a series of letters signed 'Cato' in the *London Journal* in Nov. 1720. The letter here quoted, which appeared in the issue of May 27, 1721, was written by Gordon.DNB.

80 Ibid., p. 40.

81 Ibid., p. 23.

82 Ibid., p. 22.

83 Ibid., p.23.

84 Ibid., p. 33.

85 Ibid., p. 44.

IV

THE PROGRESS OF DULNESS AND FATHER BOMBO

Satire was the dominant literary mode of the eighteenth century in Britain, but in America the effects of this were felt differently in different regions. In the American South there was plenty of satire although the presses were not active until 1740. The 'Virginia Gazette' opened with a long series of satirical essays, literary clubs produced minor satires, and William Byrd was writing satire. The only satirists of note to appear on the New England scene were Benjamin Franklin and John Wise (1652-1725) whose pamphlet "The Church's Quarrel Espoused", opposed Increase and Cotton Mather's plan of substituting a central association of clergy with a system of lay-controlled independent churches, and used some harsh invective to show the danger of the proposal. In New England it would be fair to say that, in spite of being among the most literate of colonies, satire did not flourish until the great increase in political satire which occurred during the two decades prior to the Declaration of Independence. The outbreak requires some explanation, especially when considering New England where, as Richard L. Bushman maintains in his article 'Caricature and Satire in Old and New England before the American Revolution',[1] even caricature was virtually non-existent. The colonists were not unaware of the vast quantites of political caricatures prevalent in England:

> Lord Bute appeared frequently in the Stamp Act riots as an effigy in kilts, or in pun as a symbolic boot, the same conventions by which English caricaturists represented him. Both in riot and in cartoon he took directions from a devil or the pope.[2]

Bushman goes on to suggest that as literary satire and caricature embody the same spirit; both distort and simplify for the purpose of capturing an inner truth; 'It is no coincidence that they flowered together in the 18th century.'[3] And flower they certainly did. A brief glance at those newspapers publishing anti-Stamp Act satire - 'Philadelphia Broadside', 'Boston Gazette', 'Providence Gazette', Massachusetts Gazette' and the 'Maryland Gazette' - shows the papers of the north joining their southern counterparts in heaping invective upon the Stamp Act. Why this increase occurred and why there was so little satire in New England prior to 1750 needs consideration.

Explanations for New England's failure to develop a real satiric spirit before 1700 usually concentrate on the nature of satiric attack. Leon Howard notes an uneasiness on the part of the satirist in New England as late as the 1770s. Of John Trumbull, whose 'The Progress of Dulness' published in 1772 to the fury of colleagues, friends and dignitaries of the colony alike, Howard writes:

> One basic fact about Trumbull which all further evidence supports: he did not have the thick-skinned willingness to cause trouble that was necessary to a first-rate satirist in a land where his audience, his associates, and his subjects of attack all belonged to the same small class.[4]

Bushman too concentrates on the satiric attack, and suggests a basic incompatibility between satire and American Puritanism, in that until at least 1750 in New England clergy attempted to incorporate the entire colony in the Kingdom of God:

> The application of satire in effect partitioned society into realms of light and realms of darkness and disturbed New England's self-image of a society united by common hopes for redemption and righteousness.[5]

These arguments put forward by Bush and Howard to explain New England's failure to develop satire, can be questioned in as much as a close-knit community need not, of itself, stifle the satiric impulse. In Maryland the lack of distance between satirist and subject complained of by Howard promotes a converse reaction. This is demonstrated by Elaine G. Breslaw in her article 'Wit, Whimsy, and Politics: The Uses of Satire by the Tuesday Club of Annapolis, 1744-1756.'[6] She suggests that the records of the Tuesday Club of Annapolis, which flourished under the inspiration of Dr Alexander Hamilton between 1744 and 1756, and which enjoyed such distinguished visitors as Benjamin Franklin, John Hesselius, Richard Lee, and Col. William Fitzhugh, show that:

> the members used humor deliberately to blunt the social thrust of current political conflicts and not for mere amusement. They employed satire to serve the dual purposes of screening but not completely hiding the clever exposition of important issues and of providing an outlet for aesthetic talents in a popular literary mode.[7]

Breslaw cites an impromptu debate about the sources of the club president's authority: whether he ruled by 'divine right' or was established by 'civil institution'[8] Thus a debate about one of the most sensitive issues in the province, that of the conflict between proprietary prerogative and legislative privilege, which was marked by the contests between the Court, and the Popular or Country parties, is screened by an allegorical debate about the functions and rights of the Club President. The organization of the Tuesday Club of Annapolis was based upon the principle that:

> ... no idea or event with possibly disruptive consequences could be discussed directly or in a serious vein. The members adopted what they called the "gelastic" law: "That if any Subject of what nature soever be discussed, which levels at party matters, or the administration of the Government of

> this province, or be disagreeable to the Club...the society shall laugh at the member offending, in order to divert the discourse." This rule, which set the tone for all club acivities, implied not that sensitive political topics were banned, but that only oblique or satirical references were acceptable.[9]

The very conditions, the lack of distance, which apparently stifled satire in New England, fostered and promoted satire in Maryland.

In order to foster satire in New England however, there had to be something to satirize. Tension and opposing factions were needed, those whose actions could be designated folly or vice because they opposed the values held by the satirist and others. Bushman argues convincingly that:

> New England society, particularly in the early years of the century, did not permit the development of aristocratic hauteur as in the South, or separate one class from another by a wide gulf as in England. Nor was there much of the bitterness of exclusion that permitted the English country party to assault the politicians who occupied the seats of power.[10]

Satire began to flourish in New England as hostility grew towards Britain because, if the Puritans of New England were unable to accept a realm of darkness in their midst, they had little trouble in placing the British beyond the pale. There was a whole society 'of unredeemed visciousness where the futile and self-defeating principles of dullness prevailed.'[11] Bushman argues that the Revolution had:

> 'introduced ideological dynamics which separated groups...Under the labels provided by Revolutionary rhetoric, society self-consciously divided, and social tensions become the subject of literature.'[12]

Thus, of the 530, by one count, pieces of satire written on the American issue from 1763 to Independence, New Englanders were well

represented, and nor did satire die in New England after Independence. Nevertheless Bushman's argument does promote a second consideration. If, 'at least until 1750, the clergy tried to include the whole of New England in the kingdom of God' then a different type of satire is needed to incorporate and assert this idea.

As European culture was transplanted to America, it was not a case of simple imitation. A process of selection and adaptation took place to accommodate local themes, issues, and settings. Satire was no exception to this process. The early differentiation which can be made between satires informed by American modes of thought and those of European origin; the growing use of particularly American structures in satire, based on the Puritan Jeremiad and on an exemplary figure; the pragmatic thrust of Franklin's satires which asserted practical social reform rather than absolute virtues to counteract vice; suggests that the Americans were developing a satire based on their own cultural expectations of life in the New World and a satiric structure in keeping with the normative values of their satire. Further, the Americans had, for some time, enjoyed certain rights and liberties, and were beginning to define themselves as a nation by virtue of those liberties. The principles of freedom debated by the philosophers of the European enlightenment had slipped so far into actuality in America by the eighteenth century that American satirists could invoke them as a right. It is true that satire needs targets, but to those arguments of Bush and Howard, which concentrate on satiric attack to explain the apparent lack of satire in New England prior to the 1750's, and its development during the Revolution, could be added the need of satire to assert. Satire must

assert, if it is not to slip into the nihilistic realms of black comedy, and if these assertions constitute a shift in human values, then a means of assertion must be developed. In opposing Britain during the Revolutionary era, New England and America discovered not only what it was against, but also what it was for. A close examination of two of the more famous pre-Revolutionary satires confirms this view and shows American satirists developing a means of assertion.

John Trumbull (1750-1781) is best known for the leading role he played in a group known as the "Connecticut" or "Hartford Wits". The group included Joel Barlow, Timothy Dwight and David Humphreys among others and was most active in the years that followed the Revolutionary War. The group was extremely conservative, and Trumbull, like most of its members, was educated at Yale. Trumbull's early satire, 'The Progress of Dulness' was modelled on Pope's 'The Dunciad' and was written while Trumbull was at Yale studying for his Master's Degree. It caused a furore in the New England colony when it was published in 1772. The City Fathers saw Trumbull's attack as an act of ingratitude on the part of a fellow American. Specifically however the satire was directed against the dulness exemplified by the careers of Tom Brainless, Dick Hairbrain and Harriet Simper.

Tom Brainless is a dull farm boy, who is misguidedly sent to college and grows up to be a preacher, with only orthodoxy, dogmatism and plagiarised sermons to recommend him. Like the 'Dogood letters' before it, 'The Progress of Dullness' attacks the fond parents' wish to send their child to college regardless of aptitude.

"I've loved good learning all my life;

> We'll send the lad to college wife".
> Thus swayed by fond and sightless passion ...
> The points agreed; the boy well pleased,
> From country cares and labor eased. (l.15-22)[13]

To Tom Brainless's natural idleness is added the failure of the local parson to offer either good advice or an adequate preparation for a college career:

> The parson, in his youth before,
> Had run the same dull progress o'er;
> His sole concern to see with care
> His church and farm in good repair
> His skill in tongues, that once he knew,
> Had bid him long, a last adieu; (l.35-40)

Inadequate teaching, a lack of ability, and general sloth, are not insufficient to prevent Tom Brainless from entering college, when standards give way to the need for a fee: ...a letter's sent

> Of much apochryphal content.
> To set him forth, how dull soever
> As very learn'd and very clever; ...
> He had but little time to fit in;
> Examination too must frighten.
> Depend upon't he must do well,
> He knows much more than he can tell;
> Admit him, and in little space
> He'll beat his rivals in the race;
> His fathers incomes are but small,
> He comes now, if he comes at all.
> So said, so done, at college now
> He enters well, no matter how. (l.41-62)

And so is dulness perpetrated. Tom Brainless 'Four years at college dozed away/ In sleep, and slothfulness and play' (l.145-46), is discovered some months later:

> His purse as empty as his brain;
> His father leaves him then to fate,
> And throws him off, as useless weight;
> But gives him good advice to teach
> A school at first, and then to preach. (l.177-182)

Trumbull's conservatism, apparent here, is similar to Franklin's in the Dogood letters. The fluid nature of this early American society meant that people denied access to a college education in their

country of origin, were able, to seek a better living for their children in America. As the ruination of yet another good peasant is contemplated, the reaction to Trumbull's satire by his New England contemporaries becomes understandable. Many of the prominent citizens of New England could have claimed similar backgrounds. As Tom Brainless progresses from teacher to preacher, criticism of the church becomes more overt and the reasons for the church father's displeasure are even more apparent. The clergy advances the progress of dulness by granting Brainless a licence to preach.

> ... from every distant seat,
> At stated time the clergy meet,
> Our hero comes, his sermon reads,
> Explains the doctrine of his creeds
> A li$cense gains to preach and pray,
> And makes his bow, and goes his way...
> What though his skull be cudgel-proof! (l.223-234)

Trumbull's satire suggests throughout that preachers have abandoned their duty, and when this happens the church ceases to be a place of worship, and degenerates into a social centre, predominantly a marriage market for young women.

Dick Hairbrain, the second character described in 'The Progress of Dulness', has used his college education to become wittily useless and a debaucher in true European style. The third character, Miss Harriet Simper, with the help of her mother, has grown up to be a weak imitation of the European coquette, nd one senses a growing American content here. American women were often castigated for following European fashions and as America's sense of national identity grows there is a corresponding increase in the number of satires directed against this folly. More seriously in an American context:

> On Sunday, see the haughty maid [Miss Harriet Simper]
> In all the glare of dress arrayed,

Decked in her most fantastic gown,
Because a stranger comes to town...
And for devotion those may go,
Who can have nothing else to do.
Beauties at church must spend their care in
Far other work, than pious hearing,
They've beaux to conquer, belles to rival,
To make them serious were uncivil.
For, like the preacher, they each Sunday
Must do their whole week's work in one day.
(1.263-276)

The correlation made here between the preacher and the young women of the parish is insulting enough, but Tom Brainless goes on to marry Harriet Simper (the haughty maid), after she has had a number of fashionable flirtations and an abortive love affair with Dick Hairbrain. This is not before "new beauties push her from the stage; She trembles at th'approach of age", but by the time Simper has begun to shun the ball, "And cried out vanity on all," the brethren have noted Brainless's 'amorous temper', and consider Simper:

Grown fit for ministerial union
And grave, as Christian's wife in Bunyan (1.421-22)

Vanity and dullness are united, to the delight of a congregation completely lacking in judgement:

Then swift the tag-rag gentry come
To welcome Madam Brainless home.
Wish their good Parson joy, with pride
In order round salute the bride;
At home, at visits and at meetings,
To madam all allow precedence,
Greet her at church with rev'rence due,
And next the pulpit fix her pew. (1.357-364)

Dulness triumphs in the very centre of New England life, the church, and it is small wonder that the City Fathers flinched. The themes are typical of early American satires and Trumbull shares with Byrd and Franklin a conservatism which fears the downward slide into barbarism if standards, particularly educational standards, are not maintained.

Thematically Trumbull's poem is not far removed from its model 'The Dunciad'. Peter M. Briggs in his article 'English Satire and Connecticut Wit'[14] has demonstrated the British tradition which stands in the background of Trumbull's 'Progress of Dulness'. Trumbull's poem can be read as a composite of elements drawn from English satirists whom he admired. Swift's 'Progress' poems trace the misadventures of a burlesque hero or heroine as a means of exploring a general theme and Trumbull shares with both Swift and Butler a rough metre. Trumbull's informal tone, and confidential asides to the reader are Swiftian, or may derive from Charles Churchill, whose works were much admired in America by 1770. Trumbull's theme, the progress of dulness, is self-evidently traceable to Pope's *The Dunciad*, as is the influence of Pope's other poems. Modern scholarship has noted echoes from Waller, Dryden, Etherege, Prior, Gay and others. In these terms, part of Trumbull's artistry consists of his easy adaptation of a variety of sources into a coherent form. This much allowed, Briggs maintains that the:

> 'continual recollection of English predecessors suggests cumulatively a reluctance or an inability on Trumbull's part to imagine a distinctly American kind of satire, a new set of satiric norms and metaphors to go with a new setting for satire.'[15]

Briggs cites Trumbull's portrayal of Dick Hairbrain, returned from a European grand tour, to demonstrate his point.

> As fire electric draws together
> Each hair and straw and dust and feather,
> The travell'd Dunce collects betimes
> The levities of other climes;
> And when long toil has giv'n success,
> Returns his native land to bless,
> A Patriot-fop, that struts by rules,
> A Knight of all the shire of fools.[16]

There are a number of sources for this passage: Swift, Butler, and Pope's 'needy Poet' in 'The Dunciad' who is descibed as a 'vile straw that's blown about the streets...now loose, now fast', as well as Pope's 'young Aeneas' who '...saunter[ed] Europe round, And gather[ed] ev'ry Vice on Christian ground.' (B Dunciad IV, 311,12). Finally, says Briggs, Trumbull's description of Dick Hairbrain as 'A Knight of all the shire of fools' echoes Dryden's description of Sir Fopling Flutter, in his epilogue to Etherege's 'Man of Mode':

> True Fops help Natures work, and go to school,
> To file and finish god-a'mighty fool.
> Yet none Sir Fopling him, or him can call;
> He's Knight o' th'Shire, and represents ye all.
> (1.150)

In other words 'Trumbull has marshalled a whole tradition of fops and fools who stand just behind his presentation of Dick and serve to amplify its meaning'. In fact, Briggs goes on, 'there is little in "The Progress of Dulness" that is distinctively American.'[17]

No one would wish to deny the tremendous influence of the eighteenth century English satirists upon Trumbull's work and American literature generally. Trumbull was college-educated and in addition to contemporary European satires, would have read the Greek and Roman classics which stand in the background of the Augustan age. Nevertheless, there are a number of features in this poem which do suggest an emergent American satiric tradition. It might be allowed that a European fop cuts a more ridiculous figure on American soil, than he might in Europe, and that his capacity to inflict damage is increased in proportion to the smallness of the stage strutted. Brainless's capacity to threaten a tenuous civilisation in the New World is greater than the foolish nature of his character would allow

if he operated in a less provincial setting. He moves in a limited sphere, where culture is not well-established, but surrounded by barbarism of all kinds. The fragility of that culture is made apparent by Trumbull's preoccupation with the duties and responsibilities of the preacher, on whom all seems to depend. Finally, although Trumbull's poem ends, with vanity and dulness not merely united, but revered, a vision which is similar in kind to the ending of Pope's 'The Dunciad'. There are, nevertheless, points of difference. It is on consideration of these points of difference that the truly American nature of Trumbull's satire emerges.

The great Augustan satires assert a classical and hierarchical system of ideals whereas Trumbull's assertions are clustered about a notion of an ideal America. There is a nostalgic view of the past. Against present vanity and dulness Trumbull evokes a memory of the Pilgrim Fathers, making a stinging comparison between present Sunday worship by young men and women, and that of the Puritan fathers of the previous century:

> As though they meant to take by blows
> Th'opposing galleries of beaux,
> To church the female squadron move,
> All armed with weapons used in love, ...
> Each bears th'artill'ry of her charms,
> Like training bands at viewing arms.
> So once, in fear of Indian beating,
> Our grandsires bore their guns to meeting,
> Each man equipped on Sunday morn,
> With psalm-book, shot and powder-horn;
> And looked in form, as all must grant,
> Like th'ancient, true church militant;
> Or fierce, like modern deep divines,
> Who fight with quills, like porcupines.
> (1.277-294)

That the women of the parish have turned Sunday worship into a marriage market, and arrive at church armed and ready to do battle,

not with the devil, but with the 'opposing galleries of beaux' is an indictment, and this section of the poem may owe much to Pope's 'Rape of the Lock' but when Trumbull turns his attention to the young men of the congregation, it is the presence of the early Puritans he evokes. The church fathers 'bore their guns to meeting' from a sense of real fear of Indian attack, and the lines serve as a grim reminder of the high cost in human life paid by the church fathers to give the present generation the right to worship in America. Trumbull suggests that the present generation only look 'in form' like 'th'ancient, true church militant'. The fierce 'modern deep divines', are not called upon to fight Indians, but 'fight with quills, like porcupines'. Trumbull's view of the early Puritans as men spiritually devout and physically strong enough to protect their church from Indian attack, is an idealised view of the past, and one which incorporates both the physical and spiritual aspects of the 'ideal America' previously discussed. There is no reason to suppose that the early church fathers were all devout, any more than it is reasonable to suppose that all were personally called upon to fight Indians. Folger and Thompson writing at the height of the Indian Wars suggested that those wars occurred as a direct result of spiritual malaise. They too looked back to 'golden times (too fortunate to hold) ...quickly sinn'd away for love of gold,'[18] so that Trumbull's nostalgic and idealised view of the church fathers is, like theirs, used as a normative value or a standard by which the present generation is judged. That contemporary young men should tote guns to church, merely as a matter of 'form' to impress the young women, suggests how far the church has strayed from the path laid down by the Pilgrim Fathers. It is small wonder that the colony winced.

Trumbull is an American satirist so, in addition to the nostalgic view of the past, almost inevitably the poem contains an alternative vision of the future, traceable from the earliest American satires:

> Oh! might I live to see that day,
> When sense shall point to youths their way;
> Through every maze of science guide;
> O'er education's laws preside;
> The good reign, with just discerning
> Explode the quackeries of learning;
> Give ancient arts their real due,
> Explain their faults, and beauties too;
> Teach where to imitate, and mend,
> And point their uses and their end.
> Then bright philosophy would shine,
> And ethics teach the laws divine;
> Our youths might learn each nobler heart;
> From ancient languages well known
> Transfuse new beauties to our own;
> With taste and fancy well refined,
> Where moral rapture warms the mind,
> From schools dismissd, with lib'ral hand,
> Spread useful learning o'er the land;
> And bid the eastern world admire
> Our rising worth, and bright'ning fire. (l.120-40)

These lines are the result of the poet wandering through 'fancy's realm', but the prophetic, rather than the simply imaginative, nature of his wandering can be noted in the opening line. He does not doubt that the glorious day will come, but rather wishes that he might live to see it. When, and not if, that day comes 'sense shall point to youths their way', rather than parents 'swayed by fond and sightless passion', (l.17) and from this original guidance a catalogue of good things follow until 'Taste and fancy' are refined, and the mind warmed by 'moral rapture'. The lines are of interest for two reasons. The first is the pragmatic thrust that this vision gives to the satire. The glorious new tomorrow is to be ushered in via good and sensible guidance of the young, and a good education system which is to spread 'useful learning o'er the land'. This propensity to offer definite

solutions to the problems depicted in his satire places Trumbull well within the tradition established by Franklin, and renders the satire overtly corrective. The second point of interest is that these lines directly oppose the closing lines of 'The Dunciad.'

The final and awful vision of Pope's 'The Dunciad' is well known.

> The sick'ning Stars fade off th'ethereal plain;
> As Argus' eyes, by Hermes' wand opprest,
> Clos'd one by one to everlasting rest:
> Thus as her felt approach, and secret might,
> Art after Art goes out, and all is Night.
> See sculking Truth in her old cavern lye,
> Secur'd by mountains of heap'd casuistry:
> Philosophy, that touch'd the Heavens before,
> Shrinks to her hidden cause, and is no more:
> See Physic beg the Stagyrite's defence!
> See Metaphysic call for aid on Sence!
> See Mystery to Mathemaics fly!
> In vain, they gaze, turn giddy, rave and die,
> Thy hand great Dulness! lets the curtain fall,
> And universal Darkness covers all.
>
> (*The Dunciad* Book III, l.342-356)

Like Trumbull's vision, Pope's is the result of a flight of fancy.

> 'As Prophecy hath ever been one of the chief provinces of Poesy' says Scriblerus in the notes to this extract, 'our poet here foretells from what we feel, what we are to fear; and in the style of other Prophets, hath used the future tense for the preterit: since what he says shall be, is already to be seen, in the writings of some even of our most adored authors...'[19]

Unlike Trumbull's vision however, Pope's view is a logical outcome to scenes depicted in the rest of the poem. What we are to fear is the end of civilization, and although Scriblerus assures us that this is not really the poet's view, as 'by causing all this Vision to pass thro' the *Ivory Gate* he expressly in the language of poesy declares all such imaginations to be wild, ungrounded, and fictitious'[20] Scriblerus's explication of the text is not exactly helpful. The

light disclaimer is deliberately unconvincing. The whole weight of 'The Dunciad' pushes inexorably towards the unremitting bleakness of the final vision, and civilization's end. The reader does see bad writing, and the muddled thinking of which bad writing is a symptom, as a real threat to civilization, and cannot take refuge in contempt for the weak instruments of change. Rather the reader remembers 'what the *Dutch* stories somewhere relate, that a great part of their Provices was once overflow'd by a small opening made in one of their dykes by a single *Water Rat*.'[21] In comparison with 'The Dunciad', the progress of dulness in America has similarly small beginnings, and ends with the final unification of vanity and dulness in the persons of Tom Brainless and Harriet Simper. The outcome of Trumbull's poem, however, unlike Pope's, remains specific, local, and American. This can be explained, of course, by remarking that Trumbull was not Pope. His work did not have the seriousness, the intensity, nor the universality of Pope. Further, Trumbull writes of an America of the time which can only be described as provincial, whereas Pope writes as a member of a society that can rightly be called a civilization. The court, the parliament, the universities, the very fabric of society of eighteenth century England operated as a coherent body of concepts which could be rendered incoherent for the purposes of satire. Trumbull's sphere is at once more restricted, and less easily defined. All of these things, however, do not fully explain why, when Trumbull was so clearly conversant with the work and methods of the English satirists, why when at his best he was able to combine these resources to enhance his own subject, he neglected to 'borrow' the strength of the prophetic vision at the end of 'The Dunciad' to end his own poem. It is this failure which makes Trumbull's satire American.

The 'Progress of Dulness' ends in the present tense with the marriage of Tom Brainless and Harriet Simper:

> He'd found for reasons amply known,
> It was not good to be alone,
> And thought his duty led to trying
> The great command of multiplying;
> So with submission, by her leave,
> He'd come to look him out an Eve,
> And hoped, in pilgrimage of life,
> To find a helpmate in a wife,
> A wife discreet and fair withal
> To make amends for Adam's fall.
> In short the bargain finished soon
> A reverend Doctor made them one
> And now the joyful people rouse all
> To celebrate their priests espousal; (l.440-452)

In Trumbull's poem the implications of Brainless's career are not pushed on into an inevitable and terrifying future - and the reader does not witness the final triumph of dulness. The use of the present tense fixes the poem firmly in its local American setting. There is the latent threat of this particular new Adam 'multiplying', and thus perpetrating dulness indefinitely, but it is in the 'now', the present America, that the joyful congregation celebrates the wedding. More importantly the use of the present tense at the end of the poem allows for the possibility of correction and the hopefulness which befits a New World satire. The people who greet Harriet Simper with reverence, and fix her pew next to the pulpit, might yet be brought to see the error of their ways. Reform remains a possibility. Trumbull's prophetic vision, unlike Pope's, occurs in the first canto of 'The Progress of Dulness', not at the end of the work, and clearly serves a different purpose. Coming early in Trumbull's poem, it functions as a reminder to his fellow Americans of their destiny. The pragmatic thrust suggests that a final 'moral rapture' will occur as a result of

good sense operating within the education system, and in this way Trumbull's poem reverses the logic of 'The Dunciad'. Presumably, taking the logic of 'The Dunciad', if muddled-thinking and bad writing can bring about the downfall of civilization, then good sense working through the education system can create a civilization, perhaps even a perfect civilization, an ideal America. The vision of an ideal America stands in sharp contrast to the present America depicted in the rest of the poem and together with the nostalgic and idealized view of the past previously discussed, forms some sort of standard by which present American society can be judged. It further functions as a goad to urge the steady march towards perfection. The progress of dulness across America does not so much threaten to bring down some universal concept of civilization: it threatens the fulfilment of America's promise. The structure of the American Jeremiad is recognizable making the satire corrective, not destructive, and the prevalence of this particular satiric structure in early American satires suggests that 'The Progress of Dulness' is not merely 'The Dunciad' transferred to America in order to demonstrate the decline of civilization in a more restricted and provincial setting. It suggests that Trumbull has not altogether failed 'to imagine a distinctly American kind of satire, a new set of satiric norms and metaphors to go with a new setting for satire,'[22] but has inverted the logic of 'The Dunciad' to incorporate the American destiny. As Pope's 'sick'ning Stars fade off th'aethereal plain', Trumbull's vision bids:

> ...the eastern world admire
> Our rising worth, and bright'ning fire.

He foresees America shining out like a beacon to the rest of the world. It is a vision which at once renders Trumbull's satire more

hopeful than anything that could have been written in Europe at the time, and one which places him well within an emergent American satiric tradition.

'The Progress of Dulness' demonstrates the way in which the structure of the Puritan Jeremiad had been subverted by 1770 to provide a providential framework for a satire with secular concerns. Trumbull's vision of an 'ideal America' constitutes an American satiric norm or metaphor in that it is this end the satire essentially serves. The creation of cultural values however, is not altogether dependent on the imagination of the poet. It is defined by, and occurs as the result of, general belief in the wider community. Satire, in this sense, pre-supposes an audience. Thus the general air of hopefulness that Trumbull's vision of an 'ideal America' lends to his satire was shared by other non-satiric writers of the time. De Crèvecoeur writes:

> From nothing to start; from a servant to the rank of master; from being the slave of some despotic prince, to become a free man, invested with lands to which every municipal blessing is annexed! What a change indeed! It is in consequence of that change that he becomes an American. This great metamorphosis has a double effect, it extinguishes all his European predjudices, he forgets that mechanism of subordination, that servility of disposition which poverty had taught him; and sometimes he is apt to forget too much, often passing from one extreme to the other. If he is a good man he forms schemes of future prosperity, he proposes to educate his children better than he has been educated himself; he thinks of future modes of conduct, feels an order to labour he has never felt before.[23]

The steady push towards improvement, the 'good man' forming schemes of 'future prosperity' found in this extract, written between 1770 and 1775, is to be found everywhere in American writing prior to the

Revolution, together with a slowly developing nationalistic ethos among a colonial people. The process of Americanization however, goes hand in hand with a certain intellectual cosmopolitanism, as seen in the work of Trumbull. Lewis P. Simpson remarks:

> Indeed in the most immediate sense the Republic was an invention of the intelligence of the Enlightenment, which has one of its great embodiments in the highly expressive and frequently powerful writings of Franklin, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Madison... who, like Locke and Voltaire, assumed their citizenship in the Republic (or Commonwealth) of letters. This universal, frontierless polity of the mind had become the intellectual and spiritual homeland of the secular class of the literary and learned that had come into being upon the decline of the old Western clerical order. It reached the height of its dominion in the age leading up to the American and French Revolutions...[24]

On the one hand, then, is a largely intellectual vision of America's emergence as a great civilization, on the other there is some difficulty in persuading a large body of people from differing educational, social and economic backgrounds to conform to that vision. The difficulty is noticed by de Crèvecoeur: the European arrives in America and not only forgets 'that mechanism of subordination' but is 'apt to forget too much, often passing from one extreme to the other'. For satirists like Trumbull, who shared in the intellectual cosmopolitanism of America at the time, this was a major concern. For them, hope for the future lay with the educated mind and the difference between educated and uneducated, between intellect and ignorance, constituted the difference between achieving an 'ideal America', and the backward slide into dissolution. It is this essentially secular and humane view which is incorporated into the wholly religious view of America's destiny found in earlier satires. Not that satirists uniformly promoted a vision of an 'ideal America'

within their work. The providential structure of the Jeremiad could give way to the use of a fictitious character within the satire who exemplified both America and the possibilities for the personal improvement of an American citizen. An early work of Hugh Henry Brackenridge (1748-1816) and Philip Freneau (1752-1832) will demonstrate this and some of the difficulties inherent in rendering such a figure credible in a work of satire.

Brackenridge had entered Princeton in 1768 where, together with classmates Freneau and James Madison (1751-1836), he was exposed to the ideals of Greek democracy, particularly those of Thucydides. The group was immersed in the empiricism of the senses and the ideals of common sense as taught by Dr John Witherspoon. He was a member of the Continental Congress and signed both the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation. His sermon 'The Dominion of Providence Over the Passions of Men' preached at Princeton (17 May 1776) was a clear statement of his advocacy of independence. The Princeton of Brackenridge and Freneau was rife with Whiggish political philosophies. Democracy was to be a test of rationality, and required of its adherents wisdom and culture. 'The function of government' Witherspoon taught, is 'the protection of liberty as far as it is a blessing.'[25] These influences together with reading both the classical satirists such as Lucian, and the contemporary satirists of Europe, provide the themes and the style of Freneau's and Brackenridge's early work. One early satire, 'Satires Against the Tories' was written by Brackenridge and Freneau together with Madison and William Bradford, and was used in the ongoing disagreements between rival Whig and Tory student societies. A more abiding result

of these influences is *Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca* written by Freneau and Brackenridge in 1770.[26]

In *Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca*, Father Bombo is ordered by the ghost of Mahomet who has been sent by the ghost of Lucian, to undertake a 'long and tedious journey to Mecca' because he has been caught plagiarizing a Lucian dialogue. 'To tell the truth I stole it altogether except a word here and there of my own.'[27] Bombo first travels to New York, having many adventures on the way, and there takes a ship, on which he is happy:

> But nevertheless, the Devil who is at the root of all evil would not let me rest, but persuaded me one night, to get up and put all the Ships crew in Irons, that I might have her in my own possession and go wherever I pleased. My plan was, to steer round the cape of good hope thro' the Indian Ocean into the red sea and so arrive at Mecca without the trouble of walking or burning my feet on the hot sands of Africa.[28]

Like the short cut to learning however, the short cut to penitence is swiftly punished throughout the work. In this case the crew are woken by the sounds of gunfire as Bombo fights with another vessel. The crew escape their bonds, capture Bombo and sentence him to death. He is saved by a fracas with a French ship, only to be captured by Irish privateers. His adventures continue until he arrives at Mecca and finally is returned safe to his native land, a wiser man. There Bombo determines to spend the remainder of his life 'pursuing the most sublime and noble studies, that [he] may inform and instruct the world by both precept and Example.'[29]

The work is a youthful satire, with some evidence of lack of control on the part of Brackenridge and Freneau. It is absorbed with

the idea of maintaining cultural values in an egalitarian America, but at the same time the young Americans seem to question the British hold on taste and decorum in American letters. Sometimes the need for culture is asserted while at the same time exposing the 'quackeries' of learning as when Bombo confronts a group of young men and attempts to sell them a book:

> Young Gentlemen, said I, pulling out my book, (Xenophon) and offered to sell it to the young gentlemen, for I supposed them to be scholars...Young Gentlemen, said I pulling out my book, this is a valuable author and the best edition of him, as I have corrected him with my own hand,...to render him more agreeable to this refined age.[30]

Bombo, complete with staff and turban cuts a ludicrous figure, and is sublimely unaware of it. His attempts to sell his copy of Xenophon provoke nothing but laughter which results in a vulgar brawl until:

> To my inexpressible sorrow I lost my staff and Turban in the scuffle; enraged then like a wild boar I made sudden and strenuous effort; leaping to my feet I pulled off one of my boots, and began to lay about me so that I brought them down like ripe Pissimmons.[31]

Yet, in spite of his ludicrous appearance, Bombo has the right of it. The rabble are exactly that, and have no interest in books, learning, or cultural values of any kind. By comparison Bombo takes on some of the characteristics of Cooke's Sot-Weed Factor. He blindly insists upon the ideal of learning and culture in spite of all the evidence which suggests that such things are of practical use and, since Bombo makes good his escape in this passage, there is little doubt that one target of the satire is those who fail to recognize the value of culture.

On the other hand, in eighteenth century England the ancient authors were criticized for describing the common and for employing undignified language. *Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca* uses dialect and low-level language to describe the scenes through which the traveller journeys, and in this sense the emergent American satiric tradition can be said to be influenced as much by the ancients, as by the eighteenth century British satirists. Bombo 'lays about him' or 'brings his enemy down like ripe Pissimons', which gives at least a sense of a rough and ready American life as does the exaggerated reaction of our hero to his antagonists. Bombo is 'enraged like a wild boar'. The use of rough language and the exaggerated emotions of the heroes and heroines, and the descriptions of common-place detail found in this work will become major characteristics of American western humour, and of course foreshadow the style of Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry*. The language of this American satire begins to reflect the cultural values of an American, rather than a European proposal. The attack made on ancient authors for their use of undignified language is attacked via the character of Bombo himself: the refinements he proposes to the works of Lucian serve to render such notions ridiculous:

> Bombo, when he was a student in the University, took upon him to censure Xenophon for the reduncy of the particle KAU and accordingly struck it out with a rusty horse-nail whenever he met with it. And as this was approved by the dean and principal, he took upon him to make the same refinement in Lucian with respect to the particle OUK.[32]

The very character of Bombo exposes for ridicule the artificial posturing sometimes associated with excess of learning, but simultaneously asserts the need for culture, demonstrating the difficulties inherent in a satire which asserts an ideal, while taking

into account the way in which life must be lived. Presumably in this satire, however, there remains the possibility of correcting Bombo's sillier notions. He is, after all, on his way to Mecca to appease the ghost of Lucian, and will be taught many lessons upon the way.

Bombo does present a ludicrous figure, and one sublimely unaware of his capacity to provoke ridicule. He is quite useless in the practical world of the oyster men from whom he tries to beg a free passage across the Hudson river. This is only agreed to when a use is found for Bombo: he is to stand in the middle of the boat and act as a sail:

> Thus I stood, Mast, sail and all, when they loosed the skiff from the shore. The wind blew most vehemently and the steersman kept our vessel full before the gale, my Turban bowed before the blast, and my holy garb which was sadly torn waved about like a set of streamers; to make short of the matter we plowed the deep with an amazing velocity, and in a little space reached the western shore of Long Island. They thinking I had paid sufficiently for my ferrying unbound me and left me to my own free will.[33]

Nevertheless Bombo does get across the Hudson, and if much of the humour in this work is extracted at the expense of Bombo, and the failure of his pilgrimage to adapt to the real world, then an equal amount of humour is generated by Bombo's ability to extricate himself from one difficult situation after another. The satire has a characteristic double edge, and if this, by 1770 is becoming typical of American satire, it is because of a tendency to place the ideal in a realistic setting and insist upon its practical application. The barriers which stand in the way of Bombo's pilgrimage to Mecca are all of a practical nature, and consistently demonstrate the traits of ignorance and superstition. If Bombo is punished for his posturing

attempts to play the scholar, then he is also able to extricate himself, sometimes by physical prowess, but more often by the use of wit and learning against ignorance and superstition.

Bombo, on occasions, exemplifies the possibilities of clinging to ideals in spite of all evidence to the contrary which typifies the absurd hero, however, it is equally true to say that, on occasions, he demonstrates characteristics which hint at the dangers of identifying spiritual or ideal qualities by their realistic manifestation. When the French vessel on which Bombo is travelling is attacked by Irish privateers, Bombo goes down below until he 'could learn how the play was going above'; and on hearing the Frenchman give orders to 'strike the flag' he entwines himself in a fishing net and pretends to be a prisoner:

> Arrah, tear Pryan, here is de Deevil. Oh, no, replied I, in a hoarse hollow voice imitating the Brogue, I am a dear Irish boy, a country man of your own: my name is Pady McFarland, I was taken by these accursed Frenchmen about a week ago and here tey have kept me in dis vile place, from de blessed light of de sun moon and stars...Ah, dear Pady then, said the Irishman, rise up and come away...I vill cut dem (ropes) open wid my Gully: this he immediately performed and set me at liberty.[34]

Those accursed Frenchmen have in fact rescued Bombo from a hanging and as he had declared earlier 'My new French master used me exceedingly well',[35] so that his defection to the Irish in order to save his own skin is hardly admirable and the confidence trick perpetrated demonstrates the way in which the gullible may be fooled. Changing character at will renders all realistic manifestations of the ideal inoperable, since we cannot know whether external display corresponds with inner meaning. The conscious creation of an improved self, can

allow of role-playing, deception and ultimately, confusion. In this early and hopeful American satire the punishment for such behaviour comes swiftly. On this occasion Bombo, 'at liberty' once again, chooses to impress his new Captain with a display of knowledge. The Captain is duly impressed, and Bombo is given the run of the ship, but not without making an enemy of the man whose bunk he is given. The ignorant and superstitious Irish crewmen are persuaded that Bombo is a wizard. He is once again confined, this time to the hold. His books are burnt, and, when he is unable to lay a storm, he is put into a 'Tobacco hogshead which the cooper immediately made close' and tossed into the sea.

The pattern of this work is not dissimilar to the 'but then' pattern of Cooke's 'The Sot-Weed Factor'. Bombo when at liberty, uses that freedom to exploit knowledge in a pretentious and affected manner whereupon he is punished by ignorance and superstition in an entirely practical way, by being physically confined or cast away. Bombo is a pretentious fool, but he is a pretentious fool surrounded by ignorance and superstition so that the satire lacks a clearly defined normative value, even as an implied opposite. Rather we sympathise in turn, first with those confronted by an ass like Bombo when they have practical work to do, then with Bombo as he is confronted by ignorance, superstition, and the burning of books. The normative value of the work presumably lies somewhere between these two extremes, but the good qualities of practicality and the virtues of wisdom and knowledge remain unreconciled within the work. Bombo, as a character, never manages to negotiate the distance between the real world, where consequences must be faced, and the ideal world where

virtue is absolute and universal. It is true that when Bombo finally arrives in Mecca he is rewarded not only with forgiveness, but with gifts of a more practical nature.

> ...as I was returning with a brother Pilgrim from the Mosque, we met a Gentleman, who, hearing me speak English...asked me if I had come from England. Yes Sir, returned I, but am an American born...He then insisted on my staying with him...and at parting gave me a complete suit of clothes...But what Joy did I feel! when I found myself returning to my native Country provided with clothes...which made me look more like a human creature than I did before.[36]

Bombo may look 'more like a human creature' than previously and it is true that he returns to his native land thoroughly penitent.

> Experience has taught me to be wise and leave the paths of folly for those of Virtue and Wisdom. I have passed thro' high and low life. In me you have seen the Sage, the Droll, the Gentleman, and what not...I intend to pass the remainder of my life in peace and Ease, pursuing the most sublime and noble studies, that I may hereafter inform and instruct the world both by precept and Example.[37]

But as Franklin remarked:

> '...something that pretended to be reason was every now and then suggesting to me that such extreme nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which if it were known would make me ridiculous...'[38]

In this sense Bombo remains unredeemed. The image of a 'gentle Yahoo' which sustains the reader through Gulliver's apparent insanity in Book IV of *Gulliver's Travels* is absent from *Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca*. Even with the triumph of wisdom and virtue, the satire cuts back upon the character of Bombo. There is a smugness and complacency about his resolution to 'inform and instruct the world both by precept and Example', which negates the idea of accepting even the reformed

Bombo as an embodiment of cultural values. This view is born out by Bombo's eventual end.

> He arrived at an extreme old age, which sensibly diminished his stature and turned his locks grey, and indeed I verily believe the good old man would have turned into a Whipper-will or Grasshopper as the fabled Tithonus of old, had not death...put a speedy end to all his travels.[39]

The reference to Tithonus who sought immortality whilst failing to ask for youth and vigour is particularly apt, for it would seem that, lacking a vigorous and humanly possible application, virtue and wisdom do not so much die, as merely fade away.

Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca is a youthful work, and at the end of it the 'Mecca' to which Bombo aspires remains difficult and ill-defined. Brackenridge and Freneau are clearly concerned with the implications of freedom, and with the relationship of culture to any sort of democratic experiment, but the work lacks the nostalgic view of the past or the prophetic view of the future, that are found in Trumbull's work which served to reconcile ideas of virtue and wisdom with their practical and human applications, as well as offering some sort of standard by which the society could be consistently judged. Bombo carries the mark of an incipient absurd hero, but his character renders the ideal so hopelessly impractical, and renders the practical so empty of anything approaching human aspiration, as to present an impossible conundrum. This is not to suggest that the satire is entirely lacking a New World hopefulness. Bombo's character does improve, and Brackenridge and Freneau certainly had hopes for America, but their prophetic vision is not to be found in this satire. It is rather to be found in the poem delivered at their graduation on

Commencement Day in 1771, and this poem, although not satiric, is worthy of some brief consideration in that it contains a vision of America carried in one form or another by American satire throughout the War of Independence. This poem, 'The Rising Glory of America' is written in Miltonic style, and covers a history of America, which includes a 'philosophical enquiry into the origins of the savages of America' and the European migration, then agriculture, commerce, navigation and science are 'descanted on', before launching into prospects for the future. Two visions are offered. One, like the apocalyptic vision of the Jeremiad shows devastation that will occur if British usurpation is allowed to bring tyranny and abuse of power, the other demonstrates a more 'comfortable' future with the prospect of Independence, Liberty and Peace.

The poem makes an early differentiation between North and South America. In the South:

> The town of Mexico - huge cities form'd
> From Indian architecture; are the arms
> Of haughty Spain disturb'd the peaceful sail -[40]

In the North, was a 'dark domain' - 'No towns were seen to rise - No arts were here;', so that far from displacing the Indians the European settlers brought light to a dark domain of emptiness and generally improved the landscape. Indian attacks were of course prevalent in the north, and in common with other early American writings, the Indians are described with adjectives which render them devils incarnate. There are 'fierce' Indian tribes, armed with 'vengeful malice' and 'black design' who 'Oft murdered, or dispersed, these colonies'.[41] 'Streams of blood were shed' and Indian hosts were slain, but these

wars and those with the French are not to be confused with what was occurring on the southern continent:

> Behold a different scene - not thus employed
> Were Cortez and Pizarro, pride of Spain,
> Whom blood and murder only satisfied,
> And all to glut their avarice and ambition...
> Such is the curse ... where the soul
> Humane is wanting - but we boast no feats
> Of cruelty like Europe's murdering breed -
> ...Gold, fatal gold, was the alluring bait
> To Spain's rapacious tribes...[42]

The difference between settlers of North America and those of the South are the ends sought. While the avaricious Spanish settlements were chasing gold, in the North:

> ... - more noble riches flow
> From agriculture, and the industrious swain,
> Who tills the fertile vale...
> Content to lead a safe, a humble life,
> Among his native hills...[43]

The Americans then, are in part defined by what they did not do, they 'boast no feats of cruelty', and in part by the ends they seek which are agrarian rather than monetary. The gold hunting Spanish lack the 'soul humane', while the North American seekers after the 'humble life' clearly do possess such a soul:

> ...each American, true hearted, learns
> To conquer, and to spare...[44]

The North Americans enjoy the milder epithet of 'merciful', and allowing for the dreadful nature of their foes, the bloody battles fought in the North are seen to be distinct from those fought by the Spanish, and it is implied, predestined to be so.

> More blest are we, with whose unenvied soil
> Nature decreed no mingling gold to shine,
> No flaming diamond, precious emerald...[45]

It would be churlish to suggest that the young poets are in fact making a virtue of necessity, and that the only reason the Americans are not chasing gold at this time is because none had been found on the Eastern seaboard. This 'blessing' disposes the Americans to the agrarian life, with all of its associated 'humane' values, and ensures the glorious future of America where already art, agriculture, commerce and science are beginning to flourish.But what a change is here! - what arts arise
What towns and capitals! how commerce waves
Her gaudy flags, where silence reign'd before![46]

Commerce, it is later explained, is necessary for a civilized society.

Strip Commerce of her sail, and men once more
Would be converted into savages -
No nation e'er grew social and refined
'Till Commerce first had wing'd the adventurous prow.

Thus the purveyors of commerce are described in heroic terms as men who 'spread the undaunted soil' across barren wastes where not 'The blissful haunt of human form is seen/To cheer the unsocial horrors of the way'. One derives some hint here of the supposed dimensions of the Sot-Weed Factor's heroic quest into wilderness, and as this work is not satiric, we are clearly intended to see the 'gaudy flags' of commerce as preferable to the 'silence' which reign'd before. America was a trading nation, and without trade could not continue and there is enough truth in the difficulties of trading in the eighteenth century, when ships were small and uncomfortable, pirates a real danger, and sails relatively fragile in the teeth of a gale, to render the actions of sailors heroic, in general terms. An idealized view of commerce, even in the eighteenth century might be difficult to sustain if explored beyond the abstract, as in Cooke's poem 'The Sot-Weed Factor', but the young Brackenridge and Freneau have no compunction:

> - thus came, of old,
> Galconda's golden one, and thus the wealth
> Of Ophir, to the wisest of mankind.[47]

That the Americans were wise and fitting to enjoy the fruits of commerce has already been made clear with an idealized view of the past.

> ... our fathers came
> From Europe's hostile shores to these abodes,
> Here to enjoy a liberty in *faith*...
> New governments (their wealth unenvied yet)
> Were form'd on liberty and virtue's plan[48]

It is an idealized view of the past somewhat modified since the time of Benjamin Tompson's 'New England's Crisis' however. Then the pilgrim fathers were endowed with virtue, and it was with the loss of virtue that Tompson was concerned. In Brackenridge's and Freneau's work it seems as if the Pilgrim Fathers were equipped with all of the ideas of the Enlightenment, so that the religious freedoms they sought from Europe were soon translated into political freedoms. One need only to consider the content of Folger's 'A Looking Glass for the Times' or to consider the case of Anne Hutchinson to know that the Puritan theocracies were in fact repressive, and it can be recognized that a new ideal has been added to the cluster of concepts which surround the notion of an 'ideal America'. In a work written only five years before the Declaration of Independence and some six years after the Stamp Act became law in March 1765, it is hardly surprising to find thoughts of liberty and new governments, but it is some indication of the revisionist nature of the 'ideal America' to find these attributes endowed upon the past. The new governments, 'form'd on liberty and virtue's plan' does not proceed unimpeded of course, nevertheless agriculture, commerce and science 'transplanted from the

eastern skies, dost bloom/In these blest regions,'[49] and more is to follow.

How blest the regions are to become in time is made apparent by the young poets' attempts to 'pierce the dark events of future years'.

> This might we do, if warmed by that bright coal
> Snatch'd from the alter of cherubic fire
> Which touched Isaik's lips - or if the spirit
> Of Jeremy and Amos, prophets old,
> Might swell the heaving breast - I see, I see[50]

Aided by the prophets of the Old Testament, the young poets see into the future, once again taking their structure from the American Jeremiad. First comes the apocalyptic vision of what must be suffered before the coming of the millenium:

> Nor shall these angry tumults here subside.
> Nor murder cease, through all these provinces,
> Till foreign crowns have vanished from our view
> And dazzle here no more - no more presume
> To awe the spirit of fair Liberty -[51]

Britain, bent on the ruin of America, will hire 'bloody beasts to cut...throats/wage war with prattling innocence/And basely murder unoffending women!' Britain now, this wretched land 'that drinks its children's gore' not devil serving Indians, adds to those problems already inflicted by nature:

> Pain, sickness, poverty, and natural death -
> But into every wound that nature gave
> They will a dagger plunge, and make them mortal![52]

The suggestion, inherent in these lines, is that these are preventable ills which beset humanity, problems to be solved by action, rather than virtue. The thought is reinforced as the young poets 'fairer prospects from the future draw,' and see America separated from Britain:

> Here independent power shall hold her sway,
> And public virtue warm the patriot breast:

No traces shall remain of tyranny,
And laws, a pattern to the world beside,
Be here enacted first -

One senses here something of what Mather had in mind when he suggested that America would fulfil the state of Israel materially, but in the course of some hundred years the emphasis has shifted. Brackenridge and Freneau have produced a quite different Jeremiad from those of their forbears.

The vision of these two young poets in effect reverses the logic of earlier notions as to how a perfect America might be brought into being. While poets such as Folger and Tompson looked for spiritual means to produce realistic ends by suggesting that God would reward virtue by ending the Indian Wars, Brackenridge and Freneau suggest that realistic means will produce ideal ends. Their poem is a call to action. By ridding America of British rule, it is inferred, the New Jerusalem may be brought into being. Further, the New Jerusalem has itself undergone a change. From an ideal religious state the New Jerusalem has become an ideal political state, governed by both virtue and liberty, and one whose laws will become 'a pattern to the world'. Then, after a passage of time the poet's prophetic vision sees:

A new Jerusalem, sent down from heaven,
Shall grace our happy earth, - perhaps this land
Whose ample bosom shall receive, though late,
Myriads of saints, with their immortal king,
To live and reign on earth a thousand years,
Thence called Millennium. Paradise anew
Shall flourish, by no second Adam, lost,
No dangerous tree with deadly fruit shall grow,
No tempting serpent to allure the soul
From native innocence...[53]

There follows a long list of all the things America will not have: no thistle, thorn, briar, toil, death, fierce disease, no consumption,

ghastly plague, no loud storms, no hostile seas, and most of all no fierce passions kindling to 'deeds of death', so that inherent in this long list of negatives is the notion that before the new world can commence, the old model must be rejected. America, by recognizing what it was against, was beginning to identify what it was for:

> - Such days the world,
> And such AMERICA at last shall have
> When ages, yet to come, have run their round,
> And future years of bliss alone remain.[54]

Like Trumbull before them, Brackenridge and Freneau do not appear to doubt that these wonderful times will eventuate.

> How could I weep that we exist so soon,
> Just in the dawning of these mighty times,
> Whose scenes are painting for eternity!
> Dissentions that shall swell the trump of fame,
> And ruin hovering o'er all monarchy.[55]

They regret only that they will not live to see the fruition of the vision.

On the verge of the revolution then, it may be said that there was a strong idea of what America was to embody, drawn in part from a providential view of history and in part from the ideas of the Enlightenment. Some attributes were abstract, like freedom, virtue, justice, and equality, but these abstracts were yoked to the material needs of the new country, such as commerce, science, agriculture, all of which were necessary if the abstracts were to become reality and the prophecies of the Jeremiad fulfilled. The pragmatic thrust of Franklin seems to have been so far incorporated into this vision of America's future, as to suggest that the New Jerusalem could be brought about by the realistic means of ridding America of British rule. It is this vision which is used throughout the revolution by

the satirists, to goad Americans into action, and to negotiate that distance between the miserable reality of war and the glory of the cause. Satire was used to promote the ideal America, and to castigate the British. In short satire, during the Revolution, served the state as it had once served the church.

Notes

1 Bushman, Richard L. 'Caricature and Satire in Old and New England before the American Revolution', *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings*, Part No. 88, 1978, pp. 19-34.

2 Ibid., p. 23.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 32.

5 Ibid., p. 31-32.

6 Breslaw, Elaine G. 'Wit, Whimsy, and Politics: The Uses of Satire by the Tuesday Club of Annapolis, 1744-56', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. XXXII, No. 2, Williamsburg, April 1975, pp. 295-306.

7 Ibid., p. 296.

8 Ibid., p. 301-302.

9 Ibid., p. 299.

10 Bushman, p.33.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 All line numbers refer to 'The Progress of Dulness' in *American Literature Survey* ed. Milton R. Steen, and Seymour L. Gross. *Colonial and Federal to 1800* by John Trumbull. Penguin, New York, 1978, pp.520-531.

14 Briggs, Peter M. 'English Satire and Connecticut Wit', *American Quarterly*, v.37, no.1, Spring 1985, pp.13-29.

15 Ibid., p.22.

16 Ibid., p.21.

17 Ibid., p.22.

18 Thompson, Benjamin. 'New England's Crisis' (1.13/14) *Colonial and Federalist American Writing* ed. George F. Horner and Robert A. Bain, Odyssey Press inc. New York, 1966.

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21 Ibid.

22 Briggs, Peter M. *English Satire and Connecticut Wit.*

23 De Crèvecoeur, St Jean. 'Letters from an American Farmer' (What is an American?) *American Literature Survey, Colonial to Federal to 1800* ed. Milton . Stern, & Seymour L. Gross. Penguin, New York, 1978, p.350.

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V

THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

Silence Dogood declared herself a 'mortal Enemy to arbitrary Government and unlimited Power' as early as 1722. Naturally very jealous for the rights and liberties of her country, the least appearance of an 'Incroachment' was apt to make her 'Blood Boil exceedingly'.[1] Other Americans were equally sensitive. The British had other colonies, and those in America had been neglected. An ocean away from Britain, the colonial assemblies had, by judicious manoeuvring, made the Royal or proprietary Governors responsible to them. The Colonial Assemblies held the purse strings: they provided defence, security, road building and general improvements in the Colonies. They had the power to tax and there was to be no taxation without representation. The British had allowed the American colonies largely to govern themselves; the Americans became accustomed to an arrangement by which they made the laws themselves and the Governor signed them. When the British decided to assert controls by prohibiting the push West after the French and Indian War, and by demanding more taxes in 1763, specifically via the Stamp Act, it was too late. The colonials were, as Silence Dogood testifies, already aware of being one nation. As Bruce Ingham Granger remarks in his essay 'The Stamp Act in Satire':

> At no later time in the Revolutionary period did the American press present so united a front as it did in opposition to the Stamp Act.[2]

An important part of this opposition[3] was the dozens of satires to which this crisis gave rise, on both sides of the Atlantic. The unity of opposition in the American satires makes these popular works of

particular interest. The vehicles chosen for the satires, as Granger remarks, are traditional:

> the allegorical essay and Hudibrastic poem. Consistent with journalistic etiquette at that time, they conceal their identity behind pseudonyms and remain anonymous, most of them to this day.[4]

The American Stamp Act satires share their forms with their British counterparts and satires from both sides of the Atlantic are anti-ministerial. On the other hand, the American satires can be distinguished, by their jealous guarding of the rights of their country, the foremost of which was the claim to liberty, and by the way in which abstract notions, such as liberty, are fused with the idea of America itself. In the satires, the two become a single symbolic entity.

The early Stamp Act satires indicate that, from the first, satirists were concerned with the implications of the Act. In an American press dream allegory, a 'master brander' has no trouble branding asses, but the horses run away, kicking dirt in the gentleman's face. It is explained that the horses are of English breed, mostly descended from Old Noll, a horse that had bucked if ridden by French Spurs. A member of the Brander's retinue is warned that wiser heads may consider whether the sport be worth the money it will cost: 'the beasts are wild and numerous, and their range very extensive.' The master brander, surprised by such discontent, remarks:

> 'You allow, Sir, that a shilling taken for the brand or for furniture is but the same; - pray why then is there any discontent?'
> The old man answers:
> 'It is the same Sir, to our master, but not to us. Have you never heard that branding is a mark of property; if the brand was once put on, I should

> not wonder if your next errand here was for the beasts, or their hides...'[5]

This American satirist seems to acknowledge some sort of rights as belonging to the 'Master', but:

> Mutual confidence will give our master a better and more durable property in what we have than any branding; but where distrust and diffidence comes in its stead, no good can ensue; opportunities will never be long wanting for masters to oppress their servants, or for their servants to ----- their masters.[6]

Notions of oppression and servitude are obviously not far from the satirist's mind. When the Stamp Act became law on March 22 1765, attitudes seem to have hardened, and America's cause seems to become more closely allied to the cause of liberty in the satires, in a more general sense, than had hitherto been the case.

In the political arena lines were being drawn. In May of 1765 the fifth resolution of the Virginia Resolves reserved to the Assembly 'the only and sole exclusive Right and Power to lay Taxes and Impositions upon the Inhabitants of this Colony.'[7] According to the Stamp Act, from 1 November 1765 all legal and commercial documents, pamphlets, newspapers, almanacs, cards and dice would be dutiable, and since printers were most affected by the act together with lawyers, merchants and tavern owners, the united front presented by the American press, remarked upon by Granger, is not surprising. Indeed, General Gage suggested that the seditious printers in New York might be prosecuted, but Governor Colden was advised by city magistrates against such a course. In the interim an allegory appeared which told how John Bull married his daughter 'Lady N---th Am---can Liberty' to Toleration and 'gave her in Dower a certain Tract of uncultivated

land, which she called after her Name.' When Commerce, who had won Mrs Bull's esteem, paid court to the daughter as well, Mrs Bull:

> determined to make a bold Push; at once to destroy her Daughter, disavow her Son in Law, make Slaves of all their Children and Servants, and take the Estate into her own Hands. She accordingly issued out Orders that her Servants should take her and Stamp her in so barbarous a Manner that she should not survive the wounds...honest John was never forward in the Ruin of his Daughter but was made to acquiesce, thro' the tyrannical Disposition of his Wife, and the Mildness of his own natural Temper; ... Thus died the most amiable of Women, the best Wife, the most dutiful Child, and the tenderest Mother. Happy for her family, she has left one Son, ... prophetically named I-d-p--d--ce, and on him the Hopes of all her disconsolate Servants are placed for relief under their Afflictions... her Remains will not be interred till the First Day of November, 1765.[8]

In this allegory North America has become synonymous with the concept of liberty. The interests of a trading nation, noted in the normative values of 'The Sot-Weed Factor', and the 'Rights and Liberties' of America, so beloved by Silence Dogood, appear to have fused and an attack upon the North American ability to trade, which the Stamp Act represented, has become an attack upon liberty itself. It is true that the Stamp Act did impinge upon that North American liberty to have no taxation without representation, but it is not to this specific freedom that the satire makes its appeal, it is to liberty in the general sense of the word. This fusion of the abstract and the specific appears to be an American trait, for if this American satire is compared with a British satiric print, differences emerge.

'The Deplorable State of America or SC---H Government', was announced for sale in the British papers on the 2nd January 1766. In this work Britannia offers Pandora's Box (The S---p Act) to America,

pictured as a buxom Indian. The American Indian appeals to Minerva, 'Secure Me, O, Goddess, by thy Wisdom for I abhor it as Death.' Minerva advises 'Take it not,' while Liberty declares 'It is all over with me' and lies dying on the ground, oppressed by a Scotch thistle and a viper. Mercury, the God of Trade, departs from the scene crying, 'It is with Reluctance I leave ye', and an irradiated boot sheds its malign rays on Mercury's staff.[9] The irradiated boot, like the thistle, was a symbol of Bute, and Douglass Adair has suggested that the:

> omnipresent themes of "Scotch Influence" help link the tyranny of the Stamp Act with the tyranny of General Warrants and the American with the Wilkite cause.[10]

Certainly the Stamp Act was subject to almost as much derision in Britain as it was in America, but in this British satire the figures of America, Liberty, and Trade are all quite separate. The issues may be connected, but they are not fused under the general title 'North American Liberty'. Similarly, in another British print, the figure of America as a young woman, being stamped is used in one of six medallions, ironically inscribed to E--L T----E (Earl Temple, was accused of deserting the opposition and joining the oppressors of England and America). The female figure of America is stamped by Grenville, who says, 'the Bitch Rebels', while Bute holds her down saying, 'force her.'[11] It is, however, just America that is being stamped, and while the notion of America as a helpless if rebellious girl gathers its share of pathos, the figure is not specifically labelled trade or liberty,or anything else. In the American satire of 'North american Liberty' concept and place are far more closely allied. The pun on 'Stamp' in that satire renders a physical stamp on

'Lady North American Liberty'; but it is not commerce, trade, lawyers, merchants, tavern owners, or indeed newspaper proprietors that we see wounded and bleeding when she is stamped in 'so barbarous a Manner that she should not survive the Wounds', it is liberty. The interests of all these groups are fused under the concept of North American Liberty and the scope of the satire is consequently broadened. An attack on liberty was enough to make everyone's 'blood boil exceedingly', and as Governor Francis Bernard is known to have remarked:

> The Question will not be whether there shall be a Stamp Act or not; but whether America shall or shall not be Subject to the Legislature of Great Britain.[12]

In the American satire, the accuracy of Bernard's remarks is very apparent. In the absence of Bute and Grenville, regarded by most as responsible for the Stamp Act, much of the satirist's wrath fell upon the governors of the Colonies, and the stamp distributors, but while targets can be specific, it is always to the wider cause of liberty and justice that American satirists make their appeal. On the same day that Colden was to swear to uphold the Stamp Act, the following notice appeared in the *Gazette or Weekly Post Bag* of the 31st October 1765.

A FUNERAL LAMENTATION
ON THE DEATH OF
LIBERTY
Who Finally expires this
Thirty First of October,
In the Year of our Lord
M. DCC. LXV.
And of our Slavery[13]

Also on that day the *New Hampshire Gazette* personified the American press:

> 'Must I be thus *mark'd* or Stamp'd' asked an American newspaper, speaking for the freedom of

> all. 'Tyranny, Popery, and arbitrary Power soon began to disappear, upon my coming on to the Stage, and have by me received many a fatal Blow since, and overspread the land.[14]

The personification identifies the cause of the newspaper with that of the American people, so that if the American newspaper is for liberty, then it is clearly against tyranny, Popery and aritrary power. Thus, in the popular press, the specific and local cause of the satires, that is the passing of the Stamp Act, becomes enlarged to incorporate the grander republican issues of liberty and tyranny.

Satire does ripple outwards[15] and necessarily so. The perspective of satire can only deal with the idea of a Stamp Tax not the facts of the Stamp Act. Thus a tax upon the sale of the newspaper easily becomes a tax upon freedom of speech, and in like manner another American allegorist dreamt that he encountered a crowd of papers:

> To each of them, as to the Prophet's Ass
> A Tongue was giv'n to tell his wretched Case.'

The Bond puts forward a case, but before he is finished:

> Him interrupt the Papers of the Court;
> Summons and Writ, and all of ev'ry Sort.
> Must we be st--pt, when we so much have done
> To serve the present and the Ages gone?
> We've call'd the Debtor to discharge his Debt;
> We many Rogues at Justice' Bar have set.

To a tax on justice, is added a tax on the pleasures of the tavern, for the Licence Paper cries out:

> For Ages past I've fill'd the generous Bowl,
> And pour'd seraphick Pleasures on the Soul
> Of old and young, the Stateman and the Priest
> And lull'd their troubled Minds to quiet rest.[16]

One need only compare this sublime concept of the tavern's function with the function of the taverns described by Ebenezer Cooke or Sarah Kemble Knight to recognize that however close the satirist's affiliation to truth of a general and active kind, the satirist's link with facts can be very tenuous indeed. That tenuous link achieved, satire enters the realm of art and concerns itself only with first principles. Thus, those distributing the stamp tax can be urged to

> Murder your fathers, rip up the bowels of your mothers, dash the infants you have begotten against the stones, and be blameless - but enslave your country! entail vassalage, that worst of human miseries, that sum of all wretchedness, on millions! This, this is guilt, this calls for heaven's fiercest vengeance.[17]

If these stamp distributors were merely accused of collecting an unpopular tax the idea of dashing infants against stones as a preferable option would be ludicrous. Even in the terms of the satire the suggestion is not seriously made. Rather, the horrors inherent in the idea of dashing infants against stones is used to create an enormity out of the act of collecting an unpopular tax. It becomes entirely likely that the tax collectors are enslaving their country and entailing vassalage for generations to come. Then as the logic of the satire gathers momentum, the long shadow of the Puritan Jeremiad can be recognized. The tax collectors are not condemned merely by their fellow Americans, but in fine pulpit rhetoric are told that 'This, this is guilt, this calls for heaven's fiercest vengeance.'

The subversion of the language of religion to the purposes of satire, noted previously, is no less apparent in the Stamp Act satires and serves to link the American cause of Independence with God's forthcoming millenium. Stamp distributors are often associated with

the devil and Cadwallader Colden, acting governor of New York at the time of the Stamp Act, is so depicted. In one satire he is faced with a group of insurgents while protecting the 'marking irons'. Colden remarks that in spite of inexperience he:

> ...exhibited both the Skill and Bravery of the most experienced General; and finally preserved all the Irons from the meditated Destruction. To revenge their Disappointments, the Insurgents carried off, and burnt my Wheelbarrow; and consigned to the same Fate two of my Family Pictures, *the Devils* and *my own*.[18]

Even the street satirists were depicting the distributors of the Stamp Tax as devils. A crowd of some two thousand paraded through the city in New York, but first erected a movable gallows from which hung an effigy of Colden.

> In the effigy's hand was placed a stamped paper; to its breast was pinned a label, and from its back hung a drum, both alluding to Colden's supposed service as a drummer in the army of the Pretender in Scotland...At the side of Colden's effigy hung another representing the devil.[19]

Native Americans who accepted the job of stamp distributor were particularly reviled: it would be better if they came 'from the land of savage Hottentot, or a barbarous Indian' remarks Tom Touchit of the Boston Gazette.[20] Indians and Hottentots were certainly more usually associated with the devil, than the likes of Andrew Oliver, who was a fourth generation resident of Massachusetts. He was one native American who had reluctantly accepted the job of stamp distributor, and in consequence his building was burnt and his effigy hung. The rhyme which commemorates the occasion, like other Stamp Act satires, depicts Oliver as the devil himself.

> A stately elm appear'd before my eyes,
> Whose lofty branches seem'd to touch the skies.
> Its limbs were bent with more than common fruit,
> It bore the Devil, O(liv)-- and B-te.

This work, aptly titled 'Liberty, Property and No Excise' casts the insurgents as the agents of apocalypse. At nightfall a hero orders the bodies to be cut down and placed on the bier.

> This done, he cries, 'Let ev'ry man resort
> In solemn order, with the corpse to court'
> March then (said he) in one united throng
> 'And as you march, be this the fun'ral song:
> '*Tis earth to earth*, and STAMP '*em in the dust.*

As the bodies are born away towards Fort Hill, only 'a stately EDIFICE' bars the way.

> but soon they down with this
> how in the dust they made the structure lay
> Then STAMP the bricks, and bore the wood away.
> Now from the ruins ev'ry one retire,
> Up to the mount, and raise the fun'ral fire.[21]

The last lines of this work are reminiscent of the apocalyptic vision of Benjamin Tompson, for, although lacking the power of Tompson's vision, a similar structure is retained. As the 'stately EDIFICE' is reduced to ruins, so from the top of the mount will the fires shine out as a beacon to the rest of the world. The vision is essentially one of triumph over the devil, as the 'united throng' brings in the millenium, although a difference should be emphasised. By now the 'united throng' are responsible for bringing in the millenium. No longer passively virtuous, and expectant of the millenium, they are actively ushering it in. A similar theme imbues the curse which threatened John Hughes if he agreed to implement the Stamp Act.

> Grant Heaven, that he may never go without,
> The Rheumatism, Itch, the Pox or Gout.
> May he be hamper'd with some ugly Witch,
> And dye at last in some curst foulsome Ditch.
> Without the Benefit of Psalms or Hymnes,
> And Crowds of Crows devour his rotten Limbs.
> May wanton Boys, to Town his Bones convey,
> To make a Bonfire on a Rejoicing Day.[22]

Here too, the remains of the hapless Hughes will be used to light a day of rejoicing and the fusion of images of hell and wilderness territory are recognizable as he is tormented by witches and crows alike. The newspaper satirists too urged that the Stamp Act was the work of the devil, whose property George Grenville was, while those who worked for its repeal could only be doing the work of God. One satirist, aware that collectors, injured by the mob for implementing the Stamp Act, could seek restitution, relates how:

> On death-bed, despairing, as George Grenville lay,
> And the devil stood waiting to take him away,
> In rushed Doctor Moffat and Zachary Hood,
> And urged, he, their loss, ere he died would make good
> "Since our country's resentment upon us we drew
> By supporting the schemes of the devil and you,
> And for striving to make them a nation of slaves,
> Have been treated and deemed as vile traitors and knaves,
>
> Tis but just that yourself should those losses repay,
> Before you go hence with the devil away;"
> "Oh" faintly says Grenville, "in peace let me lie,
> And the devil will pay you your due when I die:"
> "No, no," they both cried, "we will not be so shamm'd,
> First pay us, and then you may die and be ------."[23]

Those willing to support the Stamp Act then are depicted in the satires not just as enemies of their country, but the failure in patriotism is linked to the devil and all his works. Those supporting the American cause are associated not only with a nation of no taxation without representation, but with liberty and the cause of God Himself. The view is well expressed in what purports to be the dying confession of Zachary Hood, which appeared in the *New York Gazette* on 21 November, 1765, although in fact Hood resigned his post as Stamp Distributor on 26 November, 1765. The work was possibly intended to frighten anyone who might be thinking of becoming a Stamp Distributor and tells how Hood:

> was brought from the place of confinement in a cart... to the whipping post, and received Mose's

> law, so well and methodically laid on, that he was rendered almost incapable of speaking any more...He hinted and made signs that the St--ps lay heavy at his stomach, and took a vomit. ..He was put in the pillory,...and afterwards burnt: He bore it with great patience, and it was observed by all, that his countenance never once changed until he was burning.

The flames do their work, and Hood at last confesses to his executioner:

> I was indulged too much in my younger years by my tutors. I was never instructed in the true and virtuous principles of religion, viz. such as to fear my God and love my neighbours. Nor did I ever regard honour, honesty or liberty, but said, What's my country to me, I'LL GET MONEY... I once more acknowledge my villainy to my country.[24]

In this extract, the lack of religious instruction, the neglect of honour, honesty and liberty are all subsumed under the phrase "What's my country to me". The satire makes an interesting contrast with a letter written by a London gentleman writing to his friend in Annapol, also about Hood:

> It gives too many here Pleasure to find, that, let them make what Laws they please, to cramp your Trade, and destroy your Freedom, there are not wanting Sycophants enough of your Country to sue for Commissions to put those very Laws in Execution among their nearest relations and friends...[25]

In this extract the issue of trade, scarcely mentioned in the American satires, is treated separately from the issue of freedom, even though it is acknowledged that the Stamp Act inhibits both. Religion is not an issue, and it is the general or universal fault of sycophancy which inspires Hood and others to act against their fellow Americans.

The American satirists saw things differently. They were, after all, living in the New Eden, and when American importers placed an

embargo on British goods, until such time as the Stamp Act was repealed, 'A Bard of the Woods' remarked:

> Abroad for rich Dress,
> For Silks or for Lace,
> Why foolishly thus do we roam?
> Their Raiment and Food
> Sure do Us no good,
> When enough of our own we've at home...
>
> And e're to such Acts
> As impose a new Tax,
> That Might and not Right must sustain,
> Let us hive with the Bee,
> Eat the Crust of the Tree,
> And away to the Fig-Leaf again.[26]

American satirists pictured America as a single entity incorporating secular and spiritual aspirations. Thus the purely secular matter of taxation is imbued with all of the fervour of a holy war.

> *Great* Jove *decrees, and go these mortals must,*
> 'Tis earth to earth, and STAMP 'em in the dust.[27]

Further, the satires associated with the Stamp Act add a general call for liberty to the spiritual aspirations formerly associated with Puritan America. They retain much that was associated with earlier American satires: the subversion of religious language, the apocalyptic vision, and the prophetic vision of America's glorious future, but this vision becomes a means of reconciling the paradox inherent in the position of those who would hang and burn people who disagreed with them, while of course supporting honour, virtue and liberty. America's forthcoming millenium, it seems, was no longer dependent upon a virtuous population, but on a population willing to act. It is not of course unusual for warring factions to claim justice, virtue, and God for their cause, but these satires seem to be setting the terms of the debate. Even given the tendency of satire to ripple outwards, so freely do the American Stamp Act satires make

common cause with the absolutes of justice and liberty, and such is their use of religious language, that they serve on the one hand to consolidate the bond established by the Puritan satires between secular and sacred history, and on the other they call, not for the repeal of the Stamp Act, but for a free and independent America. Even a satire from the pragmatic Franklin at this time associates the passing of the Stamp Act with the worst excesses of tyranny and arbitrary power.[28]

Franklin's 'An Edict by the King of Prussia' published in 1773 is a severe attack on Britain's restrictive trade practices, which pretends that Prussia is about to impose restrictions and taxes on Britain, similar to those practised by Britain in America.

> Whereas it is well known to all the world, that the first German settlements made in the island of Britain were by colonies of people, subjects to our renowned ducal ancestors, and drawn from their dominions...have never been emancipated therefrom...And whereas we ourself have in the last war fought for and defended the said colonies, against the power of France, and thereby enabled them to make conquests from the said power in America; for which we have not yet received adequate compensation: And whereas it is just and expedient that a revenue should be raised from the said colonies in Britain,...those who are descendants of our ancient subjects, and thence still owe us due obedience, should contribute to the replenishing of our royal coffers.[29]

As the satire progresses it becomes clear that the replenishing of the royal coffers may well be expedient, but hardly just. Restriction after restriction is imposed. The colonists of Great Britain were wrong in 'presuming that they had a natural right to make the best use they could of the natural productions of their country' and it is ordained that 'no mill or other engine for slitting or rolling of

iron, or any planting forge to work with a tilt-hammer, or any furnace for making steel, shall be erected or continued in the said island of Great Britain.'[30] The manufacture of woollen cloth is allowed, but colonists are forbidden to export the same, even to the mother country. 'Nevertheless, our loving subjects there are hereby permitted (if they think proper) to use all their wool as manure, for the improvement of their lands.'[31] With similar logic it is decided that 'whereas the art and mystery of making hats hath arrived at great perfection in Prussia,...the making of hats by our remoter subjects ought to be as much as possible restrained.' Exports are forbidden, and hat-makers not allowed to employ more than two apprentices so that 'being so restrained, both in the production and the sale of their commodity, may find no advantage in continuing their business.'[32] Finally, as evidence of further good will towards the colonies in Britain it is ordained that:

> ...all the thieves, highway and street robbers, house-breakers, forgerers, murderers, s-d-tes, and villains of every denomination, who have forfeited their lives to the law in Prussia, but whom we, in our great clemency, do not think fit here to hang, shall be emptied out of our gaols into the said island of Great Britain, for the better peopling of that country.[33]

The analogy this satire makes between Britain and America is easily enough seen, and Franklin's work could have spoken for itself. The laws referred to were well known on both sides of the Atlantic and the work makes their origin clear:

> the said regulations being copied from their own statutes, of 10 and 11 William III. c.10, 5 Geo.II c.22, 23, Geo.II c.29, 4 Geo. I c.11, and from other equitable laws made by their parliaments...for the good government of their own colonies in *Ireland* and *America*.'[34]

Franklin, however, does not allow the satire to remain with its ostensible target of restrictive trade practices, but includes the greater issues of arbitrary government and tyrannical power:

> it being impossible to believe that a people distinguished for their love of liberty, a nation so wise, so liberal in its sentiments, so just and equitable towards its neighbours, should, from mean and injudicious views of petty immediate profit, treat its own children in a manner so arbitrary and tyrannical.[35]

In effect the satire seems too light to warrant the inclusion of this last passage. If arbitrary and tyrannical power were the real target of the work, then we should look for rather stronger examples of these things than restrictive trade practices. Yet for Franklin, notions of liberty and justice clearly are part of the issue, and it may be that, for an American at this time, the question is not whether the imposition of restrictive trade practices demonstrates the worst aspects of arbitrary government and tyrannical power, but rather that question embodied in the second paragraph of the Edict. It is a question of how long:

> those who are descendants of...ancient subjects...still owe...due obedience' and should still 'contribute to the replenishing of (the) royal coffers.

The question, once asked in Franklin's satire, is rendered ridiculous by the fact that Prussia's claims on Britain are so very ancient they can have nothing to do with anyone living. The parallel with America is obvious, so that the satire does not aim to repeal restrictive trade practices, but becomes a cry for an independent America, as the only just and equitable solution.

Franklin then, slips easily from a satire attacking restrictive trade practices to one which attacks the arbitrary and tyrannical nature of the British Government, affirming that the polarities of the debate surrounding the American War of Independence were those of tyranny and arbitrary power opposed by liberty. Indeed, the word liberty during this period becomes almost synonymous with that of the American revolutionary cause. The tendency, noted in the Stamp Act satires, and that of Benjamin Franklin, can also be found in the non-satiric popular ballads of the time, perhaps best epitomised by 'Liberty Song'. This song, written by John Dickinson, the author of the celebrated 'Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania', was published in the 'Boston Gazette' on 18 July, 1768 and begins:

> Come join hand in hand, brave Americans all,
> And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call;
> No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim,
> Or stain with dishonor America's name.
> In freedom we're born, and in freedom we'll live
> Our purses are ready
> Steady, friends, steady,
> Not as *slaves* but as *freemen* our money we'll give.[36]

In short, the revolutionaries have commandeered what might be termed the ethical high ground. The brave Americans are answering the call of 'Liberty' and are to oppose 'tyrannous acts'. Just what this freedom means to the Americans at this time is made local and specific in the chorus: as freemen they will give their money as and where they choose. In this, the most popular song of the Revolution, the specific freedom not to pay taxes without representation, has been easily assimilated under a general call to defend liberty.

Whether the specific grievances of ordinary Americans in regard to taxation and other things would have so readily merged into a general call for liberty had not the popular and dominant literary mode of the

time been satire, is an interesting consideration. Certainly the historians of the day viewed the American War of Independence as a war of ideas. Samual Williams wrote in 1794 that, 'From he earliest settlements of the seventeenth century, every thing tended to produce, and to establish the spirit of freedom.' Gordon S. Wood observes in his essay, 'Why did the Colonists Go to War?' that:

> While the speculative philosophers of Europe were laboriously searching their minds in an effort to decide the first principles of liberty, the Americans had come to experience vividly that liberty in their everyday lives. The American Revolution, said Williams, joined together these enlightened ideas with America's experience. The Revolution was thus essentially intellectual and declaratory: it 'explained the business to the world, and served to confirm what nature and society had before produced.' 'All was the result of reason...' The Revolution had taken place not in a succession of eruptions that had crumbled the existing social structure, but in a succession of new thoughts and new ideas that had vindicated that social structure.[37]

Wood's essay is concerned to weigh the relative merits of those arguments which represents the American War of Independence as a war of ideas, and those of the Progressive Historians grounded in a social and economic explanation of the Revolutionary era which explicitly reject the causal importance of ideas. This is a subject of continued historical debate and the role of satire in the dissemination of the ideas of the Revolution is equally difficult to assess. Nevertheless, American social realities are insufficient to explain the American War of Independence. Wood remarks in another essay that:

> ...it did not seem to have been a typical revolution, the sources of its force and its momentum appeared strangely unaccountable. ...There was none of the legendary tyranny that had so often driven desperate peoples into revolution. The Americans were not an oppressed people...In fact, the Americans knew they were probably freer and less burdened with cumbersome feudal and monarchical restraints than any part of mankind in the eighteenth century. To its victims, the

> Tories, the Revolution was truly incomprehensible. Never in history, said Daniel Leonard, had there been so much rebellion with so 'little real cause'. It was, wrote Peter Oliver, 'the most wanton and unnatural rebellion that ever existed.' The Americans' response was out of all proportion to the stimuli...[38]

Part of the stimulus for the rebellion may have been the exercise in propaganda launched by satirists on both sides of the Atlantic. It would be surprising if satire had not played its part, given its usefulness as a tool of propaganda. The way in which the satirical perspective helped to establish the rhetoric of the Independence debate, and enlarge its terms was seen in the Stamp Act satires, but how far satire, as a literary form, was responsible for a large part of the American population having, as one historian expresses it, the 'suspicion that an active conspiracy against liberty existed and involved the colonies directly'[39] can only be a matter for speculation. What can be ascertained is that by the time John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, Robert R. Livingston and Thomas Jefferson gathered together in June 1776 to frame the Declaration of Independence, the need to defend liberty in a general sense had become the primary cause of that declaration, and the language of that document, on occasions echoes the hyperbole of the satirists.

The appeal of the Declaration is to both the 'laws of Nature' and to 'Nature's God', and all other rights follow from this. The picture is one of humanity 'created equal' in a natural environment and endowed by a benevolent creator with certain rights. The implications are that God exists, that he created all men equal, that He endowed them with certain inalienable rights among which were life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and finally that there is so much

evidence as to the truth of these statements, that those assembled were entitled to hold these 'truths' as 'self-evident'. Gary Wills in *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence*, asserts that 'it is not surprising that we should misunderstand the Declaration. It is written in the lost language of the Enlightenment'.[40] Nor is it surprising to discover the American Declaration of Independence reiterating the values and concepts appealed to by American satirists. If Enlightenment values and concepts had not been current in America, then the satirists could not have used them. It is, however, of interest to find the Declaration sometimes expressed in the exaggerated rhetoric more often associated with satire, so that the authors of the document seem ready to follow the lead of that hearty lover of the clergy and all good men, and declare themselves 'a mortal Enemy to arbitrary Government and unlimited Power...and naturally very jealous for the Rights and Liberties of [their] Country.' A certain similarity can be noted between Dogood's *natural* jealousy for the rights and liberties of her country, and the '[*inherent and*] inalienable rights' of 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' The word "inherent", although eventually struck out by Congress, gives some clue as to the informing thought of the Declaration. It is suggestive of a natural right, as is the yoking together of liberty and life. Silence Dogood also had a 'natural Inclination to observe and reprove the Faults of others'[41] and while this is not declared as an inalienable right in the Declaration of Independence, much of the document is concerned with listing the faults of George III. The authors of the Declaration, being for the God-given and natural rights of humanity to life, liberty and happiness, have not merely decided to 'dissolve the

political bands' which connect them to Britain, but have been *impelled* to the separation. They have been impelled by 'a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object' and evincing a 'design to reduce them under absolute Despotism,' and if this is not enough to make Silence Dogood's blood boil exceedingly, the document goes on to submit the facts to a candid world.

Some clue as to the influence of the satirical perspective on the Declaration of Independence can be gained from words eventually struck out:

> The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of [*unremitting*] injuries and usurpations [*among which appears no solitary fact to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, but all have*] in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states.

Congress on the whole toned down the language; 'repeated' replacing *unremitting*, and 'all having' replacing the long phrase which suggests that *no solitary fact* can be found to contradict the notion that George III intended an 'absolute tyranny' over the American states. The facts submitted to the candid world, however, are expressed in loaded language. The king has refused his assent to Laws, but they were laws 'most wholesome and necessary for the public good.' He has neglected his duties, refused to allow for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless they relinquished the right of representation to the legislature, 'a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only'. In another phrase struck out by Congress; *'Future ages will scarcely believe that the hardiness of one man adventured, within the short compass of twelve years only, to lay a foundation so broad and so undisguised for tyranny over a people*

fostered and fixed in the principles of freedom. This phrase was replaced by Congess with one almost as immoderate. George III is described as: 'A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.' One suspects that Byron's feeble-minded George III, in his satire of the same name, may be closer to the real George III than the tyrannical despot conjured up by a reading of the Declaration of Independence. America was against tyranny and arbitrary power, and it was for liberty, but, by 1776 this was no longer the local and specific liberty embraced by Silence Dogood in 1722. Her rights and liberties were 'of [her] country', and presumably referred to the self-governing privileges enjoyed by the Americans. By 1776 the Declaration asserts liberty as a right both unspecified and general. In fact the Declaration does not specify exactly what Americans will be at liberty to do, unless it be to pursue happiness, until the very end of the Declaration where, in spare plain prose, it is stated that America:

> as free and independent states, ... have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do.

The language of the Declaration of Independence, does not always merely declare, however, it persuades and does so by using the inflated rhetoric of the satirists.

The right to contract alliances or establish commerce is hardly the stuff from which satire is made, and it is to the general and abstract sense of liberty, as it is yoked to and represented by America, to which American satirists make their appeal from the Stamp

Act onwards. By the time the Americans had made their Declaration of Independence, American satire had developed something like a specifically American structure, in which positive assertions were transmitted by a nostalgic view of the past, or a glorious vision of the future, or were embodied in an exemplary figure. These ideals tended to mix sacred and secular visions of America. Commercial and scientific expectations for the New World incorporated not merely classical virtues but the more humanitarian concerns of the Enlightenment, such as freedom. Essentially the American satirists were for liberty and against tyranny and invoked the laws of God and Nature to demonstrate the justice of their cause, and it is unsurprising, at a time when America was threatened, that the positive assertions of their satires were concentrated in glorious views of America's future.

There are of course lighter, and essentially comic satires of the American War of Independence, such as Francis Hopkinson's 'The Battle of the Kegs' (1778), which do not assert American liberty or set out to castigate specifically the tyranny of the British. Hopkinson, in common with other writers of the Revolution, wanted, as he wrote to Franklin in 1778, to do 'all the Service [he] could with [his] pen - throwing in [his] Mite at Times in Prose and Verse, serious and satirical essays, etc.' Many American satirists at this time saw their art wholly in terms of serving their country is in a way reminiscent of Nathaniel Ward, and other Puritans, who saw their art in terms of serving God and the Church, suggesting both an abiding influence and the way in which secular and sacred were yoked in the American mind. Hopkinson's 'The Battle of the Kegs' was a popular satirical ballad

which marked an American attempt to float kegs of gunpowder with detonation devices down the Delaware river to British ships moored at Philadelphia. The event is described by the American surgeon, James Thatcher, in his Military Journal of 1823:

> The kegs were in the night set adrift, to fall with the ebb on the shipping: but the proper distance could not be well ascertained, and they were set adrift at too great a distance from the vessels, by which means they were obstructed, and dispersed by the ice. They approached, however, in the day time, and one of them blew up a boat, and others exploded, which occasioned among the British seamen the greatest alarm and consternation. They actually manned the warves and shipping at Philadelphia, and discharged their small arms and cannon at everything they could see floating in the river during the ebb tide.[42]

Hopkinson's ballad was sung to the tune of Yankee Doodle. It expands the episode into a ludicrous battle, and takes the opportunity to make Howe and his much vaunted British army look ridiculous. Howe, who had entered Philadelphia on September 26, 1777, set up winter headquarters and commenced an affair with Mrs Loring, the wife of Joshua Loring, Howe's commissary of prisoners. According to Hopkinson's ballad, Howe is in bed with Mrs Loring when news of the kegs' arrival reaches him.

> Sir William, he, snug as a flea,
> Lay all this time a-snoring
> Nor dreamed of harm as he lay warm
> In bed with Mrs Loring...
>
> "Arise! arise," Sir Erskine cries,
> "The rebels - more's the pity -
> Without a boat are all afloat,
> And rang'd before the city...
>
> "Therefore prepare for bloody war;
> These kegs must all be routed,
> Or surely we despis'd shall be,
> And British courage doubted."[43]

The day is won by the British troops, but the victory is of course a hollow one.

> The kegs, 'tis said, though strongly made
> Of rebel staves and hoops, sir,
> Could not oppose their powerful foes,
> The conquering British troops, sir.

Hopkinson then, threw in his 'mite' by deflating the reputation of the British army, without mentioning their tyranny. Nevertheless, the satirist's battle was most commonly fought between tyranny and liberty, even in the incidental satires which, like Hopkinson's 'Battle of the Kegs' are based on particular events. William Livingston's 'Burgoyne's Proclamation'[44] of 1777 which does for General John Burgoyne what 'The Battle of the Kegs' did for Sir William Howe, is a case in point.

It may be that the single act that provided the most ammunition for the American propaganda machine was the proclamation of General John Burgoyne, as he set out on the ill-fated invasion of New York in the spring of 1777. His purpose was to neutralize American resistance which lay in his path, but his speech was a monumental diplomatic blunder, and showed little understanding of the American people. He began by listing the details of his own pedigree:

> By John Burgoyne, Esquire, etc. etc., Lieutenant-General of his Majesty's Force's in America, Colonel of the Queen's Regiment of Light Dragoons, Governor of Fort William in North Britain, one of the Representatives of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament, and commanding an army and Fleet in an Expedition from Canada etc., etc., etc.

Burgoyne went on to denounce America's 'unnatural rebellion' and 'system of tyranny' before proceeding to:

> ...invite and exhort all persons in all places where the progress of this army may point, and by the blessing of God I will extend it far, to maintain such a conduct as may justify me in protecting their lands, habitations and families.

He assured all that his purpose was to 'hold forth security, not depradation, to the country' before concluding with a warning guaranteed to raise the ire of the colonists:

> I have but to give stretch to the Indian forces under my direction - and they amount to thousands - to overtake the hardened enemies of Great Britain and America: I consider them the same wherever they lurk.'[45]

A series of reverses and blunders resulted in Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga in October 1777, and that surrender is dealt with in Philip Freneau's satire 'America Independent', but meanwhile Washington took Burgoyne's proclamation seriously enough to urge that it 'be counteracted as much as possible.'[46] Washington's call is some indication of the large part played by the satirists in a war in which only some 40% of the population embraced the Revolutionary cause. Satire was utilized by its practitioners not so much to lash the vice and folly of mankind, but as part of a deliberate attempt to persuade the colonists to a given point of view. Consequently Washington's need brought forth numerous parodies of Burgoyne's speech of which Livingston's was possibly the most effective.

William Livingston (1723-90) was a Yale educated lawyer, a member of the Continental Congress (1774-76) and from 1776 until the time of his death, Governor of the new state of New Jersey. An accomplished satirist, he contributed a number of works to the press during the early war years. His satire of 'Burgoyne's Proclamation' is marked by the clarity with which he perceives the basis of revolutionary satire, and comically allows Burgoyne to usurp it. Burgoyne is allowed to condemn himself out of his own mouth:

> By John Burgoyne and Burgoyne John, sir,
> And grac'd with titles still more higher,

For I'm lieutenant general too
Of Georgie's troops both red and blue...
And all my titles to display
I'll end with thrice et cetera...

The Burgoyne of the poem is blithely unaware of the contradictions inherent in his position:

What Britain's justice would be after.
It is not difficult to show it,
That what at first she meant to gain
By requisitions and chicane,
She's now determined to acquire
By kingly reason, sword and fire.

He assumes the total compliance of his audience to the kingly reason:

I can appeal to all your senses,
Your judgements, feelings, tastes and fancies;
Your ears and eyes have heard and seen
How causeless this revolt has been;

The Americans did of course have a case. The British had over-reacted to the 'Boston Tea Party', by closing down civil administration and occupying the city with the army. Suffering under restrictive market practices, the Americans felt the need to make a stand, and were essentially fighting a guerilla war with something like 40% of popular support for their cause. Then, as the Declaration of Independence states, the British did bring in foreign mercenaries to aid their fight. The irony of the poem steadily increases, as Burgoyne 'inspired with patriot love' comes

... th'oppression to remove;
To free you from the heavy clog
Of every tyrant demagogue,
Who for the most romantic story
Claps into limbo loyal Tory...
Nor suffers any living creature
(Led by the dictates of his nature)
To fight in green for Britain's cause,
Or aid us to restore her laws;

Burgoyne usurps all of the revolutionists' accusations:

A Tory cannot move his tongue,
But whip, in prison he is flung, ...
Where he must suffer sharper doom
Than ere was hatched by Church of Rome ...

Further, the Revolutionists who torture, scratch and bite their prisoners, '(What worse is done by th'inquisition)', profess 'to breathe in freedom's air.' Burgoyne, has come to save America, and issues his manifesto:

It is my full determination
To check all kinds of depradation;
But when I've got you in my pow'r
Favor'd is he I last devour.

His war will be conducted on a benevolent basis:

From him to loves a quiet life,
And keeps at home to kiss his wife...
I will not defalcate a groat,
Nor force his wife to cut his throat;

Burgoyne will merely help himself to their livestock to feed his troops, and for those that remain recalcitrant:

I will let loose the dogs of Hell,
Ten thousand Indians, who shall yell,
And foam, and tear, and grin, and roar,
And drench their moccasins in gore;
To these I'll give full scope and play...
They'll scalp your heads, and kick your shins,
And of your ears be nimble croppers,
And make your thumbs tobacco stoppers.

With this somewhat lighthearted version of the apocalyptic vision, Livingston's poem can be seen to utilize most of the common traits of the Revolutionists' satire. The comic juxtaposition of Kingly reason, with sword and fire leaves us in no doubt that Britain will take America by force regardless of right. The appeal to the 'dictates of nature' is made, this time ironically, on behalf of the Tory supporters. The examples of tyranny, levelled at the Revolutionists:

of prison without trial, torture, wanton destruction, a lack of conscience at court, coupled with a complete disinterest in American affairs, are all accusations commonly made against the British. There is a reminder that the Americans at least 'profess to breath in freedom's air,' and finally Livingston's satire ends, predictably since it is spoken by Burgoyne, with the apocalyptic vision of the Jeremiad. It is, in keeping with the Burgoyne of the poem, a ludicrous example, with Indians foaming and grinning and making thumbs into 'tobacco stoppers'. If the Americans remain recalcitrant Burgoyne himself will act.

> If after all these lovely warnings,
> My wishes' and my bowels yearnings,
> You shall remain deaf as an adder,
> Or grow with hostile rage the madder,
> I swear by George and by St Paul
> I will exterminate you all.
> Subscrib'd with my manual sign
> To test these presents, John Burgoyne.[47]

The alternative to action for the Americans, is complete annihilation by the tyrannous British. The threat is intended to make its audience consider all that America might become, if this evil is allowed to happen, and, as Washington requested, counteracts Burgoyne's proclamation. Livingston's poem then, exemplifies the stock in trade of the Revolutionary satirists. There, in common with the Declaration of Independence, are all the manifestations of tyranny opposed by the natural and God-given right to freedom, and there, in common with other American satirists is the structure of the Jeremiad. If, however, as I am suggesting, these traits are the stock in trade of Revolutionary satirists, it is interesting to discover loyalist satires displaying similar characteristics. American Loyalist and Revolutionary satires of this period are more like each other, than they are like their British counterparts. It is merely a question of

which abstracts are associated with the Revolution, and of who acts in accordance with God and Nature, and this in turn suggests the consolidation of a specifically American satire.

Jonathan Odell (1737-1818) was perhaps the most talented of the Loyalist party satirists. He was born in Newark, New Jersey, and educated at what is now Princeton University, and after graduation (1757) took up the study of medicine, before going to London to prepare for the Anglican priesthood. Odell was one of an estimated 30% of the American population, who supported the Loyalist party during the Revolution. He refrained from writing about political subjects until the spring of 1776 when he composed a song honouring George III's birthday, which was sung by British officers being held prisoner in Burlington. When Odell's authorship became known he was arrested as a 'person suspected of being inimical to American Liberty'[48] and was forced to promise to stay in the vicinity of Burlington. He fled to the safety of British occupied New York where he served as a chaplain and surgeon for the British, and as a secret agent. There, together with fellow poet Joseph Stansbury he handled the Arnold-André correspondence. He utilized his talent relentlessly on behalf of the Loyalist cause, quite clearly believing that Congress and its leaders were taking the Americans along the path to perdition.

Odell's poem 'The Congratulation', was written in 1779 after a series of setbacks had been suffered by the Comte d'Estang and the French fleet which had culminated in the failure to take Savannah in October of that year. Odell associates Franklin firmly with the

defeat, and suggests that false pride is the cause of the rebellion against the British:

> In vain has Franklin's artifice been tried
> And Louis swell'd with treachery and pride.[49]

The poem also suggests a congress, not only in league with the French, but with Satan himself.

> Joy to great Congress, joy a hundred fold:
> The grand cajolers are themselves cajol'd..
> Old Satan holds a council in mid-air;
> Hear the black dragon furious rage and swear -
> Are these the triumphs of my Gallic friends?
> How will you ward this blow, my trusty fiends?
> What remedy for this unlucky job?
> What art shall raise the spirits of the mob?
> Fly swift, ye sure supporters of my realm,
> Ere this ill news the rebel overwhelms.
> Invent, say anything to make them mad;
> Tell then the king - No, dev'ls are not so bad;
> The dogs of Congress at the King let loose;
> But ye, brave dev'ls avoid such mean abuse.[50]

In this extract the frame of reference is still biblical, but Congress, not the British, are in league with the devil. It is Satan who has suffered a setback at British hands, and Congress who are the 'sure supporters of [his] realm, and it is presumably Congress, therefore, which usurps God's kingdom. This notion of pride and the usurpation of God occurs in another of Odell's poems. In his 'Inscription for a curious chamber-stove...invented by Dr Franklin', Odell begins by giving Franklin his due:

> Like a Newton sublimely he soar'd
> To a Summit before unattained;
> New regions of Science explor'd
> And the Palm of Philosophy gain'd.[51]

Franklin however, like many a Faustian figure before him, has over-reached and instead of pursuing the wiser course, 'The track for his talents design'd,' Franklin, it seems, wanted political fame.

> But to covet political fame

Was, in him, a degrading ambition;
A spark, that from Lucifer came,
And kindled the blaze of Sedition[52]

Political ambition has tempted Franklin, and while in the Revolutionary satires the devil instructs the British Crown, and all its ministers, in the Loyalist satires, Satan is the agent of sedition. It all depended upon which side one was on. Odell is in little doubt about Franklin who is depicted as an exemplar of the Faustian legend, or as a latter-day Lucifer.

Let Candor, then, write on his Urn -
Here lies the renowned Inventor,
Whose flame to the Skies ought to burn,
But, inverted, descends to the Center![53]

Odell here in true satiric fashion, picks up the eventual image of the Revolution which turned the world upside down.

Odell did not pretend that the British were entirely blameless. He did not deny, for instance, the blundering nature of the pre-revolution taxation imposed by the British. In 'The American Times: A Satire' published in London in 1780 he writes:

Stand forth, Taxation-kindler of the flame;
Inexplicable question, doubtful claim:
Suppose the right in Britain to be clear;
Britain was mad to exercise it here.

The madness, however, is shared by the Americans who should not have rebelled:

Call it unjust, or, if you please, unwise;
The colonists were mad in arms to rise.[54]

Odell, in common with the Revolutionary satirists, uses his art to serve his cause but, 'The American Times: A Satire' is most interesting, in that, although Odell supports the British cause, the structure of his satire and the language used could have come from the

pen of Brackenridge, or Freneau, with whom he is most often compared. The poem contains those features that have been identified as common to American Revolutionary satires: the nostalgic view of the past, the prophetic vision of the Jeremiad, and religious language subverted to the cause of satire are all present. Further, the concerns of this Loyalist poem are not unlike those which have earlier been voiced by the patriot satirists. In particular Odell is concerned about mob tyranny. This common fear, amplified by the prospect of democracy can be noted in the work of American satirists from Byrd and Franklin, to Brackenridge, Trumbull and Freneau. These satirists question whether the culture and education necessary to ensure the survival of America or democracy, could be maintained in the face of ignorance and superstition, Odell seems to have the answer. It is a resounding 'no'.

Like Benjamin Tompson before him, Odell in 'The American Times: A Satire', sees his times as almost too awful to depict, but is determined 'the tyrants to expose.'

> Champions of virtue, we'll alike disdain
> The guards of Washington, the lies of Paine;
> And greatly bear, without one anxious throb,
> The wrath of Congress, or its lords the mob.
> Bad are the times, almost too bad to paint
> The whole head sickens, the whole heart is faint;
> The state is rotten, rotten to the core
> 'Tis all one bruise, one putrefying sore.[55]

Odell's work is not, like Benjamin Tompson's, a true 'advice to a painter' poem, since the narrator himself appears to be doing the painting, but like Tompson's work, his concern is with the State, which the narrator of the poem fears is in the hands of the mob who have been incited by a variety of vices. Anarchy 'proclaims the people's majesty aloud', Folly 'prompts the cheated populace to shout', Congress Tyranny has unfolded 'doctrines strange in matter and

in dress' whilst Confusion 'blows her trump' which, on being heard, causes the plow to be thrown aside, tools to change to swords, and sees 'quills transform'd to guns', as the whole country prepares for war. It is Confusion's trump which has brought new-born statesmen into being.

> From garrets, cellars, rushing thro' the street,
> The newborn statesmen in committee meet;
> Legions of senators infest the land,
> And mushroom generals thick as mushrooms stand.[56]

The mob threaten the state, but they are incited to the rebellion by a number of abstract qualities: anarchy, folly, and confusion. In a British satire, normative values similarly abstract might be expected, and certainly the poem calls for 'Truth's avenging sword' and there is an implicit call for Reason.

> This was not Reason - this was wildest rage,
> To make the land one military stage:
> The strange resolve, obtain'd the Lord knows how
> Which forc'd the farmer to forsake the plow;
> Bade tradesmen mighty warriers to become,
> And lawyers quit the parchment for the drum;
> To fight they know not why, they knew not what;
> Was surely Madness - Reason it was not.[57]

The Mennipean quality of these lines seem to suggest that the ills depicted are the result, not so much of vice, as mental derangement. Reason has been lost in confusion but when we discover the source of that confusion a true American structure begins to emerge in the satire which makes use of a providential framework.

The source of confusion, we are given to understand, is hell itself. The narrator, like Brackenridge and Freneau before him, calls upon metaphysical aids to help him describe the 'American Times', but aid is invoked, not from heaven and the prophets, but from 'the Furies from profoundest hell.' The vision given is that of the apocalyptic

Jeremiad. Our narrator, an eighteenth century man of reason, can hardly bear it:

> They come, they come! - convulsive heaves the ground,
> Earth opens-lo! they pour, they swarm around;
> About me throng unnumber'd hideous shapes,
> Infernal wolves, and bears, and hounds, and apes;
> All Pandemonium stands reveal'd to sight,
> Good monsters, give me leave, and let me write:
> They will be notic'd - Memory, set them down,
> Tho' reason stand aghast, and order frown.[58]

The figures of the revolution are seen: Livingston, 'zealous, yet profane; Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are thy gain': and Jay, Satan's darling son, 'to him these characters belong: Sure sense of right, with fix'd pursuit of wrong.' The list continues with Bostonian Cooper, Hancock and Adams, until finally Washington stands indicted.

> Myriads of wives and fathers at thy hand
> Their slaughter'd husbands, slaughter'd sons demand;
> That pastures hear no more the lowing kine,
> The towns are desolate, all - all is thine...[59]

This picture of America returned to wilderness is a familiar one from earlier satires and the result of Washington's innumerable crimes. This scene, however, is not opposed by calls for truth and reason, but is rather opposed by a nostalgic view of the immediate past; an idyllic picture of America evoked at the beginning of the poem. Then, in this golden age, America was fulfilling its promise, and the scene functions to show an ideal state which has been lost to present Americans.

> Ye western climes, where youthful plenty smil'd,
> Ye plains just rescued from the dreary wild,
> Ye cities just emerging into fame,
> Ye minds new ting'd with learning's sacred flame,
> Ye people wondering at your swift increase,
> Sons of united liberty and peace...[60]

This is the state from which Americans are fallen, just as the Puritans had fallen from the 'Golden Age' of the 1630s, in Tompson's 'New England's Crisis'. Then, if paradise has been lost, Washington, like Franklin earlier, is depicted as the fallen angel. It is not without regret that the narrator contemplates his fate.

> What could, when half-way up the hill to fame,
> Induce thee to go back, and link with shame?
> Was it ambition, vanity or spite,
> That prompted thee with Congress to unite;
> Or did all three within thy bosom roll,
> "Thou heart of hero with a traitor's soul?"
> Go, wretched author of thy country's grief,
> Patron of villainy, of villain's chief;
> Seek with thy cursed crew the central gloom,
> Ere Truth's avenging sword begin thy doom;
> Or sudden vengeance of celestial dart
> Precipitate thee with augmented smart.[61]

The debt owed to Milton's *Paradise Lost* is freely acknowledged by Odell, and was clearly much in mind as the narrator contemplated Washington. He, like Lucifer, seems victim of 'rais'd Ambition' (*Paradise Lost* Book 4, l.60), and is 'author' of his country's grief, as Lucifer is 'our great Author' (Book X, l.236). Lucifer is referred to as a 'sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem Patron of Liberty' (Book IV, l.957-8) and who heads a 'rebellious crew', whilst Washington is called 'Patron of villainy', and heads a 'cursed crew'. As the narrator remarks:

> O poet, seated on the lofty throne...
> Surpris'd I trace in thy prophetic page
> The crimes, the follies of the present age;
> Thy scenery, sayings, admirable man,
> Portray our struggles with the dark divan[62]

The America depicted in Odell's poem then is of a paradise lost, and its typology that of Milton's poem of the same name. Democracy is pictured as the whore of Babylon who ushers in a fallen America.

> She seems at least a woman by her face,
> With harlot smiles adorned and winning grace...

A flowing robe, that reaches to her heels,
From sight the foulness of her shape conceals...
This is Democracy - the case is plain
She comes attended by a motley train.[63]

The motley crew by which she is attended include Violence, Cunning, Persecution, Hypocrisy, Fraud, and that most feared, even by the exponents of democracy, 'the rabble rout'.

Democracy, depicted as the Whore of Babylon, would seem to herald the birth of the anti-Christ according to the Book of Revelation and suggests a quite different role for America in the millenium from that normally envisaged. Clearly in this poem America the geographical place has failed America the spiritual ideal. America is fallen, and it is in this fallen condition that vice and folly abound. It is a paradise lost, and the affiliations of Odell's work with Milton's 'Paradise Lost', places it firmly in the realm of an emergent American satiric tradition. The poem is not simply concerned with vice as such, but with the regaining of an America associated with virtue. As a result of the revolt against Britain, and by implication against God, changes have occurred. America is still associated with absolutes, but in its fallen state these are absolute vices, not absolute virtues. Hypocrisy and Fraud, not liberty, become 'emblematic' of the revolutionary condition of America:

Here violence puts on a close disguise
And Public Spirits' character belies,
The dress of Policy see Cunning steal,
And Persecution wear the Coat of Zeal;
Hypocrisy Religion's garb assume
Fraud Virtue strip, and figure in her room;
With other changes tedious to relate,
All emblematic of our present state.[64]

Democracy, however, is not unopposed and in common with other American satires which take the structure of the Jeremiad, the poem is not lacking in hope. The narrator is so horrified by his vision that he is driven to plead for intercession on the part of the Loyalists.

> Joy to my heart, and pleasure to my eye,
> A chosen phalanx her attempts defy:
> In rage she rises and her arrows throws;
> O all ye saints and angels interpose![65]

The Loyalists in this poem have become 'the chosen', presumably chosen by God to see that America fulfils its special promise.

Odell, in common with Revolutionary satirists, uses America's promise for the future, and a nostalgic view of America's past as a standard by which to judge the present state of confusion and rebellion. Like the Revolutionary satirists, Odell claims God for his side and makes copious use of religious language. Where he differs from the Revolutionist poets, however, is in the emphasis he places upon the dangers of democracy and the tyranny of the mob. In short, in Odell's poem the Revolutionaries are conspiring to overthrow the rule of God and King, and, far from ushering in the New Jerusalem are conspiring to lose paradise yet again. It is, as Lewis P. Simpson remarks in his essay 'The Satiric Mode: The Early National Wits':

> When we depart from documents of the early American Republic, which are carefully couched in the deliberative style, we find in other writings of the age - political tracts, periodical essays, poems - a very different style. We find, to be sure, that on the one side the mind of the early Republic is characterized by rhetorical composure, on the other it may accurately be described by an apocalyptic style. On the one hand, it was a mind infused with millennialistic or utopian prospects; on the other, it was a mind charged with fears of the imminence of a doomsday of social collapse.[66]

Simpson's words are, as we have seen, no less true of a Loyalist satirist like Odell, than of the Revolutionary satirists considered. In short, by structuring his work around 'Paradise Lost', with Washington cast as Satan, Odell identifies with what Bercovitch has suggested was:

> surely the single most troubling ideological attack on independence, the Tories charged that the radicals were violating a holy filial bond - inciting their countrymen to an act of ingratitude that was tantamount to patricide.[67]

For Odell, the Revolutionaries were turning the world upside down, leaving Satan, not God, in charge of America, but despite this difference of opinion Loyalist and Revolutionary satires and theirs are couched in similar terms, and this does suggest that by the time the Americans were fighting the War of Independence a satire had developed which was rapidly becoming local and specific to America. It was a type of satire charged by particularly American patterns of thought. Thus, when Bercovitch remarks:

> The patriots, we know, had a ready reply: the country had evidently come of age; continued dependence was either unnatural or tyrannous. But we also know that their reply, however persuasive to others, left them profoundly disquieted. An anti-authoritarian spirit was abroad in the land, and they had too much at stake in the status quo to undo traditional metaphors of deference.[68]

it is useful to remember that many of these 'metaphors of deference' had already undergone change in the course of some 150 years in the New World, and the ways in which the Revolutionary satirists accommodated their arguments to these 'traditional metaphors of deference' could only consolidate the development of a specifically American satire.

The Revolutionary satires of Philip Freneau compare easily with those of Odell. Philip Freneau, after leaving Princeton was captured by the British twice. In 1780, he suffered a two month period of brutal treatment on board a prison ship before being exchanged as a prisoner of war. He was then employed in Philadelphia in the post office. There he poured forth a steady stream of satirical poetry for the next three years, earning for himself the title of 'poet of American Independence'. Freneau's 'America Independent' was published in 1778, and is some indication of how fervently the poet supported America's cause even before his sojourn on the British prison ship. It is a somewhat tardy ratification of the American Declaration of Independence and the poem begins by recalling, in inflationary language, the horrors of the Stamp Act:

> When God from chaos gave this world to be,
> Man then he formed, and formed him to be free,
> In his own image stampt the favourite race -
> How darest thou, tyrant, the fair stamp deface!
> When on mankind you fix your abject chains,
> No more the image of that God remains;
> O'er a dark scene a darker shade is drawn,
> His work dishonoured, and our glory gone![69]

Here is the usual association of the Stamp Act with tyranny, and with an attempt to undo the work of God by supplanting His image, and the freedom entailed for a humanity made in God's image, with an image of bondage and 'abject chains'. Like Odell, Freneau is convinced that Reason is on his side. The British not only work against God:

> But they are *slaves* who spurn at Reason's rules;
> And men once slaves, are soon transformed to fools-[70]

'George, the Nero of [the] times' is to 'arms and war and blood inclined', but is only a 'fair day warrier' with a 'feeble mind' whose

'prayers could never reach the worlds above', so ahorrent is their content:

> You [George] prayed that conquest might your arms attend,
> And crush that freedom virtue did defend,
> That the fierce Indian, rousing from his rest,
> Might these new regions with his flames invest,
> With scalps and tortures aggravate our woe,
> And to the infernal world dismiss your foe.[71]

These words 'were but curses in the ear of Jove', God being on the side of the Revolutionaries, and if Freneau does not openly acknowledge a debt to Milton, as Odell does, a sense of 'Paradise Lost' pervades the work. This time, however, John Burgoyne parallels Milton's Satan.

John Burgoyne of Livingston's "Burgoyne's Proclamation" went to Boston to provide reinforcements for Gage. He arrived after the Battle of Lexington, and, distressed by the inactivity of the army, returned to England in November 1775. He was then sent to Canada and in 1777 made commander-in-chief of the northern army. As commander-in-chief, and in spite of the fact that he could only muster half the men expected, he was able to reoccupy Crown Point and capture Fort Ticonderoga. On his advance to Albany however, Arnold cut off his retreat, Schuyler blockaded his advance, and Clinton failed to meet him. Burgoyne lost men through desertion and in the battle of Bemis Heights (September 24, 1777) he met Gates with an army three times greater than his own. He surrendered to Gates at Saratoga (October 17, 1777). This defeat is described by Freneau, with associations with Milton's 'Paradise Lost' that are difficult to miss:

> Led on by lust of lucre and renown
> Burgoyne came marching with his thousands down,
> High were his thoughts, and furious his career,
> Puffed with self confidence, and pride severe,
> Swoln with the idea of his future deeds,

> Onward to ruin each advantage leads:
> Before his hosts his heaviest curses flew,
> And conquered worlds rose hourly to his view
> His wrath, like Jove's, could bear with no controul,
> His words bespoke the mischief in his soul;[72]

As Burgoyne, motivated by envy and ambition, appears larger than life; 'Swoln with the idea of his future deeds', so Satan in the early part of 'Paradise Lost', appears enormous.

> Satan with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
> Came tow'ring...
> Milton, John 'Paradise Lost' Book VI, ll.109-110.

The mischief in the soul of Burgoyne can be compared with that which provoked response from the angels in 'Paradise Lost':

> Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
> Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
> 'Paradise Lost' Book VI, ll.635-636.

Burgoyne's wrath compared directly to the wrath of Jove, which could not bear control, even from the highest source, creating the American battle scene one of universal import. The Revolutionary soldiers before whom Burgoyne's curses presumably flew, become 'his hosts'. He does not merely re-occupy Crown Point or Fort Ticonderoga, but 'conquered worlds rose hourly to his view'. As Freneau's Burgoyne is:

> Swoln with the idea of his future deeds,
> Onward to ruin each advantage leads:
> Before his hosts his heaviest curses flew.
> And conquered worlds rose hourly to his view
> His wrath, like Jove's could bear with no controul,
> His words bespoke the mischief in his soul;[73]

So did:

> The banded Powers of *Satan* hasting on
> With furious expedition; for they ween'd
> That selfsame day by fight, or by surprise
> To win the Mount of God, and on his Throne
> To set the envier of his State, the proud
> Aspirer...
> Milton, John 'Paradise Lost' Book VI, ll.85-90.

Freneau's entire description is redolent with the religious significance of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

The extended metaphor of a paradise lost is a traditional one, but as it is applied to America, it takes on a new, specifically American, significance. It is, for instance, from Burgoyne's other accomplishments, as writer, wit and politician, that the most damaging comparisons are made by Freneau. Burgoyne was known as a dramatist and during the British occupation of Boston in 1775 had written *The Blockade*, which was performed there. The play ridiculed the valour of the Revolutionaries and made light of the situation in which the British found themselves. Freneau remarks that:

> To fight was not this general's only trade,
> He shined in writing, and his wit displayed -
> To awe the more with titles of command
> He told of *forts he ruled* in Scottish land;-
> Queen's *colonel* as he was, he did not know
> That thorns and thistles, mixed with honours, grow.[74]

This association of wit and subtlty with the works of the devil has been present in American satires from the Puritan period onward. Burgoyne's wit makes him a fit vessel for the devil's plan, as was the serpent in 'Paradise Lost':

> Fit Vessel, fittest Imp of fraud, in whom
> To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
> From sharpest sight: for in the wily Snake
> Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
> As from his wit and native subtlety
> Proceeding...
> Milton 'Paradise Lost' Book IX, ll.89-94.

Freneau's satire gains resonance in America from the polarity marked between intellect and the stout heart, in poems like Samuel Bailey's 'The College Men's Ferrula'. Hopkins's 'Battle of the Kegs' and Livingston's 'Burgoyne's Proclamation' make it abundantly clear that

the Revolutionary American was not impressed by grandiose claims to superior wit and title. Burgoyne may seem to awe those under his command by virtue of his rank, as did Satan:

> ... but all obey'd
> The wanted signal and superior voice
> Of their great Potentate; for great indeed
> His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n.
> 'Paradise Lost' Book V, ll.704-707.

But, 'puffed with self confidence' Burgoyne has failed to comprehend that he, like the Americans, is a son of Adam, and that 'thorns and thistles' are his lot. Thus while the true context of these lines is that of the expulsion from Eden:

> Curs'd is the ground for thy sake, thou in sorrow
> Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;
> Thorns also and Thistles it shall bring thee forth
> Unbid...
> Milton, 'Paradise Lost' Book X, ll.201-204.

Or

> ...cursed is the ground for thy sake
> in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all
> the days of thy life;
> Thorns also and thistles shall it bring
> forth to thee;
> Genesis 3: 17-18.

One recognizes, nevertheless, the levelling democratic thrust, which suggests that Burgoyne, in spite of title, does not differ from any of Adam's other sons. Freneau of course also gains a pun from this line since the thistle is the emblem of Scotland where Burgoyne had property. Finally, Freneau eschews the opportunity to describe the battle between Gates and Burgoyne in favour of a brief description of the surrender:

> When you, to GATES, with sorrow, rage and shame
> Resigned your conquests, honours, arms and fame,
> When at his feet Britannia's wreathes you threw,
> And the sun sickened at a sight so new;[75]

Here one senses something of a 'natural aristocracy' emerging, as all honour and fame is cast at the feet of the triumphant Gates. For those whose sympathies might lead them to consider too closely the British case, this scene is followed by an equally brief description of the dreadful consequences which would have followed a Burgoyne victory:

> Had you been victor - what a waste of woe!
> What souls had vanished to where souls do go!
> What dire distress had marked your fatal way,
> What deaths on deaths disgraced that dismal day![76]

Thus, those not fully committed to the Revolutionary cause must consider as the alternative; a veritable waste land of dire distress, of vanished souls of death upon death.

Freneau's satire, then, is loosely structured around ideas of a second fall, with the Loyalists possessed by the devil, and the Revolutionaries fighting on the side of God and the angels.

> Heaven has not turned to its own works a foe
> Nor left to monsters these fair realms below,
> Else had your arms more wasteful vengeance spread,
> And these gay plains been dyed a deeper red. -[77]

In so structuring his work however, Freneau subverts the original intent of Milton's 'Paradise Lost' to the American Revolutionary and democratic cause. He does not of course, as Byron and Shelley were to do, declare Lucifer the hero in his rebellion against a tyrannous authority. This might have been the more obvious analogy with the American cause, but would hardly have been an acceptable metaphor to most eighteenth-century Americans. Rather, by casting America as the paradise which is about to be lost, Freneau effectively places America under God's care, and all else follows. He not only refutes the charge of Odell and other Loyalists that the Revolutionaries were, in Bercovitch's words 'violating a holy filial bond', but usurps that

charge for the Revolutionary Cause. Far from violating filial bonds, Freneau suggests, the Revolution is an act of filial piety. The controlling metaphor, that of religious history, or Paradise Lost, is combined with the rhetoric of the Jeremiad to call upon the Americans to dedicate themselves, once again, to their pre-destined mission as Americans.

In effect Freneau also subverts the rhetoric of the Jeremiad to aid the Revolutionary cause. He establishes, with the aid of miracles and wonders, that George III was mad to think that God could favour the British cause:

> Swoll'n though he [George III] was with wealth, revenge and pride,
> How could he dream that heaven was on his side -
> Did he not see, when so decreed by fate,
> They placed the crown upon his royal pate,
> Did he not see the richest jewell fall -*
> Dire was the omen, and astonished all -[78]
> * a real event of that day: see *Remembrancer* of 1777.

Americans had, after all, fled the Old World, to establish a new way of life in America, in the first instance because the Pilgrim Fathers perceived corruption within the church. Freneau, while retaining a religious framework, nevertheless makes a secular appeal. The old order of Britain is bankrupt, but now it is not the church which is corrupt, but the old monarchical order which lays claim to liberty:

> O'er Britain's isle a thousand woes impend,
> To weak to conqueor, govern or defend,
> To liberty she holds pretended claim -
> The substance we enjoy, and they the name;
> Her prince, surrounded by a host of slaves,
> Still claims domnion o'er the vagrant waves:
> Such be his claims o'er all the world beside, -
> An empty nothing - madness, rage and pride.[79]

In Freneau's claim to enjoy the substance of liberty in America, some echo of Mather's claim to be 'fulfilling the type of Israel

materially', can be noted. George III, a 'prince laying claim to world dominion', with all of the connotations that a 'prince of this world' might bring, does not, however, hold dominion over the Americans, and nor presumably does the devil. The Americans are not British. The America they have built comes from the toil of their own forefathers:

> Lost are these regions to Brittania's reign,
> Nor need these strangers of their loss complain,
> Since all, that *here* with greedy eyes they view
> From our own toil, to wealth and empire grew:-
> Our hearts are ravished from our former queen
> For as the ocean God hath placed between.[80]

It is to these early Americans, to America and to their fellow Americans, that filial allegiance is owed. God has seen fit to separate America from Britain by an ocean, no doubt as evidence of his special interest, and fellow Americans are suffering:

> From every mouth some doleful tale I hear!
> Some mourn a father, brother, husband, friend:
> Some mourn, imprisoned in their native land,
> In sickly ships what numerous hosts confined
> At once their lives and liberties resigned.[81]

As Bercovitch remarks:

> In effect the Whig leaders, in what was clearly an extension of earlier techniques, turned the Jeremiad into a lesson in national genealogy. The lesson led to the familiar figural imperative: what the fathers began, the sons were bound to complete.[82]

On this basis Freneau exhorts his fellow Americans to fight:

> American! revenge your country's wrongs;
> To you the honour of this deed belongs,
> Your arms did once this sinking land sustain,
> And saved those climes where Freedom yet must reign-
> Your bleeding soil this ardent task demands,
> Expel yon thieves from these polluted lands,
> Expect no peace til haughty Britain yields
> 'Til humbled Britons quit your ravaged fields -
> Still to the change that routed foe returns,
> The war still rages, and the battle burns.[83]

Yet in the same poem Freneau is also able to denounce the British for war-mongering:

> Let Turks and Russians glut their fields with blood,
> Again let Britain dye the Atlantic flood,
> Let all the east adore the sanguine wreathe
> And gain new glories from the trade of death.[84]

And ask:

> Can laurels flourish in a soil of blood,
> Or on those laurels can fair honours bud -[85]

And curse:

> ...that wretch who murder makes his trade
> Cursed be all wars that e'er ambition made![86]

Freneau can do this, because the providential framework of the poem enables him to reconcile the obvious paradox with a prophetic view of the future, following in the tradition of the American Jeremiad:

> America! the works of peace be thine
> Thus shalt thou gain a triumph more divine -
> To thee belongs a second golden reign
> Thine is the empire o'er a peaceful main;
> Protect the rights of human kind below
> Crush the proud tyrant who becomes their foe,
> And future times shall own your struggles blest,
> And future years enjoy perpetual rest.[87]

The poet's vision, however, has not remained static. America, in the course of the Revolution, had defined itself as a nation, and was beginning to define what it stood for. Its satiric vision developed accordingly. The satires of the Revolution are as interesting in their divergence from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as in their correspondence.

America's coming of age is nowhere more apparent than in the large number of satires which depict Britain as a brutal parent, or, more often, as a bad or false mother. These thoughts can be found in Thomas Paine and other writers of the Enlightenment.

> But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upo their families; Wherefore, the assertion, if true, or only partly so, and the phrase *parent* or *mother country* hath been jesuitically adapted by the King and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds.[88]

The American satirists however, dealing in extremes, do not make the careful distinction made here by Paine, between a phrase adopted for the purposes of propaganda, and the actuality. In satires from the Stamp Act onwards, Britain becomes the voracious bad mother from which America, now grown up, must leave. In Trumbull's Revolutionary satire 'M'Fingal' Britain is depicted as a senile old hag:

> For states, like men, are doomed as well
> The infirmities of age to feel...
> Thus now while hoary years prevail
> Good Mother Britain seem'd to fail...
> Lost all her former sense and knowledge...
> Of all the pow'rs she once retain'd
> Conceit and pride alone remain'd...
> Stiled her own children, brats and catiffs
> And knew us not from th'Indian natives.[89]

Inherent in the American rebellion against the bad parent, as in all such rebellions, is the endorsement of a new way of thinking. The way in which the millenial vision is subverted to secular concerns in American satire is evident in the Revolutionary satires. Britain's King represents bad government, and if one considers the ideas of for instance, Godwin, or those inherent in the passage from Paine quoted above, that evil in the world is the result of bad government and of superstition embodied in the figure of the Catholic priest; the struggle for independence becomes not merely a political battle, but a religious fight against evil, and a battle in keeping with the millenial fervour of the Puritan fathers. 'Kings are the choicest

curse that man e'er knew!' declares Freneau in 'America Independent' or cursing George III, his general Burgoyne, and Loyalists in general, Freneau remarks:

> Cursed be that wretch who murder makes his trade,
> Cursed be all wars that e'er ambition made![90]

Political enemies, Tories, or Loyalists, are associated with the devil, specifically of course, Milton's devil, and all his works:

> What murdering *tory* now relieves your grief
> Or plans new conquests for his favourite chief;
> Designs still dark employ that ruffian race,
> Beasts of your choosing, and our own disgrace,
> So vile a crew the world ne'er saw before,
> And grant, ye pitying heavens, it may now more.[91]

Dark designs, beasts, a vile crew, such epiphets are resonant with the devil's works, and it is small wonder that the poet must appeal to the heavens for help:

> If ghosts from hell infest our poisoned air,
> Those ghosts have entered their base bodies here
> Murder and blood is still there dear delight -
> Scream round their roofs, ye ravens of the night!
> Whene'er they wed, may demons and despair,
> And grief and woe, and blackest night be there;
> Fields leagued from hell the nuptial lamp display,
> Swift to perdition light them on their way.
> Round the wide world their devilish squadrons chace [sic]
> To find no realm, that grants one resting place.[92]

The American Loyalists, beasts of Britain's choosing, are a disgrace to Americans, possessed by the ghosts of Hell, and as such can be allowed no resting place on earth. The casting out of the Tories is reminiscent of Michael's words to Satan:

> ...how hast thou instill'd
> Thy malice into thousands, once upright
> And faithful, now prov'd false. But think not here
> To trouble Holy Rest; Heav'n casts thee out
> From all her confines. Heav'n the seat of bliss
> Brooks not the works of violence and War.
> Hence then, and evil go with thee along,
> Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
> Thou and thy wicked crew...

'Paradise Lost' Book VI, ll. 268-276.

The narrator of Freneau's poem, however, is not the Prince of Angels, Michael, and does not have at his disposal the Gulf of Tartarus with its fiery Chaos wide open ready to receive their fall, but there are the Scottish Isles, and these are as good an approximation as the narrator can envisage:

> Far to the north, on Scotland's utmost end
> An isle there lies, the haunt of every fiend,
> No shepherds there attend their bleating flocks
> But withered witches rove among the rocks...
> There LOYALS, there, with loyal hearts retire,
> *There* pitch your tents, and kindle *there* your fire;
> There desert Nature will her stings display,
> And fiercest hunger on your vitals prey,
> And with yourselves let John Burgoyne retire
> To reign the monarch, whom your hearts admire.[93]

The loyalist lovers of monarchy, associated with the devil are cast out of an American paradise of democratic freedom. The ideas of the Enlightenment, it seems, have become an integral part of the prophetic vision for America, deviation from which will be punished not only by man but also, it is assumed, by God the Father.

As America struggled to free herself from the grasping hold of her bad false mother, Britain, it can be seen that the rights of the true and good mother, nature, begin to be asserted in the satires. In Freneau's poem, 'America Independent'; nature is used not only to reward America with 'sail through which the streams of plenty flow,' but also to punish the British, in particular Burgoyne and the other Loyalists condemned to their Scottish Isle. Freneau's vision of hell is a wholly natural one:

> ...ambient fogs their broad, moist wings expand
> Damp his bright day, and cloud the infernal land;
> The blackening winds incessant storms prolong,
> Dull as their night, and dreary as my song;
> When stormy winds and gales refuse to blow,

> Then from dark sky drives the unpitying snow;
> When drifting snows from iron clouds forbear,
> Then down the hail-stones rattle through the air -
> There screeching owls, and screaming vultures nest
> And not a tree adorns its barren breast;
> No peace, no rest the elements bestow;
> But seas, forever rage, and storms forever blow.[94]

In this curse the punishment of wrong doing is not merely the province of God the father as implied by the notion of an 'infernal land' and other images of hell; it is enacted by nature, the good and true mother. Nature, whose abundance was always associated with America, is no longer the passive gift of a loving father but in this poem is become a force, albeit one ultimately directed by God the Father. The curse calls upon nature to do its worst, but in an important sense, does not altogether personify nature. The snow is 'unpitying', 'incessant storms are dull as their night. In the 'barren breast' of this isle, the complete materialism of the American wilderness can be recognized.

During the course of the Revolution American satire retained its association with the millenial vision of the Puritan Jeremiad, but that vision of the American Jeremiad did not remain static. It was always the product of the dreams and aspirations of humanity, and during the course of the Revolution ideas of the Enlightenment were integrated in a variety of ways. Hell is much more closely associated with the natural wilderness territory in Freneau's poem and the kind of paradise envisaged is also altered. It is no longer the paradise envisaged by Benjamin Tompson, basking 'in our Father's Praise', but an empire protecting 'the rights of human kind below.' A passive virtue is no longer enough to bring in a 'second golden reign' so that in the Revolutionary satires, the notion of a second golden

reign functions, not as a plea for a return to virtue only, but as a plea for virtuous action. For the Revolutionary satirists the break from their 'bad mother' meant improvement on the old monarchical order, not the break-down of any order. It meant filial obedience, to their own forefathers, not riot, anarchy, or social disorder, and most of all it meant the fulfilment of God's plan for America. The revolution was the long prepared for, long-awaited passage into the 'second golden reign'. Those patriots who fought for the cause fought to fulfil America's promise, which was at once both sacred and historical:

> Here yet shall heaven the joys of peace bestow,
> While through our soil the streams of plenty flow,
> And o'er the main we spread the trading sail,
> Wafting the produce of the rural vale.[95]

America and Americans had grown up, and the passive goodness of the virtuous child was no longer sufficient to fulfil this vision.

When the changes made by the Revolutionary satirists to American satire are considered, the promotion of something akin to a realistic ideal can be recognized. The vision of an 'ideal America' incorporating the ideas of the Enlightenment, is still to be accomplished in the future, but will come about as the result of, not virtue alone, but of virtuous action. There is, in the Revolutionary satire, the general hopefulness of the New World satire, found in Franklin's pragmatic work. Improvement was what mattered and the satires which suggest that the rights envisaged by an independent America are 'natural' to the human condition. Freneau's wish to enjoy the substance of liberty not the name, suggests a realistic ideal or goal, as does the way in which liberty was subsumed in the Stamp Act

satires under a more specific 'North American Liberty'. It is with the realistic and attainable goal of independence that the Revolutionary satirists are concerned, and they promote the ideals of a poem like Brackenridge and Freneau's 'The Rising Glory of America' as a real possibility. Finally, the Revolutionary satires also contain something of the ambiguities inherent in asserting a realistic ideal. These ambiguities are, perhaps because of the demands of war-time propaganda, subdued, but nevertheless still detectable. In Freneau's poem, again 'America Independent', George III is greeted.

> Hail, worthy Briton! - how enlarged your fame;
> How great your glory, terrible your fame;
> "Queen of the isles, and empress of the main," -
> Heaven grant you all these mighty things again;
> But first insure the gaping crowd below
> That you less cruel, and more just may grow.[96]

Here, the 'gaping crowd' is meant to threaten the sovereignty of George III, but gaping crowds do not have pleasant connotations, so that the reader feels hardly less threatened by the possibility of their sovereignty. Something of a double-edge creeps into the satire at this point, which, if enlarged, could threaten the very values the satire intends to promote. Lewis P. Simpson, in his essay 'The Satiric Mode: Early National Wits', remarks of another poem of Freneau's:

> Consider for instance...Freneau's 'George the Third's Soliloquy'... in this poem the King emerges as a suffering, disturbed, uncertain ruler ... Freneau, an arch-liberal and an active patriot in the Revolution, unquestionably intended ... to create a portrait of the monarch as an unscrupulous tyrant ... But Freneau's motive under critical inspection proves to have been more complex than his intention, and we see in his effort to depict the mind of George III a complex ambiguity in his own mind toward the meaning of the Revolution.

As independence became a reality, and as vision was tested by experience, the ambiguities of the satirists' position could only increase. The satires of the period following the Revolution are so marked.

NOTES

1 Franklin, Benjamin 'Silence Dogood No. 2', *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Leonard W. Labaree, Yale University Press, New Haven 1959, p.13.

2 Granger, Bruce Ingham 'The Stamp Act in Satire', 'American Quarterly' No.8, Winter 1956, pp.368-384. NOTE: I am indebted in this part of the thesis to the historical and bibliographic work done by Bruce Ingham Granger in this article, and for examples of Stamp Act satires.

3 *The Gentleman's Magazine* in an article entitled 'Proceedings in America on the Commencement of the Stamp Act' noted that 'The late Act of the British Parliament, for taxing the colonies in America, has produced a spirit of opposition, in that remote part of the world, that was not perhaps foreseen by the advisors of that measure.'(*Gentleman's Magazine* v.35, December 1765, p 473).

4 Ibid., p.384.

5 Ibid.

6 'Providence Gazette', 10 November, 1764 pp.2-3. Moses Coit Tyler attributes this essay to Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island in *The Literary History of the American Revolution*, New York 1897, 1.61, note. Hopkins was the only colonial governor who refused to take the oath to support the Stamp Act. Quoted in Granger, Bruce, *The Stamp Act in Satire*.

7 Granger, Bruce, 'The Stamp Act in Satire', p.370.

8 'New York Gazette; or the Weekly Post-Boy', September 5, 1765. Quoted in Granger, Bruce, *The Stamp Act in Satire*, p.5.

9 This print is reproduced in *William and Mary Quarterly* S3, v.10, October 1953 pp. 538-542, by kind permission of the Trustees of the British Museum, particularly the Museum's Division of Prints. The commentary on each print is based on rich and detailed notes on the cartoons and their allusions, prepared by F.G. Stephens and E. Hawkins and published in the *Catalogue of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum, Political and Personal Satires, 1761-1770* (London 1883), vol. IV.

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17 'Constitutional Courant' (Woolbridge, N.J.), September 21, 1765. Quoted in Granger, Bruce, *The Stamp Act in Satire*.

18 'A Soliloquy' New York 1770. Quoted in Granger, Bruce, *The Stamp Act in Satire*pp.13-14.

19 Engelman, F.L. 'Cadwallader Colden and the New York Stamp Act Riots' *William and Mary Quarterly*, S3, vol.10, 1953, pp.555-577.

20 'Boston Gazette' 9 September 1765. (Boston) *The Boston Gazette, July 29 1765-October 7, 1765 (III)* American Antiquarian Society, Worchester, Mass. 1969.

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23 Broadside, August 1773; reprinted in Moore's Ballad History, pp.38-39 (On September 2 the Maryland Sons of Liberty had pulled down Hood's House (Morgans pp.153-54). Dr Thomas Moffat of Newport, Rhode Island, was in sympathy with the Crown.) Quoted in Granger, Bruce, *The Stamp Act in Satire*.

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27 See No. 13

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VI

THE CRISIS OF AUTHORITY

When Cornwallis was defeated at Yorktown, 17 October 1781, a victory which effectively ended the War of Independence, even a loyalist like Joseph Stansbury looked forward to a bright future:

> Now restor'd to Peace again,
> Active Commerce ploughs the Main;
> All the arts of Civil Life
> Swift succeed the Martial Strife;
> Britain now allows their claim,
> Rising Empire, Wealth and Fame.[1]

In Britain, sympathising satirists celebrated with glee, 'The World Turned Upside Down':

> Goody Bull and her daughter together fell out
> Both squabbled, and wrangled, and made a damned rout ...
>
> "She be damned" says the farmer, [Pitt] and to her he goes,
> First roars in her ears, then tweaks her old nose.
> "Hello Goody, what ails you? Wake, woman, I say,
> I am come to make peace in this desperate fray" ...
>
> Unwilling awkward, the mother kneels down ...
> "There, kiss your poor daughter, and make her amends."
> "No thanks to you Mother," the daughter replied;
> "But thanks to my friend here, I've humbled your pride."[2]

America's right to be treated as an independent nation was not truly won until the war of 1812, which confirmed the Canadian boundary. By this time the Americans had recognized that extreme democracy caused fragmentation, and the Constitution of 1787, which allowed for a division of power between federal and state government had been signed by all of the thirteen states. The Americans had begun to put into practice the ideals of the Enlightenment and, perhaps because of their history of law-abiding self-government, were proving that the people

could govern. The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead has remarked of the Americans:

> The men who founded your republic had an uncommonly clear grasp of the general ideas that they wanted to put in here, then left the working out of details to later interpreters, which has been, on the whole, remarkably successful. I know of only three times in the Western world when statesmen consciously took control of historic destinies: Periclean Athens, Rome under Augustus, and the founding of your American republic.[3]

The men who founded the American Republic were, indeed, statesmen, and those who gathered in Philadelphia to draught the American Constitution could rightly be termed 'men of letters'. They included two College Presidents, three Professors, twenty six college graduates, four delegates who had read law at the Inns of Court at London, and nine who were foreign born. These were men who could lay claim to intellectual cosmopolitanism. Lewis P. Simpson observes in his essay 'The Satiric Mode: The Early National Wits':

> The voice of the Constitution is "we the people", but the Constitution implies in its austerity and solemnity of tone a limitation on the dominion of people instituting the new government. That the sovereignty of the mind of man implies the equality of all individual minds - lettered and unlettered - may have had some theoretical basis in the primitivistic notions of the age. But equality of intellect was not really contemplated by the eighteenth-century mind, which was rooted in the concept that mind and literacy are equivalent. The Republic of Letters was an order founded in the distinction - simple, fundamental, and ancient - between the man *of* letters and the man of *no* letters. The exclusiveness of literacy was an integral implication of the very mind that conceived of a government by the consent of the governed. To the eighteenth-century mind, as illustrated by the outlook of the great historian Edward Gibbon, for example, literacy and illiteracy constituted the difference between civilization and barbarism.[4]

Nevertheless, the Americans were committed to putting the ideals of the Enlightenment into practice, and in a world turned upside down

individuals must be persuaded, not ordered, to act for the collective good so government could function, and civilization flourish.

The difficulty of maintaining a democracy had become manifest historically in Shay's Rebellion in Massachusetts and in the Whiskey Insurrection in Pennsylvania. Both rebellions were inspired by frontier populism which together with other evidence of the rise of the common people, gave cause for much concern. The Revolution was not merely a matter of emancipation from British rule, but as the post-Revolutionary period shows, a crisis for authority of all kinds. Shay's rebellion and the Whiskey Insurrection are two examples of rebellion against secular authority, but Church ministers also found their authority considerably diminished after the Revolution. Emory Elliot suggests that:

> As the war neared a close, it became clear to the Congregation and Presbyterian clergy that the Revolution had altered relationships between the churches and the people in ways that could be detrimental to the churches. The ministers found themselves more vulnerable to insolent church members ready to dismiss their ministers on various charges. Frequently, ministers were accused of having shown a lack of militancy for the revolutionary cause or of preaching doctrines that were inappropriate for an independent people.[5]

The Reverend Peter Thatcher's widely circulated pamphlet 'Observations upon the Present State of the Clergy of New England, with Strictures upon the Power of Dismissing Them, Usurped by Some Churches', perhaps best summarizes the problem when it states that:

> The people, having emancipated themselves from the British government, and felt their competence to carry every point they chose, have, in some places at least, forgotten that they could never be emancipated from the bonds of justice. They have been ready to suppose that their declaration and authority were sufficient to dissolve the most

> solemn engagements, and that *the people could do no wrong.*[6]

Elliot identifies two aspects of Thatcher's protest which set it apart from any unrest among the preachers of earlier times:

> First, there was a notable increase in such cases of dismissals of clergy by the churches during and after the war ... The second unusual feature of Thatcher's pamphlet is the angry answer that it sparked from a layman ... James Sullivan, the commissioner for laws for the state of Massachusetts, published a detailed response to Thatcher's pamphlet ...
>
> In what may have been the first assertion that an act of criticism of the American people may involve a violation of national security, Sullivan began by warning Thatcher that a public attack upon the American people by a man of influence could constitute treason... Sullivan then went on to point out that, under the newly created United States legal system, Thatcher and his fellow clergymen occupied their pulpits... at the pleasure of the town officials and church members. ...ecclesiastical council...(was) now powerless and therefore superfluous, for in a republic, a minister's peers are his fellow citizens: 'it is vain for a clergyman to seek another mode of justice in a popular government.'[7]

In Sullivan's warning to Thatcher some dislocation of the ideal America, from the spiritual context in which the nation was born can be recognized. The ministers were right to view with concern the path religion might take in such circumstances.

For the satirists, often themselves men of letters, the unease with which ignorance and superstition is viewed is even more apparent. The underlying threat posed by a democratic mob is greater than that posed by the lower classes of an aristocratic society. The former have a potential for power which the latter do not, and ignorance and superstition threaten democracy with failure. Satirists must confront the unpalatable double-truth that while many are unfit to make

reasoned judgements the denial of a voice to ordinary people makes democracy impossible. The consequent problems, of what might be loosely termed America's crisis of authority, occasion and shape the satires of the period. The satires become increasingly double-edged, particularly as the rise of the common people is placed in the context of the French Revolution and its terrible aftermath. Ignorance and superstition must be attacked, elitism of any sort which would slide America towards monarchy, must also be attacked, and all whilst the democratic ideal is asserted. Finally, insofar as post-Revolutionary America expected democracy to work, the democratic ideal might be said to be a social or realistic ideal, as opposed to the classical and hierarchical system of universal ideals, asserted by the Augustan satirists.

During the course of the eighteenth century American satirists had developed means of asserting a realistic ideal. By usurping the form of the Puritan Jeremiad satirists they could promote the value of a realistic ideal in a nostalgic view of the past, or in a prophetic vision of the future. Throughout the Revolution, the American satirists had placed their vision of America within a providential framework, retaining a link with the millenialism of the Puritan Jeremiad. Millenialism was not discontinued in post-Revolutinary America. On 8 May 1783 Dr Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College, preached an Election Sermon before the Governor and General Assembly of Connecticut, later published under the title of 'The United States elevated to Glory and Honour'. The address traces the process of American independence in terms of America's special promise:

> How utopian it would have been to have predicted at the battle of Lexington, that in less than eight years the independence and sovereignties of the

> United States should be acknowledged by four European sovereignties, one of which would be Britain herself. How wonderful the revolutions, the events of Providence! We live in an age of wonders; we have lived an age in a few years; we have seen more wonders accomplished in eight years than are usually unfolded in a century...

America would shine as a beacon to the rest of the world, although by now the beam is not so much divine as enlightening:

> We shall have a communication with all nations in commerce, manners, and science, beyond anything heretofore known in the world ... all the arts may be transplanted from Europe and Asia, and flourish in America with an augmented lustre, not to mention the augment of the sciences from American inventions and discoveries...
> The rough sonorous diction of the English language may here take its Athenian polish, and receive its attic urbanity, as it will probably become the vernacular tongue of more numerous millions than ever yet spake one language on earth...

Finally, as American civic virtue had been rewarded by a successful Revolution which had so openly achieved so much, as a nation, the United States were particularly committed to fulfilling their promise:

> ...the United States are under peculiar obligations to become a holy people unto the Lord our God, on account of the late eminent deliverance, salvation, peace and glory with which he hath now crowned our new sovereignty.[8]

The prophetic view of the future expressed by Ezra Stiles is no longer simple millenialism, but emphasizes the ideals of the Enlightenment. It looks forward to a time when the arts and science will flourish, when commerce and trade will have made the nation rich, to a time when all the world will bask in the liberty being enjoyed by America, as well as to a time when America will be crowned with salvation, peace and glory. It is as much a vision of reason as of spirituality, and as such is representative of the new America, and the new American as defined by Crèvecoeur.[9]

The novelty of the American situation in the eighteenth century however, creates a difficulty for the satirist wishing to assert the realistic ideal of a free and democratic nation of holy people. If one means of reconciling the paradox of a realistic ideal is by a reference to a past golden time when society was virtuous, then, allowing that America had just broken the shackles of colonial rule, and was looking forward to a glorious democratic future, the American past could hardly be asserted as a golden age. Some American satirists continued to interpret the past in terms of millenial and biblical history, but in other works actual history becomes the target of satire. In part, this may have been stimulated by the number of historians who made their appearance after the revolution. Some of these did write histories of merit, like Jeremy Belknap's *History of New Hampshire* (1784). Others were blatantly partisan like Mrs Mercy Warren's *History of the Rise, Progress and Termination of the American Revolution*. Mrs Warren, who had written satires against the Tories and was the sister of James Otis, presented such a pro-republican and anti-federalist point of view that Jefferson was delighted and John Adams furious. John Marshall's 'Life of Washington (1804-7)' on the other hand, justified federalism. The interest in American history grew alongside the sense of an American identity and the Massachusetts Historical Society, America's first, was founded in 1790.

A number of satires written during the forty years that followed the Revolution are, to all intents and purposes, mock histories. Some, like Jonas Clopper's *Bawlfredonia* of 1819, depict the past, and past heroes of the Revolution such as Jefferson and Paine, Madison and Franklin, as examples of unremitting vice and folly; others are only

mildly critical of their forefathers. Belknap's own satirical history appeared as a fictitious account of the author's trip to the land of 'the foresters', in the *Columbian Magazine* from June 1787 to April 1788. The rest of the letters which make up *The Foresters* were probably written between 1788 and 1792. In this work the pilgrim fathers are no longer depicted as the sturdy men who:

> ... once, in fear of Indian beating
> Our grandsires [who] bore their guns to meeting,
> ...th'ancient, true church militant;
>
> (Trumbull, John, 'The Progress of Dulness' 1772-1773)

Rather, as Lewis A. Turlish has suggested, the rigid Puritanism of Humphrey Ploughshare's family is an ample target for Belknap's satiric method:

> The family and all its concerns were under very exact regulations... not one of them was suffered to peep out of doors after the sun was set. It was never allowed to brew on Saturday, lest the beer should break the fourth commandment: and once, it is said, the stallion was impounded for a whole week for holding *crim. con.* with the mare while the Old gentleman was at his devotions.[10]

The past, in the post-revolutionary satires is neither as golden nor as virtuous as Benjamin Tompson would have had us believe. Belknap's satire also shows evidence of ambiguity about the meaning of post-revolutionary America. Indeed, some ambivalence toward the post-Revolutionary American situation can be detected in the title of Belknap's work, if Timothy Dwight's slightly later use of the term 'foresters' is any indication of the current usage:

> A considerable part of all those, who *begin* the cultivation of the wilderness, may be denominated foresters, or pioneers. The business of these persons is no other than to cut down trees, build log-houses, lay open forested grounds to

> cultivation, and prepare the way for those who come after them. These men cannot live in regular society. They are too idle, too talkative, too passionate, too prodigal, and too shiftless to aquire either property or character...and finding all their efforts vain, they become at length discouraged and under the pressure of poverty, the fear of jail, and consciousness of public contempt, leave their native places, and betake themselves to the wilderness.[11]

The possible ambivalence of Belknap's title is reinforced by the eventual outcome in his satire. Ostensibly the work targets the British in the form of John Bull, and the Church of England in the form of John Bull's mother. It is her obsessive desire for uniformity which has led to the initial settlement of the forest. On the other hand Belknap makes clear his anti-Jacobin sentiments in his treatment of the Franks. It is Teneg, the representative of the Franks, who introduces 'Mother Carey's Chickens' into the forest. The divisive influence of these birds sets the foresters against each other with their calls of "war, war, war" and "whisky, whisky, whisky", representing the War Hawks and of course the Whiskey Rebellion. More significantly, letter number fifteen sees the introduction of 'a new species of rats'. These rats, the speculators, are aided by George Trusty who represents George Washington. Turlish remarks:

> We are thus aware of a curious movement in Belknap's work. The shift in tone which occurs from the whimsy of the initial sections to the ominous quality of the latter sections is indeed strange.[12]

Belknap's satire does predict a gloomy future if past mistakes are repeated. For the time being at least, the satirists have no previous model for their society and must look forward with prophetic vision to America's future. If that vision, in the last analysis, seems ominous, this is perhaps less surprising if Belknap's work is viewed

in terms of the crisis of authority which imbues many of the satires of this period, particularly as the rise of the common people is placed into the context of the French Revolution and its aftermath. The past was really no help to the American satirist at this time and the future could only be uncertain.

An optimistic view of the future was intrinsic to the millenial view of American history, but even this means of asserting a realistic ideal was not without problems for the post-Revolutionary satirist. As the glorious prophetic vision of America's future became increasingly secularized 'God's plan for America' became correspondingly difficult to use as a binding agent for idealistic and realistic expectations. It was an agent which had, in the past, ensured that outcomes would eventually be favourable. The political aspirations of the New Republic could offer no such guarantee. The difficulty is remarked upon by Emory Elliott in his book, *Revolutionary Writers:*

> The writers of the new republic were engaged in a task more difficult than they were capable of understanding: the negotiation of an uncharted intellectual and artistic path from a dominant religious vision of America to a new nationalist ideology. They felt it their duty to express the symbolic meaning of America and the social message of how to live and succeed in American society - how to be an American.[13]

Joel Barlow, in his preface to the 'Vision of Columbus' 1787, which was revised and re-issued as 'The Columbiad' in 1807, expresses just such a purpose and, incidentally, demonstrates the continuing way in which the writers of the New Republic place their art at the disposal of the state, in much the same way that Puritan satirists served their God:

> My object is altogether of a moral and political nature. I wish to encourage and strengthen, in the rising generation, a sense of the importance of republican institutions; as being the great foundations of public and private happiness, the necessary aliment of future and permanent ameliorations in the condition of human nature.[14]

For the American satirist asserting the importance of republican institutions as the necessary aliment of future and permanent ameliorations in the condition of human nature, meant asserting a realistic ideal. This could have meant asserting a prophetic view of the future that either incorporated everything the new republic was intended to be, or one which depicted total dissolution following a failure to pursue the right path. Because however, the very novelty of the American situation meant that what would best serve the new republic was by no means certain, the satires often present an underlying feeling of unease in spite of an apparently optimistic view formerly associated with millenialism. They are sometimes, as in Belknap's satire, downright ominous. The satirists of the period share a general fear of barbarism and a general support for civilization in America but are no longer able to assert America's rising glory unequivocably.

Finally, the attempt by writers of the post-Revolutionary period to come to terms with the novelty of the American situation required something of a re-negotiation of the writer's position in society. It was inevitable that a new republic which had called into question the authority of church and state should also call into question the authority of the 'man of letters'. The satirist was especially vulnerable. The very nature of the muse assumes a tacit superiority on the part of the satirist, and much of the wit in satire is created

to belie this position. The matter of tone in satire is always difficult, but when satirist and audience are imbued with democratic notions of equality, it is more difficult. An assumption of too much moral superiority leaves the satirist open to a charge of, as Franklin expressed it, 'a sort of foppery in morals': too little authority asserted on the part of the satirist diminishes the attack, and renders the tone of the satire essentially comic. The crisis of authority which had in part created the American Revolution, but was in part engendered by its success, would affect American satire in terms of both form and content and its effects would eventually be felt in European satire. These effects were however felt in America first, and a consideration of one of the best known satires of the Revolution but one which was not completed until 1782, will serve to demonstrate this.

John Trumbull's 'M'Fingal' demonstrates the effect of the crisis of authority on American satire. It was written over the period from 1776 to 1782 when society was in the throes of the revolution, but shows an early concern with the implications of its possible success. Trumbull himself was a well-educated, and probably brilliant man. He had passed the entrance examinations for Yale at the age of seven. although his clergyman father wisely kept him from college for a further six years. At the age of twenty he had completed his MA, and tutored at Yale for a further three years until, in 1773, he was admitted to the bar of Connecticut and entered the Boston law office of John Adams. Here he was unavoidably embroiled in Revolutionary politics. Trumbull returned to Connecticut in 1774, where he practised law for the next fifty years, eventually serving his state

as judge both of the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court of Errors. By comparison with Freneau, Trumbull was only mildly patriotic. The conservatism, which later saw him join that group of writers known as the Connecticut Wits who mixed verse with Federalism and a conservative religious outlook in an attempt to check Jeffersonian liberalism, is apparent in 'M'Fingal'. The work does satirize the pro-British Tories, as might be expected in a Revolutionary satire, but the unease with which democracy is viewed as the work progresses is hardly reassuring. In the years 1772-3 Trumbull had looked forward to an America of rising glory, where the young:

> From schools dismissed, with lib'ral hand,
> Spread useful learning o'er the land:
> And bid the eastern world admire
> Our rising worth, and bright'ning fire.
> (The Progress of Dulness - Tom Brainless)

Given the optimism of these lines, Trumbull's use of the prophetic vision of America's future in 'M'Fingal' is, to say the least, interesting.

The first part of 'M'Fingal' was published in January 1776, the same month as Paine's 'Common Sense'. A second Philadelphia edition, and a London edition appeared that same year. No further editions seem to have been published until 1782 when Trumbull divided the original poem into two cantos and added two more to complete the work. The poem was obviously popular and some seven editions appeared during the following decade. 'M'Fingal' tells the story of a Massachusetts squire who, a Tory himself, attempts to persuade his neighbours to submit to the authority of Parliament and George III. In Cantos I and II M'Fingal is bested in debate by his Whig opponent, Honorius, and in Canto III M'Fingal attempts to remove the local Liberty Pole. His

efforts result in his being tarred and feathered and paraded through the town. Canto IV sees a secret meeting between Squire M'Fingal and his fellow constituents give way to a lengthy vision of the course of the Revolution and the rising glory of America, but when M'Fingal hears the Whigs at the door he makes good his escape, leaving his constituents in the lurch.

The first two cantos of the poem are typically anti-British, although perhaps among the best of the Revolution. The poem begins with a ridiculously long description of M'Fingal's credentials and family history which satirizes all attempts to make pedigree important. One remembers Burgoyne:

> His high descent our heralds trace
> To Ossian's famed Fingalian race
> For though their name some part may lack
> Old Fingal spelt it with a Mac;
> Which great McPherson, with submission
> We hope will add, the next edition.[15]

Fingal, the great Gaelic legendary hero, was the father of Ossian who was purported by Macpherson to have been the author of the long epic poem 'Fingal' brought out in 1762, which narrated the hero's adventures. Macpherson's poems were much admired, by Goethe among others, for their romantic spirit and rhythm, but their authenticity was challenged, most notably by Dr Johnson, and when called upon to produce his originals Macpherson was obliged to fabricate them. A committee formed after his death in 1796 to investigate the Ossianic poems reported that Macpherson had liberally edited traditional Gaelic poems and inserted passages of his own. Subsequent research supports this view, although of course Trumbull could not have known this. Trumbull's allusion here, to what was a contemporary literary

controversy, comically suggests that Macpherson's only error was one of nomenclature, and simultaneously places Squire M'Fingal's extravagant family history in similarly doubtful terrain. The allusion also serves to establish the tone of the satire. The satirist, clearly a man of letters, is somewhere above and beyond the scenes he depicts, but his fellow Americans are invited to enjoy the comedy, in the first instance, at the expense of the British-loving Tory.

M'Fingal appears to have inherited two gifts from his illustrious heritage:

> His father flourished in the Highlands
> Of Scotia's fog benighted islands
> Whence gained our Squire two gifts by right
> Rebellion and the second sight.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

The Squire's gift of second sight is not altogether reliable:

> Not only saw he all that was
> But much that never came to pass
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

Further, since coming to America to tame the wilderness, the Squire's first gift, of rebellion, appears to have become contingent upon his second gift, of prophesying.

> So gained our Squire his fame by seeing
> Such things as never would have being
> Whence he for oracles was grown
> The very tripod of his town.
> Gazettes no sooner rose a lye in
> But strait he fell to prophesying
> Made dreadful slaughter in his course
> O'erthrew provincials, foot and horse...
> All this with spirit energetic
> He did by second sight prophetic.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

The Squire's vision of the future defeat of the provincials, is marked by a singular lack of action on his part. The true American millenial

vision of the Revolutionary period which resulted in a call for action, as in Freneau's poem 'America Independent':

> American! revenge your country's wrongs;
> To you the honour of this deed belongs,

M'Fingal's apocalyptic Tory visions are merely intended to frighten his opponents into voting for him. Ostensibly M'Fingal supports the traditional Loyalist argument which saw the Revolutionaries as:

> Ungrateful sons! a factious band
> That rise against [their] parent-land.
> (Canto II)

In spite of this traditionalist and authoritarian appeal found in the first two cantos however, M'Fingal's argument for divine rule is such as to be self-satirizing. His analogy for the King's purpose in the apocalyptic plan is as a kind of Fuller's Earth:

> So King's appointment cleans betimes
> Like Fuller's Earth, all spots of crimes...
> As when the Jews, a murmuring race,
> By constant grumblings fell from grace,
> Heav'n taught them first to know their distance
> By famine, slavery and Philistines;
> When these could no repentance bring,
> In wrath it sent them last a King.
> (Canto II)

Kings, it seems, have taken the place of Indians in the providential plan, and are a means of bringing the Americans to penitence, and if a King seems harsh, M'Fingal insists that 'Massachusettensis' has demonstrated that worse evils come from sedition, namely those of committees:

> Sprung from the eggs of foul sedition;
> Swear he (Massachusettensis) had seen the nest she
> laid in,
> And knew how long she had been sitting
> Could tell exact what strength the heat is
> Requir'd to hatch her out Committees;
> (Canto II)

The twentieth century reader may have some sympathy with M'Fingal's view here, and the language is clearly intended to alert this Whig audience to the danger, but the Whig cause is associated with foulness and secrecy, and M'Fingal has a number of other spurious references all of which purport to show that the Whigs are against God if they are against the Tories.

M'Fingal however, directs most of his appeal to the self-interest of his audience as he turns his talent for prophesying to the future, or as Honorius phrases it, guessing 'from past facts whats to come'. M'Fingal predicts a Tory victory:

> I see you sink with aw'd surprise
> I see our Tory brethren rise.
> (M'Fingal', Canto 1)

The audience are to fear not being on the winning side and M'Fingal supports his argument with tales of portents and signs. As Trumbull tells us in a note, stories of prodigies were industriously propagated by the Tory party in various parts of New England to terrify and intimidate the superstitious; and this may be an indication of the satirist's own views of the millenial fervour with which the Revolutionary cause was propagated. By endowing M'Fingal with the apocalyptic vision of America's future he draws the American reader of the time closer to the view of the 'man of letters'. Trumbull, in this poem, seems prepared to dispense with the providential framework so common in other Revolutionary satires, and render tales of prodigies harmless. In Trumbull's satire, they are quite simply ridiculous. Providence was clearly on the side of the Tories:

> And Providence declar'd against you;
> Hung forth its dire portents of war, ...
> Was there meteor far and wide
> But mustered on the Tory side.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

M'Fingal, warming to his task predicts the coming millenium, but M'Fingal's millenialism is wholly secular, with North, the British Chancellor of the Exchequor, not God, rewarding his faithful.

> ...See from your overthrow and end
> The Tories paradise ascend
> Like that new world that claims its station
> Beyond the final conflagration...
> The day of joy, when North, our Lord
> His faithful fav'rites shall reward.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

America will shine out like a beacon to the rest of the world.

> Behold, the world shall store at new sets
> Of home-made earls in Massachusetts.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

This is not precisely what the Pilgrim Fathers had in mind, and M'Fingal's use of the prophetic vision is not merely a travesty of the original, but an obvious appeal to the self interest of his audience and one unlikely to succeed in Revolutionary America. Another aristocracy was not what America's revolutionaries wanted at this time. Honorius, who eventually becomes the clear winner of this debate, points to the bloodiness of the Tories and insists that while M'Fingal's second sight can't be confuted, the vision won't come yet awhile. In the ensuing chaos M'Fingal draws his sword, and here M'Fingal functions as something of a representative personality. His actions echo British attempts, when argument failed, to keep the peace by aid of arms. He draws his sword

> Prepar'd in either chance to share
> To keep the peace, or aid the war.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

Honorius, it is assumed, represents American society as a type of exemplary figure, and as such is worthy of further consideration.

The character of Honorius is probably based upon John Adams, second President of the United States (1797-1801), and in whose law office Trumbull had worked in 1773. Thus some insight into the values promoted by 'M'Fingal' can be gained by a consideration of Adams's views. Adams had worked for independence, but his views on government differed from those suggested by Paine in 'Common Sense' and those of other Enlightenment thinkers in fundamental ways. Adams once wrote: 'All men are men and not angels' and that 'whoever would found a state ... must presume that all men are bad by nature.'[16] In 'Discourses on Davila' (1790-91) Adams insisted that:

> ...Amidst all their exultations, Americans and Frenchmen should remember that the perfectibility of man is only human and terrestrial perfectibility. Cold will still freeze, and fire will never cease to burn; disease and vice will continue to disorder, and death to terrify mankind. Emulation next to self-preservation will forever be the great spring of human actions, and the balance of a well-ordered government will alone be able to prevent that emulation from degenerating into dangerous ambition, irregular rivalries, destructive factions, wasting seditions, and bloody, civil wars.[17]

The means by which this 'human and terrestial perfectibility' was to be achieved was essentially federalist. Adams was politically conservative and, like Washington, supported the notion of a strong central government by which an experienced, wealthy and wise minority governed under a system of checks and balances which would prevent autocratic or democratic excesses. There would always be an aristocracy in Adams' opinion, so that it would be best to recognize and control the ruling minority.

Although his views made Adams the political opponent of Jefferson for some twenty years, in later life the two men had a correspondence

in which they evaluated the past and speculated upon the future of the new republic. The problems created by both aristocracy and democracy form the subject of one of their most famous exchanges. Both men were apparently agreed that there existed 'a natural aristocracy among men, the grounds of which are virtue and talents' but Adams seems to have felt that this 'natural' tendency was one too often abused.

> When I consider the weakness, the folly, the pride, the vanity, the selfishness, the artifice, the low craft and mean cunning, the want of principle, the avarice, the unbounded ambition, the unfeeling cruelty of a majority of those (in all nations) who are allowed an aristocratical influence, and, on the other hand, the stupidity with which the more numerous multitude not only become their dupes, but even love to be taken in by their tricks, I feel a stronger disposition to weep at their destiny, than to laugh at their folly.[18]

One senses something of the real basis for Trumbull's satire in these remarks of Adams: that is the way in which the many may become the dupes of the few, and 'even love to be taken' in this way. M'Fingal's powerful rhetoric, his attempt to frighten people into voting for him, his warping of the prophetic vision to incorporate an appeal to the self-interest of his audience are a clear example of the artifice and general want of principle which Adams suggests is to be found in many of those who are allowed an aristocratic influence. M'Fingal has talent of a sort, and depends upon his talent for making speeches, but it is a talent more supposed than real:

> Skilled was our Squire in making speeches
> But as some muskets so contrive it
> As oft to miss the work they drive at
> And tho' well aim'd at duck or plover
> Bear wide and kick their owners over
> So far'd our Squire, whose reas'ning tail
> Would often on himself recoil
> And so much injur'd more his side
> The stronger arg'ments he applied
> As old war-elephants dismay'd
> Trod down the troups they came to aid,
> And hurt their own side more in battle

Than less and ordinary cattle.
('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

Certainly the Tory cause might have been aided more by a somewhat less ostentatious speech-maker than was M'Fingal, but at town meetings, every chief pinned his faith on 'great M'Fingal's sleeve':

Which when he lifted, all by rote
Raised sympathetic hands to vote
('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

As Adams suggests, there is a kind of endless stupidity with which the more numerous multitude not only become the dupes of a M'Fingal, but even love to be taken in by his tricks. Trumbull's satire then, is only in part a pro-Whig, pro-Revolutionary attack on the Tories and the British. The attack becomes, in part, an attack on the way elections are held, and the ease with which people can be parted from their vote, especially the ignorant and superstitious.

Adams goes on to further define his terms, and the true significance of M'Fingal's gift of vote-catching becomes apparent when placed in this context.

> Fashion has introduced an indeterminate use of the word talents. Education, wealth, strength, beauty, stature, birth, marriage, graceful attitudes and motions, gait, air, complexion, physiognomy, are talents, as well as genius, science, and learning. Any one of these talents that in fact commands or influences two votes in society, gives to the man who possesses it the character of an aristocrat, in my sense of the word.[19]

One notes here that Adams is not concerned to differentiate between the talents he lists, or to place them in any sort of hierarchical order of desirability. The list is wholly democratic, the final test being not desirability, or even usefulness, but public opinion;

whether or not that talent 'in fact commands or influences two votes in society'. How that vote is obtained is irrelevant to the notion of aristocracy in Adams' sense of the word:

> Pick up the first hundred men you meet, and make a republic. Every man will have an equal vote; but...it will be found that twenty-five, by their talents, virtues being equal, will be able to carry fifty votes. Every one of these twenty five is an aristocrat in my sense of the word; whether he obtains his one vote in addition to his own, by his birth, fortune, figure, eloquence, science, learning, craft, cunning, or even his character for good fellowship, and a *bon vivant*...[20]

Given Adams' list of talents, it is difficult to see how virtue can be equal, but one takes the point that it is not ultimately virtue that makes the natural aristocrat, but talent. In these terms, the electoral content in Trumbull's 'M'Fingal' is not merely a contest of virtue, good Whig versus bad Tory. It is a contest of talent, of which candidate can inspire public confidence. Further, insofar as the individual represents the community which elects him, the elected candidate in turn becomes some measure of society's worth. It is a matter of which candidate is in fact the natural aristocrat, and Squire M'Fingal is not debarred from this title simply by virtue of his apparently illustrious lineage. Adams writes to Jefferson:

> ...Your distinction between natural and artificial aristocracy, does not appear to me well-founded. Birth and wealth are conferred upon some men as imperiously by nature as genius, strength, or beauty... When aristocracies are established by human laws, and honor, wealth, and power are made hereditary by municipal laws and political institutions, then I acknowledge artificial aristocracy to commence; but this never commences till corruption in elections become dominant and uncontrollable...Here you have the origin of all artificial aristocracy, which is the origin of all monarchies. And both artificial aristocracy and monarchy, and civil, military, political, and hierarchal despotism, have all grown out of the natural aristocracy of virtues and talents...[21]

Seen in this context of contemporary political thought, and that of Trumbull's own political conservatism, the underlying seriousness of 'M'Fingal' becomes more apparent. If the new republic was to succeed it was crucial that the general public be able to discern the difference between the candidate of virtues and talents and the candidate of no virtues, who is possessed of talent. The greater the talent in a candidate of no virtue, then the greater the danger of that candidate inspiring public confidence. Adams, with his presumption 'that all men are bad by nature', was not optimistic about democracy even by 1813 when he was writing to Jefferson

> You [Jefferson] suppose a difference of opinion between you and me on the subject of aristocracy. I can find none. I dislike and detest hereditary honors, offices, emolouments, established by law. So do you. I am for excluding legal, hereditary distinctions from the United States as long as possible. So are you. I only say that mankind have not yet discovered any remedy against irresistable corruption in elections to offices of great power and profit, but making them hereditary.[22]

For Trumbull, writing 'M'Fingal' between 1775 and 1782 the problems for democracy seemed prodigious and in parts one recognizes some increase in the kind of unease which was created in Freneau's work by the 'gaping crowds'.

In the first two cantos of 'M'Fingal', however, the contest between the candidates is conducted along fairly well-defined lines. The town to which M'Fingal has come to address the election meeting has long been torn by party feuding which favoured first one side and then the other. As a consequence nothing was achieved, for whatever one group did the other would undo. A project might be begun by one group but:

... when completed, or before
A second vote in pieces tore.
('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

To the difficulty of faction and getting things done in a democracy, can be added the problem recognized since the days of Plutarch; the possibility of a bad leader, but a good talker, attracting the popular vote. Thus:

... our Hero, a' their head,
In pomp the Tory faction led
Still following as the Squire should please,
Successive on, like files of geese.
('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

The other problem of democracy which Trumbull confronts is that of the election itself, whereby getting elected becomes an end in itself, rather than the means by which good government is created for the collective good. In lines which inflict a 'transitory lashing' on the church, and which are some evidence of Trumbull's religious conservatism, he renders politics and lies almost interchangable terms. The town meeting is called in the church, which in early America may well have been the only building of any size available, but Trumbull remarks:

(That house, which loth a rule to break
Sav'd heav'n but one day in the week,
Open the rest for all supplies
Of news and politics and lies).
('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

Then, as opposing factions muster their arguments, what ensues is not reasoned argument carefully assessed by the voter, but pandemonium, in which all judgement becomes impossible:

With ev'ry tongue in either faction
Prepared, like minute men, for action;
Where truth and falsehood, wrong and right
Draw all their legions out to fight;
With equal uproar fearcely rave
Opposing winds in Aeolus' cave
Such dialogues with earnest face
Held never Balaam with his ass.
('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

In this part of the poem the poet sides with neither faction but rather creates unease about the process of election itself and with the idea of power placed wholly in the hands of the people. It is the same premonition of mob tyranny which informed many of the Loyalists' satires of the Revolutionary period, and the questions raised by the notion that the people can do no wrong which mark the election scenes depicted in 'M'Fingal' are far more overtly considered than might be expected from a Revolutionary satirist. In this, Trumbull differs from the more fervently patriotic Philip Freneau, whose 'gaping crowds' presented only a latent threat. He demonstrates a far more conservative view of the Revolution which would eventually lead to a crisis of authority of all kinds.

For the most part, however, the first two Cantos of the poem do keep the ostensible target of the work within range. Honorius' speeches, whilst vehemently anti-British, are governed by a certain logic. Squire M'Fingal's talent for speech making was more supposed than real, but Honorius has a real talent for speech-making and betters M'Fingal in the debate, promoting the Whig cause by demolishing the arguments of his opponent so that, the satire does not, in the first two cantos, become double-edged. Honorius depicts a Britain grown old, the enfeebled, half-mad, but thoroughly bad mother who is overblown with a pride no longer justified.

> For states, like men, are doomed as well
> The infirmities of age to feel...
> Thus now while hoary years prevail
> Good Mother Britain seem'd to fail...
> Her arms, of nations once the dread
> She scarce could lift above her head...
> Lost all her former sense and knowledge...
> Of all the pow'rs she once retain'd
> Conceit and pride alone remain'd.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

There is something here of Adams' notion of a natural aristocracy insofar as British power was once based on qualities in fact possessed; her arms once dreaded by others, and her former sense and knowledge. British attempts to set this 'natural aristocracy' into a form of 'hereditary aristocracy' are dismised by Honorius wih a skilful use of typology. He renders claims by the British of a divine right to rule, not fearful, but the mistaken result of whimsy and pride, and consequently ridiculous:

> As Eve when falling was so modest
> To fancy she should grow a goddess; ...
> So Britain 'midst her airs so Flighty
> Now took a whim to be Almighty.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

The British whim, however, is characterized by greed and despotism. What began as fancy is set into law which enables even the most ridiculous of notions to represent a threat. Having assumed divine rights, Britain:

> In Stephen's Chapel...
> Set up her golden calf to pray to,
> Proclaimed its pow'r and right divine,
> And call'd for worship at its shrine.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

Then, having 'struck bargains' with the Catholic Church in order to purchase 'infallibility':

> She first, without pretense of reason
> Claim'd right whate'er we had to seize on ...
> Stiled her own children, brats and caitiffs
> And knew us not from th'Indian natives
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

And for those Americans who would insist on supporting Britain:

> So once Egyptians at the Nile
> Ador'd their gardian Crocodile.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

Honorius' speech then, strikes a delicate balance between fear and ridicule, perhaps encapsulated in the image of adoring a 'guardian

Crocodile'. Freedom, in such circumstances, is only for the brave. Honorius, however, does not allow his audience to dwell upon the difficulties of defeating the British. He deftly cuts his opponents down to size and demolishes any claim to a 'natural aristocracy'. Gage, the British General, has bungled so often, and stretched credulity so far that 'no fool would credit lies so silly.' Further, if British forces are in fact the agents of the devil well then:

> Whence plain it seems tho'Satan once
> O'erlook'd with scorn each brainless dunce
> And blund'ring brutes in Eden shunning
> Chose out the serpent for his cunning.
> Of late he is not half so nice
> Nor picks assistants, 'cause they're wise
> For had he stood upon perfection
> His presents had lost th'election
> And far'd as hard in this proceeding
> As owls and asses did in Eden.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

Honorius has judged his audience well, and pitched his appeal not only to the secular - American Whig versus British Tory - but perhaps also to the religious - American God versus British Satan. If this is so, however, it is a degenerate Satan who has marked out the British for his purposes and therefore presumably not one to be feared.

The religious framework on which so many of the Revolutionary satirists hung their satires has become, in Trumbull's satire, merely a rhetorical device. M'Fingal's prophetic Tory vision was a travesty of the original and the depiction of a Satan whose taste has so degenerated since the Garden of Eden that he is now prepared to take just about anybody on as a servant, does nothing to suggest that the reader is supposed to take this analogy seriously. Rather one suspects a satirist more than a little sceptical of that mixture of the sacred and the secular with which so much Revolutionary satire was

imbued. The typical alignment of the British cause with that of Satan's is present, but as part of the hyperbole necessary to win an election. As Honorius' speech reaches its climax, this view is confirmed. 'And are there' he asks extravagantly 'in this freeborn land/Among ourselves a venal band...?' Are there:

> Priests who, if Satan should sit down,
> To make a bible of his own
> Would gladly for the sake of mitres
> Turn his inspir'd and sacred writers
> Lawyers, who should he wish to prove
> His title t'his old seat above
> Would ...
> Plead for him boldly at the session
> And hope to put him in possession
> Merchants who, for his kindly aid
> Would make him partners in their trade
> Hang out their signs in goodly show
> Inscrib'd with 'Beelzebub & Co.'
> And Judges, who would lift his pages
> For proper liveries and wages...
> ('M'Fingal, Canto 1)

Honorius' use of the sacred and the secular is entirely rhetorical. He is less concerned with establishing a connection between the British cause and Satan than with winning the election, and the notion of lawyers taking Satan's brief all the way to the highest of high courts or of merchants making a literal, rather than a merely figurative, partner of Satan suggests an audience good-hearted enough, but nevertheless incapable of recognizing the devil unless he appears among them complete with horns and tail. Honorius, however, must consider that audience. His rather too literal interpretation of his own analogy is wholly in keeping with political rhetoric. The speech ends suitably. To his own long rhetorical question of whether there were any of Satan's band among themselves, Honorius replies with dramatic brevity:

> 'There are', and shone with pointing gesture
> Marks out th'Addressers and Protesters...
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

The pandemonium which erupts after this remark typifies the entire election proceeding:

> As he thus spake, our Squire M'Fingal
> Gave to his partizans a signal.
> Nor quicker roll'd the waves to land,
> When Moses wav'd his potent wand.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

In the ensuing uproar charge and counter charge is exchanged, with M'Fingal bested at every turn of the debate. He is finally driven to defend a charge of lying with the words:

> For lying is, we know and teach
> The highest privilege of speech.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

He then rationalizes the awful implications of this statement by aserting that his opponents are just as bad.

> Nor need we blush your Whigs before,
> If we've no virtue you've no more.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

For M'Fingal at least, the election contest is merely a question of talent, a gift for speech making, and virtue is not a consideration. Honorius, who has bested M'Fingal in the debate, presumably has both talent and virtue, but his election success depends upon the former quality.

The fracas surrounding the election makes 'M'Fingal' something of an oddity among Revolutionary satire. To be sure the poem satirizes the Tory British cause, and this is what Revolutionary satire is supposed to do, but the work demonstrates an early concern with the rise of Faction in the United States and the process of election. It is not surprising to find that Paul C. Nagel suggests 'The political party from the start was considered the serpent in America's

Garden.'[23] By 1787 a new Constitution had been proposed which would provide the national government with sufficient authority to maintain liberty, security and property. The 'Federalist' series numbering eighty-five papers in all, appeared between October 1787 and April 1788 to argue for the adoption of this new constitution. James Madison in 'The Federalist No.10' writes that 'neither moral nor religious motives can be relied on as an adequate control' for unbridled self-interest. Nevertheless he appears to depend upon a consensus of belief, if not in God, then at least in goodness, and he depends upon the idea that this consensus will be found, providing only that a sufficient number of the population be sampled.

> ... as each representative will be chosen by a greater number of citizens in the large, than in the small republic, it will be more difficult for unworthy candidates to practise with success the vicious arts, by which elections are too often carried; and the suffrages of the people being more free will be more likely to center on men who possess the most attractive merit, and the most diffusive and established characters.[24]

The new Constitution, with its system of checks and balances, would do this. The Constitution had been adopted by nine of the thirteen states by June 21, 1788, as much as a result of political manoeuvring on the part of Hamilton, as by the reasoned argument of 'The Federalist Papers', but certainly the control of faction was seen as crucial to the new republic. John Adams in his work of 1791, 'A Balanced Government', endorses this view: 'the essence of a free government consists in an effectual control of rivalries'.[25]

Trumbull's own uneasiness about the rise of faction appears to have begun much earlier, perhaps alongside the Declaration of

Independence. In 'M'Fingal', the British-supporting Tory, is more governed by self interest than by loyalty to the British, and uses humanity's tendency to act from self-interest both as a means of undermining Whig arguments, and as a weapon to persuade the Whigs to his own point of view. M'Fingal's speeches are self satirizing and generally serve only to confirm the Whig point of view. He points for instance to all of the kind things Britain has done for America.

> Brought o'er all felons in the nation,
> To help you on in population...
> ('M'Fingal', Canto II)

Essentially however the main thrust of M'Fingal's argument consists in the notion that democracy must fail because people are incapable of demonstrating public virtue, are incapable of acting for love of country, and will invariably act from love of self:

> Your boasted patriotism is scarce,
> And country's love is but a farce;
> And after all the reproofs you bring
> We Tories know there's no such thing.
> Our English writers of great fame
> Prove public virtue but a name.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto II)

He insists that the Whigs also can act only out of self-interest.

> ... self is still, in either faction
> The only principle of action...
> ('M'Fingal', Canto II)

M'Fingal, as usual, ironically undermines his own position by candidly admitting that:

> ... spite of all your double dealing
> We Tories know tis so, by feeling.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto II)

nevertheless one recognizes that Trumbull's concern is only in part the writing of a pro-Revolutionary, anti-British satire. Underlying

this concern is the more important consideration of what will be required if democracy is to work. Further one recognizes something of the normative value which informs this satire as M'Fingal goes on to use the fact of self-love to undermine Revolutionary arguments based on the patrilineal bond and a subsequent American millenium. M'Fingal enquires scornfully:

> Who heeds your babbling of transmitting
> Freedom to brats of your begetting,
> Or will proceed as though there were a tie,
> Or obligation to posterity?
> We get 'em, bear 'em, breed and nurse
> What has poster'ty done for us,
> That we, less they their rights should lose
> Should trust our necks to gripe of noose.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto II)

M'Fingal's position is in direct contrast to the possibility of people acting for the general and public good which, as the *Federalist Papers* made clear, was requisite if democracy was to succeed. M'Fingal's speeches are invariably self-satirizing, so the satirist would seem to endorse a possibility of acting for the public good. Ultimately Trumbull's satire does not attack pride, nor greed, nor avarice in their pure and abstract form, although M'Fingal embodies all of these vices. Rather, it attacks a kind of latent materialism which would suggest that humanity is incapable of acting from anything other than the material motives embodied, for instance, in M'Fingal's prophetic vision of America's future. Against this Trumbull's satire posits the possibility of public virtue, of acting from love of country and for posterity. His satire is in short a social message of how to live in a democracy, of how to be an American. The American is expected to act altruistically and is expected to bring into being a state in which virtue is made manifest, in which liberty is enjoyed in substance. Trumbull is in short, asserting a realistic ideal based on a new

political future. The difficulties inherent in this paradoxical position become manifest in Canto III.

Canto III, or 'Liberty Pole' is the most often anthologized section of 'M'Fingal, and with good reason, for it is by far the liveliest Canto of the four. This Canto, written in 1781, sees Trumbull freed of the necessity to satirize the British, and able to concentrate on what has been his underlying pre-occupation in the first two Cantos, that is the implications of democracy. M'Fingal remains our hero, and is still a British-supporting Tory, but in this Canto the satire develops a definite double edge, cutting back upon the lovers of liberty who hold M'Fingal captive. Trumbull emphasizes the paradox of American liberty from the very beginning of the Canto. Our 'loyal Squire', followed by a 'desperate clan of Tory friends', sees a Liberty Pole being erected.

> A Pole ascending through the sky
> Which numerous throngs of Whiggish race
> Were raising in the marketplace.
> Not higher schoolboy's kites aspire,
> Or royal mast, or country spire,
> Like spears at Brodignagian tilting
> Or Satan's walking-staff in Milton.
> And on its top, the flag unfurl'd
> Waved triumph o'er the gazing world,
> Inscribed with inconsistent types
> Of liberty and thirteen stripes.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

Trumbull's similes here, which describe the liberty pole, are not reassuring. The first, an image of schoolboys flying a kite would be endearing were it not for the fact that a pole is a good deal heavier than a kite, and liable to do considerably more damage it if comes down. The pole is as high as a royal mast, or country spire, and a reminder perhaps of the tendency for 'natural aristocracy' to become

artifically enshrined in law when, as Adams expressed it, 'corruption in elections becomes dominant and uncontrollable'.[26] These similes of aristocracy and of the English church, and the final comparisons, with Brodignagian spear throwing, or with Satan's walking staff, are hardly positive or hopeful. Trumbull draws attention to the inconsistency of depicting liberty on the American flag with stars on the one hand, symbols of all humanity's stirring, alongside thirteen stripes which can remind of nothing so much as prison bars. Then, as if this were not enough, he assures us in a footnote that 'It would doubtless be wrong to imagine that the stripes bear any allusion to the slave trade.'[27] The Whigs who are erecting the 'liberty pole' are no longer led by the talented and virtuous Honorius, but by whoever can pay for the drinks. They drink a 'dedication rite', of rum, beer and sugar, and decide to elect a committee to guard the pole.

> 'Tis consecrate to Liberty
> To guard it from th'attacks of Tories,
> A grand committee call'd of four is;
> Who foremost on the patriot spot
> Had brought the flip and paid the shot.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

The 'numerous throngs of Whiggish race' in this part of Trumbull's poem show every sign of becoming a rabble pursuing a liberty which the language of the poem denotes as a dubious blessing.

The underlying unease created by the Whigs in this Canto is balanced by a M'Fingal enhanced by arguments no longer as self-satirizing as in the first two Cantos, but which vigorously attack the Whig point of view. He remains the British-loving Tory, full of bluster.

> By this, M'Fingal with his train
> Advanced upon th'adjacent plain
> And full with loyalty possesst, [sic]

Pour'd forth the zeal, that fired his breast.
'What mad-brain'd rebel gave commission
To raise this Maypole of sedition? ...
To point at heaven and summon down
The thunders of the British crown?'...
('M'Fingal', Canto III)

In the correlation made here between the interests of heaven and those of the British crown, one recognizes the traditional Tory argument that to rebel against Britain was tantamount to a patricidal act of rebellion against all authority, and, since the work was not published until 1782 one recognizes an irony in M'Fingal's words that exists beyond the realm of the text itself. The Americans had already turned the world upside down, without any sign of heavenly intervention. This irony is compounded when M'Fingal threatens the assembled Whigs with 'Gage's power'. American readers reflecting on their eventual victory could afford to smile, but the remainder of M'Fingal's speech appears to be addressed to that same American audience, who must now learn how to live in a democracy.

Paradoxically the Americans, who had fought for 'liberty', must now learn to confine it within a workable and realistic realm if they are not to descend into barbarism and chaos. The chain of authority from above, symbolized by the British Crown, had been defeated but in breaking those shackles the Americans had taken upon themselves the responsibility of self-government. Failing good choices at election time, the way lay open for charlatans and rogues as M'Fingal suggests:

Ye dupes to every factious rogue
And tavern-prating demagogue...
Behold you not what noisy fools
Use you, worse simpletons, for tools?
('M'Fingal', Canto III)

And if the Americans are to enjoy the substance of liberty, not the name, they must paradoxically choose to be governed. In a real world liberty cannot simply exist as the perfect freedom to do as one likes. M'Fingal's words cut to the very centre of the dilemma created by an insistence that liberty is desirable above all.

> ...Liberty, in your own by-sense
> Is but for crimes a patent license
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

That is, if liberty is to be the order of the day, and everyone is free to follow their own self-interest recognizing no authority beyond the self, then self-will becomes the only criterion of desirability:

> Reduce all grievances and ills
> To Magna Charta of your wills.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

If this 'Magna Charta' of self-will is undesirable, the submission to authority, as it is represented by the British-loving Tory M'Fingal is equally so. In these circumstances, it is perhaps more desirable to submit to an authority of one's own choice in spite of the limitations imposed on liberty by so doing. Liberty can only exist in an ideal world. In the real world, where consequences must be faced, that ideal must be compromised. Trumbull's political satire must simultaneously assert both the ideal and a limiting of that ideal. The implications of this position, both for 'M'Fingal' and American satire, can perhaps be demonstrated by a comparison of the position taken up by Trumbull with that taken by Pope in 'An Essay on Man'.

In 'An Essay on Man' the concept held by Pope of 'A mighty maze! but not without a plan' is constantly under threat from a realism vividly depicted:

> The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
> Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play?
> Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,

> And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.
> Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,
> That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n;[28]

On occasions explanations seem scarcely adequate:

> But errs not Nature from this gracious end,
> From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
> When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
> Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?
> 'No' ('tis reply'd) the first Almighty Cause
> Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;[29]

Pope however is able to extricate his thesis by suggesting that the anthropocentrist argument, which places humanity as the central fact of the universe to which all other facts have reference, ought to be abandoned:

> Who knows but he, whose hand the light'ning forms,
> Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms,
> Pours fierce Ambition in a Ceasar's mind,
> Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?
> From pride, from pride, our very reas'ning springs;
> Account for moral as for nat'ral things;
> Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these aquit?
> In both, to reason right is to submit.[30]

Ultimately of course, submission is to an absolute God whose absolute virtues become the measure of humanity's feeble reasoning and pride. The normative value of the satire is both greater than and external to the self so that submission becomes not only desirable, but, given the infinite power of God, eventually inevitable. Thus, virtue is to be pursued for its own sake, and given the infinite nature of its reward, its pursuit cannot conflict with true self-love:

> God loves from Whole to Parts: but human soul
> Must rise from Individual to the Whole,
> Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
> As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
> The centre mov'd, a circle strait succeeds,
> Another still, and still another spreads,
> Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
> His country next, and next all human race,
> Wide and more wide, th'o'erflowings of the mind
> Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind;

> Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
> And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.[31]

As Pope himself notes, 'Virtue only constitutes a happiness, whose Object is *Universal*, and whose Prospect *Eternal*.[32] In these terms the pursuit of happiness is synonymous with the pursuit of virtue, whilst liberty and life, unless it be eternal life, are quite simply not an issue. For American satirists the case was different, as can be demonstrated by contrasting the views of Pope with those of Madison writing in the 'Federalist Papers'.

Faction, in post-revolutionary America, was seen by many as that evil which would prevent America realizing its promise, and means were sought to control it. Madison, in 'The Federalist Papers' No. 10, identifies two means of controlling faction. The one is by controlling its effects and the other is by removing its causes. He goes on:

> There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: The one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.[33]

In Trumbull's satire 'M'Fingal', it might be said that the first method of removing the cause of faction, by destroying liberty, is represented by the British-loving Tory, M'Fingal. The second method of removing the cause of faction Madison cites is essentially that of Pope whereby:

> ...REASON, PASSION, answer one great aim,
> That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the same;
> That VIRTUE only makes our Bliss below;
> And all our Knowledge is, OURSELVES TO KNOW.
> (Pope, 'Essay on Man' Epistle IV, l.)

In order to work this method requires that the 'one great aim' be wholly compatible with self-love for all of humanity, which must entail a universal or absolute value. For Pope only virtue constituted a happiness 'whose object was *Universal* and whose Prospect *Eternal*'. Madison remarks of this method that it is:

> ...as impracticable, as the first would be unwise. As long as the reason of man continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed. As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have a reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves.[34]

Reason and opinion then, which are neither universal nor eternal, become the vehicle for self-love, Madison suggests. He goes on to consider the means by which the effects of faction can be controlled in these circumstances, admitting of only two methods, of which only one is possible:

> Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the same passion or interest in a majority, at the same time, must be prevented; or the majority, having such co-existent passions or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert and carry into effect schemes of oppression. If the impulse and the opportunity be suffered to coincide, we well know, that neither moral nor religious motives can be relied on as an adequate control. They are not found to be such on the injustice and violence of individuals, and lose their efficacy in proportion to the number combined together; that is, in proportion as their efficacy becomes needful.[35]

In Madison's pragmatic approach the empiricism of the senses and the ideals of common sense as taught by Dr John Witherspoon, whose classes Madison attended at Princeton along with Brackenridge and Freneau can be recognized. The function of government is 'the protection of liberty as far as it is a blessing.' Madison, unlike Pope, is

unconvinced by the possibilities of the religious impulse acting to control the excesses of self-love, and to discover a statesman taking a realistic stand on matters of morals and religion is not surprising. To find a satirist like Trumbull, however, seeking a similarly realistic resolution to his satire is an altogether more interesting proposition and results, in the first instance, in the development of a definite double edge to the satire.

Were 'M'Fingal' a satire written by Pope, he would have encountered little difficulty in promoting the virtue of submission to an object which was universal and whose prospect was eternal. Since immediate circumstances have no currency in that world, it is a path all are absolutely free to follow. The voice of authority in Trumbull's poem however, is represented, not by an absolute, but by a fallible, and indeed completely conniving Squire M'Fingal to whom no reasonable person would submit. Yet, to pursue happiness under the definition supplied by Pope might mean, in material terms, exactly that. Ideally of course individual reform would ripple outwards, until:

> Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
> And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.
> 'Essay on Man' Ep. IV, l. 71-2.

Indeed in its purest form the promise that America would 'fulfil the type of Israel materially' would also mean exactly this, but as Honorius remarked in Canto II of M'Fingal's second sight: the vision won't come yet awhile. The Americans meanwhile were committed to, as it were, fulfilling the type of liberty materially and, in a material world, absolutes like justice and freedom are compromised. They become quantifiable resources, subject to the fallible reasoning of

humanity. Like Madison, Trumbull is clearly of the opinion that neither moral nor religious motives can be relied upon to provide adequate control, and the unease created by a latent fear of mob control which lay dormant in the satires of the Revolution, becomes manifest in Canto III of 'M'Fingal', giving the work a distinct double-edge.

M'Fingal's speeches, whilst never failing to promote the Tory view which would solve the problem posed by democracy by the suppression of liberty, nevertheless constitute a severe attack on unbridled liberty, and represent not only a logical dilemma, but the fears held by educated Americans about democracy itself. In the 'Magna Charta' of fallible self-will there is the inevitable problem of descent to the lowest common denominator:

> Establish cheats and frauds and nonsense,
> Framed to the model of your conscience.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

As self will becomes the only criterion of judgement, absolutes like justice become a commodity, fashioned to serve the public will, whereas of course the reverse should be true:

> Cry justice down, as out of fashion
> And fix its scale of depreciation.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

The allusion here is to the depreciation of the Continental paper money, for which Congress finally ascertained a course of declension at different periods by what was called A Scale of Depreciation. It is suggested that the decline of justice should be similarly fixed. Indeed courts of justice were everywhere closed at the outbreak of the

war, and in some cases judges forced to retire by assembled mobs armed with white staves. M'Fingal taunts the Whigs with this:

> Drive judges out, like Aaron's calves
> By jurisdiction of white staves
> And make the bar and bench and steeple
> Submit t'our sovereign lord, the People.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

Even the church, it seems, is to be subject to the will of the people and then, in Trumbull's poem, as justice became subject to a scale of depreciation, so too liberty ceases to mean free, as opposed to not free. It becomes something that one can have more or less of:

> And when by clamors and confusions,
> Your freedom's grown a public nuisance,
> Cry 'Liberty' with powerful yearning,
> As he does 'Fire!' whose house is burning;
> Though he already has much more
> Than he can find occasion for.
> ('M'Fingal, Canto III)

When all authority is finally overturned, chaos ensues as individual self-interest conflicts. Order disappears in the downward slide to social dissolution:

> Break heads and windows and the peace
> For your own interest and increase
> Dispute and pray and fight and groan
> For public good, and mean your own;
> Prevent the law by fierce attacks
> From quitting scores upon your backs...
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

The chaos depicted here comes as a direct result of rendering 'the People' sovereign lord, or in Madison's terms rendering fallible humanity's reason and opinion the object of, or vehicle for, self-love. Logically the way out of this dilemma would be to assert the value of a virtue whose object is universal and whose prospect is eternal, but Trumbull does not do this. Nowhere in Trumbull's poem is there anything which would suggest that to reason right is to submit,

and in order to assess a possible reason for Trumbull's omission some consideration might be given to that other inalienable right embodied in the Declaraion of Independence; the inalienable right to life. If this is to form the basis of value in American satire, the assertion of absolute ideals may be incongruous. John Adams marks the distinction and the paradox when he insists that:

> the perfectability of man is only human
> and terrestial perfectability.[36]

This is clearly a contradiction. In these terms perfection is not an absolute, but relative to the human condition. If it is further recognized that a value has been placed upon 'life' in the pursuit of happiness then it may also be recognized that the crisis of authority which occurred as:

> ...the flag unfurl'd...
> Inscribed with inconsistent types
> Of Liberty and thirteen stripes.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

entailed that satire should undergo a similar revolution. The question is, whether satire remains satire without reference to absolute ideals.

The world view of post-revolutionary America differed from that of Pope and yet this fact of itself could not compromise satiric status. Satire does require a system of values, a judgement greater than the self. Nevertheless, given the way in which satire varies according to the culture from which it springs, it cannot constitute a religious text. It cannot require belief in order to function, rather it functions because there is belief. Its appeal need not be to a classical hierarchical system of ideals, necessarily, nor to a set of

Christian values, necessarily, rather its appeal will be to the values, concepts and beliefs of a collective conscience, to a system of judgement which is at once created by the selves and greater than the selves, of any given society. If it is recognized that satire, like the magical form discused by Elliot in *The Power of Satire*, springs from an urge to insist upon order amid perceived confusion, it follows that during times of social upheaval, when new values present themselves or when the emphasis given to old values is changed, satire is likely to respond. To insist upon an explicit appeal to a classical hierarchical system of ideals as a criterion of satire may be to suggest that Dryden, Swift and Pope took satire with them when they went to their graves.

In America satirists had always asserted something akin to a realistic ideal. A possible means of coping with the inherent paradox of the realistic ideal were already an entrenched part of the American satiric tradition. Satirists there had been promoting a nostalgic view of the past or a glorious vision of America's future as the standard which the present real America was failing for over a hundred years. Further, they had, as part of their tradition, exemplary figures in the form of Byrd and Franklin. More importantly, the democratic element in American satire had led to developing, but still incipient, absurd heroes, in the form of Cooke's Sot-Weed factor and Brackenridge's and Freneau's Father Bombo. All of these forms had the potential to negotiate the distance between a vividly depicted real world and a very desirable ideal world and suggest a means of promoting humanistic ideals. That the American satirists had developed these forms may account, in no small way, for the fact that

while in Britain there are relatively few satirists to be found among the major Victorian writers, in nineteenth century America the spirit of satire bounds on unabated. This is not to suggest that the American satirists had no problems associated with the crisis of authority however. There are, after all, divergent views about the growth of American cultural values.

Bercovitch, in *The Puritan Jeremiad* argues that the beliefs embodied in the rhetoric of Puritan New England formed the structure that would enclose American ideas be they literary, political or social. Others, Henry Steele Commager for example, in *The Empire of Reason: How Europe Imagined and America Realised the Enlightenment*,[37] turns rather to the Enlightenment for the source of America's political and social ideals. This notion of American identity stresses the importance of law, reason and political liberalism which have their roots in classical and modern philosophy. Emery Elliot has remarked that the divergence between these views occurs:

> ... because the clash is really between two extremely different methods of historical analysis. Bercovitch and the literary scholars who follow him believe that we can understand the deeper structures of a culture through close study of verbal symbols - image, rhetoric, sermons, fictions and poems. Incisive readings of these products of the imagination will provide insight into the substratum of our society. At the other extreme, historians trusting direct discourse and the non symbolic language of official documents and records believe that all we may really know of the past is what people said they did, believed and intended.

Elliot goes on to say that:

> The difficulty with both lines of argument and the evidence for them is that they generalize so broadly about a relatively long period of history in which the lives of individuals and the progress

> of their ideas underwent many changes and even complete reversals of direction.[38]

Satire, of course, thrives upon sweeping generalization; it depends on a relationship to the lives of individuals and the progress of their ideas as it pre-supposes an audience. That is a satirist cannot use non-existent, or completely outmoded ideas and concepts, as a basis for satire. To do so would render the object of the attack inexplicable. Therefore, the presence in satire of a given concept or idea is some evidence of the presence of that concept or idea within a given community, however much the satirist has generalized. Allowing for the form of satire, its study will have more in common with the views of Bercovitch, with their emphasis on rhetoric and symbol, than with those of Commager. Nevertheless, however divergent the views of Bercovitch and Commager are for the historian, for the satirist these views have something in common. The notion is embedded in the very title of Commager's book. It does not matter whether one deals with an empire of reason which Europe imagined and America realised; or with notions of 'fulfilling the type of Israel materially'; for the satirist the difference between these views is merely one of type, not of kind. Both these views constitute a realistic ideal, and the ease with which the ideas of the Enlightenment were incorporated into the prophetic Jeremiadic vision of the Revolutionary satires testifies to this. Nevertheless, the providential framework used by the Revolutionary satirists to reconcile the paradox of asserting a realistic ideal, was not an entirely suitable framework for a satire based on political and humanitarian ideals, as its use in Trumbull's 'M'Fingal' demonstrates. When the Empire of Reason arrived in America, perhaps rather sooner than expected, the practicalities of

ushering it in, together with the shift in values which occurred as a result of Enlightenment thinking ensured that a shift in satiric form would take place.

Unlike the millenium, the Empire of Reason depended ultimately, not on an external and absolute power, but on humanity itself so that one of the first things that can be noted in post-Revolutionary American satire is its tendency to become Menippean. Originally Menippean satire was characterized by Quintillian as being an older kind of satire than that written by Lucilius, recognizable by its mixture of prose and verse. More recently Northrop Frye in his *Anatomy of Criticism* has attempted to further characterize the form. Frye abandons Quintillian's insistance on the mixture of prose and verse, but his definition is helpful in dealing with American satire. Turlish points out in his introduction to Belknap's satire, *The Forresters* that Frye characterizes Menippean satire as dealing:

> ...less with people as such than with mental attitudes. Pedants, bigots, cranks, parvenus, virtuosi, enthusiasts, rapacious and incompetent professional men of all kinds, are handled in terms of their occupational approach to life as distinct from their social behaviour. The Menippean satire thus resembles the confession in its ability to handle abstract ideas and theories, and differs from the novel in its characterization, which is stylized rather than naturalistic, and presents people as mouthpieces of the ideas they represent... At its most concentrated the Menippean satire presents us with a vision of the world in terms of a single intellectual pattern...[39]

American satire, in the post-revolutionary period, demonstrates a tendency to assert political and humanitarian ideals, so that Frye's notions are a useful way of identifying the type of satire being developed in America. Frye goes on to identify this type of satire

with stylized versions of the novel form. Turlish remarks of Belknap's satire:

> Belknap's descriptive term for his novel ("historical allegory") is itself perhaps misleading, for he was not concerned with the care and niceness of writing a history...The work is, in Northrop Frye's terminology, an *anatomy*...an outgrowth of the Mennipean or Varronian satire...
>
> This Menippean method is evident in Belknap's discussion of the reasons behind the initial settlement of the forest (the New World). John Bull's mother (The Church of England) imposes an irrational uniformity on her family: "His mother, poor woman, had been seized with hysterical fits, which caused her at times to be delirious and full of all sorts of whims. She had taken it into her head that every one of the family must hold knife and fork and spoon exactly alike...and perform every other animal function by the exact rule of uniformity." This passage is less an allegorical representation of Laud's antipathy toward the Puritans than it is a description of an intellectual malady. Here is a type of "madness" akin to that described in Swift's "Digression Concerning Madness" in *A Tale of a Tub*. It is an irrational state in which whimsy, not reason, is in control.[40]

Turlish's remarks are useful because they estalish the basis of attack in many post-revolutionary American satires. One recognizes similar conditions in Trumbull's 'M'Fingal' as the reasons for Britain's actions are described:

> As Eve when falling was so modest
> To fancy she should grow a goddess
> So Britain 'midst her airs so Flighty
> Now took a whim to be Almighty.
> (Canto 1)

The British forces are little better than idiots:

> Whence plain it seems tho' Satan once
> O'erlook'd with scorn each brainless dunce...
> Of late he is not half so nice
> Nor picks assistants, 'cause they're wise
> (Canto 1)

And the British Clinton's account of his night march in Canto IV is put down to outright lunacy:

> A small mistake, your meaning right
> You take her influence for her light...
> hence still shall teem your empty skull
> With victories when the moon is full...
> Hence all your movements, all your notions
> Shall steer by like excentric motions
> Eclipsed in many a fatal crisis
> And dimm'd when Washington arises.
> (Canto IV)

The faults depicted in 'M'Fingal' occur as a result of intellectual malady and it might be said that the Americans, at least in Cantos I and II, win out because they have right reason on their side. Trumbull's satire makes an appeal for a reasonable America, rather than for a virtuous America, it predicates a world according to insanity rather than vice, and is primarily concerned with secularized and humane values.

The consequence of this increasing concern with secularized and humane values, is that the prophetic vision of America's future becomes disassociated from its spiritual context. It loses its link with universal and eternal values and becomes, like M'Fingal's second sight, something little better than a guess. In Canto IV of 'M'Fingal' the prophetic vision of America's future was written after the event, and so carries an added joke of extreme accuracy. The poem does not altogether lack epic machinery, As Whig and Tory battle it out we are informed in a note that 'The learned reader will readily observe the allusions in this scene, to the single combats of Paris and Menelaus in Homer, Aeneas and the Turnus in Virgil, and Michael and Satan in Milton.' Its use is wholly comic however, and the result is bathos.

Nor did M'Fingal shun the foe,
But stood to brave the desp'rate blow;
While all the party gazed, suspended
To see the deadly combat ended;
And Jove in equal balance weigh'd
The sword against the brandish'd spade.
(Canto 1)

It should perhaps be remarked that Jove does in fact favour the American spade against the more sophisticated British sword: '... some Pow'r, a whig at heart/Descended down and took their part.', but this is hardly the stuff of a religious normative value in satire, and in Canto IV, entitled 'The Vision', prophetic visions are rendered even more ridiculous by their association with Malcolm, an aid to Governor Tyron who had been tarred, feathered and half-hanged by the mob in 1774. The luckless man was afterwards avoided by his own party and ended up hating Whig and Tory alike. In 'M'Fingal' he appears complete with connotations of Hector's ghost, and those of Milton's Michael: 'My Adam, thou, thine Angel I' to show M'Fingal what is to come. Nothing about M'Fingal's introduction to Malcolm's world of the occult lead us to take it seriously. Malcolm offers him:

From the wells of Bute
Three genuine drops of Highland dews
To purge...
Thine eyes, for much thou has to view.
(Canto IV)

Indeed Trumbull has pushed a device which began with Puritan typology so far into the realm of superstition and nonsense that it is fair to say that the form is become defunct.

The loss of a providential framework to American satire however, entails the loss of one way of linking the realm of universal values with those of the real world. If a secularized version of America's promise fails, there can be no visitation of God's vengeance to

confirm America's special status and ensure the eventual outcome. Humanity is on its own. M'Fingal's speeches in Canto III served to remind the liberty-loving mob of their new found responsibility. M'Fingal depicted a secular and political hell in which everyone could be what they liked by a mere act of decision:

> ... every clown, that tills the plains,
> Though bankrupt in estate and brains,
> By this new light transform'd to traitor,
> Forsakes his plough to turn dictator,
> Starts on haranguing chief of Whigs
> And drags you by the ears, like pigs.
> All bluster, arm'd with factious liscense
> New-born at once to politicians.
> Each leather-apron'd dunce, grown wise,
> Presents his forward face t'advise...
> His goose the tailor finds new use in,
> To patch and turn the Constitution.
> (Canto III)

The crisis of authority in America is fully apparent here. People are free to be as they choose, but may become whatever they choose without possessing any of the necessary qualities. More seriously, since the qualities needed may be inner qualities, how is anyone to know? It is a world in which all value could be rendered defunct. Trumbull, as a believer in democracy, does not embrace the Loyalist argument of Revolutionary satires, which suggests that the liberty loving mob are violating a holy filial bond by severing the ties with Britain. M'Fingal's grand capacity for undermining his own cause never leaves him. As he turns his attention to the British Constitution, he depicts a:

> ... constitution form'd by sages,
> The wonder of all modern ages;
> Which owns no failure in reality,
> Except corruption and venality;
> And merely proves the adage just,
> That best things spoil'd corrupt to worst:
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

Or, to put this another way, absolutes are invariably spoilt by their contact with reality. While M'Fingal can apparently live with this idea however, it is this very 'failure in reality' with which the Americans are concerned, so that some sort of moral framework is needed in Trumbull's satire. It needs some means of reconciling the concept of absolute liberty with its realistic implications in America. Otherwise, as M'Fingal suggests, liberty has:

> ... call'd up Anarchy from chaos,
> With all the followers of her school,
> Uproar and Rage and wild Misrule:
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

In many ways Trumbull does not resolve the dilemma presented by his satire. Malcolm's vision in Canto IV predicts the course of the War of Independence, and contains some of the most vitriolic satire in the whole of 'M'Fingal'. Like Freneau[41] Trumbull had no love of the way in which the British treated their prisoners:

> ...learn from this auspicious sight
> How England's sons and friends could fight...
> I looked and saw in wintry skies
> Our spacious prison walls arise
> Where Briton's all their captives taming
> Plied them with scourging; cold and famine...
> (Canto IV)

Nor it seems do the British care how they win the war. Trumbull refers to the shooting of American captives during Howe's first conquest of Long Island, an incident which occurred without censure. The prisons become in Trumbull's poem:

> ...a wise, politic plan
> (For surely treason cannot thrive
> Where not a soul is left alive)...
> And war itself is nothing further
> But th'art and mystery of murther.
> This Howe well knew...
> Whence his first captives with great spirit
> He tied up for his troops to fire at...
> (Canto IV)

As predictions go, Malcolm's must surely rank as the most accurate in American satire, and a presumably contrite M'Fingal goes off to warn his constituents. He predicts a glorious future for America. America, and American democracy is associated with the virtues. Indeed the virtues all emigrate:

> See more than human Pow'rs befriend
> And to their hostile forms ascend!
> See tow'ring o'er th'extended strand
> The genius of the western land...
> See o'er yon Council seat with pride
> How freedom spreads her bannes wide
> There Patriotism with torch address'd
> To fire with zeal each daring breast
> While all the Virtues in their band
> Escape from yon unfriendly land
> Desert their ancient British Station
> Possess with rage of emigration.
>
> (Canto IV)

Honour leaves Britain, Justice is transported; 'all quit the fallen empire for the rising'. Yet the satirist remains unconvinced and unconvincing. This is M'Fingal of the second sight, M'Fingal who guesses from 'past facts whats to come', and this must place the vision in doubt. Many of the associations of independence remain negative, so that it is the 'dire phantom of Independence' that arises even as M'Fingal calls:

> The American empire...
> To glory, wealth and fame ascend
> Her commerce rise, her realms extend
>
> (Canto IV)

The secular vision of the rising glory of America does not provide a sufficient moral framework to overcome the sound of the mob at the door, and while M'Fingal makes good his escape through a window he leaves his friends to the mercy:

> Of furious, disappointed mobs...
> And with their forfeit hides to pay
> For him, their leader crept away
>
> (Canto IV)

However despicable the actions of M'Fingal are here, the 'furious, disappointed mobs' are hardly a better prospect, so that Trumbull's poem ends on a note of acute ambivalence. The final words are probably first and foremost directed at M'Fingal, but they offer little hope to the supporters of democracy. When the world flooded the animals, it seems, sent representatives to negotiate with Noah:

> From every side the members sent
> All kinds of beasts to represent
> Each from the flood took care t'embark
> And save his carcus in the ark
> But as it fares in state and church
> Left his constituents in the lurch.
> (Canto IV)

Trumbull, like M'Fingal, seems to suggest that it is impossible, especially during difficult times, to find one who will act for public rather than private, good; that 'public virtue's but a name'. Ultimately, it is the 'failure in reality' that Trumbull's poem confronts.

The future vision of America's glory in M'Fingal only functions at best as a motif, a reminder of America's promise, at present threatened by both British Tory, and American Whig. It is not strong enough to form a moral framework. Nevertheless, Trumbull's M'Fingal should be classified as satire, not black comedy. Its purpose is not to depict the absurdity of America's dreams nor chronicle its failures: its purpose is rather to goad Trumbull's fellow Americans into right-thinking moral action so that America's promise can be fulfilled. In common with other American satires it is corrective, and carries the seeds of hope within it. There must, therefore, be a normative value embedded in the work, if only as an implied opposite to the scenes depicted. Realistically, of course, the dilemma of

'M'Fingal' could only be resolved by restricting the very freedoms for which Americans fought for so long. Obviously this is not Trumbull's position. Politically Trumbull, recognizing the inevitability of faction in a democracy, advocated its containment: 'The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their particular states, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration through other states...'. Like Madison, Trumbull was a Federalist. Federalism however cannot be the final concern of a satirist who has called into question the very nature of absolutes such as liberty and justice. The concern of the satirist must lie with those moral or religious motives, which, however inadequate and impractical Madison found them, must be relied upon if good government, good society or good anything else is to be realized. The satirist must confront the real serpent in America's garden, not merely the symptoms of his presence. The election contest itself must be considered.

The presence of the exemplary figure has been noted in the works of Franklin and Byrd. Franklin's *Autobiography* in particular bears a relation to the Puritan wish to identify which individuals were saved. The Puritans could not ultimately know this, but they could accumulate evidence in the form of journals, biographies and autobiographies. This literature recorded the soul's progress, ever alert to the symbolic moment, and the Puritan's inward turning eye has left its mark on the characterization and symbolism of American literature via the well-documented channels which run through Hawthorne. The introspective exercise, however, was not for its own sake, but was to be used as evidence or for instruction. In this way the private becomes public, and the individual becomes an exemplar of the

community. The way in which these exemplars of the community can serve rhetorically to reconcile the conflicts inherent in a private versus a corporate enterprise, or to reconcile the inherent paradox of a realistic ideal, has been discussed, and to trace this influence through the American literary tradition one might eschew the literary line that runs through Hawthorne, in favour of that which runs through Franklin and the American satirists. Father Bombo's progress from plagiarizing student to wise and virtuous manhood in the early work of Brackenridge and Freneau, *Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca*, is an obvious example of this influence. . On the other hand, the potential absurdity of an exemplary figure clinging to ideals in a real world was demonstrated in Cooke's 'The Sot-Weed Factor'. The characteristics of these figures vary according to the demands of the work in which they are found. Essentially they should use material means to pursue ideal ends, and their public virtue should be a reflection of their inner virtue. In Trumbull's 'M'Fingal', Honorius is another such figure. His very name suggests both private and public virtue, and his talents, unlike those of M'Fingal, are real, not assumed, as the wit and logic of his speech-making testify. Could Americans be persuaded to accept freely government by such types the democratic experiment could be said to have succeeded. In terms of the satire this would mean the successful transference of the ideal into reality. Honorius will, quite literally, represent his community, and the values he embodies therefore, will be those of the community he represents. It does seem as if Trumbull prescribes for America, not a unity of design structured on God's promise, but a sort of Federalist utopia. It is as if, as Bercovitch has remarked of Madison:

> his idea of heaven is a model free-enterprise society, where each self-interested angel acts for the general good without government interference.[42]

Nevertheless, the presence of Honorius in the poem does render the satire hopeful. If Honorius' presence allows for no more than that, it is because, as in other descriptions of paradise about to be lost, the serpent is a much more interesting figure. M'Fingal therefore should be recognized for the literary forebear he is.

Saints were not to be known by externals and mistakes could be made, so it may be that the true serpent in America's garden sprang into being alongside the exemplary figure. Visible signs and symbols can be misread, and the visible signs of sainthood can be acquired without the presence of commensurate inner qualities, so that just as prophetic visions of America's future were not always glorious, but could demonstrate God's special interest by depicting terrible scenes of vengeance wrought on an erring people to persuade them to His purpose, so too the exemplary American seems to be developing an alter-ego. The presence of this figure demonstrates the need for constant vigilance and in earlier satires was associated with the devil, hypocrisy and rhetorical gifts. Folger in 'A Looking Glass for the Times' berates those who

> ... carry Tales that may do hurt
> and Mischief to our Brother
> To live in such Hypocrisy,
> as Men may think us good.

The figure often forms the basis for the attack on college men so prevalent in Puritan satire and is associated with rhetorical gifts in Samuel Bailey's 'The College Feruyla, Being a Reply to "The

Country-Man's Apocrypha"'. The college men's act of satirizing the countrymen is compared to that of the devil:

> The Devil, when at Delphose he did dwell
> And cheated men to death, did use to sell
> His mind, in speeches of a double sense;
> Yet there was often, wit and eloquence.

In Cooke's 'The Sot-Weed Factor' the alter-ego of the exemplary American is present both in the Quaker, the 'pious conscientious rogue':

> Who neither swore, nor kept his word,
> But cheated in the fear o'th'Lord;
> And when his debts he could not pay,
> From trusting fools he'd run away.
> (l. 618-22)

and in the Lawyer to whom the Factor appeals who:

> ... with a stock of impudence,
> Supplied his want of wit and sense
> With looks demure, amazing people,
> No wiser than a daw on steeple.
> (l. 645-48)

Bombo in Brackenridge and Freneau's satire began as such a figure for he plagiarizes the classics, but in the course of his pilgrimage he becomes the true and honest scholar. Essentially the figure is present in all of those who manipulate the possibilities of the New World to lay claim to qualities they neither have, nor have any intention of acquiring, simply to achieve material ends. The rise of faction in America has allowed this figure to operate in a much wider sphere. The figure is, in short, an incipient confidence man and it is this figure's characteristics which are recognizable in M'Fingal.

M'Fingal's very name gives us a clue. His 'high descent' in Canto I stems from one of the biggest confidence tricks in literary history, that perpetrated by James McPherson, and there is nothing in the rest

of the poem which would suggest that the name is not well chosen. His reputation is entirely undeserved.

> As in the days of ancient fame,
> Prophets and poets were the same
> And all the praise that poets gain
> Is for the tales they forge and feign.
> So gain'd our 'Squire his fame by seeing
> Such things, as never would have being.
> ('M'Fingal' Canto 1)

The satirist, whilst admitting that in former days poets and prophets were the same, now skilfully distinguishes between these occupations by suggesting that poets are praised only for their ability for forging or feigning a good story. M'Fingal, even as he lays claim to prophet, is in fact poet and associated with rhetorical gifts. He is not even an honest story teller. He lays claim to second sight, like the true Jeremiad, and is quite up to enumerating the woes of the world and predicting vengeance for those who fail to recognize the right cause, but he consistently manipulates the gullibility, fear, ignorance and superstition of his audience under the guise of idealism, for loyalist and ultimately, material ends. He becomes 'the very tripod of his town' (the tripod was a sacred three-legged stool from which ancient priests uttered their oracles), and his prophesying:

> Made dreadful slaughter in his course
> O'erthrew provincials, foot and horse...
> Feasted with blood his Scottish clan,
> And hang'd all rebels to a man,
> ('M'Fingal', Canto 1)

This dreadful prophecy, however, is made merely to catch votes and as he proposes dividing all the rebels 'estates and pelf' he takes 'a goodly share himself' (Canto 1). Nor does M'Fingal's materialism stop with the simple desire to gain material possessions, and nor, given the Duc de la Rochefoucauld's definition that "L'hypocrisie est un

hommage que le vice rend à la vertu", can M'Fingal adequately be deemed a hypocrite. Rather his actions are underpinned by a world view which renders all abstractions meaningless. M'Fingal's faith rests wholly with the material world. He quite simply does not believe in virtue. M'Fingal's constant appeals are to the self-interest of his audience. His is the unswerving belief that:

> ...Self is still, in either Faction
> The only principal of Action.
> (Canto II)

His philosophy is one of expediency, as is that of his seer Malcolm who warns in Canto IV:

> Those hopes can ne'er succeed
> That trust on Britain's breaking reed...
> Whence in this turn of things so strange
> 'Tis time our principles to change
> For vain that boasted faith which gathers
> No perquisite, but tar and feathers...
> (Canto IV)

Like many a trickster before him, M'Fingal badly overestimates the gullibility and the patience of his audience. When he is strung to the liberty pole in Canto III by an irate mob, he has no qualms about pretending a change of allegiance in order to secure his release:

> Good Gentlemen and friends and kin,
> For heaven's sake hear, if not for mine!
> I hear renounce the Pope, the Turks,
> The King, the Devil and all their works;
> And will, set me but once at ease,
> Turn Whig or Christian, what you please.
> ('M'Fingal', Canto III)

Of course he recants as soon as he is on safe ground, and it takes a tarring and feathering before he begins to see:

> ... this feathery omen
> Portends what dismal times are coming.
> Now future scenes, before my eyes,
> And second-sighted forms arise.
> I hear a voice, that calls away,
> And cries 'The Whigs will win the day.'

At this point, M'Fingal, covered in feathers, actually appears the beast that he is and at the beginning of Canto IV is associated with that:

> ...patroness of rogues the moon...
> Beneath whose kind, protecting ray
> Wolves, brute and human, prowl for prey.

He is, in short, associated with 'wilderness territory', where all meanings and values break down, and everything which is not material is open to question. Thus, M'Fingal's bitter indictment of the mob for creating a secular and political hell whereby:

> ...every clown, that tills the plains
> Though bankrupt in estate and brains
> By this new light transform'd to traitor,
> Forsakes his plough to turn dictator...

ironically depicts the very conditions in which he himself can best operate. Even as M'Fingal prophesies a glorious future for America in Canto IV, he is not concerned to keep faith with those who have believed in him. He is concerned only with his own skin and makes good his escape through a window, leaving his supporters to the mob. M'Fingal, as an incipient confidence man, exemplifies a secular and political hell in which survival, not principle, is all.

The appearance of an incipient confidence man in an American satire during the crisis of authority which followed the Revolution is not altogether surprising, and signifies the ambivalence with which Trumbull viewed the situation. Potentially, however, the presence of this figure usurps the very values the satire intends to promote, by emphasizing the nature of the human condition and paradoxically at the end of Trumbull's 'M'Fingal', the reader is not altogether sorry to see the hero escape, suggesting some similarity between this

development in American satire, and other, earlier British satires. Such figures, after all, are not new to the satiric scene. They make an appearance in Renaissance and Jacobean drama, and in these works are perhaps associated with railing, rather than with satire. Although, given the pre-Dryden association of satire with satyrs, no doubt to their contemporary audience such figures would have been viewed as satirists. In spite of his late eighteenth-century appearance however, one recognizes a certain kinship between M'Fingal and figures like Apemantus in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, or Thersites in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. They seem to appear in plays which call into question the nature of the tragedy. Thus Jonathan Dollimore finds in *Troilus and Cressida* a prototype of the:

> ...contradictory Jacobean anti-hero: malcontented - often because bereaved or dispossessed - satirical and vengeful; at once agent and victim of social corruption, condemning yet simultaneously contaminated by it; made up of inconsistances and contradictions which, because they cannot be understood in terms of individuality alone, constantly pressure attention outwards to the social conditions of existence.[43]

Similarly Robert C. Elliot finds that:

> Although *Timon of Athens* ends in a manner appropriate to tragedy, Professor Campbell's denomination of it as a tragical satire is just; the play is entangled in the most complicated ways with problems of satirical theory and practice.[44]

When these figures appear in what may be designated as Jacobean satire, it is often in the form of an arch-trickster such as Jonson's Volpone, who gleefully exploits the self-interest of all. Again some affiliation between this figure, and M'Fingal who changes sides as the need arises and tempts all with material gain can be recognized. Further, in M'Fingal's bestial appearance at the beginning of Canto IV

is something of Volpone's eventual end, whereby appearance and reality are forced to coincide:

> ...since the most was gotten by imposture,
> By feigning lame, gout, palsy, and such diseases,
> Thou art to lie in prison, cramped with irons,
> Till thou be'st sick and lame indeed.
> *Volpone* (Act V, sc XII, lines 121-124)

Then, as we are not altogether sorry to see M'Fingal ecape at the end of the poem, so Volpone is given the last lines of Jonson's play:

> The seasoning of a play is the applause.
> Now, though the Fox be punished by the laws,
> He yet doth hope there is no suffering due
> For any fact which he hath done 'gainst you;
> If there be, censure him: here he, doubtful, stands.
> If not, fare jovially, and clap your hands.
> (Act V, sc XII: 1-6)

In the audience's applause at the end of the play is a paradoxical acknowledgement that, in spite of the disgust generated by the world represented by Volpone, in sympathizing more with the wit of Volpone than with the misfortune of his dupes, one appears to endorse a world view in which the trickster is king. Like 'M'Fingal', Jonson's *Volpone* presents us with moral uncertainties and a useful comparison may be made between American satire as it seems to be developing in 'M'Fingal', and the work of Jonson.

Parallels can be drawn between the conceptual uncertainties of Jonson's England, and those of Trumbull's America. Dollimore for instance, sees in Jonson's *Sejanus* the foregrounding of a contradiction:

> ... between the providentialist ratification of power and the demystifying strategies of survival and gain resorted to by those actually holding power.[45]

Dollimore, discussing the problems presented by Machiavellian ideas, goes on to suggest that there were those of the period who advocated both policy and a belief in providential design by maintaining that policy and practise were the means God would now use for their help. One recognizes a certain familiarity between this argument and that of the Revolutionary American satirists who incorporated their call for action within a providential framework. Both illustrate the way in which an ideology may suppress contradictions by incorporation, but as Dollimore suggests:

> if the element of suppression enables the process of ideological legitimation, that of incorporation offers the possibility of it being challenged: it renders the ideology potentially unstable - vulnerable, for instance, to the sceptical interrogation to which it was being subjected in the Jacobean theatre.[46]

Machiavellian types appear in Jonson's satires, as Sir Politic-Would-Be in *Volpone* for instance. They demonstrate the difficulties of incorporating worldly values, where policy may be all, with those of a moral nature. In this sense, it may be said of Jonson's satires, that the moral lessons invoked depend upon a kind of conspiracy between audience and satirist, that the world depicted is a morally wrong one. Jonson, in his satires especially, but perhaps no less in *Sejanus* in effect presents the audience with an enclosed world. It allows, as Dollimore has suggested, for the interrogation of contemporary ideology. It may be that Trumbull's satire, 'M'Fingal', should be understood in similarly dialectical terms. Trumbull abandoned the providential framework of earlier American satire and the scepticism with which he viewed the new ideology is apparent, both in M'Fingal's character and his eventual survival. The satire creates a world in which the moral dilemmas of the new ideology can be examined. It

differs from Jonson's world however, in the strength of the figure which directly opposes M'Fingal, that of Honorius.

If it is accepted that M'Fingal is a 'confidence man' opposed by the man of talent and virtue Honorius, then the structure of Trumbull's satire becomes plain. M'Fingal functioned as an exemplar for Britain in this work and thus the whole of the Loyalist argument which suggested that America was committing a patricidal act of rebellion against all authority, by rebelling against the British Crown, is seen as a confidence trick perpetrated by an arch trickster, for material gain. In the words of Adams:

> When I consider the weakness, the folly, the pride, the vanity, the selfishness, the artifice, the low craft and mean cunning, the want of principle, the avarice, the unbounded ambition, the unfeeling cruelty of a majority of those (in all nations) who are allowed an aristocratical influence, and, on the other hand, the stupidity with which the more numerous multitude not only become their dupes, but even love to be taken in by their tricks, I feel a stronger disposition to weep at their destiny, than to laugh at their folly.[47]

The opposite of this British confidence man, is the American exemplary figure Honorius, who will, presumably, use material means, politics and elections and so forth to bring about ideal ends, thus forging a link between the world of ideals and the world of common humanity. The mob, who are at present 'dupes to every factious rogue' must learn to tell the difference. They must, in the words of Thomas Shepherd (1605-49) 'learn to suspect and fear... that no man's Spectacles may deceive him'.[48] M'Fingal, as the British-loving Tory exemplar was easily recognised and essentially dealt with, but ultimately the problems for a democratic and humanistic satire raised by Trumbull's work remain unresolved. It can be recognized for instance that the positive

assertions in 'M'Fingal' are dependent upon the controlling voice of the satirist who is above and beyond the work. However ambivalent the satirist may feel towards his material, it is still, in effect, a satire of 'authority', and M'Fingal's escape is perhaps symptomatic of a problem unresolved.

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VII

FEDERALISM

By 1781 when Trumbull's 'M'Fingal' was published, the basic ingredients of an American satire were already in place. The hopeful and corrective nature of American satire was well established, and the difficulties implicit in the notion of a realistic and humanistic ideal were becoming clear. The exemplary figure, who might embody the paradox of a realistic ideal, was developing in figures like Father Bombo and Honorius, while the development of an opposite figure, an embodiment of 'wilderness territory', the incipient confidence man, is apparent in the character of M'Fingal. Now firmly established in America, satire proliferated during the early years of the Republic, due in part, to the fact noticed by George L. Roth, that 'idol-busting' is a popular pastime in a democracy.

> ... satire was in their blood. Their libraries were filled with satirists from Juvenal to Charles Churchill, and both eighteenth century England and America of the Revolution had supplied a tradition of using a respectable literary form to dignify political criticism. Americans also turned to satire because it was the easiest form of literature in which to achieve success without exceptional talent - the spectacle of well-known heads being broken always attracts an audience, regardless of the quality of the weapon.[1]

An examination of the works themselves suggests one further reason for the proliferation of satire: citizens of the new republic felt a need to keep the new democracy free of vice and corruption which, they felt, abounded in the old world. Satire was expected to serve the American enterprise in much the same way as Nathanial Ward's satire had served the ends of religion. In *The Power of Sympathy* (1789), the author William Hill Brown has the character Reverend Worthy remark

that satire is one way of preaching, and emphasizes its corrective nature. 'Satire' says the Reverend, 'is the correction of the vices and follies of the human heart: a woman may therefore read it to advantage.'[2] The kinship between satire and preaching remained a force in the satires of this period.

In his essay 'American theory of Satire, 1790-1820' George L. Roth notes the satirists' tacit equation of their duty with that of the clergyman. He cites William Branch's 'Life: A Poem in Three Books':

> Redeeming Mercy! ply thy chast'ning rod,
> Lead Vice away, and bring us to our God.

Another of Roth's examples is 'The Crusade' by Henry C. Knight, which contains many satiric passages, and describes the pastor's duty thus:

> The mask from tawdry vice remove,
> And win to virtue's arms of love...
> When weeds of vices thicken round,
> They cut more deep to clear the ground.

Roth remarks:

> The satirist and the preacher often stand on common ground, for each censures man's departures from an established set of norms and principles; the instances given here indicate the satirists' assumption of this kinship - even the outrageous image of "Mercy" plying a rod is tacit evidence - and their feeling that the common purpose is a noble one.[3]

The satirists in America were uniquely conscious that, in the new republic, particular dangers presented themselves against which the wider population should be on their guard. It was the satirist's job to scourge the new republic, but their satires should however stem from a spirit of patriotism rather than disaffection or disappointment. Thus Barlow's 'Columbiad' of 1807 was prefaced by remarks on the object of the work:

> My object is altogether of a moral and political nature. I wish to encourage and strengthen, in the rising generation, a sense of the importance of republican institutions; as being the great foundation of public and private happiness, the necessary aliment of future and permanent meliorations in the condition of human nature...
>
> This is the moment in America to give such a direction to poetry, painting and the other fine arts, that true and useful ideas of glory may be implanted in the minds of men here, to take the place of the false and destructive ones that have degraded the species in other countries...Woe be to the republican principle and to all the institutions it supports, when once the pernicious doctrine of holiness of error shall creep into the creed of our schools and distort the intellect of our citizens.[4]

Nevertheless, while satirists had a patriotic duty to satirize the short-comings of their society, they were not expected to adopt a superior tone. Superiority had far too long been assumed by the British, and the Americans had fought a costly war to be rid of it. Satires should reflect the democratic principles to which America was committed while castigating those elements in society which were a danger to the enterprise and the civilization America hoped to found.

If America was to succeed, good judgement and the maintenance of good standards were essential. The satires of the Early Republic testify to this. They are overwhelmingly concerned to ensure that a flexible society did not become an ignorant society and that those who assumed positions of authority were in fact capable and worthy of trust. Schools and teachers were often the targets of satires. Many of the satirists suggested that teachers encouraged feats of memory rather than understanding, and that the teachers, though well-versed in text book discipline, could be hopelessly ignorant. One anonymous satirist remarked:

> In our infancy at schools,

> We spell and parse by grammar rules;
> To settled axioms thence appeal,
> If we can act, why need we feel?[5]

Ignorant school teachers were turning out not just ignorant citizens, but citizens who thought the appearance of knowledge was more important than its acquisition. The problem continues to concern satirists well into the nineteenth century. In the centres of higher learning Washington Irving's *A History of New York...by Diedrich Knickerbocker* describes a Professor Von Poddingcroft who was:

> ... long celebrated in the university of Leyden, for profound gravity of deportment, and a talent at going to sleep in the midst of examinations, to the infinite relief of his hopeful students, who thereby worked their way through college with great ease and little study.

An educated population was important to the success of democracy for obvious reasons, but religious institutions are also targeted in a number of satires. Satire against ministers of religion is likewise concerned with the maintenance of standards. Church ministers should uphold the spiritual values they purport to serve. The satires castigate those who use their position for material ends, and those who, lacking their former authority in the new democracy, seek favour with their parishioners rather than with God. Timothy Dwight describes the modern minister who is able to keep his post in spite of the democratic powers now invested in his parishioners.

> He bowed, talked politics, learned manners mild,
> Most meedly questioned, and most smoothly smiled;
> At rich men's jests laughed loud, their stories praised;
> Their wives new patterns gazed, and gazed, and gazed;
> Most daintily on pampered turkeys dined;
> Nor shrunk with fasting, nor with study pined:
> Yet from their churches saw his brethren driven,
> Who thundered truth, and spoke the voice of heaven,
> Chilled trembling guilt in Satan's headlong path,
> Charmed their feet back, and roused the ear of death.
> "Let fools," he cried, "starve on, while prudent I
> Snug in my nest shall live, and snug shall die."

(from 'The Triumph of Infidelity', 1788)[6]

Orthodox ministers are satirized for their consideration of Mammon rather than God, but their rivals, the itinerants who had sprung up all over America since the church had been, as it were. 'thrown open', are subject to even greater attacks. The itinerants are seen as threatening the established church order and the souls of the people. They are attacked for their ignorance and lack of preparation for their calling. William Biglow (1773-1844) a Harvard graduate, schoolmaster and clergyman suggested in 'Re Re-Commencement: A Kind of Poem: Calculated to be Recited before an "Assemblage" of New England Divines...' (Salem 1812) that for the itinerant preacher ignorance was to be considered a qualification.

> "The 'postles was poor fishermans"...
> The losels think none fit to speak,
> Who've thought and studied for the week.

Henry Cogswell Knight in 'The Crusade' (*Poems* Boston 1821) makes a clear association between the itinerant preacher and the incipient confidence man in American literature when he suggests that some train for their ministry by peddling, while another:

> Receives from Heaven a calling;
> He leaves his plough, he drops his hoe,
> Gets on his meeting clothes, and lo,
> Sets up the trade of bawling.[7]

To the professions of teaching and preaching can be added those of medicine, law and all those pursuits which, if allowed to fall into the hands of the cunning rather than the capable, are open to quackery of all kinds. This might be seen as a direct result of the more flexible society which pertained in America. Since in a democracy people must be persuaded, rather than ordered into right behaviour,

the incompetents form the target of many satires, which hope to persuade the population of the importance of standards.

Another problem confronted by the satirists was that of artistic standards. Art does not easily serve the State and equality is hardly an aesthetic value as the case of John Trumbull's painting testifies. Trumbull, a second cousin to his namesake, the author of 'M'Fingal', was nearing the end of a career, first as a Revolutionary soldier, then as the Revolution's foremost commemorative artist, when Congress decided to dress the Capital Rotunda with a number of historical subjects. Pride of place was to be given to 'The Declaration of Independence' which Trumbull had painted some years before, using portraits of the Founding Fathers taken from life. Unfortunately Madison, who was by then President Madison, insisted that the painting be monumentally enlarged and the figures life-sized. Trumbull who had only one good eye, produced an unnatural and stiff enlargement which was not well received. Present at the unveiling of the 'National Painting' were two of the best occasional satirists America has seen. Fitz-Green Halleck and Joseph Rodman Drake wrote as 'Croaker' in the *Evening Post* and the *National Advertizer* during the year 1819. Halleck went on to become an important leader of national letters, but Drake died of tuberculosis in 1820 at the age of twenty-five. Croaker's comments on the 'National Painting' will perhaps serve to demonstrate the difficulties of creating artistic standards, when both painters and critics are mediocre. After an invocation to the muse to aid in the singing of Trumbull's praises, the satirist continues:

> Come star-eyed maid - Equality!
> In thine adorer's praise I revel;
> Who brings, so fierce his love to thee -
> All forms and faces to a level:
> Old, young-great, small-the grave, the gay;

Each man might swear the next his brother,
And there they stand in dread array,
To fire their votes at one another.

How bright their buttons shine! how straight
Their coat-flaps fall in plaited grace;
How smooth the hair on every pate;
How vacant each immortal face!
And then thy tints - the shade - the flush -
(I wrong them with a strain too humble)
Not mighty Sherred's strength of brush
Can match thy glowing huyes, my Trumbull.

Go on, great painter! dare be dull;
No longer after nature dangle;
Call redilinear beautiful;
Find grace and freedom in an angle;
Pour on the red - the green - the yellow -
"Paint 'till a horse may mire upon it."
And while I've strength to write or bellow,
I'll sound your praises in a sonnet.[8]

One notes the ease with which Halleck and Drake capture the satiric tone without the danger of offending their equal and democratic audience. Any idea of superiority is offset by the naive enthusiasm of the satiric *persona* who, far from being a skilful man of letters, has only this enthusiasm to offer. Nevertheless, as long as his strength lasts, he will write, or like the itinerant preachers who took up the trade of 'bawling', he will 'bellow' the praises of the painter. This assumed naivety however is belied by the witty and skilled versification of the piece, and by its display of critical expertise, so that both painter and bellowers are stung by the attack, and there is no doubt that the satirists are men of letters concerned with the maintenance of value, in a society committed to equality.

On the whole the maintenance of standards and values in a society committed to the idea of freedom meant, to many of the satirists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a politics of Federalism, of the type implied by Trumbull's 'M'Fingal'. The

Federalist sympathizers had, as it were, captured the satiric high ground. They had done so by pointing to the evils which existed in the Old World, and which had to be kept out of America, as in the case of 'M'Fingal', and by dubbing their democratic rivals a 'mob', bent on creating Faction. Faction became a term applied only to the enemies of Federalism so that a familiar satiric picture can be seen to emerge the America of the period whereby the established order, represented by Federalism, satirizes its enemies by suggesting that all other paths led to dulness, chaos and disorder. Only the Federalists were interested in good government while those opposing Federalism were motivated solely by self-interest and passion and could have no thought for the permanent interests of the community. It was, as it were, American Ancients satirizing American Moderns. 'M'Fingal' demonstrates that Faction is the enemy of order, but as George L. Roth has remarked, this meant '*the* order'.[9] The Federalists, the satires suggest, are the keepers of value and standards, and are therefore the means by which the American promise can be realized. In the satires of Timothy Dwight, political, artistic and religious conservatism become fused into a single issue.

Dwight had entered Yale at the age of thirteen and graduated in 1769, receiving his MA three years later. He studied law but, becoming interested in religion, in 1777 he resigned as a tutor at Yale, where his fellow tutor was Trumbull, the author of 'M'Fingal', and went to serve as Army Chaplain. In the October of 1778, while with the army at White Plains, news of his father's death forced a return to Northampton where he was burdened with the support of twelve brothers and sisters, his mother and his own wife and infant son. In

addition he had to contend with the stigma of Toryism, since his father had refused to fight on either side of the Revolution. A brother went insane after being shot by local patriots, who burned the Dwight fields and scattered corn. Dwight, laboured in the fields, ran a school and preached in out-lying parishes in order to support his family. He won his town's respect and in 1781-2 served as its representative on the state legislature and was nominated candidate for the Continental Congress. He rejected a career in national politics, saying that he could not make the inevitable sacrifice of principles to party and accepted in 1783 the rural parish of Greenfield Hill. From 1795 until his death in 1817 he was president of Yale. Dwight is known as one of the Connecticut Wits who included John Trumbull (1750-1831), David Humphreys (1752-1818) and Joel Barlow (1754-1812), all of whom attended Yale between 1763 and 1778. Leon Howard remarks:

> These four young men were ... with the somewhat incidental collaboration of Lemuel Hopkins (1750-1801), the original members of a literary group known to posterity as the "Connecticut Wits". The label is the result of the most occasional and least substantial of their activities... for the greater part of their literary work represents a serious attempt to grapple with the aesthetic, intellectual, and social problems of one of the most important periods in modern history. They failed to achieve the sort of literature which gives pleasure to successive generations of readers; but in spite of their failure - and perhaps in part because of it - they illuminate an age which produced a revolution in literary taste and in social institutions.[10]

In some works, it would be fair to say, Dwight failed to give pleasure to his own generation of readers. As George L. Roth remarks of other American satirists of this period:

> Often one seems intended to get the impression that the poets felt society's need for their work to be so pressing that there was no time for revision.[11]

Dwight, like other writers of the Early Republic, was heavily involved in public life. His monumental epic 'The Conquest of Canaan' took some twelve years to write. Like others, he had employed Puritan typology in his sermons to justify the Revolutionary War and he was well practised in the fusion of secular and sacred history. He attempted in 'The Conquest of Canaan' what one critic has called 'an enormous feat of synthesis':

> He tried...to transport the Puritan experience of the seventeenth century across the chasm of the Revolution, to annex the new republican vista, and thus to create a vision of the future that would fuse the Calvinist and Enlightenment world views.[12]

In view of the way in which American millennialism absorbed the ideas of the Enlightenment in Revolutionary satires, Dwight's attempt seems unsurprising. Nevertheless, although begun during the Revolution, by 1785 when 'The Conquest of Canaan' appeared, the work already presented something of an anachronism to an American public beginning to lose faith in a sacred mission revealed by the scriptures. Dwight no doubt intended to urge his countrymen on toward the fulfilment of the New Jerusalem:

> Let endless blessings round our nation rise,
> Cheer all our lives, and waft us to the skies!
> Thus strains of rapture charm'd the listening gales,
> While the low sun-beam glimmered on the vales:
> To rest the camp retir'd: ten-thousand fires
> Thro' the calm silence rais'd their bending spires:
> The bright moon rose; winds cool'd the dearful even,
> And wide magnificence enkindled heaven.
>
> ('The Conquest of Canaan' Book XI, l. 1129-1136)

The words are stirring enough, but a vision of America's eventual salvation as it would occur in some distant epoch was hardly likely to persuade the American farmer to forego self-interest for the communal good. In fairness, Dwight's own view of America was not entirely

idealized. In common with many an American satirist he was capable of demonstrating a strong streak of pragmatism. Of the American Indian Dwight remarks:

> The great hindrance to their improvement does not lie, as some dreaming European philosophers have supposed, in the inferiority of their minds...The real cause of all this degradation in the Indian is the want of such motices to exertion as he is prepared to feel within the view of his mind. The only cause of human distinction, also, is the existence of such motices...With sufficient motives [humanity] will resist temptation...[13]

One motive which could help humanity resist temptation, a pragmatic Dwight suggests elsewhere, is property: "The love of property, to a certain degree, seems indispensable to the existence of sound morals."[14] Like Madison, Dwight suspected that the religious impulse alone would prove insufficient to counteract self-love, and like Franklin suggested that material means could be used to promote ideal ends. It is an argument which makes its appeal both to conservatism and to a sort of homely common sense, but one difficult to translate into satires still heavily influenced by the eighteenth century British satirists.

Dwight became frustrated by the need to create a voice which would appeal to the widest possible audience, and as Emory Elliott suggests:

> This frustration, added to the near panic he began to feel about the declining morality and increasing corruption of the people, moved Dwight to a direct attack upon the conspicuous source of all America's ills: irreligion. The publication of *The Triumph of Infidelity*... illustrates clearly the continuation of an intimate inter-relationship between religion and literature in the 1780's. As Dwight became increasingly aware of the serious threat being posed by social changes at home and intellectual influences from abroad, he responded with the same kind of fervor that appears in the most bitter poems of Freneau, the most fiery sermons of a Calvinistic divine, and the most

> pointed barbs of Brackenridge's satire...As Dwight struggled to express his religious, social and political disagreement, the coherence of his work is repeatedly undermined by his desire to speak to too many kinds of readers on too many levels at the same time.[15]

Dwight is perhaps the most extreme example of the difficulty encountered by the post-revolutionary writers in attaining a voice which could appeal to their diverse audience. As generations of readers have attested, 'The Triumph of Infidelity' is so confusing as to be all but incomprehensible so that a sense of the essential correctness of Gordon Bigelow's views emerges from any engagement with the poem. He suggests that American poets of this period were too self-consciously aware of strutting their hour upon the world's stage.

> Their poems were usually artifacts, sometimes constructed with great ingenuity, but more often loosely pasted together from unknown elements. Only rarely were they, like the poems of Milton, new and original products, created by a refusion of these elements. American poems of this period are often 'mere' rhetoric in the sense that they are more stylistic, lacking the illumination which can come from an inner core of poetic imagination and emotion.[16]

What was needed to appeal to a democratic-minded audience, largely concerned with the material implications of the New Republic, was some sort of literary 'hasty pudding', very American, easily prepared and digested and one which would in time serve as the basis for more elaborate fare. The possibility of a comparison was not altogether lost on Joel Barlow, and in his poem 'The Hasty Pudding', the difficulty of presenting a truly American literary fare seems to underlie a harmless satire about corn-mush cake. Barlow was the youngest member of the Yale group known as the Connecticut or Hartford Wits. In 1787 he published his patriotic, and by now almost

obligatory, 'rising glory of America' poem, 'The Vision of Columbus'. During this period he became involved in 'The Anarchiad', a newspaper series of Federalist satires which, like Trumbull's 'M'Fingal' attacked what the 'Wits' saw as the worsening drift towards insurrection and faction, but he is perhaps best remembered for the Butler-type burlesque, 'The Hasty Pudding'. In this work he captures something of the right tone for an American satire.

'The Hasty Pudding' attacks the British aristocracy whose gourmet appetites are appeased, even in the midst of the Irish potato famine. Barlow remarks of his chosen subject, 'a simplicity in diet', that he is:

> sensible that it is one of those subjects in which example has infinitely more power than the most convincing arguments, or the highest charms of poetry. Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, though possessing these two advantages in a greater degree than any other work of the kind, has not prevented villages in England from being deserted. The apparent interest of the rich individuals, who form the taste as well as the laws in the country, has been against him...[17]

The dedication, however, seems more concerned with the emergent American nation: "A simplicity in diet, whether it be considered with reference to the happiness of individuals or the prosperity of a nation, is of more consequence than we are apt to imagine." The satirist elevates his subject of a simple diet to a 'great and necessary virtue', which he thoroughly recommends, but lacking a practical example, he has little hope of influencing his fellow Americans via his writing and wishes "it were in his power to do it in such a manner as would be likely to gain their attention."[18] Of the pudding Barlow remarks:

> ... There still belong

> More copious matters to my faithful song.
> For rules there are, tho' ne'er unfolded yet,
> Nice rules and wise, how pudding should be ate.
> Some with molasses line the luscious treat,
> And mix, like Bards, the useful with the sweet.[19]

Barlow does not expect his own mixture of the 'useful and the sweet' to meet with any success. 'Example' he says 'is stronger than satire', and Mrs Washington is implored to play her part in changing the eating habits of Americans.

> The example of your domestic virtues has doubtless a great effect among your countrywomen. I only wish to rank *simplicity of diet* among the virtues.[20]

Even given the pragmatic thrust of American satires the reader may wonder whether anything as earthbound as *simplicity of diet* can be ranked among the virtues, but Barlow's deprecating tone and modest satiric stance had more immediate appeal to an American audience bent on democracy, than did Dwight's somewhat anachronistic stance. In the America of the time, in culinary matters, as in art *simplicity of diet* may have been less of a virtue than a necessity. Barlow is well aware of the irony in Canto 1, and his elevation of the Hasty Pudding is well in keeping with the form of the mock heroic:

> The Charlotte brown, within whose crusty sides
> A belly soft the pulpy apple hides;
> The yellow bread, whose face like amber glows,
> And all of Indian that the bake-pan knows -
> You tempt me not - my fav'rite greets my eyes,
> To that lov'd bowl my spoon by instinct flies.
>
> (Canto 1, l. 152-157)

It is, however, in a problematical Canto II that American deviance from the European model starts to become apparent.

In Canto II the mock heroic falters a little in favour of genuine comparison between European decadence and American innocence and simplicity:

> To mix the food by vicious rules of art,
> To kill the stomach and to sink the heart,
> To make mankind to social virtue sour
> Cram o'er each dish, and be what they devour
> For this the kitchen muse first framed her book,
> Commanding sweats to stream from every cook;
> Children no more their antic gambols tried,
> And friends to physic wondered why they died.
>
> (Canto II, l. 158-165)

If the demands of the mock heroic insist that the subject matter be inflated while never allowing the reader to lose sight of its essential triviality, here the bathos of the piece is upstaged by notions of children, symbols of innocence and freshness, sickening and dying. Here the jaded palates of Europe compare unfavourably with that of the simple Yankee.

> - his abundant feast
> With simples furnished, and with plainness drest
> A numerous offspring gathers round the board,
> And cheers alike the servant and the Lord,
> Whose well bought hunger prompts the joyous taste
> And health attends them from the short repost.
>
> (Canto II, l. 166-171)

Then, as Barlow goes on to draw general moral lessons from his topic he allows a characteristic American double edge to creep into his satire:

> Yet may the simplest dish, some rules impart
> For nature scorns not all the aids of art
> E'en Hasty Pudding, purest of all food,
> May still be bad, indifferent or good ...
> Whoe'er would from it on the surest plan,
> To near the child and long sustain the man;
> To shield the morals while it mends the size...
> Attend the lessons that the Muse shall bring
> Suspend your spoons and listen while I sing.
>
> (Canto II l. 178-189)

One notes that the Hasty Pudding is not entirely a product of nature, but, in order to have any literary or hypothetical point, must partake of the very artistry by which the European palate has been corrupted. As with the pudding, so with the poem which has used a sophisticated European form to elaborate its message. Barlow's use of the heroic couplet is hardly in keeping with the simplicity of diet the poem purports to espouse, and since the over use of literary technique is intended deliberately to promote bathos in the mock heroic, so the inadequacy of the subject matter is recognised. This type of satire essentially targets the idiocy of those who, lacking an adequate subject matter, feel they have the makings of an heroic poem. What is finally interesting about this American mock heroic, compared to, say, Pope's 'Rape of the Lock', is the fact that the poem so obviously lacks any society on which the satire can rebound.

The problem with Barlow's 'The Hasty pudding', once the eulogizing Canto I has been left behind, is that, while it continues to render ridiculous the concepts and opinions held about the pudding by the narrator, this is accompanied by a growing realization that we are not in the presence of a narrator who has foolishly *chosen* to make an heroic poem out of inadequate subject matter. Rather we are in the presence of one for whom this is the *only* subject matter available. We follow our American farmer not through the decadent coffee shops and card houses of London, but

> First in the field, beneath the sun's strong rays
>
> (Canto II, l. 192)

There in the field, the farmer's enemies are possessed of neither vice nor virtue. They are typically wilderness images, the 'insidious

worm, the all-devouring crow'. A few ashes dispel the worm, although our narrator is able to get rather better poetic mileage from the crow:

> The feathered robber with his hungry maw
> Swift flies the field before your man of straw
> A frightful image, such as school boys bring
> When met to burn the Pope or hang the King.
>
> (Canto II, l. 206-210)

The puns on Swift, Pope, and 'frightful images' suggest the cultural desolation of America. The 'man of straw', and the destructive rather than constructive impulse of the school-boys carry uncomfortable resonances of a wilderness territory, held at bay only by farming and planting. The narrator may wax lyrical about the growth of corn compared variously to 'Corinthian' columns and 'tall top gallants', but the wonderful crop is only endangered, not by the vicious inhabitants of the city underworld but by numbers of squirrels and raccoons, which are not without virtue:

> Both thieves alike, but provident of time,
> A virtue, rare, that almost hides their crime.
>
> (Canto II, l. 245-246)

Then, given the prudent disposition of the squirrels and raccoons, just in case we are drawn to make odious comparisons between the prudent American Farmer and the animals; our narrator hastens to assure us otherwise.

> We've one advantage where they take no part, -
> With all their wiles they ne'er have found the art
> To boil the Hasty Pudding; here we shine
> Superior far to tenants of the pine;
> This envied boon to man shall still belong,
> Unshamed by them in substance or in song.
>
> (Canto II, l. 248-253)

Here an underlying analogy between the hasty pudding and the song sung in its praise is more explicit. If the pudding is all which separates the American farmer from the animals of the wilderness, its praises need singing. Indeed, so determinedly does the narrator stay with his subject, so doggedly does he trace the pudding's evolution, from its humble beginnings as a seed of corn, through a short eulogy to the cow, its possible effects on the love life of young Americans, its ramifications regarding family life, and on through to the best choice of spoons and bowls, that a kind of triumph emerges. Lacking a more suitable poetic topic, everything that can be said about this one has been so completely said that the poem emerges, not so much mock heroic, as absurdly heroic, giving it a true American flavour. Our narrator moves in a landscape predicated, not according to vice and folly as would a narrator of Pope's satires, but through a landscape predicated by a wilderness, devoid of meaning. A wilderness kept at bay by a Hasty Pudding seems too heavy an implication for what is after all a light-hearted romp, but this fear informs many of the satires of the period. The images of wilderness re-emerge with devastating clarity in Barlow's poem of 1812: 'Advice to a Raven in Russia'.

'Advice to a Raven in Russia', as Lewis P. Simpson points out, has been called 'perhaps the bitterest satire ever written by an American.'[21] The occasion of its composition was Barlow's last visit to a war-torn Europe. While in Poland on a trade mission Barlow experienced, first hand, the devastation wrought by Napoleon, who had himself risen to power via a democratic revolution. In the poem a

scavenging raven is advised to leave ice-bound Russia where bodies lie: "Mere trunks of ice", and to seek food in a warmer climate:

> Sweep over Europe, hurry back to Spain,
> You'll find his legions there; the valiant crew
> Please best their master when they toil for you.[22]
> (l. 18-21)

Essentially the poem reiterates the underlying fear of 'mob-rule' which informs many American satires from 'M'Fingal' onwards, but does so in language which creates a devastated wasteland in which the triumphant Raven is defeated only by the natural onset of winter:

> Imperial scavenger! but now you know
> Your work is vain amid these hills of snow.
> His tentless troops are marbled through with frost..
> Nor can you tear one fibre from their breast.
> No! from their visual sockets as they lie,
> With beak and claws you cannot pluck an eye,
> The frozen orb, preserving still its form,
> Defies your talons as it braves the storm,
> But stands and stares to God, as if to know
> In what cursed hands He leaves His world below.
> (l. 49-62)

Barlow's nightmare vision in this poem lacks the ironic perspective of Trumbull's 'M'Fingal' or his own 'The Hasty Pudding'. In those poems the possibility of success for the American enterprise was asserted, via the character of Honorius in 'M'Fingal', and in both works by the ironic perspective of the narrator, a man of letters who both judged and controlled events in the world of the satire. Barlow's 'Advice to a Raven in Russia' demonstrates no such control. The bleak and terrible landscape of this poem is devoid of any meaning, and such hope as is offered in the poem is dependent upon Barlow's return to a type of providential framework. The frozen eyes of dead soldiers stare at God, as if to know, 'In what cursed hands He leaves His world below'. Ultimately Napoleon's devastation will not be halted:

> Till men resume their souls, and dare to shed
> Earth's total vengeance on the monster's head,
> Hurl from his blood-built throne this king of woes,

Dash him to dust, and let the world repose.
(l. 79-82)

Faced with the full horror of a democratic experiment gone badly wrong Barlow is unable to control the satire via the wit of a truly American mind. The resolution of the satire becomes dependent upon men regaining their souls, presumably acting out God's will by wreaking 'Earth's vengeance' on Napoleon, and achieving what is, in effect, a typically American realistic ideal, 'world repose'. Barlow, in this poem, abandons the power of the word to enforce order in his satire, and depends upon the power of God. As Lewis P. Simpson has suggested:

> For the American satirist to seek the truth of wit - to discover a way to give back of the image of the American mind - was to undertake a quest into a world as yet unexplored by the literary mind, a world in which all the traditional norms and signs seemed obscured or obliterated, the world of an egalitarian democracy.[23]

The growth and development of satire in the new Republic were dependent upon the establishment of a new American cultural norm,[24] but the establishment of that norm was inextricably bound to the establishment of an American literary voice.

The need for an American literary voice was not lost on Noah Webster, instigator of Webster's *American Dictionary*, who said in 1778 'America must be as independent in *literature* as she is in politics, as famous for *arts* as for *arms*'.[25] Webster himself played his part by producing *The American Spelling-Book* which simplified the way in which some English words were spelt. This, like the new arithmetic books which school children needed now that they reckoned in dollars and cents, fostered and in part created, a growing sense of national identity. During this period an American Philosophical Society was

formed, as was the American Academy of Arts and Sciences at Boston. In spite of this however much American literature remained imitative of 'The Spectator', or of the Gothic, which was so popular in Europe. In 1807, as Noah Webster looked back over twenty years work he remarked that he had always:

> had it in view to detach this country as much as possible from its dependence on the parent country. ... Our people look to English books as the standard of truth on all subjects and this confidence in English opinions *puts an end to inquiry*.[26]

Thomas Cooper, the Manchester radical and political admirer of America, had observed, after his visit in 1793, that:

> With respect to literary men, it is to be observed that in America there is not as yet what may be called a *class* of society, to whom that denomination will apply; such, for instance, as is to be found in Great Britain, and indeed in most of the old countries of Europe. A class, whose profession is literature; and among whom the branches of knowledge are divided and sub-divided with great minuteness, each individual taking and pursuing his separate department as regularly as the respective fabricators of a watch or a pin. Literature in America is an amusement only - collateral to the occupation of the person who attends (and but occasionally attends) to it. In Europe it is a trade - a means of livelihood.[27]

In 1820, Sidney Smith, writing in the *Edinburgh Review* asked his now famous question: 'In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book?' and James Fenimore Cooper's 'Notions of the Americans' (1828) commented on the difficulty of creating an American book.

> There is scarcely an ore which contributes to the wealth of the author that is found here in veins as rich as in Europe. There are no annals for the historian; no follies (beyond the most vulgar and commonplace) for the satirist; no manners for the dramatist; no obscure fictions for the writer of romance; no gross and hardy offences against decorum for the moralist; nor any of the rich

> artificial auxiliaries of poetry. The weakest hand can extract a spark from the flint, but it would baffle the strength of a giant to attempt kindling a flame with a pudding-stone.[28]

It is perhaps something of an irony that Cooper should have used such a recognisably American literary trope as the negative catalogue in order to express a lack of culture and tradition for the American writer, but his difficulty is one commented upon both well before and long after 1828. Freneau, in his poem of 1788, 'To An Author' makes a similar comment, for it is not the critics' rage that American writers need fear, but rather that too 'few critics will be found/To sift [their] works and deal the wound.' He goes on:

> Thrice happy Dryden, who could meet
> Some rival bard in every street!
> When all were bent on writing well
> It was some credit to excel[29]

The satirists of the young Republic were writing for an audience less cultured, less attuned to the finely turned heroic couplet than were the audiences of their models. Taste, in the new republic, was not all that it might be, and hankered after the British model. Tyler, another satirist of the period, has his satiric *persona* remark in the Preface to *The Algerine Captive* (1797), that

> The peasant of Europe must first be taught to read, before he can acquire a taste in letters. In New England, the work is half completed. In no other country are there so many people, who, in proportion to its numbers, can read and write; and, therefore, no sooner was a taste for amusing literature diffused, than all orders of country life, with one accord, forsook the sober sermons and practical pieties of their fathers for the gay stories and splendid impieties of the traveller and the novelist. The worthy farmer no longer fatigued himself with Bunyan's Pilgrim up the 'hill of difficulty' ... but quaffed wine with Erydore in the hermitage of Vesuvius ... while Dolly the dairy maid, and Jonathan the hired man, threw aside the ballad of the cruel step-mother, over which they had so often wept in concert, and now amused

> themselves into so agreeable a terror with the haunted houses and hobgoblins of Mrs Ratcliff, that they were both afraid to sleep alone.[30]

The problem of a decline in public taste occurring with increased literacy was not of course confined to the American writers of the time. Some twelve months after Tyler's remarks in *The Algernine Captive*, Jane Austen was beginning her satire of the Gothic novel, *Northanger Abbey*. The problem of taste faced by writers on both sides of the Atlantic was not dissimilar, and Freneau's 'To an Author' of 1788, foreshadows Wordsworth's 'Preface to the Lyrical Ballads' by some ten years, when it pleads for an increase in sensibility.

> An age employed in edging steel
> Can no poetic raptures feel;
> No solitude attracting power,
> No leisure of the noon day hour,
> No shaded stream, no quiet grove
> Can this fantastic century move.
>
> The muse of love in no request -
> Go - try your fortune with the rest,
> One of the nine you should engage,
> To meet the follies of the age:-
> On *one*, we fear, your choice must fall - ...
> A mind on *murdered victims* placed -
> She, only she, can please the taste![31]

In these lines Freneau straddles the age of Pope and the incipient romanticism with which he is most often associated, but it is significant that Freneau should have looked back to Dryden who had been dead since the turn of the century as a source of happiness. It would be true to say that the early republican satires continued to be dominated by the great Augustan satirists, in spite of the fact that the formal decorum of Pope's poetry, the controlling wit of the verse was hopelessly unsuited to the rowdy and often rustic American scene. Likewise the rasping Juvenalian tones of Swift's satire, whilst

ideally fashioned to penetrate the hard polished surface of the European court and manners, was rather too strong and faintly ridiculous when used, not to express moral anger, but to put forward the moral instruction entailed in the corrective American satires. Brackenridge, a great admirer of Swift, admits at the end of *Modern Chivalry* that '... style is what I could never exactly hit'. Nor was style the only problem, as even a cursory reading of *Modern Chivalry* makes apparent. The development of Romanticism was for writers living on the other side of the Atlantic. For Freneau, Brackenridge, and the other American satirists there was the development of a nation, the giant attempt to kindle a flame with a pudding stone, in a democratic America where public taste could not altogether be ignored.

Brackenridge, in his Preface to *Modern Chivalry*, called his work 'a book without thought, or the smallest degree of sense.' Speaking nonsense was, he said 'the only way to keep out of the reach of criticism.'[32] The ploy seems to have worked. *Modern Chivalry* was in fact popular with Brackenridge's fellow Americans. Until the middle of the nineteenth century it was read across the frontier, in the American east, and by some in Europe, so that in 1815, a year before his death, Brackenridge was able to boast that five publishers had already made their fortunes on it. Twentieth century critics accord the work its place. Lewis Leary notes that:

> ... whatever its European antecedents, it is distinctively an American book, not just because of its homespun, native characters and its often slapstick, broad humour which links it casually to Irving's 'Legend of Sleepy Hollow' (1820), to Augustus B. Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes* (1835), and to Seba Smith's accounts of the escapades of Jack Downing; but also because it is a narrative of journeying and questing, like *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* or, at a farther remove, *Moby Dick*...[33]

The usual associations of the picaresque form of *Modern Chivalry* are with *Don Quixote*, Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* and Fielding's *Tom Jones*. The work was begun as a long satiric poem written, like Trumbull's 'M'Fingal', in the meter of Butler's *Hudibras*. In 'The Modern Chevalier' Brackenridge abandoned the Miltonic manner that had characterised 'The Rising Glory of America' which he and Freneau had written while still at Princeton, and sought instead a simpler language more suited to his American subject matter. After working on 'The Modern Chevalier' for some months, probably through much of 1788 and 1789, Brackenridge put verse aside, in favour of prose. The importance of this decision to American satire should not be underestimated.

'The Modern Chevalier' anticipates the themes of *Modern Chivalry*. In the poem an ignorant weaver, Traddle, meets with a modern chevalier, who travels the country observing and commenting on politics, social institutions and manners. On meeting the weaver the Chevalier suggests that he take advantage of the new democracy in order to become a somebody, a statesman. Traddle's new-found ambitions are immediately cut short by his wife who delivers a resounding slap on the rump with a cudgel. The restraining cudgel of his wife prevents Traddle becoming a champion of the people, and an observer then tells the Chevalier that he is neglecting his duty by failing to educate the people.

> It would do service to the state
> If such a noble knight as you
> Would teach them what they ought to do,
> And give them seasonable lessons
> Respecting such their wide creations
> That on the one hand while they pass
> The ignorant though monied ass
> So on the other should avoid
> The chusing such amongst the crowd

> As are unqualified, though less
> They may in property possess.[34]

The constant theme of Federalist satires is instantly recognizable and Brackenridge's own life is testimony to a belief that human nature, through education, can become rational and knowledgeable. During the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794, Brackenridge, who had denounced the excise tax, nevertheless persuaded the frontiersmen not to oppose the government and to respect the law. Unfortunately his role of mediator was misunderstood in the East, and he gained an undeserved reputation of being the chief insurgent. The events are reviewed in Vol. 4 of *Modern Chivalry* with a satirical eye: a means of education Brackenridge had used before. When Findley, a former cloth-maker on whom Traddle was based, led western representatives from the state assembly to avoid a quorum, Brackenridge remarked on the use of satire that:

> Ridicule is not the test of truth, but it may be employed to expose error and on this occasion it seemed not amiss to use it a little, as a great object was at stake, and much wilful representation to be encountered...[35]

Again, the primary function of Brackenridge's satire, was to serve the New Republic. Later, when Findley and not Brackenridge was elected to the ratifying convention, Traddle, of 'The Modern Chevalier', was substituted for what must have been the lowest common denominator of the time. Findley became Teague O'Reagan, the people's choice.

Modern Chivalry then, was born of the events which occurred in the new Republic, and although written to "get ease and allay pain"[36] the work is not bitter. In common with other American satires it is a corrective work: an attempt to show that the great burden of democracy

was education. Unfettered freedom led only to a wilderness in which all meaning broke down, and unless humanity became qualified for democracy, America could never rise to glory. The themes of Brackenridge's satire are, by now, familiar. More important, in terms of the development of American satire, is Brackenridge's decision to change from verse to prose for *Modern Chivalry*. The form of the work probably owes as much to Byrd's *History of the Dividing Line*, Franklin's *Autobiography*, and more immediately to the youthful work of Brackenridge and Freneau, *Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca*, as it does to *Tristram Shandy*. These American episodic works are characterised by the use of an exemplary figure who emodies an ideal. They move through a real landscape, as did Sarah Kemble Knight, undergoing adventures and commenting upon life as they go. The episodic prose form allows the narrator to explore the realistic implications of America on the hero's position in a way which would be denied by an abstract landscape of ideology, such as that travelled by Swift's Gulliver. 'The company of horses is by no means favourable to good taste and genius...it is observable that your jockeys are a class of people not greatly removed from the sagacity of a good horse', reflects the narrator of *Modern Chivalry*. (Book 1, ch.2, p.34). Farrago, in Brackenridge's work, travels real country, from the western frontier and back again to Philadelphia, confronting all of America's problems as he goes.

Captain Farrago, the hero of *Modern Chivalry*, is a gentle caricature of the Jeffersonian agrarian ideal. Like Beverley's ideal plantation owner before him, Farrago enjoys books and reading:

> John Farrago was a man of fifty-three years of age, of good natural sense, and considerable reading; but in some things whimsical, owing perhaps to his

> greater knowledge of books than of the world; but in some degree, also, to his having never married, being what they call an old bachelor, a characteristic of which is, usually singularity and whim. (Book 1, Ch. 1, p.29)

From the opening words of Brackenridge's work we recognise the characteristic double edge of American satire. Farrago may be full of good natural sense and be possessed of a cultivated mind, but he has paid a price for his love of reading: he knows little of the world and has become a crusty bachelor. Even given this fair share of human faults, Farrago, as representative of Jeffersonian agrarian idealism, cannot easily emulate the character of Steddy in *The Secret History of the Dividing Line*, by reconciling the inherent paradox of a realistic ideal. In Brackenridge's work the new ideal is a democratic one. To be sure, Farrago possesses only a small farm, in place of the plantation, but having served in the militia he keeps his title of Captain in civilian life, and he keeps servants, who, in a democratic society, are not allowed to eat with him. "I shall", says our narrator, "pass over the circumstances of the Captain's dining, and Teague, reconciled with the hostler, taking his mess in the kitchen". (Book II, Ch. 1, p.102) Further, Steddy, in Byrd's *The Secret History of the Dividing Line*, was able to reconcile the paradox of a realistic ideal only by the suppression of realistic detail. Those ordinary people who could only aspire to be 'ideal plantation owners' were given a generic term - lubberlanders. Allowing a group of people to become a concept is a common device of satire, which enables the satiric attack to take place. The narrator of *Modern Chivalry* allows Farrago no such luxury. As befits a democracy Teague O'Reagan is as much a character as Farrago himself.

Teague O'Reagan steps from the pages of Brackenridge's work, alight with ignorance and ambition. Teague is devoid of any idealism, and worse, on occasions his earth-bound common sense is absolutely right. When, in a foreshadowing of the Phelps episode in Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Farrago attempts to impose some of the romance of novels on his American experience, he is quickly brought down to earth by O'Reagan:

> "Teague" said [the Captain] "it is true I am none of your knight-errants... Nevertheless, as in some respects my sallying forth resembles a knight-errant, and you a squire, would it be amiss...to lie out a night or two that it might be said we have done the like...". "Fait, and I tink", said Teague, "it would be better to lie in a good house...and what good comes of lying in the woods to be ate up by snakes; but fevers, and agues, and sore throats, to get a long enough, and die in a ditch like a dead horse, and be nothing thought of, but be trown into ridicule like a black-head that has no sense."
>
> (Book II, Ch.1, p.106-7)

If education and learning are to oppose ignorance and superstition, they cannot occur at the expense of the practical common sense which enables the characters to survive the real landscape through which they travel. Thus, it may be recognized in this passage, that Teague O'Regan, not Captain Farrago, is the true grandsire of Huckleberry Finn.

For the present, however, Teague O'Regan needs control. His innocence takes the form of ignorance, dangerously coupled to ambition. Teague, in true Franklin fashion, wants to make something of himself. Captain Farrago remarks:

> A free government is a noble possession to a people; and this freedom consists in an equal right to make laws, and to have the benefit of the laws when made. Though doubtless in such a government, the lowest citizen may become chief magistrate; yet

> it is sufficient to possess the right; not absolutely necessary to exercise it.
> (Book I, Ch.III, p.38)

Teague sees things differently. He wants to become a statesman, or a philosopher, or anything, and when not in pursuit of his ambition:

> It was Teague, who had got to bed to the girl of the house. For as they would neither let him go to Congress, nor be a philosopher, he must be doing something.
> (Book III, Ch.1, p. 52)

The ceaseless energy of Teague O'Regan, which exemplifies America, is something Captain Farrago, for all his wit and learning, never quite manages to extinguish. Farrago, at each stage of their journey, cannot prevent a local populace unable to recognize true worth, from bestowing honours upon his servant. The successful Teague becomes the friend of politicians, beautiful women, and scientists alike, until, eventually, a post is agreed upon for him. He is, ironically in view of Brackenridge's experience, appointed collector of the excise tax on whiskey: a post which has seen all of his predecessors tarred and feathered. When Teague suffers a similar treatment at the hands of the mob, a frightened Teague finally recognizes the horrors of a wilderness devoid of value or principle:

> Teague began to tremble, and to skulk behind the Captain. "By de holy vater o' de confession", said he, "dey are like de savages, dey have deir eyes upon me, I shall be scalped; I shall be kilt and have de hair off my head, like a wolf or a shape. God love you, Captain, spake a good word to dem, and tell dem a good story; or by de Christian church, I shall be eat up like a toad, or a wild baste in de forests."
> (Book IV, Ch. XII, p. 313)

Teague's natural impulse, like M'Fingal's before him, was to 'con' his way out of the difficulty. "The devil burn me, if I am de

officer...It is all a mistake, gentlemen", but his procrastinations are cut short by Farrago. Farrago, the embodiment of education and reason, admits that Teague is the excise officer, and then attempts to persuade the mob to release Teague, 'not by falsehood, but by reason'. Farrago's failure is the failue of an attempt to impose principle on a democratically minded mob. He fails, essentially, because the majority are incapable of acting for the public good when self-interest is threatened, in this case in the form of an unpopular excise tax. Thus, if Teague, representative of the emergent America, has, in spite of his ignorance managed to acquire a duty he can fulfil in the new Republic, he is reduced by the mob to the level of animal once again and given 'the appearance of a wild fowl of the forest'. Both he, and soon after, Farrago, are forced to take refuge in the wilderness.

The narrator of *Modern Chivalry* rarely allows the satire of his tale to stand alone. He has, throughout the work, reflected upon each incident:

> ...just as the clergyman who divides his text into several heads, and then adds, "We shall conclude with an improvement of the whole; or with a few improvements of the whole; or with a few practical observations, or reflections.
> (Book IV, Ch. XIII, p. 315)

Like Trumbull's 'M'Fingal', *Modern Chivalry* is still a satire of authority, although authorial ambivalence towards his material has increased. On the occasion of Teague's tarring and feathering, however, he has nothing to say. He abandons the obvious topic:

> ... mistaken patriotism of even good, though uninformed men, opposing an obnoxious and unequal law, not by remonstrance, but by actual force, and thereby sapping all principle, or rather by

> overthrowing all structure of a republical government.
>
> (Book IV, Ch. XIII, p. 316)

These, the narrator says, are 'exhausted topics', and he gives them up in favour of a dissertation on the practice of tarring and feathering.The narrator's words are belied by his obvious disgust with his fellow Americans. Clearly he does not think that the 'sapping of principle' or overthrowing the structure of a republican government is an exhausted topic, or he would not bother writing about it. In part, however, the narrator of *Modern Chivalry* takes on a role in the satire at this point. He throws up his hands in dismay, and in doing so, has become an actor in, rather than director of, the satire. His action provokes, in the reader, a recognition that the world ought not to be this way, even though it so often is. By provoking this recognition the narrator makes overt what is implicitly understood when reading, for instance, Jonson's *Volpone*. The assertion of a normative value, at this point in the satire, is dependent on the voice of the satirist who has bothered to protest and runs counter to the logic of the satire, incidentally ensuring the corrective nature of the work. In the world of Farrago and Teague, at this point, we have witnessed the defeat of reason and honesty by the self-interest of the mob, and, given the human propensity for self-interest, can see no realistic hope for a society which depends upon the goodness of people being paramount. Again the tendency for American satire to become tragical satire can be recognized. The withdrawal into the wilderness is not surprising: the logic of the satire at this point demands misanthropy of the kind displayed by Shakespeare's Timon of Athens. In this American satire, beset by the problems of asserting a realistic ideal in a democracy, misanthropy appears. It is in the

form of the Marquis de Marnessie, a witness to the full horror of mob rule. He had 'seen the machine of the guillotine in actual operation'. (Book IV, Ch. XV, p. 325)

Everything, however, in a satire promoting a realistic ideal is tempered by the paradox of that condition. The Marquis de Marnessie, is not a misanthropist after the grand manner of Shakespeare's Timon of Athens. He lives in the woods with his son, and has no objection to inviting Captain Farrago's party to join them. Nevertheless he is:

> like a person with all his senses awake, and within a few seconds of death... no longer capable of enjoying the false glories of life, is not liable to be seduced by the appearance of them.
> (Book IV, Ch. XV, p. 321)

The Marquis sees nothing but man, in his 'rude and original excellence', and views all attempts at reform impossible to arrest, because of the 'insatiable nature of the human mind, that will not be contented with what is moderate.' (Book IV, Ch. XV, p. 324) Upon investigation he says Paine was wrong to claim 'rights' for men.

> ...it will be found a question more of power than of right; just as in these woods, I take the raccoons and rabbits, not that I conceive myself to have any right to have come from the banks of the Loire to make these depradations, but that having come, I have the skill to do it.
> (Book IV, Ch. XV, p. 323)

Farrago smiles at these words as 'savouring of misanthropy, equalizing the case of brute animals with men.' For Farrago, as for Franklin, improvement was what mattered, on which depends the 'perfection of our species.' In pursuing a course of action, the question for Farrago is one of whether:

> it is conducive to an amelioration of the state of life, and likely to produce a greater sum of happiness...

Allowing that:

> It is almost as impossible, comparing a physical with a moral difficulty, to change a government from despotism to liberty, without violence, as to dislodge a promontory from its base, by any other means than mining and gunpowder.
> (Book IV, Ch. XV, p. 323)

Farrago, in effect, is driven to suggest that, presumably, the ends will justify the means, or, once a value is placed upon 'life', then absolute moral values are inevitably compromised.

This issue in *Modern Chivalry* is not resolved. Teague, although in some respects an exemplar of the American community in ways which Farrago is not, can hardly function to reconcile the real and the ideal, in order to form some sort of realistic ideal. He is captured in the wilderness in his tarred and feathered state and mistaken for a new type of wild beast by some philosophers. He is eventually sent to France, where in his dishevelled condition he is mistaken by the Parisian mob as one of their own, a *sans culotte*. As was seen in Barlow's 'Advice to a Raven in Russia' Europe too, has its wilderness territory. Farrago's reasoning is too thoroughly implicated in the dilemma created by the real America, to satisfactorily suppress those aspects of the democratic ideology which endanger its validity. Thus the double-edged characteristic of American satire, in this instance, tends to lead to double-edged criticism. Lewis Leary remarks that only the most matter-of-fact reader will accept verbatim everything that Brackenridge has to say:

> The sensible man, he [Brackenridge] seems to say, will recognize that intelligent, informed, disinterested reasoning is necessary for the solution of every problem...but that even so rational a man as Captain Farrago or the narrator himself, is finally caught up in the inevitable human, lovable, laughable trap of self-interest.[37]

Nevertheless, Brackenridge's satire does demonstrate a strengthening of specifically American characteristics. Its Menippean quality, for instance, ensures that the work remains hopeful. Even the behaviour of the mob is the result, not of vice so much, as intellectual shortcomings. The mob may in fact be good men, but they are 'misinformed': a situation which could be remedied by education. If the Marquis has seen the drop of the guillotine, Farrago is not sufficiently impressed by the likelihood of a similar turn of events in America as to stay in the wilderness with him. Ultimately, it is not impossible to imagine the American democracy working in *Modern Chivalry*, and the Federalist impetus of Brackenridge's satire has ensured a place for idealism of the type engendered by the man of letters via the character of Farrago. It is true that a truly American ideal is insufficiently present in Teague or Farrago for either to function properly as an exemplary figure, but a developing American mythic character type can be recognized in both. In the terms suggested by Gregory Fitzgerald in his article 'Character Typology in Satiric Short Stories':

> ...the mythic type is symbolic, representing concepts or groups far beyond his own significance as an individual. Displaying, then, a relationship with conditions of life that are mainly *outside* himself, he is useful to the satirist who requires a symbol of mankind to scourge, not just one particular man.[38]

It could be added that the mythic character type is every bit as useful to the satirist wishing to promote value, as scourge the lack of it, but in Brackenridge's work the realistic landscape through which his characters move, and in which they live their lives, is too present to allow of easy answers. Brackenridge's prose, with its use of dialect, slang, and bawdy humour created a setting for an American

satire, but it failed to create an American who could negotiate that setting with idealism intact.

The Algerine Captive was another American satire written during this period by Royall Tyler. Tyler (1757-1826) was born in Boston, and after graduating from Harvard in 1776, he practised law, and helped to suppress Shay's rebellion. He is perhaps best known as an early American playwright, and wrote his first play *The Contrast* after seeing a production of Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*. Tyler's play contrasted the homespun dignity of the Americans with the foppery of the British and presented an early characterization of the rustic Yankee, "Jonathan", a derisive sobriquet which the British had first applied to Americans generally during the Revolutionary War. Cameron C. Nickels remarks that

> In this tradition, the figure [Yankee Jonathan] represented to the Federalist writers of the 1790s an appropriate embodiment of the American common man as the all too common denominator of American society...[39]

Nickels goes on to demonstrate the appearance of the rustic Yankee in the Federalist mock pastorals of this period, and therefore, the importance of these poems in the formation and diffusion of the tradition of the comic Yankee. Tyler's poem 'Independence Day' makes clear his own Federalist sympathies. It catalogues a number of rural New England customs, such as twisting off cockerels' heads and staggering drunkeness, and as Nickels suggests 'The political import of the poem seems unmistakable in the concluding lines:

> Come, here's the French - and Guillotine
> And here is good 'Squire Gallatin,
> And here's each noisy Jacobin.
> Here's friend Madison so hearty,
> And here's confusion to the treaty
> Come, one more swig to Southern Demos

> Who represent our brother negroes.
> Thus we drink and dance away
> This glorious INDEPENDENCE DAY.[40]

Other plays followed *The Contrast*, as did essays and poems of a satirical nature published under the pseudonym Spandee. *The Algerine Captive* was published in 1797 followed by his *Yankey in London* in 1809. Jack B. Moore remarks of the former work that:

> In stylistic purity and the clarity with which Tyler investigates and dramatizes American manners, the book stands alone in our earliest fiction. The school of sentiment and sensibility otherwise dominates this fiction...With its emphasis on ornate diction and minute description of feverishly overwrought emotionalism, the sentiment-sensibility style blighted whatever it touched in our fictional soil.[41]

Tyler's work is a product of the East coast, as opposed to one of the Western Frontier and stands alongside *Modern Chivalry* for its use of a more wholly American language, materials and as a satire firmly based in the cultural values of American society.

As with Brackenridge's work, the form of the picaresque novel allows Tyler's Algerine captive to move through a relatively realistic American, and later cosmopolitan landscape, commenting upon manners and customs as he goes. The shift in setting effectively cuts the work in two allowing comparison between the freedoms enjoyed in democratic America, and the slavery of despotic régimes. The work possesses many characteristics of American satire. It is inevitably double-edged, and since, like *Tristram Shandy*, the book begins before the birth of our hero with a story of his grandfather, Tyler is able to evoke a view of an earlier Puritan age, by which the present may be judged. The view is less nostalgic than those of earlier satires, and

the Puritans are attacked for their bigotry. Captain John Underhill, our hero's ancestor, is accused and charged with thinking about committing adultery, for having his eyes fixed:

> steadfastly and perhaps inordinately, upon one Miriam Wilbore... herself in breach of the spirit of an existing law, which forbad women to appear in public with uncovered arms and necks, by appearing at the same lecture with a pair of wanton open worked gloves... (Ch. 1, p.11)

The Puritans are, nevertheless, praised for their strength and endurance which enabled them to begin a civilization where none stood before. Then the satire is designated 'an anatomy' by Moore, meaning that it shares with other post-Revolutionary satires the Menippean quality which sees the follies depicted as stemming from a diseased intellect, rather than from vice. Tyler shared with Brackenridge, Trumbull and others the Federalist bias of the American man of letters, so that finally, the work is possesed of an exemplary figure who, in many rspects, is a composite of the qualities which went into the making of Farrago, Teague and the narrator of *Modern Chivalry* It is this exemplary figure which represents something of a development for American satire.

Our narrator, and our hero, Updike Underhill is a sophisticated form of satiric *persona*. *The Algerine Captive* is a retrospective first person narrative which allows the mature Updike Underhill to look back upon the follies of his youth with a satiric eye. Added objectivity is gained by the perspective of the tale. Updike, owing to his capture by the Algerines, has been absent from his country for a number of years and therefore sees it with fresh eyes. On his return he applauds the large number of books being sold and read, but

finds two things deplorable in the situation. The first is that the books sold 'are not of our own manufacture', and the second is that the New England reader is being 'insensibly taught to admire the levity, and often the vices, of the parent country.' (Preface p.x) Updike, wishing to remedy this situation, is persuaded by a friend that his own life story 'if not highly interesting, would at least display a portrait of New England manners' so that the use of American materials is seen as a deliberate attempt to create an American literature. Tyler does not often abandon his satiric *persona* in favour of the reflective method favoured by Brackenridge, and the result is an integrated satire which nevertheless serves the ends of the new Republic. The story, we are to believe, is firmly based on fact, including, presumably, the dream Updike's mother had before he was born, that he would fall among savages.

> I only relate facts, and leave the reader to his own comments. My own opinion of dreams I shall conceal, perhaps because I am ashamed to disclose it. (Ch. IV, p.27)

The narrator, the mature Updike, if relating the facts, sees no reason to bare his soul, but brings to bear on the tale, the wisdom accumulated in the course of his story.

The young Updike suffers the sort of educaion familiar in satires from Samual Bailey onwards. Told by his master to recite a passage for the local minister, Updike does so:

> I recited as loud as I could speak, without regard to emphasis or stops.
> (Ch.V, p.30)

The performance so pleases the minister, who prides himself on the strength of his own lungs, that he manages to persuade Updike's farmer

parents it would be a pity if 'such a genius was not encouraged'. The minister takes over Updike's education, teaching him to recite Latin and Greek with as much conviction as he formerly recited from the Dilworth spelling book. He charges Updike's parents heavily for filling their son's head with knowledge which can be of no practical use to him when he returns to their farm. The young Updike is not ignorant as was Teague, but innocent in the ways of the world, and completely ruined as a farm hand: "Alas! a taste for Greek had quite eradicated a love for labour." By the time the young Updike has killed his father's heifer and left it to putrify 'in order to raise a swarm of bees after the manner of Virgil', it is decided he had better become a school teacher. Young Updike, like Teague, must find for himself a useful place in society, but society also needs to find a place for Updike and his love of learning. The satire is distinctly double-edged. The young Updike savours his title '*Master* Underhill', and fondly expects to find:

> ... amusement and pleasure among the circles of the young, and to derive information and delight from the classic converse of the minister.
> (Ch. VII, p.45)

The distance between expectation and reality inevitably forms the basis of an American joke:

> Perhaps a more ragged, ill-bred, ignorant set, never were collected, for the punishment of a poor pedagogue. (Ch. VII, p.45-6)

When Updike abandons his original idea of never beating the children, he is himself beaten by a parent. He is unable to talk with the young men of the town who know of race horses, but not Xanthus, and he bores the young women with recitations of Homer, until interrupted with a rousing chorus of 'Fire upon the mountains! run boys run.' Updike is

a youthful but pretentious pedant, as was Bombo before him, and is saved only by his naivety, but the townspeople he meets are ignorant and bigoted. After his recitation:

> It was reported all over the town the next day, that master was a *papist*, as he had talked French two hours.
>
> (Ch. VII, p.50)

The young Updike learns from his teaching days among the rustics that, in order to be useful, knowledge must be applied, and in effect Updike functions as a sort of American Everyman, setting out to find his place in America, learning as he goes. Unlike Huckleberry Finn of course, he hopes to find civilization, not run from it.

Updike's next attempt to earn his living is as a doctor, and as the satire moves South, it hardens. Updike gradually loses his pretensions, although he can't help being astonished that the good doctor to whom he is apprenticed "should not sometimes quote Greek" (Ch. XI, p.73) High Southern society on the other hand, is as little interested in Greek as were the rustics. They do not interrupt with 'Fire upon the mountains! run boys run' but receive everything with an indifferent, icy politeness. It is amid the Southern veneer of manners that Updike's innocence shows to best advantage. Essentially Tyler identifies the same areas of Southern society for satire as do the later Twain and other nineteenth century satirists. Duelling in defence of Southern honour is a popular pastime. A challenge delivered to Updike is an early example of bumpkin letter writing, with comic dialect spelling:

> Them there very extraordinary pare of varses you did Yourself the onner to address to a young ladna of my particling acquaintance calls loudly for explination.
>
> (Ch. XII, p. 78)

The ludicrous duel is never actually fought but from it Updike gets the wholly undeserved reputation as a 'man of honour'. The Southern beaux are asses, and the Southern belles deceitful. One aging belle in particular pretends to love literature in order to secure a husband in Updike, but never reads the books he lends her. The ministers are more interested in horse racing than preaching and beat their slaves unmercifully. The worldliness of the ministers, the anti-intellectualism, and the aristocratic decay in the South see Updike's innocence tempered by experience:

> Disgusted with the frivolity of the young and the deceit of antiquated ladies, I now applied myself sedulously to my studies.

He does not lose his love of books which gives him the qualities of the man of letters, but has learnt humanity. By the time Updike leaves the South as a qualified Doctor, he has taken on something of the wisdom of Captain Farrago, and gained something of Teague's practical strength. He is ready to make something of himself.

Until this point in the narrative Tyler's satire has been basically comic and regionally American. When Updike leaves America in search of professional fame and independence, as a ship's doctor, eventually to become an Algerine captive, the satire becomes savage. The ship on which Updike leaves America is, ironically, called 'Freedom', and is bound for London, and then to the African coast on a slaving run. The American abroad is a well-used topic for American satire, and in this early example, Tyler's Updike, coming to London so soon after the War of Independence, is unable to find any ameliorating qualities in the place. He finds the population:

> ... entangled by innumerable penal laws, to the breach of which banishment and the gallows are

> almost universally annexed; a motley race, in whose mongrel veins runs the blood of all nations... rotting in dungeons, languishing wretched lives in foetid jails, and boasting of the *glorious freedom of Englishmen.*
>
> (Ch. XXVI, p. 148)

The most singular experience Updike has in London is a meeting with Thomas Paine who, although wise, tends towards atheism and possibly alcoholism. He 'laughs most loudly at the Gospel when in his cups.' (Ch. XXVIII, p. 161) Updike meets also with Dr Walcot (sic), better known as Peter Pindar (1738-1819) whose various satires on George III were much imitated by American Revolutionary satirists, before being recalled to board a new ship,now, ironically, named 'Sympathy'. It is bound for the coast of Africa to pick up a cargo of slaves.

As Updike boards the 'Sympathy' the comic aspects of his nature are left well and truly behind. This is, in part, a sign of Updike's growing maturity. In part, it is a sign of the seriousness of the attack on slave-trading, the horrors of which do not allow of ridicule, and here the emergence of an American voice in satire can be recognized. Tyler is not completely unaware of the power of sentimentality as an instrument of persuasion against slavery. When Updike suffers his imagination to rave he fancies:

> the peaceful husbandman dragged from his native farm, the fond husband torn from the embraces of his beloved wife, the mother from her babies... and all the tender and endearing ties of natural and social affection rended by the hand of avaricious violence... (Ch. XXX, p.166)

This theme will later gain full force in the work of Harriet Beecher Stowe, but for the present, Updike, in tones as completely lacking in sentimentality as those which characterize the later speech of

Huckleberry Finn, describes the miserable conditions on board a slaving vessel.

> The men were fastened together in pairs by a bar of iron, with a collar to receive the neck at each extremity; a long pole was passed over their shoulder, and between each two was bound by a staple and ring, and thus twenty and sometimes thirty were connected together; while their conductors incessantly applied the scourge to those who loitered, or sought to strangle themselves by lifting their feet from the ground in despair...
> (Ch. XXX p. 168)

Or:

> the women and children were tied together in pairs with ropes and obliged to supply the men with provisions and the slush-bucket... if the young women were released, it was only to gratify the brutal lust of the sailors: for though I cannot say I ever was witness to an actual rape, yet the frequent shrieks of those forlorn females in the berths of the seamen left me little charity to doubt of the repeated commission of that degrading crime.
> (Ch. XXX p. 172-3)

The usefulness of a basically realistic description in American satire has been discussed with reference to the 'promotional literature' of the Colonial period. In 'Our Forefather's Song' and in Cooke's 'The Sot-Weed Factor' the hyperbole of 'promotional literature' was easily deflated by a comic description of actual conditions. Captain Farrago, in Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry* confronted by the suicide of a young woman who had hanged herself after being abandoned by friends and family because of the birth of her illegitimate child, also allows the miserable facts to make the point.

> For suicide forfeits Christian burial: Her obsequies attended, not by a clergyman in front, nor by scarfed mourners holding up the pall; nor was she borne on a bier, but drawn on a cart; and the company that followed her uncovered hearse, were not decent matrons, nor venerable men, but old bawds, and strumpets and cullies, half drunk, making merry as they went along.
> (Book IV, Ch. II, p. 126)

The implications for the infiltration of social realism into satire, from this type of simple unsentimental statement of fact, together with the vernacular realism previously noted, are obvious, but the work of Augustus Baldwin Longstreet (1790-1870), whose *Georgia Scenes, Characters, and Incidents*, was published in 1835, the same year as Hawthorne's 'Young Goodman Brown' demonstrates another development for the type of realism used by American satirists.

Georgia Scenes like Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry*, depicts a realistic landscape whose inhabitants use the American vernacular, and in some senses Longstreet is a satirist. His stories of the South West are framed by the moral and refined perspective of a gentleman, much like Captain Farrago. In *The Horse Swap*, the terrible sore beneath the saddle-blanket which has the old nag prancing about like a two year old, and consequently allows one confidence man to out-wit another, is intended to appal as much as amuse the reader. James M. Cox has noted that in this, one of Longstreet's best sketches, when the reality of the raw wound is disclosed, the refined gentleman:

> averts his eyes, as it were, in the very act of completing his joke. Though Longstreet at his best was able to show his clerical gentlemen and poor whites in a humorous act of transcendent co-operation, he nonetheless has a moral as well as aesthetic disposition to withdraw from his humor.[42]

The implication of moral judgement on the part of the refined gentleman would make of this piece a satire for the distance between expectation and reality is exposed, together with the cruelty of the hoax. In other cases however, as Cox remarks, Longstreet is able to show 'that the refined moralist and the violent youth are intricately related to each other'.[43] In 'Georgia Theatrics' the refined

gentleman rushes to prevent what he thinks is an act of violence, only to discover a lone youth practising how he could 'a fout' [fight]. If the youth is embarrassed by being discovered at his play-acting, then the old man has needed the drama to be real in order to enact his own superior disapproval of violence. In this case the double-edge of American satire is inclined to be self-cancelling. The distance between expectation and reality remains, but the moral significance fades in favour of vernacular realism so that the incident is rendered merely humorous. For the future, the power of Southwestern humour would lie, not with the moral frame, but in the discovery through vernacular realism, of a direct experience of the frontier. 'The Big Bear of Arkansas', by Thomas Bangs Thorpe (1833-53) retains only the bare necessities of the moral frame, while most of the story is turned over to the vernacular, thus making the bear-hunter in relation to the bear, what a refined gentleman would be in relation to the bear hunter. It is difficult to be morally outraged by the wildness of a bear. This point is not lost on the later Henry Clay Lewis, whose own bear-hunter has lost his leg to a bear, but finally conquers it by beating it to death with his wooden leg. The ambiguities of Ishmael's whale story are wholly avoided: the bear hunter narrates his story to the doctor who made him the leg. As the moral framework was abandoned in the American tall story, the distance between expectation and reality grew ever wider and the explosive humour of the Southwest, with its emphasis on the amoral and sometimes horrendous final joke, emerges.[44]

The satirist inevitably assumes general belief in ideals and must emphasize the moral framework. If America is vaunted as a New Eden,

then realistic detail can be sufficient to correct the illusion. If Americans believe they live in a humane society, which supports and protects the familial bonds, the sad facts of the young woman's suicide are enough to dispel that illusion. If Americans living in the new republic take pride in their 'humane and free' society, the miserable facts of slavery existing in their midst are sufficient to show their error. Either the dream of freedom is precisely that, an illusion, or the realities of the American situation must be corrected, so that the dream may be realized. The deluded thinking of those who would support the slave trade while maintaining a facade of a free America, is savagely attacked in Tyler's work. The Captain fears that Updike is moved by 'some Yankee nonsense about humanity', (Ch. XXXI, p. 177), and so refuses the entirely practical suggestions, a free influx of air and a better diet, which would ensure the health of his cargo. A quarter of his cargo continues to die. Randolph the clerk blames Updike. Previous surgeons, when infections prevailed, gathered up all those who showed the slightest symptoms and cast them over the side, at one dash purifying the ship:

> "What signifies," added he, "the lives of the black devils? They love to die. You cannot please them better than by chucking them into the water".
> (Ch. XXXI, p.178)

Updike, in this section, is the reader's touchstone for normality, and as our narrator, the means by which the moral frame is kept in place. His humanity and Christian conscience serve to exemplify the lack of these qualities in the slave traders who purchase human beings as if 'they were contracting for so many head of cattle' (Ch. XXX p. 165) He execrates himself 'for even the involuntary part' he plays in slave traffic, and his conscience is heightened by the fact that he is an

American, with all of the ideals of freedom which that entails: "I thought of my native land, and blushed." (Ch. XXX p.166)

If, by the time Updike boards the slave ship, he is functioning as an exemplary figure, this is not to suggest that he has nothing more to learn. As he has observed slavery, so he must now become a slave at the hands of Algerian pirates. In so doing Updike develops a real appreciation of the freedom offered in America. The pirates' vessel presents a world turned upside down, where a black slave, whom Updike had befriended, is now in a position to help Updike. He brings him sustenance as he lies imprisoned in the hold of the slave ship. When Updike discovers who his benefactor is, he is brought to a realization of their common humanity:

> Is this, exclaimed I, one of those men, whom we are taught to vilify as beneath the human species, who brings me sustenance, perhaps at the risk of his life...
>
> (Ch. XXXII, p. 188)

On his arrival in Algiers he notes that it is the trappings of power which impress, rather than the embodiment of power in the man. The present Dey, Vizier Hassen Bashaw, is inclined to obesity, rather comely and possesses an eye

> which betrays sagacity rather than inspires awe - the latter is sufficiently inspired by the ferocious appearance of his guards... the grandeur of his court...
>
> (V.2 Ch.1, p.5)

Updike continues to be more interested in the novelty of the situation, than in his predicament, even in the slave market:

> One old man was very critical in his examination of me...He obliged me to run a few rods, and then laid his hand suddenly to my heart, to see...if my wind was good...What price was given for me I cannot tell... (v.2, Ch.1, p.11-12)

Updike is aware that his compliance at the slave market could be construed as timidity: 'Perhaps the free citizen of the United States may, in the warmth of his patriotism, accuse me of tameness of spirit.' (v.2 Ch.1, p.12) Updike himself considers that maybe he should have 'asserted the dignity of [his] nation', regardless of the guards, chains and even death. Updike though, is an incipient absurd hero, blessed with his share of human frailty. He is not a romantic hero, and practicality wins:

> If any of my dear countrymen censure my want of due spirit, I have only to wish him in my situation... that he may avail himself of a noble opportunity of suffering gloriously for his country.
> (v.2 Ch.1, p.13)

Updike's practical compliance on this occasion is only a part of the degradation he suffers at the hands of his Algerian captors. A full realization of the plight of the slave does not occur until he witnesses the impalement alive of a fellow slave, for attempting to escape. Up until this point Updike has been capable of resistance, spurning the guard who hits him, donning the surly look or planning an escape. Earlier he had defended the Christian faith in conversation with a Mollah, and resigned his body to slavery to preserve the freedom of his mind. After witnessing the impalement Updike takes on the mentality of a slave:

> I now found that I was indeed a slave... My body had been enthralled, but the dignity of a free mind remained...but the terror of the late execution, with the unabating fatigue of my body, had so depressed my fortitude, that I trembled at the look of the overseer, and was meanly anxious to conciliate his favour by attempting personal exertions beyond my ability...
> (Vol.2 Ch.XI, p.66)

The reduction of the ebullient Updike to the level of slave creates a moment of psychological realism, as Tyler demonstrates an understanding of that mental mechanism of slavery which renders slaves unable to change their condition, or even, perhaps, to want to change it. Compared to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, in which the central characters are Eliza, a mother in revolt who is heading north to freedom, and Tom who travels south, and deeper and deeper into slavery, but nevertheless keeps his Christian integrity intact, the reader recognizes in Tyler's work a determination to explore the implications of slavery, in ways that the sentimental power of Stowe could not. At this point Updike, a slave himself, has learnt to appreciate the blessings of freedom and exhorts his fellow Americans to learn from his example:

> "...and always bear it deeply engraven upon their memories, that, when men are once reduced to slavery, they can never resolve, much more achieve, any thing that is manly, virtuous or great!"
> (Vol.2, Ch.V, p.67)

Here the basis for the attack on slavery is clearly visible. It is attacked for its reduction of a human being to the state of an animal, wholly lacking in conscious volition, and without will, virtue is impossible. Slavery is attacked for its inhumanity, for its rendering of human beings in materialistic terms so that resolution, achievement and virtue are lost, in the need simply to survive. Slavery, in short, creates its own wilderness territory in the heart of America. Updike makes his escape, not through any act of his own, but because he is tricked by a Jew into believing he is about to be given his liberty. Once aboard ship he discovers that he has exchanged a tolerable slavery:

> ...for one perhaps more insupportable; but [I] should have been perfectly resigned to my fate, if

> the fear of being returned to Algiers and suffering the dreadful punishment already related had not presented itself.
> (Vol.2, Ch. XXXVI, p.220)

As Updike remarks elsewhere 'repeated misfortunes blunt sensibility', and the mixture of fear and resignation demonstrated here is unrelieved until Updike is finally rescued by a Portuguese frigate and returned to his native land.

The Algerian section of Updike's narrative is then, rather more than the mere addition of an exotic setting to add interest to the tale, although this is achieved in the chapters devoted to descriptions of the city, and its laws and customs. Its purpose is twofold. First, as an exemplary American, Updike must come to a real appreciation of his freedom as something worth protecting. It can be recognized that Updike compromises his freedom when, by signing on as ship's surgeon, he places himself under the command of the ship's captain and is compelled to play a part, however 'passive', in a slave trade he personally abhors. In this Tyler pre-figures Melville's own explorations of democracy in the closed world of the ship. Then, forming an early example of the American journeying abroad, as Updike travels east, via London to Algiers, his freedom is increasingly restricted, until finally it is reduced to slavery. The exotic landscape of Algiers forms a world which is sufficiently 'other' to allow all of the implications of despotism and slavery to be explored, and to allow Updike's condition to serve as an analogy for the American slave, without wholly abandoning the realistic landscape travelled through by exemplary figures of American satire. When Updike returns to America, he has lost the last vestiges of his innocence and

has become a wise man, whose advice is based on solid experience and whose example is worth following.

Tyler's choice of Algeria as a setting for Updike's captivity is no mere coincidence, and the second purpose of the Algerian section demonstrates the way in which the exemplary figure can serve as exemplar for the community, and for America. Updike's capture by Algerian pirates had an historic significance beyond that of the slavery issue. While the Americans were under British rule their shipping was protected from piracy, mainly by the tributes Britain paid to Algeria. When America became independent the bribes were withdrawn, and the pirates represented a test for the new republic which was watched closely, both at home and abroad. David Humphreys, to whom Tyler's satire is dedicated, took part in negotiations with the North African powers in the late 1780s and in 1791 was Barbary consul. The construction of the "USS Constitution", one of only six frigates, was authorized specifically to end Algerian piracy. It was built the year Tyler's novel was published, 1791, and that year Joel Barlow secured the release of some Americans who had been captured. Only after long effort in 1804-5, and finally in 1815 under Stephen Decatur did America emerge as an international power as a direct result of defeating the pirates rather than paying them tribute, as the Europeans had. In this context Updike's passivity while a slave, and his later mean attempts to conciliate favour with his overseer, can be seen as both futile and hopeless. Embedded in Updike's consideration of the reasons for European subservience to Algerian piracy is a typically Federalist message:

> while every European power is solicitous to enrich and aggrandise itself, it can never join in any common project, the result of which, it is fearful,

> may benefit its neighbour; and is content to suffer injury rather than its rival should share in a common good.
>
> (Vol.2, Ch.XXV, p.149)

If America was to solve the Algerian problem, a strong central government with sufficient funds to build a navy was essential. Individual states could not break the Algerian shackles alone, just as Updike was freed, only by the intervention of a superior power. At the end of the satire Updike tells his readers that if they

> peruse these pages with attention, they will perceive the necessity of uniting our federal strength to enforce a due respect among other nations.
>
> (Vol.2, Ch.XXXVII, p.228)

Thus, as Moore in his introduction to *The Algerine Captive*, has remarked, Updike's 'place of trial is his nation's also'. This reinforces Updike's role as an exemplary figure. By the time Updike returns home to 'the freest country in the universe' he has become something of an ideal American. If he has gained the wisdom of a Captain Farrago, he is not condemned to his love of books and crusty bachelorhood, but means to unite himself to 'some amiable woman'. If he has, like Teague, the urge to make something of himself, then he hopes the pursuit of his practice as a physician 'will be attended with more success than when essayed with the inexperience and innocence of youth'. He expects to contribute 'cheerfully to the support of the government' and thus secure for himself:

> ...the enviable character of an useful physician, a good father, and worthy FEDERAL citizen.
>
> (Vol.2, Ch. XXXVII, p.228)

It is the kind of life, like Franklin's of the *Autobiography*, or Byrd's of *The Secret History of the Dividing Line*, to which one might

realistically aspire, and in essence, by the end of the work Updike has himself become the normative value in a satire which perpetrates a realistic ideal. It only remains for Updike to express an

> ardent wish...that [his] fellow citizens may profit by [his] misfortunes.
> (Vol.2, Ch. XXXVII, p.228)

The Federalist satires written in novel form by Tyler and Brackenridge furthered the use of an exemplary figure in American satire by placing that figure into some sort of realistically American landscape and by creating figures in whom the idealism of the man of letters was embodied. For Tyler and Brackenridge that figure was a fictional creation, but their works were surrounded by a quantity of Federalist satires many of which created similarly representative figures. The Federalists noted the large numbers of foreigners in democratic ranks, especially the Irish, which gave rise to a number of creations, like William Clifton's[45] (1772-99) Irish malcontent Paddy Whack, which served as exemplars of mob citizenry. Foreigners were associated with foreign ideals, particularly Jacobinism, which label could include a host of other ills such as atheism, materialism, free love and egalitarianism. Then, as George L. Roth has remarked:

> Just as the whole Federalist position was stated in a theory of Faction, Jacobinism or Illuminism, so it was presented in microcosm in the character of one person: Thomas Jefferson.[46]

Jonas Clopper, a minister of Baltimore, Maryland, in his mock history *Fragments of the History of Bawlfredonia* (1819) associated anything democratic with anarchy and depravity, and directed his satiric allegory primarily against Thomas Jefferson, although Madison and Paine are secondary targets. Clopper's Jefferson is the ruler of 'Blackmoreland', and like the Jefferson of the verse satires, is

portrayed as a coward - Jefferson, as governor of Virginia, had retreated before the British from Charlottesville to Carter's Mountain, - as being depraved in his relations with slave women, and as an atheist who didn't care whether one God or fifty was worshipped.[47] Clopper goes on to vilify Deism, laboratory science and the doctrine of the perfectibility of man. He associates mob rule with the act of bawling, as did other post-revolutionary satirists: the maxim of the bawlers being:

> A public favourite can do no wrong.[48]

Jefferson was made to carry the weight of all the ills of Jacobinism in the Federalist satires which used his name. George L. Roth remarks that Jefferson became, even in non-political poems, an emblem for something evil:

> The sweetest fruit is gnaw'd by cankerous worm,
> Judas the bag among the twelve obtains
> And MAZZEI's dupe a seat with ADAMS gains.
> (William Biglow, Education ...Salem 1799)[49]

His support of Philip Freneau's 'National Gazette' was seen wholly in terms of an attempt to slander Washington. As Jefferson was vilified so Washington was eulogized. In these terms, the Federalist satires did much to ensure a place for the exemplary figure in American satire.

Jefferson's party was, of course, in power, and the strength and the sheer number of Federalist satires is some indication of how desperately they struggled to resist the new order. After the War of 1812, New England Federalists began to consider acting for themselves, even seceding from the Union, and the Hartford Convention which met in 1814-15 was called to discuss what action the East ought to take

common with Freneau, attack the institution of monarchy and an alleged Federalist love of it. When New England began to discuss disunion the Republican satirists, could as Roth suggests:

> ...without difficulty charge that she was "actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens...and aggregate interests of the community" and thus turn the theory of faction against the Federalists themselves.[50]

A light but comprehensive anti-Federalist satirical work was *The Hartford Convention in an Uproar* which was composed of several items, including an anonymous 'Lament' on hearing news of peace, in imitation of 'John Anderson My Jo'. The work suggests that James Madison has failed all the dreams of the populace:

> Since peace has come we are undone,
> James Madison, my Jo.[51]

By the time the democrats had, in effect, usurped the arguments of the Federalists, the New England Federalists themselves had been discredited and disappeared even as a faction. It is unlikely that democratic satire had much to do with their demise. In spite of Washington's claim that Freneau had saved the Constitution when it was 'galloping fast into monarchy', the Federalist satires had failed to eliminate the democracy they had so vigorously attacked for years, so that, as Roth remarks:

> It is enough to say that the satires illustrated, rather than caused, the political feelings of the period.[52]

In the age that followed, specifically political satire decreased in force and volume, but these early political satires are worth remembering, because they form a delightful record of a people's first

attempt at self-government, and the ideas surrounding it, and because their effect on American satire was lasting.

NOTES

1. Roth, George L. 'Verse Satire and Faction', 'William and Mary Quarterly', S3 v.17 Oct. 1960, pp. 473-85.

2. See Blumenthal, Walter Hart. 'Barbs and Bludgeons', American Book Collector, vol. VII, No.9, June 1957, p. 23ff., for remarks on this work and satire of the 19th century magazine era.

3. Roth, George L. 'American Theory of Satire, 1790-1820', 'American Literature' no. 29, Jan. 1958, pp.399-407.

4. Quoted from Arthur L. Ford, *Joel Barlow*, Twayne Series 1971, p.75.

5. For this and a comprehensive consideration of satire on schools see: Roth, George L. 'Satire on the Schools 1790-1820', 'Loch Haven Bulleton' s1, no.1, 1959, pp.1-4.

6. Quotations from all of Dwight's poems are from: *The Major Poems of Timothy Dwight (1752-1817) with A Dissertation on the History Eloquence and Poetry of the Bible, Facsimile Reproductions* with an Introduction by William J. McTaggart and William K. Bottorff, Scholars Facsimiles and Reprints, Gainesville, Florida, 1969.

7. For these poems and a more comprehensive consideration of satire on religion during the period see: Roth, George L. 'New England Satire on Religion, 1790-1820', 'The New England Quarterly' v.28, Jan. 1955 pp.246-254.

8. *American Satire in Prose and Verse*, ed. Henry C. Carlisle, Jnr, Random House Inc., New York 1962, 'The National Painting' (from Croaker Papers, 1819), pp. 161-163.

9. Roth, George L. 'Verse Satire on Faction, 1790-1815', pp.473-85.

10. Howard, Leon. *The Connecticut Wits*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 3-4.

11. Roth, George L. 'American Theory of Satire, 1790-1820', *American Literature*, no. 29, Jan. 1958, p.399-407.

12. Elliot, Emory. *Revolutionary Writers*, p.60.

13. Dwight, Timothy. *Travels in New England and New York*, Book III, Letter IV, from *Colonial and Federalist American Writing*, ed. George F. Horner nd Robert A. Bain, Odyssey Press Inc., New York, 1966, p. 388.

14. Ibid., Book II, Letter XIII.

15. Elliot, Emory. *Revolutionary Writers: Literature and Authority in the New Republic 1725-1810*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1982, p. 69.

16. Bigelow, Gordon, *Rhetoric and American Poetry of the Early National Period*, (Gainsville 1960), p.75. Quoted from Ford, Luther L. *Joel Barlow* Tayne Series, New York, 1971, p. 127.

17. Barlow, Joel. 'The Hasty Pudding' *The Harper American Literature*, (vol.1), Gen. Ed. Donald McQuade, Harper & Row, New York, 1987, pp. 695-705.

18. Ibid.

19. Barlow, Joel, 'The Hasty Pudding', *The Harper American Literature*, pp. 695-705.

20. Ibid.

21. Simpson, Lewis P. 'The Satiric Mode: The Early National Wits', *The Comic Imagination in American Literature*, p.58.

22. Barlow, Joel. 'Advice to a Raven in Russia', *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 2nd edn., vol. 1 ed. Louis D. Rubin Jr., Norton & Co., New York, 1979, p. 572-574.

23. Simpson, Lewis P. 'The Satiric Mode: The Early National Wits', *The Comic Imagination in American Literature*, p. 58.

24. David S. Shields has traced the change in the American ideal of happiness or its near equivalent, contentment, through a succession of poems from 1700-1776 in his article 'Happiness in Society: The Development of an Eighteenth-Century American Poetic Ideal', *American Literature*, Vol.55, No.4, Duke University Press, December 1983, pp.541-559.

25. *Oxford History of the American People*, p. 288.

26. *Introduction to American Studies* ed. Bradbury & Temperley, p. 53.

27. Ibid., p. 54.

28. Ibid., p. 54.

29. Freneau, P.M. *Poems* ed. Harry Hayden Clarke, Haffner Publishing Co., New York, 1960, p. 353.

30. Tyler, Royall, *The Algerine Captive*, into. Jack B. Moore, Gainsville, Florida, 1967 p. ix.

31. Freneau, P.M. *Poems*, p. 353-54.

32. Brackenridge, Hugh Henry. *Modern Chivalry*, p. 7.

33. Ibid., p. 15.

34. Ibid., p. 20

35. Ibid., p.20

36. Ibid., p.33.

37. Leary, Lewis. *Modern Chivalry*, Introduction, p.17.

38. FitzGerald, Gregory. 'Character Typology in Satiric Short

Stories', 'Satire Newsletter', State University of New York, Spring, 1970, pp.101-102.

39. Nickels, Cameron C. 'Federalist Mock Pastorals: The Ideology of Early New England Humor', *Early American Literature*, v.17, no.2, pp. 139-151, Fall 1982.

40. Ibid.

41. Tyler, Royall. *The Algernine Captive* with introduction by Jack B. Moore. Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, Gainsville, Florida, 1967, p.v. All future references to *The Algernine Captive* will refer to this edition.

42. Cox, James J. 'Humor of the Old Southwest', *The Comic Imagination in American Literature*, ed. Louis D. Rubin, Jr., Voice of America Forum Series, 1974, p. 110.

43. Ibid., p. 109

44. For a concise biographical data on the principal Southwest Humorists, see Blair, Walter. *Native American Humor*, American Book Co., New York, 1937, Rourke, Constance, *American Humor*. See also Gernes, Sonia. 'Artists of Community: The Role of Storytellers in the Tales of the Southwest Humorists', *Popular Culture and Development Concepts*, vol. 15, no. 4, Spring 1982. For a consideration of the role of the narrator in Southwest humour, Gernes emphasizes the use of the frame and argues that rhetoric is used by the narrator to the community's benefit, as a means of discouraging undesirables, or to his own benefit, to prove fitness to belong to the community or to enhance position in the community by besting an opponent. In this respect Southwestern humour would appear to bear some relation to the old satiric practise of flyting. Robert C. Elliot in *The Power of Satire* (pp. 73-75) has noted the Black American practise of flyting in a game called 'Dozens', toether with its practise by North American Plain Indians.

45. Clifton was a Pennsylvania poet whose conservative political poems in favour of England and against free thinking France appeared in 'The Group: an Elegant Representation' (1796)

46. Roth, George L. 'Verse Satire on "Faction" 1790-1815', p. 479.

47. Jefferson had written in Query XVII: 'But it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods, or no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg.'

48. Clopper, Jonas. *Bawlfredonia*, the American Humorists, Literature House, Gregg Press, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, 1819, p.159.

49. George L. Roth remarks that Jefferson became, even in non-political poems, an emblem for something evil:

> The sweetest fruit is gnaw'd by cankerous worm,
> Judas the bag among the twelve obtains
> And MAZZEI's dupe a seat with ADAMS gains.

(William Biglow, Education ...Salem 1799)
Philip Mazzei (1730-1816) was Jefferson's agent in France during the American Revolution. Jefferson had written to the Italian-born physician and wine grower denouncing Federalism. See Roth's 'Verse Satire on Faction', p.479.

50. Ibid., p.483

51. Ibid., p. 473

52. Ibid., p. 485

VIII

MATERIALISM

When the nineteen-year-old Washington Irving (1783-1859), contributed eight satiric letters to the New York *Morning Chronicle* edited by his brother, in 1802-03, the cultural 'norms' of American satire were beginning to be established. Irving signed himself Jonathan Oldstyle, Gent. It was a pseudonym of particularly American origin. The familiar Yankee name of Jonathan was a popular country bumpkin figure on the American stage and one which had been used by Royall Tyler. Coupled with Oldstyle, which suggests conservatism and a nature suspicious of the modern age, the name Jonathan results in a ludicrous combination. Jonathan Oldstyle also calls himself Gent., which as Lewis Leary has observed:

> had local, and somewhat new, and very American connotations, for democracy seemed to say that, all men being created equal, all men had the right and responsibility to become just as equal as anybody else.[1]

British influence on Irving's work is recognizable in that Joseph Addison was the man most responsible for the form of periodical essay couched in gentlemanly middle tones, with subject matter ranging from modern manners, modern marriages and modern modes of dress. Irving's subject matter, like Franklin's before him, offers little variance on these themes, but nevertheless the voice of Irving's speaker stems from a wholly American tradition.

Franklin went to great lengths to emulate the style of Addison, but Addison's Spectator was a university graduate who had done the Grand Tour, and whose curiosity impelled him to comment on society.

Franklin's Silence Dogood was a half-educated widow, garrulous, interfering and ablaze with patriotism. Silence Dogood reproves the vice and folly of her day, and is far from silent, but the correspondence is ultimately ridiculous because it is *she*, full of human frailty, who passes judgment on her society. From this first American spectator comes a whole gallery, mainly bachelors, who comment on the American scene. One of the most memorable was Francis Hopkinson's 'Old Bachelor' which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* from March 1775 to June 1776. Later, there appeared the letters from Major Jack Downing, an unlettered Yankee philosopher from Down East, and confidant of President Jackson, which began in 1830, and generated a host of imitations; such homely philosophers as Tom Slick, Hosea Biglow, and Mr Dooley. The Major Jack Downing letters called forth numerous cartoons of the character, who was the prototype of Uncle Sam as a symbol of the U.S. and these letter-writers share, with Silence Doggod, a characteristic tendency to comment upon society while they themselves are full of human weakness, often evidenced by the mis-spelt form the letters tke. It is perhaps no accident that the letter writer most endowed with human weakness appeared during the Civil War. The Ohio red-neck, 'Petroleum Vesuvious Nasby, late pastor ... the Church ... the New Dispensation, Chaplain to his excellency the President, and p.m. at Confederate X roads, Kentucky' was, President Lincoln found, 'worth a full division of infantry to the Union cause." Irving's Jonathan Oldstyle, Gent., can be placed firmly within this American tradition. The character, like Irving himself, is a member of the new, somewhat pretentious, and perhaps by European standards, spurious aristocracy of wealth which sprang up in the United States after the American Revolution. The tone produced by Jonathon Oldstyle

Gent. was one well suited to a democratic satire promoting a realistic ideal. In this type of satire if the voice does not carry its share of human weaknesses, it appears, as Franklin remarked, as a 'kind of foppery in morals'. Americans could laugh with a Jonathan Oldstyle, Gent., as they embarked upon the steady road to improvement.

If then, as Leary has observed: 'Irving stood at the headwaters of an American stream which flowed finally in many directions', his contribution to American satire was one of tone. In *Salmagundi* written with William Irving and James Kirk Paulding,[2] Lancelot Longstaff, Anthony Evergreen, Will Wizard and Pindar Cockloft are all late examples of the conventional Old Bachelor and give an impression of geniality not formerly associated with the scourging of vice and folly. If, as the authors suspect, the articles are read purely for amusement, without due attention paid to the 'serious truths conveyed on every page', then this 'Unpardonable want of penetration!' does not necessarily detract from the moral purpose of the work:

> ...not that we want to restrict our readers in the article of laughing...it is easier to laugh ten follies out of countenance than to coax, reason or flog a man out of one. In this odd singular and indescribable age, ...the writer who attempts to attack folly with the heavy artillery of moral reasoning, will fare like Smallet's honest pedant...[who] was laughed at for his pains.[3]

It could be said that such geniality in satire reflects the optimism with which Americans viewed their experiment. Irving's *A History of New York* (1809) which is in part mock history and in part a Federalist attack on Jeffersonian democracy, has a similarly whimsical tone. Irving, in this work, does make some inroads against notions of manifest destiny:

> For to let the reader into one of the great secrets of history, the Nieuw Nederlands had long been regarded by the whole Yankee race as the modern land of promise, and themselves as the chosen and peculiar people destined, one day or other, by hook or by crook, to get possession of it. In truth they are a wonderful all prevalent people...From the time they began to migrate, progressing and progressing from place to place...controverting the old proverb that a rolling stone gathers no moss. Hence they have facetiously received the nickname of THE PILGRIMS: that is to say, a people who are always seeking a better country than their own.[4]

Irving however fails to develop the parallel between colonialism and expansionism even in the 1848 revision. By this time other American satirists, such as Cooper, were confronting Jacksonian democracy in far more stringent terms, and Michael Black has suggested that:

> ...the best reason for the failure to develop and exploit the connections between Dutch land grabbers and the American of 1848 is that the theme of land hunger would not fit into Diedrich Knickerbocker's interpretation of history.[5]

Knickerbocker's interpretation of history was dated, a warning to the Americans of 1809, and delivered by 'a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat', and if the newspaper advertisements reporting his disappearance are to be believed, last seen carrying 'a small bundle tied in a red bandana handkerchief...travelling northward and...much fatigued.[6] This Chaplinesque figure writes his history in the amiable tones of a comic philosopher, which Martin Roth has associated with the aesthetics of Lawrence Sterne. In British satire Sterne modified the system of Augustan satire with its emphasis on wit and its choice of often vicious subject matter, in keeping with a changing view of the world. Roth observes:

> By the middle of the nineteenth century, it was commonplace that the best comic works present amiable originals...whose little peculiarities are

> not satirically instructive, but objects of delight and love.[7]

The influence of *Tristram Shandy* in *Salmagundy* is well documented by Roth. Irving's tone, set in democratic America, is if anything, more amiable and tolerant than that of Sterne. Irving's satires are certainly more genial than those of his American predecessors, such as Brackenridge and Freneau who were influenced by the early eighteenth century British satirists. Irving's amiability may be due, only in part, to literary influence. There is a pragmatism in Irving's satires which allows for human frailty in a way that a finely drawn intellectual satire will not. Mary Witherspoon Bowden has observed that Knickerbocker's *History* was above all a book written for a 'home town' audience, since the men of the Enlightenment who had founded the New York Historical Society, and the Literary and Philosophical Society, were being challenged by a younger group of writers, which included Irving as editor of the 'Analectic Magazine':

> ...they formed a newer literary school, one that laughed at the excessive erudition and "nit picking" concerns of the older group. This younger circle was anti-intellectual and pragmatic. Irving's *History* ridiculed all that the literati held dear...[8]

In spite of his pragmatism, Irving does retain a satirically instructive purpose. The *History* ends with an essentially Federalist message:

> ...the hitherto scattered colonies being thus consolidated...waxed great and powerful, and finally becoming too strong for the mother country...by a glorious revolution became an independent empire. But the chain of effects stopped not here; the successful revolution in America produced the sanguinary revolution in France...which has thrown the whole world in confusion...all the present convulsions, revolutions and disasters that overwhelm mankind,

> originated in the capture of the little Fort Casimir...[9]

This Federalist voice of doom is however moderated in part by the amiable tone, which uses a less specific 'sanguinary' to describe what could be called a 'bloody revolution', and in part by Irving's pragmatism. His final sentence undercuts the typically Federalist notion of the American revolution producing a chain of effects which end in chaos and confusion. It seems less than likely that *all* of 'the present confulsions, revolutions and disasters that overwhelm mankind' can have had their origins in the capture of Fort Casimir. The result of an anti-intellectual, more pragmatic stance can be seen in 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow'. Ichabod Crane 'a man of great erudition, for he had read several books' (p.376) is easily bested by the more fundamental Brom Bones. Unlike Brackenridge's Captain Farrago, whose affiliation with the World of Letters was unquestionable, or even Tyler's Updike, who in the course of *The Algerine Captive*, gains entry to that world, Crane is at best a pretender, and the reader is not displeased to see him ousted. Although, it is fair to say, that such is the ambivalence of Irving's gentle satire, that neither character escapes entirely unscathed. In Irving's later works, the influence of the Federalist satires together with Irving's pragmatism and amiable tone, produces a more American exemplary figure than anything that has gone before.

For *The Sketch Book* Irving adopted the *persona* of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. and it is his amiable tone and slightly raised eyebrow, which, for the most part, keeps the moral frame in place. The most famous story in the anthology, 'Rip Van Winkle' is supposed to have been

found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, not to be confused with the Diedrich Knickerbocker of *A History of New York*. In effect this gives the tale a double frame, and allows one *persona* to vouch for the veracity of the other:

> The foregoing tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick *der Rothbart*, and the Kypphaüser Mountain; the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity.[10]

In spite of its European origins, however, Irving's tale owes much to the American tradition. It partakes of those satires of the Revolution which depicted Britain as the cruel and bad mother, while giving nature the role of the good and true mother. Irving's descriptions of the country are lyrical and associated with Rip. Dame Van Winkle who is associated with Britain, is a termagant, so that Rip's sole domestic adherent is his dog, aptly named Wolf:

> as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. (p.41)

The work is essentially a late Federalist satire. Rip, although an attractive figure, is feckless: 'his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch...' (p.40) This, in common with earlier Federalist satires, suggests a need for something of Dame Van Winkle's order and control and, when Rip is 'at last reduced almost to despair' (p.43) and strolls away to the mountains to fall asleep for twenty years, he awakens to find his native village torn apart by faction. The people who once gather sociably to drink at the 'King

George III', are quite changed, now that the inn is become the 'General Washington'.

> There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling disputatious tone about it...a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of hand-bills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens - elections - members of congress - liberty... (p.50)

There is an air of barreness and sterility about the new inn on Rip's return:

> Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap...(p.50)

Rip has woken to find his nagging wife dead and gone, but his new-found liberty has frightening consequences. His escape from family and community results in a loss of identity, a chaos of self-awareness which exemplifies the post-revolutionary American condition:

> I'm not myself - I'm somebody else - thats me yonder - no - that somebody else got into my shoes ...everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am! (p. 52)

Identity, Irving implies, depends upon a relationship with the past, and with others. In the last stages of the story Irving draws a final analogy between Rip's domestic life and the life of the nation:

> ...the country had thrown off the yoke of old England...he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; ...but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was - petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony... (p. 55)

The underlying features of Rip's story suggest, as did earlier Federalist satires, that this may be something of a mixed blessing.

Irving's story however, differs in an important respect from earlier Federalist satires, for in 'Rip Van Winkle' Irving's pragmatism and moderate tone have combined to create a truly likable exemplar for America. He has neither the superiority of a Captain Farrago or an Updike, nor the relentless ambition of a Teague O'Reagan. The feckless Rip has no intention of making anything of himself, and while blessed with his share of human frailties, these may be of a natural rather than social type. William P. Dawson, in his article '"Rip Van Winkle" as Bawdy Satire: The Rascal and the Revolution', has pointed to the adulterous nature of Rip suggested by sexual innuendo that tends toward earthily realistic explanations which supplant the more mythic or sentimental possibilities. Rip:

> ...was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn or building store fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. (p. 40)

Dawson argues convincingly that:

> In images and puns Irving perhaps implies that [Rip] is anything but faithful while living with Dame Van Winkle, that he nevertheless abandons her and his family for twenty years promiscuity, and that upon his return after her death, he manages to retain the piece of cake he has eaten by a fantastic story.[11]

Dawson points to our narrator's repeated assurances of his own belief in the story, as evidence that we should not. The double frame allows Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. to insist on the scrupulous accuracy of the tale while describing Knickerbocker's research methods as lying less:

> ...among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favourite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and, still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore so invaluable to true history. (p. 37)

If however, Irving's pragmatism and anti-intellectuality has produced in Rip an exemplar for America more than usually endowed with human frailty, this does not prevent Rip from embodying those values by which the other characters are judged. His faults reinforce his kindship with nature; a preference for play rather than work and social order, and a prediliction for the opposite sex. Knickerbocker would seem to have some things in common with his hero. Dawson's reading of the text further reinforces the parallel political commentary on America's independence. It defines the relationship of 'Rip Van Winkle' to Irving's earlier political writings:

> The severance of both marital ties and national bonds of union with England dangerously disregards law and custom and is of suspect motivation. Justifications for such ruptures based on myth, such as, for instance, the revolutionary rhetoric... mask the hedonism actually at the source of the demand for freedom. The message of 'Rip Van Winkle' repeats the view of Mustapha Rub-a-dub Keli Khan of an election in *Salmagundi*: 'it seemed as all the restraints of decency, and all the bonds of law had been broken and given place to the wide ravages of licentious brutality. These, thought I, are the orgies of liberty.'[12]

Irving, like Brackenridge and Belknap, would remind us of the connection between liberty and libertine in 'Rip Van Winkle'. The very fact that Rip does manage to have his cake and eat it suggests hope for America's future, and ultimately, the termigant Dame Van Winkle and the disputatious election crowd are judged to be lacking the very amiability which Rip has in abundance. Irving's moderate tone, and tolerance of human frailty, creates in Rip a character who, if something of a scoundrel, is neighbourly, kind, is wholly lacking in avarice, and demonstrates some sort of affinity with nature. He creates a more fitting embodiment for the American cultural norm. Irving may be said to have contributed the right tone for a democratic

satire asserting a realistic ideal. It was one sufficiently amiable as to allow for human frailties without detracting from the assertion of humane values. It was however a tone which other American satirists, such as Irving's contemporary, Cooper, found scarcely adequate to deal with what they saw as the excesses of democracy. When James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851) returned to America in 1833 after a seven-year stay in Europe he discovered, among other symptoms of social and political back-sliding, a re-emergence of party strife. Cooper himself, while supporting the Democrats, refused to join any political party. He regarded all party politics with aversion, although, as George Dekker remarks:

> Cooper was by no means the diehard believer in Constitutional immutability that he has sometimes been made out to be, but he was convinced that the political maxims of the Founders had the marrow of truth in them and that the nation ignored them at its peril.[13]

Like Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), the South Carolina-born seventh President, and perhaps the man most responsible for the return of party strife to American politics, Cooper believed in basic principles. Part of Jackson's appeal for Cooper was his image as a successful Indian fighter and as the commander who had gained a glorious victory over the British at New Orleans, in the war of 1812. Jackson evoked a nostalgia for the Jeffersonian agrarian ideals which, even in Jefferson's time, had belonged to a golden past. This appealed to Cooper although he didn't entirely agree with all of his President's policies. Throughout much of the thirties and forties, Cooper was a Jackson man, before eventually losing faith. Given Cooper's propensity to view himself as something of a guardian of republican ideals, it is not surprising to discover that his satires

are largely directed against the Whigs. *The Monikins* written in 1835, warned fellow Americans of the dangers of European systems of government, and instructed them on basic principles of American democracy which Cooper felt were being subverted. The Monikins was a name synonymous with stupidity and perversity in the language of literary political criticism of the 1830s and 40s in America. Beyond this, the wider concern of the work is that America had become so completely motivated by materialism that principle meant nothing at all:

> ...every Monikin of them had a visible motive. This owned a lot by the wayside;' that had houses on the island, and another was the heir of a great proprietor at the same point of the road. Each and all had their distinct and positive interests at stake, and not one of them was guilty of so great a weakness as to leave his cause to be defended by the extravagant pretension of mere principle.[14]

John Goldencalf, the hero of Cooper's work, is a rich but benevolent Gulliver type who does share with Tyler's Updike a capacity to learn from experience. He travels to the land of the Monikins who have developed a civilization in two countries, Leaphigh (England) and Leaplow (America). Both England and America are scathingly attacked before Goldencalf learns that love of money is an 'earthly' quality, that democracy should operate on principle rather than property, and that people with power will abuse it if society does not divide the trust to minimize the abuses. He returns to England with few illusions about the possibilities of good government.

The work was not well received in America. The end of *The Monikins* offers little hope for the Americans and it offended patriot and anglophile alike. The unalleviaed attack on materialism

alienated a large section of the American community who were proud of their commercial success. Most of all, as one unsigned review in the 'Knickerbocker Magazine' (August 1835) states:

> We took it up with high expectations; and we read, with anxious solicitude that the *coming* page would be better than its predecessor. Vain hope! ... What the work is about, passes our comprehension. It is said to be a Satire; but the eyes of Argus, were they twice the fabled number, could not discern it.[15]

This reviewer is not altogether fair, for Cooper's work does have its moments of irony:

> ... a political rolling-pin, though a very good thing to level rights and privileges, is a very bad thing to level houses, temples, and other matters that might be named.[16]

On the whole however, generaions of critics have attested to its unreadability and it does little to further the development of American satire. The tone is harsh and the setting constitutes a return to an allegorical and ideological landscape which lacks the interest of, for instance, Joseph Atterley's *Voyage to the Moon* (1827) in which some slight connection can be made between the ideological landscape of satire and the use of Science Fiction to explore and criticize society. Atterley's work does contain something of a futuristic landscape:

> 'One half the houses were under-ground, partly to screen them from the continued action of the sun's rays...' or 'the houses were built of a soft shining stone...'[17]

Essentially however, Atterley's satire fails to project social trends into the future, dealing with the 'Manners and Customs, Science and Philosophy of the People of Morosofia'. It has more in common with Swift than Philip K. Dick or Ursula Le Guin, and Cooper's *The Monikins*

rightly belongs with the crop of 'Gulliver' imitations which occurred in America during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[18] These works deal with American themes, but unlike Irving, Brackenridge, Tyler, or Longstreet, they fail to realise America, and do little to further American satire.

Cooper's other two satirical novels *Homeward Bound* and *Home as Found* published in 1838 similarly fail to tap the true root of American satire. These are the Effingham novels, in which an ex-patriot American family returns home for the first time. In *Homeward Bound* the Effinghams are supposed to be the centre of interest, but in effect the sea voyage proves the right vehicle to demonstrate the virtues of New England sailor, Captain John Truck. He is a sturdy, pioneering, self-reliant type who embodies most of the things Cooper admired in a democratic man. Opposing Captain Truck is Steadfast Dodge, Esq., Editor of the *Active Enquirier*, and man of the people. This lying, cowardly and conniving character together with Truck provides more American satiric interest than the Effinghams. They do embody something of an incipient confidence man and an absurd hero respectively, and the exploration of these two American types is searching but not altogether unjust. Cooper however, abandons the promotion of specifically American values in *Homeward Bound* in favour of the Europeanized values of the Effinghams whose eventual return to America, at the end of the novel, is disappointing to say the least. Eve was 'too fresh from the gorgeous coast of Italy to be in ecstasies with the meagre villages and villas that, more or less, lined the bay of New York...'[19] and Mr Effingham remarks succinctly, 'There is less

improvement here than even I had expected.'[20] Cooper's satire is not entirely lacking in a characteristic American hopefulness, but:

> The place *is* mean and provincial; but thirty years since it was still meaner and more provincial...A century hence it will begin to resemble a large European town.[21]

The trouble is that Cooper appears to see nothing wrong with this, the Effinghams, or their central message:

> It is not a crime to be provincial and rustic; it is only ridiculous to fancy yourself otherwise, when the fact is apparent.[22]

As the Effinghams settle into a life in America, in *Home as Found*, American low life is explored with little tolerance, and the tone is far from whimsical.

If, however, Cooper's satire lacked the amiable tones of an American democratic satire, which allows of human frailty, and tended to extol the virtues of European culture at the expense of the more truly American, he nevertheless accurately assessed the social and political concerns which would form the target for American satire until well after the Civil War. The reason for Cooper's vitriolic attack in *Home as Found* probably lies with the contemporary American scene and the events surrounding a small piece of land called Three Mile Point. Cooper held this land in trust from his father's estate. Inhabitants of Coopertown had used the land for recreation for so long that many supposed it to be public property. In 1837 a series of incidents led to Cooper's closing the property to the public, and he was denounced by local citizens for denying them their rights. The local Whig press ran the story in a misleading and libellous way, accusing Cooper of behaving like European aristocracy, and when the

editors refused to retract, Cooper sued for libel. Even so, the incident might have been forgotten, had Cooper been able to forgive, but he found the public denouncement by a group of citizens for whose rights he had fought, intolerable. The fact that many of the citizens involved were new residents in Cooper's town did not help. It merely proved that the transience of the American way of life was undermining the fabric of civilized values:

> Translated into political terms, this restlessness was Whiggish: men on the move who respected neither truth nor tradition were men in search of dollars...Whig small fry who hoped to grow into Wall Street sharks...these transients were mostly New Englanders - once the masters of religious, now of political cant;...[23]

In Cooper's reaction to the Three Mile Point affair the themes which continue in American satire through to the mid-point of the nineteenth century are apparent. The most prevalent being materialism as it is associated with the rise in commercialism in America. This association of materialism with commercialism and exploitation was present in earlier American satires in characters like M'Fingal, or in Tyler's treatment of the slavery issue or in Belknap's Forresters. It is a process which sees the fears formerly associated with wilderness territory transferred to the very heart of the city to form a waste-land where all value is meaningless. This process, coupled with the idealization of nature seen in the Revolutionary satires of Freneau, and always present in the notions which saw America as a New Eden, saw a complete reversal of city and wilderness associations during the nineteenth century.

Cooper himself contributed to the reversal of City and Wilderness values in no small measure with his Leather-Stocking series. In these

works Natty Bumppo eschewed the civilized life in favour of the untamed innocence of the wilderness. It should be noted, however, that the wilderness of Natty Bumppo was not exactly that of the Pilgrim Fathers. Rather it was Frontier, or the American West, which formed that much romanticised and much idealized natural hinterland between the city and what might be termed true wilderness territory. The backwoods-man ever inhabited the furthest edges of the Frontier, and as settlers arrived and civilization encroached, so he was forced further into the wilderness and the Frontier territory extended. As the frontier beckoned nineteenth-century Americans, and as it was exploited by commercialization, the satirists chronicled the effects of American transience with dismay. Elnathan Elmwood, Esq. uses a quotation from Pope's 'The Dunciad' to set the tone of his satire:

> And now the victor stretched his eager hand,
> Where the tall *Nothing* stood, or seemed to stand;
> A shapeless shade, it melted from his sight,
> Like forms in clouds, or visions of the night.
> Alexander Pope 'The Dunciad'

Elmwood's work *A Yankee Among the Nullifiers* begins:

> The Americans are essentially a moving people. A man cannot long be contented in the same spot; ...This is particularly true of the people of New England. The tide of emigration is constantly flowing to the South and the West. Into one or the other of these currents, the sons of the pilgrims, led on by a spirit of enterprise, or a desire of change, are very apt to fall.[24]

Elnathan Elmwood was the pseudonym of Asa Greene (1789-c.1837), a Massachusetts physician and journalist. His other works include *Travels in America*, written under the name of George Fibbleton (1833), which was a reply to Mrs Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832). In *Travels in America* too, transience forms something of a theme. Remarking on the variation in colour of American porpoises;

'It is presumed to be indicative of the changeable nature of American institutions, that the very brute creation around them, are affected, no doubt on the principle of sympathy.'[25] In Cooper's *Home as Found*, when the Effinghams return to Templeton from abroad, it is to discover that yesterday's imperfect but beloved pioneers are today's hated mob. This, as Dekker observes: 'is almost the only moving thing about *Home as Found*; it justifies Cooper's otherwise irritating attempt to make this labour of hate a sequal to an earlier labour of love.'[26] A contemporary reviewer observed that:

> Mr Cooper has given a picture of men and manners in his own country, especially in his own state, and in the metropolis of that state, darker and more falsely coloured than was ever drawn by any foreign hireling...the whole tenor of *Home as Found* is to exalt foreign manners and customs at the expense of our own...the elegant and polished Effinghams, 'who had been taught by their European association to prize the refinement, grace, *retenue* and tone of an advanced condition of society'; and mark also...in judging the condition of society, takes not into account the political institutions, and the prevailing occupations of life, which determine it.[27]

There is some justice in this reviewer's remarks. The Effinghams can scarcely be deemed as representative Americans.

The ideals of *Home as Found* are Republican, and need to be seen in the context of Jacksonian democracy for if Cooper failed to realise a suitably American embodiment, his retreat into those ideals by 1838 is, at least, understandable. In the course of the 1820s the Republican parties in each state had broken into conservative and democratic factions. In general, the democratic faction wished to level such political inequalities as still remained among white males, especially the property qualification for the franchise. This had the

effect of diluting the electorate with those elements of the population who were susceptible to a more emotional appeal than those Republicans of the Jeffersonian school. At best, the democratic faction represented a genuine aspiration toward equality, at worst they were mere demagogues. Men such as Martin Van Buren of New York and James Buchanan of Pennsylvania were able men of lowly origin with an ingratiating form and phrase. With General Jackson or 'Old Hickory' at their head, and after a dirty election campaign, these men were elected with results that have been succinctly described by Samuel Eliot Morrison:

> "The General", as his intimates called him, "reigned" as his enemies called his occupancy of the White House, for two terms. He practically appointed his successor, Martin Van Buren; and, after one term of Whig opposition, Democracy returned to the saddle in the person of James K. Polk, "Young Hickory"...followed by Zachary Taylor, a tired old general who died in office...Then came two Democratic Presidents who had been spoon-fed by Jackson - Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan. And that brings us to the great American tragedy.[28]

Jacksonian democracy dominated the American political scene from 1828 to the Civil War and reprsented the upsurge of recently enfranchised voters against the Jeffersonian Republican party. It was a national movement in that it opposed disunion and knew no geographical limits. It was anti-national in that it opposed Clay's 'American System'. wanting roads, canals and later railroads funded by the state, but with no federal government profit sharing. It was less charitable towards Indians and Black Americans than its aristocratic opponents, and had no desire to level the wealthy, rather wanted a fair chance for all white males to rise. The democrats in general shared a contempt for the intellect, and Jackson's attitude to literature may be gauged by a letter he wrote to President Polk, urging that the

Madrid legation, held by an eminent American author, be given to one of his friends: 'There can be no delicacy in recalling Erwin, he is only fit to write a book and scarcely that'.[29] Unable to remember Washington Irving's name, Jackson nevertheless saw the institution of titles in American politics. Everyone became Mr Secretary, or Senator this or Governor that, or as Emily Dickinson (1830-86) was to write:

> I'm Nobody! Who are you?
> Are you - Nobody - Too?
> Then there's a pair of us!
> Don't tell! they'd advertise - you know!
>
> How dreary - to be - Somebody!
> How public - like a Frog -
> To tell one's name - the livelong June -
> To an admiring Bog!
> (No. 288)[30]

There was no contact between the philosophical democracy of Emerson and its political manifestation under Jackson. The only major democratic American literary figures were Nathaniel Hawthorne, and in a sense, Cooper. who responded to the Jacksonian era with the Effinghams.

The Effinghams are, if anything, more irritating in *Home as Found* than they were in the novel's predecessor. Clearly the family do fall into the category of 'exemplary figures': despite their criticisms they do remain loyal to America. As republicans, their superiority in education and background makes them the intellectual leaders of society, but they oppose an hereditary aristocracy, believing rather in a natural aristocracy, which allows people to rise by merit and they do regard democracy as the best means to assure this. Realistically, however, Cooper's satire fails to inspire any sort of aspiration towards his ideal:

> ...Eve, with her sweet simplicity, and highly cultivated mind and improved tastes, seemed, like a highly polished mirror, to throw back the flashes of thought and memory, that so constantly gleamed before both; it was all lost on these thoroughly matter-of-fact utilitarians.[31]

The reader may not particularly want to join the ranks of the 'thoroughly matter-of-fact utilitarians' Aristabulus Bragg and Steadfast Dodge, but confronted with the perfection of Eve and her French phrases, the best that can be aspired to is Grace who:

> wondered where her cousin, in general so simple and unpretending, had acquired all those stores of thought...while her modesty and self-abasement led her bitterly to regret the hours irretrievably wasted in the frivolous levities so common to those of her sex...[32]

Of the male Effinghams, John's aristocratic contempt is unrelenting:

> "The Western fever has seized old and young, and it has carried off many active families from our part of the world," continued Aristabulus..."And they who have gone, do they belong to the permanent families, or are they merely the floating inhabitants?" inquired Mr Effingham.[33]

John Effingham's sardonic asides and superior manner isolate him from his society. He is humble only before his God. Nevertheless his unswerving integrity and male understanding of the American character make of him a not altogether unattractive figure. He alone has an appreciation of Aristabulus Bragg's abilities, but John Effingham fails to capture the imagination or inspire emulation. The innate superiority of the Effinghams is hopelessly compromised by their belief in democracy. In his article 'The Difficult Art of American Political Fiction: Henry Adams' *Democracy* as Tragical Satire', Schmitz maintains:

> Beyond the issue of social manners, the Effinghams look with horror on Bragg and Dodge because they are sordid mirrors reflecting the activity of the

> first generation of Effinghams...It is *mal foi*, not moral outrage, that makes the Effingham/s so irascible. The energetic new capitalists in the Jacksonian period, ...simply transact in the open what the older patriciate had cloaked with civilities.[34]

Realistic detail which was suppressed to allow characters like Byrd's Steddy to reconcile the paradox of a realistic ideal, overwhelms the heroes and heroines of Cooper's work. The Effinghams, faced with Jacksonian politics, are reduced to mere aesthetic complaint and the ease with which they are pushed aside by Dodge from their constituency in their home town of Templeton, suggests an even more dire conclusion, as Schmitz points out:

> - that Jacksonian politics and the American Dream, so styled, were perfectly compatible. And that Dodge, with all his shabby bourgeois lusts, was the veritable flower of American democracy, not some recent arrival knocking down one tradition to set up another, but *the* tradition incarnate.[35]

One remembers Teague O'Reagan's urgent desire to make something of himself, and it can be recognized that, although Cooper would not have countenanced the view, it is the Effinghams who are outside history, not Steadfast Dodge, and it is their interpretation of national destiny which is delusive.

Cooper, essentially, falls foul of the double-edge of American satire and is unable to reconcile his ideal of democracy with its reality under Jackson, but he captures the emerging spirit of America in *Home as Found* with unerring accuracy, mainly through the character of Aristabulus Bragg. Bragg is the best drawn and most impressive of the characters in the novel, and from the moment of his appearance is:

> ...an epitome of all that is good and all that is bad, in a very large class of his fellow citizens. He is quick-witted, prompt in action, enterprising

> in all things in which he has nothing to lose, but wary and cautious in all things in which he has a real stake, and ready to turn not only his hand, but his heart and his principles, to anything that offers an advantage.[36]

He is an undeniably talented man, and a believer in democracy: he 'was surprised that any one could disregard a majority.'[37] When Eve Effingham remonstrates that a house built on such a principle would be very odd, Bragg demonstrates a sublime vulgarity with an early prefigurement of Nathaniel West's Hollywood landscapes:

> "I think you are mistaken Miss Effingham, for the public sentiment just now runs almost exclusively and popularly into the Grecian school...A friend of mind has just built a brewery on the model of the Temple of the Winds."[38]

For the materialistic Bragg 'everything was eligible that returned a good profit, and all things honest that the law did not actually punish',[39] and he rejoices 'in being a native of a country in which as few impediments as possible exist to onward impulses.'[40] As John Effingham remarks, "Our friend Mr Bragg considers life as all means and no end."[41] From the moment Bragg enteres the novel and calmly decides to have Eve Effingham for a wife, to the moment he is rejected, and marries her French maid before heading West, Cooper relentlessly delineates the themes which will appear in American satire through into the twentieth century. That these themes should have found such full blown expression in satire during the Jacksonian years is unsurprising. It was because Americans demanded more from their politics in the way of purity and excellence than did their old world counterparts.

Unlike the providential framework used by early American satirists, political and humanitarian ideals do not forge a link with anything which might be deemed universal or eternal. There is no perfect God to ensure the eventual outcome. As a consequence the republican democratic ideals and those of the constitution promoted in a work of satire, like Cooper's, are more vulnerable and more easily usurped by the real and material world. The idea of national destiny still informed much of the thinking about the American democratic experiment. Lewis relates in *The American Adam* that:

> during the 1840's and 1850's the charting of a universal history became something like a fashionable game: commentators vied with one another in labelling and plotting the several grand stages of the human story - the grandest, in all cases, being the present stage, which was also the final one.[42]

This imaginative and utopian vision of America, and the part to be played by Americans in universal history, was hopelessly contradicted by the realities of political life in the Jacksonian era. Then, as Schmitz observes:

> If John Quincy Adams glimpsed in Jackson's victory the fall of the republic, the conspirators proved to be an unlikely crowd. It was difficult to find dramatic malevolence in the figure of Martin Van Buren. The artist who felt, as did Cooper, that the promise of American history had somehow suffered grievous damage in the Jacksonian period, was hard pressed, then, to specify, short of fulminating against demagogues and unruly mobs, who had inflicted the wound.[43]

The idealization of political life by American satirists and its debasement during the Jackson era has its effect on American satire. The works of the period are either, like Cooper's *Home as Found*, shrill and discursive, and demonstrate a tendency to become tragical satire, or, following the Irving tradition, the tolerance of human

frailty in the satires is such as to make of Jacksonian politics a mere joke.

John Pendleton Kennedy's *Quodlibet* (1840), is typically shrill in its denouncement of Jacksonian democracy:

> that recently discovered Democratic theory, for distinction called the Quodlibetarian, which is destined to supplant all other principles in our government and the most imposing people upon the terraqueous globe.[44]

The Jacksonian demagogue in this work is Middleton Flam, and his introduction by the narrator, Solomon Secondthoughts, schoolmaster, makes of him an interesting parody of the exemplary figure:

> Holding, as I do, our democratic leader, the honourable Middleton Flam, in the most deservedly profound respect, and knowing him to be ... a bright exemplar of democrcy, and containing in himself, metaphorically speaking, the epitome of all sound opinions, I...bring him and his affairs conspicuously into the view of the world...for instruction...Such is the destiny of distinguished men, that their lives are common property for the teaching of their generation.[45]

Flam of course, ironically, teaches his generation nothing beyond self-interest and materialism. His maxim is:

> We attend to *ourselves* - that is the genuine New Light democracy. We oppose Vested Rights...Chartered Priviledges...Pledges to bind future legislators...Tariffs, Internal Improvements, Colleges and Universities, on the broad democratic ground, that we have nothing to do with Posterity. Posterity will be as free as we are. Let it take care of itself.[46]

Flam makes an incongruous villain, yet one, we are to believe, capable of inciting corruption on such a scale as to undermine the fabric of the emergent American civilization. The problem is that Flam, like Aristobulus Bragg, is the logical extension of the exemplary figure

based on democratic principles: 'the embodyment and personification of those deep and profound truths, based upon the eternal distinctions of the greatest good to the greatest number!'[47] Kennedy's satire can assert nothing in terms of value, which is not usurped by Flam's presence. It is this parody of the exemplary figure which the more strident satires like Cooper's and Kennedy's share with the essentially comic satire of, for instance, Seba Smith's Major Jack Downing letters.

Smith, himself a conservative, Whiggish, anti-partisan journalist from Maine, creates in Major Jack Downing a homely, provincial uneducated, but at the same time innately shrewd and ambitious Yankee. In these more whimsical satires which stand in the Silence Dogood and Irving tradition, the element of the character of the exemplary figure used in the earlier Federalist satires which has been suppressed, is that element which gave characters like Tyler's Updike entry into the world of letters. Updike's intelligence and obvious ability with language - he writes the book - which tended to give characters like Father Bombo, Captain Farrago, the Effinghams and so on, a superior air unpalatable to the Americans, are replaced in Major Jack Downing by the more homely common sense. His common sense and enthusiastic naivety allow for much gentle satire at the expense of Jackson's Administration,[48] but he is ever the eager seeker of an office, and his political scruples are, to say the least, flexible. Of the ratification of General Pierce, Major Jack writes:

> MY DEAR OLD FRIENDS:- We've made out to ratify at last: but it was about as hard a job as it was for the Baltimore Convention to nominate. And I'm afraid the worst on't ain't over yet; for Uncle Joshua shakes his head and says to me, in a low tone..."Between you and me, Major, the 'lection

> will be a harder job still." I put great faith in Uncle Joshua's feelings...
> "Well, didn't we do that business up well?" says I.
> "I don't know about that," said Uncle Joshua...
> "Why don't you think" says I, "the nomination of General Pierce will put the Democratic party on its legs again, and give it a fine start?"
> Uncle Joshua looked up to me kind of quizzical and says he, "It *has* gin the party a pretty considerable of a start already, it come so unexpected." And the he sot as much as two minutes drumming his finger on the table...And then he looked up again, and says he "Major, *who is General Pierce*?[49]

The affinity of this piece with the American Tall Story, can be recognized in the slow build-up of expectation, and the final explosive joke. In the Downing letters the Jacksonian years are, generally, treated as political buffoonery, fit only for laughter. James Russell Lowell's (1819-91) young New England farmer Hosea Biglow has a more trenchant voice. Lowell, under the influence of his wife, Maria White, was an ardent abolitionist and liberal, and unlike Smith, Lowell does deal with the slavery issue. As Schroeder observes:

> ...the *Biglow Papers* reflect his political concerns. In the first Paper appearing in June 1846, Hosea Biglow labels the Mexican War as a scheme of "them nigger-driven states" to extend their territory and to make "white slavers" of free northerners. Biglow also condemns war as "murder...plain an' flat", ...In short, these were strong political convictions.[50]

This much said however, the dialect and dead-pan enthusiasm of the voice used by Howel, in 'The Candidate's Letter', for instance, again tends to reduce the politics of the time to a mere joke. In this case, Lowell parodies the letters written by presidential candidates which, before the days of the televised debate, were often the only means of becoming known to the electorate. "I know of nothing in our modern times" wrote Lowell, "which approaches so nearly to the ancient

oracle as the letter of a Presidential candidate." 'The Candidate's Letter' from the Biglow Papers, is a case in point:

> I'm a straight-spoken kind o'creetur
> Thet blurts right out wut's in his head,
> An' ef I've one pecooler feetur,
> It is a nose thet wun't be led...
>
> I ain't again' to try your patience
> By tellin' who done this or thet,
> I don't make no insinooations,
> I jest let on I smell a rat...
>
> My mind's tu fair to lose its balance
> An' say wich party hez most sense;
> There may be folks o' greater talence
> That can't set stiddier on the fence.[51]

The parody is entertaining, but the satire is softened by the homely dialect. It is difficult to accept that this candidate will deceive anyone sufficiently to enable him to bring about the destruction of civilization. The satirist is so tolerant of his subject that the attack is rendered humorous rather than pointed. Confronted by another satire of Lowell's, 'A Fable for Critics', it is small wonder that Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49) felt driven to ask "What have we Americans accomplished in the way of Satire?"[52] Poe's answer was not very much. He goes on, in the same essay to, perhaps wrongly, designate Laughton Osborne's (1809-78) Tristram Shandy imitation 'The Vision of Rubeta' (1838) as 'probably our best composition of the kind'. By this he means no great compliment, complaining first of the poor form and lack of polish in American satire, before launching into an attack on its general 'namby-pambyism'. Of Osborne's 'The Vision of Rubeta' he remarks:

> 'The Vision' is bold enough - if we leave out of sight its anonymous issue - and bitter enough, and witty enough, if we forget its pitiable punning on names - and long enough (Heaven knows), and well constructed and decently versified; but it fails in the principle element of all satire - *sarcasm* - because the *intention* to be sarcastic (as in the

> 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers', and in all the more classical satires) is permitted to render itself manifest. The malevolence *appears*.[53]

In short, what Poe appears to find wanting in American satire is the intellectual component provided by the 'man of letters'. Poe's standard of judgement here, is of course, essentially the British satire of authority. For the American satirist, writing democratic satires and asserting a realistic ideal, too much intellectual malevolence with its inherent superiority, undermined the values of democracy being promoted; too little left Poe's charge of 'namby-pambyism' essentially correct.

In terms of the political satires the problem is obvious. The providential framework which in early American satires, linked the real America with an ideal America and provided the satirist with authority, was defunct. It could not be replaced by an idealized notion of elected government. This notion, already weakened by the realities of political life, meant for satire that a virulent attack on the target would call into question the possibility of the ideal, leading the work into the realm of tragical satire. Reading satirists like Cooper, Kennedy, or even Smith and Lowell, it is evident that the politics they demanded of their politicians was not really politics at all, but something greater. Schroeder observes:

> The word itself stymied them. "What satire on government can equal the severity of censure conveyed in the word *politic*" Emerson wrote, "which now for ages has signified *cunning*, intimating that the state is a trick?"... In brief politics had become the trade of clever technicians, who simply constructed pluralities and secured power."[54]

The dilemma in political satire however, was merely symptomatic of a greater dilemma in American satire. Even Emerson who, in an age dedicated to the common man, re-possessed idealism by insisting that humanity could make all new, and on the corollary of this, the infinitude and divinity of the human race, could nevertheless recognize the great American joke. Reginald L. Cook writes:

> Emerson penetrates what Henry James once referred to as the American's secret, "his joke". The nub of the joke is the startling awareness of a discrepancy between the nobility of our professed national ideals and the depressing failure to fulfil them. "There is", Emerson says, "no joke so true and deep in actual life as when some pure idealist goes up and down the among the institutions of society, attended by a man who knows the world, and who, sympathizing with the philosopher's scrutiny, sympathizes also with the confusion and indignation of the detected skulking institutions. His perception of disparity, his eye wandering perpetually from the rule to the crooked, lying, thieving fact, makes the eyes run over with laughter." Emerson is not a satirist, but who doubts he has a subtle sense of humor?[55]

Emerson's remarks on visiting the Alcott's Fruitlands are well known: "They look well in July. We will see them in December." His own, philosophical, attempts to fuse the real with the ideal, transcendentalism, provoked rather than inspired satirists. Hawthorne said "no, in thunder", and Poe, in 'How to Write a Blackwood Article', said of the tone transcendental that:

> ...the merit consists in seeing into the nature of affairs a very great deal farther than anybody else...Put in some-thing about the Supernal Oneness. Don't say a syllable about the Infernal Twoness. Above all, study innuendo. Hint everything - assert nothing.[56]

Certainly the American satirists found themselves unable to assert Transcendentalism. Hawthorne, in his satire 'The Celestial Rail Road' (1846) evokes the moral frame of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* to

satirize the rampant materialism of his day. The narrator, like Bunyan's Christian, travels from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City, but not on foot, by rail. This modern pilgrim has, for company, Mr Smooth-it-away, who shows his true identity at the end of the line by breathing fire and smoke as the narrator is about to drown in the river he expected to cross by steam-ferry. In Hawthorne's work all of the ancient institutions are changed:

> "This", remarked Mr Smooth-it-away, "is the famous Slough of Despond - a disgrace to all the neighbourhood...it might so easily be converted into firm ground...You observe this convenient bridge. We obtained a sufficient foundation for it by throwing into the slough some editions of books of morality...The whole bog might be filled up with similar matter."[57]

The imitation Hawthorne's story called forth in the form of George Wood's *Modern Pilgrims: showing the Improvements in Travel and the Newest Methods of Reaching the Celestial City*[58] (1855) uses the same moral frame and is even more anachronistic. It depicts a Mr Conscience who sets the young married couples, Gertrude and Frank Truman, and Annie and Oliver Outright on a journey to the Celestial City via Babylon and a Women's Rights Meeting. The satire in Harriet Beecher Stowe's (1811-96) *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) depends essentially for its moral frame on the Christian values embodied in Uncle Tom, while St Clare remembers "My mother used to tell me of a millennium that was coming, when Christ should reign, and all men should be free and happy."[59] These satires identify a lack of principle and a gross materialism as problems and assert the retention of Christian values as an answer. The more interesting satires of this period and the most American, are those which probe the possibilities of maintaining

ideals in a material world at all - those which confront the paradox of a realistic ideal, the 'infernal twoness of things'.

Poe criticized American writers for their failue to produce good satire: "We have really done very little in the line upon this side of the Atlantic", he remarks in 'The Quacks of Helicon - a Satire'[60], yet his own fictional satires are on the whole neither as funny, nor as acerbic as his reviews. His best satire is, perhaps, 'A Predicament' (1838) but in part, the humour in this work is extracted at the expense of the literary excesses of Signora Psyche Zenobia. She has been advised by Mr Blackwood in 'How to Write a Blackwood Article', that:

> Sensations are the great things after all. Should you ever be drowned or hung, be sure and make a note of your sensations - they will be worth to you ten guineas a sheet.[61]

In 'A Predicament' Signora Zenobia sets about recording her sensations with a vengeance:

> What a host of bloomy recollections will ever and anon be awakened in the mind of genius and imaginative contemplation, especially of a genius doomed to the everlasting, and eternal, and continual, and, as one might say, the - *continued* - yes, the *continued and continuous* bitter, harassing, disturbing...I repeat what a host of recollections are stirred up by a trifle.[62]

Putting aside the obvious parody of a writer with sensibility, Signora Zenobia relates her exquisite feelings while the minute hand of a large clock is severing her neck. All the machinery of true horror is present in the story. Any expectation of horror is offset by a preposterously literal use of the metaphoric 'Scythe of Time': "the huge, glittering, scimitar-like minute-hand of the clock had, in the

course of its hourly revolution, *descended upon my neck.* There was, I knew, not a second to be lost".[63] The same metaphor used by Poe in 'The Pit and the Pendulum' in 1842 produced chilling results. Signora Zenobia w eights her story with such a wealth of material detail while attempting to strike terror in the reader, that any illusion of horror is nullified by the sheer idiocy of her description:

> But no a new horror presented itself...My eyes, from the cruel pressure of the machine were absolutely starting from their sockets...one actually tumbled out of my head, and, rolling down the steep side of the steeple, lodged in the rain gutter...[64]

Or:

> The bar was now four inches and a half deep in my neck, and there was only a little bit of skin to cut through...At twenty-five minutes past five in the afternoon, precisely, the huge minute-hand had proceeded sufficiently far on its terrible revolution to sever the small remainder of my neck. I was not sorry to see the head...at length make a final separation from my body.[65]

Poe's emphasis is impeccable, staying as it does, with Miss Zenobia's ludicrous narration, of the physical facts of the story, rather than with the facts of themselves. In satire it is the idea of someone losing their head which can be rendered ridiculous: the fact is not funny at all. Although, if as Dryden observed, the art of satire lies with 'the vast difference betwixt the slovenly butchering of a man, and the fineness of a stroke that separates the head from the body. and leaves it standing in its place',[66] then the art of Poe's satire against sensationalism could be said to be truly American. By offsetting illusions of sensibility against the material reality of the case a somewhat grim American joke is recognizable. Indeed, the 'infernal twoness of things' was never more apparent.

Some of the most testing statements about the ideal, and its failure to adapt when placed in a real and material world, are to be found in the satires of Herman Melville (1819-91). The implications of this problem can be readily acknowledged in Melville's novels of the sea in which he explores problems of authority and the need for order, as opposed to the need for freedom, usually via the power invested in the ship's captain. Karcher has noted the tensions evoked in Melville's work as the 'strong fellow-feeling for men he equates with slaves vies with his deep-seated reluctance to defy authority.'[67] In works like *Mardi* (1849) and *White Jacket* (1850) Melville seems to advocate human answers to human problems, and at times seems almost optimistic about their eventual solution, and as Karcher remarks in *Redburn* (1849) he evokes his own millenial vision of America's future:

> The other world beyond this, which was longed for by the devout before Columbus' time, was found in the New; and the deep-sea-lead, that first struck these surroundings, brought up the sail of Earth's Paradise. Not a Paradise then, or now; but to be made so, at God's good pleasure, and in the fullness and mellowness of time.[68]

This vision of America's future is in part humanistic, an 'Earth's paradise' and in part providential, "to be made so at God's good pleasure." In Melville's later satires however, the providential framework is not evoked, even as a motif, in any sense which suggests a favourable outcome. The ideal appears to have purpose, even use, but its application in the real world seems fit only for a bleak joke. In 'Cock-A-Doodle-Doo' (1856) the narrator is overburdened by debt, and his impoverished but extremely industrious hired wood-sawyer has a sick wife and children. The wood-sawyer also owns a marvellous cock whose fine crowing sustains them all while they die. Of *Pierre, or*

The Ambiguities Leon Howard and Hershell Parker have suggested, in their Historical Note to the Northwestern-Newberry Edition, that:

> The book that did most to transform [Melville's] "silly thoughts and wayward speculations into a definite plan for *Pierre*... may have been the one he postponed reading while first indulging in them - Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Zanoni*.[69]

Parker and Howard go on to remark that although on the surface the two books are quite dissimilar, parallels can, nevertheless, be drawn. *Zanoni* is an eighteenth century romance with a Rosicrucian hero whose character and actions are focused on the ideal. There is another character Glyndon, who closely resembles Pierre. He fears "the world's opinion", fears his "own impulses when most generous", fears his "own powers" when his "genius is most bold" and fears "that virtue is not eternal". He almost misses the opportunity for initiation into the Rosicrucian mysteries because of an inability to grasp that "There are times in life when from the imagination, and not reason, should wisdom come." He fails his initiation because he cannot say consistently, "Come what may to virtue I will cling."[70] As Parker and Howard observe:

> Pierre has none of these shortcomings. He passes all the tests that Glyndon fails, and the tragic consequences of his 'success' may have reflected Melville's ironic reaction to Bulwer's belief in the superiority of the "Ideal" to the "Actual".[71]

Bulwer-Lytton's hero, Zanoni, loses the world but gains his soul, while Glyndon, who could not hold to the ideal, fails: Melville's *Pierre* does remain steadfast and loses all. Given that Bulwer Lytton's ideals were Christian, and that Melville appears to have been consciously denying those values in *Pierre*, it may be that, from the beginning, he was planning 'a book more "wicked" than *Moby-Dick*'.[72]

The views put forward by Parker and Howard in this part of their historical note are not far removed from those of contemporary reviewer Evert or George Duychink who, in an unsigned review which appeared in 'Literary World' on 21 August 1852 observes that:

> The most immoral *moral* of the story, if it has any moral at all, seems to be the impracticality of virtue;...'[73]

The problem is taken up in *Pierre or the Ambiguities*, in the pamphlet on 'Chronometricals and Horologicals' which occurs in Book XIV Ch.3 as a somewhat mangled version of a lecture by the philosopher Plotinus Plinlimmon:

> ...the chronometric soul, if in this world true to its great Greenwich in the other, will always, in its so-called intuitions of right and wrong, be contradicting the mere local standards and watch-maker's brains of this earth.[74]

Yet the morality of expediency which Plinlimmon goes on to preach, and which Duychink assumed, does not seem to have Melville's whole-hearted consent. The narrator of Pierre's story introduces the Plinlimmon pamphlet by saying:

> I confess, that I myself can derive no conclusion which permanently satisfies those peculiar motions in my soul...to me it seems more the excellently illustrated re-statement of a problem, than the solution of the problem itself...such mere illustrations are almost universally taken for solutions (and perhaps they are the only possible human solutions)...[75]

Melville is deliberately ambiguous. Even the notion that Pierre is steadfast in his relation to his supposed half-sister Isobel is by no means made clear by a reading of the text. When Pierre first tells Isabel of his plan to live with her, as if married in the eyes of the

world, but in celibacy as a brother and sister should, rather than jeopardize the good name of his father in the eyes of his romantic and idealistic mother, Melville describes the scene in self-evidently sexual terms:

> He held her tremblingly; she bent over toward him; his mouth wet her ear; he whispered it.
>
> The girl moved not; was done with all her tremblings; leaned closer to him, with an inexpressible strangeness of an intense love, new and inexplicable. Over the face of Pierre there shot a terrible self-revelation; he imprinted repeated burning kisses upon her; pressed hard her hand; would not let go her sweet and awful possessiveness.
>
> Then they changed; they coiled together, and entangledly stood mute.[76]

Later, after a discussion in which Isabel presses Pierre to define vice and virtue the precise relation between the young couple is made even more ambiguous:

> "That a nothing should torment a nothing; for I am a nothing. It is all a dream - we dream that we dreamed we dream."
> Swiftly he caught her in his arms: - "From nothing proceeds nothing, Isabel! How can one sin in a dream?"
> "Let us sit down again, Pierre; sit close; thy arm!" And so, on the third night, when the twilight was gone, and no lamp was lit, within the window of that beggarly room, sat Pierre and Isabel hushed.[77]

The hush and the dark that Melville draws over the young couple on this, the third night of their arrival in the city, renders the steadfastness of Pierre uncertain. The text, at this point, cannot be penetrated in order to finally know that Pierre is virtuous, the reader can only believe that he is. To assume that Melville's moral in this work is, simply, one of 'virtue and religion are only for gods and not to be attempted by man',[78] as Duyckink suggested in 1852, is to understate the problem. Wadlington who, rather later, sees

Pierre's instinctive intense response to Isabel as constant throughout the transformations which ironically return him to isolation, finally in the form of prison and suicide, observes:

> Pierre's murdering and suicide look like any other such deeds to the outside world, which would not relate them at all to an innocent sterling charity.[79]

Ultimately the world cannot know whether Pierre's dismal end is the result of the soul's success, its failure, or the random impetuosity of youth with which he took up his cause. As this American Romeo and Juliet die by their own hand, only the last cry of Isabel remains:

> "All's o'er, and ye know him not!"[80]

In terms of Melville's and America's satire in *Pierre*, only the dilemma is apparent. The satire is certainly double-edged, in that neither chronometricals nor horologicals will answer to the human condition, and Melville offers no useful compromise in the form, for instance, of an exemplary figure. In his way, Pierre is as anachronistic as Cooper's Effinghams, if more tragic, and this last cannot be known by externals. "So now" Melville had written to his friend Hawthorne in November 1851, "let us add Moby-Dick to our blessings, and step from that. Leviathan is not the biggest fish; - I have heard of Krakens."[81]

In 1853 Melville published 'Bartleby the Scrivener' anonymously in 'Pulman's Magazine', and reprinted it in *The Piazza Tales* of 1856. In part the story picks up a theme common to American satire since the new republic was formed; that of the difficulty of being a writer or artist in a country in which the arts are neither fully appreciated nor respected as a means of earning a living. Cooper complained of

the situation; the artist figure is certainly present in the lazy Rip Van Winkle who ends his life as a teller of tales; Poe's satires are concerned with literary standards; and the chapters in *Pierre or the Ambiguities* in which Pierre attempts to earn his living as an author contain biting attacks on the critics and literary scene of Melville's day. Melville's own attempts to appease both the public and the profound are well known. *Pierre, or the Ambiguities* did not sell well, and throughout the years from 1852 to 1855 Melville was beset by severe personal and professional problems. When offering *Israel Potter* (1855) for sale Melville felt obliged to assure *Putnams* that it would 'contain nothing of any sort to shock the fastidious. There will be very little reflective writing in it; nothing weighty. It is adventure.'[82] With insufficient funds and his security severely theatened, it is unsurprising that Melville, at this time, should pen a story about a peculiar scrivener trapped in the quantifiable world of Wall Street, who prefers not to participate in the work of the office, and whose former occupation in the 'Dead Letter Office' perhaps reflects Melville's sense of futility in regard to the neglect of his novels. In terms of the development of American satire however, Melville presents, in Bartleby, a figure much closer to an absurd hero than any of his contemporaries.

Part of Melville's success in respect of Bartleby lies with his manipulation of the 'moral frame' of the story. In the works of Augustus Longstreet for instance, the gentlemanly tones of the narrator cast an ironic reflection on the scenes depicted. Irving manipulated the frame of 'Rip Van Winkle', by doubling it, which enabled him to cast doubt on the entire story of Rip, while keeping

the integrity of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. intact. If however, during this period of America's history, the rampant materialism which flourished during the Jackson years can be said to oppose idealism, then the story of Melville's Bartleby can be said to have something of an immoral frame in the form of an elderly Wall Street lawyer.

> ...one of those unambitious lawyers who never address a jury, or in any way draw down public applause; but in the cool tranquillity of a snug retreat, do a snug business among rich men's bonds, and mortgages, and title-deeds. All who know me, consider me an eminently *safe* man.[83]

The complacent views of this eminently safe man are the more invidious because apparently so reasonable. He is not given to outbursts of temper, except when, having secured himself a political office, that office became redundant:

> "I must be permitted to be rash here and declare, that I consider the sudden and violent abrogation of the office of Master in Chancery, by the new Constitution, as a ---- premature act; ...I had counted upon a life-lease of the profits, whereas I only received those of a few short years." (p.4)

Otherwise the elderly lawyer looks out from his chambers on the white wall of the sky-light shaft at one end and a 'lofty brick wall, black by age and everlasting shade' at the other. He sees little in between. He describes his office staff in terms of mere caricature and utility:

> Nippers, like his compatriot Turkey, was a very useful man to me; wrote a neat, swift hand; and, when he chose, was not deficient in a gentlemanly sort of deportment. Added to this, he always dressed in a gentlemanly sort of way; and so, incidentally, reflected credit upon my chambers. (p.8)

Of Bartleby, the narrator knows nothing, other than what his own astonished eyes saw, and the pragmatic lawyer ironically declares at

the beginning of the tale: "I believe that no materials exist, for a full and satisfactory biography of this man. It is an irreparable loss to literature." By framing his story with pragmatism, utility, and what the world might term common sense, the enigma of Bartleby's individual freedom is rendered absurd, and ultimately self-defeating.

Bartleby is an unlikely enough hero - 'pallidly neat, pitiably respectable, incurably forlorn!' (p.10). Wraith-like as he is, however, Bartleby's quiet "I would prefer not to" when confronted with any question not immediately relevant to his employment as a scrivener, does have its effect on the quantifiable world of Wall Street.

> ...Turkey blandly and deferentially approached.
> "With submission, sir," said he, "yesterday I was thinking about Bartleby here, and I think that if he would but prefer to take a quart of good ale every day, it would do much towards mending him..."
> "So you have got the word too", said I, slightly excited.
> "With submission, what word sir?" asked Turkey...
> "I would prefer to be left alone here," said Bartleby, as if offended at being mobbed in his privacy.
> "*That's* the word, Turkey", said I - "*that's* it."
> "Oh, *prefer*? Oh yes - queer word. I never use it myself. But sir, as I was saying, if he would but prefer -" (p.24)

Bartleby's non-participation in office life is an increasing embarrassment, so that the embodiment of Wall Street materialism, the lawyer himself, is not unaffected:

> "...what ought I to do? What does conscience say I *should* do with this man, or, rather, ghost. Rid myself of him, I must; go, he shall. But how? You will not thrust such a helpless creature out of your door? You will not dishonour yourself by such cruelty?" (p.33)

Bartleby is no more than a pallid reminder of the ideals on which America was founded, and the city which once formed a bulwark against the emptiness of the wilderness, is itself reduced to a mere material bulk, devoid of meaning:

> His poverty is great; but his solitude, how horrible! Think of it. Of a Sunday, Wall Street is deserted as Petra; and every night of every day it is an emptiness. This building, too, ...at nightfall echoes with sheer vacancy, and all through Sunday is forlorn. And here Bartleby makes his home; sole spectator of a solitude which he has seen all populous - a sort of innocent and transformed Marius brooding among the ruins of Carthage. (p.20)

The ghost of idealism, of which Bartleby is the embodiment, is something the pragmatic lawyer and American cannot whole-heartedly affirm, nor resolve to be entirely without. "Aside from higher considerations, charity often operates as a vastly wise and prudent principle - a great safeguard to its possessor." (p.30) Rid himself of Bartleby, the lawyer must. But how?

Bartleby then, as the embodiment of the ideals on which America was founded, functions as a reminder of those ideals, and form a standard by which the quantifiable world of Wall Street can be judged. However, just as the lawyer is not a pure embodiment of materialism, but is tainted by conscience and some memory of a Christian ideal, so Bartleby's idealism is tainted and rendered absurd by his common humanity. As he increasingly asserts his negative freedom, not to do, so ironically he becomes increasingly, physically confined: first to the lawyer's office where he has taken up residence, then to prison, and finally:

> huddled at the base of the wall, his knees drawn up, and lying on his side, his head touching the cold stones...the wasted Bartleby. (p.40)

The failure to take adequate account of reality resulting in physical punishment has been a constant feature of American satire, but Bartleby's disregard of material reality includes even the needs of his own body. He lacks house, bed and the food in his office home consists of 'a few crumbs of ginger-nuts and a morsel of cheese.' (p.20) Finally he 'lives without dining'. In Bartleby, the double-edge of American satire has been forced so far apart as to render a human application of the ideal impossible, and it is fair to say that Melville, at this time, seems less interested in reconciling the paradox of a realistic ideal, than in exploring its ambiguities. Wadlington has observed that:

> ...discrepancy between deed and motive, funded act and external motion, implicit in discourse as early as *Mardi* and implicit in action as early as *Typee*, takes a fresh, central urgency in Melville's fiction beginning with *Pierre* and 'Bartleby'. ...What increasingly matters for Melville i that the external event is altogether different depending on the motivation that informs it...[84]

Motivation, of course, cannot be known by externals, and as the narrator struggles to find a rational explanation for Bartleby's behaviour, via a rumour that Bartleby was once a subordinate clerk in the Dead Letter Office at Washington, he succeeds only in compounding the enigma. The explanation is so patently inadequate that it serves only to underline the inadequacy of rational explanation and reality to account for Bartleby. The explanation at the end of Bartleby's story functions, as do the deliberately banal endings to a Shakespearean tragedy, as a return to reality and an admission that reality alone cannot account for the events depicted. Thus even as the narrator offers his explanation, he re-enacts the effect that Bartleby has had on him:

> "Dead letters! does it not sound like dead men? Conceive a man by nature and misfortune prone to a pallid hopelessness, can any business seem more fitted to heighten it than that of continually hndling these dead letters, and assorting them for the flames?...pardon for those who died despairing, hope for those who died unhoping;...On errands of life, these letters speed to death." (p.41)

Like Edgar's speech at the end of *King Lear*: 'Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say' (Act V, Sc.III, l.321), the language of the narrator's explanation is loaded with the effects of the event. His rational explanation moves almost inadvertently toward the apocalyptic, so that it is not the event, but the emotion triggered in the narrator which casts a final shadow over the enigma of Bartleby and the nature of the ideal he embodies. Melville, unable to find a humanly workable application for the ideal in 'Bartleby', has rendered this American satire almost without hope. It is devoid of the optimism which informed earlier American satires, suggesting no firm possibility of correction, only an insoluble puzzle. The apocalyptic motif inherent in the notion of sorting the dead letters for the flames, lacking a spiritual context, creates only a mocking reminder of what may, or may not, charge the events of the story with meaning. The only hope for the future lies with the narrator's reaction; that Bartleby as the embodiment of the ideal does promote action in the material world of Wall Street, that the yearning toward the ideal, however feeble, remains part of the human condition, and finally that it is a recognition of this which stimulates the last cry of the narrator: "Ah Bartleby! Ah humanity!" (p.41) It may allow Bartleby to function as something of an absurd hero, but this assertion is dependent upon the power of the word.

The doubts and ambiguities which permeate the stories of Pierre and Bartleby threaten the satirist's position. They threaten what Kernan has called the 'monolithic certainty'[85] of the satirist who has customarily inhabited a world of clear-cut good, represented by the satirist, and of clear-cut vice represented by just about everything else. In American satire, virtue is not merely threatened by vice and folly, but by a materialism so encompassing as to render the terms defunct. The satirist can then only rail against a recalcitrant reality, and the tendency for the political and social satires of this period to verge toward tragical satire is symptomatic of the more universal problem confronted by Melville. Thus R.W.B. Lewis, has called Melville's last work of this period, *The Confidence Man: His Masquerade* (1857):

> the recognizable and awe-inspiring ancestor' of a number of American books characterized by 'the vision of an apocalypse that is no less terrible for being enormously comic', books which comprise 'the continuing anti-face of the American dream, the continuing imagination of national and even universal disaster that has accompanied the bright expectancy of the millenium.'[86]

Further, the alter-ego of the exemplary figure, incipient in Trumbull's M'Fingal, and realised more fully by figures like Cooper's Steadfast Dodge and Aristobulus Bragg, achieves a full form in the figure of Melville's 'confidence man'. He threatens material stability by relieving people of their money, and threatens the stability of ideals by rendering them inoperable. *The Confidence Man*, read in the context of an American satiric tradition, is seen to develop the territory of the American nightmare from the opening pages of the work. In a society built upon faith in the future there is 'NO TRUST', and indeed no one to be trusted. In a society dedicated to

liberty the Fidele ominously makes its way down river to New Orleans, the very heart of slave country, and those on board who are persuaded to have confidence, place it not in spiritual ends, but in materialistic means. Schemes to make money, like the Black Rapids Coal Company, potions to extend an already diseased life, the Protean easy-chair in which 'the most tormented conscience must, somehow and somewhere, find rest' or A World Charity which will direct money from ill to good, 'setting forth a philanthropy and a finance which are practicable'. It shows us a world in which the ideal and the real have become hopelessly mixed. Doubts and ambiguities abound as absolute virtues are wrenched from their proper sphere and relentlessly tested in the human sphere where they collapse into ineffectuality. The theological virtues of faith, hope and charity are pitched against the Cardinal or natural virtues of justice, prudence, temperance and fortitude, so that the constant testing of absolute values by human experience evokes in *The Confidence Man* something akin to the curse of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*:

> ...Piety, and fear,
> Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,
> Domestic awe, night rest, and neighborhood,
> Instruction, manners, mysteries, and trades,
> Degrees, observances, customs, and laws,
> Decline to your confounding contraries,
> And let confusion live.
> *Timon of Athens*, Act IV,Sc.1, l.15-20.

To depict such a world is to call into question the very possibility of satire.

The curse of Shakespeare's Timon as he leaves Athens is perhaps the clearest literary, as opposed to religious, expression of the

cluster of associations which survive in the idea of wilderness or wasteland, in American satire:

> Let me look back upon thee, O thou wall,
> That girdlest in those wolves, dive in the earth,
> And fence not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent!
> Obedience fail in children! slaves and fools,
> Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench
> And minister in their steads! To general filths...
> And cut your trusters' throats...
> (Act IV, Sc.I, l.1-10)

One remembers Bartleby's prison wall which he faced when dying and Timon likewise was a man who had no sense of humanity's middle state. Timon was an absolutist unable to forgive human failings and, if he could not be god, would then be beast. He condemned himself to a misanthropic existence in the forests beyond Athens. Such misanthropy has the power to both fascinate and repel. It is heroic, uncompromising, and completely inhuman, so inhuman in fact that we must allow a truth in the judgement of Apemantus, the complete cynic:

> Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself:
> A madman so long, now a fool.
> *Timon of Athens*
> (Act IV, Sc.III, l.221)

Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* may have been much on Melville's mind during the latter part of his publishing career. In his essay 'Hawthorne and His Masses' written for the Duychinks' *Literary World*, August 17 and 24 1850, Melville had called Timon of Athens one of the 'dark characters' through whom Shakespeare 'craftily says, or sometimes insinuates the things, which we feel to be so terrifically true, that it were all but madness for any good man, in his own proper character, to utter or even hint of them.'

Melville allied the structure of *The Confidence Man* closely to that of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, and takes to task Emerson's

Transcendentalism among other optimistic attempts to fuse the world of the spirit with the world of common humanity. In the first half of the book Melville, who would not oscillate in Emerson's rainbow, but preferred he said, to hang himself in his 'own halter than swing in any other man's swing', depicts a gaggle of oscillators and swingers. From the cripple whose 'whole rigid body, like a ship's long barometer on gimbals, swung to and fro, mechanically faithful to the motion of the boat'[87] to the 'old miser leaning against the herb-doctor with something of that air of trustful fraternity' (p.93) an assortment of swaying humanity are relieved of their money in the name of confidence. As Apemantus remarks in *Timon of Athens*: 'Methinks false hearts should never have sound legs' (Act 1,sc.ii). Pitch puts up by far the best struggle against the confidence man's wiles, but falls with the third temptation. He does not swing, he revolves: 'He revolves, but cannot comprehend the operation, still less the operator. Was the man a trickster, it must be more for the love than the lucre'. (p.113) Pitch joins the ranks of 'Indian haters' in the second part of the work, without quite knowing why he does so. If he has no respect for humanity at least, he says, 'I have some respect for myself'. Self-reliance, to the degree of standing by their own judgement, though it stand alone, is the hallmark of the hopeless and distrustful who parade as misanthropists in the second half of the book.

The central critical problem of *The Confidence Man*, as with *Timon of Athens*, is that we cannot be entirely certain whether mad philanthropy or foolish misanthropy has the author's approval. In *Timon of Athens* we may, if we wish, see the world through Timon's

eyes. It is a world in which, to use Melville's metaphor, chronological time and horological time precisely correspond; a world in which, as Robert C. Elliot has remarked:

> ...exact correspondence will hold between word and concept; language will once again be performing its ancient creative function: what it states, by virtue of being stated, is.[88]

In Timon's world there is no ambiguity, no room for irony, doubt, misapprehension and certainly no place for deliberate deceit. When that world crumbles, as we know it must, for even in the early scenes of the play we have heard the voice of Apemantus, we may nevertheless, defend Timon's right to curse. As Elliot says:

> It is as though Timon were re-enacting an ancient role, attempting to change the world through the power of language. He is a magician manqué, a primitive satirist ages out of his time. ...Timon's words break on the cold substantiality of a world from which magic has vanished, and the only monster he can conjure up is man. Still, the awful words affect us; in obscure ways we are moved by Timon's efforts to manipulate atavistic powers.[89]

In *The Confidence Man* on the other hand, there is no Timon. Even the Indian haters are tainted by human ambiguities and have more in common with the black and white values of American Puritanism than with misanthropy on the grand scale:

> The instinct of antipathy against an Indian grows in the backwoodsman with a sense of good and bad, right and wrong. In one breath he learns that a brother is to be loved, and an Indian to be hated. (p.127.)

In the backwoods however, Indian hating remains untested in the whole of human experience where good and bad, right and wrong, are seldom so clearly defined. It is fair to say that, with the exception of the Indian woman that Pitch brings on board the Fidele, Indians within the

text are consistently associated with the devil. "Still", we are told:

> all this is less advanced as truths of the Indians than as examples of the backwoodsman's impression of them - in which the charitable may think he does them some injustice. (p.127)

Living as they do on the edges of civilization, the backwoodsmen have no right to curse, men never flattered them, so that unless we are beguiled by the text into reinstating the Indians as the full-blown representatives of the devil, Indian hating is become ridiculous. The satire is so riddled by the complexities of humanity's middle state that the loading of Indians, and indeed the Confidence Man himself, with associations of hell and the devil seems downright mischievous. As readers we are unable to break through the ambiguities, the ironies, the satiric surface of the text to take hold of some universal truth. Ideal after ideal is tested in the human sphere and found in its entirety to be unworkable. To believe in the devil and Indian hating is a beguiling prospect. One recognizes what such belief does to the views of Emerson, but if faith is placed in the devil then the logical alternative offered at the end of the book by the old man becomes a possibility: we may be concerned not with human life, but with eternal life:

> for all our wanderings through this vale, how pleasant, not less than obligatory, to feel that we need start at no wild alarms, provide for no wild perils; trusting in that Power which is alike able and willing to protect us when we cannot ourselves'. (p.215)

The old man demonstrates his and perhaps our own lack of trust when, instead of believing in his 'Committee of Safety' he insists upon finding a 'Life Preserver' before retiring, and is led away clutching

the chamber pot, which the Confidence Man has assured him will suffice. The last lamp is extinguished. 'The next moment, the waning light expired, and with it the waning flames of the horned altar, and the waning halo round the robed man's brow...' (p.217) The old man is led away into the ensuing darkness and with this mock apocalyptic vision something akin to Timon's curse is fulfilled:

> ... Degrees, observances, customs, and laws,
> Decline to your confounding contraries
> And let confusion live.

The very values which satire must assert if it is not to slip into the nihilistic realm of black comedy are apparently defunct.

In spite of the testing of values in *The Confidence Man*, however we do appear to be dealing with a satire. The form is Menippean if Bakhtin's broad definition is taken, which has been summarized as:

> ... free thematic and philosophical invention; fantastic episodes and adventures whose sole purpose is the testing of philosophical ideas (often incorporated in the image of a wise man). It combines fantasy, symbolism and mystical or religious elements with coarse and primitive naturalism; often set in bars, brothels and highways etc. Academic philosophy is dropped and only the ultimate question of ethics and practicality remain. The genre features experimental fantasy...and sharply changes the scale of objects observed...Alternative selves and lives are seen...The genre features scandal and disruption of accepted codes; it favours abrupt transitions in tone and subject, incorporates other genres to increase the profusion of styles and tones, and engages in current controversy.[90]

The definition seems perfectly suited to Melville's *The Confidence Man*, and the testing of ethics and practicality which occurs in Menippean satire makes the form particularly suited to America's satire in which real and ideal are inextricably bound. Its appearance

has been noted previously. In the Confidence Man we have a figure who consistently manipulates ideal means to serve material ends, and does so via the power of the word. Those who become his dupes do so because material ends are all that they ultimately trust. The material world is become the sole indicator of spiritual well-being, and as the Confidence Man assures us mockingly 'nothing absolute can be known from human form'. If the form of *The Confidence Man* is Menippean, the purpose of the work is certainly attack, and further appeals to our sense of what is right. We do know that there is something very wrong with the idea of letting missionary work out to tender. 'So much by bid for converting India, so much for Borneo...' and a feeling of unease is created by the miser clinging to his gold even as he dies. In the surfeit of practicability generated by responses to the Confidence Man, we at least recognize the need for ethics however impractical. Behind the world of the Confidence Man there is the voice of a satirist, like those of whom Kernan has remarked, 'acts as if God and Nature were withdrawn and he stood alone in the lunatic world to stay its progressive degeneration'.[91] Melville seems to have stirred this recognition of satire without recourse to either the optimism of the American millenium or by reconciling the real and the ideal in an exemplary figure. Indeed, the figure of the Confidence Man suggests that the exemplary figure is unknowable in this world, as is the Confidence Man himself.

The Confidence Man, as the barber says, is 'quite an original' (p.204). The presence of this figure has long been associated with wilderness territory and the American nightmare and with the ability to manipulate language. The Confidence Man bears a relationship to

a Puritan satire, like that of Samuel Bailey's 'The College Feruyla, Being a Reply to "The Country-Man's Apocrypha"' who compares the college men with the Devil, who:

> ...when at Delphose he did dwell
> And cheated men to death, did use to sell
> His mind, in speeches of a double sense;
> Yet there was often wit and eloquence.

In Cooke's 'The Sot-Weed Factor' the quaker is 'a pious conscientious rogue' while Trumbull's M'Fingal has a very name which is based on one of the biggest literary confidence tricks in history. Tales in which the devil disguises himself abound, and Melville himself had an idea for a story in which the devil disguises himself as a Quaker. Melville's Confidence Man is the result of some hundred years of American 'progress'[92] and is perhaps a full-blown conglomerate of all that is dangerous to the notion of an Earth's paradise. Many critics do view the Confidence Man as the devil, some as Christ, and in one case it is suggested that we are being asked to consider whether Christ is the Devil.[93] A more recent study, Peter J. Bellis 'Melville's *Confidence Man*: An Uncharitable Interpretation' argues that:

> Melville does provide his readers with all the "evidence" needed to identify and characterize a single "Confidence Man". But the contexts in which such "evidence" appears work to undermine rather than sustain interpretive certainty. Again and again, Melville's dialogues reveal the unreliability of any possible "evidence" of identity, whether physical or verbal. The attempt to build a single, inclusive line of argument from such evidence involves more than mere selection - its insights require a considerable degree of interpretive blindness.[94]

Finally Bellis concludes that *The Confidence Man* does not provide an authoritative textual centre on which a reading can be built, but that

each of the episodes is already 'decentred', and Melville's purpose in the novel is precisely that; the demystification of interpretive assumptions. It is a challenge to those who think 'self-knowledge - and knowledge in general - too easy or secure'.[95] This concurs with the view of Steven E. Kemper that *The Confidence Man* 'keeps insisting, the best word to describe man's relation to man, the world, and his own deeper self, is "stranger".[96] Melville's method and language in *The Confidence Man* support this view. The emphasis on the individual perspective confronting fate or experience with which Melville created the tragic potential in works like *Moby-Dick*, and even in *Pierre* and 'Bartleby' is wholly absent from *The Confidence Man*. In that work no major character emerges with a point of view more valid than any other, the only constancy is the ever-changing Confidence Man. The structure is episodic and accretive, and the language in *The Confidence Man* also distinguishes it from Melville's earlier works. The prose style is tight and contained, and the exuberance of Americanisms disappeared, as are the poetic, and perhaps purple, passages on phenomena. The discourses on metaphysics have gone, and as Kemper observes:

> The normative language in *The Confidence Man* mostly describes the outward physical appearances of people and objects, in keeping with Melville's painful awareness that apperances are all man can know. And he finally discredits even that presumption.[97]

These critics seem to suggest that *The Confidence Man* presents an unknowable and de-centred world in an almost modern, even existentialist, sense. It is a world however, which has its links to the 'wilderness territory' of earlier American satires by nature of its materialism. The Confidence Man does function as an embodiment of

a world in which all value and meaning have broken down, and this does make the Confidence Man "QUITE AN ORIGINAL". (p.204)

Melville's discussion of these three words is typically ambiguous. Chapter 44 comes with a heading which suggests that the discourse "will be sure of receiving more or less attention from those readers who do not skip it'. (p.204). The chapter is considered by Kemper to be 'Melville's lament'[98] about the impossibility of creating an original character out of his materials. Having given America heroes as long as he could believe in them himself, a confidence man was the best that Melville could do. Given the nature of the Jacksonian era, and the political and social disenchantment demonstrated by the other satires of this era, the view has some merit. The mysterious imposter featured on the placard near the captain's office is also described as 'quite an original genius in his vocation...though wherein his originality consisted was not clearly given; but what purported to be a careful description of his person followed.' (p.1) This seems to follow the structure and normative pattern of the novel. Nevertheless when Melville comes to describe the characteristics of a character deemed original in works of fiction, even as he denies the possibility of complete originality: 'there is discernible something prevailingly local, or of the age; which circumstance of itself would seem to invalidate the claim...' (p.205). Melville seems to describe the activities of his own Confidence Man:

> if we consider, what is popularly held to entitle characters in fiction being deemed original, is but something personal - confined to itself. The character sheds not its characteristic on its surroundings, whereas, the original character, essentially such, is like a revolving Drummond light, raying away from itself all round it - everything is lit by it, everything starts up to it...so that, in certain minds, there follows upon

> the adequate conception of such a character, an effect in its way, akin to that which in Genesis attends upon the beginning of things. (p.205)

An original character need not, perhaps, be a hero. In Melville's image of a revolving Drummond light something of the way in which the Confidence Man is the creator of his masquerade, or little world, can be recognized. His arrival on board the Fidele is described as being as sudden as Manco Capac's, the mysterious founder of the Inca empire, sent to earth by his father, the sun. The allusion would seem to suggest the realistic light of day. The very presence of the Confidence Man illumines a lack of faith, hope and charity in the world which, without his presence, might remain comfortably obscure - 'everything is lit by it, everything starts up to it'. He creates unease and a yearning for a world in which word and deed hold correspondence, and the possibility of knowledge is secure. There is also, in the circularity of Melville's image here, a sense of a new world and in its light an effect 'akin to that which in Genesis attends upon the beginning of things', so that, as with Trumbull's 'M'Fingal', a similarity between the type of satire Melville creates, and that of Jonson's Jacobean satire can be distinguished.

Melville's view of the revolving Drummond light in this passage can be compared to Jonson's view of his craft in 'The Magnetic Lady' which is similarly spherical:[99]

> ...in idea, this Magnetic Mistress: a lady, a brave bountiful housekeeper, and a virtuous widow; who having a young niece, ripe for a man, and marriageable, he makes that his centre attractive, to draw thither a diversity of guests, all persons of different humours to make up his perimeter.[100]

To be sure Melville's Drummond light casts its light away from itself, while Jonson's Magnetic Mistress draws people in, but in creating a world with a defined perimeter the effect is similar. T.S. Eliot has remarked of Jonson's satires that:

> ...satire like Jonson's is great in the end not by hitting off its object, but by creating it; the satire is merely the means which leads to the aesthetic result, the impulse which projects a new world into a new orbit.[101]

Melville creates an enclosed world, in which ideologies are explored. Melville's satire is, further, informed by doubts and questions similar to those felt by Jonson for whom Machiavellian ideas, the new science, and the new commercialism had hastened the degeneration of order. The tendency for American satire to slide into tragical satire during this period and Melville's own consideration of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, suggests a value system called into question. It would seem that Jacksonian politics and the shift in world view which began in the previous century combined in Melville to produce a satire of Jacobean type: a form of satire better suited perhaps to the testing of value systems than the formal Augustan satires which asserted a stable and universal value system. Parallels have been drawn between Jacobean drama and twentieth-century black comedy and John Boni suggests in his article 'Analogous Form: Black Comedy and Some Jacobean Plays':

> In both the twentieth century and the seventeenth, these forms serve to express a lack of reliance on value systems...an acceptance of the moral ambivalence of existence implied in Edgar's closing speech in *King Lear*, 'Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.'[102]

The similarity of effect between Edgar's closing speech in *King Lear*, and that of the narrator in Melville's 'Bartleby' has been noted, but

if the new world created by Melville's Confidence Man is that of complete materialism, it must be admitted that even as we salute the world in which the trickster is king, we enter into a conspiracy with the satirist to recognize, not merely how the world is, but how it ought to be. Melville, in common with early American satires, leaves his work open ended. This is not to suggest that 'Something further may follow of this Masquerade' holds out anything more than a vague hope that there will be a future, and work has been done to suggest that Melville had plans for a sequel.[103] Nevertheless one may point to similarities with the ending of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* in order to suggest something of what Melville may have had in mind. After Alcibiades reads Timon's epitaph he says ...'Dead/Is noble Timon, of whose memory/Hereafter more.' (Act V, Sc.IV, l.80) For Alcibiades the memory of Timon seems to stir some attempt at synthesis. 'Bring me to your city and I will use the olive with my sword' he says.(Act V. Sc.IV, l.82) Timon's epitaph like the images of apocalypse at the end of Melville's 'Bartleby', and like expiry of the last light in *The Confidence Man*, and 'with it the waning flames of the horned altar, and the waning halo round the robed man's brow...' (p.217) stirs memories. These things function like the moon in T.S. Eliot's 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night':

> Whispering lunar incantations
> Dissolve the floors of memory
> And all its dear relations,
> Its divisions and precisions,...
> And through the spaces of the dark
> Midnight shakes the memory
> As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

As Robert C. Elliot has remarked of Timon's curse, the words may break upon the cold substantiality of a world from which magic has vanished, but: 'Still the awful words affect us; in obscure ways we are moved by

Timon's efforts to manipulate atavistic powers'.[104] Melville's Confidence Man forms a grim reminder of a magic which perhaps is lost from the world forever, that is the 'ancient creative function of language: 'what it states by virtue of being stated is'.[105]

NOTES

1 Leary, Lewis. 'Washington Irving'. *The Comic Imagination in American Literature*, Voice of America, Forum Series, ed. Louis D. Rubin, Jr., 1974, p.64.

2 James Kirk Paulding (1788-1869) was bound to the Irving family by both literary interests and by marriage. His sister Julia married William Irving. His own satires include *The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathon* (1812), and *Lay of the Scottish Fiddle* (1813) which satirized Scott's romanticism and his dislike of the British produced *The Book of St Nicholas* (1836) which satirized the literary styles of Scott and Byron and as a defender of Jeffersonism, he wrote *John Bull in America or the New Munchausen* (1825).

3 Irving, Washington (with William Irving and James Kirk Paulding), *Salmagundi* No.XIII. *The Complete Works of Washington Irving*, ed. Bruce I. Granger and Martha Hartzog, Gen. Ed. Richard Dilworth Rust, Twayne Publishers, Boston, 1977, p. 227.

4 Irving, Washington. *A History of New York*, The Complete Works of Washington Irving, ed. Michael L. Black and Nancy B. Black, Gen. Ed. Richard Dilworth Rust, Twayne Publishers, Boston, 1984, p. 162.

5 Ibid., p.lxvii

6 Ibid., p.6.

7 Roth, Martin. *Comedy and America, The Lost World of Washington Irving*, Kennikat Press, New York, 1976, p. 29. See also Tove, Stuart, *The Amiable Humorist*, Chicago, 1960.

8 Weatherspoon Bowden, Mary. 'Knickerbocker's *History* and the 'Enlightened Men of New York City', 'American Literature', vol. XLVII, May, 1975, p. 159.

9 Irving, Washington. *A History of New York*, p. 293.

10 Dawson, William P. 'Rip Van Winkle' as Bawdy Satire: The Rascal and the Revolution', ESQ, vol. 27, no.4 (105), 1981, p. 198.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., p. 204.

13 Dekker, George. *James Fenimore Cooper the Novelist*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1967, p.142.

14 Cooper, James Fenimore. *The Monikins*, George Routledge and Sons, London, 1889, p.381.

15 *Fenimore Cooper: The Critical Heritage*, ed. George Dekker and John P. McWilliams, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1973, p.177.

16 *The Monikins*, p.409.

17 Atterley, Joseph (pseud.), Tucker, George (1775-1861), *Voyae to the Moon* E. Bliss, New York 1827., L.H. Wright, American Fiction, 1774-1850, no.2611. Lib. of Congress, PJ 3100,776. Copy 2. p.91-92. George Tucker was a member of Congress (1819-25), and was appointed by Jefferson as professor to the University of Virginia (1825-45). A volume of essays, *Letters from Virginia*, satirized the decadent gentility of the Old Dominion. His priomary literary reputation was based on his histories and writings on political economy. His *Life of Thomas Jefferson* (2 vol. 1837) although lauditory, is considered the most satisfactory and impartial of the early biographies.

18 For a useful list of works published primarily as satire between 1791-1830, in America see: 'American Satire in the Early National Period, 1791-1830', Donald Kay and Carol McGinnis Kay, 'Bulletin of Bibliography and Magazine Notes', v.33, 1976, p.19-23.

19 Cooper, James Fenimore, *Homeward Bound: or The Chase*, Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, London, 1838, p.345.

20 Ibid., p.348.

21 Ibid., p.348.

22 Ibid., p.349.

23 Dekker, George. *James Fenimore Cooper the Novelist*, p.154.

24 Elmwood, Elnathan, Esq. *A Yankee Among the Nullifiers*, W.M. Stodart, 6 Cortland Street, New York, 1833, p.7.

25 Elmwood, Elnathan, *Travels in America*, Willis Pearson, New York, 1833, p.22. Greene's other work includes a satire on the *Observations...in the United States (1833) by the Rev. Isaac Fiddler. The Perils of Pearl Street* (1834) takes the realistic world of New York business and high finance as a background to a humorous tale, and *The Life and Adventures of Dodimus Duckworth* (1833) which is a mock heroic biography of a New Englander.

26 Ibid., p.156.

27 Unsigned review, 'Cooper's Lost Works', *New York Review* IV (Jan. 1839), p.209-31, *Fenimore Cooper, The Critical Heritage*, pp.184-5.

28 Eliot, Morison. *The Oxford History of the American People*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1965, p.423.

29 Ibid. p.424.

30 Dickinson, Emily. *The Complete Poems*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson, Little, Brown & Co., Boston, p.133.

31 Cooper, James Fenimore. *Home as Found*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York, (undated), p.293.

32 Ibid., p.294.

33 Ibid., p.22.

34 Schmitz, Prof. 'The Difficult Art of American Political Fiction: Henry Adams' *Democracy* as Tragical Satire', *Western Humanities Review*, no.25, 1971, p.153.

35 Ibid., p.155.

36 Cooper, *Home as Found*, p.10.

37 Ibid., p.14.

38 Ibid., p.15.

39 Ibid., p.22.

40 Ibid., p.24.

41 Ibid., p.24.

42 Lewis, R.B. *The American Adam.*

43 Schmitz. 'The Difficult Art of American Political Fiction ...', p.148.

44 Kennedy, John Pendleton, *Quodlibet*, ed. Solomon Secondthoughts (pseud.), Lea and Blanchard, Philadelphia, 1840, p.xvii-xviii.

45 Kennedy, *Quodlibet*, p.57.

46 Ibid., p.65.

47 Ibid., p.36.

48 John H. Schroeder in 'Seba Smith's Political Satire 1845 to 1856', 'The New England Quarterly' no. 50, 1977, pp.214-33, however, argues convincingly that:
'...unlike his Downing letters of the 1830's, in which [Smith] had seemed content to poke fun at vote-seeking politicians and their partisan shenanigans, the letters of the 1840's and 1850's reflect Smith's increasing concern over the dangers inherent in political demagoguery and narrow partisanship. While he continued to caricature lesser luminaries such as Stephen Douglas, William Marcy, James Buchanan, Lewis Cass and Franklin Pierce in a good natured manner, his depictions of James K. Polk, were acerbic.' (p.220)

Schroeder's contention would seem to support a view that the strident and the more gentle satires of this period essentially stand at opposite poles of the same satiric structure, in that the Downing letters shift from one type to the other without the need to substantially alter the central figure.

49 Smith, Seba. "Showing how the Major Persuaded Uncle Joshua to take

Hold and Help Elect General Pierce to the Presidency, and how Downingville Ratified the Nomination", Major Jack Downing Letters July 20th, 1852, *American Satire in Prose and Verse*, pp.77-78.

50 Schroeder, John H. 'Seba Smith's Political Satire, 1847-1856', p.218.

51 Lowell, James Russell, *The Biglow Papers*, 1867, *American Satire in Prose and Verse*, p.84.

52 Poe, Edgar Allan, 'James Russell Lowell', *The World of Edgar Allan Poe* in 8 vols., vol. 8, J. Shiells & Co., London, 1898, p1.

53 Poe, Edgar Allan. 'James Russell Lowell', *The World of Edgar Allan Poe*.

54 Schmitz, 'The Difficult Art of American Political Fiction', p.152.

55 Cook, Reginald L. 'Emerson and the American Joke', 'Emerson Society Quarterly', no.54 (1st Qt, pt.1), 1969, p.22.

56 Poe, Edgar Allan. 'How to Write a Blackwood Article', *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, 1965, p.342.

57 Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 'The Celestial Rail Road', *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Ohio State University Press, 1974, p.187.

58 Wood, George. *Modern Pilgrims* (2 vols.) Philips, Sampson & Co., Boston, J.C. Derby, New York, 1855.

59 Stowe, Harriet Beecher, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, intr. Van Wyk Brooks, Dent, New York, 1977, p.235.

60 Poe, Edgar Allan, 'The Quacks of Helicon - A Satire', *Complete Works*.

61 Poe, Edgar Allan, 'How to Write a Blackwood Article', *Complete Works*, p.341.

62 Ibid., p.346.

63 Ibid., p.350.

64 Ibid., p.331.

65 Ibid., p.351-52.

66 Dryden, John. 'The Original and Progress of Satire', p.44. *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W.P. Kerr, Vol.II, Russell & Russell, New York, 1961.

67 Karcher, Carolyn L. *Shadow over the Promised Land*, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge and London, 1980, p.60.

68 Ibid.

69 Melville, Herman, *Pierre, or The Ambiguities*, ed. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, G. Thomas Tanselle, Historical Note by Leon Howard and Hershel Parker, Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, Evanston and Chicago, 1971, p.370. All references to Melville's *Pierre* are to this edition.

70 Bulwer-Lytton. *Zanoni*, quoted in Historical Note, Melville's *Pierre*, p.371.

71 Ibid., p.371.

72 Ibid., p.372.

73Branch, Watson G. (ed.) *Melville - The Critical Heritage*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1974, p.301.

74 Pierre, or the Ambiguities, p.211.

75 Ibid., p.210.

76 Melville, Herman. *Pierre, or the Ambiguities*, p.192.

77 Ibid., p.274.

78 Watson, *Melville - The Critical Heritage*, p.301.

79 Wadlington, Warwick. *The Confidence Game in American Literature*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and London, 1974, p.112.

80Melville, Herman. *Pierre, or the Ambiguities*, p.362.

81 Ibid. Quoted from Melville's letter to Hawthorne, Historical Note, p.366.

82 Melville, Herman, Letter to Putnams, June 1954. Quoted in *The Confidence-Man His Masquerade*, ed. Harrison Hayford, Herschel Parker, G. Thomas Tanselle, Northwestern-Newberry Edition, Evanston and Chicago, 1984, p.275.

83 Melville, Herman. 'Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street', *Four Short Novels*, Bantam, New York, pp 3-4. All further references to 'Bartleby' to this edition.

84 Wadlington, Warwick. *The Confidence Game in American Literature*, p.112-113.

85 Kernan, Alvin. *The Cankered Muse*, p.22.

86 Lewis, R.B. 'Afterword to *The Confidence Man*, New York, New American Library, 1964, pp.261-76. Quoted in the Historical Note to Melville, Herman, *The Confidence Man: His Masquerade*, ed. Hershel Parker, Harrison Hayford, G. Thomas Tanselle, Northwestern and Newberry, Evanston and Chicago, 1984, p.349.

87 Melville, Herman. *The Confidence Man: His Masquerade*, ed. Hershel Parker, W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1971, p.79. All further references to *The Confidence Man* will be to this edition.

88 Elliot, Robert C. *The Power of Satire*, p.166.

89 Ibid.

90 Bakhtin, M.M. *Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo*, rev. edition Leningrad, 1979., pp.129-36. Quoted in Ph.D. thesis, *Dostoevsky and MacDiarmid*, Peter McCarey, Glasgow, p.5. McCarey goes on to suggest strong Menippean elements in *Moby-Dick*.

91 Kernan, Alvin. *The Cankered Muse*, p.21.

92 See, for instance, Bryant John. 'Citizens of a World to Come: Melville and the Millenial Cosmopolite', *American Literature*, Duke University Press, March 1987, pp.20-36; or Bergmann, Johannes Dietrich, 'The Original Confidence Man', 'American Quarterly', 21, Fall 1969, pp.560-577.

93 Fiedler, Leslie A. 'Out of the Whale', 'The Nation', 169, November 1949, pp.494-495.

94 Bellis, Peer J. 'Melville's *Confidence Man*:An Uncharitable Interpretation', 'American Literature', Duke University Pess, December 1987, p.550.

95 Ibid., p.569.

96 Kemper, Steven E. *'The Confidence Man*: A Knavishly-Packed Deck', 'Studies in American Fiction', Northeastern University, Spring, 1980, p.34.

97 Ibid., p.25.

98 Ibid., p.24.

99 I am indebted for this view of Jonson's satire to discussions with my Chief Supervisor, Professor G.M. Walker.

100 Feidler, Leslie

101 Eliot, T.S. *Selected Essays*, 'Ben Jonson', Faber & Faber Ltd., London, 1966, pp.158-59.

102 Boni, John. 'Analogous Form: Black Comedy and Some Jacobean Plays', 'Western Humanities Review', V.14, 1960, p.214.

103 See Hanford, Howard C. 'Evidence of Melville's plans for a Sequel to *The Confidence Man*, 'American Literature 24', Mar. 1952, pp.85-89.

104 Elliot, Robert C. *The Power of Satire*, p.166.

105 Ibid.

IX

IDEALISM

Melville's *The Confidence Man* epitomizes the destruction of a satiric norm, which from the early days of American satire, had implied that realism and idealism could be brought to co-exist. In these terms Melville's *The Confidence Man* can be seen as the low point of nineteenth century American satire, exemplifying as it does, the logical trap into which the realistic-ideal must fall if pressed. The Confidence Man himself is the symbolic materialistic embodiment of an American nightmare which renders moral categories defunct. Melville's satire is surrounded by other satires which suggest that utopian visions based upon some loose notion of perfectability in human affairs is not only in error, but can be exploited by the cunning to the detriment of the individual and the humane values embodied therein. Socially, given the period under discussion, this is not surprising. The Frontier West, an area of rapid change, was connected with a period of national expansion on all fronts. Gold discoveries in California in 1848 had seen the population of both coasts spread into unsettled land in an optimistic effort to partake of the scramble for wealth. The railway had grown by 28,000 miles between 1840 and 1860 and the rapid development of new areas had taxed and overwhelmed the resources of American institutions. It has been claimed that:

> particularly in the period 1815-60, ruling groups and their institutions in the United States, previously able to maintain a deferential social order, found it more and more difficult to control affairs with the same success...[1]

Simultaneously Jacksonian politics had placed greater emphasis on the democratic component of the republican ideology adopted at the time of

the Revolution to legitimize the shifts in power which were taking place. Eastern ruling groups had been further challenged by fast-growing areas of the east where groups of European immigrants continued to settle. Their entry into the governing system could not be democratically denied, but nevertheless undermined the Conservatism of the day. All of these factors had played their part in the emergence of the Confidence Man. Finally during this period the rift between North and South had continued to deepen. This ensured that the satires written during the civil war would be conducted along already familiar lines.

During the 1820s and 30s the Old South's consciousness of itself as an entity had continued to grow. America, divided as it was by the slave economy of Southern States, ensured that the Old South would give increasing recognition to a way of life which gave its culture a value beyond that of slave ownership. The need to believe in itself produced those images of the Old South with which every filmgoer is familiar. Ranson and Hook observe:

> The mode of life possible on a handful of large plantations provided the basis for the self-identification the South needed and sought. Around the existence of such plantations there thus developed a whole set of theoretical assumptions about the South's way of life - and its absolute contrast with that of the North - which passed into general circulation...From the 1830s, what the South was defending was no longer simply the institution of slavery, it was an entire social structure with a culture and a way of life it passionately believed to be in every sense superior to those of the North.[2]

North and South were motivated by different values and attitudes, it was said. In the South was an aristocratic agrarian civilization descended from Cavalier stock which was conservative and traditional,

valuing honour, personal integrity and a sense of community. In the North a democratic, commercial society had evolved descended from Puritan stock. This society was materialistic, money loving, competitive, rootless and transient. Th early emergence of these cultural badges was noted in Tyler's satire of 1797, *The Algerine Captive*, but they were strengthened and reinforced in the course of the nineteenth century as inter-sectional conflict became something of a permanent condition:

> From the mid-1840s it was no longer the case that one area of tension was followed by another, it was rather that a permanent crisis moved on from one phase to the next.[3]

As civil war first threatened and then became a reality the cultural values of North and South came under attack from each other.

William R. Linneman has noted the preponderance of certain themes in *Southern Punch* a purported comic weekly:

> *Punch* not only lashed at the Union Army and its leaders (Lincoln was drawn as Satan and Grant's initials were expanded to 'Universal Slaughter'), but at the whole Yankee civilization. It scorched the Yankees for their Puritanism, intolerance, and love of money... New England paled in contrast with the South, claimed *Punch*, where lived a people noted for their physical beauty and brilliant intellect, their dash and vigor...New England, on the other hand, had been settled by one race which had inbred so long that physical and mental deformities were occurring.[4]

The satires of *Southern Punch* seem to have also taunted their Northern counterparts with the Puritan fusion of secular and sacred history. Recalling that God changed the Biblical Abraham's name to Abraham because he would be the father of many nations, one satire makes the obvious comparison with Abraham Lincoln, and his part in causing a

war in which the South felt they had had no option other than to secede:

> In Yankeeland, an Abraham,
> With speeches wise nor witty,
> Went down to his Jerusalem,
> The famous Federal city.
>
> True to his name, this Abraham will,
> So changed are his relations,
> Instead of one great nation, be
> Father of many nations.[5]

The class of songs most deeply resented in the South were those which implied that the Northern cause was sanctioned by God and advanced by an army of militant saints. Lazar Ziff has observed that:

> ...a Confederate song...spoke of Northern hypocrisy in terms of the "sanctified jaws" of the parson. The epithet masked behind such verses came to the fore in another secessionist song. Henry St. George Tucker in 'The Southern Cross' written in the meter of 'The Star Spangled Banner' made bitter mention of what he took to be at the root of Northern Hypocrisy:
>
> How peaceful and blest was America's soil,
> 'Til betrayed by the guile of the Puritan demon,
> Which lurks under virtue, and springs from its coil
> To fasten its fangs in the life-blood freeman.[6]

Union soldiers for their part were glad enough to take on the mantle of Puritan and one song coupled it with the notion of Cotton kings, in a Northern ditty:

> Though Cotton be of kingly stock,
> Yet royal heads may reach the block;
> The Puritan taught it once in pain,
> His sons shall teach it once again.[7]

Here, the last vestiges of the patrilineal argument used by the Revolutionaries in the War of Independence, which suggested that what the father began his sons were bound to complete, can be recognised. By now the argument is completely lacking a spiritual context, and its

force is dissipated. Thus, as Ziff observes a Northern suspicion that:

> dislike for his religious claims is intertwined with aristocratic pretension comes to the surface in the following couplet:
>
> And as for those poor Southern ducks, Jeff Davis and his peers,
> We'll show them that our Pilgrim stock are good as Cavaliers.[8]

In this couplet the association with the Pilgrim Fathers is neither with religion nor virtue, it is with their lowly origins as opposed to the aristocratic pretensions of the South. The Union songs however are not without a certain sense of irony with regard to the more general social concerns. Even as the Northerners insisted on the virtue of their slave-freeing cause Ziff is able to point to at least one Union song which satirically acknowledges the possibility of material gain as a motive for the war:

> So come along, come along! Uncle Sam can pay;
> Right down to Dixie's land - we shall find the way;
> Sugar lands, cotton lands, ready for your arms!
> Dixie's land is rich enough to treat us all to farms!
>
> We're a-going into business boys, I'd have you understand,
> For there never was so good a time to speculate in land...
> As for niggers, we'll *apprentice* them to till for us the land,
> And if 'massa' comes to catch 'em we'll declare 'em *contraband*.[9]

The italics here are original, creating a satirical correlation between the position of slaves in the South and that of apprentices in the industrializing North. The comparison of war with a commercial venture is light-hearted enough, but even here, in the invective swapped by troops during conflict, an underlying disenchantment with American society is apparent. In its way this song reflects the

destruction of a notion which suggested that idealism and realism could be made to co-exist.

The loss of this particular form of innocence is similarly apparent in the work of the Misspellers. Brom Weber observes of this particular form that:

> The disturbance of language represented by misspelling humor was a tangible and profound expression of the psychological shock suffered by the American people during the Civil War. A humorous disordering of language was also stimulated by World War I and II. At times like these, humor has an opportunity to be much more openly deviant and controversial...the Civil War misspellers took advantage of their fortunate freedom to deviate from socio-cultural norms of many kinds by bursting forth into an exuberant and often savage riot that went far beyond misspelling.[10]

In terms of satiric tone and *persona*, the difference between, for instance, Pope's finely tuned Heroic Couplet securely asserting adherence to a classical and hierarchical system of ideals, and the chaotic form adopted by the Misspellers can be recognized as symptomatic of the loss of faith in the perfectability of human institutions. What began as a form of idealism is distorted in the misspelt letters of this period into the spurious arguments of popular ideology. The often ingratiating, ignorant and wholly conniving *persona* of these satires is used to present popular ideology in such a way as to render its logical absurdities fully apparent, as in Lowell's 'John C. Calhoun Stands on the Constitution':[11]

Slavery's a thing that depends on complexion,
It's God's law that fetters on black shine don't chafe;

Ef brains wuz to settle it (horrid reflection!)
Wich of our onnale body'd be safe?
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he; -
Sez Mister Hannegan,
Afore he began agin,

'That exception is quite oppertoon,' sez he.[12]

Here the misspelling serves to emphasize the failure of intelligence to go beyond received opinion, an attack which grows in force as in American satire, as the Civil War takes hold. Robert Henry Newell's (1836-1901) *persona*, Orpheus C. Kerr, a dialectical pun on the words 'Office Seeker', similarly embraces received opinion in spite of an obvious inability to see quite how it might be applied to a given situation. A notion that the negro problem could be solved by mass deportation is the subject of Letter LXII, August 15, 1862.

> Our white men are now changing their base of operations daily, and often taking the Malvern Hills. This is on your account. You are the cause of it. How you have caused it I will not attempt to explain, for I do not know; but it is better for us both to be separated, and it is vilely selfish in you (I do not speak unkindly) to wish to remain here in preference to going to Nouva Zambla. The fact that we have always oppressed you renders you still more blamable, especially when we reflect upon the fact that you have never shown resistance. A trip on your part to Nova Zambla will benefit both races.[13]

As Orpheus C. Kerr continues to battle with the logic of his proposition and the need to render it attractive, he makes a valiant attempt to correlate mass deportation with the essentially Federalist American ideal of acting for the public and future good, rather than from self-interest and immediate good. He cannot promise the negro immediate bliss, and many could starve at first, or die on the passage, espcially as the great highway between the North Pole and Sir John Franklin's supposed grave is the place marked for Colonization, but, he points out:

> 'in the Revolutionary War General Washington lived exclusively on the future. He was benefiting his race; and though I do not see much similarity between his case and yours, you had etter go to Nova Zambla.'[14]

Sunk to the level of popular ideology values once seriously asserted in the satires, have become fit only for parody. Kerr's grand scheme of deportation ends with the words:

> Colonization, my boy, involves a scheme of human happiness so entirely beyond the power of conception, that the conception of it will almost pass for something inhuman.
> Yours, utopionically,
> ORPHEUS C. KERR.[15]

Grand and ideal schemes can be inhuman when put into practise and again, a hopelessness with regard to such possibilities seems to underly this satire. This hopelessness can be recognized in the wholly comic use of utopian ideas - 'Yours utopanically'. Thus something of Frye's thesis of movement in satire is apparent in the popular satires of the Civil War. Frye designates 'satire of the low norm', as that which identifies a world of vice and folly, but nevertheless operates from a world view which is permanent and undisplacable. Of such a type were the early Puritan and Reolutionary satires which used a providential moral frame, and perhaps even the Federalist satires which used an 'enlightened' humanistic and political moral frame to assert utopian possibilities. The conceptual conventions of a given society are, Frye suggests, 'largely invented by dead cranks'. Notions become outmoded, so that a new attitude is needed by the satirist.

> Hence the logic of satire itself drives it on ... to a second phase in which the sources and values of conventions themselves are objects of ridicule.[16]

Notions of a perfect society, an 'earth's paradise' seems fit only for ridicule in this satire, and with the loss of this assertion in American satire has gone the optimism.

Further evidence of hopelessness may lie with the satiric *personas* adopted for the misspelt letters. If the exemplary figure which can form the satiric *persona* in American satire may be considered as a type of barometer of social well-being, then it must be admitted that the most conniving, rationalizing and generally appalling of all the writers of misspelt letters emerges in the course of the Civil War, in the form of David Locke's Petrolium V. Nasby. Gone is the rural naivety which lent a certain charm to Seba Smith's Major Jack Downing, in spite of his office seeking. This satiric persona is so loaded with human frailty as to constitute the epitome of all cracker-box philosophers. On reading in the newspaper that the Government had instituted a draft, Petroleum writes on 6th August 1862:

> ...in a few weeks sum hundreds uv thousands uv peecable citizens will be dragged to the tented field.[17] I know not wat uthers may do, but ez for me, I cant go. Upon a rigid eggsaminashun uv my fizzleckle man, I find it wood be wus nor madnis for me to undertake a campane, to-wit:-
>
> 1. I'm bald-headid, and hev bin obliged to wear a wig, these 22 years.
>
> 2. I hev dandruff in wat scanty hair still hangs around my venerable temples.
>
> 3. I hev a kronic katarr.
>
> 4. I hev lost, sence Stanton's order to draft, the use uv wun eye entirely, and hev Kronic inflammashen in the other.
>
> 5. My teeth is all unsound, my palit aint eggsackly rite, and I hev hed bronkeetis 31 yeres last Joon. At pesent I hev a koff, the paroxisms uv wich is friteful to behold.
>
> 6. I'm holler-chestid, am short-winded, and hev alluz hed pains in my back and side.
>
> 7. I am afflictid with Kronic diarrear and Kostivness. The money I hev paid (or promist to pay), for Jayneses Karminnytiv balsam and pills wood almost enny body.

8. I am rupchered in nine places, and am entirely enveloped with trusses.

9. I hev verrykose vanes, hev a white-swellin on wun leg and a fever sore on the uther; also wun leg is shorter than tother, though I handle it so expert that nobody never noticed it.

10. I hev Korns and bunyons on both feet, wich wood prevent me from marchin.

I don't suppose that my political opinions, wich are aginst the prossekooshn uv this unconstooshnel war, wood hev any wate, with a draftin orfiser; but the above reesons why I cant go, will, I make no doubt, be suffishent.[18]

This appalling human frame embodies a collection of equally appalling values all supported by a spurious appeal to God or nature. Here he reacts to an election taking place after the Fourteenth Constitutional Amendment:

> On my way home I wuz gratified to see how the nateral antipathy to the nigger had revived. At Cincinati...they wuz bangin uv ern about...and the next day, ez I saw em at the ralerode stashens, they had, generally speekin, ther heds bandaged. It wuz cheerin to me...[19]

The election is rigged as Nasby drags voters from gaols and poorhouses: 'One enthoosiastic Dimekrat, who cost us $5, hed to be carried to the polls. He hed commenced early at one uv the groseries, and hed succumbed afore voting.' The way in which misspelling can reinforce the satire is evident in the spelling of *Dime*krat. Elsewhere in Locke the word will be spelt 'dimocrat', but here the issue of bribing voters is paramount, and this so that the Fourteenth Amendment which gave black Americans voting rights, could be voted down by the 'liberty-lovin freemen uv Ohio'. If the realistic ideals of earlier satires demonstrably abused by the ostensible writers of misspelt letters even in this small sampling are considered, the

providential framework, action for public and future good, the possibility of a perfectible society, acting in accordance with nature, democracy, and freedom of the individual - it can be recognized that the satirists from the turn of the nineteenth century have progressively lost faith in notions of an 'ideal America'. These satires have lost the overtly corrective tones of earlier American satires, and sound no note of optimism as did earlier satire. At best, it can be said, these values still exist, but only as an implied opposite of what occurs within the satire, and a growing despair is evident.

The despair, both moral and political, which becomes overt in the American satire written in the period following the Civil War had its roots in the satires of Jacksonian politics. Schmitz makes the point that:

> David Ross Locke's perennial 'offis-seeker', Petrolium V. Nasby, unfailingly makes a point of his lineage: "My politiks hez ever bin Dimocratic, and I may say, without egotism, I hey bin a yooseful member uv that party. I voted for Jckson seven times, and for every succeedin' Dimocratic candidate ez many times as possible." When Lord Skye describes his dinner engagement with two of 'nature's noblemen' from Yahco City in *Democracy*, his sardonic tone richly echoes the modulated sarcasm with which the Effinghams in *Home as Found* deride the Jacksonian *arrivistes* in Templeton.[20]

Schmitz sees satires like Twain's *The Gilded Age*, Adams' *Democracy* and Cooper's *Home as Found*, as an outgrowth or reaction to the perceived corruption of American politics which occurred during the Jackson years. Tony Tanner, in his essay, 'The Lost America - The Despair of Adams and Twain', similarly sees parallels to be drawn between Adams and Twain. In part the disillusion and ultimate despair of these two

writers could be attributed to personal tragedy. For Twain there was the agony of Livy, the death of Suzy Clemens, and the humiliation of bankruptcy. Adams did not personally suffer bankruptcy, but his family did, and his wife Clover committed suicide. Nevertheless Tanner argues that these two writers demonstrate a despair, not of personal bereavement but of country, and ultimately of man:

> If these two were alone in their disillusion and despair one might be inclined to put it down to a personal perversity of vision. But the evidence is all the other way. One can trace a spectrum of complaint throughout the age...A man less like Adams than Whitman never lived and yet the former would have supported Whitman's complaint that 'the element of the moral conscience, the most important, the vertebrae to State or man, seems to me either entirely lacking, or seriously enfeebled or ungrown'.[21]

Since the abandonment of a providential frame in works of satire, the moral and political have been inextricably interwoven in American satire. The political disenchantment noted by Smitz and Tanner, and the despair of America evidenced by the absence of optimism in the Misspelt Letter satires, brings forth a group of satires in the post-Civil War period which, by American satiric standards, could be designated in Frye's terms, 'satire of the high norm'.[22] In satires of this type, even common sense or the reality of the senses, taken for granted in former attitudes, now becomes suspect. The world is shown to be fragmented, disordered and grotesque. In these satires political despair is matched by a corresponding moral despair, and the satirist, in the words of the twentieth century Nathaniel West, can only 'point to where the smoke is coming from.'[23]

The satire which gave the period its name, Twain's *The Gilded Age*, was published in 1873, although dated 1874. It was written in

collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner (1829-1900).[24] The work owes some debt to Twain's much admired contemporary Charles Dickens, and Richard Church has observed that Colonel Eschal Sellers, 'who is the most memorable character in *The Gilded Age*, has a lively resemblance to Mr Micawber'.[25] The structure of the work with its elaborate plot, and abrupt switching from one theme to another, also indicates the influence. As with earlier American satires, however, form may be influenced, but the satiric concerns of *The Gilded Age* are wholly American. Before Twain's own father died in 1847, he bought at a peppercorn price, some 75,000 acres near Jamestown. The fairy-tale belief that the land was rich in minerals sustained the family for years with the notion that wealth was within their grasp, once the land could be exploited. This was never to happen and *The Gilded Age* opens with the Hawkins family moving from Tennessee to the Missouri settlement which is the current speculative project of Col. Sellers. The themes of the work are wholly concerned with the false optimism engendered by the speculative rush for wealth which took place in America during a period which saw the rise of the 'robber barons'. The illusory nature of the quest for wealth is captured in Twain's style. Following the path of many an American pioneer, the Hawkins family head west and, confronted by a vast expanse of America are, not unnaturally, driven to romanticize and idealize the landscape:

> The little company assembled on the log were all children (at least in simplicity and broad and comprehensive ignorance), and the remarks they made about the river were in keeping with the character; and the solemnity of the scene before them, and by their belief that the air was filled with invisible spirits and that the faint zephyrs were caused by their passing wings... (p.14)

The peace and simlicity of this scene is shattered by the arrival of a train, 'a fierce eye of fire' which is mistaken by the negro Daniel for the arrival of the Almighty:

> "HEAH I IS, LORD, HEAH I IS! De ole niggah's ready, Lord, de ole - "
>
> The flaming and churning steamer was right abreast the party, and not twenty steps away. The awful thunder of a mud-valve suddenly burst forth drowning the prayer, and so suddenly Uncle Dan'l snatched a child under each arm and scoured into the woods...And then, ashamed of himself, he halted in the deep darkness and shouted (but rather feebly):
>
> "Heah I is, Lord, heah I is!" (p.15)

Fred Durden has observed that the setting up of reader's expectations with emotive descriptions of landscape, only to deflate them, usually for comic purposes, is typical of Twain's style:

> The typical functioning of his artistic device here is to describe a given landscape in rather ecstatic language, often with vague or general terms, and then to puncture his description with a "dose" of reality...example occurs in *The Innocents Abroad* when Twain defines a rapt view of the Italian horizon, and then adds the "patent applied for" phrase...When employing this device, Twain is consciously reproducing dualities between what appears to be real and what is real, after satirizing romantic hack writers along the way.[26]

The technique similarly creates the characteristic double edge of American satire. Inherent in this parody of Adam's attempt to hide from his God from *The Gilded Age* is another parody, on the Providential American wish to see their land as a New Eden. For Twain, as for the authors of the Misspelt Letters, a providential interpretation of current events was only for the innocent, ignorant or downright superstitious. Daniel's mistake, however, in the 1870's, is understandable.

In *The Gilded Age* faith in the Almighty has everywhere been replaced by faith in money and the machine - 'Eschal Seller's Infallible Imperial Oriental Optic Liniment' (p.54), 'dead loads of peat...tobacco...sassparilla...enough...to fat up all the consumptives in all the hospitals from Halifax to the Holy Land' (p.180), and the modern way to the New Jerusalem is via a not so celestial railroad. As Col. Sellers assures his wife:

> Oh, I warn you my dear, there's a good time coming...That railroads fetching it...don't you see? We've got the railroad to fall back on...(p.181)

In the world of Col. Sellers however, even material objects cannot be relied upon. His clock is 'remarkable': "She'll strike a hundred and fifty, now, without stopping - you'll see" (p.48). Lowly potatoes become 'awe-inspiring agricultural productions' and execrable coffee takes on an improved flavour from the knowledge that 'it was from the private stores of a Brazilian nobleman' (p.51). When Washington accidently discovers that the stove contains nothing but a lighted candle, it is explained that the influence of heat is deadly in nervous organizations: "What you want is the *appearance* of heat, not the heat itself - that's the idea" (p.50).

> The Colonel's tongue was a magician's wand that turned dried apples into figs and water into wine as easily as it could change a hovel into a palace and present poverty into imminent future riches. (p.51)

The Colonel's tongue, in the event, is not so much that symbol of creativity, the magic wand, but rather its reverse, the faulty yardstick which turns everything it touches into dust. The Washington scenes show politicians similarly afflicted with the Colonel's tongue so that any correspondence between fact and idea which might form a

basis for a realistic ideal is wholly lacking in *The Gilded Age*. While confidence abounds, true and sustaining optimism is absent:

> Washington was so dazed, so bewildered - his heart and his eyes had wandered so far away among...such avalanches of coin and currency...that he was now as one who has been whirling round...and all objects a dancing chaos. However, little by little...the poor room lost its glitter and resumed its poverty. (p.56)

In terms of American satire, riches, or Franklin's means to a virtuous end, are become, in Twain's work, an end in themselves. Washington's ideal is wholly material, and this faith placed in materialism, which was attacked in Cooper's satire, renders future events speculative, uncertain and subject to chance. An optimistic view of America's future once used as a means of promoting a realistic ideal is hardly an option in this satire. Thus, unlike former American satires, the work is not overtly corrective even after the misguided manner of Cooper's satire, it is destructive. It suggets that the ideal which would see in America a perfect society made to work, is impossible. In effect, the logical dilemma of a realistic ideal demonstrated by Melville in *The Confidence Man*, is socially exemplified by satires like *The Gilded Age* and *Democracy*. The vision the Americans had of themselves was poetic, and political life in the United States perpetually contradicted that vision. It is, as Long observes, as if:

> The realist in Twain made him a satirist...it was the romanticist and idealist in Twain which made him yearn for perfection and scorn ignobility, but it was the realist in his nature which perceived sham, pretense, and humbug.[27]

In *The Gilded Age* the corrupt politicians are impregnable while the reformers lose at every turn. In Henry Adams' (1838-1918) *Democracy*,

written in 1880, the matter of reform is the most pressing question addressed in Ms Lee's drawing room:

> "Reform such as he wants it is utterly hopeless, and not even desirable."
> Mrs Lee...still pressed her question. "Surely something can be done to check corruption...Is a respectable government impossible in a democracy?"
> "My eply", said Ratcliffe, "is that no representative government can long be much better or much worse than the society it represents. Purify society and you purify the government. But try to purify the government artificially and you only aggravate failure."[28]

The representative nature of American government is evident in Ratcliffe's remarks: 'Purify society and you purify the government'. Ratcliffe himself is viewed by Mrs Lee as a specimen:

> "Half our wise men declare that the world is going straight to perdition; the other half that it is fast becoming perfect...I must know whether America is right or wrong...For I really want to know whether to believe in Mr Ratcliffe. If I throw him overboard, everything must go, for he is only a specimen." (p.45)

The present politicians can be measured against those of the past, particularly Washington who is for Gore, 'Morality, Justice, Duty, Truth...austere, soitary, grand, [and] ought to be deified.' (p.73) Ratcliffe, a man of the present, refutes Gore's view as nostalgic and idealized. For him Washington was a man who fussed too much over trifles, but for Gore realistic detail is legitimately suppressed in favour of the ideal Washington embodies:

> We are not his body servants, and we care nothing aout his infirmities. It is enough for us to know that he carried his rules of virtue down to a pin's point...(p.75)

Washington in these terms, forms a realistic ideal to which all of the politicians who appear in Adams' *Democracy* ought to aspire. Mrs Lee

sees him in terms similar to Melville's 'original character', not as a Drummond light exactly, but:

> "Why was it", she said bitterly to herself, "that everything Washington touched, he purified...and why is it that everything we touch seems soiled?"

The answer to Mrs Lee's question lies with the question asked by Gore before asserting the value of Washington - "Was not this man an abstract virtue?" The answer, of course, is no: Washington represents a realistic ideal asserted via a nostalgic view of the past. In the present real America the realistic detail of political life overwhelms idealism, or worse, renders it absurd.

Ratcliffe is a 'good practical politician' (p.45) and for him winning of the next election is all:

> If virtue won't answer our purpose, we must use vice, or our opponents will put us out of office...(p.76)

Being put out of office, it is assumed, is the greatest evil that can befall, for nothing is greater than party allegiance: "Nothing, except national allegiance." (p.48) Then, once the election is won, there are "dozens of office-seekers...besieging the house; men whose patriotic services in the last election called loudly for recognition from a grateful country." (p.79) Confronted by corruption and desertion of principle, Mrs Lee sees only a political wilderness:

> Where did the public good enter at all into this image of personal intrigue, this wilderness of stunted natures where no straight road was to be found, but only the tortuous and aimless tracks of beasts and things that crawl? (p.92)

Ratcliffe, as the exemplary figure of present political life, cares only for the appearance of virtue: 'one of his stongest reasons for

going to church at all was that he might get an hour or two of undisturbed reflection.' (p.83) For Mrs Lee:

> ...her notion of legislative bodies was vague, floating between her experience at church and at the opera, so that the idea of a performance of some kind was never out of her head. To her mind the Senate was a place where people went to recite speeches...This is a very common conception of Congress; many Congressmen share it. (p.18)

In this world of performance, where appearance is all, the ultimate representatives of the American people, the President and his wife, become lifeless puppets:

> ..they stood stiff and awkward by the door, both their faces stripped of every sign of intelligence, while the right hands of both extended themselves to the column of visitors with the mechanical action of toy dolls...automata, representatives of the society which streamed past them. (p.50)

This droll aping of monarchical forms, devoid of meaning and lacking any sort of objective is seen by Mrs Lee as worse than anything in the 'Inferno':

> it had the effect of a nightmare...She felt a sudden conviction that this was to be the end of American society; its realization and dream at once. (p.51)

As political life is subject to test in the crucible of Mrs Lee, principle after principle is burned away until only gross materialism remains, an endless mechanical acting of the forms of government infused by nothing other than greed.

Given the reprsentative natue of political life it is not surprising to find a mindless and destructive mob overwhelming other aspects of American life in these novels. Mrs Lee, at the beginning of *Democracy*, has despaired of New York society: "What was it all

worth, this wilderness of men and women as monotonous as the brown-stone houses they lived in?" In *The Gilded Age* Twain depicts the death of his younger brother Henry, who was killed in the explosion which destroyed the steamboat *Pennsylvania* in June 1858. For his satire however, Twain adds to the horror of that event by making human brutality and irresponsibiliy its cause. After the appalling explosion the engineer struggles to his feet and curses his own brother:

> "...a ghastly spectacle..." He said; "you were on watch. You were boss. You would not listen to me when I begged you to reduce steam. Take that! - Take it to my wife and tell her it comes from me by the hand of my murderer! Take it - and take my curse with it to blister your heart a hundred years - and may you live so long!"
> And he tore a ring from his finger, stripping flesh and skin with it, threw it down and fell dead! (p.26)

The curse, on this occasion, unlike the one which ended 'The Sot-Weed Factor' in 1708, has no recourse to metaphysical machinery, but depends on one brother living with the full horror of the other's death, knowing himself to have been the cause. The curse in this satire has recourse only to the human heart in which true principle appears to have died. At the end of the novel, Laura, who has murdered Selby for his desertion, and has been acquitted of the charge via a faulty justice system, decides on a new direction and a new beginning:

> The past was sunk below the horizon, and existed no more for her; she was done with it for all time. She was gazing out over the trackless expanse of future now with troubled eyes. Life must begin again...And where to begin? The page was blank, and waiting for its first records...(p.405)

Laura sees her future as wilderness territory, a 'trackless expanse', and views her past in similar terms:

> it was lined with the gilded and pillared splendours of her ambition, all crumbled to ruin and ivy-grown; ...the unresponsive earth had uttered no voice of flowers in testimony that one who was blest had gone that road. (p.405)

Her life now is a Lockean 'tabula rasa', on which she must 'mark her course...and follow it...without swerving through rocks and shoals, through storm and calm...Let the end be what it might, she would mark her course now - today- and follow it.' (p.406) Laura's predicament, the wholly American one of attempting a new beginning without reference to the past, cannot be resolved by the tragic gesture. Ahab-like, she decides to follow her course 'to a haven of rest and peace - or, shipwreck',(p.406) but she abandons the first principles which would invest a tragic gesture with meaning. It is a reflection of the society in which she lives:

> She said that love was not for her - the time that it could have satisfied her heart was gone by and could not return...Love, she said, was a woman's first necessity: love being forfeited, there was but one thing left that could give a passing zest to a wasted life, and that was fame, admiraton, the applause of the multitude. (p.407)

Laura, like Adam's Mrs Lee, has failed to find in Washington, the very heart of democracy, anything worthy of sacrifice, but unlike Mrs Lee, who drifts back to Europe, Laura makes a final attempt to impose meaning on a world devoid of principle. She will settle for fame, applause, and 'a passing zest'. Rather than fame however, Laura has notoriety, and while friends beg her not to persist with her lecture tour: 'her spirit was roused, her ambition was towering now. She was more determined than ever. She would show these people what a hunted

and persecuted woman could do.' (p.408) Her spirit, fed by ambition rather than principle cannot sustain failure. Instead of the expected full house at her first lecture, Laura finds:

> Only a vast, brilliant emptiness...only a handful of coarse men and ten or twelve still coarser women, lolling upon the benches...There was a moment of silence, and then a brutal laugh and an explosion of cat-calls and hisses...The clamour grew stronger and louder...A half-intoxicated man rose up and threw something...She was bewildered; her strength was forsaking her... (p.409)

Outside the lecture venue an even larger insensate mob awaits:

> Upon the pavement she was hustled by the mob; the surging masses roared her name...they thronged after the carriage, hooting, jeering, cursing, and even assailing the vehicle with missiles... (p.410)

A stone wounds Laura's forehead, rendering her as insensate as the mob which pursues her carriage, and, since her decision to chart this particular course was purely intellectual and made without recourse to principle, it could be said that, within the terms of the satire, she has been punished by the mob. The mob, in this sense however, are not the throng of fools and dunces which people the satires of Pope. This mob, as Richard Church suggests, represent:

> another line of potential development in Twain's later work, where as social and political critic he follows both classical and Shakespearean precedent in using mankind in the mass as the equivalent of the indifferent brute force of nature, inert to the hopes of individual genius, reason and spiritual aspiration.[29]

The triumph of the mob in *The Gilded Age* is the triumph of the wilderness over the city and the point is reinforced by the nature of Laura's death:

> The jury of inquest found that death had resulted from heart-disease, and was instant and painless. That was all - merely heart disease. (p.411)

The metaphoric significance of Laura's heart disease is suppressed and the tragic impact of her death denied by the jury's findings. In a world devoid of meaning Laura's death was 'instant and painless. That was all - merely heart disease.'

The problem with mobs in the satires of Twain's America, as opposed to those of Pope's Britain, is of course that they are all members of the voting public. As Adams observes in *Democracy*, while:

> In former days it was not admitted that the devil's servants could by right have any share in government. They were to be shut out, punished, exiled, maimed and burned. The devil has no servants now; only the people have servants. (p.96)

Elsewhere in *Democracy*, Mr Gore, with almost the energy of despair, has declared:

> I believe in democracy. I accept it. I will faithfully serve and defend it. I believe in it because it appears to me the inevitable consequence of what has gone before it. Democracy asserts the fact that the masses are now raised to higher intelligence than formerly. All our civilization aims at this mark. (p.46)

Encapsulated in the latter passage is some remnant of the millenial fervour which pervaded early American satires. Those satires were corrective and intended to goad Americans along the steady road of improvement, ultimately toward perfection, the eventual outcome being guaranteed by the providential framework. Even here Gore refers to democracy as the '*inevitable* consequence of what has gone before', which suggests a force at work beyond human control, and gives this as the reason for his faith. Improvement and possible perfection can be inferred from the notions that 'democracy asserts the fact that the masses are now raised to a higher intelligence than formerly' and that

'all our civilization aims at this mark'. If however, the improvement and the possible perfection of humanity are the humanistic values asserted by democracy and the satires which serve it, then the constant depiction of the mob as mere brute force which occurs in these political satires can only undermine the very values the satire intends to promote. It confirms the status of these works as tragical satires. Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) poses similar questions to *The Gilded Age* and *Democracy* and offers a very similar outcome, as Tony Tanner has observed:

> the novel, as Professor Henry Nash Smith has shrewdly pointed out, is a *roman experimental* and the question at issue is whether republican idealism and nineteenth century technology can redeem society. This in turn poses the question of whether or not man can improve his lot if offered an ideal opportunity; whether indeed, man is perfectable.[30]

Hank Morgan brings to sixth century England a belief in innate goodness and human perfectibility, as well as the economic principles and the technology which would improve the age. The initial philanthropist however, like Timon of Athens, gradually turns misanthropic as he discovers people incapable of improvement and instead of bringing light, Morgan produces a foul holocaust, when idealism fails. As James M. Cox observes, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*:

> holds much the same position in Mark Twain's work that *Pierre* occupies in Melville's...both books reach resolutions involving self-destruction...both works disintegrate into extravagant failures; indeed, their desperate resolutions suggest a desperation behind the fiction...In these works reality and fiction coalesce in such a way that the writer is drawn more and more into his creation until he can end it all only by fighting his way out.[31]

The coalescence of reality and fiction in these works is essentially that of a realistic ideal, in which fact and idea cannot be brought into correspondence. Long observes of Twain that perhaps nowhere in his writing do the realist and idealist meet more abruptly than in 'Those Extraordinary Twins':

> ...a farce of little value except that it exemplifies Twain's methods and attitudes. One twin is an idealist, the other immersed in the material, both unfortunately inhabiting the same body and exemplifying concretely the duality of human nature.[32]

The notion of human perfectibility suggests that correspondence may be possible and is a realistic ideal. It is the paradoxical nature of the notion that lies at the heart of the problems depicted by American satire during this period. In 'The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg' (1900), Twain again probes the nature of the realistic ideal: 'Hadleyburg was in reality an incorruptible town.'[33] The incorruptible town however, proves not only corruptible but unable to recognize virtue or the lack of it from outward signs. All nineteen families in Hadleyburg are proved corruptible when a stranger tempts them with money, but Richards' reputation is saved from public humiliation by the Rev. Burgess in the mistaken idea that Richards had once befriended him. Even the corruptive stranger leaves town believing Richards to be an honest man:

> I am a disappointed man. Your honesty is beyond the reach of temptation...I beg pardon and do it sincerely. I honor you and that is sincere too.[34]

It is not until Richards confesses that the town is 'stripped of the last rag of its ancient glory. Its mourning was not showy but it was deep.'[35] The satirists, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, had lost their optimism, and Twain's famous reply to Howells' praise

of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* perhaps best sums up their attitude: 'Well my book is written - let it go. But if it were only to write over again there wouldn't be so many things left out. They burn in me; and they keep multiplying and multiplying; but now they can't ever be said. And besides, they would require a library - and a pen warmed up in hell.'[36]

The satirist whose pen seems most likely to have been warmed in hell is that of the misanthropic Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914?). Interestingly, during this period of pessimism about America's future, Bierce reverts to an even older form of satire than that of the Jacobean type of tragical satire which characterizes the attack on political life. Bierce's satire is almost pure invective, as Jay Martin has observed:

> The satiric tendency in Bierce is clearly in the vituperative tradition of Archilochus and Juvenal, and contrasts strikingly with the more genial Horatian wit which characterized American humor until the second half of the twentieth century.[37]

Martin depicts Bierce as a humorist, although Bierce seems to have considered himself a satirist. He was aware of the conflict between the Horatian and Juvenalian modes of satire, and wrote of a reviewer who criticized him for indelicate humor:

> O, certainly [humor] should be "delicate". Every man of correct literary taste will tell you it should be "delicate"; and so will every scoundrel who fears it...A man exposed to satire must not be made unhappy - O dear, no! He must find it very good reading...Don't mangle the man like that coarse Juvenal, and that horrid Swift, but touch him up neatly, like Horace or a modern magazinist.[38]

In effect however, although Bierce liked to think of himself as working in the tradition of Juvenal, Swift, Pope and Rabelais, his tendency is to rail rather than satirize. The heavy use of sarcasm in the passage quoted above is not untypical, and on his own admission, he was "an abuser".[39] In *The Devil's Dictionary* his style is terse and epigrammatic: the mode stands in the tradition of Protestant proverbalism, but Bierce's definitions reveal a view of humanity so unexpectedly bleak, as to be genuinely witty:

> POSITIVE, adj. Mistaken at the top of one's voice.
> LEARNING, n. The kind of ignorance distinguishing the studious.
> HYPOCRITE, n. One who, professing virtues that he does not respect, secures the advantage of seeming to be what he despises.
> TRUTHFUL, adj. Dumb and illiterate.[40]

The Devil's Dictionary which was begun in 1881, and continued until 1906, was originally published under the title *The Cynic's Word Book*. Although Bierce claims that he 'had not the power to reject nor the happiness to approve' (p.188) it, the title is not inept. The work lacks any informing cluster of values which would allow the author to curse, as opposed to rail. On Oscar Wilde, Bierce is similarly scathing:

> And so with a knowledge that would equip an idiot to dispute with a cast-iron dog, an eloquence to qualify him for the duties of caller on a hog-ranch...this consumate and sarlike youth, missing everywhere his heaven-appointed functions and offices, wanders about, posing as a statue of himself...emitting meaningless murmurs in the blaze of women's eyes.[41]

He is an Apemantus heaping invective upon a human race he despises.

The pure invective form of Bierce's satire produces interesting results in the short stories. In 'A Horseman in the Sky', Bierce explores the idiocy of a Civil War which, in some cases, saw father and son fighting on opposite sides. The moral frame of this story however is so far shrunk as to constitute mere surprise rather than outrage. Druse, who has just shot his own father, is ordered by the sergeant to report:

> "...I order you to report. Was there anybody on the horse?"
> "Yes."
> "Well?"
> "My Father."
> The sergeant rose to his feet and walked away.
> "Good God!" he said. (p.9)

In Bierce all roads lead to death and the interest lies only in how that end is achieved. In 'My Favourite Murder' both the debt Bierce owed to Swift, and his divergence from Swift can be recognized. Bierce begins in elaborately casual tones:

> Having murdered my mother under circumstances of singular atrocity, I was arrested and put upon my trial, which lasted seven years.

The Swift of 'A Modest Proposal' begins in similarly deceptive tones:

> It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town, or travel in the country, when they see the *streets*, the *roads*, and *cabin-doors* crowded with *beggars* of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, *all in rags*...[42]

Swift of course proceeds, with irreproachable logic, to draw us into considering a scheme of diabolical proportions. Bierce uses a similar technique. The judge of the Court of Acquittal in 'My Favourite Murder' remarks that the narrator's murder of his mother was 'one of the most ghastly crimes' that he had ever been asked to explain:

> At this, my attorney rose and said:

> "May it please your Honor, crimes are ghastly or agreeable only by comparison. If you were familiar with the details of my client's previous murder of his uncle you would discern in his later offense...something in the nature of tender forbearance..." (p.793)

The reader is logically beguiled into a consideration of the murder of the narrator's uncle, on the basis of whether it is, or is not, the most atrocious murder of which he or she has ever heard. The logical trap of satire, with its appeal to logic rather than sense is a familiar one, but it is with this matter of technique that similarities between Swift and Bierce end. Bierce lacks the intellectual stature of Swift, so that, although he saw himself as working within a classical satiric tradition, in effect he does not. Bierce, as Martin remarks:

> ...took his basic moral values from the example of antiquity. "To say of a man that he is like his contemporaries is to say that he is a scoundrel without excuse," Bierce observed. "The virtues are accessible to all...Rome was corrupt, but Marcus Aurelius was not corrupt"...Bierce was convinced that the feather of truth in the midst of delusion was permanent and culture-free.[43]

Nevertheless, Bierce does not produce an Augustan type of satire asserting a classical and hierarchical system of ideals, for while Swift's 'A Modest Proposal' is tightly controlled and its attack finely targeted, in spite of the deceptively casual tone. Bierce's logical stance is similar to Swift's, but his tone is so casual that tone usurps sense, and verbal chaos ensues. The narrator discovers that his Uncle belongs to the same order, the Knights of Murder, as himself:

> Here was an opportunity exceeding my wildest dreams - to murder I could add insubordination and treachery. It was what my good mother would have called 'a special Providence'. (p.795)

The narrator's wish to murder his uncle occurs not as a result of vice. It is quite simply what he is going to do, and nor does Bierce have the psychological interest of an Edgar Allan Poe. However horrific the event the language is banal, leading to the annihilation of value. When the narrator tells his Aunt that he intends to murder his Uncle, she hoped 'the best man would win'; and the Aunt's lack of interest mirrors the narrator's lack of motive. Sickening as the murder is, the murderer is as devoid of a reason for its perpetration as the ram which eventually ends his Uncle's life. It is man reduced to animal, and there remains only an obscene joke:

> Altogether, I cannot help thinking that in point of artistic atrocity my murder of Uncle William has seldom been excelled. (p.800)

As Bierce remarked to Nellie Sickler in 1901: "The only originality that you or any modern can hope for is originality of expression - style. No one can think a new thought (that is worth thinking) or feel a new emotion."[44]

Bierce's pessimism about human nature leads his work to a point at which satire can no longer function. It is perhaps a logical outcome for satires which, from the Puritan satires onwards, have been demonstrably optimistic about the capacity of humanity to improve. American satirists have believed in humanity, humanitarian ideals, and the capacity of Americans to enact them. These notions have formed the normative values of their satires. Nevertheless, that optimism was always tinged by a pessimism which began as a trickle but developed as an ever-increasing force. Through the images of wilderness in Tompson, the town scenes of Cooke, the 'gaping crowds' of Freneau, the factious mobs of Trumbull, and in the tragical satires

which surrounded Jacksonian democracy and the Gilded Age, the pessimism of the satires gathered force until its strength undermined the humanitarian ideals the satires were promoting. Bierce's work points the way toward the nihilism of Black Humor:

> a movement without unity, a group of guerillas who huddle round the same campfire only because they know that they are in Indian territory...Desperate men, they have abandoned not only the safety of received opinions, but have also left to the news media the advance positions of satirical shock treatment, charging instead the exposed flanks of undiscovered lands 'somewhere out beyond satire' which require 'a new set of filters' to be seen.[45]

Not that the bleak view of Ambrose Bierce was endorsed in its entirety by American satirists in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Optimism dies hard in America and even Laura in *The Gilded Age*, just before her death, looked longingly back to a period of innocence when fact and idea seemed to correspond:

> Her pride was humbled, her spirit was broken. Her memory found but one resting-place; it lingered about her young girlhood with a caressing regret; it dwelt upon as the one brief interval in her life that bore no curse. She saw herself again in the budding grace of her twelve years...holding confidential converse with the flowers...(p.410)

In Adams' *Democracy* there occurs something of a pragmatic endorsement of the democratic ideal:

> There may be some mistake about a doctrine which makes the wicked, when a majority, the mouthpiece of God against the virtuous, but the hopes of mankind are staked on it; and if the weak in faith sometimes quail when they see humanity floating in a shoreless ocean, on this plank, which experience and religion long since condemned as rotten, mistaken or not, men have thus far floated better by its aid than the popes ever did with their prettier principle; so that it will be a long time yet before society repents. (p.96)

Twain's statement may well amount to no more than nostalgic longing and Adams' may well be weighted too much on the side of realism to form a 'realistic ideal', but even by the end of the nineteenth century, the notion of synthesis between the real and ideal had not been abandoned. Melville, whose Confidence Man exploded the paradox of this notion nevertheless demonstrates that an opposite view could be taken, but it is a view not without difficulties.

Melville draws his example from 'a foretopman of the fleet toward the close of the last decade of the eighteenth century,'[46] In *Billy Budd, Foretopman* (1891) Timon's world is apparently reinstated. The inside narrative begins with the idea of a natural aristocrat, the 'Handsome Sailor':

> With no perceptible trace of the vainglorious about him, rather with the off-hand unaffectedness of natural regality, he seemed to accept the spontaneous homage of his shipmates. (p.198)

The narrator's first example is that of a common sailor:

> ...so intensely black that he must needs have been a native African of the unadulterate blood of Ham. A symmetric figure...his face...beamed with barbaric good humour...At each spontaneous tribute rendered...the motley retinue showed that they took that sort of pride in the evoker of it which the Assyrian priests doubtless showed for their grand sculptured Bull when the faithful prostrated themselves. (p.199)

The pride taken by 'the motley retinue' in the object of their adulation is, in part, a recognition of their own participation in its creation. Like the grand sculptured Bull of the Assyrian priests, the Handsome Sailor is adored by the motley retinue because he exemplifies that part of themselves considered worthy of admiration, and nor is this merely a matter of physical prowess:

> The moral nature was seldom out of keeping with the physical make. Indeed, except as toned by the former, the comeliness and power, always attractive in masculine conjunction, hardly could have drawn the sort of homage the Handsome Sailor in some examples received from his less gifted associates.
> (p.199)

Such a cynosure, with important variations, was the 'welkin-eyed Billy Budd,' and by first placing Billy within the sea-going tradition of a 'Handsome Sailor', Melville effectively frames a story which ends with a seaman's ballad. The frame would seem to fix Billy's position somewhere in a hinterland between the real world substance of his story,[47] and the imaginative and ideal world of myth. The character is created as a nearly perfect combination of physical and substantial beauty harmonized with a moral strength which stems from a natural goodness. Like the Confidence Man, he is an 'original character' by which everything is lit: 'a virtue went out of him sugaring the sour ones' (p.201) so that a rat-pit of quarrels becomes a peaceful forecastle. Unlike the Confidence Man, Billy Budd is so absolutely as he appears that, when he issues a salute to his old ship on his impressment: "And good-bye to you too, old *Rights of Man*" (p.203), it is to be understood that Billy's salutation was:

> yet by no means of a satirical turn. The will to do it, and the sinister dexterity were alike wanting. To deal in double meaning and insinuation of any sort was quite foreign to his nature.
> (p.204)

Billy is illiterate and has an almost Houynhnmhnm inability to speak the thing which is not. Beyond this however Billy seems incapable of comprehending the thing which is not.

Billy brings to the ship *Indomitable* the disposition of a 'child-man' and critics place much emphasis on the *childish* connotations of this phrase. Melville however, appears to stress the paradox. A child's utter innocence, Melville insists, is 'but its blank ignorance, and the innocence more or less wanes as intelligence waxes'. (p.238) Billy, in this respect, is not innocence because he is child-like: 'in Billy Budd intelligence, such as it was, had advanced while yet his simple-mindedness remained for the most part unaffected.' (p.238) Billy lacks an intuitive knowledge of the bad, in much the same way that Timon, in the first part of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* is unable to comprehend that friendship can be fickle, until experience teaches otherwise. Billy similarly lacks experience, his 'years make his experience small,' (p.238) so that, rather than childishly innocent, Billy's natural goodness is both unspoilt and untested:

> To any stray inheritor of these primitive qualities found, like Casper Houser, wandering dazed in any Christian capital of our time the poets famous invocation...of the good rustic out of his latitude in the Rome of the Cæzars, still appropriately holds:
>
> Faithful in word and thought,
> What has Thee, Fabian, to the city brought?
>
> (p.207)

The questions posed by Billy Budd's disposition are two-fold. The first, and most obvious is how natural goodness can survive the complexity of experience in a fallen world. The second is that posed by Melville himself in the discussion of Billy's stammer:

> The avowal of such an imperfection in the Handsome Sailor should be evidence not alone that he is not presented as a conventional hero, but also that the story in which he is the main figure is no romance.
>
> (p.208)

In what sense could Billy be an unconventional hero?

To see Billy Budd as an unconventional hero is perhaps to question those critics for whom discussion of Billy Budd centres upon the assumption that the story, in spite of Melville's denial, is a romance or allegorical representation of some universal truth. Evidence abounds for views which see this tale as a parable of good and evil, a re-working of Adam's fall, or as a myth of ritual killing and resurrection. These readings however, depend in turn on the notion that Billy is, in all the ways which matter, a conventional hero. Fagle, in *'Billy Budd*: The Order of the Fall' states that:

> *Billy Budd* is a tragedy, in that it presents an action of great magnitude which develops a dilemma insoluble without the loss of one good in the preservation or achievement of another...We sympathize with Vere, but such is the complexity of the considerations that we are not quite sure that he has chosen rightly...There is a tragic reconciliation, however, for the memory of Billy lives on as a Christ of the sailors, as a bright spot of meaning and hope against a dark background.[48]

Fagle is concerned to emphasize the large and affirmative elements of *Billy Budd* and in these terms, given harmony between physical and moral being embodied by Billy, it could be argued that Billy forms something of a realistic ideal. That as the epitome of all that is human and yet innocent for the American satires in which such figures might appear, he could represent a means of reconciling the inherent paradox of a realistic ideal. Readings like this, however, make of Billy Budd a *new* hero, but not the unconventional one that Melville seems to suggest.

In some respects opposed to the views of Fagle and others is that of Warner Berthoff in his article 'Certain Phenomenal Men: The Example of Billy Budd'. He argues that:

> *Billy Budd* is indeed full of quickening intimations as to the larger, the perhaps universal circumstance of human life - intimations which are typical of Melville's imagination...But the decisive narrative logic and cogency of the story...are to be found in an effort which Melville characteristically troubled to furnish precise words for, the effort to "define and denominate certain phenomenal men." (Ch.11)"...and make authoritative example of the character manifested in them..."[49]

Berthoff goes on to argue that the 'quickening intimations' of Melville's prose are not atypical of nineteenth century prose, and are placed at the service of explication. Melville's main concern in *Billy Budd* is to have us know the phenomenal quality of character in Vere and Billy, their 'magnanimity'. The questions raised by Berthoff's essay are interesting, for, as he himself states:

> The question is not only, what does Melville do in *Billy Budd* but, what kind of a writer is he?[50]

There is no clear and simple answer to this question. Melville's style is abundant and energetic and on occasions poetic. Certainly it partakes of nineteenth-century prose in a general way, and the long shadow of Carlyle is often evident, but wherein lies his decisive virtue? Berthoff argues that:

> the decisive virtue in Melville's best writing is its insistent thrust toward entire explicitness, an unstinting exactness...[51]

Certainly this seems to be Melville's concern in relation to *Billy Budd*. The method of characterization is diffuse, but pushes toward precise definition. The physical description of Billy supports this

view. Billy is 'young', but 'looked even younger' - this is 'owing to a lingering adolescent expression' - 'all but feminine purity' - 'something analogous to that of a rustic beauty...brought into competition with the high-born dames of the court' - 'Cast in a mould peculiar to...those Englishmen [of] the Saxon strain' - 'that humane look of reposeful good-nature which the Greek sculptor...gave to his heroic strongman, Hercules. But this again was subtly modified...' (p.205), and so on. Given that, as Berthoff suggests, Melville, in common with so many major American writers, is an explainer, and that: 'what he was moved to express he found words for - with a thoroughness and consistency',[52] then any inquiry into the nature of Billy Budd must begin with the assumption that Melville tries to tell us, as best he can. That is if as Richard Chase has suggested, the 'mindless innocence of Billy Budd' renders that character 'not quite adequately conceived for the part he is supposed to play...that is, of innocence and generosity in tragic collision with the rigid proscriptions of society' it may not be entirely satisfactory to suggest that 'the idea of Billy Budd appeared so overwhelmingly moving to the aged Melville that he was not able to express it in artistically cogent language.'[53]

It is true, as Richard Chase suggests, that there are contradictory elements in the character of Billy Budd:

> he is, for example "innocent" yet he has had "experience". We ought to desire the tragic writer to show us innocence as it has survived or been produced by experience, by knowledge of life.[54]

Melville, however, does seem to show us 'innocence as it has survived' in the character of Billy Budd, for Billy's mindlessness appears to take a specific form. He consistently fails to comprehend the

ambiguities and use of language: 'The will to it and the sinister dexterity were alike wanting'. (p.204) Billy is illiterate, 'by no means of a satirical turn' and his stammer, in this sense, seems symbolic. (p.204). His effect upon others is entirely due to a kind of symbiosis: 'not that he preached to them or said or did anything in particular'. (p.201) Melville states, when describing Billy's 'occasional liability to vocal defect' (p.204) that:

> In this particular Billy was a striking instance that the arch-interpreter, the envious marplot of Eden, still has more or less to do with every human consignment to this planet earth. In every case, one way or another, he is sure to slip in his little card...

In the instance of Billy Budd, the card of the arch-interpreter seems to have taken the form of having not more to do with Billy, but less. On Billy's impressment, Captain Gravelling relates how the 'bluffer of the gang', not captivated by Billy, mockingly designated him a 'sweet and pleasant fellow' and tried to provoke arguments:

> Billy forbore with him and reassured with him in a pleasant way - he is something like myself, Lieutenant, to whom aught like a quarrel is hateful - but nothing served. (p.202)

It is only when Billy feels the insulting dig in the ribs that he loses his temper:

> I dare say he never meant to do as much as he did, but anyhow he gave the burly fool a terrible drubbing. (p.202)

Captain Gravelling's story demonstrates his own participation in the creation of Billy's goodness. Because Billy does not quarrel, he is forbearing, 'something like myself', and when Gravelling witnesses Billy giving the 'bluffer of the gang' not one blow to teach him a lesson, but 'a terrible drubbing', it is probable that 'he never meant

to do as much'. As is remarked elsewhere 'Billy in many respects was little more than a sort of upright barbarian' (p.207). In this passage what is assessed as virtue, forebearance, seems to be ignorance of insult until felt as a dig in the ribs. Similarly, Billy fails to understand the after-guardsman's intimations of a plot among the impressed men:

> Shrewd ones may...think it but natural in Billy to set about sounding some of the other impressed men in order to discover what basis...there was for the emissary's obscure suggestions as to plotting disaffection aboard...But something more, or rather, something else than mere shrewdness is perhaps needful for the due understanding of such a character... (p.241)

If Billy does not understand the emissary's obscure suggestions, there is no possibility of his accurately perceiving Claggart's 'mute aspects toward him' (p.24) Even the rest of the ship's company fail to recognize the grimace which accompanies Claggart's equivocal words when Billy spills soup on him:

> "Handsomely done, my lad! And handsome is as handsome did it too"...everybody taking his remark as meant for humorous, and at which therefore as coming from a superior they were bound to laugh "with counterfeited glee" acted accordingly; and Billy, tickled, it may be, by the allusion to his being a Handsome sailor, merrily joined in...

It is not until Claggart overtly and openly lies to Billy's face. accusing him of mutiny, that Billy comprehends, but again the absence of the 'arch-interpreter' makes himself felt and Billy hits out.Billy's innocence seems to have survived, in spite of his experience, because his intelligence 'such as it was' (p.238) fails to comprehend evil as it is most often manifested in civilized society, by look, by innuendo, and in the use or abuse of the word.

It is true that Billy dies almost blameless, and as Chase remarks: 'In this sense, the theme of *Billy Budd*, as of Melville's *Typee*, and, indeed, as of the sacrament of communion, is the ritualistic sacrifice of the hero.'[55] Nevertheless, if hero he is, Billy is an unconventional one. It is usually expected that a hero will have sufficient intellect to identify moral categories, but if Billy's apprehension of evil is, to say the least, limited, then his apprehension of good is similarly so. Ideas of goodness in Billy are endowed upon him by others: Captain Gravelling's notion of forbearance in him, and Captain Vere's exclamation on Claggart's death: "Struck dead by an angel of God. Yet the angel must hang." (p.252) Billy's own ideas of right behaviour seem to stem from a healthy fear of authority:

> When Billy saw the culprit's naked back under the scourge gridironed with red welts and worse...Billy was horrified. He resolved that never through remissness would he make himself liable to such a visitation, or do or omit ought that might merit a verbal reproof. (p.222)

When Billy is asked why Claggart lied so maliciously: 'At that question, unintentionally touching on a spiritual sphere, wholly obscure to Billy's thoughts, he was nonplussed...' (p.257). When confronted with the only moral dilemma that he actually comprehends in the course of the novel, that of having to turn 'informer against one's own shipmates' (p.257) or lie, he sacrifices the abstract, truth, to expediency: 'This with the blind feeling now his, that nothing really was being hatched, prevailed with him. When the answer came it was negative.' (p.257) Abstract morality means little to Billy and he is unable to conceive of the thought of salvation or a Saviour:

> Billy listened, but less out of awe or reverence, perhaps, than from a certain natural politeness; doubtless at bottom regarding all that in much the same way that most mariners of his class take any discourse, abstract or out of the common tone of the workaday world...not wholly unlike the way in which the pioneer of Christianity full of transcendent miracles, was received...by any superior *savage* so called - Out of natural curiosity he received but did not appreciate. It was like a gift placed in the palm of an outstretched hand upon which the fingers do not close. (p.271)

Quite what this makes of Billy's final words: "God bless Captain Vere", it is difficult to say, but the reaction of the crew comes:

> Without volition, as it were, as if indeed the ship's populace were the vehicles of some vocal current-electric, with one voice, from alow and aloft, came a resonant echo - "God bless Captain Vere!" And yet at that instant Billy alone must have been in their hearts, even as he was in their eyes. (p.273)

Billy's benediction may well be similarly 'without volition, as it were' for in Billy's character there is nothing which could make of it a moral affirmation: 'as elsewhere said, a barbarian Billy radically was.' (p.270) Indeed, mindless innocence seems precisely the part Melville expected Billy to play. Such affirmation as occurs in *Billy Budd* occurs not as a direct result of Billy's innate character, but indirectly in the creative acts of his fellow seamen, his captains and the narrator.

Ultimately, of course, words can confound as well as clarify and as William York Tyndall remarks:

> The words of *Billy Budd* carry more than denotation. "Sinister dexterity" at once witty and desolating, sounds like something from *Finnegan's Wake* where, indeed, it reappears.[56]

The narrator's constant use of biblical and classical metaphor and images draws the reader to assess the innocence of Billy within a framework of religious experience. A resurrection, a translation into myth is required, but in the work it is the ambiguities which abound. Vere's last words "Billy Budd, Billy Budd" (p.278) are ambiguous. Do they denote regret, self-realization, or remorse? Like Billy's benediction it cannot be known but, caught up in metaphor and allusion, the reader struggles to endow meaning, as do characters in the novel. After Billy's phenomenal death, three differing versions of the phenomenon are offered. The ship's surgeon insists that a hanging is a purely scientific matter:

> any movement following the completed suspension...indicates mechanical spasm in the muscular system. (p.274)

It is recognized that the coldly factual description no more explains the phenomenon of Billy, than the 'Dead Letter Office' explains Bartleby. It is with the feelings evoked by Billy's death which concern us. A report in a naval chronicle endows Billy with evil intent and is an outright distortion:

> ...the extreme depravity of the criminal, appears the greater in view of the character of the victim, a middle-aged man, respectable and discreet... (p.279)

This obvious lie hardly merits the notion of 'sinister dexterity'. It is an obvious evil. More difficult however, is the affirmation of Billy's 'unconscious simplicity' by the sailors, for, paradoxically, this presumably good and creative act is itself marked by 'sinister dexterity'. Billy, who, we are told, 'was wholly without irrational fear' (p.270) of death, is endowed with precisely such fears to create pathos:

> "...they'll lash me in a hammock, drop me deep
> Fathoms down, fathoms down, how I'll dream fast
> asleep" (p.281)

Billy is now a woman's man, for he compares himself, when hung, to the 'Pendant pearl...Like the ear drop I gave to Bristol Molly' (p.281), and Billy, in whom 'sinister dexterity' was quite absent, is now able to pun:

> "Oh, 'tis me not the sentence, they'll suspend.
> Ay, ay, all is up; and I must up too
> Early in the morning, aloft from alow." (p.281)

In affirming Billy as a hero, in the creation of myth, an inevitable dislocation has taken place between the fact and the idea of Billy's character and death. The narrator of the story of Billy Budd similarly frames his story with the tradition of the Handsome Sailor, and the translation of Billy Budd's life into the stuff of myth, emphasizing an aspect of fabulation. Chase suggests that the hanging of Billy Budd, at once a death and a resurrection, affirms that:

> ...in some magical way innocence and beauty still exist in the world, that however evil nature and man may be they are still graced with a kind of minimal creative principle.[57]

Melville, however, seems to suggest, that the creative principle is not the 'genial, liberating grace'[58] of Richard Chase, but rather evidence that:

> the arch-interpreter, the envious marplot of Eden, still has more or less to do with every human consignment to this planet earth. In every case, one way or another, he is sure to slip in his little card, as much as to remind us - I have a hand here. (p.208)

Ironically the character of Billy would seem to demonstrate that the apprehension and perpetration of good requires intellect, a 'sinister

dexterity', which simultaneously annuls innocence. It is with humanity as it was with Claggart:

> in an aesthetic way he saw the charm of it...and fain would have shared it, but he despaired of it. With no power to annul the elemental evil in himself, though he could hide it readily enough, apprehending the good, but powerless to be it... (p.231)

The 'mindless innocence' of Billy Budd may represent an ideal, perfectly harmonized with physical form, but such a figure cannot form a realistic ideal. Billy lacks the elemental and very human evil so obviously there in Claggart, his intellect. It is this which ironically allows him to recognize good. It also gives Claggart power over the word - a gift long associated with the devil in American satire. Satire however, relies in no small measure on a sinister dexterity, so that the embodiment of a realistic ideal would have sent forth a curse from the scaffold.

It is in the work of Mark Twain that the various strands of American satire fuse into a coherent voice. The paradox of a realistic ideal, and the Jacobean inclusiveness of American satire which led it into the realms of tragical satire, seems to have been intrinsic to Twain's view of life. As Long remarks:

> The aspirations of the romantic [he] knew from his own heart, but the counterbalance of realism prevented his sinking into sentimentality. The true realist in [Twain] saw that this world is made of many shades and moods...until the wide gamut from the ideal height to the sorry dregs of animal naturalism are encompassed.[59]

In Twain's satire this combination of the real and ideal, leads to a technique evident in American satire from 'Our Forefather's Song' onwards, that is one of allowing a realistic description in spare

plain prose to make silent comment upon a particularly perverse aspect of human behaviour. Tyler's treatment of the slave ships in *The Algerine Captive* is typical. Twain described his own method in a letter of the 6th March, 1879,[60] which concerned two juxtaposed chapters of *A Tramp Abroad*. One chapter giving a burlesque account of a French duel would:

> follow a perfectly serious description of 5 very bloody student-duels which I witnessed in Heidelberg one day - a description which simply *describes* the terrific spectacle, with no jests interlarded and no comments added. The contrast between that chapter and the next one...will be the silent but eloquent comment.[61]

In terms of the normative values of American satire, this combination of realism and idealism leads to a satire which essentially asserts realistic and humanistic ideals, in a tone which, if the works are not to stray into the realm of tragical satire, must allow of human frailty. Twain is the true heir to those satirists like Tyler, Seba Smith, and particularly Irving who ridiculed humanity out of vice and folly in tones which allowed of some human imperfection and the possibility of improvement. Twain's tendency to fall into a simple burlesque is very apparent throughout his work, and even in a satire such as 'The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg' in which the final apocalyptic town scene suggests that humanity is incapable of virtue,[62] Twain is able to end with something akin to ironic optimism:

> By act of the Legislature - upon prayer and petition - Hadleyburg was allowed to change its name...and leave one word out of the matter...
>
> It is an honest town once more, and the man will have to rise early that catches it napping again.[63]

The town had changed its motto to 'Lead us into Temptation', and in essence a virtue tested and tempered by experience lies at the base of humanistic values embraced by Twain in his satires. In a passage later deleted from *Life on the Mississippi* Twain discusses the travel book written by Mrs Trollope[64] and his reasons for admiring her work, generally disliked in America, perhaps exemplify his own views about tone and value in satire:

> Of all those tourists I like Dame Trollope best. She found a 'civilization here which you, reader, could not have endured'...Mrs Trollop spoke of this civilization in plain terms - plain and unsugared, but honest and without malice, and without hate. Her voice rises to indignation, sometimes, but the object justifies the attitude...She was holily hated for her 'prejudices'; but they seem to have been simply the prejudices of a humane spirit against inhumanities, of an honest nature against humbug, of a clean breeding against grossness; of a right heart against unright speech and deed.[65]

In Twain's remarks about Mrs Trollope the hallmarks of those American satires which have been admired in America can be recognized. The tone is 'honest', but without 'malice', it carries the message of the 'humane spirit' against 'inhumanities', and the voice speaks in 'plain terms'. In Twain's work the voice speaking in plain terms represents perhaps his greatest contribution to American letters and to American satire. T.S. Eliot wrote of Twain in 1953 that he:

> ...reveals himself to be one of those writers...who have discovered a new way of writing, valid not only for themselves but for others. I should place him...with Dryden and Swift, as one of those rare writers who have brought their language up to date, and in so doing, 'purified the dialect of the tribe'.[66]

Eliot's point of comparison, with Dryden and Swift, is interesting, suggesting some sort of interdependence between the fixing of the language and the fixing of the 'cultural values of the tribe'

essential for satire. In Twain, it is fair to say, American satire becomes truly American. Lionel Trilling has remarked of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, that Twain could scarcely have estimated the work for what it is: 'one of the world's great books and one of the central documents of American culture'.[67]

In the character of Huck Finn, Twain created America's most enduring exemplary figure. His narrative, like those of early Puritans, is essentially one of the spirit exemplified by the physical journey, afloat on a raft down the Mississippi. The 'mostly true book, with some stretchers' (p.1) created a figure both human and ideal. At home in a realistic and often dangerous landscape Huck nevertheless embodies the truths of moral passion which every good satire demands. For Twain this truth is often an expression of humanistic values in a cruel and uncaring world. As the Duke and the King set out to swindle the Wilks girls out of their inheritance, Huck observes their performance with disbelief stemming from real disgust:

> "Well, if ever I struck anything like it, I'm a nigger. It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race." (p.210)

As Twain remarked, and as Trilling reiterates:

> No one...sets a higher value on truth than a boy. Truth is the whole of a boy's conscious demand upon the world of adults. He is likely to believe that the adult world is in a conspiracy to lie to him, and it is this belief...that arouses...all boys to their moral sensitivity, their everlasting concern with justice, which they call fairness.[68]

The boy's concern with 'Truth' is perhaps no more than a demand that fact and idea be brought into correspondence. A naive but realistic ideal. The humanity, fairness, and the innocence embodied in Huck

Finn have become so central to any discussion of the American anti-hero, that to stress these qualities or point to their usefulness for the satirist asserting a realistic ideal, is to repeat a literary cliché. The character of Huck Finn does negotiate the paradox of a realistic ideal. Readers of the novel may imagine Huck's territory as a kind of eternal boyhood, but given his ability to negotiate a realistic landscape and his lack of sentimentality, Huck's boyish innocence does not test credulity as does the 'mindless innocence' of Billy Budd. This is, of course, because Huck's innocence is far from mindless.

The reader is aware from the first page of the novel that a lively intelligence is at work describing the events, and offering a sometimes not so silent comment upon the society in which he finds himself: 'it was rough living in the house all the time, considering how dismal regular and decent the widow was in all her ways...' (p.1). Trilling suggests that Huck 'always expresses himself better than he can know'[69] This suggests that a satiric control is evident in the text which allows us to smile at the dismal regularity and decency of the widow's habits, while simultaneously shaking our heads over the things boys say. The narrative voice of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is so consistent as to deny the reader this kind of superiority. It is suspected that Huck does know: that his remarks and his decisions are based on an abundant capacity, so lacking in Billy Budd, to perceive the motivation and will of others:

> She told me all about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there...She got mad, then,...*she* was going to live so as to go to the good place. Well, I couldn't see no advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind I wouldn't try for it. But I never said so, because it would only make trouble, and wouldn't do no good. (p.3-4)

Huck's recognition of the uselessness of arguing with another's dogma does perhaps bespeak a capacity of perception beyond his years but, realistically speaking, it is a capacity not altogether uncommon in an intelligent child who has learnt the hard way how to placate a violent and unpredictable parent: "I used to be scared of him all the time, he tanned me so much." (p.23) In these terms it can be recognized why Twain might have written to his friend William Dean Howells:

> By and by I shall take a boy of twelve and run him on through life (in the first person) but not Tom Sawyer - he would not be a good character for it.[70]

Given the satiric concerns that Twain expresses in his admiration for Mrs Trollope - those of a humane spirit against inhumanities, of an honest nature against humbug, and most important, of a right heart against unright speech and deed - it is accurately observed by Walker that Twain's:

> best invention...is the flexible authentically vernacular voice of Huckleberry Finn, which particularly warrants William Dean Howells' comments on the fluidity of his style: "So far as I know, Mr Clemens is the first writer to use in extended writing the fashion we all use in thinking, and to set down the thing that comes into his mind without fear of favour of the thing that went before or the thing that may be about to follow." His chief vein is satire...[71]

The importance of the American vernacular in expressing an American cultural identity is self-evident. Beyond this, that which has always differentiated the trickster or 'confidence man' from the exemplary figure in American satire has ultimately depended upon a recognition of the use or the abuse of language. The confidence man abuses language in order to deceive: the exemplary figure uses language as an expression of reality, keeping a close correspondence between fact and idea. It follows that a voice which sets down the thing that comes to

mind without fear or favour will best serve the realistic ideals of American satire. Implicit in such a voice is silent comment upon the disparity between fact and idea elsewhere. The voice of innocence of itself however is not enough, for as shown by Melville in *Billy Budd*, abstracts such as good and evil are inconceivable without intelligence. It is then, the flexibility of Huck's voice as it is informed by his intelligence which makes of it the voice of a satirist. In short, Huck's moral growth is matched in the novel by an ever-increasing power over the word.

The inapplicability of received authority to Huck's world is demonstrated early in the novel via the banal theology of the widow: 'she...learned me about Moses...and I was in a sweat to find out all about him; but...she let it out that Moses had been dead a considerable long time; so then I didn't care no more about him; because I don't take no stock in dead people." (p.2) A similar demonstration occurs with regard to the romantic illusions of Tom Sawyer. On being told of magicians and genies, Huck says:

> "I got an old tin lamp and an iron ring and went out into the woods and rubbed and rubbed...but it warn't no use, none of the genies come. So then I judged that all that stuff was only just one of Tom Sawyer's lies. I reckoned he believed...but as for me I think different." (p.17)

Huck does not leave the civilized world however until he has learnt to read, write and spell a little. These new-found skills have a direct relationship to Huck's first moral victory, that over his father:

> "I used to be scared of him all the time...I reckoned I was scared now, too;...but right away after, I see I warn't scared of him worth bothering about."

Huck's new-found stature is quickly sensed by his father and directly attributed to his schooling:

> "Your mother couldn't read...before she died...None of the family couldn't, before *they* died. I can't...Say - lemme hear you read." (p.24)

Huck is able to stand his ground with his father on this occasion so that when the question is asked: "Why there ain't no end to your airs - they say you're rich. Hey? - how's that?" (p.25), Huck is able to answer in flat, terse tones: 'They lie - that's how." Then, given his father's antipathy to schooling, Huck senses the power it gives him:

> "I didn't want to go to school much, before, but I reckoned I'd go now to spite pap." (p.29)

Huck is, of course, more intelligent than his drunken father, so that even when physically imprisoned he is able to plan an escape. With a symbolic death and re-birth into the natural world, Huck shrugs off the last vestiges of received authority and sets out on his own.

Huck's entry into the magical universe comes, in the first instance, not via the word of received authority, but via the primitive folklore of Jim. Huck has always been disposed to order his world with signs and potents:

> "I felt so lonesome I most wished I was dead. The stars was shining, and the leaves rustled in the woods ever so mournful; and I heard an owl, away off, who-whooing about somebody that was dead...Pretty soon a spider went crawling up my shoulder, and I flipped it off and it lit in the candle...it was all shrivelled up...an awful bad sign...I got up and turned around in my tracks three times and crossed my breast every time." (p.4)

It is however Jim who teaches Huck that seeing young birds skip is a sign of rain, or that bees must be told when their owner dies, or that it was the worst bad luck in the world to touch a snake skin. When the omen read in the young birds eventuates, and there is a terrible storm, or when Huck kills a snake and puts it on Jim's bed for a joke, so that its mate coils round it and bites Jim, we see that Jim's signs and omens work. It raises his stature, and when Jim has a folk cure for snake bite that actually works, it is, as Daniel G. Hoffman has observed:

> When Jim's omens come true he is no more a gullible supplicant to witches. He is a magus now, a magician in sympathetic converse with the spirits that govern...the world of things and men...medicine man, free to control - within mortal limits - his universe.[72]

Robert C. Elliot has demonstrated the affinity of magic ritual with the origins of satire:

> The motives behind the practice of magic are simple, Freud believed: they are human wishes, and magic is no more...than the projection of the human will..."All magic," says Payl Radin, "consists in the coercion of an object so that it will comply with the wishes and desires of the performer." But before the object can be coerced there must be unconditional belief in the power of the coercer's will to achieve its end.[73]

Distance of course is of no importance in thinking and nor is time, so that behind the practice of magic lies a will, assumed to be omnipotent and operating a cause and effect relation independently of time and space, which is known to be effective. Behind all satire lies the power of the will, manifested in sophisticated societies by the power of the word to create action in the real world. It is a means of imposing order so that Hoffman is able to assert that: 'hero of his own magic...The fear-ridden slave becomes in the end a source

of moral energy.'[74] No one would wish to deny Jim's role as true father and moral guide to Huck Finn. It is through him that Huck finally abandons the deformed conscience of the civilized world. Huck however gains control over the word alongside his moral growth which can be demonstrated by a re-consideration of Huck, working himself up to 'humble [himself] to a nigger.' (p.105)

The basis of Huck's meanness to Jim on this occasion lies with his ability to tell a good 'stretcher'. Like the narrator of any American tall-story, a poker-faced Huck manages to convince Jim that there has been no fog, no mix up among the islands, and that they didn't both almost drown. Huck continues the deception. He allows Jim not only to believe that he has had "de powerfullest dream...En I han't ever had no dream o'fo' dats tired me like dis one", (p.104) but also allows the joke to continue long enough for Jim to "start in and 'terpret it" (p.104). By the time Jim realizes that he has been taken, the joke has gone too far for anything other than humiliation: "Dat truck dah is *trash*; en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head or dey fren's en makes 'em ashamed." (p.105) The telling of a good stretcher, as has been noted, can be used to create community, or to gain entry to a community already in existence. Huck has used his stretcher, not as a means of gaining entrance into a community, nor even to establish hierarchy in a community already in existence. In social terms, Huck already views himself as Jim's superior. His stretcher has been used to humiliate not an enemy, but a friend, it has been used to fracture a community of which he was already a member. It is a clear abuse of the art of story-telling for which Huck becomes, justifiably, sorry. The incident occasions moral

growth, but Huck also seems to learn the proper use of a good stretcher.

Frank Baldanza[75] has noticed the rhythmic patterns which occur in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, whereby an earlier incident is repeated with subtle variations later in the text. The description of Twain's method for the two juxtaposed chapters which describe duelling scenes in *A Tramp Abroad* suggests that these contrapuntal repetitions may be deliberate, as Walter Blair remarks.[76] The occasion of Huck's abuse of the 'stretcher' is followed by other examples of the American word game. In the Raftmen's episode Huck is first witness to an American practice not dissimilar to flyting, although the object is to frighten one's opponent rather than shame them. Two of the raftsmen, spoiling for a fight, begin to call each other:

> "Look at me! I take nineteen alligators and a bar'l of whisky for breakfast...a bushel of rattlesnakes and a dead body when I'm ailing! I split the everlasting rocks with my glance, and I squelch thunder when I speak..."
>
> "Whoo-oop! bow your neck and spread, for the kingdom of sorrow's a-coming...I'm a child of sin...Don't attempt to look at me with the naked eye...I scratch my head with the lightning...
> (p.110)

On this occasion the proliferation of fighting words are ended by a little black-whiskered chap who means what he says:

> "Come back here, you couple of chicken-livered cowards, and I'll thrash the two of ye!"
> And he done it, too. (p.111)

After this Ed tells the story of the baby Charles William Allbright who was murdered by his father and put in a barrel. The barrel

haunted the raft on which his father worked, until in the third year the barrel was brought aboard and the father confessed:

> They started to get a boat out to take him ashore and lynch him, but he grabbed the little child...and jumped overboard with it hugged to his breast and shedding tears... (p.119)

Ed's story is disbelieved and its artistic substance ruined by an excessive concern with realistic detail:

> "*Who* was shedding the tears?"
> "Why, Allbright, of course...the baby was dead...how could it cry?"
> "...Never mind how it could cry - how could it *keep* all that time?" ...
> "Say - what did they do with the bar'l?"
> "What was the brand on that bar'l?"
> "Say Edwin, was you one of the men that was killed by the lightning?" (p.119)

The refusal to accept Ed's story in effect places Ed outside of the group. He loses credibility and eventually walks off 'cussing' while the other men jeer and laugh at him. Thus, when Huck is discovered in his hiding place among the water-melons and is in fear of a beating he manages to extricate himself by topping Ed's story. Huck's stretchers begin slowly:

> "...How long have you been aboard here?"
> "Not over a quarter of a minute..."
> "How did you get dry so quick?"
> "I don't know, sir. I'm always that way mostly."
> "Oh you are, are you? What's your name?
> I warn't going to tell my name. I didn't know what to say, so I just says:
> "Charles William Allbright, sir."
> Then they roared - the whole crowd...
> When they got done laughing, Davy says:
> "It won't hardly do, Charles William. You couldn't have growed this much in five year, and you was a baby when you come out of the bar'l, you know, and dead at that. Come, now, tell a straight story, and nobody'll hurt you..." (p.121-22)

On this occasion Huck's stretcher is so self-evidently a lie that it passes for wit, and gains him entrance into a community which might otherwise have done him harm. It is language used rather than abused. This group of contrapuntal repetitions ends with Huck, not inadvertently using the right 'stretcher', but controlling his situation with language. Having given voice to his good heart, rather than his deformed conscience, by claiming that Jim was white when asked by a pair of 'nigger hunters' with guns, he controls the situation by telling the truth as though it were a lie:

> "...Say, boy, what's the matter with your father?"
> "It's the - a - the - well, it ain't anything much."
> "Boy, that's a lie...Answer up."
> "I will, sir...but don't leave us, please."
> (p.126)

The men merely assume the presence of small-pox; the plea of arch-trickster Uncle Remus' Brer Rabbit not to be thrown into the briar patch is recognizable. There, as here, the ability of the weak and powerless to control their situation by outwitting their stronger and more powerful predators casts satirical comment on the way of the world, when those with power are so easily bested.[77]

Throughout the novel abuse of language enables vice and folly to persist. Thus the Grangerford and Shepherdson feud is about chivalry and honour, not murder. Emmeline Grangerford's art and poetry, awash with false sentimentality, is symptomatic of the muddled thinking which the muddled language exemplifies. The king goes to 'work' a camp meeting, not to swindle the people. The travesty of Shakespeare is in '*our* show' according to Huck, but is juxtaposed with the true magic of the circus, so that the reader recognizes the irony. As in Pope's 'Dunciad' dulness abounds and people fall easy victims to the

wiles of Duke and King. As Duke says: "Greenhorns and flatheads." Unlike Pope's 'Dunciad' however, the controlling voice of the satire is not above and beyond the text, an authority, but in true democratic fashion within the text and that voice itself afflicted with human frailty. Huck tells the truth in this world only after considerable thought when trying to save the fortunes of the Wilks' girls:

> "So I went to studying it out...I reckon a body that ups and tells the truth when he's in a tight place is taking considerable many risks...yet here's a case where I'm blest if it don't look to me like the truth is better, and actually *safer*, than a lie." (p.239)

If Huck is an embodiment of humanistic ideals, it is not after the manner of Billy Budd. Huck's plain speaking implicitly makes a silent but eloquent comment on the vast array of swindlers, cheats, liars and hypocrites who form the characters of the novel, but the horrors of perfect alignment between word and deed in this world are exemplified by the shooting of Boggs. Boggs' facts and ideas are so far out of alignment that those who know him translate his words into truth:

> "I wisht old Boggs'd threaten me, 'cuz then I'd know I warn't gwyne to die for a thousan' year." (p.184)

The reverse is true of Sherbourne who means exactly what he says. When he says he will shoot Boggs at one o'clock if his threats continue, Boggs is quietly and calmly shot. Sherbourne's perfect correlation between word and deed do instil fear and allow him to control the mob:

> " - a mob...fight...with courage that's borrowed from their mass, and from their officers. But a mob without any *man* at the head of it, is *beneath* pitifulness." (p.191)

Sherbourne does control the mob, but he does so, as the original illustrations demonstrate, via authority handed down from above, and

through fear. Huck, in true democratic fashion, controls his world from within, by being a better trickster than even the Duke and King. From the beginning Huck knows that "these liars warn't no kings nor dukes, at all, but just low-drawn humbugs and frauds." (p.165) Nevertheless Huck decides to go along with the pretence:

> "If I never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way." (p.165)

To the end of the novel Duke and King never know that they are being *given* their own way, so that when Huck sees:

> the king and the duke astraddle of a rail...all over tar and fethers...[looking] like nothing in the world that was human...[he is] sorry for the poor pitiful rascals...

Huck's forgiveness on this occasion is not born simply from his increase in moral stature, but from his superiority over these two. They were 'poor pitiful rascals'. From the very beginning Huck was a better one.

If part of Huck's development in the course of his adventures is to learn how to control his world via the power of his words to become, as it were, himself the 'arch-interpreter' then the controversial Phelps farm episode becomes not merely an embarrassing appendage, but a crucial testing ground for Huck's new-found powers. Walker has argued that Huck's behaviour in the Phelps episode is 'defensible on grounds of form, consistency and realism'.[78] Huck has throughout the novel missed the addition of Tom Sawyer's 'style'. In the Phelps farm episode it is demonstrable that Huck has developed his own 'style'. Unlike Tom Sawyer he approaches Phelps farm:

> not fixing up any particular plan, but just trusting to Providence to put the right words in my mouth when the time come; for I'd noticed Providence always did put the right words in my mouth, if I left it alone. (p.277)

This is in direct contrast with Tom Sawyer's flair for the grand plan, but, while Huck is prepared to live according to his own conscience, his respect for order and plan is undiminished. This is made apparent by his horror on discovering that Tom, who had 'a character to lose' and his 'family to shame', (p.292) should be prepared to abandon form to the extent of helping to 'steal a nigger'.

> "It was outrageous, and I knowed I ought to just up and tell him so; and so be his true friend, and let him quit the thing right where he was, and save himself. And I *did* start to tell him; but he shut me up..." (p.293)

Huck sees the loss of Tom's social form, as a loss of Tom's self. He justifies his own part in the 'dirty low-down business' by defining himself as 'low-down'. What emerges in the course of the Phelps farm episode is that Huck Finn's re-defined self increasingly creates, via his language, an ironic counterpoint to the socialized and civilized 'style' of Tom Sawyer.

Huck's own plan for Jim's escape is simple and straight forward - too simple for Tom Sawyer:

> "...there ain't nothing *to* it.
> What's the good of a plan that ain't no more trouble than that?...
> I never said nothing, because I weren't expecting nothing different; but I knowed mighty well that whenever he got *his* plan ready it wouldn't have none of them objections to it."
> (p.292)

From the first an impression is gained of Huck's superiority, of his humouring Tom Sawyer, but simultaneously his position of superiority enables him to satirize Tom's efforts. Huck's position of superiority comes from his use of what might be termed a new irony. The incipient absurd hero has had this ability since the Federalist satires of the late eighteenth century, when those figures absorbed the ideals of the 'man of letters'. In Huck this ability has been made manifest and very American. Huck's position of superiority comes from his use of what might be termed a new irony. Where Huck is simple and direct, Tom is elaborate and hopelessly ineffectual:

> "if we don't want picks and shovels what do we want?"
> "A couple of case-knives."
> "Confound it, it's foolish, Tom."
> "It don't make no difference how foolish it is, its the *right* way...And there ain't no *other* way, that I ever heard of, and I've read all the books that gives any information about these things..." (p.304)

As Huck remarks elsewhere: "He was always just that particular. Full of principle." Benjamin DeMott, assessing the role of the Sickniks in the twentieth century as 'effective social satirists' remarks on their use of irony. Irony functions best as an instrument of moral clarification, so that Swift's ironies and ambiguities issue in something more than confusion partly because they are guided by a forceful intellect and partly because the moral language of the eighteenth century was relatively unambiguous. Irony does not, of course, lose its usefulness as a rhetorical mode because value systems are uncertain, but at such times, DeMott observes:

> irony is less useful as a means of sharpening moral issues than as an agent of artificial social cohesion.[79]

The artificial social cohesion created by Tom Sawyer in the Phelps Farm episode is that of a wrongly based ironist.

The ironist is essentially a self-protectionist. Fearing quick assessment he or she adopts a manner which indicates a complexity deeper than words can convey. The talk of the ironist posits two listeners. One listener is witless and incapable of understanding anything other than the public dictionary definition of words, and one is quick enough to understand that the words spoken carry a meaning greater or lesser than their public significance. As DeMott observes:

> ...this implies, quickness alone can be a bond that creates the community: it is not necessary that quickness be accompanied by faith in the good and the true. For even if the unique society created by the ironist and the knowing audience amounts only to a matching off of "high verbal aptitudes" it still has a working principle of exclusion. And the latter, as is well-known, is the *sine qua non* of a working society.[80]

The Puritan dilemma of recognizing saints by externals, and the problems with verbal dexterity exemplified in *Billy Budd* are much in evidence when dealing with the Phelps Farm episode of *Huckleberry Finn*. Tom, via his verbal dexterity, is able to create within the novel a working principle of exclusion. The adults in the novel are no match for the boys when it comes to the matter of counting spoons and linen. Jim is excluded on the basis of ignorance. What Tom's verbal aptitude fails to do is create a knowing relationship with the reader. It is Huck's ironies which do that, and this irony is that of the satirist, for, it would be fair to say that Swift's satires, and the ironies therein, no less than the ironies of Huck Finn, use verbal virtuosity to create an artificial cohesion between reader and satirist. The reader is drawn toward that 'knowing' relationship with

the ironist, to the exclusion of those for whom words have only their public and dictionary meaning. Implicit in that knowing relationship in the case of a satirist like Swift, will be an appeal to the reader's sense of right and wrong. Since wrong will always lie with the group excluded from the knowing relationship, the irony of satire draws the reader to identify with the moral and virtuous, while laughing at the vice and folly of humanity. When the knowing relationship between ironist and audience is created merely by a matching of 'high verbal aptitude' there is no satire. In reality motivation for irony can be difficult to judge, as Melville shows. In a work of American satire no one has ever doubted the faith of the American absurd hero in the good and the true. What has perhaps been too little emphasized is their intelligence and their verbal dexterity. For it is intellect which is used to direct and control the ironies and ambiguities towards coherent issue. It is the absurd hero's intellect and capacity for irony which draws the reader into the knowing relationship essential for satire.

In test after test Huck's new found self is proved superior to the socially created self of Tom Sawyer, Tom's final failure, of course, being the failure of his plan to adapt to the real world, to the extent of physical injury. A trait common to American satire since the days of Father Bombo, and Tom, injured, is proven a false magician:

> "he was for crawling out and setting the raft loose himself; but we wouldn't let him. Then he give us a piece of his mind - but it didn't do no good."
> (p.341)

Tom's words, even his curses, create no action in the real world. His authority was received authority, whereas the new authority for satire comes, democratically, from within the text. Ultimately the satiric voice in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is that of Huck himself. He is the creator of order - he is the author of the tale:

> "so if there ain't nothing more to write about, and I am rotten glad of it, because if I'd a knowed what a trouble it was to make a book I wouldn't a tackled it and ain't agoing to no more."

NOTES

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2 Ranson, Edward and Hook, Andrew. 'The Old South', Ibid., p.95.

3 Ibid.

4 Linneman, William R. 'Southern Punch: A Draught of Confederate Wit', *Southern Folklore*, v.26, 1962, p.132.

5 *Southern Punch*, Aug. 22, 1863, p.2, quoted in Ibid., p.132.

6 Ziff, Lazar 'Songs of the Civil War', *Civil War History*, v.2. Summer, 1956, p.20.

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11 This work was suggested to Lowell by an actual debate following an Aolitionist attempt to gain sympathy for the cause of two men, Drayton and Sayres, whose unsuccessful attempt to free seventy sevel slaves brought down a violent and immediate reaction from states-right forces led by Calhoun. The work includes a number of other senators in the dispute. The Hannegan referred to in this extract is Edward A. Hannegan of Indiana who was an aggressive champion of expansion.

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13 Newell, Robert Henry. 'Orpheus C. Kerr letter LXII, August 15th 1862, Scheme for the Benefit of the Black Race', from Orpheus C. Kerr Papers, 1862-1871, *American Satire in Prose and Verse*, p.213.

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16 Frye, Northrop, *An Anatomy of Criticism*, p.229

17 Smith, Seba (1792-1868) born in Maine, graduated from Bowdoin (1818) and founded the daily *Portland Courier* in 1829.

18 One of the most surprising results of the conscription was the amount of disease disclosed among men between "eighteen and forty-five" in districts where quotas could not be raised by volunteering [Locke's note].

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24 Charles Dudley Warner may have contributed the original idea for *The Gilded Age*. He worked as a railroad surveyor after graduating from Hamilton college in 1851, and the character of Philip Sterling is probably autobiographical. Prompted by the investigation into the shoddy world of high finance during the Reconstruction era, which occurs in *The Gilded Age*, Warner went on to write a trilogy about the immoral use of a great fortune: *A Little Journey in the World* (1889), *The Golden House* (1894), and *That Fortune* (1899). In the final work of the trilogy, a regeneration of values is suggested by the marriage of a daughter, in this family saga, to an honest, but socially undistinguished lawyer, who becomes a journalist.

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34 Ibid., p.156.

35 Ibid., p.161.

36 Quoted from Cox, James M. 'The Machinery of Self-Preservation', p.117.

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38 Quoted from Martin, Jay, Ibid., p.212.

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50 Ibid.

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73 Elliot, Robert C. *The Power of Satire*, p.52.

74 Hoffman, Daniel G. 'Black Magic - and White..' p.110.

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AFTERWORD

"The time has come" the walrus said,
"To speak of manic things,
Of shots and shouts and sealing dooms
Of commoners and kings."[1]

In the early part of the nineteen-sixties, American values seemed defunct. Tom Lehrer turned heterosexuality into the last refuge of the psychotic with his 'Masochism Tango' and audiences hummed to his Al Jolson serenade: "I Wanna Go Back to Dixie" - "Ain't seen a good Lynching in years." Lennie Bruce demonstrated his fondness for childish innocence: "I hit one of those things in the street - waddyacall it, a kid?" The flight from decency and values seemed further confirmed by horror comics, horror jokes, even publications called *Sick* and *Mad*. Thurber admitted:

> Comedy didn't die, it just went crazy. It has identified itself with the very tension and terror it once did so much to alleviate...The *Zeitgeist* is not as crazy as a loon or mad as a March hare; it is manic as a man.[2]

Moral indignation, however, is not an easy thing to relinquish. Kenneth Allsop credited Lennie Bruce[3] with:

> ...a desperate kind of integrity. On occasions he will, in a spasm of disgust, chuck in his assignment to provoke laughs and rail angrily at the audience about an issue that has disturbed him.[4]

Similarly Mort Sahl, who has been credited with the innovation of sick humour, expressed irritation with his imitators in an interview which took place in 1959:

> The difference between me and the sick comics is that they have no point of view...They are trying to panic people into laughing.
> But I believe my attitude is implicit in what I say, no matter how tough it is...

> Some of the things that have happened in America in recent years were due not only to intellectual cowardice but also to lack of heart. I have no time for people who are trying to make us even more heartless.[5]

Clearly Sahl thinks of himself as a satirist but the problem in twentieth century America has been one of definition. An early review of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* charges Heller with using:

> ...nonsense, satire, non-sequiturs, slp-stick, and farce. He wallows in his own laughter, and finally drowns in it. What remains is a debris of sour jokes, stage anger, dirty words, synthetic looniness, and the sort of antic behavior that children fall into when they know they are losing our attention.[6]

James Nagel on the other hand, argues that *Catch-22* is:

> ...demonstrably a satire, essentially a Juvenalian satire which functions within the historical patterns of that form.[7]

Nagel goes on to identify Heller's method as an inversion of the satiric mode employed by Aristophanes in *Lysistrata*:

> Lysistrata emphasizes that a return to the style of life of the recent past, a style clearly defined historically, would be a solution to the problems; whereas in *Catch-22* what seems to be advocated is a movement forward toward some ill-defined yet positive and brave new world.[8]

The structure is not unfamiliar, nor are the normative values of Heller's satire which Nagel identifies. They are typically humanistic:

> ...essentially opposed to war, capitalism, bureaucracy and traditional religion, and in favor of freedom, peace, agnosticism, sex, and life.[9]

These ideals are embodied in the character Yossarian:

> From the beginning it is clear that Yossarian's mind is not in harmony with the established thinking around him. Either he is maladjusted to a

> logical world, or the world is itself insane...But Yossarian is "mad" only in terms of his inability to accept the absurdity of war and in his compulsive desire to remain alive.[10]

The designation of Yossarian as an absurd hero following in the wake of Huck Finn is not, of itself, enough to classify *Catch-22* as a satire. If, as Nagel maintains, the work does create that feeling whereby the 'sympathetic reader, laughing at the satirized subjects, feels himself to be a member of a select aristocracy based on virtue and intelligence' it is necessary to know how this happens. It is necessary to recognize that the American absurd hero is not so much a character as a literary device.

The innate virtue of the American absurd hero is not in doubt, but it is their innate intelligence and their innate superiority which enables American satire to function. Holden Caulfield may be a maladjusted adolescent in a 'phoney world' but he is intelligent enough to recognize that phoniness from the first pages of the novel. Of the advertisement for Pencey School which claims to have been moulding boys into splendid, clear-thinking young men, he comments:

> Strictly for the birds. They don't do any damn more *moulding* at Pencey than they do at any other school. And I didn't know anybody there that was splendid and clear thinking and all. Maybe two guys. If that many. And they probably *came* to Pencey that way.[11]

Inherent in these words are Holden's insistence on some correlation between fact and idea, and his ability to judge an absence of correspondence, as in the case of the advertisement. He is able to assess whether his school friends are splendid and clear thinking which suggests that he is, and there is the sly irony at the expense

of the school - of the two that were splendid and clear thinking - 'they probably *came* to Pencey that way.' If readers do not want to identify with 'the birds', then they must identify with Holden, who, no less than Huck, controls his situation with words, even with a New York taxi driver. When Holden asks where the ducks go to in winter, he stays calm as the taxi driver becomes progressively angrier:

> "It's tougher for the fish, the winter and all, than it is for the ducks, for Chrissake. Use your head, for Chrissake."
> I didn't say anything for about a minute.
> Then I said, "All right. What do they do, the fish and all, when that whole little lake's a solid block of ice..."
> "What the hellaya mean, what do they do?" he yelled at me. "They stay right where they are, for Chrissake."
> "They can't just ignore the ice..."
> "Who's ignoring it? Nobody's ignoring it!"
> Horwitz said..."They live right *in* the goddam ice. It's their nature, for Chrissake. They get frozen right in one position for the whole winter."[12]

By now the taxi driver, under pressure from Holden, has taken a stand he cannot possibly maintain. The fish freezing in one position for the whole winter is not far removed from an American tall story. It only remains for Holden to press the realistic details of the statement: "Yeah? What do they eat, then? I mean, if they're frozen *solid*, they can't swim around looking for *food* and all."[13] Holden always knows what he is doing. Joyce Carol Oates' grotesque parody of the absurd hero similarly demonstrates this trait. Richard, of *Expensive People* constructs a galaxy of misfits for his mother from among his supposed school friends - 'It would never have occurred to me to tell my parents the truth about anything':

> "His mother is an alcoholic and he loves her a lot..."
> "That sounds terrible," Nada said.
> She fixed her eyes upon me, not to see if I was lying - why would I lie? - but to see how far my childish mind has assessed the gravity of the

> situation. I made a habit, in these days, of saying things I couldn't possibly have understood, in my innocence.[14]

The adult version of the form is similarly intelligent. Tod Hackett's credentials as a 'man of letters' is established as soon as *The Day of the Locust* opens. As an army of cavalry pass by on the Hollywood film set, Tod recognizes:

> ...The dolmans of the hussars, the heavy shakas of the guards, Hanoverian light horse...the scarlet infantry of England...the black infantry of the Duke of Brunswick, the French grenadiers...[15]

He is a graduate of the Yale School of Fine Arts and is determined to learn much more: 'despite his race, training and heritage, neither Winslow Homer nor Thomas Ryder could be his masters and he turned to Goya and Daumier.'[16] West's Miss Lonelyhearts reads Dostoyevski.[17] Richard Condon's Osgood Noon in *The Vertical Smile* reads Victor Hugo,[18] and Billy Pilgrim in Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five* graduated from Illium High School in the upper third of his class.[19]

The intelligence of the absurd hero is established early in the work, but often surreptitiously and often belied, as was the position of the satirist in the older authoritative satires. Thus Tod Hackett probably wouldn't have been sent to Hollywood if the talent scout had seen him:

> His large, sprawling body, his slow blue eyes and sloppy grin made him seem completely without talent, almost doltish in fact.[20]

In Condon's *The Vertical Smile*, Ada Clarke appears unable to think about anything other than sex, but on the first page of the novel she observes of her son-in-law about to be nominated to the Senate, that:

> All she had ever been able to say in favor of her son-in-law was that he had a beautiful set of caps on his teeth. If they could run him on a combined Republican-Conservative-Democrat ticket, the Panthers would sweep the election.[21]

Billy Pilgrim's graduation record is given as part of a potted synopsis of his life. The qualifications of Ignatius J. Reilly in Toole's *A Confederancy of Dunces* come via his mother:

> "You can get you a good job. Wait till they see a boy with a master's degree."[22]

And the reader prefers affiliation even with this intelligence, than with the dulness that surrounds it. The controlling intelligence may simply be embedded in the language; the metaphors and images and the allusion used, as in Walker's 'New York: Port Authority'.[23] This hero remembers the 'last elegance with all the trimmings' and 'the fine adieux'. For him the buses are 'demotic Greyhounds, loping in from Albany' and 'Your beast is late'. As the ironies compound, the knowing relationship between reader and satirist is forged, so that the 'black Old-Timer, authorized version' causes the grin of recognition. The poem is called 'New York: Port Authority', but in this recognition the old authority is remembered and its value asserted. The friend 'strung round the bend' wishes the bus would come, but we remember it is the beast that is late. Mario rocking with triumph, hands diving 'for joy to his crotch' no longer seems a simply comic figure:

> There is a moment of perfect stillness
> in the Port Authority. Mario hears
> the silence, sees the glint, and digs
> America.

NOTES

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2 Ibid., p.40.

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