

AN AUDIENCE ANALYSIS OF
JOHN BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

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Preface

Few books in English literature have been as widely read and greatly admired as John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Since its first appearance in 1678, this allegory about Christian and his journey to the Celestial City has been issued in hundreds of editions and translated in numerous languages. Today the book seems as popular as ever.

This study aims to analyze the popularity of Bunyan's work. It attempts to describe the audience of the book through the various periods of history, to relate the different categories of readers to the particular social milieu in which they flourished, and to explain how the changing social, economic, and religious conditions have influenced the readership of the book.

To trace as many of the readers of this Puritan allegory as possible, it was necessary to pore over two thousand volumes. A number of the sources are critical and historical writings, although the majority of them are biographies and memoirs. Every shred of evidence, whether in the form of direct statements or overheard in conversations, was extracted from the data, analyzed, and evaluated. The conclusions arrived at on the basis of such an analysis appear at the end of the study.

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Dr. John Ball, Dr. David K. Berlo, Dr. Hideya Kumata, Dr. John F. A. Taylor, and Dr. John Useem, members. In particular I should like to mention Dr. MacLean's valuable help and encouragement. I also wish to record my indebtedness to Dr. John Ball, whose idea it was to explore the relationship between certain phases of communication theory and the audience of a literary work. Without his inspiring and competent guidance, this study would never have been done. To Miss Anne Beard, I hereby express my profound thanks for going over the manuscript in great detail. And to my wife, who prepared the bibliography, I am extremely grateful.

---F. C. S.

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ABSTRACT

AN AUDIENCE ANALYSIS OF JOHN BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

by Felixberto C. Sta. Maria

John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, which was first published in 1678, has been issued in hundreds of editions and translated into numerous languages. This study aims to analyze the popularity of Bunyan's work. It attempts to describe the audience of the book through the various periods of history, to relate the different categories of readers to the particular social milieu in which they flourished, and to explain how the changing social, economic, and religious conditions have influenced the readership of the book.

The data consist of more than 200 sources - comments, views, and other pieces of evidence - which were extracted from over 2,000 volumes. These were classified, analyzed, and evaluated. The following conclusions are suggested:

1. John Bunyan's high credibility as a source, as well as his increasing personal prestige, helps enlarge the audience of his allegory.
2. Simplicity of style and the use of a plain and lucid language make the Pilgrim's Progress accessible to a wide audience. This stylistic quality has greatly increased Bunyan's audience.
3. The use of an allegorical form, replete with adventurous episodes, appeals to some sections of the reading public. This characteristic has increased the popularity of the book.

4. The universality and profoundness of the theme of Pilgrim's Progress - touching as it does on what many people consider fundamental values in life - has attracted numerous readers. This spiritual appeal of the book will continue to attract an audience.

5. The popularity of the Pilgrim's Progress through the years has been related to the characteristics of the times: the work was more popular during congenial times, and less popular during less congenial times.

The implications of this study for mass media communication can be summed up thus: the relationships among source, message, and audience are highly complex. The social milieu is a critical factor in the processs of interaction among the different variables. Manipulating some of these variables is indeed possible, and could conceivably affect the outcome; but such an outcome, in the final sense, remains highly unpredictable.

CHAPTER I

A RATIONALE FOR THE ANALYSIS OF EFFECTS OF A LITERARY WORK

The written word records some of mankind's deepest thoughts. In song and story, in verse as well as in prose, man has captured fleeting experience and preserved it in a more enduring form. Much of such effort has been lost or forgotten. With the lapse of time some works have lost their significance. There may have been other reasons. Some men, afraid of the ideas expressed in these works, might have destroyed them deliberately. Natural calamities, wars, and physical decay certainly have taken their own toll.

All these are plausible explanations.

Some of man's written efforts have, however, survived. They have resisted the forces of oblivion and decay. In time some of these works will also be forgotten. But a few will continue to occupy the minds of men, read and reread by millions of people who find in these writings something to believe, to admire, or simply to enjoy. This phenomenon is found in every literate culture and in every language. And the reasons why a particular piece of writing survives are as varied as the subjects and the styles of literature itself.

In the realm of English letters there is a work which has endured for almost three hundred years. It is said to have been read by a far greater number of people than any other work in the language, except the Bible. It has been issued in numerous editions¹ and translated into

¹In 1928 the New York Public Library, celebrating the tercentenary of Bunyan's birth, exhibited more than 500 editions in its own collection, including translations in 40 languages. Cited by Frank Luther Mott, *Golden Multitudes* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947), pp. 19-20.

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the research and the objectives of the study.

The second part of the paper discusses the methodology used in the study and the results of the research.

The third part of the paper discusses the conclusions of the study and the implications for future research.

The fourth part of the paper discusses the limitations of the study and the strengths of the research.

The fifth part of the paper discusses the future research and the potential for further studies.

The sixth part of the paper discusses the conclusions of the study and the implications for future research.

The seventh part of the paper discusses the limitations of the study and the strengths of the research.

scores of languages and dialects.¹ At least until the end of the nineteenth century - and possibly beyond - it had a conspicuous place, along with the Bible, on the family reading shelf.

The work is John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, first published in 1678. A religious allegory, it bears resemblance to the Bible, which is the source of its material. The story is told in the form of a dream, and relates the adventures of Christian who seeks the Celestial City. As it turned out later, Bunyan's work became a favorite book among Protestant missionaries who found it effective in teaching unbelievers.

It is not an easy task for us in the twentieth century to rank the Pilgrim's Progress, or even to define its exact place in English literature. Popularity in itself is only an index; it cannot be an absolute criterion. Apparently the chief appeal of Bunyan's work is religious. If a great number of people read it, this might be the reason. It is also in this context that the generally lavish praise heaped upon the work should be evaluated. Even where the critics were enthusiastic over the literary qualities of the work, sometimes undeservedly so, the religious element remained evident in the background. Sympathy for Bunyan's views, or his admirable personal battle for freedom of worship, might conceivably have affected some people's judgment.

¹ John Brown, authoritative biographer of Bunyan, counts "120 languages or dialects of other countries." The Pilgrim's Progress, according to him, sold by the hundreds of thousands in Great Britain and in the British colonies, particularly the American colonies, within a few years after publication. In New England the book was reprinted for the Puritan colony less than three years after its appearance, by Samuel Green. Says Brown: "Everywhere through the States, Bunyan's name is found as a household word and his 'Dream' among the household treasure." In addition, there have been numerous parodies, imitations, abridgements, and poetical and dramatic versions. See John Brown, John Bunyan, His Life, Times, and Work (London: The Hulbert Publishing Co., Ltd., 1928), pp. 452 ff.

Bunyan's theology is Christian. This fact should immediately endorse his work to a potentially vast audience. Yet this is not exactly true. The Pilgrim's Progress represents Calvinistic thinking, which England rejected along with Puritanism toward the close of the seventeenth century. With the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the death-knell of this religious movement had been sounded.¹ The Calvinists believe that salvation is a matter of predestination. It is bestowed upon the elect by the grace of God, without which no amount of good work or piety can save a man's soul. The elect are preserved from death by reason of eternal mercy.²

But the unique trait of Bunyan's work, sectarian as its theology clearly is, lies in the fact that it appeals in its entirety to every type of Christian religion in its extolling of spiritual values and its vigorous condemnation of materialism. If one were willing to overlook the nuances of Bunyan's sectarian dogma - as many Protestants and, supposedly even some Catholics, did - he would

¹ See G. R. Cragg, From Puritanism to the Age of Reason (Cambridge: The University Press, 1950), Chap. 2.

² G. B. Harrison, in John Bunyan: A Study in Personality (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1928), p. 113, quotes Bunyan (Works, Chap. II, 342): "Election is free and permanent, being founded in grace and the unchangeable will of God; it was before the foundation of the world, and so before the elect themselves had being in themselves. The decree of election is, so far off from making works in us unseen, the ground or cause of the choice: that it containeth in the bowels of it, not only the persons but the graces that accompany their salvation. And hence it is that it is said we are predestined 'to be conformed to the image of his son' (Rom. viii 29), not because we are, but that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Eph. i, 4). Election does not forestall or prevent the means which are of God appointed to bring men to Christ, but rather puts a necessity upon their use and effect."

find in the Pilgrim's Progress an absorbing piece of religious reading. This quality may explain in part why every boy and girl in traditional England was brought up, along with the three R's, on the Bible and the Pilgrim's Progress.

This confusion between its practical religious value, on the one hand, and its literary merit, on the other, obscures the proper place of Bunyan's work in literature. Certainly the praise for it, while preponderant, is not unanimous. The book has been attacked from both its theological and its literary aspects. Another point to consider is that favorable criticism, after the reputation of a certain work has been established, is more likely to survive than unfavorable comment. It takes only "a passionate few" - to borrow Arnold Bennett's phrase - to perpetuate a work; the opinion of an indifferent thousand often does not matter.

It would be inaccurate to say, however, that Bunyan's book is without intrinsic literary merit. A number of recognized writers from both sides of the Atlantic regard the work highly. Whether such criticism is justified or not, or whether it will stand the ultimate test of time, is hard to say. Of the phenomenal success of the book, in terms of the magnitude of its audience, there seems to be no question.

In evaluating the popularity of the Pilgrim's Progress, we are faced basically with the problem of determining the effects of mass communication. No doubt a number of variables are involved. Studies in this area have dealt with such concepts as source, or communicator, message, media, audience, and group relationships. For our purpose we may group the important variables into three: source, message, and audience.

The studies of Hovland and Weiss tend to show that when the credibility of the source is high, changes in opinion in the direction advocated by the communicator is significantly greater than when the same material is attributed to a low credibility source.¹ Farnsworth and Misumi, working with pictures, found that prestige of source also influences the preference of the receiver. The greater the perceived prestige of the communicator, the greater is his influence on the rating of his message by the audience.² Asch, on the other hand, found evidence that group and ego standards affect significantly the judgment of the audience. Given two fictitious standards that are in agreement, and referred to congenial sources, the receivers of the message mutually reinforced each other's judgment.³

Several studies have been made on the message as a variable, although perhaps the most pertinent to Bunyan's case was the experiment of Hovland, et al, on controversial material. They found some evidence that a one-sided presentation was more effective for men initially favoring the stand taken.⁴ As an advocate of Calvinism, Bunyan evidently influenced most effectively those who initially believed in this doctrine

¹ Carl I. Hovland and Walter Weiss, "The Influence of Source Credibility on Communication Effectiveness," Public Opinion Quarterly, XV (Winter, 1951-52), 635-650.

² Paul R. Farnsworth and Issei Misumi, "A Further Data on Suggestion in Pictures," American Journal of Psychology, XLIII (1931), 632.

³ Solomon E. Asch, "Studies in the Principles of Judgments and Attitudes: II. Determination of Judgments by Group and Ego Standards," Journal of Social Psychology, XII (1940), 433-465.

⁴ Carl I. Hovland, A. A. Lumsdaine, and F. D. Sheffield, Experiments on Mass Communication (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1949), Chap. 8.

and were in favor of propagating this particular faith. No other side is presented in the Pilgrim's Progress.

The audience as a variable promises to be the most complex of all, especially since we are dealing with a time span that covers more than three centuries. Several studies have identified the following factors in relation to the audience: group and individual goals, prior attitudes, group conformity, and balance. Some of these are relevant to the present study.

Two unpublished studies at the University of Michigan have found sufficient evidence to testify that attempts to influence people will be effective if they start not with what the communicator regards as good logic or strong emotion but with the values which people themselves regard as important and with the means which people see as relevant for maximizing these values.¹ Applied to the Pilgrim's Progress, such principles might explain the tremendous popularity of the work among those who treasure religious values, particularly of the Calvinistic variety, and who place such values above everything else.

Directly related is the finding of Hyman and Sheatsley to the effect that people seek information congenial to prior attitude, and that, conversely, people tend to avoid exposure to information which is not congenial.²

¹ Milton J. Rosenberg, "The Experimental Investigation of a Value-Theory of Attitude Structure" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Psychology, University of Michigan, 1953), and Myron Ford Barlow, "Security and Group Approval of Value Systems Related to Attitude Change" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Psychology, University of Michigan, 1954).

² H. Hyman and P. Sheatsley, "Some Reasons Why Information Campaigns Fail," Public Opinion Quarterly, XI (1947), 412-423.

Sherif, studying the influences of the group upon the formation of attitudes, arrived at these conclusions: (1) When individuals face the same unstable, unstructured situation as member of the group for the first time, a range and a norm within that range are established, which are peculiar to the group; (2) when a member of the group faces the same situation subsequently alone, after once the range and norm of his group have been established, he perceives the situation in terms of the range and norm that he brings from the group situation; and (3) a member of the group with prestige may influence the judgments of a "naive" member.¹ In other words, there is a strong tendency toward group conformity in a normal social situation. Such pressure toward conformity may also be viewed as kind of symmetry or balance, in which the individual tends to be drawn to a common value or entity in the group. Heider,² Newcomb,³ and Osgood and Tannenbaum⁴ have hypothesized that there is a strain toward such a symmetry in a group situation. Festinger⁵ describes it as the reduction of dissonance, or movement toward consonance. However it is described, the theory seems directly applicable to the analysis of

¹ Muzafer Sherif, "Group Influences Upon the Formation of Norms and Attitudes," Sociometry, I (1937), 90-98.

² F. Heider, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: Wiley, 1958).

³ T. Newcomb, "An Approach to the Study of Communicative Arts," Psychological Review, LX (1953), 393-404.

⁴ C. E. Osgood and P. H. Tannenbaum, "The Principle of Congruity in the Prediction of Attitude Change," Psychological Review, LXII (1955), 42-55.

⁵ L. Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance. (Evanston: Row, Peterson & Co., 1957).

the popularity of Bunyan's work. The theory that certain forces are at work toward group homogeneity may explain in part the continuing popularity of the allegory. Who knows how many Protestant scholars and laymen have been drawn into the circle of Bunyan's admirers, as a result of group interaction? Indeed, there is some evidence that some favorable opinions advanced for the Pilgrim's Progress were influenced either by the critics' desire to "belong" to a group, or by a source with prestige.¹

Historical Background

The Protestant Reformation which swept England in the sixteenth century culminated in the establishment of the Church of England. For political and personal reasons, King Henry VIII saw fit to sever England's ties from the Papacy. The Anglican communion emerged from this schism. While independent from Rome, the new Church nevertheless retained many of the basic rites of the Catholic Church. It prescribed a common prayer book and generally adopted the vestments of Catholic religious services.

For the first time in many centuries the English people had a church which they could call their own. The liberation was not, of course, complete, since the State exacted conformity on its subjects. But it was the beginning of a crusade for greater personal freedom. To the Englishman the rebellion transcended the bounds of religious conscience. It meant the freedom of the individual to think for himself, whether in religious or in secular matters. Later on, this sense of unbounded personal freedom would splinter the Protestant Church into

¹ Alfred Noyes, for example, observes that most of the replies (of almost 200) to his article which severely criticized Bunyan's allegory built their arguments around Macaulay's praises for the work. The implication is that these writers, instead of demonstrating the intrinsic merit of the work, simply showed a kinship with the views of a prestige source, such as Macaulay, and assumed that all who did not belong to this school of thinking should be ignored. See Alfred Noyes, "Bunyan Revisited," The Opalescent Parrot (London: Sheed and Ward, 1929), p. 95.

numerous sects, each one claiming for itself the absolute right to interpret the Scriptures.

Toward the middle of the seventeenth century a group of reformers felt that the Church of England had not been "purified" enough of the influences of the Papacy. All vestiges of Roman Catholicism should go; Papism in every form should be banished from England's ecclesiastical life. In exacting conformity to the Church of England, the Anglicans were taking away the very same freedom that the Catholics denied. Clearly, reforms were in order.

The zealous group of reformers came to be known as "Puritans" and the movement as "Puritanism."

The idea of reforms was an attractive one to many who had become dissatisfied with the English government. New political and religious ideas were flowing in from the European continent. The struggle for power, somehow inevitably linked to religious control over the peoples of Europe, was becoming keener. Puritanism was indeed rife.

Within a short time the reformers were in disagreement among themselves. How much reform? What kinds of reforms? If there should arise differences in the interpretation of the Scriptures, who would be the arbiters? The Anglican bishops, who had been the overseers of the Church until this time, were discredited. They represented authority, and were not very different from the bishops of the Roman Church. To be truly free, each congregation should be independent from the control of a central ruling body.

As early as the rule of King James I, the conflict had centered around the imposition of the will of the Anglican Church. In 1633 the king appointed William Laud archbishop to succeed the Archbishop of

Canterbury. Laud went about his task zealously. He started to rebuild and remodel the Puritan-dominated churches, putting back the stained-glass windows, restoring the vestments used during services, and demanding conformity in religious services. He also rounded up non-conformists and punished them. With the accession of Charles I, James' son, in 1625, Laud's powers increased. He was stopped only when Parliament, after failing to convict him in a public trial, declared him a traitor and had him executed.

When Charles I took on a Catholic wife, the rift between him and Parliament widened. He dissolved one Parliament after another. In 1642 a civil war broke out, resulting in the defeat of the Royalist army three years later. The king surrendered to the Scottish army which turned him over to the English Parliament. He was tried and executed in 1649. The Puritans' victory seemed complete. A Commonwealth was established and lasted for three years. It was succeeded by a Protectorate under Cromwell, who died in 1658. His son took over briefly and stayed in power until the restoration of Charles II in 1660.

The rabid reformers who set out to rid England of "Papism" were not able to maintain their unity for long. With the death of Cromwell and the dissolution of the Protectorate, the Puritans had passed the acme of their political power. In their time they had fought the Anglicans with resounding success, opposed the Presbyterians who came from Scotland to the aid of Charles I, and suppressed the Catholics. Yet in the ensuing years of the Restoration they would find themselves the underdogs - powerless politically and divided religiously.

Upon assuming the throne Charles II vowed to give religious toleration to England. But the Parliament whose support he badly needed

was Anglican. In short order it passed a series of acts enforcing the use of a common prayerbook, and establishing, in general, the supremacy of the Anglican Church. With a Catholic wife, Charles was under constant scrutiny by Parliament, lest he bring back hated Catholicism to his country. Nevertheless in 1672, seizing an opportunity to enforce his theory of religious toleration, Charles issued a Declaration of Indulgence. This Act granted freedom of public worship to both Catholics and Protestants. Not to be outmaneuvered, the opposition acted to nullify the effect of the Act, and succeeded in having it withdrawn within three years.

The Puritans in the meantime had fallen into disagreement among themselves. Many factions arose, with the more radical thinkers among them seceding from the group and forming their own congregations. If religion was a matter of personal conscience, then every individual should have the right to worship God as he saw fit.

It was amidst such religious restlessness that a Free Church was founded at Bedford in 1650. To this church the author of the Pilgrim's Progress was soon to be converted, becoming its chief pastor in later years.

About a mile to the south of Bedford was the village of Elstow, seat of a Benedictine nunnery in the Middle Ages. Bunyan was born here in 1628. His father was a lowly tinker, or mender of pots. In Bunyan's words, the calling was "the meanest and most despised in the land." Despite the poverty of his parents, they were able to send him to school, where he received a rudimentary education.

There were not many books available to the youth, who, in the first place, was not particularly inclined to a scholarly life. He grew up in his native village spending his time with other boys in such

common pastimes as dancing, gambling, and sports. Bunyan confessed that as a youth he had "few equals" for "cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming the name of God." Yet possibly his own testimony was somewhat exaggerated. Even as a child he had been haunted by religious terrors, imagining all kinds of devils and other dreadful spirits watching over him, ready to carry him off. In later life he would suffer great mental anguish because he had indulged in such innocent pastimes as reading ballads and ringing the town's church bells. He would attribute to God's grace his escape from drowning and his being spared from death while in military duty.

Bunyan's conversion was neither dramatic nor sudden. Until the time he married he had a distaste for religious books and sermons. The girl he took for a wife, however, came from a fairly religious family. She brought into their new household two pious books which her father had given her, presumably as a wedding present. By fireside at night the couple read the books. Gradually, a religious longing was awakened in Bunyan. He started to discuss the Scriptures with some of his neighbors. The strange voices he had heard as youth had never really left him. Sometimes, according to his own confession, he was seized by great fears, as deep and audible voices admonished him to take the righteous path, or forfeit his soul to the devil.

Perhaps the final step toward conversion was taken when Bunyan came under the influence of the town's pastor, a Mr. Gifford, who was reputed to have been a notorious rake before he turned to religion. Bunyan began attending services in the Free Church, and in 1653 was admitted a member. Only two years later he was elevated to the position of preacher.

The Order of Justices passed in November 1660 restored the Book of Common Prayer in England. Within a month Bunyan was arrested for refusing to conform. Despite repeated warnings, he had stubbornly declined to stop preaching. In January of 1661 he was tried, found guilty, and sent to prison at Bedford.

Altogether the tinker turned preacher spent more than twelve years in jail. He was released briefly in 1666, only to be recommitted for another six years. When the Declaration of Indulgence was passed in 1672 he was set free. But three years later the Declaration was withdrawn, and again Bunyan was imprisoned for six months. It was not until the end of this last incarceration that he was to be free permanently. He became official pastor of his congregation, with license to preach.

Bunyan wrote a number of religious works while in prison, including the autobiographical Grace Abounding. His faith, sternly tested by adversity, was thoroughly expounded in these writings. He quoted freely from the Bible, sometimes bitter and angry, sometimes clearly expository in an attempt to interpret the Scriptures.

From his own testimony, Bunyan conceived the Pilgrim's Progress in prison. The first part was written during the shorter six months' imprisonment. It was published three years later, in 1678.

The Pilgrim's Progress was the product of a mature Bunyan, from whom much of the fight and the bitterness of earlier years was gone. It was steeped in the wisdom of the Scriptures. But it was also the

handiwork of a dedicated - some say even fanatic - Puritan mind¹ which shaped reality accordingly.

Calvinist Christian was able to attain salvation ultimately not because he deserved it but as a result of God's grace.

In a sense, therefore, the Pilgrim's Progress was a Puritan document not unlike the tracts carefully wrought out by the theologians of the Puritan era. In examining the tremendous success that the work has achieved through the centuries, it would be wise to consider seriously this aspect of the book.

The Nature of Puritanism

What, indeed, was Puritanism, and who were the Puritans?

The answer to this question is a complex one.

Puritanism as a movement influenced many aspects of life in seventeenth century England: the religious, the political, the social, the intellectual. The Puritan was many types of person, depending on who was viewing him at the moment. Alexander Bailey, in A True Information of the Unhallowed Offspring (1628), spoke of the Puritans as "heretics" and "apostates." Puritan gospelers, he said, employed their wits to ensnare innocent Christians. On the other hand, John Baswyck, a Puritan whose ear was cut off for high treason, denied this contention. Puritans, according to him, were neither rebellious nor disobedient. A

¹Consider, for example, Robert Bridges' criticism (Collected Essays, XVII, London: Oxford University Press, 1934): "Christian, as we see him, is selfishly seeking his own salvation; he cares for nothing else. . . . He is set going by the fear of Hell. . . . he lives for himself and God, not for God and his neighbor." Also take Alfred Noyes' comment ("Bunyan - A Revaluation," The Bookman, LXXV, No. 445, 13): "It is in fact one of those piously repulsive books which, in former generations, were used by well-meaning but foolish adults to fill the minds of little children with hideous ideas of hell fire. . . ."

third view painted the Puritan as something of a rebellious spiritualist who irritated people because he pretended to be the guardian of their morals. As Dr. Samuel Brooke was moved to say to Archbishop Laud, "Predestination is the root of all rebellion and disobedient intrac-tableness and all schism and sauciness in the country, nay in the Church itself."¹

John Tullock, tracing the growth of Puritanism, had this to say:

The history of English Puritanism is the history of both a theological movement and of a great national struggle. The spirit of which Puritanism is a symbol has entered deeply into the national life, and strongly coloured many of its manifestations. It has given depth not only to the religion, but to the literature and patriotism of the country; it has largely contributed alike to its intellectual lustre and heroic fame. . . During the reign of James, and that of his son, to the eve of the memorable parliament so associated with the triumphs of Puritanism, the controversy, while still retaining its ecclesiastical character, took at the same time a higher and wider range. . . . It became mingled in the course of these reigns with new and exciting interests, both theological and political, and gradually passed into a great party conflict - a wide schism of thought and feeling, of manners and policy.²

According to Woodhouse,³ Puritanism is indeed a complex thing, and the Puritan mind a complex mind. The Puritan attempted a social revolution and tried to establish a holy community in England. Woodhouse sees in the Puritan mind a dominant place for dogma, which he endeavors to translate into secular life.

¹G. R. Cragg, From Puritanism to the Age of Reason (Cambridge: The University Press, 1950), p. 16.

²John Tullock, English Puritanism and Its Leaders (London: W. Blackwood & Sons, 1861), "Introduction."

³A. S. P. Woodhouse, Puritanism and Liberty (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951).

In Tudor Puritanism Knappen perceives the very essence of Puritanism in moral earnestness.¹ Puritanism is an individual philosophy which stresses feeling over intellect. The Puritan is a man of enthusiasm disposed to be excessive in his zeal to move close to God. Though he may, in fact, have a great appetite for knowledge, he is too preoccupied with his own sins to extend the range of his learning.

Says G. B. Harrison:

Puritanism is an unattractive creed, and its holiness is not beautiful; for its power comes from a rigorous denial of all that appeals to the senses. It demands an intense self-discipline for an end which to the skeptic seems too uncertain to be worth the effort, and to the Catholic to savour of a churlish refusal to use God's good gifts.²

The spirit of Puritanism, Harrison continues, existed among the English people long before the Reformation. But as a creed it is based on the Bible, which is regarded as the "direct voice of a jealous and stern God."

These many divergent views on Puritanism suggest several traits which seem to be common to all Puritans. The first is literalism, which tends to make the Puritan interpret things as he sees them. He follows the Scriptures to the letter. This trait accounts for the plainness of worship, dress, and behavior for which the Puritan is noted. Any gesture which belies the inner spirit is hypocritical; it must be condemned.

¹ M. M. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939).

² Harrison, op. cit., p. 11.

The second is practicality. To the Puritan idleness is evil because it brings no useful results. Man's highest aim is the salvation of his soul, and anything which does not conduct to this end is undesirable. Thus, sports and the drama should be spurned.

The third trait is a demand for consistency with principle. The Puritan's conduct is regulated by a strict code of ethics based on a system of prohibition and formulated into clear-cut injunctions. He may not trespass these laws.

The last trait is independence. The Puritan exalts individuality. He believes in the right of the individual to decide for himself what is right and what is wrong. John Milton, the great Puritan poet, once claimed that he had come to his own doctrine through his interpretation of the Scriptures. Liberty of conscience was the watchword of the Puritan rebellion.

Bunyan and the Pilgrim's Progress

By 1660 Puritanism had passed its peak in England. The restoration of Charles marked the decline of this great movement, although a number of stalwart Puritans would continue in positions of influence in the Church.¹

It was a considerably mellowed Bunyan that faced the Bedford congregation upon his release in 1672. There was no more of the hell-and-brimstone stuff with which, as a young preacher, he frightened away his listeners. Severe Scriptural literalism gave way to common sense. Harrison observes that in The Strait Gate Bunyan quotes much less and relies more on his own words and the illustrations which he drew from his ample converse with saints and sinners of many kinds.²

¹ See Cragg, op. cit., Chap. II.

² Harrison, op. cit., p. 125.

The Pilgrim's Progress appeared at this late period of Bunyan's life. In concept it was thoroughly Puritan: a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, a rejection of all activities that do not enhance spiritual life, a firm belief in salvation by grace¹, an affirmation of the doctrine of liberty of conscience, and a severe denunciation of the vanities of life. Yet it hardly preached at all. The author managed to drive home those austere points in pictorial, even entertaining, language.

In at least one sense - the popular - Bunyan was the spokesman of Puritanism, and the Pilgrim's Progress was his chief medium. No doubt many other men propagated the faith. These were the scholars who spoke in solemn tones and engaged in theological discussions. Their audience was, however, quite limited; their voices rang in the halls of Cambridge and spurred the intellectuals into lengthy debates. But as their words became fainter, Bunyan's seemed to become more audible and urgent. Whereas during the first fifty or sixty years after its publication the Pilgrim's Progress was read only by children and the uneducated people, in the ensuing years it passed into the realm of significant

¹ H. A. Taine, in History of English Literature (New York: John W. Lovell Co., 1873), p. 271, says: "Next to the Bible, the book most widely read in England is the Pilgrim's Progress, by John Bunyan. The reason is, that the basis of Protestantism is the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that no writer has equalled Bunyan in making the doctrine understood."

literature, discussed by critics of many countries.¹

Neither the decline of Puritanism nor the triumph of rationalism over religion in the eighteenth century could shove Bunyan's book into oblivion. The neglect was but temporary; the snubbing was confined to the elite. While the Hobbesians and the Cambridge Platonists turned attention to their philosophical jousts, the less educated folk were enjoying the tinker's allegory in their "farthing rushlight,"² happily oblivious of the intellectual storm raging over their heads.

Classification of Data

Sources of opinions and comments about the Pilgrim's Progress will

¹ Frank Luther Mott, op. cit., pp. 19-20, notes that the Pilgrim's Progress was sneered at by such fine judges as Mr. Addison, the critic, and Mrs. Montagu, the bluestocking. In later years Macaulay was to say: "The style of Bunyan is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. . . . There is no book in our literature on which we would so readily stake the fame of the old unpolluted English language, no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed." (From Macaulay's Essays, Vol. I). Sir Charles H. Firth writes: "How was it, one naturally asks, that a man of little education could produce . . . a masterpiece which is still read wherever the English language is spoken, and has been translated into every European tongue?" (From an 1898 edition of the Pilgrim's Progress, "Introduction.") John Brown, in his biography of Bunyan, cites the latter's influence on the German poets Schiller, Jung-Stilling, and Wieland. He quotes Wieland as saying: "In that book (Pilgrim's Progress) I learned to read English. English literature had a great influence on me, and your Puritan writings particularly."

² Says David Sime (The Literary Charm of the Pilgrim's Progress, 1880): "In lonely houses of shepherds and ploughmen it is frequently the only indication of any kind of literature that may be seen. . . . Such people will spell over the Pilgrim's Progress after a hard day's work, by their farthing rushlight, and they will laugh and exult and tremble and sigh with poor Christian when they do not even understand what poor Christian's joy or trouble is. . . ." Brown, op. cit., p. 287.

be classified for purposes of analysis into the following categories:

1. The critic. This term refers to anyone who expresses a critical opinion about Bunyan's work, setting himself off as competent in expressing such opinion. His approach is often literary, and his views do not represent any formal institution or religion. He usually is a professional man of letters, although not necessarily so.

2. The general public. This category refers to anyone who, during the time he evaluates Bunyan's work, does so for his own delight. He generally is a member of the general reading audience, and his reaction is a personal response to the Pilgrim's Progress.

3. The religious. This term refers to anyone whose point of view in reading and evaluating Bunyan's work is governed by its religious value. He may or may not be officially connected to an organized religion. His chief concern with the work is its implications to man's moral or religious conduct.

4. The synthesizer. This term refers to anyone who incorporates several points of view, and may in fact try to fit the Pilgrim's Progress into the total complicated spiritual pattern of his time. Often he has a thorough familiarity with the book, sometimes demonstrating this by writing a parody or imitation of the original work.

These categories are not mutually exclusive. Where a particular source may fall under more than one of these classifications, it will be treated according to its most salient aspect, relevant to the analysis required.

CHAPTER II

1660-1744: RESTORATION TO JOHNSON

From the publication of the first part of the Pilgrim's Progress in 1678 to the rise and triumph of Neo-Classicism in England - a period of 66 years - Bunyan's work remained in comparative obscurity. One would have to search diligently in the literature of the era to find any extensive comment about the book.

The reasons for this could be found in the fact that English society was undergoing a rapid change. New social and intellectual forces were at work. It was as if the people awoke one day to find not only a monarchy restored but a vast new horizon open before their eyes. In reality, the change was not as abrupt as it seemed. The renaissance was only a hundred years old, and its impact was only beginning to be felt in some aspects of English culture. Francis Bacon's arguments for the role of the "new science," which he so daringly expounded at the turn of the seventeenth century, were still being raked over on the philosophical hearths of England. In this sense there was a continuity, although the fires might have subsided somewhat during the Puritan regime. European intellectuals were reading Descartes and Hobbes and Joseph Glanvill. The scientific spirit born with Bacon was carefully being nursed into maturity.

The quest for truth led men into rationalistic and even materialistic philosophies. Hobbes, a materialist, rejected Descartes' division of reality into matter and mind. He denied the existence of the soul. With such rejection the essence of religion and all forms of supernatural existence had to go. A reaction to this was the Cambridge Platonist movement, which argued for a rational theology. Man, the Platonists contended, is divinely created; he only has to search his inner self to discover the existence of God.

What the Cambridge Platonists were doing the Puritans would later try to do on a different level. Both were trying to turn the tide of materialism which threatened to engulf the country. With its uncompromising attack against sin and its emphasis on salvation, Puritanism was able to check, at least for a while, the extreme forces of liberalism. Yet toward the close of the seventeenth century, as Willey¹ observes, the prestige of the Bible had diminished appreciably. It was not so much, he explains, that men have given it up as "false," as it was that "natural religion" came more and more to seem all-sufficient, and revelation incongruous. Puritanism was on its way out.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century John Locke's naturalistic views on the Deity were widely accepted. Nature was a sufficient evidence of God's existence; it was revelation in itself. The Earl of Shaftsbury, a typical English moralist of the age, asserted that human virtue consists in "following Nature," in the sense that "it is a reproduction, within the individual microcosm, of the harmony and proportion so manifest in the greater world."² All that one needed to be moral was to be natural.

¹Basil Willey, The Seventeenth Century Background (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), Chap. IV.

²Ibid., p. 76.

It was David Hume, however, who destroyed all the traditional certainties about matter, reality, soul, and God. An arch skeptic, he debunked miracles, rejected the law of cause and effect, and reduced morality to sentiment. To him organized religion was a hindrance to philosophy. Willey says of Hume:

Reason is not the source of moral judgments any more than of 'belief'; it is concerned with the state of affairs and affirmations of 'is' or 'is not,' and no contemplation of a state of affairs as such is a moral judgment. . . . In order to discover the nature of the 'good' and the 'bad,' therefore, we have not to embark upon any dialectical enquiries; we have only to collect statistics.¹

Religion was not a matter of reason but of faith. Primitive man, Hume said, created his own gods by personifying his own hopes and fears.

Hume was following in the footsteps of Bacon and Hobbes, and certainly agreed with those who would advance the role of science in building the foundation for a new and better social order. Other philosophers after him, prominent among whom was David Hartley, were to continue the crusade.

Such was the intellectual climate under which the Pilgrim's Progress fared half a century or more after its publication. Little wonder, indeed, that instead of gaining support from the intellectuals of the day, it was ignored or ridiculed.

The Data

For the period under consideration twelve sources are available. Three are critics, one is general public, and eight are synthesizers.²

¹Ibid., Chap. VII.

²For a discussion of categories, see p. 20.

Two of the critics are unfavorable; one is favorable. The general public source is favorable. Two of the synthesizers draw a highly unfavorable image of the Pilgrim's Progress; one, who attempted to write Part II of Bunyan's allegory, is highly critical of the work. One wrote Bunyan's story in verse; another made two series of drawings which were inspired by the allegory. Two other synthesizers tried to write sequels, whereas a third one did an imitation.¹

Bunyan and His Critics

There is ample evidence that the Pilgrim's Progress met with considerable success soon after its publication. Brown records that three editions were called for within a year, and that "the striking and unexpected success of his pilgrim story" encouraged him to write a sequel, or second part. Such a sequel was published in 1685.² By then

¹ Unfavorable critics are: Samuel Butler (1612-1680), British satiric poet; Joseph Addison (1672-1719), British essayist and critic. Favorable comment comes from Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), British critic.

The favorable general public source is Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), American philosopher and statesman.

Unfavorable synthesizers are: William Congreve (1670-1729), British dramatist, and John Gay (1685-1732), British dramatist. "T. S." (Thomas Sherman), who intended "to mend" the "four-fold defects" of Bunyan's allegory, attempted to write Part II a few years after the first part appeared.

Other synthesizers are: William Hogarth (1697-1764), artist and painter; Benjamin Keach, a Baptist tailor and pastor, who was Bunyan's chief rival writer and who published The Progress of Sin, or the Travels of Ungodliness, in London, in 1684; an "Anonymous" author who wrote a spurious Part III in 1693; and a writer using the pseudonym "John Bunyan," whose work, The Statesman's Progress, purported to be a commentary on the morality of public service. This work was published by C. Corbett, in London, in 1741. Francis Hoffman wrote The Pilgrim's Progress in verse form.

² Brown, op. cit., pp. 251-257.

two foreign editions, one in Dutch (1682) and another one in French (1685) had been issued, aside from several reprintings in the Puritan colonies of New England. A number of forgeries and imitations had also appeared.

It is noteworthy, however, that the critics of the day had hardly taken notice of Bunyan's allegory. If they had been aware at all of its popularity among the common people and the clergy, they chose to keep quiet about it. The mere mention of the work by name, it seemed, was an invitation for some contemptuous remarks from the elite.

Sam Butler's attacks on Bunyan were directed against the tinker's rabid Puritanism, rather than against his specific works. The famous satirist criticized Bunyan's Calvinistic logic:

He was in Logick a great Critick
 Profoundly skilled in Analytic.
 He could distinguish and divide
 A hair 'twixt South and South-west side.¹

Perhaps the only evidence that he might have read and found unsuitable to his taste the Pilgrim's Progress is contained in a couplet from the same poem:

Or rowing scull, he's fain to love
 Look one way and another move,

which probably alludes to By-ends, the hypocritical character in the allegory.²

¹ Hudibras, Part I, Canto 1; cited by Henri Talon, John Bunyan, The Man and His Works (London: Rockliff Publishing Corp., 1951), p. 120. The criticism was clearly intended by Butler to reflect on both the man and his writings. The specific reference was to Bunyan's distortion of Scriptural text, made in an earlier tract, whereby Christ is quoted as saying, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Bunyan interpreted all as meaning only the elect.

² Hudibras, Part I, Canto 3; cited by Talon.

Hudibras is a mock heroic epic poem of more than ten thousand lines satirizing the Puritans. It was easily Butler's most popular work, and was widely acclaimed by the critics. To what extent it might have dampened public enthusiasm for Bunyan's allegory, beyond discrediting all Puritan writings as a whole, it is difficult to say. It is logical to assume that Butler's circle of readers did not overlap that of Bunyan's to a large degree. For the most part Bunyan's readers consisted of the uneducated masses and dedicated Puritans.¹

Joseph Addison was to come much later than Butler. He was an accomplished essayist and critic, identified with the beginnings of journalism. His popularity was at its height during the Augustan Age, roughly between 1700 and 1750, during which Neo-Classicism, with its emphasis on form and decorum, swept England.

From Addison there is only indirect evidence. That he disliked the Pilgrim's Progress is an undisputed fact; that he stated his views categorically on the subject is, however, open to question.² Mott relates that "for more than half a century it [Pilgrim's Progress] was regarded as mere popular reading . . . and sneered at by fine judges like Mr. Addison, the critic. . . ."³ White, reviewing the criticism of the eighteenth century, sums up: "Literary people have not had much to say about Bunyan, and what little they have said is often contemptuous."⁴

¹ Here was an instance of selective perception - in this case exposure to a mass media source. Refer to Hyman and Sheatsley, above, p. 6.

² J. W. Mackail, in The Pilgrim's Progress: A Lecture Delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1924), expresses doubt that "disparaging" remarks were made by Addison. The paper in question, Mackail asserts, "has been wrongly attributed to Addison."

³ Mott, op. cit., p. 19.

⁴ William Hale White, John Bunyan (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), p. 198.

Addison's name is, by common consent, somewhere at the head of this list of literary people.

In glaring contrast was Jonathan Swift's opinion. A political pamphleteer, Swift is often considered the greatest satirist in English prose. In a letter to a young minister, he admitted that he "had been better entertained, and more informed, by a few pages in the Pilgrim's Progress, than by a long discourse upon the will and intellect, and simple or complex ideas."¹ Acworth, one of Swift's later biographers, affirms that the satirist frequently referred himself to Bunyan's work.²

Swift's favorable opinion of Bunyan's work may be accounted for by the satirist's religious background. Educated at Trinity College, an Anglican school at Dublin, he took holy orders in 1695. Later he became chaplain, and still later appointed dean of the St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. Like Bunyan, he was a strong hater of "Papists." Several of his tracts, including the famous Tale of a Tub (1704), were written in defense of the Church of England against the attacks of other sects. His hearty endorsement of Bunyan's allegory affirms to some degree the contention that the Pilgrim's Progress, although Calvinistic in doctrine, appeals to other religious denominations as well.

Across the Atlantic, meanwhile, in the New England colonies, a little boy who was destined to become one of American's outstanding statesmen and philosophers, shared Swift's congenial opinion of Bunyan. The story of the pilgrim pleased the boy Benjamin Franklin so much that,

1

Jonathan Swift, "A Letter to a Young Clergyman," Works, VIII (1883), 215.

2

B. Acworth, Swift (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1947), p. 18.

according to his biographers, he made a collection of the tinker's works. This the lad accomplished by pinching his pennies - if the charmingly romanticized accounts of his admirers are to be believed. "Franklin's first purchased book was Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," records Russell. "Franklin . . . was pleased with it, owing to its brisk plot and graphic dialogue."¹ In later life Franklin commented:

Honest John Bunyan is the first I know of, who has mingled narrative and dialogue together; a mode of writing very engaging to the reader, who, in the most interesting passages, finds himself admitted, as it were, into the company, and present at the conversation.²

Among the Puritan colonists in eighteenth century America, Bunyan's book found a receptive audience. Puritanism had not fallen into disrepute in the New England settlements as it had in England; it would be an influential force for many years to come. The seeds that the Puritans sowed had taken deep roots in American life and culture. Hawthorne and Emerson, a hundred years later, would be spawned in this great intellectual tradition.

But Calvinist Bunyan did not fare as well in England. The anti-Puritan reaction pervaded the whole body of literature, manifesting itself in the poetry, the prose, and the drama of the age. In the theater the repercussions were especially sharp. The dramatists were still indignant with the Puritans for the closing of the theaters from 1642 to 1660. They were eager for revenge.

¹ Philipps Russell, Benjamin Franklin; The First Civilized American (New York: Brentano's, 1926), p. 13. A similar testimony comes from Bernard Fay, in Franklin, The Apostle of Modern Times (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1929).

² Joseph Ivimey, The Life of Mr. John Bunyan (Boston: E. E. Finch, 1814), p. 304.

There was no direct attack, no crude recrimination, on the English stage. But satire - that terrible weapon in the hands of the Restoration writers - was to abound. In William Congreve's popular comedy, "The Way of the World," for instance, Bunyan's writings are amply made fun of, along with the pious works of Puritans Quarles and Pryn. In this play, which was presented at London in 1710, Lady Wishfort addresses Mrs. Marwood (Act III, Scene 4):

. . . Hark! I hear her - Dear Friend retire into my Closet, that I may examine her with more Freedom - with you - There are Books over the Chimney - Quarles and Pryn, and the Short View of the Stage,¹ with Bunyan's works to entertain you. . . .

Modern critics regard Congreve as the greatest master of the English comedy of repartee. Although his plays were often encumbered by involved plots, they were well attended. His satirical remarks were evidently provoked by his quarrel with Jeremy Collier, the clergyman who carried on a vicious attack against the stage. Inevitably Bunyan, the chief Puritan prose writer, shared the dramatist's satirical outbursts.

Another playwright, John Gay, ridiculed the mawkish sentimentality of Bunyan's allegory in a farce entitled The What D'ye Call It. This play was staged in London in 1715. Here the author mentions the Pilgrim's Progress by name. In the story a man, about to be shot, is offered a book that may help him to pray. Taking it, he says:

1

Full title: A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage (1698), by Jeremy Collier. This Puritan attack upon the "bawdry and profaneness" of the stage is generally believed to have precipitated the closing of the theaters. It is the chief work of Clergyman Collier.

Lend me thy hankercher (Reads and weeps)
 'The Pilgrim's Pro--
 I cannot see for tears! 'Pro-- Progress' - Ch!
 'The Pilgrim's Progress! - eight - edition,
 London printed - for - Ni - cho - las Bod-
 ding - ton;
 With new ad - di - tions never made before,'
 Oh! 'tis so moving, I can read no more.¹

One of Gay's less known plays, The What D'ye Call It was a failure on the stage. But the author himself was a major literary figure in his time, and his opinions cannot be dismissed lightly.

Of the other synthesizers, "T. S." was the most critical of Bunyan's work. He found the first part of the Pilgrim's Progress too attractive and not doctrinal enough. In proposing to remedy these "defects," he ventured a second part "to deliver the whole in such serious and spiritual phrases that may prevent that lightness and laughter which the reading of some passages occasions in vain and frothy minds." Further, he would use the book at funerals, instead of in "Rings, Gloves, Wine, or Bisket."² John Bunyan was not Puritanic enough!

William Hogarth was a popular artist and painter who made two series of prints or drawings directly inspired by Bunyan's allegory. The first group, entitled "The Harlot's Progress," consisted of seven prints depicting the making of a prostitute, from the time she arrives in London as an innocent country lass who wants to improve her fortune, to her death as an impoverished prostitute. This was published in 1731. The second group was called "The Rake's Progress," and it was composed of eight prints. It depicts the story of a young man who, fresh from college, inherits his

¹ In citing what he calls a "curious testimony to its widespread circulation," Buckland is attempting to demonstrate the popularity of Bunyan's work. He misses the point entirely. The dramatist's intention is clearly to ridicule the book. See A. R. Buckland, John Bunyan, The Man and His Works (Chicago: The John C. Winston Co., 1928), p. 84.

² Brown, op. cit., p. 258.

father's fortune, then squanders it on women, drinking, gambling, and other forms of vice. This series was published in 1735.

In 1706 an unknown poet, Francis Hoffman, decided that Bunyan's work would reach more people in verse form. So he rewrote the pilgrim's story in iambic pentameter couplets. The first few lines read:

As thro' the World's wide Wilderness I past,
 I to a certain Place arriv'd at last,
 Where was a Den; to rest within the same
 I laid me down, and fell into a Dream,
 And saw a man who in a lonesome Place
 Cloathed with filth Rags, had turned his Face
 From his own Home, yet was he at a Stand
 What Course to take: A Book was in his Hand. . . .¹

In retrospect, the period starting with the restoration of Charles II and ending with the Augustan Age - during which the new Classicism reached its height - was not congenial to Bunyan. Puritanism had had its heyday. Just as any period of reaction tends to exaggerate the faults of the preceding age, this era in English history was marked by a complete rejection of Puritan values. With the swing of the pendulum, the people turned from austere spiritualism to a liberal humanism. It was a humanism which would be carried over, in somewhat different form, into the Romantic Age of English literature.

¹
 Francis Hoffman, Pilgrim's Progress in Verse (London: R. Tookey, 1706).

CHAPTER III

1744-1832: JOHNSON TO THE END OF ROMANTICISM

The new classicism which had dominated English letters from the beginning of the eighteenth century saw its decline in the lifetime of Samuel Johnson. This great defender of Augustan standards died in 1784. Until the end of his literary reign, there was continued emphasis on classical learning, although more and more public interest was turning to the workaday world.

There were unmistakable signs that the Age of Dryden and Pope had come to an end. Instead of Imitations of Homer, or an erudite translation of the Iliad, as Pope had done, Goldsmith would compose a sensible Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning, in which he laments the artificialities of English poets and the restrictions upon them. From the continent Rousseau's naturalistic doctrines would have a great impact on the new crop of writers. Many poets, tired of the formal rules of the classical tradition, turned to nature and the simple life. There was a concerted search, it seemed, for a greater naturalness in social and intellectual life, as well as for freedom of expression in literature.

This awakening came to be known as the Romantic Movement. Its proponents, chiefly poets in search of an imaginative new philosophy that could take into account the individual and his rightful place in society, stressed emotion and imagination over intellect and reason.

They believed in the intuitive powers of the mind, in the importance of the common man, in the rural life and external nature, and in the primacy of feeling and imagination over intellect. To them the precision and symmetry of classical style was obnoxious; originality and color were more important. For such color they were ready to borrow from the settings of the past - the medieval tales and ballads. They were willing to indulge in mysticism to achieve dramatic effects in their poetry.

Taine sees the Romantic as seeking "religious sentiment beyond dogmas, poetic beauty beyond rules, critical truths beyond myths." He sighs for the beyond, says Taine, and forebodes it "through the formulas of science, the texts and confessions of the churches, through the intoxication of love."

Continues Taine:

Thus rises the modern Romantic man, impelled by two sentiments, one democratic, the other philosophic. From the shallows of his poverty and ignorance he exerts himself to rise, lifting the weight of established society and admitted dogmas, disposed either to reform or to destroy them and at once generous and rebellious . . .¹

A rapid industrial expansion, particularly between 1798 and 1832, resulted in profound changes in the economic life of the nation. New inventions gave rise to factories and resulted in the influx of people to the cities. The traditional agricultural economy was giving way to a modern industrialized system. And with such change came the exploitation of the masses, child labor, slums, and unemployment.

It was inevitable that literature should reflect the new currents in the social and intellectual life of the English people. The poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge, spanning the critical years of the Romantic Era,

¹Taine, op. cit., pp. 509-510.

broke out in lyrical sympathy with the plight of the common man. Sometimes the voice was vague and philosophical, as in Coleridge's Religious Musings, or direct and forceful as in Hazlitt's The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte.¹ Wordsworth himself eulogized the "humble and rustic life" because, according to him,

in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of great simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended. . . .²

Wordsworth and his followers tried to destroy the grand and aristocratic style of the preceding era. They proposed to people their poems and stories with common men, who spoke the language of the lower classes. Poetry, therefore, must have a prosaic and conversational tone, if it was to be genuine.

In the realm of prose the novel continued to grow in popularity. The literary form which was given its modern structure by Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding, had captured the imagination of the public. Romance and adventure filled the pages of Scott and Austen. And the same readers who pored over Ivanhoe and Waverley might have thrilled to Christian's perilous journey to the Celestial City.

The era of individualism had dawned. The "unsung hero" - the common man - had at last emerged from obscurity to make the statesmen and writers take notice. And they did.

This philosophy of individualism also found expression in religious life. Taine observes that Coleridge, who became a sort of oracle toward

¹ Written between 1828-1830, the four-volume series extols Napoleon as the destroyer of kings, especially the Bourbons, as the upsetter of oppressive institutions, and as the main hope of freedom.

² From the Preface of the Lyrical Ballads (1800).

the close of his career, attempted "in the pale of the Church, to unfold and unveil before a few faithful disciples the Christianity of the future." Coleridge failed, however, because "the English mind was too positive, the theologians too enslaved."¹ The movement, according to Taine, was constrained to transform itself and become Anglican, or to deform itself and become revolutionary.

But John Wesley, imbued with the zeal and purpose of a missionary, proved to be more successful. Under the Methodism which he founded, religion became a vital personal experience, with its concomitant social responsibilities. Soon this sect of Protestantism grew in social and political influence.

The Data

Between 1744 and 1832 the period under consideration, thirty-eight sources are available. Eleven of these are from foreign countries: eight Americans and three Germans. The critics number twelve, the general public sources eighteen, the religious two, and the synthesizers six. Only six of the sources are unfavorable; four of them are critics, one a general public source, and one a synthesizer. The rest are favorable.²

¹Taine, op. cit., p. 509.

²Notice the sharp contrast with the preceding era. Favorable critics are: Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), English author, critic, and biographer; William Cowper (1731-1800), English poet; Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), English poet, critic, and philosopher; Robert Southey (1774-1843), British poet and prose writer, poet laureate from 1813 to 1843; Charles Lamb (1775-1834), British essayist and critic; Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), Scottish novelist and poet; Henry Hallam (1777-1859), English historian and critic; and Lord John Campbell (1779-1861), English barrister, chief justice of the Queen's Bench.

Unfavorable critics are: Elizabeth Montagu (1720-1800), English authoress and social figure; Edmund Burke (1729-1797), British statesman, orator, and writer; Dr. Samuel Parr (1747-1829), English pedagogue,

Bunyan and His Readers

As the eighteenth century wore on, and rationalism began to be replaced by a humanitarian outlook on life with its stress on the individual, two trends became apparent among Bunyan's audience. The first was an obvious increase in the readership of Pilgrim's Progress from all walks of life. Many more critics, clergymen, and ordinary people were reading the work and were talking about it. The second was a dramatic shift from a generally unfavorable to a markedly favorable attitude toward Bunyan's allegory.

writer, and schoolmaster; and Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), American poet and critic.

Favorable general public sources are: William Shenstone (1714-1763), British poet; Horace Walpole (1717-1797), Fourth Earl of Oxford, English writer, novelist, and letter-writer; Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813), German poet, novelist, and translator; Johann Heidrich Jung-Stilling (1740-1817), German writer; Hugh Henry Brackenridge, Scottish pioneer in eighteenth-century America; Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), British dramatist, novelist, and translator; John Trumbull (1750-1831), celebrated American poet of the eighteenth century; William Blake (1757-1827), British poet and artist; Johann C. F. Schiller (1759-1805), German poet; Henry M. Muhlenberg and Mrs. Herman Herson, immigrants to America; Sir Humphrey Davy (1778-1829), British chemist; William Hazlitt (1778-1830), British critic and essayist; Daniel Drake (1785-1800), a Kentucky pioneer; Washington Irving (1783-1859), American essayist, novelist, and historian; John Keats (1795-1821), English poet; and Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), American statesman and sixteenth president of the United States.

Unfavorable general public source is David Hume (1711-1776), Scottish philosopher and scholar.

Favorable religious sources are: Rev. John Wesley (1703-1791), founder of Methodism; and Henry Martyn (1781-1812), eminent English missionary and Orientalist.

Favorable synthesizers are: William Oldys (1696-1761), English antiquarian and bibliographer; Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), Scottish judge and writer; Dr. Hugh Hamilton (1729-1805), Irish author and clergyman; James Boswell (1740-1795), English writer and biographer of Johnson; and George Crabbe (1754-1832), English poet and clergyman.

Unfavorable synthesizer is Richard B. Sheridan (1751-1816), Irish dramatist.

To be sure, there were still some who disliked the tinker's Puritanic piety, or who, while secretly admiring Bunyan's work, were afraid to speak out for fear of being ridiculed by the intellectuals. Yet, such readers were in the minority. By the beginning of the nineteenth century it was extremely unlikely that one would come across any adverse criticism.

The unrestrained praise of the work by Dr. Samuel Johnson, critic and greatest literary personality of his age, was hardly typical of the prevailing attitude toward the Pilgrim's Progress. But it did set the key for the larger appreciation of the age which was to follow. Boswell writes:

Johnson praised Bunyan highly. "His Pilgrim's Progress has great merit, both for invention, imagination, and the conduct of the story; and it has had the best evidence of its merit, the general and continued approbation of mankind. . . ." ¹

Johnson, it must be noted, was talking about a humble tinker's allegory which previously had been consigned to the hands of the unlettered peasants and the children. The impact of his views, if any, indeed, was not immediately felt. It would take another thirty or forty years before writers of comparable stature could utter similar praise, and thus help elevate the work of the realm of "literature."

It was a splendid tribute, nevertheless, and evidently made with sincerity. An often-told anecdote reflects Johnson's genuine admiration for the Pilgrim's Progress. Once a little girl was presented to the venerable old writer. Johnson's first question was whether she had read the Pilgrim's Progress. Upon being told that she had not, he snubbed

¹ James Boswell, Boswell's Life of Johnson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 501.

her and refused to talk to her.¹

William Cowper, the poet, might well have shared Johnson's enthusiasm for Bunyan. In his poem Tirocenium, he paid high tribute to the Puritan writer, although he did so cautiously "lest so despised a name" should arouse contempt. The poet goes on to say that he can never forget one so "borne on Fancy's eager wing," adding:

Ingenious dreamer! in whom well-told tale,
Sweet fiction, and sweet truth alike present;
Whose hum'rous vein, strong sense, and simple style,
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;
Witty and well employed, and like thy Lord
Speaking in parables his slighted word;
I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should raise a sneer at thy deserved fame;
Yet even in transitory life's late day,
That mingles all my brown with sober grey,
Reveal the man, whose Pilgrim marks the road,
And guides the Progress of the soul to God.

One is tempted to say, as some critics of Bunyan have done, that Cowper's compliments were patronizing rather than a sincere utterance of admiration. The truth is that in refraining to mention Bunyan by name, Cowper was simply exercising prudence: a little too much of it, perhaps, but it is never easy to espouse an unpopular cause!

Robert Southey is often regarded as the first scholar who made a study of the Pilgrim's Progress. He wrote a biography of Bunyan, with extensive comments on the allegory.² That Southey was profoundly influenced by the Puritan's work is evident in his own comments, as well as in the information supplied by his biographers. The Pilgrim's Progress,

¹ The incident prompted Alfred Noyes' remark that this was one of the "really mean acts" in Johnson's life - a gesture undeserved by the terribly poor quality of the Pilgrim's Progress. See Noyes, A., "Bunyan - A Revaluation," The Bookman, LXXV, No. 445 (1928), 15.

² Robert Southey, The Pilgrim's Progress, With the Life of John Bunyan (New York: J. C. Derby, 1855).

says Southey,

is a book which makes its way through the fancy to the understanding and the heart: the child peruses it with wonder and delight, in youth we discover the genius which it displays; its worth is apprehended as we advance in years, and we perceive its merits feelingly in declining age.¹

Such universality of appeal, avers the author, is reinforced by a "homespun style," which makes it a "well of English undefiled," from which poets and philologists alike should draw their inspiration. The general popularity of Bunyan's work is explained in some degree by this natural style.

Writing to a certain Miss Barker on his way to Dublin, Southey confessed that he had become acquainted with "a character with whom he had been long at variance - Mr. Worldly Wiseman." A few days later he wrote to Grosvenor Bedford about an appointment. He was no richer, he said, "but my shoulders are lighter, Grosvenor. Look at the picture in the Pilgrim's Progress! What happened to Christian when he saw the cross? He put nothing in his pocket either."²

As an admirer of Bunyan and as England's poet laureate for thirty years, Southey no doubt furthered the popularity of the pilgrim's story. He certainly was among the first to lift the literary stigma off Bunyan's allegory. Subsequently, it would be easier to praise the work in public, as many a writer did, without inviting ridicule.

A contemporary, but even greater poet, who delighted in reading the Pilgrim's Progress, was Samuel Taylor Coleridge. To him this "wonderful book" was "one of the very few books which may be read over repeatedly at

¹ Southey, op. cit., p. 11.

² Geoffrey Carnall, Robert Southey and His Age (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 56.

different times, and each time with a new and different pleasure." He himself read it, according to his own admission, variously as a theologian, once with devotional feelings, and once as a poet.

In June, 1830, he was moved to write:

I know of no book, the Bible excepted, as above all comparison, which I, according to my present judgment and experience, could so safely recommend as teaching and enfacing the whole saving truth according to the mind that was in Christ Jesus, as the Pilgrim's Progress. It is, in my conviction, incomparably the best Summa Theologiae Evangelicae ever produced by a writer not miraculously inspired.¹

In matters of style Coleridge was equally impressed by the allegory. It disappointed and surprised him, he stated, that Southey "expressed himself so coldly respecting the style and diction of the Pilgrim's Progress," adding that in his opinion the conversation between Faithful and Talkative is a model of "unaffected dignity and rhythmical flow." Southey's qualified praises were not good enough for him.

Perhaps Coleridge's profuse praise for Bunyan's work should be tempered by the reader's knowledge that Coleridge had a strong inclination toward theology. His Aids to Reflection (1825) chiefly attempted to harmonize the tenets of Orthodox Christianity with a form of transcendental philosophy. He was a proponent of the "moral sense," and a repudiator of eighteenth century rationalism and skepticism.

The master of the English familiar essay, Charles Lamb, grew up with the Pilgrim's Progress. As a child he kept a beautifully illustrated edition of Bunyan's masterpiece - so beautiful, in fact, that he could say, at fifty-three, about a new edition:

1

S. T. Coleridge, The Literary Remains of S. T. Coleridge (London: William Pickering, 1838), III, 391-392.

A splendid edition of Bunyan's *Pilgrim* - why, the thought is enough to turn one's moral stomach. . . . Stop thy friend's sacrilegious hand. Nothing can be done for Bunyan but to reprint the oldcuts in as homely but good a style as possible. . . . Perhaps you don't know my edition, what I had when a child. . . .¹

The edition referred to appeared in 1830, and was reviewed, probably by Lamb himself, in The Times of London for May 7, 1830. In the review he gave some qualified praise for the "unexhausted diligence and unwearied pen" of Southey, who produced "a new and excellent edition of the celebrated" work. Repeatedly, in his correspondence, Lamb mentions the Pilgrim's Progress, at one time even sending Barton several lines of verse about some of the characters in the allegory.

Sir Walter Scott as a child had Bunyan read to him by his mother. He recalls in his autobiography that the pilgrim's story along with two or three other books, relieved "the glum of one dull sermon succeeding another."² In later life he would rank Bunyan above Spenser in the handling of an allegory:

This complication of meanings may render the Faery Queene doubly valuable to the antiquary who can explore its secret sense. . . . Bunyan, on the contrary, in recommending his own religious opinions to the readers of his romance was impressed throughout with the sense of the sacred importance of the task for which he had lived through poverty and captivity. . . .³

That Bunyan may pass for the father of English novelists was an idea advanced by Henry Hallam, who sees in the Puritan writer originality as well as a remarkable power of representation. Furthermore, Hallam

¹ From a letter to Bernard Barton, Oct., 1828, commenting on the forthcoming edition by Major, issued two years later, and containing Southey's *Memoir of Bunyan*. See The Letters of Charles Lamb, ed. E. V. Lucas (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935), p. 178.

² J. G. Lockhart, Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1861), p. 54.

³ Ibid., p. 484.

avers, Bunyan skillfully adapted to his own use the incidental language.¹ Lord Campbell, on the other hand, observes that the merit of the book was "first discovered by the lowly," but "now lauded by the most refined critics."²

In contrast to the congenial views of the foregoing critics were the opinions of three English subjects and an American poet.

Elizabeth Montagu was a critic and social leader who boasted that she "never invited idiots to her house." She dismissed Bunyan as one of "those classics of the artificers in leather." In a letter to Mrs. Donnellan, she referred contemptuously to the Pilgrim's Progress as fit for "some of our squires (who) read nothing but parish law and books of Husbandry."³

Edmund Burke, the statesman and writer, referred to Bunyan's style thus:

The admirer of Don Belianis perhaps does not understand the refined language of the Aeneid, who if it was degraded into the style of the Pilgrim's Progress might feel it in all its energy on the same principle which made him an admirer of Don Belianis.⁴

To Dr. Samuel Parr of Harrow, Bunyan was nothing but "an illiterate tinker," a remark to which the Reverend Fullerton takes vigorous exception.⁵

¹ Robert Nourse, Plain Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress (Springfield, Illinois: H. W. Rokker, 1878), p. 18.

² Quoted by A. R. Buckland, in John Bunyan, The Man and His Work (Chicago: The John C. Winston Co., 1928), p. 84, from Campbell's Lives of the Chief Justices.

³ E. J. Climenson, Elizabeth Montagu, the Queen of the Bluestockings (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1906), p. 73.

⁴ Quoted by William H. White, op. cit., p. 169.

⁵ Says Rev. W. Y. Fullerton, in The Legacy of Bunyan (London: Ernest Ben Ltd., 1928), p. 12: "Adverse criticism of the poem was yet heard, is heard still. . . . Dr. Parr, the Master of Harrow, who filled eight volumes with bad English, had the effrontery to call him an illiterate tinker."

In America, the poet and short story writer Edgar Allan Poe, criticizing the use of allegory as a literary device, concluded that the Pilgrim's Progress was a "Ludicrously over-rated book."¹

Among general readers, however, opinion was overwhelmingly favorable to the Pilgrim's Progress. Often the testimony was fragmentary and indirect; sometimes it was only in the form of circumstantial evidence. In any event, it was indicative of the expanding popularity of the pilgrim allegory, especially outside England. To a number of these readers the Pilgrim's Progress was an inspiration as well as an enduring influence in their lives.

William Hazlitt's biographer writes of the British critic and essayist:

Every page of the Pilgrim's Progress he knew too, every line of the prints that decorated the volume. Nor did he read those Puritan classics without interest and profit, and there can be no doubt that they made a lasting impression on his mind.²

The same source recounts how Hazlitt would weave the allegory into his daydreams and fancy. "The long tall avenue of trees" seemed to him "like something recalled from memories of his childhood . . . like something in the Pilgrim's Progress."

Sir Humphrey Davy, a renowned British chemist, was born in Cornwall in 1778. It is said that before he had learned his letters, he could recite little prayers and stories, and before he had learned to write, he amused himself by reading the Pilgrim's story. "Of the latter book," says Timbs, "he could repeat a great part, even before he could

¹ F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 249.

² C. M. Maclean, Born Under Saturn (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1944), p. 49.

well read it."¹

To William Blake, the poet and artist, Bunyan was a source of inspiration. De Selincourt records that "besides the Bible, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Dante . . . Bunyan provide him with subjects more or less congenial to his mind, and are witnesses to his intellectual vigor."²

The young Romantic poet, John Keats, showed his familiarity and fondness for Bunyan's allegory on at least two occasions. In one, he wrote to Fanny Keats from Oxford in September, 1817: "We have been so little together since you have been able to reflect on things that I know not whether you prefer the History of King Pepin to Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress - or Cinderella and her glass slipper to Moor's Almanack."³ In the other instance Joseph Severn wrote to John Taylor on December 24, 1820, as Keats lay gravely ill at Rome:

O! my dear Sir you cannot imagine what I sometimes feel - I have read to him incessantly - until no more books could be had. . . . the other books he wished me to write down are not in Rome - they were Madam Dacier's Plato and the Pilgrim's Progress. . . .⁴

Another British poet, William Shenstone, justified his indulging in "needful amusement" in terms of Bunyan's Vanity Fair. He wrote to Christopher Wren: "Do not despise others that can find any needful

¹ John Timbs, School Days of Eminent Men (Columbus: Follett, Foster and Co., 1860), p. 277.

² Basil de Selincourt, William Blake (London: Duckworth and Co., 1909), p. 255.

³ M. B. Forman, The Letters of John Keats (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 37.

⁴ The Keats Circle, ed. H. E. Rollins (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 181.

amusement in what, I think, Bunyan very aptly calls Vanity Fair. I have been at it many times this season, and have bought many kinds of merchandize there. . . ." ¹

It was the same Bunyan whom Thomas Holcroft ranked "among the most divine authors I had ever read." And Horace Walpole obviously thought he was paying Spenser a compliment when he called him "John Bunyan in rhyme." ²

In Germany, Bunyan's work found favor with many intellectuals. Among these were Jung-Stilling and the poets Schiller and Wieland. Brown records:

The book was, we know, early received into the pietistic circles of Germany. Jung-Stilling, in his Schlüssel zum Heimweh, in which he has attempted a broad, artistic, but unimpassioned imitation of Bunyan's work, tells us how, in 1748, when in his eighth years, he had read with inexpressible pleasure the Pilgrim's Progress. ³

Brown avers that the influence on Schiller was even greater. He confirms Dr. Gustav Kettner's opinion that in two of Schiller's poems Bunyan's influence is distinctly traceable. These were "Der Pilgrim" and "Die Sehnsucht," which expresses pilgrim thoughts and ideal longing. As a boy at Ludwigsberg, according to Brown, Schiller read many pietistic works, and may have had Bunyan's Dream in mind when he wrote his poems.

In a conversation with Crabb Robinson while dining with the Grand Duchess at Weimar in 1805, Wieland is quoted as saying: "In that book [Pilgrim's Progress] I learned to read English. English literature had a great influence on me, and your Puritan writings particularly." ⁴

¹ Marjorie Williams, The Letters of William Shenstone (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939), p. 292.

² D. M. Stuart, Horace Walpole (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1927), p. 215

³ Brown, op. cit., pp. 255 ff.

⁴ ibid

At this time, in America, the tinker's allegory was receiving wide and enthusiastic response. The boy Lincoln was reading Aesop's Fables and the Pilgrim's Progress in his cabin, along with the family Bible. According to Sandburg,¹ Lincoln spent many hours poring over these books, much as any other youth of his time and age did.

Washington Irving, who spent some years in the Alhambra, was fascinated by Bunyan. He was "never long under the spell of another artist," writes Williams, "save, perhaps, Spenser, Milton, Bunyan, and Defoe."² Another biographer states: "Of the prose volumes, Pilgrim's Progress made a special appeal to his imagination, much as later it became the cherished companion of young Nathaniel Hawthorne. . . . The lure centered for Irving in its adventurous quality. . . ."³

American poets and versifiers were reading Bunyan, too, and sometimes finding him inspiring. John Trumbull, who is labelled by Cowie as "the most celebrated American poet of the eighteenth century," dedicates his verse thus:

Bunyan . . .
 And yet what author gain'd more fame
 Or raised more high his matchless name?
 His works where'er they come, engage
 The looks of childhood and age,
 Draw tears from antient nations' eyes,
 And from their breasts heart-heaving sighs.⁴

¹ Carl Sandburg, Abraham Lincoln (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1954), p. 38.

² Stanley T. Williams, The Life of Washington Irving (New York: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 205.

³ George S. Hellman, Washington Irving, Esquire (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925), p. 14.

⁴ A. Cowie, John Trumbull, Connecticut Wit (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1936), p. 45.

Furthermore, Cowie observes, Bunyan was among the authors whose works may be regarded as part of the general background for Trumbull's poetry. Some of these works the poet mentions in the footnotes to M'Fingal as having been definite sources in point of substance and style.

In the pioneer days, as during the colonial era, the children's reading fare consisted mainly of religious books. The holy Bible was, of course, the chief among these, followed by such pious Puritan works as Book of Martyrs and the Pilgrim's Progress. It was not uncommon, therefore, for a boy to have some familiarity with the story of Bunyan's pilgrim by the time he was old enough to read.

A testimony to the wide popularity of the pilgrim story comes from Daniel Drake, a Kentucky pioneer. He recounts that his mother was "more illiterate" than his father, but could read the Bible and the Pilgrim's Progress. Their preachers and teachers in those days were in general almost as destitute as the folk, who could hardly read and write, and who kept no books in the house. Of their own library, Drake continues, he could remember the Bible, Rippon's Hymns, Watt's hymns for children and the Pilgrim's Progress.

Drake concludes: "The persecutors of John Rogers and John Bunyan were not likely to be regarded with much favor by those who had learned their letters in a primer . . . and who afterwards read the Pilgrim's Progress more than any other book, except the Bible."¹

Two other early settlers, one coming from Scotland and the other from the Netherlands, testify to the popularity of Bunyan's work in the colonies. Hugh Brackenbridge, the Scotchman who ventured as a pioneer in America, quotes liberally from the pilgrim story, "having read it 30 years

¹ Daniel Drake, Pioneer Life in Kentucky (New York: Henry Schuman, 1948), p. 111.

ago."¹ Henry Muhlenberg alludes in his journals to a visit from Mrs. Herman Herson, "who wished me to send her from Pennsylvania Bunian's 'Journey of a Christian to Heaven.'"²

Among the general public sources, the lone dissenting voice in the chorus of praise for Bunyan comes from the arch skeptic, David Hume. Mossner tells of the following incident: Lady Elliot-Murray and Hume were engaged in a friendly argument one day. She was trying to persuade him to burn all his writings, and "write the other way." Hume would be a "shining light," she said, "and equal the author of the Pilgrim's Progress" if he did this. At this suggestion Hume flew in a passion and went away in a huff!³

If the fame of the Puritan allegory was widespread in secular circles by the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was more so among the religious, particularly the Protestants. Bunyan's story and text were incorporated into sermons; scholars of the church made serious critiques and translations of the book. In the foreign missions, the Pilgrim's Progress often accompanied the holy Bible.

Reverend John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, was one of those who gave conscientious attention to Bunyan's work, although there were appreciable differences in dogma between Calvinism and Wesley's religion. His meticulous journals tell us that he, on "Monday, Oct. 8, 1739, drest, tea, conversed, 8.15 Hampton Cammen, Luke vii - 42, 6,000; 10.15 at the inn, tea, conversed, set out, read Pilgrim's Progress." And again:

¹ Claude M. Newlin, The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenbridge (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932), p. 258.

² The Journals of Henry Melchin Muhlenberg, trans. T. S. Tappert and J. W. Doberstein (Philadelphia: The Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania, 1945), p. 682.

³ Ernest C. Mossner, The Life of David Hume (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1954), p. 576.

"Friday, 2: Drest, prayers; 6 set out, read Pilgrim's Progress; 8 Hungerford, tea; 9 set out, Pilgrim's Progress, etc. . . ."¹

Buckland tells, on the other hand, of how a missionary in India used the Pilgrim's Progress with remarkable effectiveness. Henry Martyn, British chaplain at Bankipore, could not at first interest civil and military leaders in his sermons. He substituted for sermons passages from Bunyan's work, and obtained excellent results. Soon the book appeared in many Indian languages. Buckland relates:

Missionary succeeded missionary in recalling instances of its power. At one time it was the Tamil version put into native hands by an Englishman; at another, it was a copy brought by one who had apparently been reached by no missionary effort; at another it was a Brahmin convert, who received his first impression of Christianity from the book; at another it was a pupil of Mr. Noble's school at Masulipatam. . . . As the years have gone on and version has succeeded version - some of them with Illustrations especially drawn for Indian circulation - the hold of the book upon the interest of inquirers seems to increase.²

Of those who appeared to be familiar enough with the Pilgrim's Progress to be able to compare it with other works, or to view it from a larger perspective, only the dramatist Sheridan made an unfavorable comment. In the prologue to "The Rivals," which was staged in 1775, the playwright asks, in mocking the sentimentalism of Bunyan, if we should advance

The Goddess of the woeful countenance -
The sentimental Muse! - Her emblems view,
The Pilgrim's Progress, and a sprig of rue!
View her - too chaste to look like flesh and blood -
Primly portray'd on emblematic wood!

¹ The Journal of John Wesley, ed. V. Curnick (London: The Epworth Press, 1938), II, 288-313.

² A. R. Buckland, op. cit., p. 84 ff.

There fix'd in usurpation should she stand,
 She'll snatch the dagger from her sister's hand:
 And having made her vot'ries weep a flood,
 Good heaven! she'll end her comedies in blood. . . .¹

Sheridan was, of course, close on the heels of the Restoration dramatists, Gay and Congreve, and had no special affection for the Puritans.

But a number of others - the poet Crabbe, the biographer Boswell, the antiquarian Oldys, and the Scottish judge Lord Kames - praised the work.

In "The Parish Register," a poem about the memories brought up in a country parson's mind as he thumbs the entries of the register, Crabbe devotes several lines to Bunyan's "genius":

Bunyan's famed Pilgrim rests that shelf upon;
 A genius rare but rude was honest John:
 Not one who, early by the Muse beguiled,
 Drank from her well the waters undefiled;
 Not one who slowly gain'd the hill sublime,
 Then often sipp'd and little at a time;
 But one who dabbled in the sacred springs,
 And drank them muddy, mix'd with baser things.²

William Oldys, according to Ivimey, Bunyan's biographer, testifies that the Pilgrim's Progress "had infinitely outdone Swift's Tale of the Tub, which perhaps had not made one convert to infidelity, whereas the Pilgrim's Progress had converted many sinners to Christ."³ To this Lord Kames adds: "The Pilgrim's Progress, and Robinson Crusoe, great favorites of the vulgar, are composed in a style enlivened like that of

¹ Richard B. Sheridan, Prologue to "The Rivals," The Plays of Richard B. Sheridan (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1925), p. 9.

² George Crabbe, Prologue to "The Parish Register," The Poetical Works of George Crabbe (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), p. 59.

³ Joseph Ivimey, The Life of John Bunyan (Boston: E. E. Finch, 1814), p. 304.

Homer, by a proper mixture of the dramatic and the narrative," and concludes that on this account, these works have been translated into most European languages.¹

Probably that last word in this array of eoonium should come from an Irish author and clergyman. Dr. Hugh Hamilton rhapsodizes: "He [Bunyan] has extracted plaudits from a larger host of writers than ever conspired to praise a man of genius. . . . At first the favorite of the vulgar, he is now the wonder of the learned; and from the obscurity of smokey cupboards and cottage chimneys, he has been raised to the highest place of Classical renown, and duly canonized by the pontiffs of taste and literature."²

¹Ibid., p. 305.

²James Large, Evenings with John Bunyan; or the Dream Interpreted (New York: Robert Carter & Bros., 1861), p. 12.

CHAPTER IV

1832-1885: The Victorian Age

Many historians tend to look at the Victorian Age as an era of social reform. With the coming of industrial progress, life in England - and, indeed, in a number of Western societies - became complex. Innumerable new problems arose. The lower classes, spurred by a humanitarian movement launched in the preceding age, demanded economic and political rights from the government. They clamoured loudly for much needed reforms, and often got them.

In 1832 Parliament passed a Reform Act which broadened and equalized representation. It was a significant step, although it failed to benefit directly the laboring classes, who could still be excluded from voting on economic grounds. In 1867 a second reform bill granted wider suffrage rights, and corrected many existing injustices.

The oppressive Corn Laws were repealed in 1846. By abolishing duty on wheat and encouraging free trade, this act brought down the price of bread to within the reach of the poor. Factory legislations also humanized working conditions in the country. Child labor was restricted; women were forbidden from working more than twelve hours a day.

These reforms were followed by similar improvements in criminal law, in civil service, and in education. A number of outdated penal

1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

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practices were abolished. Parliament removed the death penalty, for example, from more than one hundred crimes. Imprisonment for debt was outlawed. Speedier trials were instituted. The law of 1807 which put an end to slavery was amended in 1834, so that all slaves were freed, including the new ones to be born from parent slaves.

By 1885, Chartism - which is the term commonly used by historians to describe the widespread social and political reform movement - had had its full impact on England. Political democracy was a reality.

In the realm of religion significant changes were taking place. At least in the case of Ireland, religious reform was closely related to political and social reform. The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, while removing most of the civil disabilities of the Roman Catholics in the British Isles, still denied the Catholic Irish nation the right to send a representative to Parliament. It was not until the Irish Disestablishment Act of 1869 that these religious barriers were removed. The Irish question, entangled in religious and political issues, was to remain unsolved for a long time.

It is the view of some that the Anglican church had become filled with conservatism and formality. Many of the clergy were said to live rather loosely. "In the early nineteenth century," says Rickard, "the church leaders had opposed such matters as Parliamentary reform and abolition of slavery and thereby made the church unpopular with some."¹ One result of this reactionary trend, according to him, was the rebellion of the Scottish church, which, encouraged by the religious discontent in England, founded the Free United Presbyterian Church, with a congregational selection of pastors.

¹J. A. Rickard, History of England (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1960), p. 192.

Another consequence was the Oxford Movement. Initiated by John Keble's sermon at Oxford University in 1833, this religious movement had for its basic purpose "to defend the authority of the episcopacy and the sanctity of the 'apostolic succession,' thus deriving from Archbishop Laud and the other royalist ecclesiastics who had been removed by the Puritans in the seventeenth century."¹ But in its broader aspects, the movement also attempted to cope with the danger which the Church faced as a result of the political and social trends during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Between 1833 and 1841 a series of ninety tracts (thus the movement also became known as the "Tractarian Movement") were published. Keble, John Henry Newman, and E. B. Pusey were the chief writers. Later, Newman defected to the Catholic Church, followed by such other well-known religious thinkers as Henry Edward Manning.

The theological movement came abruptly to an end when dissension entered the picture, but not before it had profoundly affected the Church of England as well as education and ecclesiastical experience both in England and abroad.

A parallel movement, although running in the opposite direction, was the Broad Church, sometimes also described as "Latitudinarianism." This was a modernist movement inside the Church. Its proponents emphasized intelligent contact with the problems of contemporary life, even while accepting the complex doctrines of the English Church. Scientific theory and progressive social ideas were stressed. Tolerance was the keynote, and a liberal interpretation of the Thirtynine Articles

¹ J. D. Cooke and L. Stevenson, English Literature of the Victorian Period (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1949), pp. 62-63.

one of its principles. Thomas Arnold, the master of Rugby, was one of its early leaders, and the "Christian Socialism" was a striking manifestation of its liberal point of view.¹

But such a permissive philosophy of theology cannot sustain its unity for long. Soon the movement became saddled with inconsistencies and splintered into different groups, each going its own way.

That the church was undergoing a painful self-appraisal during the Victorian Age is Elliott-Binns' thesis:

Thus the Church of England was developing and arousing itself from the complacency which had, in earlier days, been a barrier to its true progress. Nonconformity likewise was growing and advancing; and with its growth there came an increasing realization² of the disabilities under which it labored.

The rapid strides made by science helped foment religious restlessness. It was becoming harder and harder, from the point of view of the intellectuals, to reconcile religious dogma with science. In medicine Pasteur, Lister, and Koch made significant discoveries. In natural science Darwin, Spencer and Huxley led the way. Darwin's theory of evolution, in fact, challenged the traditional position of the Church in its dogma regarding creation, and started a long-drawn controversy. Significant progress was made in communication; the steam locomotive and the telegraph were developed, and railroads were built. Newspapers and magazines began to acquire large circulations.

¹ Ibid., pp. 64-65.

² Leonard E. Elliott-Binns, Religion in the Victorian Era (Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1953), p. 69.

Along with the advances made in medicine and biology, electricity began to be harnessed for light and power. All evidences, indeed, pointed to the ascendancy of science and to the increasing role it was to play in man's everyday needs.

Caught in this cross-current of scientific progress and a revitalized theology, the Victorian thinker often emerged espousing a comfortable middle-of-the-road position. Darwin remained a member of the Church of England; Huxley neither affirmed nor denied God, but became instead an "agonistic," for he admitted he could neither prove nor disprove spiritual concepts. Some sought a compromise by regarding science and religion as occupying separate and distinct compartments.

Most Victorian writers, however, were drawn into a position supporting moral idealism, or at least searching for a solution to the moral and social difficulties that beset the rational man. The prose and the poetry of the age reflected this concern. Many writings were designed to accomplish social reforms. Carlyle and Mill bent their genius on social and economic issues, striving to define the boundaries of righteous action. Dickens, Thackeray, and Eliot turned out novels that were incisive social criticisms. Browning, Tennyson, Swinburne, and Hardy attempted "almost persistently to suggest compromises or new creeds that might reconcile religion with science."¹

Mass media as a result tended to be not only entertaining but also didactic and critical. The novelists and essayists talked to the people, and reflected their pressing social and spiritual problems.

¹

Cooke and Stevenson, op. cit., p. 70.

Dawson, appraising the impact of Victorian thinking on English society, sees "the spiritual energy which had been accumulated by a century of intensive activity come to the surface and produce a social and intellectual harvest extraordinary in variety and profusion." He says that in this respect the Victorian Age was like the Seventeenth Century: in both cases "the intensity of religious life generated a profusion of new ideas and new political and social forces."¹ Dawson sums up:

Now the paradox of Victorianism is that for half a century it has been a by-word for all that is stuffy and conventional and reactionary; whereas in actual fact it was a great revolutionary age - an age in which Britain did more to change the world than she has ever done before or since. . . . In fact all the great currents of ideas and political change that we associate with Victorian England, like the rise of modern science and triumph of Liberalism and the ideal of progress and social reform, were never peculiar to England, but were also characteristic of nineteenth century culture in general in the Continent and in the United States.²

The Data

Sixty-eight sources are available during the period under review. Of these, sixteen are critics; twenty-five are general public sources; thirteen are religious; and the rest are synthesizers.

Only eleven of the total number of sources can be classified as unfavorable.

Geographically, the sources are distributed as follows: Britain, thirty-eight; United States, twenty; France, three; Germany, one;

¹ Christopher Dawson, Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians (London: Sylvan Press, 1949), p. 28.

² Ibid., p. 27.

Russia, one; Italy, one; China, one; Canada, one; and others, two.¹

Bunyan in the Victorian Age

Toward the close of the Romantic Era Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress had attained a fairly favorable reputation in England as well as abroad. As the years went by, this reputation grew both in magnitude and in depth. Progress in printing, which allowed the publication of books in greater volume and at a cheaper cost, helped disseminate the work. Advances in technology resulted in extensive communication throughout the world. Bunyan's allegory began to appear in numerous translations, and soon became a favorite among the Christian converts in foreign land.

¹ Favorable critics are: Thomas B. Macaulay (1800-1859), British historian, essayist, and poet; Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), British clergyman, novelist, and poet; Edmund Venables (1819-1895), British antiquary and contributor to Biblical and biographical dictionaries; James Anthony Froude (1818-1894), British historian; Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), American essayist and poet; Dr. Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), English teacher and historian; David Masson (1822-1907), Scottish biographer, critic, and editor; David Sime, M. D., who wrote "The Literary Charm of the Pilgrim's Progress," in 1880; Frederick York Powell (1850-1904), professor of modern history at Oxford; and George Gilfillan, English author of Second Gallery of Portraits, 1852.

Unfavorable critics are: George L. Craik (1799-1866), Scottish historian and critic; Charles A. D. Filon (1800-1875), French historian; Charles A. Sainte-Beuve (1804-1869), French critic; Samuel Butler (1835-1902), English author; Richard Dowling (1846-1898), Irish novelist and journalist; and Francis Thompson (1859-1907), British poet.

Favorable general public sources are: Sam Houston (1793-1863), Texan general; Charles Dickens (1812-1870), British novelist; Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), American author and critic; William Gilmore Simms (1806-1870), American author; H. B. Stanton, American lawyer and politician of the early nineteenth century; Harriet B. Stowe (1811-1889), American author; John Ruskin (1819-1900), British author, art critic, and social reformer; Josiah G. Holland (1819-1881), M.D., American author and editor; Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), British poet and painter; Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), American Christian Scientist; George Eliot, pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans (1819-1880),

Yet interest was not confined to the general readers alone, since even the critics and intellectuals seemed all of a sudden to take interest in the book. Most of them gave it their hearty stamp of approval; a few, piqued by Bunyan's homely style, or offended by its didacticism, rejected it. Some religious persons perceived in it the epitome of Christian virtue, and praised it abundantly.

While the verdict was far from unanimous, the evidence distinctly pointed to one fact: for the first time since its publication in 1678, the Pilgrim's Progress was enjoying a popularity which it had never known. Victorian England was casting a second glance at this Puritan handiwork, feeling almost remorseful in having "neglected" it in the past hundred years. There was a sense of rediscovery in this effort. In America and Europe, a great number of people came in contact with the book for the first time.

British novelist; Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888), American author; Sir James F. Stephen (1829-1894), British judge of the High Court of Justice; Albion W. Tourg  e (1838-1905), American novelist, editor, and judge; Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901), English novelist; John Wesley Powell (1834-1902), American ethnologist; Richard Jefferies (1848-1887), British nature writer; Sir William Osler (1849-1919), Canadian physician and professor of medicine; Baron Friedrich von H  gel (1852-1925), Catholic thinker of England; James L. Williams, D.D.S., American author and philosopher; and Octavia Hill (1838-1912), English housing reformer.

Unfavorable general public sources are: Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894), American author and physician; William Johnson Cory (1823-1892), British writer; William James (1842-1910), American psychologist and philosopher; and Oscar Wilde (1856-1900), British dramatist, poet, and critic.

Favorable religious sources are: George B. Cheever (1807-1890), American author and preacher; John Brown (1830-1923), D.D., minister at Bunyan Meeting, Bedford, from 1864 to 1903, and biographer of Bunyan; W. Morley Punshon (1824-1881), Wesleyan preacher and lecturer; Arthur P. Stanley (1815-1881), English divine and dean of Westminster; Friedrich Paulsen (1846-1908), German philosopher and pedagogist; William R. Weeks (1783-1848), D.D., American minister; Frederick W. Farrar, (1831-1903), D.D., dean of Canterbury; Isaac Kallock, a New England

In England, Macaulay's voice was the first to rise in recognition of Bunyan's worth. It is an authoritative voice:

That wonderful book, while it obtains admiration from the most fastidious critics, is loved by those who are too simple to admire it. . . . This is the highest miracle of genius, that things which are not should be as though they were, that the imaginations of one mind should become the personal recollections of another. And this miracle the tinker has wrought. . . . We live in better times; and we are not afraid to say that, though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two minds which possessed the imaginative faculty in a very eminent degree. One of these minds produced the *Paradise Lost*, the other the *Pilgrim's Progress*.¹

This was not enough. Fourteen years later, in 1854, Macaulay wrote a short biography of Bunyan in which he says: "The *Pilgrim's Progress* is perhaps the only book about which, after the lapse of a

preacher who lived in the 1850's; James Large, American author of Evenings with John Bunyan; or the Dream Interpreted (1861); James Rogers, D.D., American author of Lectures on Pilgrim's Progress (1883); Robert Nourse, American author of Plain Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress (1878); Rev. J. W. Pearce, a missionary in Canton; and an unnamed "monk at Beirut," cited by John Brown.

Favorable synthesizers are: Henry Crabb Robinson (1775-1867), British critic; Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), Scottish essayist and historian; Alexander S. Pushkin (1799-1837), Russian poet and short story writer; Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), American writer; John G. Whittier (1807-1892), American poet; William M. Thackeray (1811-1863), British novelist; Robert Browning (1812-1889), English poet; H. A. Taine (1828-1893), French literary critic and historian; Mark Twain, pseudonym of Samuel L. Clemens (1835-1910), American humorist; Mary Godolphin, pseudonym of the unidentified author of The Pilgrim's Progress in Words of One Syllable (1884); George MacDonald (1824-1905), poet, novelist, minister, and his wife Louisa, who acted *Pilgrim's Progress* at various times; Robert L. Stevenson (1850-1894), Scottish novelist, essayist, and poet; Bonaventura Zumbini, Italian author of Saggi Critici (1876).

Unfavorable synthesizer was an unknown writer for the Penny Cyclopaedia (1836).

¹ T. B. Macaulay, "John Bunyan," Miscellaneous Works of Lord Macaulay, (New York: Harper and Bros., 1880), I, 524-535.



hundred years, the educated minority has come over to the opinion of the common people."¹ This statement is prefaced with the remark that in general, when the educated minority and the common people differ about the merit of a book, the opinion of the educated minority finally prevails. With Bunyan, Macaulay observes, the opposite was true.

The critic is quick to admit that Bunyan's is "not a perfect allegory." There are inconsistencies, and sometimes disguises are "altogether thrown off." But, the critic avers, such inconsistencies are inevitable in a long allegory, and on the whole Bunyan had done well. "There is no book in our literature," he concludes "on which we would so readily stake the fame of the old unpolluted English language - no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed."²

James Anthony Froude, the British historian, agrees essentially with Macaulay. The reason for Bunyan's success, he explains is that the tinker had an excellent material which was suited exactly to his genius. Furthermore, the allegory was composed at precisely that time when the "Puritan formula" was a real belief, and was about to change from a living principle into an intellectual opinion. As long as a religion is fully alive, Froude contends, men do not talk about it or make allegories about it. The Pilgrim's Progress was created in an era when religion was on the wane.

¹ T. B. Macaulay, "John Bunyan," The Life and Works of Lord Macaulay, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1897), VII, 308-309.

² Macaulay, Miscellaneous Works, I, 535.

But the historian goes deeper in his analysis:

The Pilgrim though in a Puritan dress is a genuine man. His experience is so truly human experience, that Christians of every persuasion can identify themselves with him; and even those who regard Christianity itself as but a natural outgrowth of the conscience and intellect, and yet desire to live nobly and make the best of themselves, can recognize familiar foot-prints in every step of Christian's journey. . . .¹

Everyone of us, he continues, is a pilgrim on the same road. As we encounter our own trials, we recall Bunyan's tribulations. Once we have read the Pilgrim's story, therefore, we can never forget it.

Edmund Venables puts the same idea differently. The secret of the graphic power of the allegory, according to him, is that Bunyan describes real men and women of his own day. There is slight exaggeration in the portrayal; nevertheless, the "bold personifications are truthfully drawn from his own experience." This quality gives the work its universal popularity, Venables observes, adding: "Intensely religious as it is in purpose, the Pilgrim's Progress may be safely styled the first English novel."²

Dr. Arnold of Rugby once confessed that he had left off reading the divines, except for Bunyan whom he holds as "a man of incomparably greater genius than any of them."³ He has always been struck by the piety of the Pilgrim's Progress, he says, but now he is "equally, or even more" impressed by its profound wisdom.

Professor Frederick York Powell of Oxford, on the other hand, was "intoxicated by Bunyan's prose."⁴

¹James A. Froude, Bunyan (London: Macmillan and Co., 1895), pp. 154-155.

²Edmund Venables, Life of John Bunyan (London: Walter Scott, 1888), p. 176.

³Quoted by Frank M. Harrison, "Editor's Preface" to Brown, op. cit.

⁴Jackson Holbrook, The Reading of Books (New York: Charles

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To Charles Kingsley, the British clergyman and writer, the essence of Bunyan's genius lies in his eternal humanity, not unlike the humanity represented by the eternal form of Greek statues. This trait Kingsley describes as "a tendency of spiritual portraiture of the highest kind, in which an ideal character is brought out, not by abstracting all individual traits, but by throwing in strong individual traits drawn from common life. . . ." ¹ This has been the manner of the highest masters in poetry and painting, in Kingsley's view. He cites Shakespeare and Dante as examples. But the lowly tinker from Elstow possessed still another trait, though he was not conscious of it: he had "classic grace and purity of form." Because of these qualities, Bunyan is one who writes for all ages; he is full of eternal humanity.

David Sime describes such a universality of appeal in the pilgrim story in another sense; he speaks of its popularity among the unlettered. In the lonely hovels of shepherds and peasants the Pilgrim's Progress is often "the only indication of any kind of literature," he writes at the close of the nineteenth century. These people would "exult and tremble and sigh" with poor Christian even when they do not understand the latter's joy or trouble. Without demanding to grasp the allegory's inner meaning, these crude readers nevertheless can "dream of the solace and glory of so heavenly a paradise."²

One reason for the enduring appeal of the pilgrim allegory, in Masson's opinion, is the refinement of the author's language, despite its homeliness of style. Masson thinks that the taste of the tinker of

Scribner's Sons, 1947), p. 245.

¹ From a letter to Charles H. Bennett, Jan. 23, 1859, as cited in Charles Kingsley, His Letters and Memories of His Life (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Co., 1877), p. 289.

² Quoted from Sime's "The Literary Charm of the Pilgrim's Progress"

Bedford in matters of speech is "more fastidious and cleanly" than that of many scholars and writers educated in universities.¹

At least one Victorian critic - George Gilfillan - ranks Bunyan with Homer in his handling of fight scenes. The "fire and vigour" of such reports, the critic believes, has not been surpassed even by the greatest Greek epic poet himself.²

Gilfillan proceeds to analyze the phenomenal success of the pilgrim allegory, and comes to the conclusion that it was all possible because of certain peculiar qualities of Bunyan's mind. These qualities he describes as: (1) A thorough "equality and almost identity of the subjective and the objective." Thought and imagery are one; so are imagery and reality. Thus Bunyan "does not think but imagine, - not imagine, but see." (2) An exceeding earnestness, which makes his work "beat with heart, with passionate purpose, with deep faith, and with deep reverberations of past suffering."³

Considered apart from its theology, the Pilgrim's Progress, the critic concludes, contains the best, clearest, and boldest exhibition of truth ever given by uninspired man.

Across the Atlantic, in the United States, a great essayist and poet also paid tribute to the Puritan allegorist, although perhaps not in as enthusiastic terms as Gilfillan's. Ralph Waldo Emerson referred

(1880) by Brown, op. cit., p. 288.

¹ Cited by Brown, op. cit., p. 285. But for a contrary view, see Alfred Noyes, "Bunyan - A Revaluation," Bookman, LXXV, No. 445 (1928).

² George Gilfillan, Second Gallery of Portraits (Edinburgh: James Hogg, 1852), p. 324.

³ Ibid., p. 316.

to Bunyan as "a poet" in possessing "the imaginative power in a high degree" - mentioning his name along with the author of the Book of Job, Aristotle, Hume, Kant, and Shakespeare.¹ One of Emerson's later biographers reports that though the American writer could hardly read most of Hawthorne's somber fiction, he was pleased with "the Celestial Railroad," a satirical parody of the Pilgrim's Progress.²

But Bunyan's greatest admirer in America during this period was Nathaniel Hawthorne, who developed his taste for the Puritan writer at a very early age. In those days the banks of the Sebago Lake, in Maine, was a wild and isolated country with hardly any recreation available except fishing, hunting, and reading. At the age of six Hawthorne had read the Pilgrim's Progress. And he carried the book around with him in fields and woods.³

The pilgrim story by the tinker of Elstow was no doubt Hawthorne's favorite work; he mentioned it in his own pages more than any book. Matthiessen notes that Hawthorne was haunted by memories in the Pilgrim's Progress, and that the work asserted itself when the author "was creating his own intense crisis." For example, in The Scarlet

¹ From a lecture on Shakespeare delivered in Dec., 1835, The Early Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 302.

² Ralph L. Rusk, The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 298.

³ George S. Hellman, Washington Irving, Esquire (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925), p. 14. See also Mark Van Doren, Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York: Viking Press, 1957), pp. 10 ff.

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Letter,

Chillingworth, warped from his former upright calm by the irresistible compulsion to prey upon the minister in revenge, looked as though he had been struck by "one of those gleams of ghastly fire that darted from Bunyan's awful doorway in the hill-side, and quivered on the pilgrim's face."¹

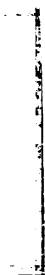
The most thoroughly Bunyan among Hawthorne's creations is "The Celestial Railroad." This is an adaptation of the Pilgrim's Progress in which the New England writer satirizes the Unitarians and Transcendentalists, who would change the nature of man by asserting his goodness. The characters seeking the Celestial City do not go on foot, as Bunyan's pilgrim does, but ride comfortably on the train. The burden which plagued Bunyan's Christian throughout his journey is checked in the baggage car. Steward continues the comparison:

A bridge spans the Slough of Despond, a tunnel cuts through the Hill Difficulty; modern gas lamps illuminate the Valley of the Shadow of Death. But the train stops short of the Celestial City owing to the limitation of franchise. Bunyan's way, Hawthorne thought, was still the best. The railroad in Hawthorne's story becomes a symbol of those contrivances - whether philosophical systems or mechanical inventions - which promise an easy and ready way of perfection.²

Included in the case of characters are Mr. Greatheart, Mr. Smooth-it-away, Mr. Live-for-the-World, Mr. Scaly-conscience, Mr. Take-it-easy, and Giant Transcendentalist. A number of Bunyan places are borrowed: City of Destruction, Celestial City, Slough of Despond, Valley of Humiliation, Interpreter's House, and Vanity Fair.

¹ F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance - Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 273.

² Randall Stewart, Nathaniel Hawthorne (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 245.



"The Celestial Railroad" is so adeptly written that, it is said, even Ralph Waldo Emerson admired it. Hawthorne could not have chosen a more appropriate vehicle for expressing his own Puritanism.

Bunyan's American admirers during this era also included writers, scholars, and many prominent figures. A number of them were articulate in their praise.

Nevertheless, there were those who found defects in the Puritan allegory, and their opinions were often backed by meritorious arguments. Professor George L. Craik, the Scottish historian and critic, in his scholarly survey of Literature and Learning in England simply "treats Bunyan as an 'also ran,' and disposes of him in three rather condescending lines."¹ But Samuel Butler, the famed Victorian novelist, was unsparing in his comment. The Pilgrim's Progress, he says,

consists mainly of a series of infamous libels upon life and things; it is a blasphemy against certain fundamental ideas of right and wrong. The allegory halts continually. Nothing can be more carnal than the golden splendour of the Eternal City.²

Writing for a literary magazine, Francis Thompson, the British poet whom Noyes describes as "a thinker opposed in every way to Samuel Butler,"³ criticized Bunyan's incompetence as a writer. The descriptions are dull and insufficient, Thompson averred; solemn ideas are treated with flippancy. Thus,

¹
Cited by St. John Adcock, "Bunyan's Progress," Bookman (Dec., 1927), p. 159.

²
Quoted by Alfred Noyes, "Bunyan Revisited," The Opalescent Parrot (London: Shud and Waid, 1929), pp. 95 ff.

³
Ibid., p. 96.



In the account of the Valley of Despair he [Bunyan] does flicker into a meagre glimmer of description; but its only effect is to leave the darkness of his fancy visible, and he flickers feebly out again. The Mouth of Hell is by the way; and after his usual commonplace manner of vision, he introduces this tremendous idea with a dense flippancy, such as never surely was accorded it before.¹

Thompson, according to his biographer, also "approved of Richard Dowling's assault upon the Pilgrim's Progress" - presumably on grounds similar to those on which he based his own criticisms.

The French critic, Sainte-Beuve, is not congenial to the tinker's allegory, In his opinion the work has been highly overrated. Criticizing Taine for being whimsical in his judgments, Sainte-Beuve says that the former "bows down or he raises up, according to his feelings; he will despise Butler for his bepraised Hudibras, he will magnify Bunyan, the fanatic, for his Pilgrim's Progress." Then he qualifies his statement and explains that by "magnify" he means Taine tends to create an impression in the reader that the allegory is better than it actually is.²

Another Frenchman, Charles Augustine Filon, a historian, asks sarcastically: "In time gone by this book was the property of peasants and children. Ought we not to give it back to them?"³

Thus was the climate of critical opinion surrounding Bunyan's book during the Victorian Era. The self-appointed arbiters of literary

¹ E. Meynell, The Life of Francis Thompson (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, Ltd., 1926), p. 203.

² C. A. Sainte-Beuve, English Portraits (London: Dalby, Isbester, and Co., 1875), pp. 267-268.

³ To which Brown, Bunyan's admirer, replies: "Perhaps Filon did not know that Swift, Cowper, Samuel Johnson, to mention a few, had read 'this book' with love and admiration?" See Brown, op. cit., p. 144.

taste had spoken; it was for the general public to accept or reject their views.

Among the general readers, as among the critics, there was disagreement. This was expected. Nevertheless, opinion was overwhelmingly favorable toward the Pilgrim's Progress. In a sense the voice of the general reading public is a more accurate index of Bunyan's popularity than the critics'. It is less sophisticated and more spontaneous. When people read a book and like it, they often say so without hesitation or embarrassment. Sometimes such readers do not express their views in writing, or else their words reach the printed page only through secondary sources.

The outstanding Victorian writers Charles Dickens and John Ruskin were steeped in the tradition of Bunyan. As children they read and reread the tinker's allegory, and their writings in later life reflect this familiarity. "Of classical literature he [Dickens] knew little and showed hardly the slightest influence," writes Johnson, "but he knew the entire range of English prose fiction, from Bunyan and Defoe. . . ." ¹

In Pickwick Papers the Puritan writer's influence on Dickens is amply shown. Mr. Pickwick "begins by being as silly a fellow as Jack . . . a gay but undeniable Christian escaping the Fleet dungeons where so many are imprisoned by the Giant Despair. . . ." ²

Ruskin himself learned to read the Pilgrim's Progress along with the Bible. As a social reformer his was a compelling voice during

¹ Edgar Johnson, Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952), p. 1131.

² Ibid., p. 174.

during the Victorian Age; as an art critic, he was widely read and respected. Cook records that after seeing Tintoretto's works in a Venice museum one day, Ruskin felt that his "function was henceforth to be that of the Interpreter in the Pilgrim's Progress."¹

A great Catholic thinker, Baron von Hügel,² admits that he and his wife enjoy reading the Puritan allegory, which he finds "curiously Catholic in its ideas." He understands the author as being strong about the necessity of good works, as well as faith.³ Also, he feels that there is brought out a difference between involuntary feelings and sin - a distinction which the Catholic thinker regards as important. "May and I are getting on beautifully with Bunyan," he writes to an acquaintance. Then he adds: "the 'Valley of the Shadow of Death' is grand."⁴

George Eliot, the novelist, was familiar enough with the pilgrim story to be able to say in a letter to a friend: "Having got my head

¹E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin (New York: Macmillan Co., 1911), p. 187.

²Michael de la Bedoyere, in Preface to The Life of Baron von Hügel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), reproduces the following piece from the Times Literary Supplement, published two years after von Hügel's death: "Were we asked to name the Roman Catholic Thinkers who have in modern times left an enduring work on the religious mind of England, we should mention Newman and we should mention Friedrich von Hügel, but no third without doubts and reservations."

³Calvinists, of whom Bunyan was one, believe salvation is a matter of predestination. (See footnote on page 3). Apparently von Hügel's opinion is at variance with the generally accepted interpretation of the theology of Bunyan's work.

⁴De la Bedoyere, op. cit., p. 4.

above this slough of Despond, I feel quite inclined to tell you how much pleasure your letter gave me. . . ."¹ So was Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the poet. Writing to a certain Mrs. Gaskell in 1860, he remarks that her address ("Shady Hill") reminds him of the Pilgrim's Progress, in which the pleasant names of heavenly places makes one feel as if he could get there. All the pitfalls are "plain to the eye," he adds facetiously, and all the wicked people are equipped with wicked names.²

An intense admiration for the pilgrim allegory was developed in Octavia Hill, England's housing reformer and pioneer of the open space movement. She spent her Sundays and other spare time acting out the Pilgrim's Progress on the stage. She often described in glowing terms scenes from these stagings, in letters to her mother.³

Others who read Bunyan's work early in their youth were Sir James F. Stephen, a judge of the high court of justice, Richard Jefferies, the Nature writer, and Charlotte Mary Yonge, the novelist. Yonge especially recommends the Pilgrim's Progress to children, "in spite of its peculiarities," because she does not think that Bunyan's doctrines would do the children any harm. She was an advocate of "wholesome and amusing literature."⁴

¹ From The George Eliot Letters, (ed.) Gordon S. Haight (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 78.

² From the Letters of Charles Eliot Norton (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913), p. 207.

³ From Life of Octavia Hill, ed. C. Edmund Maurice (London: Macmillan and Co., 1913), pp. 438, 482-83, 494.

⁴ For references to the names cited in this paragraph see: L. Stephen, The Life of Sir James Stephen (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons,



In America Bunyan's audience was extremely diversified. Among his readers, for example, were an army general, a lawyer-politician, numerous authors and editors, a physician, a religious leader, a judge, and an ethnologist.

Sam Houston, the great Texan general who fought in the Mexican war, carried with him in his early campaign days the Pilgrim's Progress, along with the Bible, the Iliad, and Robinson Crusoe.¹

H. B. Stanton, lawyer, politician, and a "very religious man," records in his memoirs: "Other scenes arise before me . . . sketch a visit to Boston, where William Brewster, my Puritan ancestor, was long imprisoned for nonconformity; and to the gloomy jail at Bedford, where John Bunyan wrote the 'Pilgrim's Progress'. . . ." ²

For William Gilmore Simms, the author, Bunyan's influence from early childhood would show in his writings in later life. He confesses that "I used to glow and shiver in turn, over 'Pilgrim's Progress'. . . ." The editors of his Letters comment: "As was the case with so many of his childhood experiences, the memory of Bunyan yielded rich fruit in one of the most touching episodes in American literature in which the Tory villain, Hell Fire Dick, succumbs to the spell of Bunyan."³

1895); E. Thomas, Richard Jefferies (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1938); and G. Battiscombe, Charlotte Mary Yonge (London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1943).

¹The Autobiography of Sam Houston, eds. D. Day and H. Ullom (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p. 17.

²H. B. Stanton, Random Recollections (New York: Harper and Bros., 1887), p. 108.

³From The Letters of William Gilmore Simms, ed. M. C. S. Oliphant, et al. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1956), I, ixiv.

And for another writer, Margaret Fuller, the pilgrim story was a guide to the meaning of "conscience."¹

In the same measure, Louisa May Alcott, author of the popular Little Women, was deeply affected early in life by her reading of Bunyan. In the first chapter of her novel this long passage occurs, in which Mrs. March says to the girls:

"Do you remember how you used to play Pilgrim's Progress when you were little things? Nothing delighted you more than to have me tie my piece-bags on your backs for burdens, give you hats and sticks, and rolls of paper, and let you travel through the house from the cellar, which was the City of Destruction, up, up to the house-top, where you had all the lovely things you could collect to make a Celestial City."

"What fun it was, especially going by the lions, fighting Appolyon, and passing through the Valley where the hobgoblins were," said Jo.

"I liked the place where the bundles fell off and tumbled down the stairs," said Meg.²

Still from another woman author - Harriet Beecher Stowe, who wrote one of America's most socially significant books - comes the testimony that the pilgrim story was her favorite. "Of all the books that I read at this period, there was none that went to my heart like Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress'," she confesses. "I read it and re-read it night and day; I took it to bed with me and hugged it to my bosom while I slept. . . ."³

¹ M. Sterne, The Life of Margaret Fuller (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1942), p. 115.

² Quoted by Mott, op. cit., p. 20.

³ Charles E. Stowe, Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1891), p. 437.

Thus might the author of Uncle Tom's Cabin have developed her sense of compassion for the Negro slaves of the South, whose liberation she probably hastened with her book. According to her, she eagerly sought out every new edition of Bunyan's book and "devoured" it unquestioningly. Then she exclaims: "Oh that I could read that most inimitable book once more with the same solemn conviction of its literal truth, that I might once more enjoy the same untold ecstasy!"

It is difficult to find any testimonial to Bunyan's "literary prowess" as enthusiastic as this, even if one were to scan the range of American literature. Perhaps it is somewhat overdone; yet, the sincerity of the narrator cannot be doubted.

In other, less dramatic ways, the Pilgrim's Progress influenced a number of Americans, most of whom became familiar with the work as children. Among them were Josiah Holland, a physician and author, who liked the imaginative quality of the work more than its "moral earnestness";¹ Mary Baker Eddy, a Christian Scientist;² Albion W. Tourg  e, judge, lecturer, and novelist;³ John Wesley Powell, ethnologist and surveyor of the Colorado River, who read and reread the tinker's allegory as a youth;⁴ and James Leon Williams, dentist, philosopher, and author, who learned to read the pilgrim story at the age of four.⁵

¹ H. H. Peckham, Josiah Gilbert Holland (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), pp. 7, 113.

² L. P. Powell, Mary Baker Eddy (Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Co., 1930), p. 281.

³ Roy F. Dibble, Albion W. Tourg  e (New York: Lemcke and Buechner, 1921), p. 16.

⁴ W. Darrah, Powell of the Colorado (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 23.

⁵ G. W. Clapp, The Life and Work of James Leon Williams (New York: The Dental Digest, 1925), p. 11.

For Sir William Osler, Canadian physician and professor of medicine, Bunyan's ideas were useful as a constant companion. His biographer writes: "He ornamented his discourse with quaint allusions to Holy Writ and the Pilgrim's Progress, but did not in those days say much about Montaigne and the Religio Medici, and rarely alluded to Plato or Marcus Aurelius."¹

On the unfavorable side, a number of general public sources found Bunyan's book unsatisfying. One of them, William James, an American psychologist, classes Bunyan as among the "sick souls" - a psychopathic case. Says James in Varieties of Religious Experience: "He is that, at this period, no doubt; the voices and the visions and the diabolical suggestions and the hound-like fears are beyond all question psychopathic."² James does not, however, comment directly on Bunyan's allegory.

Oliver Wendell Holmes objected to the Puritanic concept of righteousness. He admitted that Pilgrim's Progress is a wonderful work of imagination, with all its beauty and power, but it seemed to him "then, as it does now, more like the hunting of sinners with a pack of demons for the amusement of the Lord of the terrestrial manor than like the tender care of a father for his offspring."

Holmes goes on to say that the book makes the idea of salvation "more unreasonable and more repulsive," rather than attractive.³

¹ H. Cushing, The Life of Sir William Osler (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 310

² Quoted by John L. Lowes, Of Reading Books (London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1930), p. 3.

³ John T. Morse, Life and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1896), I, 39-42.

Yet he is not necessarily evaluating the work from the religious viewpoint; he is simply speaking as a casual reader, a part of Bunyan's general audience in the Victorian Age.

In England, Oscar Wilde is said to have scanned the Puritan allegory while he was in jail, and found it unsuitable to his taste.¹ And William Cory, the writer, called the work "wretched stuff."²

All religious sources during the Victorian Age were favorable toward Bunyan's work. This, of course, is not surprising. By this time the reputation of the Pilgrim's Progress has been firmly established in many lands, and its didactic value is especially attractive to the religiously inclined.

Among Bunyan's admirers was Reverend John Brown, whose biography of the Puritan writer, first published in 1885, remains the most complete and authoritative source of material on the subject today. In 1864 Brown became pastor of the historic Bunyan Meeting Church at Bedford, where the famous Puritan himself spent many years. He held this post for almost forty years.

Although Brown tries to be impartial in his appraisal of Bunyan's work, backing every assertion with rigorous documentation whenever possible, the fact cannot be denied that he treats his subject with great affection and extreme personal bias. His viewpoint is colored by his religion. This is understandable, and perhaps even necessary.

¹ H. Pearson, Oscar Wilde (New York: Harper and Bros., 1946), p. 280.

² Robert Bridges, Collected Essays (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), XVII, 121.

But one reading his work should be properly apprised of this fact beforehand, if he is to get a clear and balanced picture of the subject.

Thus Brown arrays an impressive list of names of persons who have heaped praise upon Pilgrim's Progress: Macaulay, Shaw, Stevenson, Firth, Chesterton, and Masson, among others.

On his own, he says:

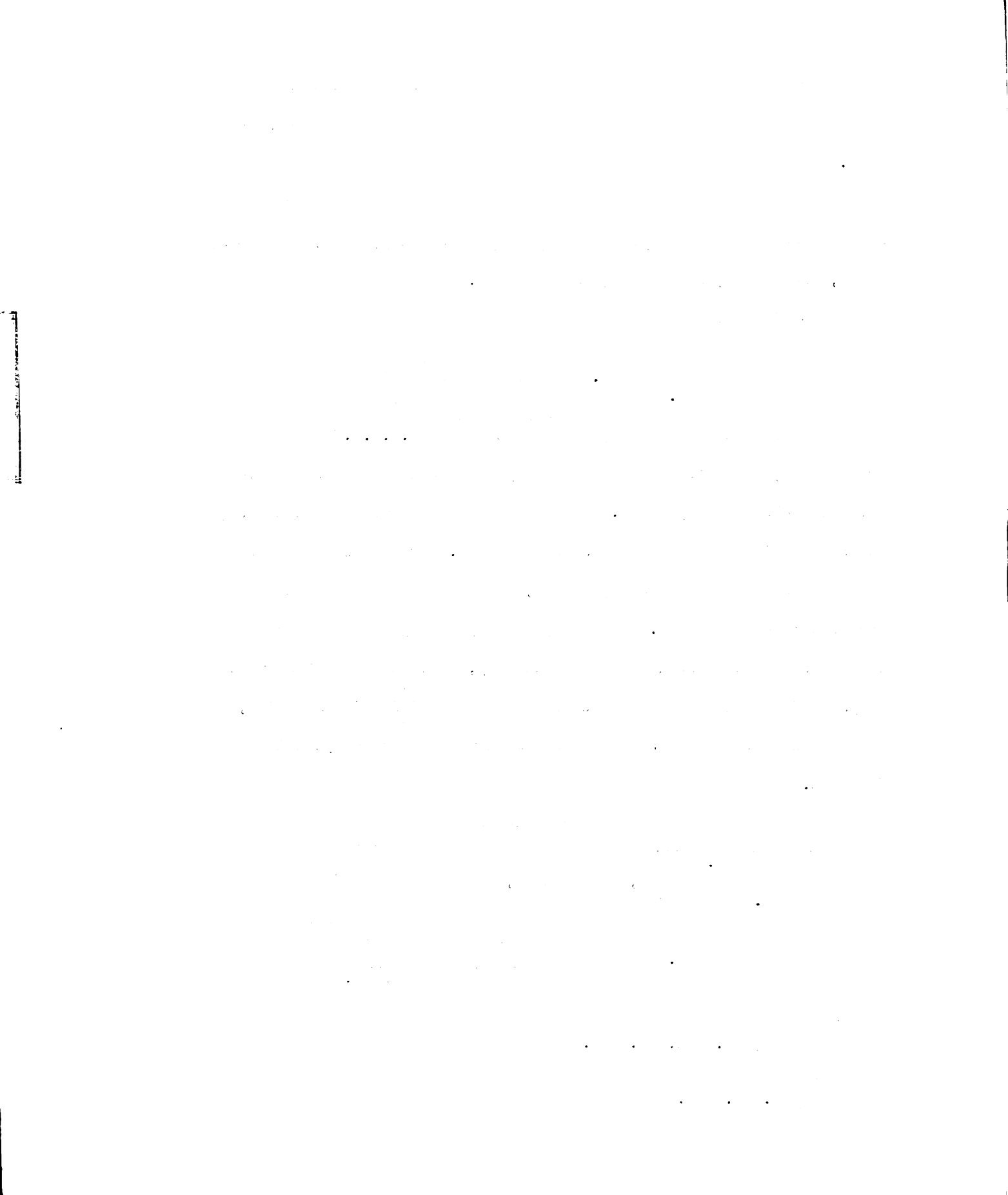
Foremost among its literary qualities is its perfect spontaneousness. It has all the simple freedom of life. There are no signs of toil, no inartistic traces of elaboration; the vision grows up like a flower, effortless and fair. . . .¹

Furthermore, Bunyan's work is "marked by a dramatic unity" which even greater books do not possess. There is "great humanness" in the book; it has rapidity and power of characterization. Brown also observes that with all its "homeliness, humour, and humanness," the work is "never coarse or unclean." Finally, anticipating possible objection to the Calvinistic theology of the allegory, Brown contends that while Bunyan undoubtedly professed the doctrine of Justification by Faith, many people have been charmed by this book who do not accept this doctrine. He concludes:

He who is nearest to the Bible is nearest to The Pilgrim's Progress in its comprehensive Christ-like spirit. He belongs to that region where men are neither of Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas but of Christ. And as there is no nationality in that Christ who on His human side is the universal man, so he whose work comes nearest to Christ comes nearest to the universal heart. This is why The Pilgrim's Progress has found its way to almost every people under heaven.²

¹ Brown, op. cit., p. 281.

² Ibid., p. 287.



"It is this universality of thought that gives to the book its large catholicity of feeling," explains Dean Arthur P. Stanley of Westminster. Once within the charm of its story, the reader is not bothered by sectarian clamour. Even Roman Catholics, the dean observes, relish the book once the few parts offensive to them are deleted. He closes with the statement:

. . .that book has been truly described as one of the few which act as a religious bond to the whole of English Christendom, as one which . . . contributed to the common religious culture of the Anglo-Saxon race.¹

The Reverend W. Morley Punshon feels, that it is "superfluous" to speak in praise of the pilgrim allegory. It is a book, he says, which is treasured from childhood, through manhood, and into "the weariness of waning years."² The Very Reverend Frederick W. Farrar, Dean of Canterbury, is in agreement, stressing the "wonderful vividness and reality of Bunyan's impersonations," as well as "the great beauty of many special passages."³

In the United States ministers of various Protestant sects agree on the general excellence of the book. The Reverend James Rodgers thinks that it is "the most wonderful of human compositions," and that "it bears the same rank in theology that Shakespeare does in literature." Echoing Reverend Punshon's comments, he states that one

¹ From an address at Bedford, 1874, quoted by Brown, op. cit., p. 286.

² W. M. Punshon, Lectures and Sermons (Toronto: Adam, Stevenson & Co., 1873), p. 113.

³ F. W. Farrar, D. D., Dean of Canterbury, Great Books (New York: Thomas U. Cromwell & Co., 1898), passim.

peculiarity of the work is that it is calculated to charm at all periods of life; one does not have to wait until his mind is matured to be able to appreciate it. Yet, he goes on, one's "fondness increases in proportion" as his intellect develops. In fact, it appeals also to both the pious and those who are not inclined to God, because of its "indescribable charm."¹ James Large affirms this testimony to the universal popularity of Bunyan's work. "Such is the charming simplicity of Bunyan's language," he claims, "that even a young child can understand the verbal meaning of the narrative."² He also admires the way Bunyan has taken ideas from the Bible and woven them into an inimitable allegory.

Revivalist preachers, according to Isaac Kalloch's biographer, use the tinker's examples effectively; Kalloch himself, as a New England minister, often refers to the work.³ Robert Nourse delivered a series of lectures in Illinois in the winter of 1877-78, in which he cited a number of critics who praised Bunyan's work.⁴

A minister of the Fourth Presbyterian Church in New Jersey, Reverend William R. Weeks, composed a lengthy version of the Pilgrim's Progress "for the nineteenth century," taking some liberty with the theological views of the original book. The work consists of seventy-

¹ Rev. James Rodgers, D.D., Lectures in Pilgrim's Progress (Pittsburgh: Myers, Shinkler & Co., 1883), p. 75.

² James Large, Evenings with John Bunyan; or the Dream Interpreted (New York: Robert Carter and Bros., 1861), p. 3.

³ M. M. Marberry, The Golden Voice (New York: Farrar, Straus, & co., 1947), p. 216.

⁴ Robert Nourse, Plain Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress (Springfield, Ill.: H. W. Rokker, 1878), p. 18.

four chapters, and is prefaced by an explanation by the author to the effect that "new incidents" are introduced in consonance with modern conditions.¹ Otherwise, the form and intent of the book is preserved.

In Germany Bunyan also had his readers among the religious. The philosopher and pedagogist, Friedrich Paulsen, relates how he and his aging father used to read together the Pilgrim's Progress in winter evenings. He admits that it was not its poetic value, which made it acceptable, "but only its devotional and didactic elements."²

A monk at Beirut, as well as a missionary in Canton, were quoted by Brown as certifying to the popularity of the pilgrim story in those regions. The monk declared that he read the book during the long winter evenings, and was quite delighted that his Protestant friends have "at least one good book" to offer. He testified further that among the Arabic books of the vineyard keepers was a well-used copy of Bunyan's allegory. On the other hand, a certain Reverend J. W. Pearce, in a letter to Brown in June, 1883, stated that not only was the copy in Canton Vernacular regarded as one of the best books in their depository, but it was also taught in the native schools. He had seen, according to him, "Chinese who knew or cared little for Christianity poring over The Pilgrim's Progress with interest and delight."³

¹ William R. Weeks, D.D., The Pilgrim's Progress in the Nineteenth Century (New York: M. W. Dodd, 1849).

² Friedrich Paulsen, An Autobiography (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), p. 37.

³ Brown, op. cit., p. 456.



Such a popularity with the religious was matched in breadth and intensity by the synthesizers.¹ Probably foremost among these was Robert Louis Stevenson. From the earliest time he could remember, Stevenson had had Bunyan's story for a companion. His mother read it often to him as a young child, as she did the Bible and other missionary stories. On the Sabbath, he was not allowed to indulge in play or frivolity; the only exception was when his mother sewed a pack on the back of a wooden doll, to represent Christian, and let Robert play "Pilgrim's Progress." Robert in later life recalls this gesture as a "pleasant maternal casuistry."²

Stevenson outgrew the religious fervor which might have been inculcated in him by his mother, and became an adventurous Bohemian. But his love for the Puritan tinker's allegory remained throughout his life. "He could wolf down Samson Agonistes today and Fleurs du mal tomorrow," observes Furnas, "simultaneously worship Bunyan and learn Swinburne by heart."³

Stevenson wrote the introduction to the Bagster edition of the Pilgrim's Progress, giving much serious thought to his task. He confided to a friend:

How about carving and gilding? I have nearly killed myself over Bunyan; and am too tired to finish him today, as I might otherwise have done. For his back

¹ For an explanation of the categories, see p. 19.

² G. Balfour, The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), I, 38.

³ J. C. Furnas, Voyage to Windward, the Life of Robert Louis Stevenson (New York: William Sloane Associates, 1951), p. 29.

is broken. For some reason, it proved one of the hardest things I ever tried to write; perhaps - but no - I have no theory to offer - it went against the spirit.¹

As it turned out, the introduction became one of the most glowing tributes ever paid to Bunyan. "We can follow him step by step," the critic says, "into the trap which he lays for himself by his own entire good faith and triumphant literality of vision . . . all with the same clearness, all written of with equal gusto and precision, all created in the same mixed element, of simplicity that is almost comical, and art that, for its purpose, is faultless."²

The great Victorian poet, Robert Browning, probably discovered Bunyan at a much later time in his life. Nevertheless, he regarded the tinker of Elstow with "utmost admiration and reverence" - to use his own phrase. While at Splügen in the Swiss Alps in the summer and fall of 1878, Browning wrote "Ned Bratts," which runs in part:

The Book, sirs - take and

read!

You have my history in a nutshell, - ay, indeed!
It must off, my burden! See, - slack
 straps and into pit,
Roll, reach the bottom, rest, rot there -
 a plague on it!
For a mountain's sure to fall and
 bury Bedford Town,
'Destruction' - that's the name, and
 fire shall burn it down!
O 'scape the wrath in time! Time's
 now, if not too late.

¹ From a letter to W. E. Henley, Nov., 1881, The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1919), II, 58.

² Introduction to the Bagster edition of the Pilgrim's Progress (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1845).

How can I pilgrimage up to the
 wicket-gate?
 Next comes Despond the slough: not
 that I fear to pull
 Through mud, and dry my clothes
 at brave House Beautiful - 1

From another Victorian giant, Thomas Carlyle, comes another tribute: England needs to be aroused into activity, and the books that arouse Englishmen into activity "are like Bunyan's, addressed to the inner life and to the individual soul."² Writing to a friend in October, 1859, Carlyle alludes to his own "heart-breaking Prussian Concern," which he says is "comparable to poor Christian's 'Burden' in the Pilgrim's Progress."³

William Makepeace Thackeray, the novelist, and Henry Crabb Robinson, the critic, demonstrated familiarity with the Puritan tinker's work. Thackeray patterned his Vanity Fair after Bunyan's own allegorical city in which worldly goods were on sale; likewise, his book was a moral commentary upon human nature. Robinson, on the other hand, knew Bunyan's early editions so well that upon seeing some designs made for Sir Joshua Reynolds, he exclaimed: "The shepherds . . . are a palpable plagiarism from Christian and Faithful in the folio edition of the Pilgrim's Progress."⁴

¹ Robert Browning, Dramatic Idyls (London: Smith, Edder & Co., 1879), p. 120.

² Osbert Burdett, The Two Carlyles (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1931), pp. 198-199.

³ David A. Wilson, Carlyle to Threescore-and-ten (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1929), p. 365.

⁴ Henry C. Robinson, On Books and Their Writers, ed. E. J. Morley (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1938), II, 540.

For a couple and their children, fondness for Bunyan's allegory went beyond mere reading. They went from one city to another acting the Pilgrim's Progress. George Macdonald and his wife Louisa first presented the pilgrim play in 1877, at a coach house and stable. The performance was so well received they decided to make a tour. In 1879 George wrote to an acquaintance about their decision to act Bunyan's allegory "wherever we can," adding: "The Pilgrim's Progress has [become] such a reality to us that it seems a duty to do it - from the multitude of testimonies we have had to the moral and good of the play. . . ." ¹ Macdonald played the role of Mr. Greatheart - the name by which he became generally known in later life to many of his intimate friends.

The only dissenting voice in England comes from an unidentified writer for the Penny Cyclopedia who "confesses" that "to us the Pilgrim's Progress appears to be a coarse allegory . . . mean, jejune and wearisome." ²

Two American writers, who lived less than thirty years apart, also demonstrated a close familiarity with Bunyan's masterpiece. Mark Twain subtitled his famous Innocents Abroad "The New Pilgrim's Progress." It is an account of the author's travel on the steamship "Quaker City" to Europe and the Holy Land. In the conclusion he says fondly that were the ship to sail again on the same journey, he would be glad to be a passenger, "with the same captain and even the same pilgrims, the same sinners." ³

¹ G. Macdonald, George Macdonald and His Wife (New York: The Dial Press, Inc., 1924), p. 490.

² Cited by W. Hale White, op. cit., p. 198.

³ Mark Twain, The Innocents Abroad (New York: Harper and Bros., 1869), p. 440.

The poet John Greenleaf Whittier is the other person who confesses in his "Supernaturalism of New England" that even in later life, at the mention of Evil Angel, the image of Bunyan's horrible fire-breathing monster rises before him. Like many others of his age, Whittier was brought up in the Pilgrim's Progress.¹ His admiration went deeper than the work; he regarded the man highly for having lived out and acted what Milton and Penn and Locke wrote in definition of Liberty.²

An interesting tribute to the pilgrim allegory was one in the form of a simplified version, put out by an American publisher in 1884. It was authored by "Mary Godolphin," (a pseudonym) and it transformed the allegory into words of one syllable.³

Russia's Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin, poet and short story writer, also pays tribute to Bunyan. Many of his short poems are adaptations and translations. One of them is The Pilgrim, a paraphrase in Alexandrine couplets of the first few pages of Pilgrim's Progress.⁴

¹W. S. Kennedy, John Greenleaf Whittier (Boston: S. E. Cassino & Co., 1883), p. 71.

²H. E. Speight, The Life and Writings of John Bunyan (New York: Harper Bros., 1928), p. 203.

³Mary Godolphin (Pseud.), The Pilgrim's Progress in Words of One Syllable (New York: McLoughlin Bros., 1884). Sample: "Now I saw, in my dream, that one day as he took his walk in the fields with his book in his hand, he gave a groan, - for he felt as if a cloud were on his soul, - and he burst out as he was wont to do, and said, Who will save me?"

⁴Prince D. S. Mirsky, Pushkin (London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1926), p. 213.

In Italy, Bonaventura Zumbini compared Bunyan and Dante, pointing out that their works are complementary to each other. Bunyan's allegory, he avers, pictures the soul while it is on earth, whereas Dante describes the soul in the world beyond. Death is both the writing and dividing element in their epics. Together, the artists show a profound understanding of the whole ideal history of the Christian soul.¹

Of all the synthesizers, H. A. Taine, the French literary critic and historian, perhaps draws the most balanced picture of John Bunyan. He admits that next to the Bible the most widely read book in England is the Pilgrim's Progress. The reason for this, he explains, is that the work is unsurpassed in portraying the doctrine of salvation by grace, which is the basis of Protestantism. As a result, the allegory has become a manual of devotion for the use of the simple folk.

Stylistically speaking, the book employs the allegory, "the most artificial kind," out of necessity rather than choice. Bunyan is not well educated; likewise, children and uncultivated minds can grasp most easily arguments which are transformed into parables. Abstract ideas elude Bunyan's mind. The "repetitions, embarrassed phrases, familiar comparisons, this artless style, whose awkwardness recalls the childish periods of Herodotus, and whose simplicity recalls tales for children" prove that the author had to make the work allegorical to make it intelligible; it also proves, according to Taine, that "Bunyan is a poet because he is a child."²

¹ Cited by Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 280, from Saggi Critici, di Bonaventura Zumbini (Napoli, 1876).

² H. A. Taine, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

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However, the critic commends Bunyan for his simplicity and vision. No one, he says, is so lucid but Spenser. He adds:

Bunyan has the copiousness, the tone, the ease, and the clearness of Homer; he is as close to Homer as an Anabaptist tinker could be to an heroic singer, a creator of gods.¹

¹

Taine, op. cit., p. 271.

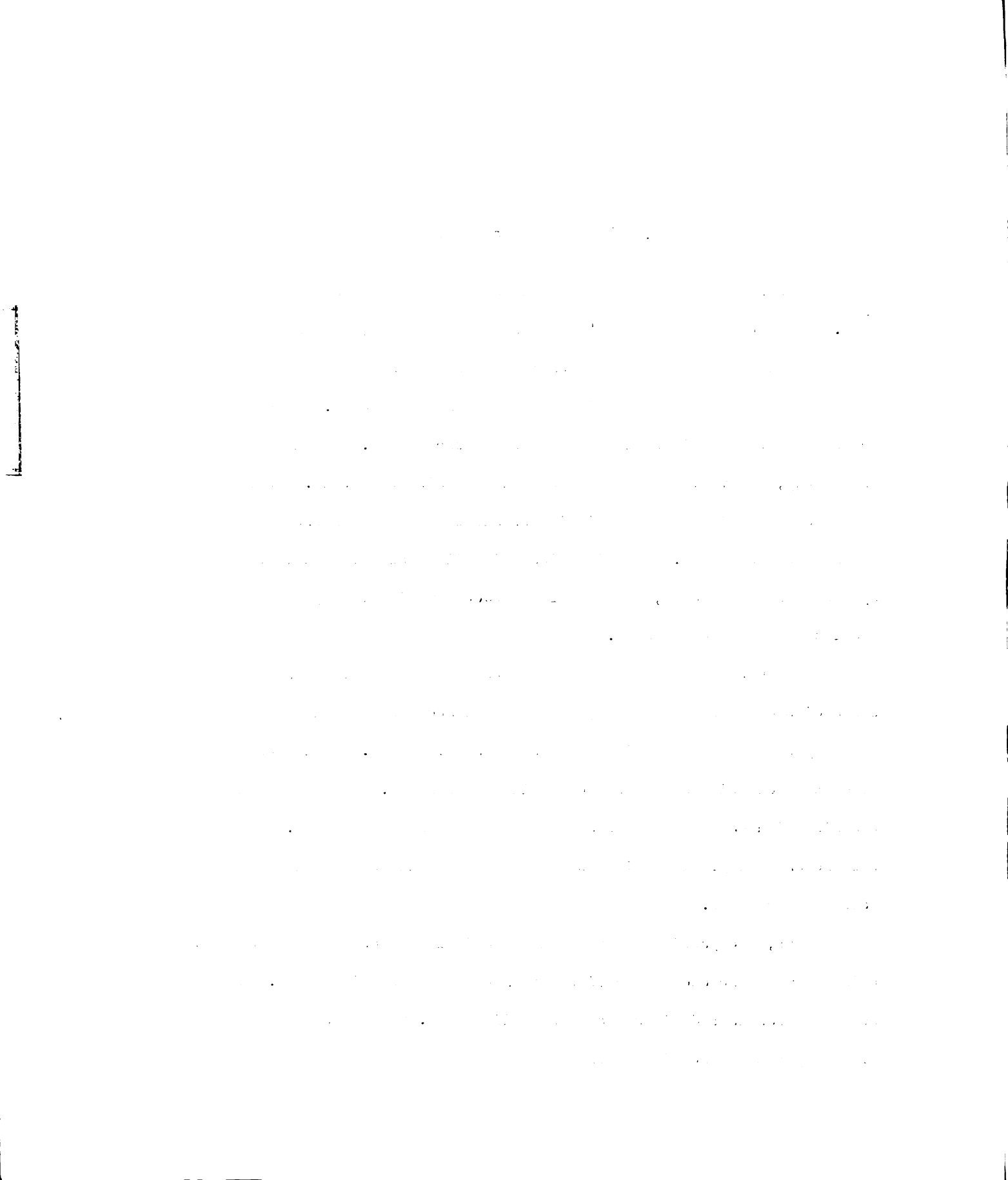
CHAPTER V

1885-1960: The Contemporary Age

Drawing the boundaries of a literary age is never an easy task. As an expression of man's thoughts and feelings, literature usually flows in a continuous stream; it does not make convenient pauses in order that the chronicler may keep a neat record. Historical events sometimes plot the course of the stream. Not infrequently, however, men of letters influence history itself. This reciprocal relationship makes it impossible to distinguish the course of one from the other. And significant intellectual movements, whether spontaneous or directed, continually attract new minds, adopt new ideas, and lead to unexpected paths.

Of course it cannot be gainsaid that certain patterns and tendencies do emerge over time, such that it becomes possible to identify some traits as being peculiar to a given "age." But such a process of classification is the result of hindsight. In retrospect the historian can sort events and put them in convenient piles. To set the chronological partitions of an era is still essentially a matter of judgment.

Thus, the passing of Queen Victoria in 1901 does not necessarily coincide with the end of the Victorian Age in English literature. A number of scholars designate a much earlier date. They assign the last fifteen years of the nineteenth century to the next era, when some



important literary and social happenings began to emerge. To many Robert Browning and John Ruskin were the last great Victorians, and George Bernard Shaw, who was forty-five years old when Queen Victoria died, is as contemporary as socialism and the automobile.

The period which started at the turn of the century is certainly the most complex in the history of mankind. It is doubtful if any single phrase or shibboleth could encompass its terrible complexity. Such descriptions as "Age of Interrogation," "Atomic Age," and "Era of Decision" have been proposed; each one only succeeds in emphasizing one of the many aspects of a civilization that seems to change at a fantastic pace.

It was Bernard Shaw, according to Ward, who at the dawn of the twentieth century attacked with vigour the "old superstition" of religion and the "new superstition" of science. He deplored those who would support any doctrine blindly, without satisfying themselves of the merit of the movement. Says Ward:

In his view every dogma is a superstition unless it has been personally examined and consciously accepted by the individual believer. Question! Examine! Test! - these were the watchwords of his creed.¹

If some found these views too radical for their taste at the time, they only had to wait for a few years to elapse. Soon experimentation and testing became standard methods of social inquiry, and every theory and established belief, whether in science or in the realm of faith, was to be subjected to rigorous inquiry.

¹ A. C. Ward, Twentieth-Century Literature (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1933), p. 2.

Naturally many of the old values gave way under the pressure of scientific discoveries and the new technology. At times the change was gradual and evolutionary, at other times abrupt and violent. "The old values had begun to crumble before the new values began to be established," observes Routh.¹ As a result, those who were learning to think in the eighties and nineties were still raised in the traditional certainties of Victorian culture, whereas they were also training themselves to question and discredit these traditions. The young, according to Routh, were told to prize the "things of the spirit" above worldly goods. But when they went out into the everyday world, they realized that spiritual and cultural wants could not be satisfied without material prosperity. Industry opened tremendous new opportunities for employment for everyone. The young people and the women, who were too genteel to work in previous years, found themselves in offices and factories. They were eager for financial independence and for the shining new goods that money can buy.

With the advance of material civilization, it is inevitable that religion lose some ground. Western society, particularly Europe and the United States, has greatly felt this decline in spiritual values, it being the center of technological development. The invention of the telephone, the movie, the radio, the automobile, and television - to mention the major ones - has given the church steady competition. Changes in social habits and in mass behavior have not been helpful to the growth of religion. In England prominent churchmen have taken the view that the greater part of the British people have foresaken Christ.

¹ H. V. Routh, English Literature and Ideas in the Twentieth Century (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1948), p. 3.

Charles Gore, Bishop of Birmingham, doubted early in the century

whether half the grown men of the country could seriously say that they believed Christ was God, or that He really rose on the third day from the dead. It is not that they have become Unitarians. It is that their religious opinions are in complete chaos.¹

Many have disputed such a view. From the intellectual and social angle, according to some, religion has never been a more vital force in everyday life since the Reformation. People may no longer flock to the churches, but this is a reflection of the highly mobile and technological society rather than an index of the loss of faith. Furthermore, statistics on church-going and church memberships are not reliable; they do not provide an accurate index of "piety."

Whichever view is correct, it seems patent that, as Ashley puts it, religion of the old type is on the decline. Religion "is doing what it has done for ages - abandoning to secular interest many fields which formerly were deemed religious."² The control of education, which in many countries used to be in the hands of churches and missions, is shifting to the state or to private hands. The shift is inevitable because of the increasing demand for mass education, as well as the tremendous costs involved. In many places, too, the operation of hospitals and charitable institutions has been taken over by public and private enterprise.

The first half of the century has also witnessed the growth of capitalism and big business, especially in the United States. It is

¹Quoted by G. Stephens Spinks, Religion in Britain Since 1900 (London: Andrew Dakers Ltd., 1952), p. 198.

²Roscoe L. Ashley, Our Contemporary Civilization (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1935), p. 571.

assumed that with economic power, big business has political power at its command. Since the thirties, however, unionism has grown considerably, and in recent years it has challenged the position of strength which the bankers and financiers have traditionally occupied. At the same time, the Capitalist seems to be emerging with a greatly improved image - certainly far more favorable than the horned monster that he was pictured to be in the early twenties and during the Depression years. This transformation might have been due to the emergence of a broadened middle class in American society, as a result of the diffusion of wealth through the income tax, social security, and similar legislations.

In Russia the Czars were overthrown in the Revolution of 1917. A new political system, fathered by Marx and Lenin, replaced the monarchy, and has since ruled the Soviet Union. In theory communism, the new ideology, derives its power from the working class; it is a dictatorship of the proletariat. In practice the individual is a creature of the State, and is subservient to it. An extremely small ruling clique wielding absolute powers has so far governed the communist states. In recent years communism has spread to large areas of the globe.

A significant phenomenon during the twentieth century is the liquidation of vast colonial empires in Asia and Africa. Great Britain hauled down the Union Jack from its far-flung colonies, most of which were acquired in the Victorian era. France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, as well as the lesser European powers, either voluntarily withdrew their sovereignty or were forcibly thrown out from their foreign territories. Japan was stripped of her extensive holdings in Asia after her defeat in World War II. Most of the liberated countries have since emerged as sovereign nations, or are in the process of becoming independent.

In the field of communication, technological advancements figuratively shrank the world into a small place. Regions previously regarded as remote or inaccessible have been linked to the rest of the world by radio and airplane. Atomic power has brought on the prospects of a prosperous new era to mankind - as it has, unfortunately, the horrible prospects of nuclear annihilation.

Mass media have expanded tremendously. Newspapers, magazines, and books have begun to be published by the millions. More and more people come to view television, which is taking up much of the people's time in the highly industrialized countries. Motion-picture audiences have relatively decreased before the competition of TV, but still account for a sizable audience throughout the world.

In literature the age has been one of wide divergences in style as well as content. The classics have been reissued in cheap editions and thus have been made available to large new audiences. The short story has apparently replaced the novel as the favorite form of fiction, if only because it is more accessible and takes less time to read. Writers have experimented with new forms - inverting the sonnet, combining prose and verse, or tampering with the traditional drama. Ward observes that

the twentieth century brought with it a spirit of regression as well as of progress. It was difficult not to lament the passing of the old values, and some groups of writers . . . were to create ample scope for their genius out of the prevailing nostalgia.¹

¹Ward, op. cit., p. 11.

Whatever the author's intention, Ward continues, his chief care is to increase his circulation, for "few people are averse to making a reputation, and money."

In a real sense, it is impossible to put twentieth century literature into one descriptive category. It is vast, it is varied, and it is still evolving into unpredictable forms. We are too close to the experience to view it with either detachment or comprehensiveness.

The Data

During the Contemporary Age one hundred and five sources are available, distributed as follows: critics, thirty-five; general public sources, twenty-one; religious, twelve; and synthesizers, thirty-seven.¹

Ninety-eight of these sources are favorable. Of the seven who are unfavorable, five are critics.²

Nationalities of sources represented include British, American, French, Indian, and Irish.

Among the professions represented are: poet, novelist, historian, dramatist, psychologist, labor leader, president of a country, doctor, ambassador, member of Parliament, governor, minister, journalist, and social reformer.

¹ For a discussion of the categories, see p. 19.

² Favorable critics are: Robert Blatchford (1851-1943), British journalist and author; George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), British dramatist and critic; G. K. Chesterton (1874-1936), British poet, novelist, and critic; Sir Sidney Lee (1859-1926), British biographer and critic; Sir Charles Firth (1857-1936), British historian and scholar; J. W. Mackail, Oxford professor of poetry, 1906-1911; Gwilyn O. Griffith, biographer of Bunyan; Mark Rutherford, whose pseudonym is William Hale White (1831-1913), British novelist, philosopher, and critic; Sir Edmund Gosse

Bunyan and His Twentieth Century Audience

That Bunyan's audience has grown considerably in the last seventy years is certainly obvious. This growth is hardly significant in itself, and may be easily explained by the progress in printing as well as the increased number of readers. Yet it is a tribute to Bunyan that despite the competition from other books and various types of mass media, the Pilgrim's Progress seems to have held its ground. At least in the English-speaking world - and possibly beyond - the allegory has remained popular. Two things appear noteworthy in this respect: first, there is a remarkable diversity of the class, or profession, of people that are reading the book; second, favorable comments outnumber unfavorable comments by a ratio of better than ten-to-one.

There is also evidence that the pilgrim story is attracting a wider audience among the general readers, who are members of neither literary nor religious circles. Opinion among these sources is overwhelmingly favorable.

(1849-1929), British poet and critic; J. Birkbeck Nevins, M.D., British doctor; William J. Dawson, English author and Methodist minister; M. P. Willcocks, British author of Bunyan Calling, A Voice From the Seventeenth Century (1943); John Lowes, author, Of Reading Books (1930); Walter Raleigh, British author; A. R. Buckland and Austin K. de Blois, American biographers of Bunyan; Sidney Finkelstein, author of Art and Society (1947); William Y. Tindall, author of John Bunyan, Mechanick Preacher (1934); Foster S. Damon, author of Thomas Holley Chivers, Friend of Poe (1930); Perry Miller, author of The New England Mind from Colony to Province (1953); Richard Heath, author of "The Archetype of the Pilgrim's Progress" (1896); Henry Guppy, author of "John Bunyan" (1928); H. E. Greene, author of "The Allegory as Employed by Spenser, Bunyan, and Swift" (1889); Llewelyn Powys (1884-1939), American writer; John H. Willey, author of Midsummer Nights With the Great Dreamer (1908); Stephen Gwynn, author of The Masters of English Literature (1904); George E. Woodberry, author of Makers of Literature (1900); Augustine Birrell (1850-1933), author of "John Bunyan" (1927); St. John Adcock, author of "Bunyan's Progress" (1927); and Henri Talon, French author of John Bunyan and His Works (1948).

Unfavorable critics are: Alfred Noyes (1880-), British poet and critic; Albert Mordell, American author of Dante and Other Waning Poets

The critics are extremely outspoken in their praise of Bunyan's work; but so are those who disagree. Undoubtedly the most articulate among the admirers of the book is George Bernard Shaw, the Irish dramatist and social reformer.

Shaw states that "the whole allegory is a consistent attack on morality and respectability, without a word that one can remember against

(1915); Josiah Royce, psychologist and author of "The Case of John Bunyan" (1894); Robert S. Bridges (1844-1930), British poet laureate and critic; and B. Dobree, American author of William Penn, Quaker and Pioneer (1932).

Favorable general public sources are: Alfred R. Wallace (1823-1913), British naturalist and traveller; John Burns, British labor leader and Member of Parliament; William Kent, author of John Burns: Labour's Lost (1950); Robert Lynd, author of "John Bunyan Today" (1927); Conrad Aiken, American author; Cecil B. Williams, Oklahoma pioneer of the early twentieth century; James G. Huneker (1860-1921), American author; Willa S. Cather (1876-1947), American novelist; Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), American president, 1901-1909; Wilbur L. Cross (1862-1948), American educator and governor of Connecticut, 1931-1939; Caroline S. Creevey, American author of A Daughter of the Puritans (1916); Finley Peter Dunne (1867-1936), American humorist; Victor Heiser, American physician and author; Wallace Nutting, American author of Biography (1936); Walter H. Page (1855-1918), American editor and ambassador to England, 1913-1918; William W. Comfort, American biographer of William Penn; John Woodbury, American secretary of the Harvard Class of 1880; Vida D. Scudder (1861-1936), American author of On Journey (1937); Carl Van Doren (1885-1950), American writer; W. E. Woodward, American author of The Gift of Life (1947); and Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948), Hindu religious and political leader.

Favorable religious sources are: Singleton Fisher, missionary to Africa (c. 1927); Handley Moule, British bishop of Durham; Zion's Herald, a Methodist publication; Harold Butcher, author of "John Bunyan For Today" (1938); Arthur Porter, D.D., American author of The Inside of Bunyan's Dream (1927); S. Parks Cadman, D.D., American clergyman; Dewitt Lincoln Pelton, D.D., American rector of St. James' Church, Fordham; Edwin B. Parker, clergyman; H. F. B. Mackay, American author of Pilgrim's Progress in the World Today (1930); W. Y. Fullerton, D.D., author of The Legacy of Bunyan (1928); Edmund A. Knox, D.D., bishop of Manchester; and John Kelman, D.D., author of The Road (1911).

Favorable synthesizers are: William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), Irish poet; W. H. Whanslaw, British author of Twelve Puppet Plays (1946); Rodney Bennett, author of a dramatization of Pilgrim's Progress (1949); Pierre Janelle, British author of Robert Southwell, the Writer (1935); Stapleton Martin, British author of Izaak Walton (1903); J. B. Priestley (1894-), British novelist; Jackson Holbrook, American author of The Reading of Books (1947); Frank Luther Mott, American author of Golden



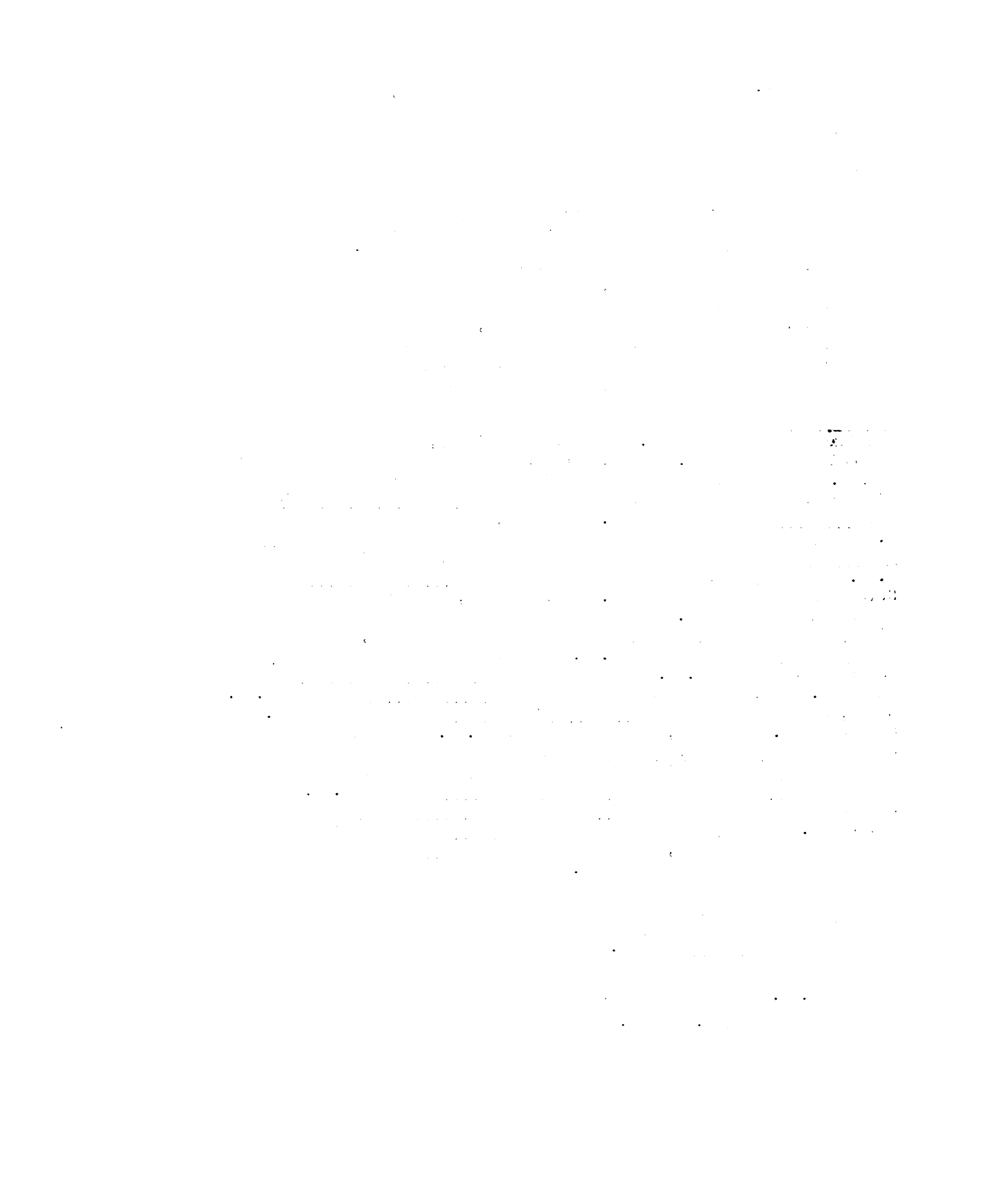
vice and crime."¹ Having acknowledged this weakness, he launches on an energetic praise of Bunyan's dramatic ability, citing specific passages from the book, and holding the Puritan writer above Shakespeare:

The contrast is enormous: Bunyan's coward stirs your blood more than Shakespeare's hero, who actually leaves you cold and secretly hostile. You suddenly see that Shakespeare, with all his flashes and divinations, never understood virtue and courage, never conceived how any man who was not a fool could, like Bunyan's hero, look back from the brink of the river of death over the strife and labor of his pilgrimage, and say "Yet I do not repent me"; or, with the panache of a

Multitudes (1947); David G. Phillips (1867-1911), American novelist and editor; Florence B. Lennon, American biographer of Lewis Carroll; Hugh R. Williamson, author of "The Pilgrim's Progress Reconsidered" (1948); Max Savelle, American author of A Short History of American Civilization (1957); Charles E. Goodspeed, American bookseller; Horatio S. Krans, author of "Bunyan's Place in English Fiction" (1908); The Living Age, a magazine; Arthur Kitson (1860-1937); British writer; V. S. Paltsits, author of "An Account of the Pilgrim's Progress in the Seventeenth Century" (1901); R. Ellis Roberts, author of "Bunyan and his Times" (1927); Harry L. Koopman, American author of "The Eternal Pilgrim" (1928); Ivor Novello, actor, 1920-1930; Edward Thompson, American author of Sir Walter Raleigh (1936); E. M. Butler, American author of Rainier Maria Rilke (1941); E. C. Batho, author of The Later Wordsworth (1933); Albert E. Long, American author of The Christian Pilgrim (1904); C. S. Lewis, American author of The Pilgrim's Regress (1935); William B. Otis and Morris H. Needleman, American authors; R. E. Roberts, American author of Samuel Rogers and His Circle (1910); Osbert Burdett, American author of The Two Carlyles (1931); John Ball, American author and editor of From Beowulf to Modern British Writers (1959); V. J. McGill, American author of August Strindberg, the Bedeviled Viking (1930); Frances H. Burnett, American author of Two Little Pilgrims' Progress (1895); Van Wyck Brooks, American author of Parodies (1960); and "One Hundred Books," a pamphlet (1948).

Unfavorable synthesizers are: Harold Golder, American author of "John Bunyan's Hypocrisy" (1926); and Ben Hecht, American author of A Child of the Century (1954).

¹G. B. Shaw, "Epistle Dedicatory," Man and Superman (New York: Brentano's, 1906), p. xxxiii.



millionaire, bequeath "my sword to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. . . ."¹

All that one misses in Shakespeare he finds in Bunyan, the critic continues. While the Puritan preacher lived in a more terrible world, he nevertheless saw running through it a path which led to the Celestial City. There was in him fulfilment and a sound philosophy of life. Compare this attitude, Shaw says, with Shakespeare's "lower ground" where there was "inferiority in energy and elevation of spirit." It is like turning from morning air and eternal youth to the terrors of a drunken nightmare.

Even in the mere technical adaptation to the art of the actor, Bunyan's dramatic speeches are, in Shaw's opinion, as good as Shakespeare's tirades. But where the author of Pilgrim's Progress clearly excels Shakespeare is in the handling of fight scenes. He cites the famous contest between Macbeth and Macduff as an example, in which Macbeth says:

Yet I will try the last: before my body
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff
And damned be he that first cries
Hold, enough. . .

Turn from this "jingle," Shaw exhorts, to Appolyon's cue for the fight in the Valley of Humiliation:

I am void of fear in this matter. Prepare
thyself to die; for I swear by my infernal
den that thou shalt go no farther; here
will I spill thy soul.

The Irish critic goes on to match Bunyan's dialogue line by line with Shakespeare's, and comes to the conclusion that in "energy or reality of imagination" Bunyan is the greater writer.

¹
Ibid., p. xxxi.

It might be useful, however, to moderate Shaw's glittering comments with the realization that the dramatist was specially congenial to Bunyan. This fact he once admitted: "I have, I think, always been a Puritan in my attitude toward Art. I am as fond of fine music and handsome buildings as Milton was, or Cromwell, or Bunyan. . . ." ¹

Bunyan was Shaw's favorite author, and the Pilgrim's Progress his favorite book.

J. W. Mackail, professor of poetry at Oxford, essentially affirms the Irish dramatist's views. That the pilgrim story is a classic, he asserts, is now beyond debate. Macaulay himself established, over a century ago, the reputation of the work. Modern readers, however, approach the Pilgrim's Progress not so much for the religious doctrine or for the edification they get out of it, but "for its narrative and dramatic excellence, its unsurpassed power of characterization, its humour, its mastery of terse and lucid English." ²

The first six lines of the book, according to Mackail, demonstrate a perfect beginning. Like the few strokes of a master of etching, these few words establish the atmosphere, launch the movement, and secure the effect for the whole narrative. But what is even more remarkable is the serene and artistic way the story is ended, not unlike Milton's Paradise Lost or Samson Agonistes.

Touching on the spiritual qualities of the work, Mackail states

¹ M. Coulbourne, The Real Bernard Shaw (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1940), p. 29.

² J. W. Mackail, The Pilgrim's Progress: A Lecture Delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1924), p. 10.

that its "ethical and spiritual import" is "more fundamentally valid than that of the Paradise Lost." Both works deserve an exalted place in literature, and between them they represent the national character and the spiritual belief of a great age. The critic sums up by saying that Bunyan is more than an artist, and the dream more than a work of art, adding:

It is the statement of and appeal to truths which, under whatever form they may be expressed from one age to another, are unchangeable: that the difference between right and wrong, between good and evil, is fundamental.¹

Bunyan's style is brought under close scrutiny by another critic, Mark Rutherford, who concludes that in grandeur and pathos the closing pages of the Pilgrim's Progress is equalled only by the Bible. The English critic defends Bunyan against those who hold his genius to be "tainted with vulgarity" - a tinker without education. Though his chief school was the Bible, Bunyan, according to Rutherford, made better use of it than "most of us do of a university education."² Proof of this is the allegory in which he uses "his mother tongue with purity and force." Properly speaking, he has no style; that is, he does not allow anything to come between the reader and the idea, because his words flow freely and naturally. Bunyan rumbles on with the sound of the best poetry.

¹
Ibid.

²
Cited by Irving Stock, William Hale White (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 188.

In his book on Bunyan¹ Rutherford also commends the spiritual value of the pilgrim allegory, observing that the concept of salvation by God's grace, which is the leading thought in the book, is one which many people find difficult to accept. Nevertheless, the brotherhood and love personified by Christian and Hopeful are inspiring qualities which people can emulate "when billows have gone over" them, and despair threatens their lives.

The British journalist and author, Robert Blatchford, attributes the greatness of Bunyan's book to sincerity and imagination. Bunyan was a born story-teller, and he lived what he wrote about. In this sense the Pilgrim's Progress is not a romance, but a true story. The author's "abnormal imagination," and his ability to portray his characters in a "vivid, active, flaming, and Dantean" manner accounts for the excellence of the book.

What about Bunyan's English? It "is tinker's, and soldier's, and preacher's English. It is the English of the Bible, of the Ironsides, and of the village green."² Because of this, it is refreshing. And we remember many of Bunyan's scenes, according to Blatchford, because he tells us so little about them. The reader paints his own pictures and puts them into Bunyan's frames. Thus the pictures are ours, even as they are the author's.

Sir Charles Firth agrees with Blatchford that the Great Dream is a product of Bunyan's experience. It is impossible to appreciate

¹William Hale White [pseud.], John Bunyan (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904).

²Quoted from Robert Blatchford's My Favorite Books (1900) by Brown, op. cit., p. 289.

the work, he avers, without knowing the life of the author - "so closely related" are the two. Then Firth asks rhetorically: "How was it . . . that a man of little education could produce . . . a masterpiece which is still read wherever the English language is spoken, and has been translated into every European tongue?"¹

The tinker of Elstow, observes G. K. Chesterton, produced such a perfect description by the use of merely plain words that no one, except perhaps Homer, has equalled him in this achievement. If an "original thing" was ever created, it was Bunyan's work, Chesterton adds.

On the question of originality, J. Birkbeck Nevins makes a studious comparison between the tinker's allegory and Guillaume de Guilleville's Le Pelegrinage de l'Homme, which is sometimes suspected as Bunyan's source. A French monk, de Guilleville lived in the fourteenth century. Nevins finds that while there are many similarities in both works, there is no evidence that Bunyan copied, or even read, the French source. What is patent is that both writers must have derived their stories from the Bible.² To the question "Was Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress merely an imitation of the French monk's?" Nevins answers a categorical "No."

On the other hand, Richard Heath admits the possibility that the allegory may have its archetype in the Anabaptist traditions in Germany.

¹
From the Introduction to the Methuen's edition of Pilgrim's Progress (1898), cited by Brown, op. cit., p. 289.

²
J. Birkbeck Nevins, "On the Influence of Political and Religious Allegory on European Thought for 600 Years, and a Comparison Between a Pilgrim's Progress, by a French monk, in the Fourteenth Century, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress in the Seventeenth Century," from the Proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, During the 88th Session, 1898-99, No. LIII (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1899). Nevins mentions the apocalyptic vision of the New Jerusalem descending from heaven in the book of the Revelation of St. John as one of the common sources.

Assuming that this were so, Heath avers, the originality and imaginative power of the work does not suffer in the least. Bunyan's genius made possible the construction of the "floating, disjointed popular stories" into an "immortal work."¹ Bunyan is a voice of all the ages, and his soul is so great that the thoughts of a people slowly taking form through generations finally express themselves through him. And the state of mind that England and Central Europe has passed through, ably captured by Bunyan's book, will live on in new forms.

In the opinion of Griffith, the Pilgrim's Progress cannot be made "a narrow or mean book." It is

too religious to be merely religionist, too big to be meanly sectarian, too honest to be ambiguously amiable, too full of natural gusts and sympathies to be wholly other-worldly, too practical to lack reforming zeal, too sane to be romantically Utopist, too Biblical and believing to be taken up with this world alone.²

Curious attempts have been made to improve upon the book, says Griffith, but all have failed.

Another poet and critic, Sir Edmund Gosse, scans English prose of the last forty years of the seventeenth century and comes to the unhappy conclusion that it is unimaginative, pedestrian and level. Much of what was written during this period, Gosse claims, is of little interest to the common reader. But after reviewing a few "talents" he comes "at last upon a genius": John Bunyan, the tinker of Elstow. This man

¹ Richard Heath, "The Archetype of the Pilgrim's Progress," Contemporary Review, LXX (1896).

² G. O. Griffith, John Bunyan (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1927), p. 242.

to him is the exception; he is in many respects the most original figure of his time. It is extraordinary, to Gosse's mind, that with his utter indifference to literature, Bunyan should "write so remarkably well."¹

For the Pilgrim's Progress the British critic has unqualified praise. The allegory succeeds in being both theological and entertaining, and it rings true because it is compounded of the writer's own experiences. The style is

the very perfection of what the style of such a book should be - homely and yet distinguished, exquisitely simple, yet tuned to music at all its finer moments.

The allegory, Gosse states, is the "matchless and inimitable crystallization into imaginative art of the whole system of Puritan Protestantism." It is the most successful allegory in literature.²

M. P. Willcocks ranks the Pilgrim's Progress with the Odyssey, Don Quixote, and Gulliver's Travels. One of the curious attractions of the book, in his view, is the intermingling of satire with the sure, instinctive knowledge of one who knows all the secrets of the inner struggle. Bunyan's writing is authentic because it proceeds from his personal experience; his language is pure vernacular, which comes from the people in ale-houses, in shops, and in the cottages of England.³

¹Edmund Gosse, A History of Eighteenth Century Literature (London: Macmillan & Co., 1891), p. 82.

²Ibid., pp. 84-86. Sir Sidney Lee, biographer and critic, makes a similar statement in the prefatory note to Methuen's edition of Bunyan's work: "The stirring and sustained human interest of the Pilgrim's Progress renders it the greatest example of allegory in literature."

³M. P. Willcocks, Bunyan Calling, A Voice from the Seventeenth Century (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1943), pp. 168-170.

Yet, continues the critic, Bunyan's myth-making faculty alone cannot explain the success of his work. It is rather his ability to create universal figures found everywhere - and readers can find in every village a Talkative, a Mr. By-ends, or a Mr. Worldly Wiseman.

The "inner struggle" referred to by Willcocks is explored further by W. J. Dawson, who discovers in it the chief reason for the astounding fame of Bunyan's allegory. The work belongs to that rare domain of literature which may be called confessional. The author, in Dawson's view, has built up a spiritual tragedy which is unsurpassed in literature; and every element in it is drawn from the substance of his own inner life. "Very few men of genius have done this," explains the critic. "They have lacked both the simplicity and the daring, perhaps also the innocent egoism, and hence the confessional books of the world are few. . . ." ¹

Dawson compares Bunyan with Shakespeare: they share the primacy of English literature, although the disparity between them is great. The great poet sees human life as a whole, whereas the tinker of Elstow perceives that part which is governed by religious ideals. Each is a dramatist, but Bunyan's is the drama of the soul; he is not concerned with the world of the flesh. Dawson believes that Bunyan may have "influenced the course of human thought and action" more than Shakespeare has. The critic concludes: "What more wonderful thing can be said of any book than that it ranks next to the Bible in that unnamable quality which we call inspiration?"

¹
W. J. Dawson, "John Bunyan Tinker and Poet," The Book News Monthly, XXVI, No. 8 (April 1908), 571-572.

Dawson is probably right. But another critic looking at the allegory sees it as the prototype of the novel. Walter Raleigh asserts that in form and outline the book bears the same relation to the novel proper as the Morality bears to the drama proper. Furthermore, the realistic novel of manners that flourished in the eighteenth century was forecast by the "humorously natural scenes" of the Pilgrim's Progress.¹

Bunyan's book has colored the imagination and stamped itself upon the phraseology of ten generations of the English-speaking race, states John Lowes. Except for Shakespeare and possibly Milton, the allegory about Christian and the Celestial City is the most widely read work of the seventeenth century. This is somewhat surprising, because, as the critic notes, the book was published at a time when England was wallowing in sensual romances. "The Pilgrim's Progress was not carried into favour upon that tide," Lowes observes.²

An American biographer, Austin de Blois,³ labels Bunyan's work as a "world book," because, according to him, after two hundred and fifty years it is read more widely than any book except the Bible. It occupies a unique and unchallenged place in the religious literature of mankind.

¹ Cited by William B. Otis and Morris H. Needleman, An Outline History of English Literature (New York: Barnes & Noble Inc., 1939), II, 318.

² John L. Lowes, Of Reading Books (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1930), pp. 3-6.

³ Austin K. de Blois, John Bunyan the Man (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1928).

De Blois believes that while theological attitudes and opinions change, human nature does not. Therefore, Bunyan's book, containing as it does the basic ingredients of humanity, will always find favor with the readers. The tinker of Elstow, his biographer adds, knew the people whom he depicts; he knew their virtues as well as their vices, their ambitions as well as their hankerings after evil. It is the "complete humanness" that makes these characters fascinating; they "are genuine flesh and blood realities." Thus, some books last a generation, others last longer. A few - very few - become part of the literary heritage of the race. And Bunyan's is one such book.

In testimony to the wide circulation of the book, A. R. Buckland records that the Religious Tract Society alone has produced, or assisted to produce, versions in one hundred and twenty languages and dialects. The list includes versions in most of the European tongues, as well as languages spoken in the Pacific, in Asia and in Africa.¹

The analysis of William Tindall is made on quite a different plane. To him Bunyan's allegory is a flowering of the Puritan preacher's theological controversy with the Anglicans and his fellow Baptists. The first part of the book, says Tindall, is devoted principally to the Anglicans; the second part is a product of his quarrel with the strict Baptists, and is both a restatement of his position on baptism as well as his reaction to the theological innuendos of Thomas Sherman ("T. S.").

1

Some such versions mentioned by Buckland (op. cit., pp. 84-90) are in: Gilbertese (Gilbert Islands), Dyak (Borneo), Gaelic, Aneityumese (New Hebrides), Chinese in various dialects, Ga (Accra, Africa), Kongo, Ashanti, Uganda, Swahili, Mombasa-Swahili, Tswa (Portuguese Africa), Eskimo, Maori, Tamil, Pashtu, Samoan, Siamese, Persian, Arabic, and Yiddish.



"Controversy was both his nursery and his school," Tindall asserts, "and the triumph of Pilgrim's Progress was made possible on the playing fields of dissent."¹ But Bunyan was more of a popularizer than a theologian. By the use of metaphor, allegory, and colloquial speech, he "adorned Calvin, yet made him familiar, concealed him without impropriety, yet introduced him to the curiosity and the favor of the public." Through the controlled debates among the characters in the story, he manipulated the controversy to his own advantage.

Finkelstein, on the other hand, sees the allegory as an "amplified sermon." Like the morality plays of the Middle Ages, Bunyan's book derives its power from the fact that it is drawn from folk experience. Bach based his religious music on the popular music of the people, says the critic, adding:

In England rose John Bunyan, who directed his bitter satire against an immoral society, using the Biblical symbol and parable which had made up so much of the texture of the English folk song and drama.²

It is argued by Perry Miller that Puritans conceived history to be a record of divine providences, and that in this sense the Pilgrim's Progress is no less a history than Bradford's and Winthrop's of the early colonial days in America. The book gets its coherence from the "flow of the standard phases in the process of conversion"; the narrative

¹ William York Tindall, John Bunyan Mechanick Preacher (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934), p. 58.

² Sidney Finkelstein, Art and Society (New York: International Publishers, 1947), p. 55. Bunyan's appeal to the folk is also illuminated by Foster S. Damon, in Thomas Holley Chivers, Friend of Poe (New York: Harper & Bros., 1930), pointing out that "Bunyan and Defoe, who wrote for the lower classes only, were despised by the polite."

moves steadily forward to a predestined path. Since the Puritan mind found allegory congenial, Bunyan's technique fitted exactly his material.¹

There is no doubt in the mind of H. E. Greene that the pilgrim story owes its wide popularity to its simplicity. The meaning is so clear that it cannot be mistaken, even perhaps by a child. The narrative is perfectly artless. Nothing detracts from the unity of the piece. The story never flags; even when Christian halts upon his journey, the movement continues. Greene sums up: "The clearness of Bunyan's allegory may be due in part to a cause that is not generally suspected - namely, that much of it is not allegory at all."²

If it is not allegory, then what is it?

To this question Stephen Gwynn gives only an indirect reply: "It was, in short, a genuine work of art, conceived and executed with the true artist's pleasure; and in this spontaneity and absence of intention lies its peculiar charm."³ At the same time, it is the true expression of Puritan England.

"It would be a mistake to bring an accusation of sentimentality against Bunyan," states Powys. The power of his style comes from a certain quality of "tough, racy realism." Such style

¹ Perry Miller, The New England Mind From Colony to Province (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 31. Talon (*op. cit.*) adds: "Professor Perry Miller goes so far as to assert that only a Puritan who is also a dramatic artist can present an adequate picture of Puritanism, and that Bunyan alone fulfills both conditions."

² H. E. Greene, "The Allegory as Employed by Spenser, Bunyan, and Swift," PMLA, IV (1888-1889), 158.

³ Stephen Gwynn, The Masters of English Literature (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1904), p. 131.

is as infracturable and sinewy as a freshly grown willow sapling, and it has about it something of the robust aroma that belongs to the more sturdy kinds of wild flowers such as yarrow and ground ivy. . . .¹

In this little symposium the voice of Henry Guppy is heard:

Of the three outstanding writers of that period - John Bunyan, Daniel Defoe, and Jonathan Swift - who belong to no special class and school, and whose literary genealogy cannot be traced, John Bunyan stands alone, with his vivid descriptions of characters, his quaint turns of thought, and his racy English styles. In creative genius he was the most gifted of the three, although in educational advantages he was the least favored.² What Bunyan produced "changed the thinking of his age," rejoins Willey, "and has exercised an irresistible charm in all succeeding ages."³

Willey regards Bunyan's main influence as moral. There is no room, according to his thinking, for a "crooked transaction in the way of eternal life." One has to be honest in his dealings with other people, whether it be in buying or selling, or in talking about another person's reputation. Reverting to the book, Willey pontificates: "It has become a part of our literary thinking, not to know it is to be uneducated."⁴

¹ Llewelyn Powys, Thirteen Worthies (New York: American Library Service, 1923), p. 127.

² Henry Guppy, "John Bunyan," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, XII (1928), 123.

³ John H. Willey, Midsummer Nights With the Great Dreamer (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1908), p. 3.

⁴ Ibid., p. 4.

In the opinion of another critic, the outstanding thing about the Pilgrim's Progress is the success with which truth is fused with fact. This is a measure of genius. To make the feat even more striking, Bunyan uses the medium of allegory but yet succeeds in making the action and character alive. "A transcript of life so vivid," exclaims the critic, "that it cannot wear out!"¹

The tinker of Elstow, according to Woodberry, actually owed much to his personal limitations. But within his bounds, and helped by a native gift of imagination and of fluency in the folk's speech, the tinker produced a masterpiece. He "told the highest Truth in the commonest words and made it current."

Augustine Birrell speaks of another kind of "limitation." In his view it was fortunate that the accidents of history made Bunyan a Baptist and a Nonconformist believer of the Christian Faith. Had it been otherwise, "conformity might have withered his imagination and knocked the literary gusto out of the 'Pilgrim's Progress.'" Yet, Bunyan's Calvinism was not "black."²

Whether "black" or not, Bunyan's theology did not have a congenial setting in England at the time his book came out. Adcock points out that it was probably the degenerate state into which this period had fallen that prompted Bunyan to write his story. "Unspeakably corrupt and degenerate" are the words Adcock uses to describe the Court and London in these days. And it was as a reaction to this, in his

¹ George E. Woodberry, Makers of Literature (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1900), p. 277.

² Augustine Birrell, "John Bunyan," The Bookman, LXXIII, (Dec. 1927), 149-150.

opinion, that the tinker of Elstow wrote his allegory.¹

Perhaps the most thorough study and criticism ever made of Bunyan's book in Europe was done by Henri Talon in his John Bunyan - l'homme et l'oeuvre,² published in 1948. The author explains, as background material, that in France Bunyan is hardly more than a name, although many have read him in school. It is difficult for modern readers, according to Talon, to penetrate the spiritual significance of Puritanism, which is the essence of Bunyan's work. Puritan culture, as much as Bunyan, produced the Pilgrim's Progress.

The characters in the story are real men - they have "too much flesh and blood to be merely allegorical." Thus, to praise the work for its being allegorical is "to pronounce it excellent for the very reason that it is weak." If some "technician in allegory" were to judge the book purely by the rigid rules of art, he would certainly find it defective. Bunyan's genius, which is not subservient to rules, has produced a superb allegory, notwithstanding its minor defects.

Talon then compares Bunyan with Balzac and Flaubert, neither of whom could have done better, he says, in the providing the opening scene of the pilgrim story. The tinker's "instinctive art" is amazing. His slightest flick of the brush is more suggestive than another's full stroke.

It is also the French critic's opinion that the Puritan allegorist painted "with justice, in spite of his religious passion and

¹ St. John Adcock, "Bunyan's Progress," Bookman (Dec., 1927), p. 158.

² Talon, op. cit.

didactic will." This demonstrates his singularly wide and strong humanity. His lucidity is made possible by his detachment, when needed; his satire is restrained, and there are no caricatures.

The style of the dialogue is "vivacious, pointed, and above all precise," observes Talon. There is freshness on every page, dignity even in the most homely remarks. So,

the truth is that the Pilgrim's Progress is one of the rare works which give man his measure - his weaknesses, his imperfections, his meanness, but also his will, his courage and his thirst for the absolute. Bunyan does not confine himself to one extremity but he touches both at the same time, and in that lies the best testimony to his genius.¹

In 1928, on the tercentenary of John Bunyan's birth, the Bookman published a special Bunyan number. One of the articles in this issue was Alfred Noyes' "Bunyan - A Revaluation." It was an attack on the Pilgrim's Progress. Within a few months close to two hundred replies - all in defense of Bunyan - were received.²

Noyes' objections touch on several aspects of the allegory:

- (1) its theology, (2) its language and imagery, (3) its symbolism, and
- (4) its narrative technique.

The dominating motive of the book is fear, says Noyes. But it is not that fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom; rather, it is the fear of fire and brimstone. Bunyan's Deity is an angry, re-

¹ Ibid., p. 223.

² The critical article appeared in The Bookman, LXXV, No. 445 (Oct., 1928). Noyes wrote a subsequent article, "Bunyan Revisited," in The Opalescent Parrot (London: Sheed and Ward, 1929) wherein he refers to the replies and elaborates on his own criticisms.

vengeful God who lays traps along the way to ensnare unsuspecting people. Christian would not do a single good act without being told that a rock will fall on his head or a dragon will bite him. "It is in fact one of those piously repulsive books," Noyes comments, "which, in former generations, were used by well-meaning but foolish adults to fill the minds of little children with hideous ideas of a treacherous trap-laying, revengeful old Deity. . . ." ¹

Even as a moral fable the work is ludicrous, according to the British critic. He cites how the "vain and boastful pilgrim" (Christian) watches in glee at the gates of heaven, as poor Mr. Ignorance, bound hand and foot, is thrown to the fiends through the Deity's private entrance to hell. The Pilgrim's Progress actually states that one of the joys of the Celestial City is the pleasure of helping "to judge and condemn to hell those with whom you have not agreed upon earth."

Bunyan's language and imagery is equally faulty. Noyes deplors the vulgar way the author talks about the flesh and blood of Christ, in the incident in which Christian's son, Samuel, became ill and was prescribed pills made of these consecrated elements. This is also an example of crude and repulsive symbolism; "it is on the lowest and most squalid levels of the primitive races of Africa." Whatever phrases have been admired in the allegory Bunyan borrowed from the Bible, asserts Noyes, and he spoiled everything he borrowed.

There is also a confusion of ideas throughout. For example, the pilgrims see the sheep grazing, of whom the Lord is not only the shepherd, but also seemingly the butcher or the butcher's employer. ²

¹Bookman, LXXV, No. 445 (Oct., 1928), p. 15.

²Ibid., p. 16.

In the castle of Giant Despair the imprisonment of Christian and Hopeful is a sham. Noyes recounts that after the two pilgrims had been there for a considerable period, Christian calmly remarks that he forgot to tell Hopeful that he has a key in his pocket which will open all the doors. Then they open the doors and walk away.

Such naive scenes, which proceed from an undeveloped mind,¹ fill the pages of Pilgrim's Progress, according to Noyes. Although as a human document the work is of enormous interest, as a work of art

it is a childish scrawl - a two-penny broadsheet
dipped in the cruder colours of the Puritan's
reading of the Old Testament. . . .²

This distinction between its artistic worthlessness and its value as a human document is fundamental and necessary, Noyes stresses. Beside the Confessions of St. Augustine, Bunyan's work "is a mouth-organ to an orchestral symphony of Beethoven." Noyes concludes: "There is not a single gleam of original thought or insight into the spiritual world."

Albert Mordell, another critic, cautions people from being blinded by sympathy for the author in judging his work. Bunyan's admirable courage and endurance in his personal fight for freedom of conscience has nothing to do with the literary quality of the Pilgrim's

¹ The phrase "undeveloped mind" is Noyes'. However, Professor Josiah Royce, a psychologist, explains "Bunyan's malady" as having a "constitutional basis." The physical strain of the preacher's imprisonment must have been great, says the psychologist, "and the mental anxiety involved were of the severest." Royce sums up: "Our result can be briefly stated. This is unquestionably a fairly typical case of a now often described mental disorder. The peculiarities of this special case lie largely in the powers of the genius who here suffered from the malady." (See J. Royce, "The Case of John Bunyan," The Psychological Review, I, No. 3 [May, 1894].)

² Noyes, Loc. cit.

Progress. The tinker of Elstow, comments Mordell, "never uttered an original idea" - supporting Noyes' criticism.

The critic advances the thesis that Bunyan's allegory has neither significance nor connection with our lives today. Although like Bunyan we are also pilgrims, we are headed for other goals. "We strive for freedom, for justice, for material help to ourselves and fellow men," writes Mordell. "We pursue culture, art, science, philosophy; we are engaged in a business, a profession, or a trade."¹ Moreover, allegory as a form of literature has passed. Unlike the bloodless character types in the allegory, real people are both good and evil, and literature to be vital should give us such types.

An undeniable usefulness of Bunyan's work is as a missionary's handbook. In fact, it has been used successfully for this purpose. And while its popularity with "aborigines who are deficient in intellect and morals" is a tribute to its usefulness, it is a commentary on the "intellectual poverty and the artistic barrenness" of the book.

Thus, the allegory

does not for one instant deserve the fame it has and Christian is not to be compared as a literary personage with Gulliver or Robinson Crusoe and certainly not with Don Quixote.²

Dwelling on the theological aspects of the work, Robert Bridges expresses his own concern. Christian is selfishly seeking his own salvation, and cares for nothing else. He leaves his family to destruction

¹ Albert Mordell, Dante and Other Waning Classics (Philadelphia: Acropolis Publishing Co., 1915), pp. 77-80.

² Ibid., p. 82.

and pursues his way alone, motivated by an insane fear of hell. Bridges says it is difficult to reconcile Froude's just condemnation of Bunyan's narrow theology with his assertion that all "is conceived in the large wide spirit of humanity itself."

Critic Bridges asserts that Bunyan's chief merit is his prose style, which is admired by those who prefer the force of plain speech to the devices of rhetoric. But Bunyan's style shows lack of resourcefulness and artistry. "The clumsiness of his verse alone seems to prove that the tinker could not have done well in any other style," Bridges adds.¹

The unwarranted praise heaped on the work by Macaulay, according to Bridges, demonstrates that "Macaulay made another of his magnificent blunders."²

Thus have the critics spoken. What do the general readers - those who view the book with a casual, unsophisticated eye - think about Bunyan's work?

Robert Lynd thinks that children do not really read the Pilgrim's Progress, but simply love to look at the pictures. He recalls that as a child he never got tired of gazing at those illustrations. As a picture book, Bunyan's story is the "rival of any volume of fairy-tales." Here,

¹
R. S. Bridges, Essay XVII, Collected Essays (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 126.

²
For Macaulay's comments, see pp. 61-62. B. Dobree, in William Penn, Quaker and Pioneer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1932), assesses Penn's No Cross; No Crown thus (p. 51); "It deals with the nature and discipline of the Holy Cross of Christ. . . . As a piece of Christian homiletics it may be below what Jeremy Taylor could do, but it is far above anything Bunyan wrote, because, while as frank and whole in the faith, it is far more intelligent."

he notes, was one of the world's great fantasies; it is a book that appeals "at once to the innocence and to experience of mankind."¹

The common observation that the pilgrim book was among some "good standard works" in the typical nineteenth-century home comes from A. R. Wallace, the British naturalist. All of such books in his home he read over and over again with constant pleasure, he confesses. On Sunday evenings his father would read from Bunyan. Only Bunyan's allegory and Milton's Paradise Lost were allowed on Sunday.²

To William Kent and to John Burns, the English labor leader, Bunyan's book was a constant conversation piece. Kent, who is Burns' biographer, recalls that they used to argue about the phraseology of a hymn adapted from the tinker's allegory. Also, Burns often cited the work in his speeches.³ And to James Gibbons Huneker, the American author, reading Bunyan in hot weather is one way of keeping "cool."⁴

Conrad Aiken refers nostalgically to those days "first adumbrated slyly and shyly at Savannah, on the playroom floor, where one had first fingerpointed the words of . . . Pilgrim's Progress."⁵

¹

Robert Lynd, "John Bunyan To-day," Bookman (Dec., 1927), p. 151.

²

A. R. Wallace, My Life (London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1905), p. 74. A pioneer in Oklahoma, "America's last frontier," reports that "at first picture books with Bible stories were the favorites, then Robinson Crusoe and Pilgrim's Progress." See Cecil B. Williams, Paradise Prairie (New York: The John Day Co., 1953), p. 107.

³

William Kent, John Burns: Labour's Lost Leader (London: Williams & Norgate, Ltd., 1950), pp. 302-308.

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From a letter to Benjamin de Casseres, July 29, 1910, Letters of James Gibbons Huneker (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922).

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Conrad Aiken, Ushant (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), p. 93.

Three generations of Cathers were brought up in Bunyan. Willa's grandmother looked up to the Puritan as her prophet; she never lost her feelings for his books, and in particular the pilgrim allegory. Her mother, who was an ardent Baptist, adored Bunyan's book. Willa herself loved Bunyan: "One might say that every fine story must leave in the mind of the sensitive reader an intangible residuum of pleasure; a cadence, a quality of voice that is exclusively the writer's own, individual, unique. . . ." ¹

Caroline S. Creevey, who calls herself "a daughter of the Puritans," ² relates how their man servant, before he left, gave her a beautiful morocco covered volume of the Pilgrim's Progress with many engravings in it, and her name marked in gilt letters on the outside. She still has the book, she says, and has read it through many times.

Politicians and statesmen have often made use of the pilgrim allegory in their campaigns. Wilbur Cross, who was the governor of Connecticut in the thirties, records in his autobiography that on one occasion, not knowing what to say, he alluded to some Republicans in Democratic rallies as people who "are ready to climb with me and Bunyan the straight and narrow path which leads to the Celestial City." ³ And President Theodore Roosevelt launched his famous reform movement

¹ E. K. Brown, Willa Cather, a Critical Biography (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 341.

² Caroline S. Creevey, A Daughter of the Puritans (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916).

³ W. L. Cross, Connecticut Yankee, An Autobiography (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), p. 309.

with a borrowed term from Bunyan: "muckraker." He used the word to refer to the more spectacular and less objective of the critics, but soon the term became famous and stayed on.¹

One of those who took up the reform campaign with Roosevelt was Finley P. Dunne, a writer and humorist. Roosevelt praised him for one article he wrote, and he replied:

. . . Whenever I see the worst of these rascals
marching through McClure's or Collier's, I
feel like saying, "But for the grace of God,
there goes John Bunyan."

It was also Dunne who carried on a series entitled "Interpreter's House," in which he used a full-fledged character drawn from Bunyan's work - Worldly Wiseman.²

Two other Americans, Wallace Nutting and Walter H. Page, found the pilgrim book applicable to life. Nutting comments in his autobiography that the Puritan preacher, instead of sulking in prison, wrote an immortal book. "Magnificence and glory has come from what might have been called moribund and awful conditions."³ Page suggests to a writer friend that a literary revolution of a sort is in order, and that the latter should lead it, making Bunyan a model. "His idioms are a joy,"

¹ William R. Thayer, Theodore Roosevelt, An Intimate Biography (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1919), p. 79.

² Elmer Ellis, Mr. Dooley's America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941), pp. 216-229. Mr. John Woodbury, secretary of the Harvard Class of 1880, in sending to his classmates a notice of Roosevelt's death on Jan. 6, 1919, added a quotation from the second part of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. (See Thayer, op. cit., p. 455).

³ W. Nutting, Wallace Nutting's Biography (Framingham, Mass.: Old American Co., 1936), p. 237.

Page writes, and his blacksmith style can open the door to innumerable Lincolns in our democratic literature."¹

Other readers who mention the Pilgrim's Progress, or give evidence in their writings that they had read the allegory are: W. E. Woodward, author, who was familiar with the work at an early age; Vida D. Scudder, author and professor, who uses the title "A House of Holiness," with a Bunyan quotation, for a chapter of the book On Journey; Carl Van Doren, writer, who says he read the pilgrim allegory at a young age; William Comfort, who compares Bunyan's work with William Penn's; and Victor Heiser, physician who authored the book An American Doctor's Odyssey.²

Finally, George Slocombe, writing about India, testifies that when Mohandas K. Gandhi - the great Indian spiritual leader and social reformer - was in prison, he had only a few books in his cell, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress was one of them.³

Expectedly, the views of the religious sources are entirely congenial.

John Kelman, D.D., states that the Pilgrim's Progress is "one of the everlasting books." Its author had been branded a peculiar mark by his times, both in regard to his theological convictions and his sufferings

¹ B. J. Hendrick, The Training of an American (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 290.

² References to these authors occur in: W. E. Woodward, The Gift of Life (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1947); V. D. Scudder, On Journey (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1937); Carl Van Doren, Three Worlds (New York: Harper & Bros., 1936); W. W. Comfort, William Penn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1944); and Victor Heiser, An American Doctor's Odyssey (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1936).

³ G. Slocombe, The Tumult and the Shouting (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1936), p. 354.

of persecution. Every generation derives renewed inspiration from this man and his book. As a humanist Bunyan ranks with Chaucer, Dante, and Shakespeare; although his claim to rank among them in genius may be disputed, his superiority over them in humanity cannot be questioned.

The Puritan author, unlike other theologians of his time, did not demand uniformity in religious experience, avers Kelman. Christian, Hopeful, and Faithful arrive at the Celestial City each in his own way. Kelman observes: "This breadth and catholicity of portraiture is another reason for the perennial vitality of the Pilgrim's Progress."¹

Bishop Edmund A. Knox believes that few authors can be found in the same class as John Bunyan, if vitality and popularity be tests of literary greatness. One who can retain an audience of multitudes in all nations three hundred years after his death, "and that by a purely spiritual appeal," should be counted among the immortals of literature (*italics supplied*). How many of the great religious leaders of the seventeenth century are read today? Knox answers: Fox and Baxter were read shortly after their death, but they are both out of print today.²

In glaring contrast, more than fifty pages of the British Museum Catalogue are needed to register the various editions of Bunyan's works, including the commentaries on those works. This piece of information is volunteered by Reverend W. Y. Fullerton.³ But even during his lifetime, the preacher from Elstow was popular, notes Fullerton; thousands would come to hear him, even though the other famous preachers seem to have been

¹ John K. Kelman, D.D., Preface to The Road, A Study of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress (Edinburgh: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1911).

² E. A. Knox, D.D., John Bunyan In Relation to His Times (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1928), p. 96.

³ W. Y. Fullerton, D.D., The Legacy of Bunyan (London: Ernest Bent Ltd., 1928).

scarcely aware of him.

For several reasons, according to Arthur Porter, the great *Dream of Bunyan* may very well be called an immortal classic: firstly, it deals with the fundamental matter of religion and life; secondly, it shows the way to what the psychologist calls the "unification of the divided self"; thirdly, "as literature it is one of the finest monuments of the grace, simplicity, directness and strength of the Anglo-Saxon tongue, ranking second to the Bible."¹

An interesting, because unusual, commentary on the Pilgrim's Progress comes from one who is presumably a Catholic clergyman. Reverend H. F. B. Mackay lays the allegory in a contemporary setting: England in 1930, after the first world war. Christian is a well-to-do and amiable man with a flourishing business in the city. He volunteers in the Great War, against the violent objections of his wife. The ensuing events parallel those of Bunyan's allegory. However, the character of Pope is omitted from the story. The author also takes occasion to criticize the Puritan "misreading" of the Old Testament.² What is the sophistry of Giant Maul? - Mackay asks. "It is the plea that heart-whole Catholic Christianity is unpatriotic. . . . Giant Maul would have the Church of England remain established in order that he may retain a hold on her."

¹ Arthur Porter, D.D., The Inside of Bunyan's Dream (New York: Fleming H. Reuell Co., 1927), p. 7. S. Parks Cadman, in the introduction, recommends strongly as reading for children Bunyan's book, together with Porter's work. "The light and strength required for the arduous journey of life are herein supplied," explains Cadman.

² H. F. B. Mackay, Pilgrim's Progress in the World Today (Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1930).

Our Lord, continues Mackay, promises us not only everlasting life but also persecutions in this present life; and "that is the life which the Pilgrim's Progress describes." Because of its applicability to present life, "our generation ought to be able to follow this allegory."¹

Also attempting to fit the allegory into modern times, Reverend Dewitt Pelton, rector of St. James' Church at Fordham, employs Hill Difficulty to symbolize education. Only the brightest minds do not find it hard to get to the top, says Pelton; a great number fail to finish. Even in business there is a Hill Difficulty to overcome. Then he quotes Edwin B. Parker: "More than any other human book, is Pilgrim's Progress a religious bond to the whole of Christendom."²

That such a bond extends to primitive Africa is attested to by Singleton Fisher, who, writing in 1927 to the Religious Tract Society, reported that Bunyan's book is popular among the tin miners of the Congo. Some young men came to the mission station from these mines, Fisher says, claiming that they have been converted through reading the work. They wanted further religious instruction. The report enthusiastically adds: "The imagery of the Pilgrim's Progress seems to appeal to the native mind!"³

¹ Apropos the subject, Harold Butcher's curt remark is: It is Christ or Caesar; Bunyan has shown that for the civilized man there can be but one answer - Christ. (See H. Butcher, "John Bunyan for Today," The Christian Century, LV (Aug. 31, 1938).)

² D. L. Pelton, D.D., A Modern Pilgrim's Progress (New York: American Tract Society, 1928), pp. 9, 50-51.

³ Buckland, op. cit., p. 93. Buckland also quotes Dr. Handley Moule, sometime Bishop of Durham, to the effect that the book is "a treasury of deep, solemn, tender Christian teaching."

A Methodist publication, Zion's Herald, published an article, which was carried by the Literary Digest in 1928, purporting to harmonize science and religion in Bunyan's allegory. In the tinker's absorbing symbolism, says the article, "will be found good science as well as good religion." In terms of modern psychology the "burden" is the load of fears and apprehensions we carry in the subconscious mind. It is a sense of guilt which we constantly try to conceal "in the very depths of our being." Along the same terminology "defense mechanism," "inferiority complex," and "sublimation" are explained, in relation to the allegory.

Nowhere in religious literature is the harmony between the teachings of science and of religion more pronounced, continues the Herald. As Christianity bids us to love God and our fellowmen, so does science enjoin us to find worthwhile channels for service to mankind. "Yes," concludes the article jubilantly, "science supports the allegory . . . it gives new force to the old, old teachings of John Bunyan."¹

Among the synthesizers of the period, Bunyan's work was extremely popular. Williamson attempts to fit the allegory into the context of contemporary life. According to him, three aspects should be considered by today's readers: (1) The twentieth century is in a better position to comprehend the book because, like the seventeenth century to which it was addressed, ours is an "age of crisis." Today we are equally conscious of our "imprisonment" in the City of Destruction. To the "polite rationality" of the eighteenth century and to the "vulgar progressive optimism" of the nineteenth Bunyan's book was less comprehensible. (2)

¹ From "Modern Psychology in 'Pilgrim's Progress,'" Literary Digest, XCIX (Dec. 1, 1928), 30.

Despite the Calvinistic theology of the book, all Christians can accept it. Beneath the "obstructing theology" and its dullness shines a spiritual validity "which can be recognized by even those readers who reject the Christian way of salvation." (3) Bunyan's record of his religious experience is written in a popular idiom and with a restraint that makes it intelligible to his fellowmen. It is this simplicity of style - the apparently simple yet infinitely difficult variation on the theme - which establishes Bunyan as a master artist.¹

One who calls himself a "fellow pilgrim," Arthur Kitson, places Bunyan's allegory in the setting of modern-day economic struggles. He dedicates his book to his fellow crusaders in "the campaign for righteousness against the money-power, the chief cause of the world's economic evils and misery." Religious intolerance and bigotry, to Kitson's mind, were rampant in Bunyan's time. Were he living today, he would have to choose, not between religious principle and persecution, but between the practice of his religion with the certainty of a life of poverty (and possible starvation) on the one hand, and on the other the practice of commercialism, with its "soul-destroying" effects. Today Bunyan would have to fight for economic freedom.²

Kitson moves on to say that intolerance in economic dealings is becoming "as oppressive and as bitter as the religious intolerance of the Middle Ages." The future of England, he concludes, is in grave danger because of this condition.

¹ Hugh Ross Williamson, "The Pilgrim's Progress Reconsidered," Fortnightly Review, CLXIII (1948), 347-351.

² Arthur Kitson, A Modern Pilgrim's Progress (Oxford: The Alden Press, 1936).

Frank Luther Mott recalls that for more than half a century after its publication, Bunyan's work was regarded a mere popular reading and sneered at by the intellectuals. But after it was "enthroned" by critics, it sold by the hundred thousand. Mott draws a list of "best sellers" in the United States, and includes the Pilgrim's Progress for the year 1681.¹ Today, he says, there are very cheap abridged editions of the work in the market.

In explaining the popularity of the book, Mott points to its universality and to its element of adventure and conflict. The work "attracted its great audience" in the same manner that the accounts of the exciting Indian captivities of Colonial America won their audience.

Charles E. Goodspeed, who fashions himself as a "Yankee book-seller," thinks that Bunyan's spiritual experience is different from that which we encounter today, but it was vital. He believes that the "artless sincerity" of the narrative entitles it to a high place in religious biography. Then he regrets that he had not been "lucky enough to pick up, as a local scout once did, the first American Bunyan" which fetched over a thousand dollars years ago.

The desire to escape is not a peculiar human trait, asserts Jackson Holbrook, but is common to all forms of life. Every living thing is running away from something or building defenses for itself. John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, is, in this sense, escapist literature not unlike "Ode to a Nightingale" or "Blessed Damozel."

¹Mott, op. cit., Appendix A, p. 303.

²C. E. Goodspeed, Yankee Bookseller (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1937), pp. 261, 304.

How did Bunyan come to write his allegory? He was "scared into 'grace'" by the terror of eternal damnation which he extracted from religious books. The tinker of Elstow read little, Holbrook comments, but "every word affected him like a powerful drug." As a writer, Bunyan can be ranked among the best:

The strength and clarity of such masters of English prose as Bunyan or Cobett, or Bernard Shaw and Hilaire Belloc postulate a certain ardency in their readers. These writers do not cater for the intellectually lazy or the mentally deficient.¹

The question of whether Bunyan's influence over the English-speaking world is increasing or failing is raised by Krans.² His answer is that "historically, both as a landmark in English fiction and as an exponent of Puritanism, Bunyan's place is secure." But as an influence upon the world, Bunyan's power is waning, and will never be as strong as it used to be.

One reason for this ebbing influence is that the tinker's philosophy of life is given through a single book - and "through a narrow interpretation of that book." His ideal springs not from love for holiness but from a fear of the wrath to come. As that fear dwindles, Krans says, the ideal will become less compelling. Bunyan has a "dogged, obstinate Philistinism, with its blindness to beauty and its indifference to joy." And this is another factor which will alienate

¹ Jackson Holbrook, The Reading of Books (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), p. 167.

² Horatio S. Krans, "Bunyan's Place in English Fiction," The Book News Monthly, XXVI, No. 8 (April 1908).

him from the affection of modern readers.¹ The Puritanism of the Faerie Queene is for all time; whether as much can be said of the Puritanism of the Pilgrim's Progress is debatable.

Krans believes, nevertheless, that Bunyan has contributed significantly to the development of English fiction. He speaks highly of the author's "realistic method" and extremely fluent dialogues, both of which advanced the English novel considerably.²

Basically the same idea runs through an unsigned article in The Living Age. Like Milton, Bunyan thought that the theology of his work gave it an eternal value. It turns out, however, that the aspects of theology change, and now the theology in their works is the main obstacle to their being read. In a large sense, however, Bunyan's allegory remains a work "of lasting value, even in its most spiritual side."³

C. S. Lewis, in a book he describes as "an allegorical apology

1

John H. Randall, in The Making of the Modern Mind (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1940) points out that the Puritan lacks "saving humour, even when possessed with wit." An exaggerated sense of seriousness makes him overlook most of the amenities of life. As typified by John Bunyan, the Puritan tended to "shrink from a surplice or a mince-pie at Christmas as he shrank from impurity."

2

Of a similar opinion are William Otis and Morris Needleman (An Outline History of English Literature, II, New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1939) who assert that while "inconsistencies do creep in" and "theology may be outworn," Bunyan's allegory lives on in more than one hundred languages.

3

"Every Pilgrim's Progress," The Living Age, 291 (Oct. 21, 1916), 181-184. R. Ellis Roberts, in "Bunyan and His Times" (Bookman, Dec., 1927) says: "So I would insist that Bunyan as an author has 'no times'; we value him first not for what he tells us of his own day, his own religion or his own society, but for what he tells us of ours." Also, the Pilgrim's Progress appears in "One Hundred Books - Chosen by Prominent Americans," a publication of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, 1948.

for Christianity, reason, and romanticism,"¹ explores the philosophical implications of a work such as Bunyan's for the modern man. Somewhat of a Pilgrim's Progress "in reverse," Lewis' allegory delineates the journey of a person through life. He traces man's "progress" from childhood innocence through sinful and inquisitive adolescence and adulthood, plagued by all sorts of philosophies and ignorant of true religion, then on to religious enlightenment, and finally into regression to a child's faith.

In style and form the book is patterned after the tinker's allegory. Chapter One, titled "The Rules," goes:

I dreamed of a boy who was born in the land of Puritanism and his name was John. And I dreamed that when John was able to walk he ran out of his parents' garden on a fine morning on to the road. . . .

A number of other readers of Bunyan's Great Dream may not have been moved deeply enough, as Lewis was, to compose a philosophical work, but they nevertheless became familiar with the pilgrim story. "What is it," muses R. E. Roberts, "that makes the humour of Chaucer, the heart-rending simplicity of Bunyan, and the vital interminableness of Richardson so revealing, so astoundingly full of the very sap of human life?"² Bunyan, he claims, is one of the "great modernists" - one who is not a professional artist, but who must have self-expression.

Florence Lennon, writing about Lewis Carroll, speculates that if only the great creator of Alice in Wonderland had been imprisoned like

¹ C. S. Lewis, The Pilgrim's Regress (New York: Sheed & Ward Inc., 1935).

² R. E. Roberts, Samuel Rogers and His Circle (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1910), p. 6.

Bunyan, he might have written a Pilgrim's Progress. Some such experience, the biographer avers, would have enhanced Carroll's maturity.¹ Stapleton Martin, on the other hand, states that The Compleat Angler and Bunyan's allegory are two of the most popular books published in the English language; yet it is doubtful if Walton and Bunyan could have gotten along together considering their religious views.²

The similarity between Puritan Bunyan and Robert Southwell, Catholic writer during the Elizabethan times, is pointed out by Janelle. "Like Bunyan," Janelle writes, "Southwell is unable to paint sin in other than dark colours." It is no more possible to know Southwell apart from Counter-Reformation Catholicism than Bunyan apart from Puritan Protestantism.³ To this piece of historical writing Thompson adds the episode of Sir Walter Raleigh, who was "a heroic memory" with the Puritans of the "next two generations." The biographer claims that he can "never read Milton's descriptions of Eden or Bunyan's descriptions of the Land of Beulah, without being sure that behind them

¹ F. B. Lennon, Victoria Through the Looking Glass (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), p. 106.

² S. Martin, Izaak Walton and His Friends (London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1903). As an index to popularity, Max Savelle (A Short History of American Civilization. New York: The Dryden Press, Inc., 1957) chronicles that the Pilgrim's Progress was "especially popular" in early America. To this information Paltsits adds that 100,000 copies of the allegory were sold during the author's lifetime. (See V. H. Paltsits, "An Account of Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress' During the Seventeenth Century," The Literary Collector, II, No. 3 (June 1901).

³ Pierre Janelle, Robert Southwell, the Writer (London: Sheed & Ward, 1935).

shakes the remembered tapestry of Raleigh's pictures. . . ."¹

William Butler Yeats, the Irish poet, disputed his father's statement that Bunyan was a mystic. In a letter to his father, he contends that "it is not possible to make a definition of mysticism" to include Bunyan. The latter, according to him, is a "pietist" or "visionary."² The Puritan preacher from Elstow is likewise mentioned in a biography of Wordsworth.³ Bunyan drew the moral of the sad fate of Ignorance, whose heart told him mistakenly that he was saved, says the writer. But the evangelicals of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whether they were inclined towards Bunyan's Calvinism or towards an Arminianism which Wordsworth condemned, were satisfied if their hearts told them emphatically that they were saved.

A pessimist's outlook is shown by Rilke, a religious poet, who "saw the world we inhabit as Bunyan saw Vanity Fair, as a city of sorrow situated in the great land of grief."⁴

But Osbert Burdett puts Bunyan beside Carlyle, Swift, Addison, and other literary greats. Carlyle, he says, is in the succession of

¹ Edward Thompson, Sir Walter Raleigh (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936), p. 115.

² The Letters of W. B. Yeats, ed. A. Wade (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955), p. 650.

³ E. C. Batho, The Later Wordsworth (Cambridge University Press, 1933).

⁴ E. M. Butler, Rainer M. Rilke (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941), p. 317. An American editor and novelist, David G. Phillips, would rather employ Bunyan's symbolism for promoting ethical practice in public office. In Theodore Roosevelt's campaign against corruption, Phillips named a crusading column "In the Interpreter's House." (See E. Ellis, op. cit., p. 229).

Bunyan, but in place of allegory we have history. The homeliness of Bunyan's or Pepys' prose is so patent as to appear artless, and yet there is no doubt about the immortality of both writers. These writers, the writer continues, "stand as quietly as the stars, waiting to be read and, once read, remain above our disputation."¹

John Ball observes that Bunyan wrote his book "when he had been humanized by a full experience of life," and had thus been equipped with a knowledge of "the workings of the human heart and mind." It was not his purpose to improve mankind; in writing the allegory he simply wished to dramatize the spiritual conflict within the soul of man. The result, says Ball, is "one of the world's few great books."²

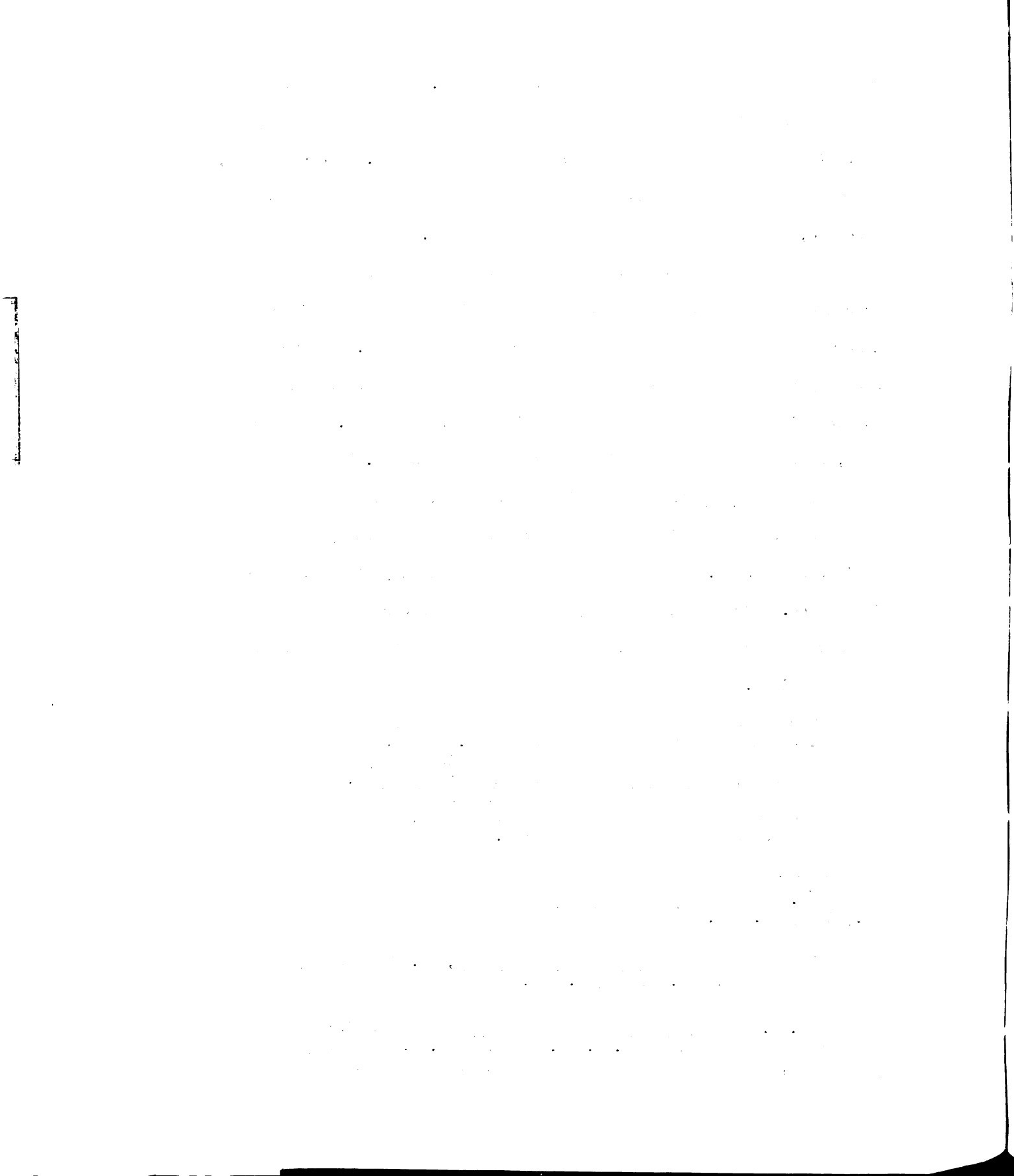
If the Pilgrim's Progress is a great book, the reason is that its author took liberties with the established order, Van Wyck Brooks reminds his reader. It is an attribute of the great poet "to be disinterested." Bunyan, like Dante, applied to the social order "the touchstone of a more elemental order," thereby effecting a rearrangement of values.

The French mind has concerned itself wholly with rearrangements within the social order. Contrast the Human Comedy of Balzac with the Divine Comedy of Dante, or Telemaque with the Pilgrim's Progress. The panoramic hand is there; a mighty hand runs up and down the scales, but it strikes a clear, sharp note at either end of the keyboard.³

¹O. Burdett, The Two Carlyles (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1931), p. 198.

²From Beowulf to Modern British Writers, ed. John Ball (New York: The Odyssey Press, Inc., 1959), p. 403.

³V. W. Brooks, The Malady of the Ideal (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1947), p. 18. See also V. J. McGill, August Strindberg, the Bedeviled Viking (New York: Brentano's, 1930) for a



One scholar believes that the Dreamer of Bedford Jail could not have written his allegory without the help of romances popular in those times. Harry Koopman contends that Bunyan was familiar with the romance of Sir Bevis of Southhampton, which was "full of adventures, single combats, the cutting off of giant's heads, and, what is perhaps most curious of all, it contains the name Appolyon."¹ This same thesis has led Harry Golder to accuse Bunyan of hypocrisy. Golder says the Puritan allegorist is insincere in condemning all types of fiction or reading for entertainment, because he himself read a great deal of the stuff. In fact, claims Golder, the tremendous popularity of Pilgrim's Progress is due to its adventure-filled story.²

J. B. Priestley, the famed British novelist, once wrote an essay which was obviously inspired by Bunyan's allegory. In the essay he falls into a dream and finds himself being chased by a stranger. He gains the safety of his house and locks himself in. But soon the door gives way to the pounding, and he awakes:

The windy night, the dark side street, the great drafty kitchen, the besieging crowd, all had vanished, huddled away into the lumbering room of such phantasmagoria; one twist of the brain's kaleidoscope and the strange tale was in progress, another twist and it was gone. I glanced at my

comparison of the Pilgrim's Progress and Strindberg's Toward Damascus. The "great unpardonable sins" of the Stranger in Strindberg's play, like those of Pilgrim and Faust, are sensuality and pride, according to McGill.

¹H. L. Koopman, "The Eternal Pilgrim," an address commemorating the three hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Bunyan (Providence, Rhode Island, 1928).

²Harry Golder, "John Bunyan's Hypocrisy," North American Review, CCXXIII, (June 1926), 323-332.

watch and found that I had been asleep for some ten minutes; I had only halted for a second near the Ivory Gate. . . .¹

An unashamed imitation of Bunyan's book came out in 1904 under the title The Christian Pilgrim. The author, Albert E. Long, does not in any way give credit to the original work, nor does he acknowledge its source. "The aim of the author," states the Preface, "has been to set forth the journey of the Kingdom of Heaven in a plain and simple way, so that all can read and understand."² The story, which is almost a paraphrase of Bunyan's allegory, is told in the tinker's familiar style. Only the names of the characters have been altered.

Frances H. Burnett earlier wrote Two Little Pilgrims' Progress, the story of a little boy and a little girl who visit the World's Fair. The tots are able to do so by spending their own savings. "This is their Pilgrim's Progress," explains the Preface, "and their interest-adventures and the happy ending of it all Mrs. Burnett tells as no one else can."³

A dramatization of the allegory is given by Rodney Bennett. According to the editor's explanation, the play is written in such a

¹ J. B. Priestley, Papers From Lilliput (Cambridge: Bowes & Bowes, 1922), p. 70. Obviously unimpressed by Bunyan's work is Ben Hecht, who in 1954 drew a list of "The World's 22 Worst Books" and placed the Pilgrim's Progress at the head of the list. The tinker of Elstow was in good company, however; others listed were Milton's Paradise Lost, Hugo's Les Miserables, Scott's Ivanhoe, and Tolstoy's What is Art. See Ben Hecht, A Child of the Century (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1954), p. 328.

² Albert E. Long, The Christian Pilgrim (New York: Printed for the Author, 1904).

³ Frances H. Burnett, Two Little Pilgrims' Progress (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895).

way that amateur groups can stage it at a small cost. The dramatic continuity is preserved, and John Bunyan himself, as a member of the cast, provides the narration.¹ H. W. Whanslaw, on the other hand, wrote a puppet play presumably intended for staging in religious schools.²

What is perhaps the most recent parody of Bunyan's allegory is the one that appears in Dwight Macdonald's book, published in 1960. The author, using James Joyce's Ulysses as material, imitates the tinker's style:

Heard he then in that clap the voice of the god
Bringforth or, what Calmer said, a hubbub of
Phenomenon? Heard? Why, he could not but
hear unless he had plugged up the tube Under-
standing (which he had done). . . .³

These are the voices out of the twentieth century that have spoken of Bunyan's book - some in awe, others in admiration, and a few in contempt. No doubt there are many more which are not included in this work. Together, they constitute an irrefutable testimony to the popularity of the Pilgrim's Progress.

¹ Rodney Bennett, A Complete Dramatization of the Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan (London: The Religious Drama Society, 1949). Ivor Novello, an actor on the English stage during the 1920's, once urged George Bernard Shaw to write Bunyan's allegory into a play. The Irish playwright could not be prevailed upon, although he was reminded about articulate praise for the "dramatic quality" of Bunyan's dialogue. See Peter Noble, Ivor Novello (London: The Falcon Press, 1951), p. 166.

² Twelve Puppet Plays, ed. H. W. Whanslaw (Wellington, Surrey: The Religious Education Press, Ltd., 1946), pp. 28 ff.

³ Parodies, ed. Dwight Macdonald (New York: Random House, 1960), p. 528.

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

Few books in English literature have achieved the popularity of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. In a decade or two the book will have been in active circulation for three hundred years. This is enough time for many erudite works to be entirely forgotten, or politely buried in scholars' anthologies. Yet, today thousands of people read Bunyan's allegory with apparently the same eagerness that characterized readers' response to his early editions.

Such a remarkable success invites close examination.

Some of the questions that arise are: What kinds of people read the book over the years? Who accepted the work and who rejected it - and for what reasons? In what ways do prevailing social, economic, and religious conditions influence the readership of the book? Are there any implications of this phenomenon of popularity on the relationships among source, message, and audience in mass media communication?

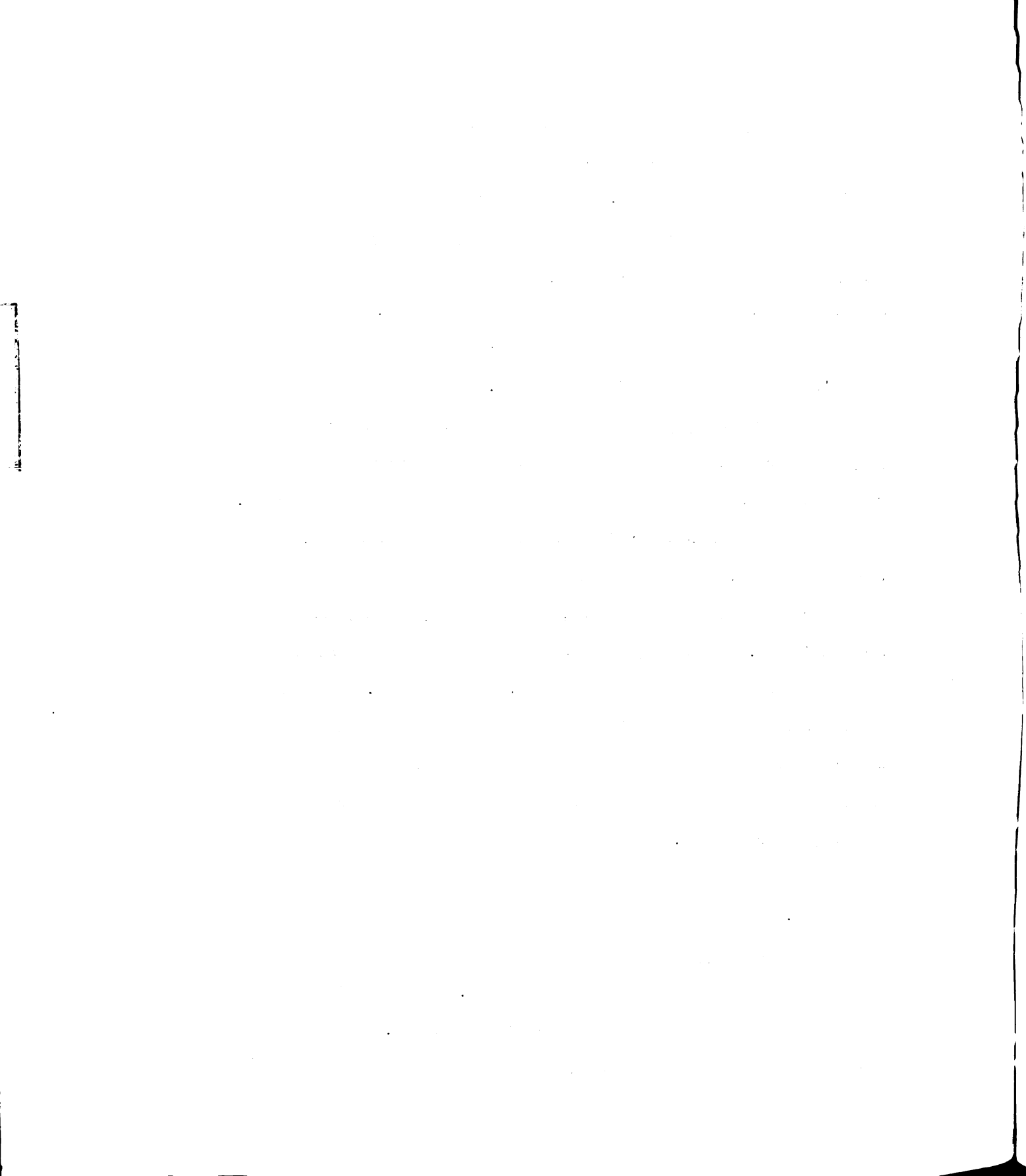
The views and comments discussed in this study offer ample data for arriving at answers to most of these questions. A number of sources make categorical statements; others, who appear to be more prudent or cautious, give qualified comments. In either case, the "answer" which can be derived is only tentative. Since no attempt was

made in the first place to catalogue all existing comments about the Pilgrim's Progress (a task which would be well nigh impossible), it would be unsound to ascribe either completeness or finality to any conclusion made from the data. There is reason to believe, however, that the material collected in this study comes as close to being representative as would be practicable, and in this sense provides a reasonable basis for arriving at certain conclusions.

It will be helpful to premise an analysis of the audience of Bunyan's work on certain basic assumptions.

The first assumption is that from a psychological standpoint people are basically equipped with certain drives or urges, which are related to certain needs, and which may be manifested in various ways. Given a degree of literacy which enables them to read and comprehend the printed page, most people will normally tend to react in some way to such stimuli as death, fear, revenge, love, beauty, challenge, and fulfilment. There are, in other words, certain universal themes in literature which invariably elicit readers' interest. A corollary of this assumption is that whereas people read for a variety of reasons and purposes, it is generally true that everyone passes a stage in the maturation process wherein he is attracted to stories of fantasy, romance, and adventure. For some this stage may come early, for others late; and in some exceptional cases, a person may not entirely outgrow this phase.

The second assumption is that one's tastes in reading are largely determined by his own society and environment. A person will tend to read the kind of material he is exposed to constantly. Whether he is aware of it or not, a person develops a taste for the kind of reading



which the group of which he is a member approves of, or supports. What the person will accept or reject as "proper" reading material is decided by his personal "system of values," which in turn is a product of his social environment.

The third assumption is that the evaluation of literature, like that of other forms of art, inevitably involves the critic's personal bias. There is no such thing as "objective criticism." This statement does not imply that one person's judgment is "as good as" anybody else's. There are certain critical standards in evaluating a work of art, just as there are accepted principles of composition in music or in painting. The competence of a literary judgment can be established on the basis of these standards, even while it may not be measured with the precision of a physicist's scales.

The fourth assumption is that popularity is not synonymous with, or equivalent to, literary excellence. A work may appeal to an audience for many different reasons which may have nothing to do with literary qualities. Popularity is an index of the degree to which a work is accepted by a given audience at a given time. Thus, judged on the basis of literary standards, many "best sellers" in recent years are far from adequate. In some instances their appeal is based on an exploitation of sex and violence, or on a timely discussion of some public issues.

Conceivably there could be more assumptions than these. But accepting these four basic premises will relieve one of the necessity to explain every type of behavior which he may encounter in this study. One can accept as "normal," for example, the fact that children (and some adults!) like to hear or read stories of adventure. Fight scenes



and pursuits, especially those involving elves, giants, dragons, and other denizens of the world of fantasy, excite them. Another implication of the acceptance of these assumptions is that less mature minds can grasp abstract ideas only with difficulty, but that when these same ideas are dressed in allegorical clothes or personified in true-to-life characters, they are easier to understand. Still another implication is this: that since popularity is not the same as literary excellence, it is possible to admit certain literary flaws in Bunyan's work without minimizing its popularity. Much of the apparent conflict in the judgment of the Pilgrim's Progress arises from a lack of awareness of this fact. Some fanatical admirers of Bunyan overlook its faults entirely. These readers can discriminate only between black and white; to them there are no subtle shades of grey.

On this basis of the categories proposed in this study,¹ the data may be summarized as follows:

¹

For a discussion of the categories, see p. 20.

PERIOD	CRITIC	GENERAL PUBLIC	RELIGIOUS	SYNTHESIZER	TOTAL
1660-1744: Restoration to Johnson	3 (2)*	1		8 (2)*	12 (4)*
1744-1832: Johnson to the End of Romanticism	12 (4)	18 (1)	2	6 (1)	38 (6)
1832-1885: The Victorian Age	16 (6)	25 (4)	13	14 (1)	68 (11)
1885-1960: The Contemporary Age	35 (5)	21	12	37 (2)	105 (7)
TOTAL	67 (17)	65 (5)	27	64 (6)	223 (28)

*() = Unfavorable source

The following statements can be made on the basis of the above data:

1. There has been a steady increase in the number of published comments, indicating a consistent expansion of the audience of Bunyan's book.

2. In terms of the various categories, the critics, general public sources, and synthesizers are about equal in number; also, while these three have grown steadily over the years, the "religious" category has remained relatively steady. There are no unfavorable religious sources.

3. Only 28 out of the 223 total number of sources (less than 15%) are unfavorable. The critics lead the rest in this respect.

4. The proportion of unfavorable to favorable sources changed from 1 out of 2 in the first period (1660-1744) to 1 out of 14 in the last period (1885-1960). This indicates a tremendous rise in the popularity of the book.

5. The high proportion of unfavorable to favorable comments among the critics (1 out of 4, as compared to general public sources, 1 out of 13; synthesizers, 1 out of 11; and religious 0 out of 27) seems to indicate that the main objections to Bunyan's book are made on literary grounds, since the critics are generally regarded as the "arbiters" of literary taste.

A pertinent question to raise at this point is, what are the readers of Bunyan looking for in the Pilgrim's Progress, and what aspects of the work do they praise or criticize?

The comments can be roughly divided into three types; namely, (1) those which tend to take a literary viewpoint; (2) those which stress the entertainment value of the book; and (3) those which emphasize the religious and moral aspects of the work. In terms of the four categories, the critics generally group themselves around the literary viewpoint (1), the general public sources around the entertainment value (2), the religious around the religious and moral aspects (3), and the synthesizers around all three aspects (1, 2, 3).

Those who take a literary viewpoint prominently mention two aspects: (a) style and (b) theme and content. In relation to style they mention dialogue, characterization, narrative technique, use of language, and dramatic quality. Their views of theme and content



touch on the nature of the story, as well as its appropriateness for the form of the allegory.

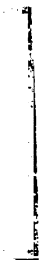
The favorable terms most commonly used to describe Bunyan's style are: "plain," "natural," "simple," "lucid," "spontaneous," "homely," "dignified," "very engaging," "homespun," "unaffected dignity," "rhythmical flow," and "charming simplicity." The unfavorable terms are "dull," "vulgar," "insufficient," and "illiterate." One significant observation is that even those who are critical of Bunyan's allegory are generally receptive to the "plain" and uninvolved style of his prose.

The dialogue is described by the favorable sources as "dramatic," "fluent," "vivacious," "precise," "pointed," and "heartwarming." The same adjectives are used for describing the language of the book, with the addition of: "charming," "pure and forceful," "poetic," "unpolluted," "never coarse or unclean," "terse," and "lucid."

Bunyan's characterization is described by his admirers with the terms: "vivid," "real," "unsurpassed," "Dantean," "universal figures," "genuine flesh and blood," "realistic," and "no caricatures." The unfavorable sources use the terms "unartistic" and "naive."

A highly praised aspect of the Pilgrim's Progress is the theme and content. The following terms abound: "profound," "universality of appeal," "truly human experience," "unsurpassed in literature," "drama of the soul," and "true expression of Puritan England." On the other hand, the unfavorable sources use "narrow," "blasphemous," "infamous libels upon life," and "piously repulsive."

Those who emphasize the entertainment value of the work cite the adventures and the "fairy-tale" quality of the story. One remark



made repeatedly is that children like Bunyan's allegory because of the "interesting" story, and in particular the adventures of Christian in his pilgrimage to the Celestial City.

Unquestionably the appeal of the pilgrim tale to many is due to the fact that it reads like a novel; a few regard it as a prototype of this literary form. There is a skillful merging of narrative, dialogue, and characterization, according to some. While the book is basically theological, it is also entertaining.

The sources who emphasize the religious and moral aspect of Bunyan's allegory may be classified into three groups:

(1) Those who subscribe to Bunyan's Calvinistic theology. These are the readers who are in perfect agreement with the author's theological views, and who reinforce their beliefs by reading the allegory.

(2) Those who perceive in the work a broad religious and didactic quality, regardless of the author's sectarian views. These sources commend the spiritual value of the book in such terms as "fundamentally valid moral and ethical import," "brotherhood and love," "matchless and inimitable crystallization of the whole system of Puritan Protestantism," and "religious bond of the whole English Christendom." On the other hand, the unfavorable sources use the phrases "narrow theology," "motivated by fear," "vengeful Deity," and "blasphemy against fundamental ideas of right and wrong."

(3) Those who find a utilitarian value in the allegory as a missionary handbook. These sources are predominantly Protestant, although not necessarily believers of Bunyan's Calvinistic doctrine.

Many of the readers of the Pilgrim's Progress, but particularly the synthesizers, take more than one point of view in assessing the book. A significant phenomenon in this respect is that this particular class of readers have an extremely favorable attitude toward the work. The implication here is that when considered as a whole, or in all its aspects, the book possesses enough attributes to make it an enduring piece of literature.

It has also been shown in this study that the prevailing social, intellectual, and economic conditions at a given time influence the readership of Bunyan's allegory. A review of the summary of data will demonstrate that the sources for the period of Restoration to Johnson (1660-1744) total only twelve, of whom four are unfavorable. The smallness of the audience is not as significant as the fact that one out of three readers were unfavorable in their opinion. This "unpopularity" has been amply explained: the intellectual climate of the age was hostile to Bunyan's ideas. Puritanism, both as a religious and a political force, had begun to decline in England. A new rationalism was beginning to take root; a materialistic philosophy was challenging the traditional primacy of religion.

In the next era, during which Romanticism flourished, the allegory fared slightly better. Not only did the audience grow in size, but it also became more sympathetic with Bunyan's book. The number of uncongenial sources was less than one-sixth of the congenial sources. Again, the trend can be accounted for by the prevailing social and intellectual climate. As the eighteenth century came to a close, rationalism began to be replaced by humanitarianism, and this new humanitarianism was characterized by a sympathy for the individual.

The Puritan's allegory was finding a bigger audience at this time not only on account of the greatly improved printing facilities, but because of favorable social climate. The people's reaction against the artificialities of the Neo-Classical Age was a search for greater naturalness in social and intellectual life. The Romantics' emphasis on the common man also helped "bring back" many readers to the simplicity of taste and the philosophical solace that the Pilgrim's Progress provides. And as this individualistic philosophy found expression in religious life, Bunyan's allegory increasingly fell on receptive minds.

During the Victorian Age the growth of Bunyan's audience was even more remarkable. The progress in printing and in communication facilities, as well as the rise in literacy, undoubtedly accounts for some of the increase in readership. But the widespread and intense reawakening to religious values, as typified in the Oxford and Broad Church movements, should not be overlooked. These were instrumental in stimulating reader interest in religious writing.

Finally, during the Contemporary Age, the audience of the Pilgrim's Progress has become extremely diversified. The highly complex society which has emerged from centuries of change and turmoil is still groping for new values. More people from all walks of life and different parts of the world are reading Bunyan and are talking about him. It is almost impossible to generalize across such a heterogeneous audience. As the many cultures shift and change, it will be even harder to predict the directions that such an audience will take.

In a real sense, a final evaluation of the Pilgrim's Progress is not possible. Are the admirers of Bunyan "right" and his detractors

"wrong"? Is the popularity of the book due to its outstanding literary qualities which, according to some readers, characterize the book? Or is its popularity largely due to its religious and didactic significance?

It would seem futile to argue the case of popularity from the literary standpoint. Assuming that Bunyan's admirers are correct - that is, the book possesses brilliant literary traits - the problem of popularity would still be unsolved. Why? Because literary excellence, as previously stated, is not necessarily a passport to popularity. Conversely, a piece of writing could draw a wide audience for a while even if it were bereft of literary finesse. Numerous examples of this truism abound in contemporary publishing. By the same token, many excellent literary works never make the "best seller" lists.

In literature, works which have a universal appeal have a significantly greater chance of enduring. The reason for this occurrence is not hard to find. Reader interest is easily aroused and retained by a skillful treatment of the human urges and drives. The reader identifies himself with the characters and the action of the story; he perceives a personal significance in the work, even if the experience were only vicarious on his part.

Many a reader reads a book "for the story," and would be willing to overlook the sectarian aspect of the work to be able to enjoy it. To this type of reader, entertainment comes first. Another person reads a book out of curiosity, or out of a desire to take issue with the author's views. The list could be made longer. And the deeper one goes in analyzing the psychology of an audience, the more variables of

the first of these is the fact that the system is not self-sufficient. It is dependent on the external world for its raw materials and for its energy. The second is that the system is not self-organizing. It is dependent on the external world for its structure and for its function. The third is that the system is not self-replicating. It is dependent on the external world for its reproduction. The fourth is that the system is not self-maintaining. It is dependent on the external world for its survival.

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human behavior he has to explain.

Why does one book "succeed" and another one "fail"? Why do sequels rarely attain the height of popularity of the original work? Why is it, for instance, that Milton's Paradise Regained has never approached Paradise Lost in reputation or popularity? Why is it, likewise, that Part II of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress is generally considered inferior to Part I?

The critic honest to himself cannot give glib answers to these questions. He can only describe and theorize. He realizes that as soon as a book is launched, a complex process of interaction among numerous variables begins to operate. And some of these variables are not easily identified.

This state of affairs suggests that from the communication standpoint there is a highly complicated relationship among source (the author), message (the book), and the audience. Some of the variables operating in this complex process have been suggested.¹

For the source, credibility and prestige are definitely involved. A significant phenomenon is this: that as Bunyan's credibility as a preacher increased, the more people he was able to attract to his views. It is suggested that the increase in the number of sources in this study from the Restoration Period to the Contemporary Age is largely due to the increase in Bunyan's prestige. The import of this statement is not diminished by the fact that some of the sources are not congenial to Bunyan's views.

It is further suggested that once Bunyan's reputation was established by such prominent critics as Macaulay, Southey, and Johnson, that reputation tended to increase and augment his prestige as a communicator.

¹ See pp. 4-8.



In connection with the message as a variable, the Pilgrim's Progress presents only one side: the Calvinistic doctrine of salvation. Hence, a limitation of the book becomes a strength; in presenting only one side of a controversial issue, it makes itself an effective instrument among those who initially favor the stand it takes. Among the believers of Calvinism, the book tends to be a drawing force in the growth of the reading audience.

If it is admitted (as some sources have done) that Bunyan's theology is flexible enough to admit modification without mutilating its basic principles, the potential audience becomes even greater. Other Protestant sects perceive the book as a fairly adequate representation of their views. They thus align themselves on the side of the tinker of Elstow in his crusade against sin, and in his fight for the primacy of spiritual values.

It is suggested that this "broadness" of Bunyan's approach to an admittedly sectarian dogma has given the book sufficient ambiguity to be perceived as congenial to the beliefs of various sects. Consequently, this quality of the message tends to increase the popularity of the book.

The audience as a variable involves several aspects. As implied in the foregoing discussion regarding the ambiguity of Bunyan's theology, readers tend to adopt goals as a group. That is, the individual member is normally led on by the aspirations and objectives of the group. It will remain a matter of speculation how many believers in Calvinism have sought the Pilgrim's Progress, although undoubtedly a great numbers have. When formal groups and organizations, such as the church, are involved, this phenomenon seems to be even more pronounced. This is the essence of organized religion: to provide an institutionalized approach to spiritual ends. Therefore, there is a tendency for the religious audience of the Pilgrim's Progress to grow

in proportion as the membership of the church grows.

Even apart from the purely religious aspects of the situation, group values operate among Bunyan's audience. It has been pointed out that admirers of the Puritan writer tend to reinforce each other's admiration; they are likely to rise as a group in defense of the author's reputation whenever such a reputation or position is threatened or attacked.¹

It is suggested that the popularity of Bunyan's work can be partly explained by the operation of the group in striving for a common goal.

A related aspect is group conformity. Again, individuals are not only inclined to support the values of the group they belong to, but they are sometimes pressured into adopting the norms of the group they already belong to. This conformity can come about in several ways. One might not have the competence, for example, to evaluate Bunyan's work. In this unstructured situation, the probability is high that he will adopt the opinion of the group, if he values membership in that group. Another possibility is that his own views about the work may not be sufficiently set to resist change. Again, the probability is that he will be influenced by a prestigious member of the group in his evaluation. Finally, continued exposure to the same group, with their values and norms, will normally affect his attitudes and beliefs to the extent that he will conform to the group.

The familiar testimony of how the young child is "brought up" on Bunyan illustrates the point. For many, there is no choice: the Pilgrim's Progress is foisted upon them from an early age. By the time they are old enough to select their own reading fare, the chances are good that the story of Christian has been deeply ingrained in their consciousness.

¹The example previously cited - that of Noyes' observation in connection with his critical article on Bunyan - is pertinent. See p. 8.

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It is suggested that Bunyan's audience has been enlarged by the effect of group pressure working on individuals, sometimes with the consequence that some readers have taken up the book in order to be able to conform to his group.

Still another aspect of the audience as variable is prior attitude. People seek information congenial to prior attitude; conversely, people tend to avoid exposure to information which is not congenial. It would not be surprising if the Pilgrim's Progress is as much sought after by those who believe in Calvinism and other related forms of Protestantism as it is avoided by those who disagree. The point remains to be made that Bunyan's audience has been considerably augmented by those who seek pietistic literature consonant with their religious views. It is suggested that the popularity of Bunyan's allegory has been enlarged to this extent.

Group interaction, which normally leads to more interaction, can take various forms. The members need not have face-to-face communication to reinforce one another's values and goals. Organization activities and communal projects often achieve similar results. Membership in certain antiquarian societies, religious publishing groups, or memorial groups - to name only a few - keep common goals and interests alive. Brown's list of some of these "Items of Interest in Connection with John Bunyan"¹ shows a wide range of such activities.

It is suggested that the interaction of people within groups that have common interests in, or a common admiration for, Bunyan, has enlarged Bunyan's audience and increased the popularity of his book.

¹ Brown, op. cit., p. 490 ff. Some of such items are: a Baptist Society at Oxford; Bunyan's Memorial at Westminster Abbey, Southwark Cathedral, and Elstow Church; and "Bunyan's Fellows."

Conclusion

On the basis of the foregoing analysis, the following statements are suggested:

1. John Bunyan's high credibility as a source, as well as his increasing personal prestige, helps enlarge the audience of his allegory.

2. Simplicity of style and the use of a plain and lucid language make the Pilgrim's Progress accessible to a wide audience. This stylistic quality has greatly increased Bunyan's audience.

3. The use of an allegorical form, replete with adventurous episodes, appeals to some sections of the reading public. This characteristic has increased the popularity of the book.

4. The universality and profoundness of the theme of Pilgrim's Progress - touching as it does on what many people consider fundamental values in life - has attracted numerous readers. This spiritual appeal of the book will continue to attract an audience.

5. The popularity of the Pilgrim's Progress through the years has been related to the characteristics of the times: generally speaking, the work was more popular during congenial times, and less popular during less congenial times.

There are three general statements which can be made; namely:

First, the Pilgrim's Progress is a product of a Christian, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon culture. As long as such a culture, with its historical and religious traditions, continues to exist, Bunyan's book will continue to be read.

Second, since people are, from the psychological standpoint, basically equipped with certain drives, or urges, and seek fulfilment of certain needs, they will react in similar ways to certain stimuli. It is highly probable,

therefore, that even in non-Christian, non-Anglo-Saxon, non-English-speaking cultures, the Pilgrim's Progress will continue to have its audience.

Third, the implications of this study for mass media communication can be summed up thus: the relationships among source, message, and audience are highly complex. The social milieu is a critical factor in the process of interaction among the different variables. Manipulating some of these variables is indeed possible, and could conceivably affect the outcome; but such an outcome, in the final sense, remains highly unpredictable.

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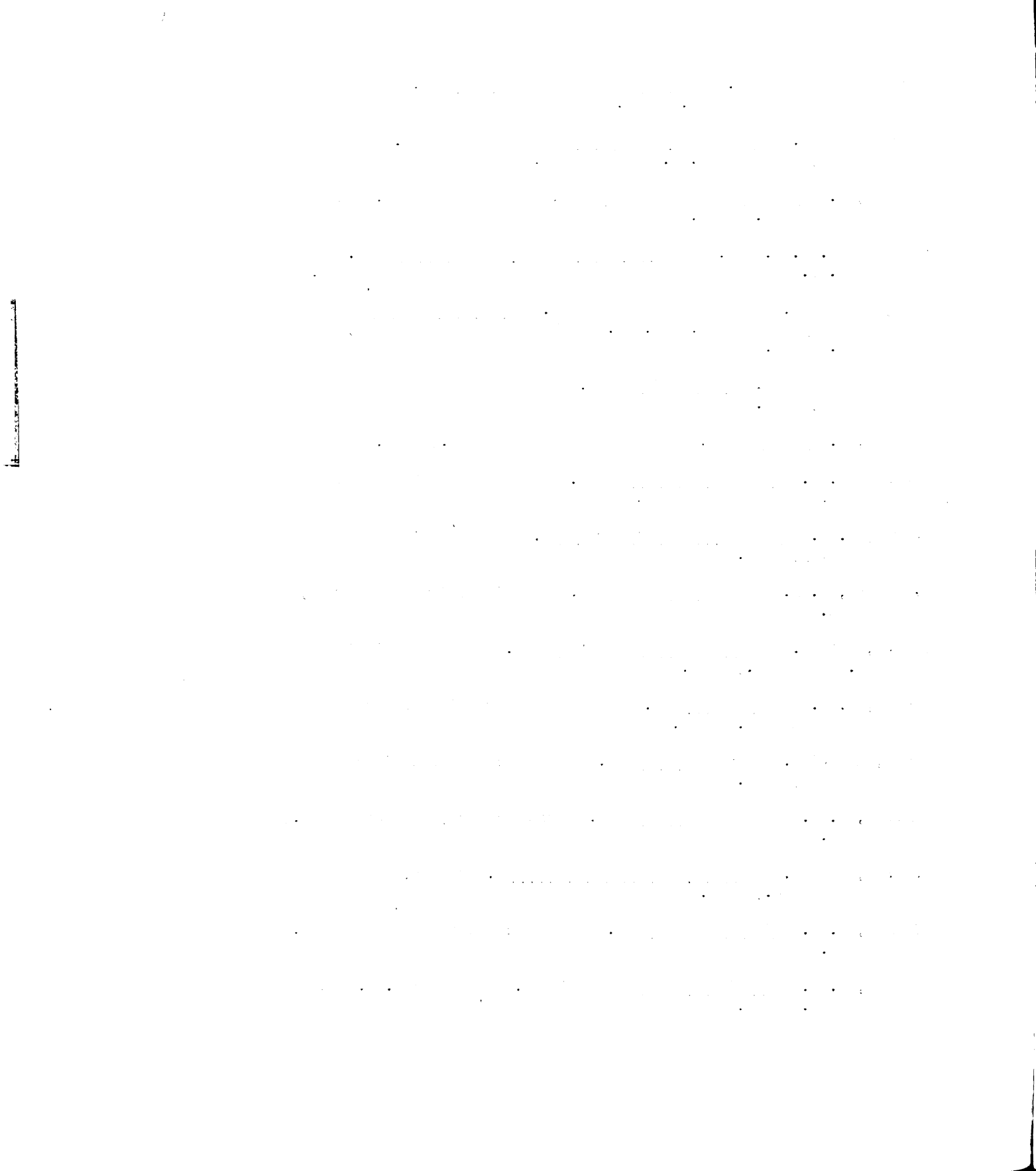
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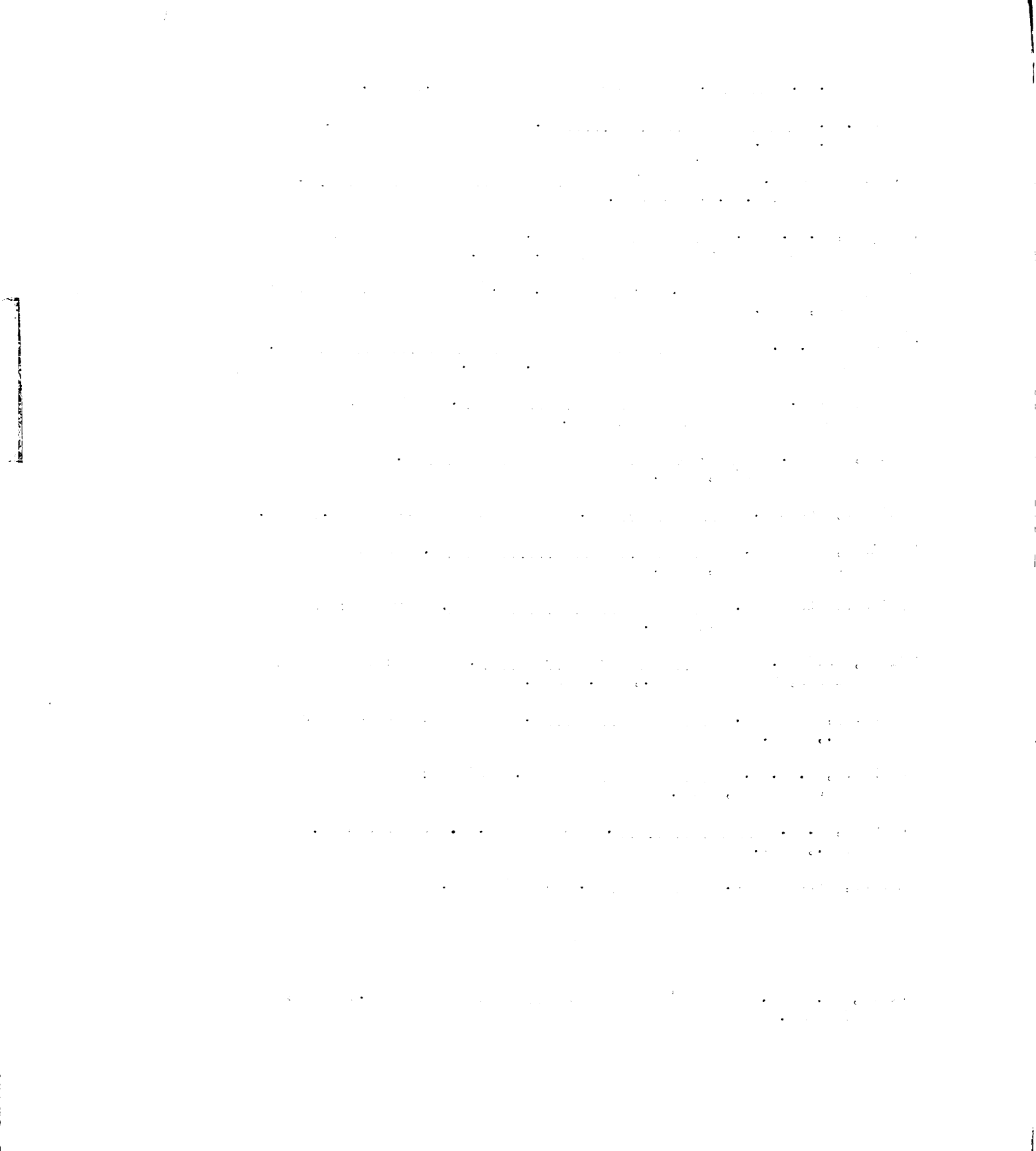
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