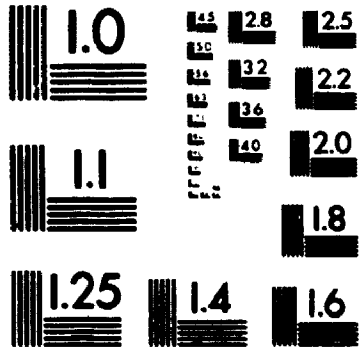




**PM-1 3½"x4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
NBS 1010a ANSI/ISO #2 EQUIVALENT**



PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

385 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

385, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file *Votre référence*

Our file *Notre référence*

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

**The "Apotheosis of Protestantism":
The Concept of Work in Carlyle**

by

JOHN EDWARD HARE, B.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of History

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

7 April 1995

© copyright

1995, John Edward Hare



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file *Votre référence*

Our file *Notre référence*

THE AUTHOR HAS GRANTED AN IRREVOCABLE NON-EXCLUSIVE LICENCE ALLOWING THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA TO REPRODUCE, LOAN, DISTRIBUTE OR SELL COPIES OF HIS/HER THESIS BY ANY MEANS AND IN ANY FORM OR FORMAT, MAKING THIS THESIS AVAILABLE TO INTERESTED PERSONS.

L'AUTEUR A ACCORDE UNE LICENCE IRREVOCABLE ET NON EXCLUSIVE PERMETTANT A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA DE REPRODUIRE, PRETER, DISTRIBUER OU VENDRE DES COPIES DE SA THESE DE QUELQUE MANIERE ET SOUS QUELQUE FORME QUE CE SOIT POUR METTRE DES EXEMPLAIRES DE CETTE THESE A LA DISPOSITION DES PERSONNE INTERESSEES.

THE AUTHOR RETAINS OWNERSHIP OF THE COPYRIGHT IN HIS/HER THESIS. NEITHER THE THESIS NOR SUBSTANTIAL EXTRACTS FROM IT MAY BE PRINTED OR OTHERWISE REPRODUCED WITHOUT HIS/HER PERMISSION.

L'AUTEUR CONSERVE LA PROPRIETE DU DROIT D'AUTEUR QUI PROTEGE SA THESE. NI LA THESE NI DES EXTRAITS SUBSTANTIELS DE CELLE-CI NE DOIVENT ETRE IMPRIMES OU AUTREMENT REPRODUITS SANS SON AUTORISATION.

ISBN 0-612-02980-8

Canada

Name John Edward Hare

Dissertation Abstracts International is arranged by broad, general subject categories. Please select the one subject which most nearly describes the content of your dissertation. Enter the corresponding four-digit code in the spaces provided.

Social Sciences - History - General

0 5 7 8

U·M·I

SUBJECT TERM

SUBJECT CODE

Subject Categories

THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS

Architecture 0729
 Art History 0377
 Cinema 0900
 Dance 0378
 Fine Arts 0357
 Information Science 0723
 Journalism 0391
 Library Science 0399
 Mass Communications 0708
 Music 0413
 Speech Communication 0459
 Theater 0465

EDUCATION

General 0515
 Administration 0514
 Adult and Continuing 0516
 Agricultural 0517
 Art 0273
 Bilingual and Multicultural 0282
 Business 0688
 Community College 0275
 Curriculum and Instruction 0727
 Early Childhood 0518
 Elementary 0524
 Finance 0277
 Guidance and Counseling 0519
 Health 0680
 Higher 0745
 History of 0520
 Home Economics 0278
 Industrial 0521
 Language and Literature 0279
 Mathematics 0290
 Music 0522
 Philosophy of 0998
 Physical 0523

Psychology 0525
 Reading 0535
 Religious 0527
 Sciences 0714
 Secondary 0533
 Social Sciences 0534
 Sociology of 0340
 Special 0529
 Teacher Training 0530
 Technology 0710
 Tests and Measurements 0288
 Vocational 0747

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS

Language
 General 0679
 Ancient 0289
 Linguistics 0290
 Modern 0291
 Literature
 General 0401
 Classical 0294
 Comparative 0295
 Medieval 0297
 Modern 0298
 African 0316
 American 0591
 Asian 0305
 Canadian (English) 0352
 Canadian (French) 0355
 English 0593
 Germanic 0311
 Latin American 0312
 Middle Eastern 0315
 Romance 0313
 Slavic and East European 0314

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

Philosophy 0422
 Religion
 General 0318
 Biblical Studies 0321
 Clergy 0319
 History of 0320
 Philosophy of 0322
 Theology 0469

SOCIAL SCIENCES

American Studies 0323
 Anthropology
 Archaeology 0324
 Cultural 0326
 Physical 0327
 Business Administration
 General 0310
 Accounting 0272
 Banking 0770
 Management 0454
 Marketing 0338
 Canadian Studies 0385
 Economics
 General 0501
 Agricultural 0503
 Commerce-Business 0505
 Finance 0508
 History 0509
 Labor 0510
 Theory 0511
 Folklore 0358
 Geography 0366
 Gerontology 0351
 History
 General 0578

Ancient 0579
 Medieval 0581
 Modern 0582
 Black 0328
 African 0331
 Asia, Australia and Oceania 0332
 Canadian 0334
 European 0335
 Latin American 0336
 Middle Eastern 0333
 United States 0337
 History of Science 0585
 Law 0398
 Political Science
 General 0615
 International Law and Relations 0616
 Public Administration 0617
 Recreation 0814
 Social Work 0452
 Sociology
 General 0626
 Criminology and Penology 0627
 Demography 0938
 Ethnic and Racial Studies 0631
 Individual and Family Studies 0628
 Industrial and Labor Relations 0629
 Public and Social Welfare 0630
 Social Structure and Development 0700
 Theory and Methods 0344
 Transportation 0709
 Urban and Regional Planning 0999
 Women's Studies 0453

THE SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Agriculture
 General 0473
 Agronomy 0285
 Animal Culture and Nutrition 0475
 Animal Pathology 0476
 Food Science and Technology 0359
 Forestry and Wildlife 0478
 Plant Culture 0479
 Plant Pathology 0480
 Plant Physiology 0817
 Range Management 0777
 Wood Technology 0746
 Biology
 General 0306
 Anatomy 0287
 Biostatistics 0308
 Botany 0309
 Cell 0379
 Ecology 0329
 Entomology 0353
 Genetics 0369
 Limnology 0793
 Microbiology 0410
 Molecular 0307
 Neuroscience 0317
 Oceanography 0416
 Physiology 0433
 Radiation 0821
 Veterinary Science 0778
 Zoology 0472
 Biophysics
 General 0786
 Medical 0760
EARTH SCIENCES
 Biogeochemistry 0425
 Geochemistry 0996

Geodesy 0370
 Geology 0372
 Geophysics 0373
 Hydrology 0388
 Mineralogy 0411
 Paleobotany 0345
 Paleocology 0426
 Paleontology 0418
 Paleozoology 0985
 Palynology 0427
 Physical Geography 0368
 Physical Oceanography 0415

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Environmental Sciences 0768
 Health Sciences
 General 0566
 Audiology 0300
 Chemotherapy 0992
 Dentistry 0567
 Education 0350
 Hospital Management 0769
 Human Development 0758
 Immunology 0982
 Medicine and Surgery 0564
 Mental Health 0347
 Nursing 0569
 Nutrition 0570
 Obstetrics and Gynecology 0380
 Occupational Health and Therapy 0354
 Ophthalmology 0381
 Pathology 0571
 Pharmacology 0419
 Pharmacy 0572
 Physical Therapy 0382
 Public Health 0573
 Radiology 0574
 Recreation 0575

Speech Pathology 0460
 Toxicology 0383
 Home Economics 0386

PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Pure Sciences
 Chemistry
 General 0485
 Agricultural 0749
 Analytical 0486
 Biochemistry 0487
 Inorganic 0488
 Nuclear 0738
 Organic 0490
 Pharmaceutical 0491
 Physical 0494
 Polymer 0495
 Radiation 0754
 Mathematics 0405
 Physics
 General 0605
 Acoustics 0986
 Astronomy and Astrophysics 0606
 Atmospheric Science 0608
 Atomic 0748
 Electronics and Electricity 0607
 Elementary Particles and High Energy 0798
 Fluid and Plasma 0759
 Molecular 0609
 Nuclear 0610
 Optics 0752
 Radiation 0756
 Solid State 0611
 Statistics 0463
Applied Sciences
 Applied Mechanics 0346
 Computer Science 0984

Engineering
 General 0537
 Aerospace 0538
 Agricultural 0539
 Automotive 0540
 Biomedical 0541
 Chemical 0542
 Civil 0543
 Electronics and Electrical 0544
 Heat and Thermodynamics 0348
 Hydraulic 0545
 Industrial 0546
 Marine 0547
 Materials Science 0794
 Mechanical 0548
 Metallurgy 0743
 Mining 0551
 Nuclear 0552
 Packaging 0549
 Petroleum 0765
 Sanitary and Municipal 0554
 System Science 0790
 Geotechnology 0428
 Operations Research 0796
 Plastics Technology 0795
 Textile Technology 0994

PSYCHOLOGY
 General 0621
 Behavioral 0384
 Clinical 0622
 Developmental 0620
 Experimental 0623
 Industrial 0624
 Personality 0625
 Physiological 0989
 Psychobiology 0349
 Psychometrics 0632
 Social 0451



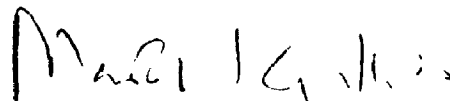
The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate
Studies and Research acceptance of the thesis:

"THE 'APOTHEOSIS OF PROTESTANTISM':
THE CONCEPT OF WORK IN CARLYLE"

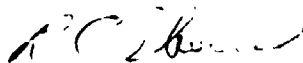
submitted by

John Edward Hare, B.A.,

in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts



Thesis Supervisor



Chair, Department of History

Carleton University

4 May 1995

Abstract

Carlyle's concept of work, surprisingly, has been neglected as a primary subject of study. Given the premises that the concept of work is central to Carlyle's moral thought and that "the moral" is the essence of his thought, understanding work is considered to be the most economical means of understanding Carlyle. Work was traced to two sources: Protestant doctrine, fundamentally, and German Romantic idealism ("transcendentalism"). A look at work in Sartor Resartus and Past and Present revealed the experiential process by which Carlyle's concept of work evolved and showed work's purpose to be the Protestant-inspired and transcendently motivated ideal that virtue be effectualized in this world. In conclusion, it was argued that the "effectualization imperative" (as Carlyle's "religion") is the unifying element in Carlyle's moral thought which reconciles the earlier Carlyle with the later and allows this "Calvinist without the theology" to be seen whole.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	The Makings of Work: Calvinism and Transcendentalism	18
3.	The Work of Discovery: <u>Sartor Resartus</u>	45
4.	Work as Prophecy: <u>Past and Present</u>	76
5.	The Effectualization Imperative: Overview and Conclusions	111
	Select Bibliography	145

Introduction

Carlyle's "concept of work" has been treated by scholars but never fully explained. According to G.B. Tennyson, while "the most penetrating critics have agreed that Carlyle's central thrust is religious and philosophical," in the realm of ideas it has been his social and political thought that has "attracted the main critical attention."¹ It is not surprising then that "work," which will be shown to comprehend the core of Carlyle's religious and philosophical (or "moral") thought, has failed to attract the attention it deserves.²

There are both practical and cultural explanations for this neglect. Practically, Carlyle's social and political thought are two of his more external aspects, which, like his "relations," "influence," "theory of history" or "literary artistry," are much more "accessible" in the sense that they are more amenable to scholarly certainty. Culturally this is

¹ G.B. Tennyson, "Thomas Carlyle," in Victorian Prose: A Guide to Research, ed. David J. DeLaura (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1973), 75.

² By "moral" thought I imply Carlyle's critique of human values and conduct, and the correctives he prescribed. It will be seen how Carlyle's "philosophical" thought tended toward the "religious" or moral, not epistemological models or systems in themselves.

a century that, having given its faith to empiricism, science and technology, is much more receptive to tangible socio-political or economic "programmes" for reform than to the abstract and often obscure moral foundations of these programmes. This is a century, moreover, that has found the implications of Carlyle's moral thought increasingly unpalatable and indeed unacceptable.

I

The inspiration of this thesis is to respond to the lack in the Carlyle scholarship of any thorough study of "work."³ Its purpose is to trace the origins of Carlyle's concept of work, to analyze its expression, and to define its influence on Carlyle's life. My premise is that a concept of work is the essence of Carlyle's moral thought. I will argue that understanding work, therefore, can be a means of capturing Carlyle's moral thought in a way that is both more "accessible" and significant.

³ A partial exception is Karen Faith Reifel's 1990 PhD. dissertation, "The Work of Believing: Labor as Self-Definition in Carlyle, Dickens and Bronte," The University of Texas at Austin, 1990. Reifel apprehends quite succinctly that to Carlyle, labour in all its forms was a material manifestation of "work," meaning the pursuit of virtue. But the value of her thesis to present purposes is limited by the fact that, as a dissertation in the field of English Literature, it gives less focus to Carlyle's thought itself than to its written expression, and then concentrates on just one text, "Biography," having also Dickens and Bronte to deal with.

Carlyle "never closely defined his favourite word, work."⁴ This fact is undoubtedly a reflection of work's centrality to Carlyle's sense of self and to his sense of purpose in life. It indicates that work was not a "doctrine" so much as a morality in itself, a conceived world view and way of life.⁵ That Carlyle's pronouncements upon work "are so rich and varied" as to "resist simple summary," is a reflection of the fact that whether he was speaking, on the surface, of societal health, economic arrangement or horseshoes, the underlying purpose for a personality such as his was always, implicitly or expressly, moral.⁶ By understanding "work," then, this thesis hopes to capture not only Carlyle's moral thought but also Carlyle.

As the products of a psyche so intensely religious, Carlyle's well-studied external aspects cannot properly be understood apart from his inner moral thought.⁷ Carlyle has been somewhat less than well understood precisely because,

⁴ Charles Frederick Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought: 1819-1834 (London: Archon Books, 1963), 197.

⁵ Hence, in this thesis I have referred to work not as Carlyle's doctrine but as his "concept."

⁶ The quotation is from Fred Kaplan, Thomas Carlyle: A Biography (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983), 406. See also Tennyson, "Thomas Carlyle," 75.

⁷ A prime example is the popular misconception of Carlyle's doctrine of "Might and Right." Neither fully understanding nor in some cases even perceiving the controlling influence of his moral idealism, many have interpreted the doctrine merely as a sanction of political despotism and brutality (and a justification for twentieth century fascism). See chapters four and five.

as far as comprehensive studies are concerned, his moral thought, his concept of work, has been almost completely neglected. Also neglected have been Carlyle's later, less morally compromising years, years in which the moral, previously dressed in the metaphor and artistry of the outward expression, became increasingly the outward expression itself.⁸ But neither can the early Carlyle, the focus of most Carlyle scholarship, be understood without a knowledge of the whole Carlyle, without a knowledge, that is, not only of inner as well as outer, but of later as well as early. As Chris Vanden Bossche explains, when "we are unable to see exactly what the relationship between early and late is, we fail to understand the precise nature of the problems in the early Carlyle or what really happens in the later works."⁹ In other words, we fail to understand Carlyle. Understanding work, the most fundamental of Carlyle's ideas (next to his conception of the universe itself), is the means of reconciling the inner with the outer Carlyle; therefore it is also the means of understanding the continuity between early and later.

⁸ See Tennyson, "Thomas Carlyle," 103.

⁹ Chris R. Vanden Bossche, Carlyle and the Search for Authority (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1991), viii-ix.

II

Because it has not been plumbed deeply or carefully enough, Carlyle's concept of work has most often been misinterpreted. The concept of work has been reduced to a "doctrine of labour" having the dual purposes of emotional palliation and material progress. On the other side of the spectrum it has been over-complicated, with the similar result that its proper origins, central purpose and essential importance to Carlyle's life are overlooked.¹⁰ In truth, work is both much more than mere labour and much less complicated than systematic philosophers or intellectual historians assume it to be. Work had a central, broad yet simple purpose which, it will be discovered, greatly enhances our understanding of Carlyle's person, purpose and overall career as quintessential Victorian "sage."

The concept of work, broadly defined, is the means of getting at the soul of Carlyle: it will be seen how it comprehends and reconciles the two main sources of his

¹⁰ Philip Rosenberg, for one, borrows the theories of Hegel and Hannah Arendt to transplant into Sartor Resartus an overly philosophical and technical disaggregation of work into the trinity of "labour," "work" and "action," even though he admits that Carlyle never explicitly makes such a distinction in the book. Rosenberg's purpose, of course, is not to get to the bottom of work. But his clouding of the issue causes him, I believe, to fundamentally misinterpret the message of Carlyle's "gospel of work" in Sartor and to fundamentally misinterpret Carlyle himself. See Rosenberg, The Seventh Hero: Thomas Carlyle and the Theory of Radical Activism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 57-58 and chapter III passim. See also 27-29.

thought and ideas, Calvinism and "transcendentalism."¹¹ Many would argue that Romanticism was also a primary source of Carlyle's thought and ideas. They would be right. But as the reaction and conscious antidote to what some by the end of the eighteenth century had begun to consider the inadequacies of Rationalism, its thrust was subsumed in that of transcendentalism.¹² Carlyle's membership in the nineteenth century "cult of masculinity" is less easy to dismiss. In recent decades the argument has been raised that industrialization's destabilizing influences on society led to a new rationalization and entrenchment of distinct, socially prescribed male and female roles, that an advocacy of the potentials of the "manly" (as Carlyle described it) role of labour, "courage," production and progress, in self-conscious comparison to the domestic, "sentimental" sphere of "passive femininity," was an expression of a newly assertive (and insecure) masculinity.¹³ Certainly Carlyle's

¹¹ See Tennyson, "Thomas Carlyle," 72. Tennyson's term for transcendentalism is "German idealist philosophy."

¹² The Romantic position was that Rationalism had been mistaken in believing the universe could be understood in terms of the sum of its physical parts. As such, Romanticism rejected Rationalism's belief that the objective, rationalistic consciousness was the last word on knowledge, and argued instead that the "irrational," unconscious and subjective "soul" of the individual had a vital epistemological role to play in a universe that was not atomistic and mechanical but holistic, dynamical and mysterious. For a clarification of the close relationship of Romanticism and transcendentalism see Elizabeth M. Vida, Romantic Affinities: German Authors and Carlyle. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.

¹³ Still struggling to find his place in society, Carlyle noted in 1841 that the "female genius" (meaning a particular part of a male or female's consciousness) can "admire and receive, but can hardly create..." Two Notebooks of Thomas Carlyle, ed. Charles Eliot Norton (1898; rpt. Mamaroneck, New York: Paul P. Appel, 1972), 188. As an introduction to the issues of masculinity and gender in the nineteenth century experience, see Michael

"masculinity" was a source for his thought and ideas, work included. It can be a valuable insight into the special attractiveness of an ethic of work to the nineteenth century and to Carlyle. Masculinity, however, must be considered an adjunct to the primary sources of Carlyle's thought and ideas, not a primary source in itself. It was not a moral precept as such, but rather a social.

Calvinism and transcendentalism remain as the two routes to an understanding of work. I have analyzed Carlyle's own texts in order to induce work from its hiding places, and so avoid the misinterpretation that has dogged it. I have given attention to Carlyle's journals, Reminiscences and especially the correspondence, but I felt a more economical and indeed a more careful approach was to first study in significant depth the two books most central to what all agree was Carlyle's central role as "prophet of the gospel of work."

Sartor Resartus (1831) is universally acknowledged to be the source of Carlyle's thought, and Past and Present (1843) the most representative example. David Alec Wilson described Past and Present as "the application of the principles of

Roper and John Tosh, eds., Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain Since 1800, New York: Routledge, 1991. See also Stefan Collini, "Manly Fellows," chapter 5 in Public Moralists. Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain, 1850-1930, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, and Tom Lloyd, "The Feminine in Thomas Carlyle's Aesthetics," European Romantic Review, 2 (2), 1992, 173-94.

Sartor to daily life..." Similarly, Alice Chandler more recently summed up Carlyle's "two greatest books" as "a search for a Father in Heaven" and "a search for a father on earth."¹⁴ A careful reading of both revealed the Protestant foundations of work as well as the influence of transcendentalism. It showed that ascetic Protestantism (Calvinism) and transcendentalism together tended toward a re-invigorated Calvinist purposefulness in Carlyle and that the chief end of this purposefulness was the effectualization of virtue in this world.¹⁵

I found, and I will argue, that Carlyle's other major writings most directly pertinent to the concept of work (On Heroes, Cromwell and Latter-Day Pamphlets) are also centrally concerned with what I have called the "effectualization imperative," that in fact the effectualization imperative is the kernel of work and of Carlyle's whole moral thought. I will argue, in fact, not only that this is the key to reconciling Carlyle's often misunderstood outer aspects with his inner essence, but also that it is the linchpin between the early Carlyle and the

¹⁴ David Alec Wilson, Carlyle on Cromwell and Others (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1925), 201; Alice Chandler, A Dream of Order: The Medieval Ideal in Nineteenth Century English Literature (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), 51. Wilson's work is volume III of his six-volume biography.

¹⁵ Carlyle once characterized Cromwell's attempt to give this ideal a practical reality "the Apotheosis of Protestantism." Collected Letters, 15, 239; TC to Karl August Varnhagen von Ense, 19 December 1842. The question of Carlyle's moral debt to the Protestant Reformation, significantly, has been at least as under-investigated as work.

later (ca. post-1843) and the means of better understanding, therefore, both early and later.

"While we now have a good grasp of the sources from which Carlyle drew his religious and philosophic ideas and some idea of their impact on the age," Tennyson wrote in 1973, "there is still no comprehensive study of Carlyle and religion that really unites these emphases."¹⁶ These "emphases," Tennyson alluded to earlier (above), were Calvinism and transcendentalism, and it is hoped that this thesis at least helps point the way toward the "comprehensive study of Carlyle and religion" -- the comprehensive study of work, in other words -- "that really unites these emphases."

III

Chapter two ("The Makings of Work: Calvinism and Transcendentalism") will show how it was ascetic Protestantism or Calvinism that went farthest in incorporating physical labour into a religious ideal of work. Secondly, it will show that even though Carlyle came to reject the literal truth of the Bible (the foundation upon which his inherited work ethic rested), his Calvinist moral purposefulness could endure, because he would find in German Romanticism an alternative justification for work--

¹⁶ Tennyson, "Thomas Carlyle," 74-75.

the "transcendental" potential within each individual to transform himself and his environment according to the ideals of his moral conscience.

Chapter three ("The Work of Discovery: Sartor Resartus"), properly speaking, is an extension of chapter two. It will adumbrate the aspirational and experiential process by which Carlyle gradually came to his conclusions regarding the individual and collective transcendental potentials of work, which he would discover to be the process of "work" itself. It will focus upon Sartor's loosely autobiographical thread to show how Carlyle came to these conclusions regarding the nature of work and its purpose, and how, based on this experience, he could construct the essentials of his concept of work.

Moving from the source of work to its most representative expression, Chapter four ("Work as Prophecy: Past and Present"), by means of another textual analysis, will study Carlyle's mature teaching as "prophet of the gospel of work" and reveal his didactic thrust-- that work was a serious, practical programme for individual and societal reform and that the ultimate goal to be striven after was no less than the Calvinist imperative that virtue be effectualized in every aspect of earthly life. As a reflection of the fact that the effectualization imperative was Carlyle's central

message, this textual analysis will show that the concept of work embodied tensions between the transcendentalist advocacy of the potentials of free activity and the purposeful Calvinistic emphasis on compulsion and control.

The concluding chapter five ("The Effectualization Imperative: Overview and Conclusions") will seek to show that the effectualization imperative had always been, and would remain in the years after Past and Present, the preoccupation of Carlyle's moral thought. It will show how effectualization is the link between the early Carlyle and the later and the means, therefore, of understanding the whole Carlyle. As such, the chapter will argue that this same effectualization imperative -- as reflecting Carlyle's Calvinistic conception of the nature of God and human duty before God -- is itself the answer to the question of many confused Carlyleans: "What, if any, was Carlyle's religion?"

IV

My approach in this study has been to stick as closely as possible to what Tennyson has called Carlyle's "word"-- the indispensable primary sources mentioned and, as the occasion demanded, some of the more peripheral of his essays and books.¹⁷ As concerns secondary sources, I have restricted

¹⁷ According to Tennyson, "it is in the word that all of Carlyle's contradictions can be reconciled." G.B. Tennyson, "Carlyle: Beginning with the Word," in The Victorian Experience: The Prose Writers, ed. Richard A.

myself to those which could help guide my primary research.¹⁸ These are, first of all, the most authoritative guides to Carlyle's Calvinist Protestantism and transcendentalism; secondly, the articles, essays and books which have as their central concern the holistic, moral Carlyle; and thirdly, for the purposes of general background and crucial insight into Carlyle the human being, the major biographies.

With regard to Carlyle's essential Protestantism, particularly helpful has been Robert McAfee Brown's The Spirit of Protestantism. Brown looked beneath theology to reveal the essential core or "spirit" of the Protestant mentality. Carlyle was always the most unsystematic of thinkers, particularly as regarded religious faith; his Protestantism (and Calvinism) was purely "spiritual" and temperamental, utterly undogmatic. A nice counterweight to Brown however was J.S. Whale's The Protestant Tradition. An Essay in Interpretation. Whale stuck more closely to the theological sources underpinning the Protestant spirit, and especially valuable were his substantial studies of Luther

Levine (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1982), 21.

¹⁸ Even so, I could not possibly hope to get to all those secondary studies which, if it were not for the sheer numbers involved, might otherwise have been deemed essential to this thesis. For a better appreciation of the sheer bulk of the sources available to the Carlylean, and for some crucial selections I have no doubt overlooked, see the bibliographies of Carlyle scholarship, especially Rodger L. Tarr's Thomas Carlyle. A Bibliography of English-Language Criticism, 1824-1974. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975.

and Calvin. What could not be completely neglected in any study of Carlyle's moral thought, "religion" or concept of work, obviously, was Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion itself (Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion, John T. McNeill, editor). Carlyle, again, was notoriously unsystematic and even more undogmatic, and so care had to be taken not to impute any of the theology too directly to him.¹⁹ More valuable was Hugh T. Kerr's A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin. Through judicious selection and condensation, Kerr managed to bring the intimidatingly large Institutes (McNeill's two-volume edition runs to 1,734 pages) down to a chewable 214. Even better, Kerr's work includes the original book, chapter and section references, making for easy cross-reference to Calvin's final edition of 1559.

Any investigation of Carlyle's Protestantism necessarily involves the Protestant fundamentals of the concept of work. Adriano Tilgher's Homo Faber. Work Through the Ages is sweeping in its generalizations but nevertheless is a good brief introduction to the interpretation of work "through the ages." From Antiquity through the Hebrew-Christian

¹⁹ Carlyle's undogmatic bias is undoubtedly an explanation for the curious fact that while he spoke copiously of Luther throughout his lifetime, he said next to nothing of the great systematizer of the Protestant Reformation, Calvin. Nevertheless Calvin's theological outlook was the more immediate source of Carlyle's ascetic Protestant or "puritan" temperament. See Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), 118.

tradition, Tilgher showed how work, which to the Greeks and Romans was merely the means of securing a virtuous freedom, came to be synonymous with virtue itself.²⁰ Alan Richardson's The Biblical Doctrine of Work outlines the Old Testament versus the New Testament interpretation of work, both of which, in different but complementary ways, were strongly emphasized by Calvinism. Max Weber's famous The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism was valuable for helping to clarify the connection between Calvinist doctrine and the "worldly asceticism" and impulsion to activity typical of the puritan mindset.

Charles Frederick Harrold's seminal Carlyle and German Thought: 1819-1834 illustrates the relationship between Carlyle's Scottish Calvinism and German transcendentalism and has been of central importance to this thesis. The same can be said for A. Abbott Ikeler's Puritan Temper and Transcendental Faith: Carlyle's Literary Vision. Both sources were very helpful in clarifying the significance of Carlyle's (Calvinistically inspired) selective reading and idiosyncratic interpretation of German thought. Margaret Storrs' The Relation of Carlyle to Kant and Fichte and Rene Wellek's Immanuel Kant in England, 1793-1838 helped to fill in the gaps as needed. The same can be said for Elizabeth M.

²⁰ Tilgher also touched upon the distinction between the Catholic and Protestant interpretations of work, which, however, is better explicated by Brown and Whale in the works mentioned.

Vida's Romantic Affinities: German Authors and Carlyle, though to a very limited extent, as I only came across it very late.

For the reasons given in the first section of this introduction, there have been surprisingly few studies, in the vast Carlyle historiography, focusing on the holistic Carlyle and/or his moral and religious essence. This sort of approach has much more in common with the nineteenth century than with ours, and the bulk of such studies are to be found there. The weakness of the nineteenth century studies, however, is their lack of perspective either on Carlyle's life and career as a whole or on the nineteenth century and Victorian Age. Of those consulted, one which was felt to be of significant current value was Ewald Flügel's Thomas Carlyle's Moral and Religious Development. The most valuable from the twentieth century books, which could almost be chosen by default given that there are so few, are C.F. Harrold's Carlyle and German Thought (already cited), A. Abbott Ikeler's Puritan Temper and Transcendental Faith (already cited), Albert J. LaValley's Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern. Studies in Carlyle's Prophetic Literature And Its Relation to Blake, Nietzsche, Marx and Others, and Chris R. Vanden Bossche's Carlyle and the Search for Authority. Of the articles and essays there are, in descending order of importance, C.F. Harrold's "The Nature of Carlyle's

Calvinism," Ian Campbell's "Carlyle's Religion: The Scottish Background," Carlisle Moore's "The Persistence of Carlyle's 'Everlasting Yea'," Basil Willey's "Thomas Carlyle" (in his Nineteenth Century Studies. Coleridge to Matthew Arnold) and David J. DeLaura's "Carlyle and Arnold: The Religious Issue."

Of the major biographies the two oldest and still most utilized are James Anthony Froude's four-volume effort published in the years immediately following Carlyle's death (Thomas Carlyle. A History of the First Forty Years of His Life. 1795-1835, 2 vols; Thomas Carlyle. A History of His Life in London. 1834-1881, 2 vols.) and David Alec Wilson's six-volume work, published in the early part of this century (Carlyle). Both of course are dated, but both remain invaluable. Froude was Carlyle's intimate friend and confidant for more than thirty years, and his insights for that reason must retain respect. A more practical consideration is that Froude's biography is the only source for Carlyle's post-May 1832 journal entries.²¹ Wilson's work is still a veritable mine of information, and its episodic as opposed to merely chronological arrangement also gives it a special value. Ian Campbell's short Thomas Carlyle (1974) is credited here as a "major biography" for

²¹ Those covering the initial years 1822 to 1832 are preserved in Charles Eliot Norton, ed., Two Notebooks.

its much needed explication of Carlyle's early Scottish years and Calvinist inheritance. Fred Kaplan's Thomas Carlyle: A Biography (1983) is the first truly full-length treatment to appear since Wilson. Kaplan makes good use of the additional perspective that has been acquired, and the result is not only substantial but balanced.

**The Makings of Work:
Calvinism and Transcendentalism**

If it can be stated that Carlyle's concept of work is the essence of his moral thought and that his moral thought, in turn, is the essence of his personality, it can be assumed that understanding work is the best means of understanding Carlyle. With this broad purpose in view, the task of chapter two is to define work. This chapter will trace the origins of work to its two sources, Calvinism and "transcendentalism."

Calvinism, the first and fundamental influence on Carlyle's concept of work, might be better defined "Calvinist Protestantism" or ascetic Protestantism. To speak simply of Carlyle's "Calvinism" is to forget or misinterpret its Protestant essentials. The first two sections of this chapter, then, will show that the origins of Carlyle's concept of work are to be found in the Protestant Reformation. Sections III and IV will define "transcendentalism" as it applied to Carlyle's readings in German Romanticism and will show how he was able to retain the Calvinist work ethic he had inherited by replacing its scriptural rationale with a transcendentalist faith in human

potential. The concluding section V will clarify the fact that -- as the origins of the concept of work are to be found in the Reformation -- Calvinist moral discipline and purposefulness, rather than transcendentalist idealism in itself, was the driving force in this relationship.

I

With his Ninety-Five Theses Martin Luther (1483-1546) protested the depths of laxity, corruption and impiety to which he felt the Christian Church had fallen. His purpose was to rescue from obscurity and to conserve what he considered "the heart of the Christian message"-- "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."¹ The meaning of Christ's agonized death on the Cross, Luther argued, needed to be emphasized above all else: that it was both the Atonement for man's Original Sin and the example of the life of "work" (in reconciling God, meaning virtue, with this world) the Christian was to live.² Man was justified by "faith alone" because as a child of Original Sin he could

¹ Robert McAfee Brown, The Spirit of Protestantism, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 126. The latter quotation is from the New Testament, II Corinthians 5:19. Verse twenty continues: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The entire second half of chapter five, in fact, concerns Christ's "ministry of reconciliation."

² Christian virtue had come to be defined, predominantly, in terms of the monastic ideal, which called for the separation of the virtuous individual from the corrupt world.

never presume to earn salvation through any efforts of his own and because, through Christ, he had already been forgiven, and thus saved. But in Christ, individuals had been shown the way in which God in His miraculous grace could be thanked, and praised.³ One's "faith" -- one's trustful belief in God through Christ -- then, was properly expressed in the form of one's good conduct in every aspect of life through effort, forbearance, Christ-like suffering, "work."⁴ Although the doctrine of "Justification by Faith Alone" did free the individual from the direct authority of the institutional Church, in this crucial sense it represented a much greater individual responsibility.⁵

The concept of vocation or "calling" in the New Testament was freshly interpreted by the Reformation as the practical vehicle of "work," the means by which work could be

³ Because man was undeserving of God's grace, in the spirit of the Bible his whole conduct "must be inspired by gratitude...for the free mercy and gift of God;" it cannot be representative of "the earning of a reward" but rather as "the utterly inadequate acknowledgement of a debt." Alan Richardson, The Biblical Doctrine of Work (London: SCM Press, 1963), 59.

⁴ The singular tense is significant: because of what evolved as the (Catholic) Church's practical reliance on institutionalism and the intervening hierarchy between God and the individual sinner, individual penance and absolution came to be expressed (so the Reformation argued) in mechanical, disconnected terms. The Catholic Church has traditionally emphasized "works" rather than the more holistic "work." See J.S. Whale, The Protestant Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), chapters iv and v, passim.

⁵ Luther conceived of the Church as an association of believing individuals or "Priesthood of All Believers." In this "priesthood" the responsibility of each individual -- in the role of priest and atoning Christ -- was selfless service to his neighbours. This is Luther's doctrine of the Neighbour. See Whale, 98, and Brown, 102.

naturalized, regularized, and perpetuated.⁶ According to the New Testament, "Christians will ordinarily remain in the status in which they were called.... They will pursue their normal occupations, remembering that their principal duty in every situation of life is to regard themselves as servants of the Christ who called them..."⁷ In this way, the concept of vocation legitimated an individual's "fated" worldly circumstances; it fostered an attitude of resignation and acceptance regarding these circumstances and helped prevent distraction from the ultimate "work" any circumstances could serve. The proper work and the proper life of Christians was "the furtherance of the Gospel and the service of the purpose of God" in "the divine reconciliation."⁸ Clearly, the Reformation did not represent a softening of piety, but rather a hardening of it: it put the concept of the Christian's duty and his "work" in the performance of this duty, on a whole new level of austerity.

Though he fostered a distinct creed, the reforming work of John Calvin (1509-64) is properly understood as the

⁶ See Whale, 108-9; Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, 4. To the austere Luther, again, man the original sinner could never achieve justification in the eyes of God on the basis of his own efforts. The spirit of Protestantism is embodied in the concept of the never-ending, "ongoing Reformation." Brown, x and xi-xii.

⁷ George Arthur Buttrick, et. al., The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. An Illustrated Encyclopedia (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 791. See I Corinthians 7:17-24.

⁸ Richardson, 31.

continuation of Luther's.⁹ Luther was a Christian fundamentalist who sought to distil or purify Christianity into its irreducible essentials in order to clarify, and better effectualize, Christian virtue. Calvin, in turn, took Luther's "Justification by Faith Alone" (sola fide) and distilled it further into what for him was its purest state-- solī deo gloria, "To God Alone be the Glory." Around this core, Calvin in the formulation of his theology conceived "a systematic rational ordering of the moral life as a whole."¹⁰ All of Calvinism is subjugated to the purpose of effectualizing the virtuous life of work.¹¹

The Reformation took very seriously that portion of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven." Calvin interpreted it in particular earnest. In

⁹ Hugh T. Kerr points to the continuity from Luther to Calvin when he designates Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion "the supreme theological structure of the Protestant Reformation. As Martin Luther was unquestionably the major prophet of the Reformation, John Calvin was its greatest systematic theologian." Kerr, ed., A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), iii.

¹⁰ Weber, 126.

¹¹ Whale, 166-67. Even the ghastly "Double Predestination," a logical corollary of Solī deo Gloria, has its purposeful place in Calvin's theology. According to the doctrine, all men, relative to God and in the eyes of God, are utterly irredeemable and equally deserving of damnation (the doctrine of Reprobation); but as God does save some (the doctrine of Election), this gift of grace is totally unconditioned by the quality of the sinner's life, and so predestined. As the Elect are predestined to be saved, so too, logically, are reprobates predestined to be damned (Whale, 141-42). This "Double Predestination" compels work and the pursuit of virtue, order and worldly prosperity (rather than resignation, inaction and moral laxity) as the means by which an individual attempts to prove to himself -- by this evidence of God's divine grace -- that he has been predestined for salvation and not damnation. In this way the doctrine "forms a recurring framework" in Calvinism "for the connection between faith and conduct." Weber, 126.

Calvinism, therefore, the concept of vocation was "more rigorously developed." An individual undisciplined by a "calling" lacked "the systematic, methodical character" ascetic Protestantism demanded.¹² In the concluding section to "How We Must Use The Present Life And Its Helps," Calvin remarked,

Finally, this point is to be noted: the Lord bids each one of us in all life's actions to look to his calling. For he knows with what great restlessness human nature flames.... Therefore each individual has his own kind of living assigned to him by the Lord as a sort of sentry post so that he may not heedlessly wander about throughout life.It is enough if we know that the Lord's calling is in everything the beginning and foundation of well-doing. And if there is anyone who will not direct himself to it, he will never hold to the straight path in his duties.¹³

To remind the individual of his corruption before God, to more effectively reduce him to submission, Calvinist teaching stressed the legitimacy of "ordinary, everyday, more-or-less monotonous toil."¹⁴ Calvin wrote, "It is the will of [man's] heavenly Father to exercise [him] in this

¹² Weber, 4, 161.

¹³ Calvin, Institutes, III, x, 6, in John T. McNeill, ed. Institutes of the Christian Religion Ford Lewis Battles, trans. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), I, 724. See also Hugh T. Kerr, A Compend, 107.

¹⁴ Richardson, 11. In the Bible there are three forms of "work": God's work of creation; work as vocation or calling in Christ's "ministry of reconciliation" (exclusively New Testament); and this mundane, often physically arduous labour of daily existence (primarily Old Testament). Richardson, 17-18. We have seen how in the concept of vocation both practical work and ideal "work" could overlap and become one ethic.

manner, that he may have a certain proof of those that belong to him.... Our Lord was under no necessity of bearing the cross, except to testify and prove his obedience to his Father..."¹⁵ Everything, in fact, that did not bear witness to God and His purposes as prescribed in the Bible Calvinism denounced: frivolity, merriment, artistic expression, sensuality, sexuality, self-consciousness, contentment, anything that distracted from the task to which God had appointed man it ruthlessly proscribed. For as John Knox (1505-72), Calvin's zealous Scottish lieutenant had it,

Of nature we ar so dead, so blynd and so perverse,
that neather can we...see the lycht when it
schynes, nor assent to the will of God when it is
reveilled.... Of our selves we ar nott sufficient
to think ane good thought.¹⁶

II

The Calvinist conception of God, the individual, virtue and work, as it evolved out of medieval Christian theology and dogma and filtered through Luther, Calvin and Knox, was embraced by Scotland. The characteristic amenability of the Scottish character to Calvinism has often been noted. As Andrew Macphail had it, "These stiff and austere people were

¹⁵ Calvin, Institutes, III, viii, 1-2, in Hugh T. Kerr, 103, and McNeill, I, 702-3.

¹⁶ John Knox, The Works of John Knox, ed. D. Laing (Edinburgh: 1846-64), II, 103-4, cited in A. Abbott Ikeler, Puritan Temper and Transcendental Faith: Carlyle's Literary Vision (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972), 129.

attracted by the stiff and austere character of the creed, and their character was made thereby still more stiff and austere by being confirmed in its natural bent."¹⁷

Carlyle's parents themselves were devout members of the Burgher Secession Church, one of the numerous splinter groups which had broken with the Church of Scotland over the issue of government interference in Church affairs.

The emphasis in the Secession Church was very much on the preaching of the Word, and its application to the individual life. As was natural in a Church which had owed its existence to strong personalities insisting on their right to independence in all matters relating to faith and ecclesiastical life the stress on individual behaviour, on the relation of the Bible to morality in each person's life, and on the duty of the individual in the universe dominated by a Transcendent God (the most important of Calvin's ideas which Carlyle would have heard in early youth) would have been very strong.¹⁸

¹⁷ Sir Andrew Macphail, "Jonathan Edwards," 16, in his Essays in Puritanism (London: 1905), 1-51, cited in Ikeler, 131. A clarification of the term "puritanism" is necessary here. It is a term often applied to the state of mind normally associated with Calvinists and other ascetic Protestants such as the Baptists or the Quakers. All puritans emphasized with particular zeal God's absolute sovereignty and the individual's absolute subjection and responsibility to Him (though this was sometimes expressed in different ways). This emphasis tended to produce in the individual certain ascetic or "puritan" psychological characteristics such as "stiffness," austerity, dourness and often a certain misanthropy (evidenced by John Knox above). This was especially true of Calvinists, and despite his more endearing qualities, "puritan" is a term quite properly applied to Thomas Carlyle. As I am using it here in its psychological or temperamental sense only, it is not capitalized. Where the term acquires a political aspect (as pertaining to Oliver Cromwell and the English Calvinists of the seventeenth century) the capital-P is used.

¹⁸ Ian Campbell, Thomas Carlyle (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1974), 9.

From the earliest days of his life, work represented for Carlyle one's individual responsibility, one's prescribed duty.¹⁹

Frugality and assiduity, a certain grave composure, an earnestness...were the order of our household. We were all practically taught that work (temporal or spiritual) was the only thing we had to do; and incited always by precept and example to do it well. An inflexible element of Authority encircled us all; we felt from the first (a useful thing) that our own wish had often nothing to say in the matter. It was not a joyful life (what life is?) yet a safe, quiet one; above most others (or any other I have witnessed) a wholesome one. We were taciturn rather than talkative; but if little were said, that little had generally a meaning. I cannot be thankful enough for my parents.²⁰

The very word work was an indication of individual responsibility to something other and higher than the self. Froude would recall Carlyle saying, as he undoubtedly expressed many times to anyone who would listen, that "We did not come into the world with rights which we were entitled to claim, but with duties which we were ordered to do."²¹ Throughout Carlyle's life, puritan earnestness remained the one outstanding characteristic of his

¹⁹ Carlyle was born 4 December 1795 in the village of Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, southwestern Scotland.

²⁰ Thomas Carlyle, Reminiscences, ed. Charles Eliot Norton, (1887; rpt. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1972), 28.

²¹ James Anthony Froude, Thomas Carlyle. A History of His Life in London. 1834-1881 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1890), I, 13.

personality, inclusive of so many: his practicality, bluntness and sternness; his individualism, independence, single-mindedness, selfishness and arrogance; his idealism, humanity, tenderness, sensitivity, simplicity and humility; his cynicism, stoicism; even his humour.²² All could be of equal strength in his make-up, because they derived from this single source.

Carlyle's writings are fatiguing for the modern reader who accompanies and attempts to identify with a soul so entirely in earnest. His correspondence and private journal entries are full of fulsome yet utterly sincere expressions of his perceived inadequacies, personal anxieties and their resultant physical complaints, usually coupled with recognitions that the only remedy is work.²³ For the Protestant, especially the ascetic Protestant, the duty owed to God was perhaps too personal and too clear. In defence against such anxiety, Carlyle in typically Calvinist fashion turned to the monotonous, often arduous yet realizable labour of daily existence (in Carlyle's case the "labour" of research and writing) for a source of personal palliation.

²² "...mirth not based on Earnestness" is "mournful, distressing, and in the end intolerable...for it is false mirth." Carlyle, Two Notebooks, 246.

²³ For an early and representative example, see Collected Letters, 1, 127; T to Robert Mitchell, 25 May 1818. Hereafter the Collected Letters will be referred to as "CL."

It seemed to him that the suffering caused by the interaction between personal confusion and cultural imperatives could be decreased by some commitment to and immersion in constructive work-- an idea that had antecedents in Classical and Christian culture and that was expressed with special force in the rigorous work imperatives of the Calvinistic world from which Carlyle had emerged.²⁴

This is where the actual and the ideal notions of work came together for the Calvinist. As previously stated, daily immersion in one's labour of daily existence is promoted in the Bible generally and the Old Testament particularly. A commitment to constructive labour, because it was a commitment to something apart from one's own self, precluded self-consciousness and thus anxiety and doubt, and minimized the potential for waywardness. In this way, actual work was the vehicle or effectualizer of one's ultimate, ideal "work"-- the reconciliation of this world with virtue. When the New Testament advocated that the individual pursue a vocation or "calling" suitable to his particular situation and needs, the purpose was to institutionalize and regularize a commitment to actual work and so to provide a realistic, practical and permanent framework within which the individual's ultimate "work" could be made effective and continuous.²⁵

²⁴ Fred Kaplan, Thomas Carlyle: A Biography, 55.

²⁵ Carlyle would later recall of his father that "As a man of Speculation...he must have gone wild and desperate as Burns; but he was a man of Conduct, and Work keeps all right. What strange shapeable creatures we

Carlyle's appreciation of the efficacy of vocation is evident in a series of letters written to his brother John through 1830-31. During this time, John was considering the possibility of abandoning his medical career for a life of literature. "The voice of all Experience seems to be in favour of a Profession," Carlyle counselled. To his mind, a stable, circumscribed profession reinforced, sustained and enhanced an individual's capabilities of serving virtue free of the Devil's snares, and in this sense helped an individual's work become, in the truest meaning of the word, a calling from God. One who follows a profession, he continued, sails through life "as under convoy, in the middle of a fleet," and has thus "a thousandfold chance of reaching port."²⁶ As for literature, to Carlyle it "was worse as a trade than that of honest Street Sweeping," for he "knew not how a man without some degree of prostitution could live by it-- unless indeed he were situated like me, and could live on potatoes-and-point..."²⁷ John eventually followed his older brother's advice, and on the occasion of his appointment as travelling physician, Carlyle wrote

are." Reminiscences, 9.

²⁶ CL, 5, 128; TC to John Carlyle, 6 August 1830.

²⁷ CL, 5, 237; TC to John Carlyle, 26 February 1831. For years, Carlyle's earnestness (he would not write anything in which he did not entirely believe, nor accept any employment which could not accommodate the free expression of these convictions) kept him in a material condition out of all proportion to his capabilities. Only with the celebrity earned from The French Revolution (1837) did he gain a measure of economic security. By this time he had been writing, full-time, for about fifteen years.

confidently of his expectations "of one day seeing you a Man." To Carlyle, to be "a man," was to put virtue and God before easier, more pleasurable pursuits. "One has to learn the hard lesson of Martyrdom," he continued, "and that he has arrived on this Earth not to receive but to give: let him be ready then 'to spend and be spent' for the God's cause..."²⁸

III

Thus far I have discussed the nature of the direct influence on Carlyle of Calvinist Protestantism and its work ethic. This influence was purely scriptural and prescriptive. But for Carlyle the validity of the scriptural justification for work proved to be short-lived. Notwithstanding the fact that he had inherited and would retain the temperament of eighteenth century rural Scottish Calvinism, he was an individual not intellectually inclined to the acceptance of beliefs for their own sake. Sections III and IV, then, will show how the philosophy of Goethe and similar German writers provided Carlyle with an alternative justification for his belief in work. At the same time, it will show how this surrogate "transcendental" faith broadened the scope and potential of work to the extent that for Carlyle it could become, in practical terms, an entire belief system in

²⁸ cf. II Corinthians 12:15. CL, 6, 68; TC to John Carlyle, 20 December 1831.

itself.

Carlyle's essential deism, the earnest Calvinist religiosity he retained, was obliged to discover for itself a new foundation, a new faith, upon which his critical intellect could freely stand. His parents had sent him to the university with the intention that he one day speak from a Presbyterian pulpit.²⁹ But university, with its exposure to books, knowledge and the dominant secular scepticism of the age, only intensified the doubt Carlyle had always felt of the literal truth of the Bible, which was the sanction of God's authority and the very foundation upon which the work imperative he had inherited rested.³⁰ He felt bound to renounce any clerical intentions, and his "introspective Protestant self-consciousness" struggled for a reconciliation of Christian duty and personal conviction.³¹ It "was in this mood of profound depression and religious longing that Carlyle began his study of German art."³²

²⁹ Under Scotland's uniquely egalitarian educational system, the idea was to provide as broad, basic and inexpensive a university education to as many pupils as possible. Carlyle and other peasant sons from his district, unable to afford transport, often walked the nearly one hundred miles to Edinburgh (usually over four or five days and sometimes sleeping under the stars)-- a touching scene to the imagination.

³⁰ It is important to realize that evolutionary geology was as much a hindrance to traditional faith in the early part of the nineteenth century as evolutionary biology was in the later.

³¹ Kaplan, 144.

³² Ikeler, 73.

The poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe provided the young and impressionable Carlyle with the proof by way of personal example that a life of intellectual inquiry was not incompatible with religious faith of a sort.³³ Goethe had had his own inherited faith shaken to near obliteration. But as Froude put it, he "had not rushed into atheism"; neither, significantly, had he "sunk into superstition," but had "remained true to all that intellect could teach him, and after facing all the spiritual dragons he seemed to have risen victorious into an atmosphere of tranquil wisdom."³⁴

Goethe had remained true to himself as an individual and in remaining true he had not denied the existence of God but had joyously reaffirmed it. In this way he confirmed for the very (in spirit if not wholly in theology) Protestant Carlyle the value, validity and even the necessity of his own individualism. As Carlyle wrote in the preface to his 1824 translation of Wilhelm Meister, Goethe "rules, and is not ruled"; once lost in the "darkest" scepticism, the peace he has attained through "laborious efforts" and fearless inquiry "stands on no hollow or deceitful basis," for he has not only "searched out and denied the False," but has also, "what is equally essential and infinitely harder," searched

³³ Fellow poet Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller was also an important early influence, though of lesser significance than Goethe.

³⁴ James Anthony Froude, Thomas Carlyle. A History of the First Forty Years of His Life (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1890), I, 135.

out and admitted "the True."³⁵ Similarly, in the July 1828 essay "Goethe," Goethe "was once an Unbeliever, and now...is a Believer; and he believes, moreover, not by denying his unbelief, but by following it out; not by stopping short, still less turning back, in his inquiries, but by resolutely prosecuting them."³⁶ Goethe, remaining true to himself, had pursued doubt as far as it could take him, and found there only God.

Carlyle was to become "convinced that Goethe was the greatest man of the last two centuries."³⁷ Undoubtedly the reason for such enthusiasm was the fact that the German had reaffirmed the purpose and significance of "work" for Carlyle who, though he had rejected its scriptural foundation, constitutionally was not able to discard the conception of God, man and duty it represented. Goethe proved by his personal life example that faith could come through honest inquiry, through the struggle, striving and experience of an individual human being. In a word, through

³⁵ Carlyle, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Travels, in The Works of Thomas Carlyle in Thirty Volumes, Centenary Edition (London: Chapman and Hall, 1898-99), XXIII, 23-25; see also Friedrich Althaus, Two Reminiscences of Thomas Carlyle, ed. John Clubbe (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1974), 70-72. In addition to Wilhelm Meister, Carlyle had also been influenced by Goethe's Sorrows of Werter and Faust.

³⁶ Carlyle, "Goethe," in Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, I, 210; Kaplan, 138. Subsequently, the Critical and Miscellaneous Essays will be referred to as "CME."

³⁷ Althaus, Two Reminiscences, 70. Editor John Clubbe supports this with the note, "Carlyle frequently expressed this conviction."

"work."

In this way, crucially, Goethe's example provided a much broader, more hopeful scope for Carlyle's native work imperative, one which went beyond its prescriptive, defensive and penitential role in the Calvinist world. To reconcile the contradictions of virtue and evil in oneself and one's world, Carlyle wrote, "is the task of all good men, each for himself, in his own way and manner; a task which, in our age, is encompassed with difficulties peculiar to the time; and which Goethe seems to have accomplished with a success that few can rival."³⁸

Carlyle gradually would discover and take to heart as his own the associated ideas from other German thinkers that were necessary to take his broadened -- religious in spirit yet secular in its implications -- conception of work from a personal conviction to a world view.³⁹ He would discover that the confidence in individuals, individualism and the destiny of mankind characteristic of much of German thought was founded in "transcendentalism"-- the philosophical bedrock upon which the entire range of individual action and

³⁸ Carlyle, Wilhelm Meister (Preface to translation of), in The Works of Thomas Carlyle in Thirty Volumes, XXIII, 23-25; Althaus, Two Reminiscences, 70-72.

³⁹ Foremost among these "other German writers" were Friedrich von Schlegel, Jean Paul Richter, Novalis (pseudonym of Baron Friedrich Ludwig von Hardenberg), Immanuel Kant and Johann Gottlieb Fichte.

experience could be meaningful.

IV

To appreciate the importance of transcendentalism's influence on Carlyle's work ethic, it will need to be defined.⁴⁰ As a philosophy transcendentalism was disseminated most comprehensively through Immanuel Kant's Critiques. The central thesis of Kant's seminal Critique of Pure Reason is the "refutation of empiricism as the necessary antecedent to the apprehension of truth."⁴¹ Kant argued that the empirical paradigm, which seeks certainty through the causality of sensory experience, ultimately confounds itself because the unconditional or absolute certainty "transcends all possible experience."⁴² There can be no certainty, he stressed, that those objects which are perceived through sensory experience necessarily exist as they appear, nor can there be any certainty that they exist at all. They are perceived through the intermediaries of "time" and "space," which, like the senses themselves, are mere modes of the human mind's perception and not

⁴⁰ Defined, that is, only in those most fundamental and general aspects which influenced Carlyle. The whole intent and meaning of such a broad and complex epistemology is beyond the scope of this study.

⁴¹ Ikeler, 84.

⁴² Ikeler, 85. And if empiricism could not explain this unconditional, many might infer that there was really no unconditional to be explained. Carlyle himself recognized early in 1827 that "Empiricism, if consistent...leads direct to Atheism!" Two Notebooks, 102.

necessarily real or absolute in themselves."⁴³

The empirical school, believing objects or matter to be an absolute certainty, felt justified, as it were, in putting the object (that which is perceived) before the subject (the perceptive human mind). Kant, lacking such confidence, considered the only potentially sure source of knowledge and reality to be the subject itself-- the human mind. This epistemological premise is the foundation of Kant's subsequent Critiques.

In the second Critique of Practical Reason, Kant finds in (what he believed to be) the existence of absolute truth and a natural moral sense, a justification for arguing that in the human mind there exists an innate and higher "Reason" distinct from the "Understanding" acquired through sensory experience.⁴⁴ This is that moral sense at the basis of all systems of morality or religion which Kant considered to be beyond the province of experience or "Understanding."⁴⁵

In the third Critique of Aesthetic Judgement Kant attempts to define the practical significance of Reason's fundamental

⁴³ Charles Frederick Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 88-89; 94.

⁴⁴ Ikeler, 86.

⁴⁵ Kant called it the "Categorical Imperative." See Will Durant, "Immanuel Kant and German Idealism," ch. vi of The Story of Philosophy (Toronto: Pocket Books, 1961), 275-76.

place in the human mind. Crucially, from this premise he argues that the faculty of Reason can function in concert with the experience of one's "Understanding" to bring about "a reconciliation between the sensuous and the good."⁴⁶ In other words, since what an individual experiences sensually is ultimately a product of his innate moral "Reason," by cultivating the interaction of these faculties (through philosophy, art, activity or any other practical manifestation) that individual can aspire toward moral perfection.

This, in a nutshell, is what Carlyle extracted from the labyrinth that is transcendentalism. Simply, he embraced its refutation of the empiricist school which was dominant in Britain and which for him, because it believed in a universe dominated by matter, imprisoned the thinking individual between two untenables-- the "atheism" attendant upon the inability of sensory experience to explain the why and the how, and the "superstition" of the literal Bible. To Carlyle, what Kant was saying in essence was that the universe was not physical matter but rather spirit, and that this spirit was only a reflection of the universe's moral law which also existed (as all the universe was spirit)

⁴⁶ Ikeler, 87.

innately in each human being.⁴⁷ Through the 1820s Carlyle gradually absorbed through the works of other transcendentalists, most notably Fichte, this meaning. Again, he would understand it to be the philosophical or intellectual foundation of the idealism he had found in the poetic works of Goethe and Schiller.

For Carlyle, the implications of transcendentalism threw open the doors to human activity and virtually limitless possibilities for worldly improvement. Buttressed by Kant's epistemological foundation, Carlyle took to heart Fichte's concept "that all things which we see or work with are a kind of garment or sense impression under which, as its essence," is spirit, "the Divine Idea of the World,"⁴⁸ and that man is the cognizant, active agent, the direct tool as well as the manifestation and embodiment, of this spirit.⁴⁹ As man possesses within himself the divine, and as all the

⁴⁷ See Carlyle's 1829 essay, "Novalis," in CME, II, 26: "the whole question of the origin and existence of Nature must be greatly simplified; the old hostility of Matter is at an end, for Matter is itself annihilated; and the black Spectre, Atheism...melts into nothingness forever." See also Ikeler, 90. As Rene Wellek has shown, Kant never intended to prove that matter was immaterial or spirit. On the contrary his purpose was simply to establish epistemological certainty on firmer ground by showing that its origin was in the subject or human mind rather than the object or things perceived. Carlyle in his enthusiasm (with some encouragement from Fichte--see below) made the inference himself and attributed it to Kant. "Kant's idealism is epistemological, [sic] not psychological [or religious] like Carlyle's." Rene Wellek, Immanuel Kant in England, 1793-1838 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1931), 200; 195.

⁴⁸ Althaus, Two Reminiscences, 46. "Many times throughout life Carlyle recalled with reverence" this concept from Fichte's On the Nature of the Scholar. Clubbe, ed., Two Reminiscences, 46n.

⁴⁹ Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 85. (Harrold uses Fichte's original German: man is "the unmittelbares Werkzeug und Organ of spirit...")

material world that exists is but the malleable, mutable expression of his own perception, the world is his to work with and to transform progressively into what he can. "The world is the projection of human spirits," wrote Fichte, "and represents the stage which they have reached."⁵⁰ This was the kind of purposeful but provable world view for which Carlyle's religiosity and his rational scepticism both had been yearning. Transcendentalism went "a great deal further than Christianity in its appeal to the intellect," yet the religious idealism was still there, and what was more, it was perfectly suited to the work imperative he had inherited from his parents.⁵¹

V

Calvinist Protestantism and transcendentalism came together, indeed complemented one another, in forming Carlyle's concept of work. Carlyle's transcendentalism allowed his puritanical spirit to find expression in its creative, hopeful possibilities. The Protestant mentality in itself, by contrast, was less than hopeful for man's world. Christianity, especially Protestant and particularly Calvinist Christianity, as has been seen, possessed too profound an appreciation of Original Sin. Though Calvin and

⁵⁰ Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Science of Knowledge: A Critical Exposition, ed. C. C. Everett (Chicago: 1892), 273, cited in Ikeler, 111, note 117.

⁵¹ The quotation is from Ikeler, 86-87.

Cromwell attempted to make their respective societies conformable to the law of the Bible in every possible respect, their programmes were disciplinary, compulsive and authoritarian; as ascetic Protestants, they certainly were under no illusions that they could transform what they considered to be corrupt and irredeemable human nature. This was not the case in transcendentalism, which was not confined by specifically Christian precept. It will be seen in the following two chapters (three and four) how Carlyle's "work" embraced both ethics-- the moral discipline of Calvinism and the worldly idealism of transcendentalism.

Before plunging into work itself, however, it remains to define by way of conclusion the nature of the relationship of Calvinism and transcendentalism. The question to be answered is: in "work," which was the dominant ethic, Calvinism or transcendentalism? The former. As a substitute for Scripture, the transcendental ethic provided Carlyle with a foundation for work he could intellectually accept.⁵² As well, the implications of transcendentalism broadened the scope and possibilities of work-- "work" was no longer, primarily, a disciplinary devotion, but became a metamorphic process for individuals and their world. Work was modified only in scope, however, not in nature. The

⁵² German thought "furnished the necessary theoretical basis for the demands of his moral conscience..." Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 7.

moral discipline, and the moral purpose of Calvinism -- the effectualization of virtue -- remained its driving force.

On the contrary, Carlyle's Calvinism modified the nature of transcendentalism. Transcendentalism was a multiform and often very nebulous system of philosophy. Carlyle interpreted transcendentalism selectively and subjectively according to the dictates of his Calvinism, and in so doing transformed it into a moral ethic. Through Carlyle, "transcendentalism" acquired a direction, a discipline, a moral purpose it never had before. We have already seen that what Carlyle took from various German thinkers was not always what they intended. A prime example is his interpretation of the Kantian, Fichtean and Goethean conception of God.⁵³ What pleased Carlyle as a Calvinist about the transcendentalists' deity was its immanence. But as a Calvinist he found fault with the fact that this deity was not also fully transcendent of matter. Carlyle's Calvinist God was an immanent God, but was also a conscious, more or less anthropomorphic being who controlled, directed and judged the visible world as its lord and master. This was the God Carlyle psychologically and temperamentally felt bound to believe in, and this was the God he applied to the

⁵³ Of course there were unique aspects and emphases in the conception of each, but Carlyle, reductively and characteristically, saw only the similarities.

transcendentalist world view.⁵⁴

Generally speaking, only such transcendentalist ideas as were compatible were admitted into Carlyle's Calvinist universe. Those which didn't quite mesh were made to mesh.⁵⁵ According to John Clubbe, Carlyle "often quoted" Goethe, "usually (and significantly) substituting 'the True' for 'the Beautiful'."⁵⁶ Goethe's "Do the duty which lies nearest thee" was meant to be a practical maxim promoting self-development and culture more than (as Carlyle interpreted it) a moral imperative; Carlyle appropriated in a similar way both Goethe's "Entsagen" ("renunciation") and Novalis' "Selbstoddtung" ("annihilation of self").⁵⁷

As Harrold, Ikeler, all the major biographers and others have proved, Carlyle's roots remained "in the

⁵⁴ See Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 76-87 passim (chapter iv, "Carlyle's Universe"), particularly 81, 86, 87.

⁵⁵ "We shall find Carlyle appropriating, rejecting, transforming. He invaded authors like a monarch, and exercised a royal privilege in ordering his newly acquired possessions according to the requirements of his own domain. Ideas in any form, if they expressed his inarticulate convictions, appealed to him independently of their source or their context." Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 5-6. For a closer look at Carlyle's incomplete, selective and subjective readings in transcendental thought, see especially C.F. Harrold in the work cited, Margaret Storrs, The Relation of Carlyle to Kant and Fichte. 1929; rpt. Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Folcroft Library Editions, 1970, and Rene Wellek, Immanuel Kant in England.

⁵⁶ Clubbe, ed., Two Reminiscences, 60n.

⁵⁷ Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 313n; 216, 217-18, 219, 227. Schiller's "Ernst ist das Leben" ("Life is Serious") would eventually appear on the frontispiece of the first edition of Past and Present (1843) shorn of its latter half: "heiter ist die Kunst" ("Art is joyful"). Harrold, 208.

Reformation."⁵⁸ Ian Campbell has warned that it is easy to overrate the influence of the Germans in Carlyle's emotional and intellectual development. Much less than replacing Carlyle's native Calvinism, he stressed, transcendentalism provided him with the emotional fortitude necessary to be able to accept his father's stern prescriptions of individual duty before God.⁵⁹ This is supported by Harrold, who held as a central plank in his thesis on the nature of the German influence, that Carlyle's Calvinist convictions "needed the guidance of an intellectual illumination.... In turning to German writers, he found not so much a source as an inspiration."⁶⁰

Carlyle saw Goethe as the biggest single influence of his life-- after his parents.⁶¹ The conclusion of Carlyle's contemporary and companion James Anthony Froude, that the "Sage of Chelsea" in the last analysis was "a Calvinist without the theology," has stood the test of a century's worth of scholarship.⁶² To complement the Calvinist moral

⁵⁸ Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 19.

⁵⁹ Campbell, Thomas Carlyle, 44.

⁶⁰ Harrold, 3. See also Ian Campbell, "Carlyle's Religion: The Scottish Background," in Carlyle and His Contemporaries: Essays in Honor of Charles Richard Sanders, ed. John Clubbe (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1976), 19.

⁶¹ See CL, 5, "Fifteen English Friends to the Poet Goethe," 305-8; 17 July 1831. See also Kaplan, 169.

⁶² Froude, First Forty Years, II, 2.

discipline, transcendentalism supplied the "theology" founded upon the principle of hope through inquiry and experience, which Carlyle could include under the rubric of work. Transcendentalism encouraged Carlyle to recognize the germs of Godly virtue and hope in the natural ambitions and activities of individuals. Writing to John Stuart Mill in the midst of the ferment surrounding the passage of the Reform Act of 1832, he expressed his conviction that "the Radical," though he often misapplied his energy, possessed nonetheless "an infinite hope," an infinite ideal within himself. Viewing the radical in basically Protestant terms, Carlyle saw him as "a wild heathen Iconoclast" who, through his activity, through the conscious or unconscious expression of this ideal, was levelling the old society so that a new and better might be built.⁶³

⁶³ CL, 7, 23; TC to John Stuart Mill, 28 October 1833.

The Work of Discovery: Sartor Resartus

Chapter two showed how Carlyle was able to retain his inherited Calvinist work ethic by replacing its Scriptural rationale with a transcendentalist faith in the innate potential of human beings to transcend their limitations. In this way the chapter defined Carlyle's concept of work. This was what would become Carlyle's concept of work, however; chapter two said very little of the process by which Carlyle came to his conclusions. It was Carlyle's gradually unfolding life experience which showed how the principles of transcendentalist thought and Calvinism could come together in the form of work. In other words, Carlyle needed the experience of what he would only later understand to be this process of "work" itself before he could begin to comprehend its full significance and implications.

As the title indicates, in this chapter I will explain the process of Carlyle's "work of discovery" by which he came to comprehend what work -- the interaction of moral discipline and purposefulness with the inquiry and striving of individual human experience -- was all about. Sartor Resartus above all is the semi-autobiographical

representation of Carlyle's "work," that is to say, his struggle through doubt and denial to a reaffirmation of God, duty and the primacy of virtue.¹ Appropriately enough, Sartor is "the first connected setting-out of the thematic ideas that run through and dominate all Carlyle's later work."² On these grounds, a textual analysis of Sartor can be considered the exemplar of what work basically was, and signified, to Carlyle. What is more, a textual analysis from the standpoint of work is probably the best means of making an arcane and confounding book clearer.

The structure of the book is unique. Carlyle assumes two roles, that of the mysterious German "Professor of Things-in-General," Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, and the bewildered yet diligent English Editor charged with delineating for English readers the major sources, tenets and ramifications of the Professor's "Philosophy of Clothes."³ The dual role is an effective one for Carlyle's purposes in several ways. It

¹ Sartor Resartus literally translated is "The Tailor Retailored," and is highly symbolic of the metamorphic process of work by which Carlyle overcame his spiritual crisis and by which he could fully comprehend what "work" was and could be. This process paralleled what has been called Carlyle's "apprenticeship" to German literature and philosophy, which may be considered to have been served from 1820 to about 1830. In 1820, having recently begun to comprehend Goethe, Carlyle wrote confidently to a friend that the "unfathomable store of enthusiasm" in the human soul, given the "proper channel to hold and direct" it, promised "boundless melioration for ages yet to come." CL, 1, 161-62; TC to Matthew Allen, 7 June 1820. By 1830, Carlyle understood this "proper channel" to be work. Sartor was begun in 1830, finished in 1831 and published for the first time (serially) in 1833.

² A.L. Le Quesne, Carlyle (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982), 23.

³ Which supposedly had been published in Germany under the title, Clothes, their Origin and Influence.

allows him the freedom to express the more foreign elements of German transcendentalism without seeming to commit himself personally; it provides him the flexibility to express alternate sides of his ambivalences with equal force and conviction; and it allows for an example of the revelatory effect of Teufelsdröckh's philosophy on an initially sceptical mind (the Editor's).

In Book I the Editor conducts a preliminary and cursory examination of Teufelsdröckh's Philosophy of Clothes, but finds that for the lack of proper sources, the Professor's arcane assertions remain prohibitively obscure. In Book II he turns to some disordered scraps of autobiographical material in the hope that a knowledge of the philosopher might better explicate the philosophy. This is the longest of the three books, for Teufelsdröckh's life history (in a general and metaphoric sense Carlyle's) is detailed if not complete. The insights gleaned do allow the Editor, finally, to make some sense of Teufelsdröckh's philosophy, to the point even that by the end of the book he is converted. In Book III, the Editor helps explain the greater import and broader significance of the Philosophy of Clothes, which has emerged in its full transcendental implications. For the sake of convenience and clarity, I will treat Books I and II together before I turn to Book III.

I

Teufelsdröckh recounts his first awareness as a child of what he describes as the central dilemma of man, the contradiction posed by the twin claims of free will and necessity. Significantly, the subject is work. We remember from the last chapter that from his exposure to German transcendentalist thought, Carlyle came to see in the active expression of the individual's free will what his dour parents never could: cause for optimism. As Teufelsdröckh has it, it is free will -- a kind of God-given "creative instinct" -- which inevitably fuels the prescribed duty of work. "In all the sports of Children," he says,

were it only in their wanton breakages and defacements, you shall discern a creative instinct (schaffenden Trieb): the Manikin feels that he is a born Man, that his vocation is to work. The choicest present you can make him is a Tool; be it knife or pen-gun, for construction or for destruction; either way it is for Work, for Change.⁴

But the individual eventually runs headlong into that barrier posed by the contradiction that his free will, albeit essential, has to be constrained. In the midst of his happy, wondrous childhood, Teufelsdröckh felt that "strait bond of Obedience" renouncing "wishes in any measure

⁴ Sartor Resartus. The Life and Opinions of Herr Teufelsdröckh. (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1893), II, 80. All subsequent references to Sartor, with the exception of those which include additional information, will be incorporated (parenthetically) into the text.

bold," (II,86) a phrase that recalls Carlyle's description of his own "inflexible element of Authority" which "encircled us all."⁵ This is the "ring of Necessity whereby we are all begirt," writes Teufelsdröckh. It is "the basis of worldly Discretion, nay of Morality itself." (86) Happy and healthy is the individual, then, for whom this "ring of Necessity" can become a "ring of Duty." (85)

Here, the process of work is implied, and its goal identified: the reconciliation of free will with necessity--the reconciliation of oneself, and this world, with virtue. In his "Philosophy of Clothes" Professor Teufelsdröckh indicates the vital importance of man's work and (of greater importance still) his continued work. "Whatsoever sensibly exists," all that man can perceive, in the material sense, is only a temporary "Clothing," to be "put on for a season, and to be laid off"-- a representation of "Spirit to Spirit," a mere symbol of the divine reality which lies underneath. (I,64)⁶ This spiritual unity and animate wholeness of the universe is the key to work's great potential (helpful or hurtful) for change. Thus it is a truth that

⁵ Reminiscences, 28. See chapter two, section II.

⁶ The influence of Fichte is obvious here. See chapter two, section IV.

not Mankind only, but all that Mankind does or beholds, is in continual growth, regeneration and self-perfecting vitality. Cast forth thy Act, thy Word, into the ever-living, ever-working Universe: it is a seed-grain that cannot die; unnoticed to-day (says one), it will be found flourishing as a Banyan-grove (perhaps, alas, as a Hemlock-forest!) after a thousand years. (I,33)

He who invented movable type, though he did not know it, was actually, in the end, "disbanding hired Armies, and cashiering most Kings and Senates, and creating a whole new Democratic world..." (34)

Will this work of the little inventor of movable type (namely the democratic world), the Professor asks, prove to be a sheltering "Banyan-grove" or a poisoning "Hemlock-forest"? The myriad clothings of man's world have made him careless of his work. Though clothes have made individuality and society possible for man, they have tended to blind him to the divine spirit that resides in all things, including himself; they have given him eyes only for these clothings themselves, whose innate value is only relative and temporary. (34) Therefore the beginning of all wisdom and goodness, writes the Professor, is "to look fixedly" upon all things until they appear, and become, unclothed, transparent, true. (57) This is what Teufelsdröckh's spiritual journey of discovery in life is all about. Through this journey, which he will only later understand to be the process of work itself, he will discover work's full import

and significance.

II

Teufelsdröckh's life journey, his "work" and struggle with the conflicting claims of free will and necessity, is the theme of Book II and the heart of Sartor Resartus. "No Object and No Rest," the "stern Monodrama" (108) Teufelsdröckh is obliged to enact in life, roughly parallels Carlyle's own unenviable state following university.

Teufelsdröckh has no "Object": he has no "landmark of outward guidance," having given up his profession which nature provided for steerage through life, and this "frightfully aggravates" his lack of "inward guidance," his lack of religious faith. (108) While Carlyle himself had renounced his ministry intentions in the spring of 1817, in November 1818 he left his teaching position (at Kirkcaldy). He was now officially, as it were, without inward faith or outward vocation.⁷ Though Teufelsdröckh lacks any "Object," neither can he enjoy any "Rest." Teufelsdröckh did not yet fully realize that a "Time-impulse" both sprang from and operated upon what he only later recognized, as a student of the "Philosophy of Clothes," as man's free will, his

⁷ The period ca. 1819 through 1821 Carlyle was to refer to as his "three most miserable years." Froude, First Forty Years, I, 64.

creative instinct for work, change, and discovery.(113)⁸
 Even in the midst of his directionless state, uncertainty
 and "Sorrows" (chapter vi), "Time" compelled Teufelsdröckh
 to be and remain active. From the centre of his being, "all
 Nature sounded to me, Forwards!"(138)

In fact one of Carlyle's earliest resolutions in the midst
 of his crisis of faith was the rejection of stoic endurance
 as a solution in itself. He wrote to a friend:

Till not very long ago, I imagined my whole duty
 to consist in thinking and enduring. It now
 appears that I ought not only to suffer but to
 act. ...How far the creed of [ancient stoic
 philosopher] Epictetus may require to be modified,
 it is not easy to determine; that [it] is
 defective seems pretty evident. I quit the
 stubborn dogma, with a regret heightened almost to
 remorse; and feel it to be a desire rather than a
 duty to mingle in the busy current which is
 flowing past me, and to act my part.... What part
 I shall act is still a mystery.'

This is one of the earliest indications that Carlyle,
 reluctantly enough, was looking for more from his parents'
 Calvinism than it could itself offer, a search which led
 him, of course, to German philosophy and its enthusiastic
 advocacy of personal inquiry, search and discovery.

⁸ "Our whole terrestrial being is based on Time, and built of Time; it
 is wholly a Movement, a Time-impulse; Time is the author of it, the material
 of it."

⁹ CL, 1, 157; TC to James Johnston, 8 January, 1819. See also Kaplan,
Thomas Carlyle: A Biography, 55.

Teufelsdröckh also early believed in, and was disappointed by, the forbearance of stoicism. In the midst of his lamentations of the "trifling nourishment" to be had from the stoic creed, the Editor intervenes with advice Carlyle surely wanted to emphasize: "Thou foolish Teufelsdröckh! How could it else? Hadst thou not Greek enough to understand thus much: The end of Man is an Action, and not a Thought, though it were the noblest?" (138,139)¹⁰

Teufelsdröckh's free will, expressed in the form of his restlessness in the face of inaction, is the necessary catalyst of change. "Time," as the most fundamental of worldly clothings, imprisons man in the deadness of his worldly, material and mechanical existence, so "that only in lucid moments can so much as glimpses of our upper Azure Home be revealed to us." (114) But given man's active force for free will, Time (manifested as the "Time-impulse") also provides for his "Whole Duty, which is to move, to work ["Forwards!"]-- in the right direction," (113) toward discovery and spiritual melioration.¹¹ As had Goethe, Teufelsdröckh pursues doubt until doubt can take him no farther, and there he finds God.

¹⁰ The dictum (italicised) is of Aristotle, latterly of Goethe.

¹¹ C. F. Harrold noted that Carlyle took from (especially) Fichte the "central doctrine of the dynamic revelation of a moral principle active in spite of, and by means of, time and matter..." This doctrine, Harrold continued, "will be seen determining [Carlyle's] conception of time, nature, heroes, labor, society, ethics." Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 85.

Inevitably Teufelsdröckh's experience carries him to the point of darkest despair, at which "Doubt had darkened into Unbelief." (142) Is there in fact any God, he asks, or at best an absentee one, sitting idle and watching his universe go? Like Carlyle, Teufelsdröckh feels that the age of rationalism and empiricism has decreed, in the expression of an "Everlasting No" (chapter vii), that the whole world is a dead mechanism, "a grim desert...wherein is heard only the howling of wild-beasts, or the shrieks of despairing, hate-filled men." A world, he tells himself, "like thee, sold to Unbelief..." (143) However, Teufelsdröckh realizes that despite being "sold to Unbelief," there still remained in him something which could not be "sold" or effaced in any way. In other words, like Kant's "Categorical Imperative," God's "Infinite nature of Duty" remained and would always remain a truth for him. He realizes that in the physically manifested world of doubt, denial and despair, in which God to all appearances was absent (or at least neutral), "nevertheless in my heart He was present, and His heaven-written Law still stood legible and sacred there." (144) Like Carlyle, Teufelsdröckh could prove to himself that he was not a prisoner of mere matter but on the contrary, "a Child of Freedom." This revelation of God's true and active existence provides Teufelsdröckh with the strength, the inspiration -- the purpose -- to deny the despair of "the Everlasting No." In "the most important transaction" of

life, his free soul

stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its Protest. The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's);' to which my whole Me now made answer: 'I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!' It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual New-birth, or...Fire-baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man.(148)

The process of Teufelsdröckh's moral and spiritual journey of discovery, up to and including his decisive denial of the Everlasting No, is an illustration of what, it will become clear, are the two manifestations of "work," the one immediate, the other ultimate. Work in its ultimate, idealistic purpose -- the pursuit of virtue, the reconciliation of free will with necessity -- is fuelled by the immediate and functional work of activity, experience and the many painful yet fruitful resolutions it obliges. This lesser type of work is the expression of the individual's free will, his "creative instinct" for activity and "Change." (80, above) Teufelsdröckh's expression of his free will, in other words his activity and experience, successfully led him to the point at which he felt compelled to choose between the path of unfettered free will (straight into the Everlasting No) and the somewhat fettered free will which acknowledges the existence of God and therefore necessity, duty. Significantly, he proclaims his rejection

of the Everlasting No and its despair in terms of his freedom-- "I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!" This is an indication that to a degree, he has already -- according to work's ultimate purpose -- begun to reconcile his freedom (free will) with duty (necessity).

Carlyle himself experienced this revelation "quite literally" in Leith Walk (near Edinburgh) in August 1822.¹² Such a revelation was undoubtedly ameliorated by his familiarity by that time with several of Goethe's more influential works, particularly the Sorrows of Werter and Wilhelm Meister, both of which influenced Sartor. The "Leith Walk experience" surely owed much to transcendentalist thought, the implications of which, though Carlyle was not fully acquainted or perhaps even aware of the term at this time, permeated the writings of his earliest influences, Goethe and Schiller. Transcendentalism stressed the divine essence, morality or (to use the Quaker's term) "Inner Light" which shines (with a greater or lesser radiance) in the soul of all individuals. This was Teufelsdröckh's "Infinite nature of Duty still dimly present" to him, despite "all the nameless woe that Inquiry" had brought. Which, for Carlyle, was indeed cause for optimism. What was

¹² The fact is from Froude while the date is Kaplan's. See Froude, First Forty Years, I, 103, and Kaplan, 82-83. This experience effectively gave the coup de grace to the blackest period of Carlyle's religious crisis, the "three most miserable years." For a listing of the factors contributing to Carlyle's recovery, see Clubbe, ed., Two Reminiscences, 49n.

more, it provided him with a substitute justification for the Scripture-inspired Calvinist work ethic he had inherited.

Carlyle's Leith Walk experience, as it had helped balance worldly despair with hope, signified an acceptance of the world in all its manifestations and implications both positive and negative. The force of will of Carlyle's own rejection of the Everlasting No is an early and significant victory in his struggle with, and effort to reconcile, the contradiction created by the conflicting claims of free will and necessity. The rejection indicates, as it did for Teufelsdröckh, the proper path of spiritual progress. That is, the path of continued honest inquiry and moral effort with its necessary inconveniences, difficult resolutions and even suffering. In short, the path of continued and continual work. In rejecting the Everlasting No Carlyle "imitates the example of the man he most admires, and although he does not -- cannot -- share his father's faith, he wishes to share the strength that faith gave."¹³

Similarly, Teufelsdröckh's resignation to a life of moral struggle and suffering gives him the freedom to contemplate

¹³ Campbell, Thomas Carlyle, 44-45, 43. As Carlyle recalled later, "This great maxim of Philosophy [his father James Carlyle] had gathered by the teaching of nature alone: That man was created to work, not to speculate, or feel, or dream." His calling was "to labour patiently at his Task....uniting the Possible with the Necessary, [bringing] out the Real wherein also lay an Ideal." Reminiscences, 5, 8.

the meaning and significance of selfhood from the perspective of disinterested honesty.

With other eyes...could I now look upon my fellow man: with an infinite Love, an infinite Pity. Poor, wandering, wayward man! Art thou not tried, and beaten with stripes, even as I am?Truly, the din of many-voiced Life, which, in this solitude...I could hear, was no longer a maddening discord, but a melting one; like inarticulate cries, and sobbings of a dumb creature, which in the ear of Heaven are prayers. ...Man, with his so mad Wants and so mean Endeavors, had become the dearer to me; and even for his sufferings and his sins, I now first named him Brother. (166)

Teufelsdröckh in this freed state begins to perceive what his wide ranging experience had always indicated but which is now clear and undeniable. He is able to see society as a holistic, meaningful and purposeful process, in spite of its outward fragmented, chaotic and hostile appearance. He can perceive that there are invisible ties that bind all of mankind: a city is a "mysterious live ember of Vital Fire" put down in that spot by God, "its flame looking out from every kind countenance, and every hateful one..." (150)

Teufelsdröckh's neutral pensive state, which he names his "Centre of Indifference" (chapter viii), is the state "through which whoso travels from the Negative Pole to the Positive must necessarily pass." (161) From this "healing sleep" he "awoke to a new Heaven and a new Earth." (164)

What, exactly, had Teufelsdröckh affirmed here; what was this "Positive Pole" to which he had crossed, this "new Heaven and Earth"? First of all, he had affirmed the essential unity of the universe and of life, and the essential spirituality of all things. But at this point in the narrative this argument is not sustained as a central theme. The full import of this "Natural Supernaturalism" (the core of the transcendentalist world view), is not explained until the Editor returns to the Professor's "Philosophy of Clothes" in Book III. All that is stressed in any sustained way through Books I and especially II is the validity of Teufelsdröckh's "work," of his own personal struggle with the contradiction created by the two imperatives of free will and necessity. Work's validity, its crucial significance, lies in the fact that at the centre of each individual as of the universe there is a spiritual essence or "God" struggling to be active and free. Teufelsdröckh had discovered, as we saw above, that "in the ear of Heaven" man's "so mad wants and mean Endeavors" are "prayers." The "New Heaven and New Earth" is a universe of hope. Hope is the "Positive Pole" to which Teufelsdröckh had crossed from his "negative" state of despair.

Carlyle's own "Centre of Indifference" of sorts was passed during the year 1825-26 (prior to his marriage) at Hoddam Hill farm. According to Ian Campbell, Sartor's Centre of

Indifference "plainly owes much" to Carlyle's "rustic idyll" that was Hoddam Hill.¹⁴ This year was the culmination of Carlyle's gradual emergence from the state of resignation or mere acceptance of the world (his successful denial of the Everlasting No) into an affirmative, almost enthusiastic acceptance.

....I lived very silent, diligent, had long solitary rides...my meditations, musings and reflections were continual; thoughts went wandering...through Eternity, through Time, and through Space, so far as poor I had scanned or known; --and were now, to my endless solacement, coming back with tidings to me! This year I found that I had conquered all my scepticisms, agonising doubtings, fearful wrestlings with the foul and vile and soul-murdering Mud-gods of my Epoch; had escaped, as from...Stygian quagmires; and was emerging, free in spirit, into the eternal blue of ether, -- where, blessed be Heaven, I have, for the spiritual part, ever since lived...¹⁵

Here the full potential and implications of work became clear. The compelling significance of Carlyle's Calvinist inheritance and upbringing mixed with and moderated by the transcendentalist influence, the accumulation of years of relative solitude and painful introspection, life's experience and its progress-- all this "work" came to a culmination of sorts at Hoddam Hill. The catalyst was undoubtedly Carlyle's beginning to comprehend the full

¹⁴ Campbell, Thomas Carlyle, 51.

¹⁵ Reminiscences, 281-82.

import of the transcendentalist philosophy of Kant and Fichte, which dated from about this time.¹⁶ This philosophical foundation of the personal experience and example of Goethe and Schiller provided Carlyle, if not with a systematic "philosophy," then at least with a comprehensive and optimistic world view. This world view threw open the doors of possibility to human activity and aspiration; it broadened the scope of, and gave greater meaning to, the purely prescriptive concept of work he had inherited. Having found a faith intellectually (and empirically) more credible than Christianity, Carlyle was able to substitute for the points of Christian theology he had long rejected, and to add to the Calvinist asceticism he still possessed, "his personal belief that the universe is a spiritual structure illumined by the divine force within man and the cosmos which promises ultimate justice and potential salvation through work and struggle."¹⁷

III

It should be restated here that work, in the form of Teufelsdröckh's struggle with the conflicting claims of free will and necessity, is the central theme of Book II and the heart of Sartor Resartus. Carlyle represents work

¹⁶ Ikeler, Puritan Temper and Transcendental Faith, 82-83. See chapter two, section IV.

¹⁷ Kaplan, 114.

metaphorically and emphatically at key crossroads of Teufelsdröckh's spiritual journey of discovery. The "Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh" (chapter vi) are his "altercation with the Devil" before he can begin "honestly fighting him." (140) Concerning his decisive rejection of "The Everlasting No" (chapter vii) it is remarked that "the citadel" of his soul's kingdom he "has thus gained by assault, and will keep inexpugnable; outwards from which the remaining dominions, not indeed without hard battling, will doubtless by degrees be conquered and pacificated." (149) To account for his successful passage through the "Centre of Indifference" (chapter viii) it is explained that the best "spiritual Doctor" is "experience," and that with him "Teufelsdröckh has now been long a patient, swallowing many a bitter bolus." (159)

"The Everlasting Yea" (chapter ix) is Teufelsdröckh's affirmation of his "New Heaven and new Earth," (164, above) the final resolution of his spiritual journey. Carlyle's chief purpose for the chapter is to outline, by way of conclusion, the meaning, purpose and significance of work.

Our Life is compassed round with Necessity; yet is the meaning of Life itself no other than Freedom, than Voluntary Force: thus we have a warfare; in the beginning, especially, a hard-fought battle. For the God-given mandate, Work thou in Well-doing, lies mysteriously written, in Promethean Prophetic Characters, in our hearts; and leaves us no rest, night or day, till it be deciphered and obeyed;

till it burn forth, in our conduct, a visible, acted Gospel of Freedom. And as the day-given mandate, Eat thou and be filled, at the same time persuasively proclaims itself through every nerve,-- must not there be a confusion, a contest, before the better Influence can become the upper? (161)

Here is the whole dilemma of man, the battle of free will versus necessity Teufelsdröckh had fought since his earliest days of childhood. The "God-given mandate" man hears from his heart or conscience, which tells him to work, to be active, yet to do well. This is the "Necessity," or duty, God gives to man. But this impetus is a passive force, not an active: it "lies mysteriously written...in our hearts." At the same time the "day-given mandate" summons the immediate desires of "Voluntary Force" (or free will) for material or pleasurable things. And it is an active force, not a passive: it "persuasively proclaims itself through every nerve." The "confusion" and the "contest," then, is one of active animalism versus passive spiritualism. In effect it is a battle driven by man's divine conscience to make the naturally active force a spiritual one, or to actuate the naturally passive force which in itself being passive is less than effectual. This is to reconcile the twin necessities of free will and necessity-- it is to effectualize duty, which is virtue. Only then, it is implied, will the doubt, confusion and despair within individual human souls be solaced.

This struggle of work, the Protestant's "ongoing Reformation" in the service of Christ's gospel, is endless.¹⁸ Teufelsdröckh's successful defiance of the Devil's Everlasting No did not give him victory, but only "the consciousness of Battle, and the resolve to persevere...to work out my way into the higher sunlit slopes-- of that Mountain which has no summit, or whose summit is in Heaven only!" (162) Again, work in its immediate functional role is the effectualizer, the necessary vehicle of the ultimate, endless "work" of moral improvement. Here the scope of work is greatly broadened. Any activity is helpful and indeed crucial on account of the integral role played by experience in this progressive learning process. (171-2)¹⁹ Any activity, any experience is helpful, for the source of all activity and all experience, as Teufelsdröckh had discovered, is the divine transcendental soul struggling to transcend its finite world.

Will the whole Finance Ministers and Upholsterers and Confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in

¹⁸ The term is from Brown, The Spirit of Protestantism, x and xi-xii. See chapter two, section I.

¹⁹ The only necessary knowledge for an individual, Teufelsdröckh comes to realize, is to know his vocation, to know what he can work at: "...of your strength there is and can be no clear feeling, save by what you have prospered in, by what you have done. Between vague wavering Capability and fixed indubitable Performance, what a difference! A certain inarticulate Self-consciousness dwells dimly in us; which only our Works can render articulate and decisively discernible. Our Works are the mirror wherein the spirit first sees its natural lineaments." (145) Thus Teufelsdröckh counsels to those who long for enlightenment, "Do the Duty which lies nearest thee,' which thou knowest to be a Duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer." (172)

joint-stock company, to make one Shoebblack HAPPY? They cannot accomplish it, above an hour or two: for the Shoebblack also has a Soul quite other than his Stomach; and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more, and no less: God's infinite Universe altogether to himself, therein to enjoy infinitely, and fill every wish as fast as it rose. Oceans of Hochheimer, a Throat like that of Ophiuchus: speak not of them; to the infinite Shoebblack they are as nothing. No sooner is your ocean filled, than he grumbles that it might have been of better vintage. Try him with half of a Universe, of an Omnipotence, he sets to quarrelling with the proprietor of the other half, and declares himself the most maltreated of men.-- Always there is a black spot in our sunshine: it is even, as I said, the Shadow of Ourselves. (167)

On the surface this is a condemnation, and contemptuous dismissal, of the insatiable animal appetites of man, and given Carlyle's ascetic Protestant heritage, this is undoubtedly true. But beneath the surface, on the deeper level, the Shoebblack's insatiable longings are to be praised, because they are the expression of the aspirations and frustrations of his infinite soul trapped in a finite world. If man were, in fact, no more than an animal, as Teufelsdröckh in his darkest hours had feared, then he would be satisfied with simply the very basics of existence and comfort. Significantly, it is his transcendental "Soul quite other than his Stomach" that renders him forever unhappy and dissatisfied, continually conscious of some ideal greater than himself which, clumsily stumbling after in his finite world, he misnames the pursuit of "happiness," the pursuit of pleasure.

Similar to the Protestant concept of vocation, work is simultaneously an immediate function (or activity) and an ultimate process. The desired (conscious or unconscious) end result of the process, again, is the reconciliation of free will with necessity, or in Protestant terms, the reconciliation of this world with Christ's virtue. "Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free." (172)²⁰ Carlyle's Calvinist asceticism has mixed with transcendental idealism to give the former a credible and more meaningful justification, and the latter some steel, purposefulness and discipline. It is the strong puritan streak in Teufelsdröckh which recognizes that if "happiness" in the worldly sense is not discarded as life's end and purpose, if the self is not, in this sense, "annihilated," (164) the contradictory imperatives of free will and necessity can never be completely reconciled. Significantly, while Teufelsdröckh's most important discovery in life is the creative and metamorphic role of work in a universe founded on spirit, the final revelation of his spiritual journey is not just "Work, be active." Rather, it is

²⁰ Which brings us back to II Corinthians (see chapter two, section I): "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." II Cor. 5:18.

Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the
EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is
solved; wherein whoso walks and works, it is well
with him. (169)

Superimposed over the transcendentalist's encouragement to
be active is the Calvinist's piety, and a reminder of duty
and Judgement:

I too could now say to myself: Be no longer a
Chaos, but a World, or even Worldkin. Produce!
Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal
fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name!
'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it,
then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do,
do it with thy whole might. Work while it is
called To-day; for the Night cometh, wherein no
man can work." (173)²¹

IV

In Book III the Editor returns to Professor Teufelsdröckh's
"Philosophy of Clothes." The Professor outlines the
essentials of the philosophy in what constitutes Book III's
gravitational centre, the doctrine of "Natural
Supernaturalism" (chapter viii). The term signifies, quite
simply, the union of the natural with the supernatural. In
other words, all, quite literally, is of God, who manifests
Himself as the divine essence of all things, the outward
appearance of which is but the temporary "clothing" for the

²¹ cf. Ecclesiastes 9:10 (Old Testament) and John 9:4 (New Testament).

eternal substance. (232)²² Within the external clothing of the human body, as Teufelsdröckh had discovered, is a divine spirit struggling to be free and active. Natural Supernaturalism as a discovery, then, is both the fruit of Teufelsdröckh's life "work" (his search for a meaningful reconciliation of free will with necessity) and the justification for work's central, creative and redeeming role in human existence. Given the implications of Natural Supernaturalism, through their work individuals can reconcile with the spirit of God not only themselves but their whole society.²³ Every chapter of Book III furthers this argument in some way.

In "Circumspective" (chapter ix), the Professor explains the prescriptive, circumscribed duty incumbent upon man by virtue of the fact that the universe is one and God's.²⁴ This was a fact which was proved by the evidence of Teufelsdröckh's own experience. It was no shaky inference. For him man's duty to God, then, is no mere personal

²² "...this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God;...through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams." (232) We should remember from chapter two that Carlyle's personal God was not only immanent but also, in the Christian sense, transcendent and judgemental.

²³ According to the Editor, "Here, therefore, properly it is that the Philosophy of Clothes attains to Transcendentalism; this last leap, can we but clear it, takes us safe into the promised land, where Palingenesia, [societal rebirth] in all senses, may be considered as beginning." (224)

²⁴ See also "Symbols," "Old Clothes" and "Organic Filaments," chapters iii, vi and vii respectively, for further treatment of this central theme.

conviction. It is a self-evident fact."²⁵ The Professor echoes Faust's expression of this duty with the earnest words,

'Tis thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply,
And weave for God the Garment thou see'st Him
by' (235)

This of course is the duty of work, "each according to ability" (236) in his respective calling, according to God and the divine conscience the individual feels in his heart.

Thus, like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth's mountains are levelled, and her seas filled up, in our passage: can the Earth, which is but dead and a vision, resist spirits which have reality and are alive?(234)

To a degree, man's responsibility to God entails a responsibility for God. Man is described as the purposefully active agent on earth of God's divine amorphous immanence ("the Inane")-- the "Spirit-host." Man acts as God's surrogate: he hastens "stormfully across the astonished Earth," making it, through great effort, more truly his (and God's).

²⁵ Again, this was how transcendentalist philosophy helped provide Carlyle with an acceptable foundation for his parents' unquestioning faith in God, personal responsibility and work.

Activity is man's duty but it is also, happily, his propensity. As Teufelsdröckh discovered quite early in his spiritual journey, he is, like all men, a "Son of Time." Time and space, as the two most fundamental "clothings" of the universe, tend to blind man to the immanent and transcendent reality of God by creating the illusion of an all-materialistic, all-mechanistic world.²⁶ But they are also the practical means by which individuals live: they "clothe our celestial ME for dwelling here," they guide man "to his true benefit." (227,228) Whereas space gives man a sense of self, of individuality, of perspective, time keeps him active, moving, working, and learning.

From this combination of individuality and restlessness comes those qualities so displeasing to the stoic-ascetic such as the insatiability and perennial dissatisfaction of even the lowliest "Shoeblick," but which in their effect serve as clothings, even surrogates, for the aspiring Godly idealism that is in man. This is all very positive, for given his duty coupled with his inherent limitations, man must not only wonder but continually strive in whichever way he can and with whatever tools he can find and use.

²⁶ Of course this is the spectre (in the form of the "Everlasting No") which would haunt Teufelsdröckh.

One such tool, in the words of the Editor, is "the monster UTILITARIA." The Editor expresses his disappointment that the Professor would consent to allow radical Utilitarianism to level established society as if society were a "Phoenix" (chapter v) which would rise in revitalized form from its own ashes. (207-9) But this faith of the Professor's is based on his conviction that as the universe is Godly at its essence but often disorderly and unGodly in its outward clothing, it will and must remain in a state of work and metamorphosis until its inner and outer realities conform. To the Professor, then, even evil exists for the ultimate purposes of good.

For example, the work even of a Napoleon was not, in the final analysis, destructive and disorderly. Drawn naturally to the flames of a metamorphosing society like a "moth," (208) Napoleon in fact was a "Divine Missionary" who preached the gospel of the indispensability of work in all its forms. "La carriere ouverte aux talens (The Tools to him that can handle them)," writes the Professor, "is our ultimate Political Evangel, wherein alone can liberty lie." (II,157) Despite the disorder and destruction left in his wake, what Napoleon did, at bottom, was to further the course of experience on the societal and world-wide level. In this sense he was a necessary and important pioneer in the work of societal and universal regeneration. Both literally

and figuratively Napoleon cleared the ground, making the task and the work of his successors clearer, easier and more productive.

V

The work of Napoleons aside, the type of individual society will ultimately require, if it is to regenerate itself in accordance with God, is the "Peasant Saint." This is the individual whose practical active inclination is coordinated most effectively with his ideal passive essence or conscience, whose outward and inward endeavour "are one." (200)²⁷ Though he is animated by God's justice, mercy and wisdom, the Peasant Saint knows that as this world is God's world, his place is there, and his task the reconciliation of God's world with God (chapter iv, "Helotage"). Indeed he is primarily a worker himself: he recognizes that "he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest." (200) He knows, in other words, that a commitment to outward, actual, realizable work itself is the means by which humble worldly man -- progressively and cumulatively -- may aspire toward a reconciliation with God. Declares the Professor,

²⁷ The Peasant Saint undoubtedly would believe that the institutional Church (chapter ii, "Church-Clothes") is nothing more and nothing less than a clothing or "practically active Body" which enables it to work, among the people, "as a living and life-giving WORD." (188)

Sublimer in this world know I nothing than a Peasant Saint, could such now anywhere be met with. Such a one will take thee back to Nazareth itself; thou wilt see the splendor of Heaven spring forth from the humblest depths of Earth, like a light shining in great darkness.(201)

Here the Professor touches upon the difficulty of the personal renunciation necessary for the effective reconciliation of free will with necessity. The qualification above -- "...could such now anywhere be met with" -- reflects a doubt as to the possibility of "peasant saints." In Book II he had expressed a similar doubt of man's ability to subordinate his active expression of freedom to his mostly passive conception of virtue: "could we but do it, as we can demonstrate it!"(171) But the most remarkable "Incident in Modern History" (chapter i) proves to the Professor that this -- and so the "Perfectibility of Society"(186) -- is possible.

The "incident" is the cobbler George Fox's successful pursuit of virtue, the salient fact of which is his stitching for himself "one continuous all-including Case" of leather for a suit of clothes.(185)²⁸ In a clear practical way Fox's one-piece leather sheath symbolized his separateness from the worldly but fundamental connection to, even love for, the world. He had renounced and escaped only

²⁸ George Fox, 1624-91. English Puritan and founder of the Society of Friends (the Quakers).

the superficial clothings of the world, not the world itself and its inner reality of work, struggle and suffering. On this basis the Professor declares that if Diogenes can be considered the greatest man of ancient times, then George Fox is the greatest of modern times, the greatest, even, of all time.²⁹ For

he too stands on the adamantine basis of his Manhood, casting aside all props and shores; yet not, in half-savage Pride, undervaluing the Earth; valuing it rather, as a place to yield him warmth and food, he looks Heavenward from his Earth, and dwells in an element of Mercy and Worship, with a still Strength, such as the Cynic's Tub did nowise witness. (186)

Fox asserted his freedom, his free will, yet not, like Diogenes, to the point of rejecting the world. He followed the example of Christ in successfully reconciling his free will with his necessity through great trial, tribulation and "silent agony." (184)³⁰

Particularly as it was positioned at the opening of Book III (which cursorily explores the practical potentials of work) Carlyle's idiosyncratic and idealized interpretation of this

²⁹ Diogenes, 412?-323 B.C. Greek Cynic philosopher.

³⁰ An ancient, Diogenes of course could know nothing of Christ. "The Old World knew nothing of Conversion; instead of an Ecce Homo [image of the suffering Christ] they had only some Choice of Hercules. It was a new attained progress in the Moral Development of man: hereby has the Highest come home to the bosoms of the most Limited; what to Plato was but a hallucination, and to Socrates a chimera, is now clear and certain..." (II, 174)

"incident" in the life of George Fox seems a conscious effort on his part to emphasize the one salient fact of his own life-- his discovery of a more tenable justification, and a more hopeful use, for the Calvinist purposefulness he had inherited. What this chapter's title calls Carlyle's "work of discovery" was the process by which he overcame his crisis of faith, the process by which he learned the meaning and significance of a concept of work. Through this process the full worldly implications of work became clear to him. By the end he had found his vocation to be "prophet," and his didactic message "the gospel of work."³¹

³¹ "Phoenix-like, a new faith had emerged, retailored to Carlyle's own circumstances. Above all, he had a faith." Ian Campbell, "Carlyle's Religion: The Scottish Background," 3. "I thank the Heavens that I have now found my calling," wrote Teufelsdröckh, "wherein, with or without perceptible result, I am minded diligently to persevere." (I, 175)

Work as Prophecy: Past and Present

Through the maturing process Sartor represents, the meaning and significance of work became clear to Carlyle. He had found his vocation to be that of "prophet," and his predominant message the "gospel of work."¹ The task of chapter four, then, is to study Carlyle in his prophetic role so as to gain a fuller and more complete understanding of the prophet and, particularly, his message. I will argue that Carlyle in his mature prophetic role preached his work ethic as a practical programme for individual and societal reform and that, moreover, he came to advocate work itself as the only "religion" capable of serving the ideal he believed possible-- the effectualization of virtue in this world by man. The best tool for the purposes of this chapter is another textual analysis. This time the subject is Past and Present. If one had to name a single-volume source for

¹ On the occasion of Sartor's first (serial) publication in 1833, Carlyle perceived that "the first act of his life was closing, the second not yet opened." Froude, First Forty Years, II, 361. For all intents and purposes Carlyle ceased his study of German thought and all speculative or imaginative writing after this time and concentrated on the history, biography and social criticism more suited to his prophetic role. "He that can write a true Book, to persuade England, is not he the Bishop and Archbishop, the Primate of England and of All England?" Carlyle, On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History, Murray Baumgarten, ed.-in-chief, with Michael K. Goldberg, Joel J. Brattin and Mark Engel, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), V ("The Hero as Man of Letters"), 140.

the "essential Carlyle," it would be this book.² Past and Present is the quintessential Carlylean sermon.

The premise of the book is simple. The forces of unprecedented technological advance, industrialization and mechanization will be England's dutiful servant or her cruel master, depending on the effectiveness of her work in harnessing these forces to the purposes of order and virtue.³ By the time Carlyle began writing in the autumn of 1842, it appeared disorder and evil were winning out. England was producing never before heard of wealth, but almost one-tenth of the population were paupers.⁴ What amounted to a £4,000,000 bill for Poor Law relief in 1836 had by 1842 reached £5,200,000.⁵ A large assemblage of urban poor and unemployed, the "Manchester Insurrection," threatened violence. "As more than one modern historian has observed, the year was the most ominous, the most critical,

² This is corroborated by Jules Paul Seigel ("Introduction" to Thomas Carlyle: The Critical Heritage), G. Robert Stange ("Refractions of Past and Present"), A. L. Rowse ("The Message of Past and Present"), W. E. Buckler ("Past and Present as Literary Experience") and many others. Appropriately enough, "Ernst ist das Leben" ("Life is Serious"), borrowed from Schiller, was inscribed on the frontispiece of the first edition.

³ By "England," Carlyle means Britain. Depending on the context, the term can also imply the world.

⁴ Contributing factors were a series of poor harvests beginning in 1847, the skyrocketing of the price of wheat, a series of bank failures in 1848 and, in 1849, the closing of the cotton factories.

⁵ Alice Chandler, A Dream of Order: The Medieval Ideal in Nineteenth Century English Literature, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), 13. Carlyle wrote to his brother Alexander, "The distress of the people of Britain this winter, I believe, excels all that they have ever known before." EL, 14, 39; 70 to Alexander Carlyle, 7 February, 1842.

of the whole century."⁶

I

Carlyle outlines his thesis in the succinct Book I ("Proem"). England is "enchanted": obsessed with wealth and the pleasures of wealth for their own sake, she has lost sight, even the ability to perceive, of the ultimate meaning of man's existence. The result, it seems to Carlyle, is that the course of progress and socio-economic improvement has attained its limit, and can proceed no farther. Though blessed with unprecedented wealth and potential, England is not able to make proper use of it; instead she finds herself mired in unemployed multitudes, unnecessary suffering and general, large scale unrest.⁷

To whom, then, is this wealth of England wealth?
We have more riches than any Nation ever had
 before; we have less good of them than any Nation
 ever had before.... In the midst of plethoric
 plenty, the people perish; with gold walls, and
 full barns, no man feels himself safe or
 satisfied. Workers, Master Workers, Unworkers, all
 men, come to a pause; stand fixed, and cannot
 farther. Fatal paralysis spreading inwards, from

⁶ Richard D. Altick, "Past and Present: Topicality as Technique," in Carlyle and His Contemporaries, ed. John Clubbe (Durham: Duke University Press, 1976, 112-28), 112. The socio-economic dilemma of the late 1830s and early 1840s was referred to at the time as the "Condition of England Question."

⁷ The title Carlyle gives to his opening chapter is significant. "Midas," the legendary king of Phrygia, was "enchanted" by gold, and longed unreasonably for it. As his punishment, the gods granted him his wish: whatever he touched was turned to gold, so that he could make no practical use of it or indeed of anything. In effect he was made a prisoner of his own wealth.

the extremities, in St. Ives workhouses, in Stockport cellars, through all limbs, as if towards the heart itself. Have we actually got enchanted, then; accursed by some God?"

"Enchanted" England shows that she is incapable of answering the "Sphinx's riddle" of the true meaning of existence, and for this failure she is dying. In August 1842 the unemployed poor of Manchester asked of England, in effect, "What do you mean to do with us?" (16)⁸ This question, Carlyle asserts, "England will answer." Or, "on the whole, England will perish;-- one does not yet expect the latter result!" (17)

How was England to solve her problems, how was she to discover the true meaning of existence? It would be "infinitely handier," writes Carlyle, "if there were some "Morrison's Pill," an "Act of Parliament, or remedial measure, which men could swallow, one good time, and then go on in their old courses, cleared from all miseries and mischiefs!" (23)¹⁰ Unfortunately however, there is no such pill in existence, neither is one possible. Rather, Carlyle counsels, England will have to "work" her way out of her problems.

⁸ Past and Present (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1947), 6. All subsequent references, with the exception of those which include additional information, will be incorporated into the text.

⁹ The "Manchester Insurrection."

¹⁰ James Morrison (1770-1840), self-styled "the Hygeist," became rich by selling cure-all vegetable pills.

There will no 'thing' be done that will cure you. There will a radical universal alteration of your regimen and way of life take place; there will a most agonising divorce between you and your chimeras, luxuries and falsities, take place; a most toilsome, all-but 'impossible' return to Nature, and her veracities and her integrities, take place: that so the inner fountains of life may again begin, like eternal Light-fountains, to irradiate and purify your bloated, swollen, foul existence, drawing nigh, as at present, to nameless death! Either death, or else all this will take place. Judge if, with such diagnosis, any Morrison's Pill is like to be discoverable! (23)

For Carlyle, the crux of the matter is this: in order to achieve any real societal health and to avoid sinking deeper into chaos, England would have to learn, through the hard lessons of continuous, earnest work, to reverence truth and virtue before convenience and pleasure. In practical terms England, through her reverence of truth and virtue -- through what Carlyle calls her "hero-worship" -- would have to discover and substitute for the "Morrison's Pill" of convenient, directionless democracy, a "true" government of the best and wisest that could effectively command and direct her work, an "Aristocracy of Talent." (29-30)

II

In Book II ("The Ancient Monk"), the didactic use of history is both Carlyle's method and one important remedy he prescribes for the "Condition of England." The "Past" which contrasts this "Present" in Past and Present is the twelfth

century, a world Carlyle believed had much to teach his own. If England was to be enabled to continue to "work," to progress beyond the successes she had achieved and the difficulties she had encountered, it was necessary for the past to serve as a practical, moral guide. Carlyle believed that the majority of nineteenth century historians (whose representative he occasionally brings to life in his works in the personage of "Dryasdust") stripped history of this role.

Alas, what mountains of dead ashes, wreck and burnt bones, does assiduous Pedantry dig up from the Past Time, and name it History...till...the human soul sinks wearied and bewildered; till the Past Time seems all one infinite incredible gray void, without sun, stars, hearth-fires, or candle-light... and over your Historical Library, it is as if all the Titans had written for themselves: DRY RUBBISH SHOT HERE! (46)

In his detached, scientific, "assiduous" way, Dryasdust dissected, categorized, classified and labelled things of the past, dispossessing the past of its unity and therefore its life, making it seem something that never existed in any human, meaningful way. In effect, Carlyle argues, Dryasdust separated the past's significance from the present and the future.¹¹ As a result, nineteenth century society finds

¹¹ To Carlyle Dryasdust was "the gleaner of detail, the historian without vision..." Albert J. LaValley, Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 255. The term was originated by one John Croft (1732-1820), antiquary and writer, and was also used by Sir Walter Scott. Carlyle, of course, made it distinctively his own. See Clubbe, ed., Two Reminiscences, 103n.

itself isolated. Its work does not build upon what was found to be good and true of the past, but only services immediate inclination, convenience and inertia. Work does not serve religion and duty, but only wealth, power and fame. Nineteenth century society is "enchanted," merely "galvanic." Thus it finds itself on the path not of increasing order and virtue, but of increasing disorder and evil.

In Past and Present Carlyle resurrects the moral instructional role of history so as to resurrect the concept of work as the guiding principle of human life. His chief didactic tool is the Chronica Jocelini de Brakelonda, or "Chronicle," a memoir of the monk Jocelin of Brakelond which details the life of the monastery of Bury St. Edmunds and its heroic Abbot Samson between the years 1173 and 1202, and which sheds light on the twelfth century as a whole.¹²

The central theme of Book II is the spiritual and moral health of twelfth century society in comparison with the nineteenth. It is made clear that twelfth century society is healthy and vital precisely because the Christian imperative to reverence truth and virtue highest is self-evident, clearly understood and unquestioned. There is no mention of

¹² The Chronicle was unearthed by the antiquarian Camden Society and published in 1840.

monks following their free will in a Teufelsdröckhian contest with necessity. Monks, as well as most members of society, perceive clearly their duty and do it. When they occasionally stray from it, they can be made to recognize the error of their ways, and are penitent.

Though these monks predate the Reformation by four centuries, "work" is an imperative to them. Their "Catholicism" is ascetic in the Calvinist Protestant manner, relatively free of obscuring formalism. More to the point, they simply have no cause to believe in any intrinsic reality but God and (therefore) duty.

The great antique heart: how like a child's in its simplicity, like a man's in its earnest solemnity and depth! Heaven lies over him wheresoever he goes or stands on the Earth; making all the Earth a mystic Temple to him, the Earth's business all a kind of worship. Glimpses of bright creatures flash in the common sunlight; angels yet hover doing God's messages among men: that rainbow was set in the clouds by the hand of God! Wonder, miracle encompass the man; he lives in an element of miracle; Heaven's splendour over his head, Hell's darkness under his feet. A great Law of Duty, high as these two Infinitudes, dwarfing all else, annihilating all else...(112)

In the twelfth century, there are as yet no scientific means of dissecting the universe into a mechanism of component parts; no such means, then, of distracting the beholder from

its compelling wholeness.¹³ These monks do not have to struggle, as did Teufelsdröckh, to believe and to know that divine revelation is everywhere, as "Natural Supernaturalism."¹⁴ Their religion is their life, as their worship is their work. (113,193,224)

Appropriately, the monks exhibit a proper reverence for truth, virtue and duty -- a proper "Hero-Worship" -- when the time comes to elect a new Abbot. The monks are blind, unlike individuals of the nineteenth century, to the superficial "clothings" of worth (wealth or eloquence, for example); they seek genuine worth itself. After earnest deliberation, they decide upon Samson, though he is only a humble monk like themselves. Samson is deemed to be worthy, though "discovered with a maximum of two shillings in his pocket...his frock-shirts looped over his arm." (82)

Samson is the hero of Past and Present. For Carlyle, Samson's great virtue is his clear and unmitigated reverence for God and for the duty of work He prescribes. Samson is reverential in a real, practical way, not a formulaic,

¹³ Unlike those of the nineteenth century, twelfth century individuals are not led astray from God by rationalism and empiricism. According to these schools, all that cannot be logically and scientifically explained is considered unreal, or at least irrelevant. Carlyle believed that these paradigms of thought encouraged nineteenth century individuals to be cognizant only of the incidental aspects or "clothings" of the universe and remain ignorant of the divine, all-inclusive cohesiveness beneath.

¹⁴ Sartor, III, viii. See chapter three, section IV.

mechanical or superficial way. Carlyle emphasizes that Samson is a worldly, skilful, even shrewd man. As Abbot and governor he "tempers his medicine to the malady, now hot, now cool." He is "prudent though fiery, an eminently practical man." (108) Samson is much like the "Peasant Saint" of Sartor.¹ His piety is of the world (as it should be), but never "worldly." He eagerly takes up shield and sword himself to free King Richard from his German captivity, but he absolutely refuses to strip the gold from Saint Edmund's shrine for the purposes of a ransom. (102)

As the expression of the clarity with which he perceives his duty, Samson practices the virtue of "Silence."

Abbot Samson, all along a busy working man, as all men are bound to be, his religion, his worship was like his daily bread to him;-- which he did not take the trouble to talk much about; which he merely ate at stated intervals, and lived and did his work upon! This is Abbot Samson's Catholicism of the Twelfth Century;-- something like the Ism of all true men in all true centuries, I fancy! (113)

In his clear recognition of the one "great Law of Duty" (112, above) which overarches and encompasses his world, Samson does not talk about his religion, for to talk about it or to attempt to rationalize it (and so to turn it into an "ism") could only reduce it from something infinite and

¹ Sartor, III, IV, 200-1. See chapter three, section V.

compelling to something finite and relative. Religion then becomes a dead theology and not a living conduct, or the "atmosphere and life-element" in which one lives. (58) It is separated from one's life and work, and renders work -- the "effectualizer" of religion -- and thus the principles of religion itself, ineffectual. Samson's attitude to his religion is reminiscent of James Carlyle's belief "that man was created to work, not to feel, or speculate, or dream." Carlyle's father was "a man of Conduct" not of "Speculation"; he could "believe and know" as well as "inquire and be of opinion."¹⁶ "Silence," for James Carlyle as for Samson, keeps religion and work one unified conduct, one duty.

To reiterate, the central theme of Book II is the twelfth century's spiritual and moral vitality in comparison with the nineteenth. The reason, what might have been called a subordinate theme, is the singular clarity with which the work imperative is perceived and understood. A second subordinate theme of sorts is the necessity -- if this duty is to be obeyed -- of individual resignation to struggle and hardship.

¹⁶ Reminiscences, 5, 9, 11 *an. passim*. See also chapter two, section II and chapter three, section II. This verbal reticence is one aspect of Samson's character among many he shares with Carlyle's father.

There is a great significance in Carlyle's explanation of Samson's success as governor, that he "had served no apprenticeship to the trade of governing,-- alas, only the hardest apprenticeship to that of obeying." (85) This apprenticeship to the trade of obeying, it turns out, was in fact the best apprenticeship to governing Samson could have served. For what he had "obeyed" in his life's work before becoming Abbot, what he had learned and adapted himself to, was the stern reality of earthly life, the naturalness and persistence of disorder. Through his unstinting service to the "great Law of Duty," he was almost impervious to the hardships of this disorder, unswerving in confronting the obstacles it created. And governing, Carlyle inculcates, is no more and no less than the arduous creation of order in a naturally disorderous world. It is "man's highest work, done well." (85)

Samson emerges as Carlyle's ideal of the earnest, bravely dutiful, piously active, autocratic yet ultimately just "Hero as King."¹⁷ The life of all true governors is "double toil and trouble...not the spoil of victory, only the glorious toil of battle can be theirs." (96) The former Abbot Hugo, though good intentioned, had been weak. His love of ease and consequent inaction precipitated the monastic

¹⁷ See On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History, VI ("The Hero as King").

community's decline into moral and physical decay. Samson himself could have ignored life's contradictory facts, and in ignoring them, "might have merely thrown new contention into them, new unwisdom into them, and so been conquered by them; much the commoner case!" (51)

But he turns the fortunes of the monastery around, eliminates debts and tendencies toward indebtedness, strengthens walls, patches roofs, renders the recalcitrant monks more dutiful, the dutiful still more pious. The task is not easy, nor does it ever end. Work, the reconciliation by man of this world with God, is continuous, manifold in its manifestations and continuous in its application because disorder, the result of the world left to itself, is also continuous.

Samson's work is an "internecine duel, with the whole World of Darkness that lies without one and within one." (101) In fact Samson's apprehension of his duty is so clear, his attentions to it so complete, that he is once moved to cry out, his hands raised to heaven, "From such anxiety, Omnipotent merciful Lord deliver me!" (100) His recognition of the one "great Law of Duty" at the foundation of existence steels his stoicism, fuels his "noble slow perseverance," his "strength of 'subdued rage.'" (97) Samson's life, like the life of all individuals if virtue on

the broad scale was ever to be effectualized, was properly "but a labour and a journey; a bustling and a justling, till the still Night come." (121)¹⁸

III

Book III returns to nineteenth century England in the critical year 1842. In relative terms nineteenth century man can perceive no "great Law of Duty." The sky, "the heavens," envelope him "only as an Astronomical Time-keeper." (131) The universe is considered to be a dead mechanism. As a result the only real "morality," that which drives and sanctions behaviour, is not a self-sacrificing duty but convenience based upon the principles of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," the virtue of pleasure and the evil of pain.¹⁹ "Laissez-faire" having become man's guidepost, modern England finds herself adrift and out of control, her directionless state exemplified by large-scale suffering in the midst of unprecedented prosperity. Man "has lost the soul out of him," explains Carlyle, "and now, after the due period-- begins to find the want of it!" (131)

¹⁸ "Night," significant for its capitalization, refers of course to death, and probably also refers, as in Sartor it most certainly does, to the Judgement (II, ix, 173: "Work while it is called To-day; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."). cf. Ecclesiastes 9:10; John 9:4. See chapter three, section III.

¹⁹ Utilitarianism, which was to become, increasingly with the years, one of Carlyle's most hated manifestations of the modern malaise, was a product of the British empirical tradition's reliance on observation, experience and the sensibly provable.

Carlyle's purpose for Book III ("The Modern Worker") is to define the means by which nineteenth century individuals and society might aspire toward the twelfth century's spiritual and moral vitality. Only once she has attained to a state of proper "Hero-Worship," Carlyle warned in Books I and II, will England be able to secure the government of the best and wisest capable of commanding her work and remedying her ills. The dominant theme of Book III is work's practical potential to achieve this precondition.

As we discovered in chapter three, Carlyle defines work in two ways. In the ultimate, abstract sense, work is the process by which individuals aspire toward and progressively effectualize the reconciliation of virtue with their world. In the immediate or functional sense, work is the experiential and learning process of everyday activity that gives impetus to and sustains the ultimate work of reconciliation. The nineteenth century "modern worker," following convenience rather than duty, has forgotten this higher "work" of moral improvement; he does not look to work for the effectualization of virtue, only of money and fame. Carlyle finds hope in the modern worker nonetheless, for he does, at least in the immediate and functional sense, work.

For Carlyle, the only hopeless thing is idleness: "work earnestly at anything, you will by degrees learn to work at

understood in these ascetically moral, specifically Calvinistic terms. Carlyle's disillusionment, the narrowing and hardening of his prophetic vision especially in the years after Past and Present, and the occasional brutality of his work prescriptions which resulted, is well-known.³¹ From this time Carlyle's social diagnoses became less hopeful, his prescriptions more severe, and work as a concept came increasingly to entail nothing much more than blind submission to any constituted authority. The best example of this phase of Carlyle's life are the Latter-Day Pamphlets (1850), which gave great offence in Carlyle's day and continue to do so today. What is not as well-known, however, is the degree to which this later Carlyle is, in fact, consistent with the earlier Carlyle.

As Chris Vanden Bossche explains, when "we are unable to see exactly what the relationship between early and late is, we fail to understand the precise nature of the problems in the early Carlyle or what really happens in the later works."³² The later Carlyle has been misunderstood largely because the early Carlyle has been misunderstood. When we (as I am arguing we should) recognize work and the effectualization

³¹ The tensions between transcendental and Calvinistic influences in Past and Present have already been noted. Temperamentally, Past and Present can be considered the mid-point of Carlyle's life.

³² Chris R. Vanden Bossche, Carlyle and the Search for Authority, viii-ix. See chapter one, section I.

almost all things. There is endless hope in work, were it even work at making money." (141)²⁰ Here Carlyle recapitulates and expands upon the practical, instructional function of earnest work adumbrated in Sartor. When working earnestly toward any goal (even the making of money), Carlyle explains in his cryptic way, the individual will learn. He will encounter obstacles along his path and will have no reason for avoiding them, and every reason for surmounting them. And the resulting experiences will be personal, immediate, and compelling. In working earnestly, "Mammonism has seized some portion of the message of Nature to man; and seizing that, and following it, will seize and appropriate more and more of Nature's message." (145)²¹

Carlyle finds hope in the modern worker of England precisely because he is a worker and not an idle talker or theorist. (151) To Carlyle the typical Englishman is a "Man of Practice" (the typical Frenchman a "Man of Theory"). Because the man of practice concerns himself with the "Doable" rather than the "Speakable," he cannot have his moral energies satisfied, and so dissipated, by the relatively easy faculty of speech and a priori logic.

²⁰ This earnest working Mammonism divides the world, writes Carlyle, with the "idle...Dilettantism" of the unearnest aristocratic classes.

²¹ Carlyle uses the terms "Nature" (capitalized) and "God" interchangeably: "the real desire to get Work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to Nature's appointments and regulations, which are truth." (189)

Instead, through the difficult lessons of experience, these moral energies will be kept in a healthy state of growth. "Conviction" of right and wrong, Teufelsdröckh had asserted, "is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct." For "inasmuch as all Speculation is by nature endless, formless...only by a felt indubitable certainty of Experience," in other words only through activity and work, "does it find any centre to revolve round, and so fashion itself into a system."²²

In discovering truths "in silence mainly," like Abbot Samson, the man of practice unlike the man of theory learns free of facile, error-prone preconception and so can progress, cumulatively, through experience, discovery, emendation. In this way he progresses "down to the World's centre" (153) toward that fact of facts so clear to the twelfth century man which holds the key to the world's meaning-- that it is God's world, that man, God's trustee on earth, is morally bound to work and struggle according to His laws and toward His goals.

In order to progress in virtue, all the modern worker need do is examine, in a clear and honest light, the results of his work. To Carlyle, because the world is ultimately God's world His laws will either affirm or repudiate work in the

²² Sartor, II, ix, 171 and 172.

form of success or failure, prosperity or adversity.

Whatsoever of morality and of intelligence; what of patience, perseverance, faithfulness, of method, insight, ingenuity, energy; in a word, whatsoever of Strength the man had in him will lie written in the Work he does. To work: why, it is to try himself against Nature, and her everlasting unerring Laws; these will tell a true verdict as to the man. So much of virtue and of faculty did we find in him; so much and no more! He had such capacity of harmonizing himself with me and my unalterable ever-veracious Laws; of co-operating and working as I bade him;-- and has prospered, and has not prospered, as you see! (152)

As Teufelsdröckh had discovered, the individual's works "are the mirror wherein" his soul "first sees its natural lineaments."²³ We recall from Book I that "The Sphinx" possesses the riddle of man's existence, which man must answer correctly, or be devoured. The Sphinx, the inscrutable essence of the universe which may be interpreted as Nature or God, leaves clues to this riddle's answer all around man in the form, again, of success or failure. England (the measure of the collective virtue of the English) "has prospered, and has not prospered." Her material work has been proved to be virtuous, because Nature has so spectacularly permitted the advancement of material progress. (163) But in the form of an equally spectacular moral failure -- England's labour unrest, unemployed multitudes, destitute families -- Nature answers with equal

²³ Sartor, II, vii, 145. See chapter three, section III.

emphasis in the negative. (162)²⁴

The dichotomous material/moral condition of England shows the modern worker that he has heard and obeyed only half of God's message to man, namely the easy half-- the imperative to be active and not idle. The difficult half, the imperative to learn from his work and adjust accordingly, he has, on balance, not obeyed. In God's universe only that which is of God, only the good and true and just, Carlyle warns, will ultimately survive and prosper.

The "Bucanier" [sic] may pile his decks high with plunder, having "fleets larger than the combined British Navy all united with him in bucaniering," yet, as a practitioner of injustice, he "has one enemy never to be struck down; nay two enemies: Mankind and the Maker of Men." For him, thus, lasting ultimate victory is not possible. Napoleon himself, once the undisputed sovereign of continental Europe, finds himself chained at last to tiny St. Helena, "the latter end of him sternly compensating the beginning." (185)²⁵

²⁴ The providential role of Nature (or God) was a concept with which Carlyle would have been long familiar. We remember from chapter two that the Calvinist doctrine of Predestination interpreted the worldly fortunes or misfortunes of an individual as a sign of God's predisposed grace or wrath, and that the doctrine compelled the believer to pursue worldly prosperity, the achievement of which was considered the sign of virtue (and God's grace). The strictly scriptural Heaven and Hell of Predestination, of course, Carlyle had less time for.

²⁵ This seems to be a good place to clarify Carlyle's much misunderstood concept of "might and right." To Carlyle, again, what was exemplary of Nature's providential role (and, consequently, of God's grace or wrath) was the material prosperity or status of nations and individuals. To Carlyle,

Carlyle gives as a third example of misplaced work his cotton magnate, "Plugson of Undershot." Neither can Plugson, who persists in producing cotton for the sake of money alone, gain any permanent victory. He treats his workers according to the harsh code of the amoral "bucanier," in this case the principles of laissez-faire economics, supply-and-demand wage and price setting and "cash-payment the one nexus of man with man," which Carlyle emphasizes are not of God. (186) Plugson, then, gains no lasting peace in which to enjoy his profit (booty?). Until his workers are treated according to the ideals of justice, they attack him in the form of unionist activity, work stoppages and general disruption to his trade.

But Plugson is a "man of practice," and so remains for Carlyle a source of significant hope. Plugson possesses an "indomitable heart which can conquer Cotton." In fact he demonstrates, at bottom, a kind of moral strength, a strength of commitment, a courage and an adaptability in the face of difficulty which promises, through the learning process of everyday, practical work, "ten-times nobler

then, "might" and the "right" to that might coincided, but only in the long run, once God's judgement had had a chance to be applied. In 1866 Carlyle put it thus: "...no man who is not in the right, were he even a Napoleon I at the head of armed Europe, has any real might whatever, but will at last be found mightless, and to have done, or settled as a fixity, nothing at all, except precisely so far as he was not in the wrong. Abolition and erosion awaits all 'doings' of his, except just what part of them was right. ...your great Napoleon, openly bankrupt under the latter clause, is flung out to the nettles and broken bottles; & the salutary process of expunction goes on to the end, as fast as it can. So that right and might are identical, in the long run..." Cluthe, ed., Two Reminiscences, 98-99n.

conquests." (188)

IV

Through Books I, II and III Carlyle, with the help of the twelfth century, adumbrated the broad ideal of work, and expanded upon the practical means by which he felt nineteenth century individuals and society might understand and effectively embrace it. This practical "effectualization of virtue," while only touched upon in Sartor, is the dominant concern of Past and Present. Sartor is the semi-autobiographical representation of Carlyle's spiritual journey of discovery; by this process, he had found his vocation to be "prophet of the gospel of work." Past and Present, on the other hand, is a sermon. The text indicates the same. It is rhythmical, iterative, hortatory and alliterative. Carlyle's central ideas are repeated over and over in various clothings of metaphor and allusion, as a kind of litany. Only the pulpit is missing.

The dominance of the "effectualization imperative" for Carlyle is more apparent when one considers the interrelationship in his mind between Oliver Cromwell and Past and Present. For Carlyle, the great virtue of Cromwell was his Puritanism, which was expressed in his attempt to make the law of God effective in every aspect of England's affairs. From shortly before his lectures "On Heroes, Hero-

Worship and the Heroic in History" (1840), Carlyle had been struggling unsuccessfully to find the proper format and precise method for a planned treatment of the Puritan Revolution and Cromwell, the man he considered the most heroic of the previous two centuries. Carlyle's problem was that he was trying, in effect, to write two books at once. Given his prophetic conception of the role of history, his planned treatment of Cromwell, whether it would take the form of a biography of the Protector or a history of his revolution, had to be applicable, meaningful and instructive to the nineteenth century.²⁶

With his discovery of the Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond, he felt he had found at least a temporary substitute hero in the person of Abbot Samson, and in the twelfth century monastic community generally, a simpler, more effective vehicle for the application of the Cromwellian ideals of the past to the problems of the present.²⁷ Thus what Carlyle

²⁶ "...I feel withal as if the one hope of help for [England] consisted in the possibility of new Cromwells and new Puritans; thus do the two centuries stand related to me, the seventeenth worthless except precisely in so far as it can be made the nineteenth; and yet let anybody try that enterprise!" CL, 15, 57; TC to Ralph Waldo Emerson, 29 August, 1842. See also Kaplan, Thomas Carlyle: A Biography, 289-90.

²⁷ For Carlyle, Samson in his character and most notably in his actions as Abbot and governor was a kind of Cromwell in miniature. Carlyle "regarded Cromwell and Samson as similar men, his first writings on Samson appearing in the pages of his Cromwell manuscripts and Cromwell appearing throughout Past and Present." Chris R. Vanden Bossche, Carlyle and the Search for Authority, 110. As was touched upon in the discussion of Book II, it can be seen how Carlyle equated Samson's twelfth century "Catholicism" with the ascetic Protestantism of Cromwell. What was common to both, of course, was the effectualization imperative. "This is Abbot Samson's Catholicism of the Twelfth Century;-- something like the Ism of all true men in all true centuries, I fancy!" (113, above)

considered the essential message of Cromwell and the Puritan Revolution -- that virtue itself be valued highest, reconciled with the everyday business of individuals and society, "effectualized" through work -- is also the essential message of Past and Present.²⁸ The final sections of this chapter, then, will present further evidence to prove that Carlyle's primary purpose for work in Past and Present is the effectualization, not merely the idealization, of virtue.

What gives Carlyle's sermon its particular strength and relevance is his conviction that a practical effectualization of virtue is possible. To Carlyle the "atheism" of nineteenth century England is not of the nature of man, it is only a temporary weakness of faith. Predictably, he traces the origin of the present socio-economic crisis back to the failure of Cromwell's Puritan Revolution. To Carlyle, the Restoration or "Settlement of 1660" was a "Settlement as of despair" which, having found the attempt to govern by Cromwell's "Christian Law of God" too difficult, chose "to govern henceforth without God, with

²⁸ With Past and Present out of the way, Carlyle was able to avoid the problem of writing two books at once. Satisfied that he had effectively delivered Cromwell's message, he felt free thereafter to let the Protector speak more or less for himself. The result was the edited and annotated Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations (1845). Although there were several exceptions, the predominant eighteenth and nineteenth century opinion was that Cromwell was a savage ego-driven thug and hypocrite. Carlyle's five volume work was a purposeful attempt to rehabilitate Cromwell's reputation, and with the help of other revisionist biographies and histories, it largely succeeded.

only some decent Pretence of God." (160) As a result, individuals were obliged to express what Carlyle considered their innate Godly idealism through alternate gods, who went by the names of self-interest, individualism, and laissez-faire.

In this light, Carlyle's contempt for "Dryasdust," discussed earlier, is better understood. The opening line of Book IV ("Horoscope") is significant: "To predict the Future, to manage the Present, would not be so impossible, had not the past been so sacrilegiously mishandled; effaced, and what is worse, defaced!" (230) To Carlyle, history was the record of divine revelation, which it was the duty of historians to consult, in order that society might have its faith maintained and strengthened by this continuous and cumulative moral guide. Concerned with the superficial aspects and insignificant details of the past only, Dryasdust obscures, and thus ultimately misrepresents, the inner reality of history and its events. Cromwell, for example, is perceived predominantly in terms of the outward violence and disruption of his revolution, while the inner idealism necessitating such an upheaval is mostly forgotten, or misinterpreted.²⁹ The critical result for Carlyle was that large-scale disorder and suffering could be considered

²⁹ "To discredit" the evidence of "God's-Finger writing," Carlyle writes, "is an infidelity like no other." (231)

natural, or at least inevitable.

For in truth, the eye sees in all things 'what it brought with it the means of seeing.' A godless century, looking back on centuries that were godly, produces portraitures more miraculous than any other. All was inane discord in the Past; brute Force bore rule everywhere; Stupidity, savage Unreason, fitter for Bedlam than for a human World! Whereby indeed it becomes sufficiently natural that the like qualities, in new sleeker habiliments, should continue in our own time to rule. Millions enchanted in Bastille Workhouses; Irish Widows proving their relationship by typhus-fever: what would you have? It was ever so, or worse. Man's History, was it not always even this... (230)

It could be considered "impossible," for example, to save the destitute from starvation. Carlyle alludes in the passage above to the documented case of the Irish widow who, destitute, weakening and unable to elicit sufficient help from any of the charitable establishments of Edinburgh, contracted typhus and died, infecting her neighbourhood in the process.³⁰

'Impossible:' of a certain two-legged animal with feathers it is said, if you draw a distinct chalk-circle round him, he sits imprisoned, as if girt with an iron ring of Fate; and will die there, though within sight of victuals, -- or sit in sick

³⁰ Carlyle interprets the incident thus: "The forlorn Irish Widow applies to her fellow-creatures, as if saying, "Behold I am sinking, bare of help: ye must help me! I am your sister, bone of your bone; one God made us: ye must help me!" They answer, 'No, impossible; thou art no sister of ours.' But she proves her sisterhood; her typhus-fever kills them: they actually were her brothers, though denying it! Had human creature ever to go lower for a proof?" (143) Carlyle's source for the particulars was Dr. William Pulteney Alison's Observations on the Management of the Poor in Scotland (1840).

misery there, and be fatted to death. The name of this poor two-legged animal is-- Goose; and they make of him, when well fattened, Pate de foie gras, much prized by some! (144)

The brutal mockery of the Swiftian satire reveals the depth of Carlyle's frustration that "spirits which have reality and are alive," who carry each inside of them God's divine spark of life, could become so "enchanted" as to lose utter control of their own destiny.³¹ Two million people in 1842 sit in workhouses, Poor Law prisons, or are dependent on relief, hundreds more are starving in the midst of unprecedented prosperity and plenty. In the face of the general disorder the whole physical, intellectual and moral might of modern England, to all appearances, is powerless. This is to be the puppet of destiny rather than its master, "geese" rather than human beings.

However, work and gradual emendation remain a possibility for Carlyle. The "Condition of England" is a "dragon" that is impervious to the easy arrows of logic or convenient half-measures, that is conquerable by earnest work alone. (154) He did not expect any spiritual conversions to the "gospel of work" in the spectacular manner of a Teufelsdröckh. But as Carlyle believed that the individual had a divine conscience, could "read something of the

³¹ The quotation is from Sartor, III, viii ("Natural Supernaturalism"), 234. See chapter three, section IV.

Eternal there," he also believed that the individual already knew what was virtue and what was not.(240) Thus a commitment to earnest work, at the very least, Carlyle felt he could realistically expect.³² Chris Vanden Bossche has pointed out that at the time Past and Present was written, Carlyle's reputation as a seer and prophet was already high, and that his name and authority was already being used by others in the cause of political and economic reform. Carlyle, he emphasizes, "had every reason to believe that his analyses and solutions would be taken seriously."³³

Indeed in Book IV, Carlyle earnestly advocates the institutionalization of work as the proper worship, the proper religion.³⁴ He looks to work as an effective substitute for the failure of the "church" of laissez-faire and the inadequacy of the institutional Church.(161) The failure of laissez-faire is evidenced in the present "Condition of England." The Church is preoccupied with formalism and is ineffectual against the powerful and

³² As we discovered in the treatment of Book III, it was this natural activity itself to which Carlyle turned as the source of the experience, convictions, resolutions -- and faith -- necessary to continue "working" in the ultimate moral sense. To all the various workers of Britain, in derogation of those, like the "idle aristocracy," who would do no work at all, Carlyle declares, "It is to you I call: ye know at least this, That the mandate of God to His creature man is: Work!"(264)

³³ Vanden Bossche, 105-6.

³⁴ In Book III he had said: "...properly speaking, all true Work is Religion: and whatever Religion is not Work may go and dwell among the Biahmins, Antinomians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will; with me it shall have no harbour. Admirable was that of the old Monks, 'Laborare est Orare, Work is Worship.'"(193)

persistent tendencies in man and nature for disorder. What is more, its generally passive piety is inconsistent with the active force of will implanted in individual souls by God. (239)

To Carlyle, then, work is "The One Institution."³⁵ He envisions a new era of cooperation, a "Chivalry of Labour." Whereas the old epic of history was typically one of competition, which Carlyle names "Arms and the Man," the new epic, he announces, is "Tools and the Man." (241)³⁶ The process of metamorphosis into this new state of being is to be the "grand reformation." (242)

In Carlyle's mind, a Chivalry of Labour is not only possible, it is inevitable. His extraordinary idealism is more easily understood if one remembers that his psyche was a uniquely potent mixture of Calvinist asceticism and transcendental faith: the iron discipline and purposefulness of the former made the latter seem more hopeful even than it already was. Moreover, he still assumed at this point in life that most people thought as he did, and that before long the social situation would seem so serious to so many that England on the whole would feel constrained to embrace

³⁵ Book IV, chapter iii.

³⁶ The opening line of Vergil's Aeneid (trans. John Dryden) is: "Of arms and the man I sing".

the individual asceticism and collective state control intrinsic to his gospel of work.³⁷ For an example of the inevitability of the seemingly "impossible" when perceived to be indispensable, Carlyle looks to the soldier.

Who can despair of Governments that passes a Soldier's Guard-house, or meets a redcoated man on the streets! That a body of men could be got together to kill other men when you bade them: this, a priori, does it not seem one of the impossiblest things? Yet look, behold it; in the stolidest of Donothing Governments, that impossibility is a thing done.... The Soldier is perhaps one of the most difficult things to realise; but Governments, had they not realised him, could not have existed: accordingly he is here. (250-2)

Neither could England much longer exist, Carlyle believed, without true work beginning to set things right.

"'Organising of Labour' is, if well understood, the Problem of the whole Future." (248)

Inspired by the example of the soldier, Carlyle conceives of a comprehensive range of government programmes such as national education, an emigration service (to ensure that all can find opportunities to work), and "considerable varieties of United and Separate Services, of the due thousands strong, all effective as" the soldier's service,

³⁷ When accounting for Carlyle's seemingly naive idealism, one should also remember that state intervention, at least on the broad and deep scale he conceived of (see below for some examples), was still mostly untried.

"all doing their work, like it;-- which work, much more than fighting, is henceforth the necessity of these New Ages we are into!" (252)

V

The question which remains for Carlyle, one he devotes a considerable portion of Book IV to addressing, is how to sustain the "grand reformation." The problem, he recognized, was the fragile nature of faith. Even if institutions of the revolutionary state control he envisioned could be established, the effective work of these institutions still depended on the effective work of individuals, and the effective work of individuals depended on the perseverance of their faith. Carlyle realized that a lapse of moral endurance was the problem that prevented an individual from persevering in earnest work alone, and which encouraged him to abandon his ultimate work for the easier and more convenient "wages" of work.

Again, the root cause of England's decrepit spiritual and moral condition, Carlyle believed, was the discovery that to live by Cromwell's law of God was difficult. As it was discovered to be difficult and disruptive, it was abandoned, and all of Cromwell's work toward this end was lost in the process. To Carlyle faith was so fragile, particularly in his own age, because difficulties -- and the experience,

personal revelations and faith he believed the overcoming of difficulties would effectualize -- could too easily be avoided.

As the practical precondition for an individual's perseverance in earnest work, the learning process, and faith, Carlyle calls for the effective institution of the "one widest universal principle," which he names "Permanence of Contract."³⁸ Carlyle pins all the hopes and possibilities of an effectualized "Chivalry of Labour" on this one principle.³⁹ "This once secured," he writes, "the basis of all good results were laid."³⁹ Carlyle interprets the concept in terms of its practical application to the employee-employer relationship, but his preoccupation is its implications of stoic perseverance in the face of difficulty and the concomitant renunciation of personal "happiness" as the goal of life.⁴⁰ The modern worker's work could remain consistently earnest, his faith in God could

³⁸ Book IV, chapter v ("Permanence").

³⁹ Chapters iii ("The One Institution"), iv ("Captains of Industry") and v ("Permanence") are the gravitational centre of Book IV.

⁴⁰ In the interest of permanent employer-employee relationships, Carlyle radically suggests that labourers might be given a stake in the businesses for which they work. (27) "Permanence" is really the last chapter in which Carlyle says anything new; in his mind it is the practical summation of the stoic message consistently and vigorously emphasized throughout Past and Present. See especially Book III, chapters iv ("Happy"), xi ("Labour") and xii ("Reward"). It is all reminiscent of Teufelsdröckh's rejection of worldly happiness as the first condition for all virtue and goodness. See Sartor, III, ix, 164 and 169 ("Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him."). See also chapter three, section III.

remain a possibility, only if he considered the principle of permanence the necessary consequent of his manhood.

Permanence, persistence is the first condition of all fruitfulness in the ways of men. The "tendency to persevere," to persist in spite of hindrances, discouragements and "impossibilities:" it is this that in all things distinguishes the strong souls from the weak; the civilised burgher from the nomadic savage, -- the Species Man from the Genus Ape! (266)

In Book II Carlyle spoke of Abbot Samson's "noble slow perseverance" in creating order out of the persistently disorderous world of St. Edmundsbury Monastery. (97, above) An individual's persistence or stoic disregard, his perseverance in the face of difficulties, supports and strengthens his faith, which in turn helps further fortify his perseverance. Faith and perseverance together make for earnest work, which, in its turn, enables the individual to learn more and more of the truth of his existence-- which can only strengthen his faith and perseverance.⁴¹

The circular, self-sustaining interaction of these three -- faith, work and perseverance -- shows quite strongly in Carlyle's very loose translation of Goethe's "Symbolom," the

⁴¹ "I am for permanence in all things, at the earliest possible moment, and to the latest possible. Blessed is he that continueth where he is. Here let us rest...here let us learn to dwell.Not a difficulty but can transfigure itself into a triumph.... Wealth richer than both the Indies lies everywhere for man, if he will endure. Not his oaks only and his fruit-trees, his very heart roots itself wherever he will abide;-- roots itself, draws nourishment from the deep fountains of Universal Being!" (270)

ethic of which dominates Past and Present. To the end of his life this was Carlyle's favourite poem.⁴² The attraction according to Fred Kaplan was its combination of "the fervour of a hymn with the lilt of a marching song. [This] religion of the heart embraced modern man's needs, not his theology."⁴³

Carlyle transcribes the poem partially at the end of Book II, wholly at the end of Book III and partially again, for good measure, at the end of Book IV. The opening stanza is significant for the theme it establishes, the direction it gives to that which follows. Carlyle speaks of the earnest assiduous care, persistence and implied perseverance of the mason's work, which is required naturally of all men:

The Mason's ways are
A type of Existence,
And his persistence
Is as the days are
Of men in this world.

Also significant are the particular stanzas Carlyle chooses to emphasize, and where he chooses to emphasize them. He

⁴² See Froude, Life in London, I, 86. Carlyle's version bears the title "Mason-Lodge." This "translation" gave Goethe's original the ascetic cohesion and moral urgency it lacked. See Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 232-4, 323-4, and Kuno Francke, "Carlyle and Goethe's Symbolum," Philological Quarterly, VI, no.2, (April 1927), 97-101.

⁴³ Kaplan, 468. Carlyle's earnest practicality found it "full of piety yet free of cant.... He [Goethe] calls it Mason-Lodge, not Psalm or Hymn." (228)

cites the final two stanzas (fifth and sixth) at the end of Book II so as to stress the centrality in the universe of the "great Law of Duty" so well understood by the individuals in the twelfth century, and, correspondingly, the transcendental importance of the individual's work which obeys and effectualizes this duty and this virtue.

Heard are the Voices,
 Heard are the Sages,
 The Worlds and the Ages:
 "Choose well; your choice is
 Brief and yet endless.

Here eyes do regard you,
 In Eternity's stillness;
 Here is all fulness,
 Ye brave, to reward you;
 Work, and despair not."⁴⁴

Carlyle had transcribed the entire poem at the end of Book III, the book in which he had treated most thoroughly the practical potentials of nineteenth century work. At the end of Book IV, appropriately, his emphasis (second stanza) is the incomprehensible, often difficult universe in which the individual works and the faith -- the stoic perseverance in the face of manifold difficulties and "unhappiness" -- required to continue working in it.

⁴⁴ The "reward" spoken of is vague: it can apply both to the practical and spiritual rewards of the world and/or the reward of a Christian-styled afterlife.

The Future hides in it
 Gladness and sorrow;
 We press still thorow,
 Nought that abides in it
 Daunting us,-- onward.

According to Carlyle's ideal of work, Calvinist purposefulness, stoic discipline and perseverance combine with the transcendentalist faith in the ability of individuals and society collectively to transcend its limitations. The former fuels the latter, transforming "mere Mammonism" gradually into true work, and effectualizes, by degrees, virtuous individuals and a true society.⁴⁵ For the individual fortified with sufficient faith, his work in reconciling God with this world becomes his religion.

Hourly and daily, for himself and for the whole world, a faithful, unspoken, but not ineffectual prayer rises. "Thy will be done." His whole work on Earth is an emblematic spoken or acted prayer, Be the will of God done on earth,-- not the Devil's will, or any of the Devil's servants' wills! He has a religion, this man...(221)

⁴⁵ "...unless it were a Demon that made this Universe; which I, for my own part, do at no moment, under no form, in the least believe."(201) This is Carlyle's faith.

**The Effectualization Imperative:
Overview and Conclusions**

Past and Present shows clearly what work was to the mature Carlyle, the purpose he believed it served and the means by which this purpose could be served. The passage cited at the close of chapter four reveals what I have called the "effectualization imperative" to be the purpose of work, and the nature of Carlyle's religion. To Carlyle, again, the "whole work," every aspect of the virtuous individual's life "on Earth is an emblematic spoken or acted prayer, Be the will of God done on earth.... He has a religion, this man..." By comparison, "what are all rituals, liturgies, mythologies, mass-chantings...? They are as nothing; in a good many respects they are as less."¹

The effectualization imperative reflects the moral purposefulness of Carlyle's Calvinism, which as we have seen was even more insistent and uncompromising given that it was fuelled not by the problematic theology of the Bible but by what to Carlyle were the facts of human reality and

¹ BOOK III, chapter xv ("Morrison Again"), 221. And further: "the Prayer which accomplished itself in special chapels at stated hours, and went not with a man, rising up from all his Work and Action, at all moments sanctifying the same.-- what was it ever good for?" (224)

experience.² To Carlyle's Calvinism God was quite literally all, both immanent and transcendent; given the facts of human reality and experience (revealed through the aid of transcendentalist philosophy), Carlyle felt that God could be all. His religion was the effectualization, through work, of the Lord's Prayer.

This concluding chapter will show that the effectualization imperative, as Carlyle's religion, is the unifying element which allows us to see this "Calvinist without the theology" whole. There are three major phases in Carlyle's moral thought, and it will be seen how the effectualization imperative is behind each. The first phase (which chapters two and three have already discussed) was Carlyle's evolving conception of a concept of work in the 1820s, his melding of Calvinist moral precept and ascetic discipline with a transcendental faith.³ The second was the maturing of the concept of work in the years between its first adumbration

² "The Universe, I say, is made by Law; the great Soul of the World is just and not unjust. Look thou, if thou have eyes or soul left, into this great shoreless Incomprehensible: in the heart of its tumultuous Appearances, Embroilments, and mad Time-vortexes, is there not, silent, eternal, an All-just, an All-beautiful; sole Reality and ultimate controlling Power of the whole? This is not a figure of Speech; this is a fact. The fact of Gravitation known to all animals, is not surer than this inner Fact, which may be known to all men." Past and Present, III, xv, 221.

³ Again, chapter two showed that though Carlyle's concept of work required the better part of the 1820s to evolve and become clear to him, his native puritan purposefulness made him conscious of the "shortcomings" of German transcendentalist thought from virtually the very beginning of his association with it and that, more to the point, his subsequent role as critic and interpreter of transcendentalism was undertaken with some conception of the purpose he felt it was to serve. Carlyle's selective and subjective interpretation of this labyrinthine philosophy gave it a direction, a discipline, a moral purpose it did not really possess.

(Sartor) and its fullest prophetic expression (Past and Present). These years saw the idealistic concept transformed into a "gospel," which in Carlyle's eyes was a practical programme for individual and societal regeneration.⁴ The third and final phase was Carlyle's narrowing prophetic vision from the mid-1840s.⁵ I will argue that if we see Carlyle's religion as the effectualization imperative and if we view the "earlier" Carlyle from the same perspective, this "later" Carlyle presents no mysterious inconsistency. In the conclusion to this chapter I will take a closer look at Carlyle's conception of the relationship of work and religion and discuss how this has encouraged a widespread misunderstanding and misinterpretation of his moral purpose.

I

On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History (1841), like Sartor, is a seminal work. While Sartor outlined the basics of the idealistic process of work, On Heroes pointed toward the practical means by which "working" individuals could be encouraged and sustained, by which the ultimate goal of work -- the theocratic society -- could be effectualized.⁶ In this sense, On Heroes is the gateway to

⁴ This second phase will be the focus of section I of this chapter.

⁵ The focus of Section II.

⁶ We saw in the last chapter that Carlyle considered the attainment by individuals (through their work) of a "proper" state of "hero-worship" the necessary prerequisite for the authoritarian "government of the best and

both Past and Present and Cromwell. It is the direction Carlyle's moral thought took him in the 1830s.

Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, With Elucidations

(1845) endured a long period of incubation. It is the major work on the Protestant Reformation Carlyle had long been contemplating. From the earliest years the major book ideas he entertained almost all had to do with what was for him this one pregnant subject. They included a biography of Luther, a biography of Knox, a history of the Scottish Reformation, and a history of Cromwell's Puritan Revolution.⁷ But it was 1840 (just after completing the lectures "On Heroes") before Carlyle began working in earnest on Cromwell.⁸

The time lag is significant. It was because Carlyle was always preoccupied with the effectualization imperative and did come to consider it his central purpose that his views on how best to "preach" it had long been in a state of flux: quite gradually through the 1820s, more rapidly through the 1830s, they became less theoretical and more practical.

wisest* capable of overseeing England's metamorphosis.

⁷ In early 1830 Carlyle wrote of the fact that he had "long been striving...to represent [the Reformation] to myself under all possible points of view." CL, 5, 60; TC to David Aitken, 26 January 1830. Carlyle's first journal entries in 1822 concern a projected study of the Civil War and Commonwealth era. Two Notebooks, 1, ff.

⁸ Using his rough notes as a guide, Carlyle turned the "Heroes" lectures into the book published in 1841.

Carlyle was as serious, purposeful and pedagogic about a projected "Life of Luther" in 1829 as he would be eleven years later regarding Cromwell and the Puritan revolution. "I have long had a sort of notion to write some life or characteristic of Luther," Carlyle revealed in 1829. "It would require immense research. -- Alas! alas! -- When are we to have another Luther? Such men are needed from century to century: there seldom has been more need of one than now."⁹ The only difference between 1829 and 1840 was that Carlyle had not yet come to any firm conclusions on how best to put the ideal of the Reformation into practice.

With the accumulation of life's experience Carlyle became less confident in the transcendental potential of free human aspiration. His moral thought grew more dependent on the idealistic strongmen or "heroes" he came to believe were alone capable of directing society's work and effectualizing its eventual metamorphosis. This was the process by which Carlyle began to feel more at home with the ascetic pessimism and moral absolutism of his native Calvinism. Though transcendental philosophy had given Carlyle an alternative foundation to the Christian Bible for the work ethic he had inherited, had engendered an idealistic faith

⁹ Two Notebooks, 139-40. In 1831 Carlyle was still struggling with the problem of readapting Luther to the didactic purposes of the nineteenth century. CL 5, 420; TC to Jane Welsh Carlyle, 11 Sept. 1831. See also CL, 6, 12; TC to Macvey Napier, 8 Oct. 1831.

in the potential of individuals to transcend their limitations, which he retained, his actual expectations, paradoxically, diminished as his puritanism increasingly dominated his psyche. In his thought, he began to rely more on the traditionally Calvinistic "compulsions and controls" for the effectualization of virtuous individuals and a virtuous community.¹⁰

It was Protestantism's earnest spirit and single-minded pursuit of truth and virtue that had always guided Carlyle's life. And in his moral thought Protestantism as a theme had been becoming more dominant, its purpose clearer and more focused, as time passed. This process was accelerated by Carlyle's completion of The French Revolution (1837), which crystallized his long-held Calvinist conviction that the course of human history was dictated by divine favour or disapproval, and which gave the ultimate justification to his gospel of work.¹¹ The "Heroes" lectures of 1840 are the

¹⁰ See Harold, Carlyle and German Thought, 235-37. See also Froude, First Forty Years, II, 55. Past and Present, as we have seen, exhibited the tension in Carlyle's thought between the hope for self-improvement he saw in the restless (though materialistic) activity and experience of a Plugson, yet the need for the wide range of proactive government initiatives to direct and control society's metamorphosis, such as the enforced institution of the principle of "permanence of contract" in creating "industrial regiments." And Samson, of course, was implied as the kind of necessary chief autocrat of an "Aristocracy of Talent" England's "hero-worship" was to effectualize.

¹¹ Carlyle's short-lived career as a lecturer, made possible by the success of The French Revolution, is instructive. After the "History of German literature" series in 1837 (in a sense Carlyle's "farewell" to his German apprenticeship), he chose the broader framework of the "History of Literature" (1838), within which he could accommodate the Reformation, Luther, Ulrich von Hutten and Erasmus (lecture VII of XII). For the lectures of 1839 Carlyle concerned himself solely with the "Revolutions of Modern Europe," and devoted fully half to the reforming spirit of Protestantism.

end result of this process. By this time Carlyle had grouped two of the most central subject-interests of his life under the Protestant rubric: "...Protestantism has not died yet, that I hear of! ...German Literature and the French Revolution; rather considerable signs of life!"¹²

Carlyle came to conceive the whole struggle of the modern age in terms of the spirit of Protestantism. Protestantism was "the grand root from which our whole subsequent European History branches out."¹³ For Carlyle, the "first act" of Protestantism was Luther's revolt against false spiritual authority; the second was Cromwell's broadened attack against both false spiritual and false earthly authority; the third was the French Revolution's violent uncontrolled levelling of all human falsity, "the explosive confused return of mankind to Reality and Fact..."¹⁴ In On Heroes Carlyle's purposeful Protestant iconoclasm delineates the historical pattern of revolution "in which essentially idolatrous beliefs are violently destroyed and replaced by

Lecture II tackled Protestantism generally while both III and IV were devoted to Cromwell's Puritan revolution. V and VI treated the French Revolution.

¹² Carlyle, On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History, IV ("The Hero as Priest"), 117.

¹³ On Heroes, IV ("The Hero as Priest"), 106. This is Carlyle's "reductive and schematic concept of historical periods" identified by Albert J. LaValley. LaValley, Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern, 245. The cause of such tendencies in Carlyle was undoubtedly the dominance of the effectualization imperative in his moral thought.

¹⁴ Carlyle, On Heroes VI ("The Hero as King"), 203. See also IV ("The Hero as Priest"), 106.

genuine vision."¹⁵ Throughout the book Carlyle leaves no doubt as to what the new epoch to be realized is:

"Theocracy, Government of God, is precisely the thing to be struggled for!The Earth will not become too godlike!"¹⁶

In the progress of Carlyle's life "On Heroes" are an epoch in themselves. They were the last of Carlyle's lecture-series, having "a thematic depth and a conceptual unity" the previous lectures lacked, and they were the only lectures Carlyle chose to turn into a book.¹⁷ The essentially (conscious or unconscious) pious and purposeful, divinely ordained spirit of Protestantism he came to perceive in history, the destruction of the accumulated obstructions, misconceptions and delusions he saw symbolized in the French Revolution, made him, in real and practical ways, forever expectant and impatient thereafter of the new beginning founded on the rule of truth, justice, and divine law. Carlyle interrupts the chronological ordering of his lectures by placing Cromwell (the "Hero as King") after the eighteenth century "Hero as Man of Letters," in order to

¹⁵ Michael Goldberg, "Introduction" to On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History, lviii.

¹⁶ On Heroes, IV ("The Hero as Priest"), 130-31. Carlyle refers to the reforming efforts of John Knox in Scotland, whose work he considered Cromwell to have continued in England. See also CL, 12, 150; TC to Margaret Carlyle, 23 May 1840.

¹⁷ Goldberg, "Introduction" to On Heroes, lvii.

compare him favourably with the alternative, secular king, Napoleon.¹⁸ Cromwell was the type of divinely inspired chief Governor Carlyle came to believe was alone capable of ordering, sustaining and ultimately effectualizing individual and societal metamorphosis.¹⁹ To Carlyle Cromwell is the hero-king who

is practically the summary for us of all the various figures of Heroism; Priest, Teacher, whatsoever of earthly or of spiritual dignity we can fancy to reside in a man, embodies itself here, to command over us, to furnish us with constant practical teaching, to tell us for the day and hour what we are to do.²⁰

The years between Sartor and On Heroes were the most critical to Carlyle's professional life as prophet of the gospel of work. He was transformed from an obscure, insecure critic of a foreign literature in desolate Craigenputtoch to a respected (if peculiar) "sage" dispensing wisdom in cosmopolitan London. The success of The French Revolution put him in demand as a thinker, encouraging his inclination

¹⁸ Napoleon, Carlyle explains, "had to begin not out of the Puritan Bible, but out of poor Sceptical Encyclopedies." On Heroes, VI ("The Hero as King"), 204.

¹⁹ Carlyle's evolved conception of work, Protestantism and the effectualization imperative appears to have mirrored his evolved estimation of the Lord Protector. In 1822, "Cromwell and the rest look like a pack of fanatical knaves-- a compound of religious enthusiasm, and of barbarous selfishness..." By the end of 1826 the verdict has improved somewhat to "at once a hero and a blackguard pettifogging scrub..." Two Notebooks, 17 and 93. By 1840 he has become the king of kings.

²⁰ On Heroes, VI ("The Hero as King"), 169.

toward moral criticism and prophecy, which he indulged increasingly through the lecture series.²¹ The first section of this chapter has argued that it was the effectualization imperative looming in the pit of Carlyle's moral consciousness that fuelled this transformation.

The central importance of Cromwell to Carlyle's professional and private life and the great effort devoted to it, supports this contention.²² Past and Present, though the most representative of Carlyle's mature concept of work (in breadth and balance of thought it is the "essential Carlyle"), was an evasion of the difficulties of Cromwell, which from 1840 was Carlyle's one preoccupation.²³ Quite plainly, from 1840 until the book's third and final edition of 1849 Carlyle was obsessed with Cromwell. His journals and correspondence, especially up to the publication of the first edition of 1845, are quite literally filled with Cromwelliana and the difficulties of making a true epic of

²¹ Any mention of the short work Chartism (1839), at once a radical and a conservative piece of social criticism and an anticipation of Past and Present, has been noticeably absent from this thesis thus far.

²² And it is also true that Cromwell became the long-planned major work on Protestantism because Cromwell, being English and chronologically the closest to Carlyle's own time, was the most applicable, relevant and potentially effective means for the moral instruction of nineteenth century England. On 26 December 1840, freshly underway with what was then a general intention to produce a history of the Puritan revolution, Carlyle confided in his journal, "If one can delineate anything of England, then this thing. Heaven guide me!" Froude, Life in London, I, 215.

²³ The former work was a suitable temporary substitute for the latter: we saw in chapter four how the Puritan and his revolution loom over Past and Present.

✓

Cromwell and the Puritan revolution. What Carlyle was struggling to make clear was the message of his entire life. His difficulty, as touched upon in the previous chapter, was in making what he clearly understood to be the "soul" of the revolution -- the attempt to effectualize God's laws on earth -- applicable and real to the nineteenth century.²⁴ The "body" of Puritanism, Carlyle admits in Cromwell, "was bound to die," the practical necessities of modern England require that it remain dead; but the "soul" of it must live again in new clothes.²⁵ "Till we become Believers and Puritans in our way, no result will be arrived at!"²⁶

Indeed, in Cromwell and throughout his private journals and correspondence, Carlyle links the effectualization imperative with Cromwell's ascetic Protestantism, and with the concept of work. Explicitly, Carlyle says very little of Cromwell's Puritanism in Cromwell precisely because its purpose is so simple, so self-evident in his speech and actions. Carlyle explains only that in Cromwell's Puritan universe "the grand axis of all" was man's "Two Covenants" with God, namely, God's gift of grace to man and man's duty of work to God-- "Two; and by Christ's death they have

²⁴ See, for example, CL, 13, 72; TC to Thomas Murray, 2 April 1841.

²⁵ Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, With Elucidations, 5 vols., 3rd edition (London: Chapman and Hall, 1849), I, 8.

²⁶ CL, 12, 283; TC to Thomas Ballantyne, 8 October, 1840.

become One: there for Oliver is the divine solution of this our mystery of Life."²⁷ Typical of many is a letter in which Carlyle spoke of Cromwell's "grand attempt to shape [his] Life according to the Christian Scriptures; one of the grandest Attempts ever made,-- and not likely to be repeated..."²⁸ For Carlyle, Puritanism's effectualization imperative was "the last of our Heroisms," the model by which alone human aspiration could continue.²⁹ To an acquaintance he wrote of his long "studies and struggles" with "our great Puritan Civil-War, what I call the 'Apotheosis of Protestantism.'"³⁰

II

So far this concluding chapter has made the central importance of the effectualization imperative to Carlyle's early life, including Past and Present and Cromwell, clearer. We have seen how Carlyle's early years are properly

²⁷ Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, V, 151. See also John Morrow, "Heroes and Constitutionals: The Ideological Significance of Thomas Carlyle's Treatment of the English Revolution," History of Political Thought 14, 2 (1993), 207, and D.J. Trela, A History of Carlyle's Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches. (Queenston, Ontario: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), 149, 182.

²⁸ CL, 18, 223; TC to C.K.J. Bunsen?, 27 Sept. 1844. Twenty-two years later Carlyle was still expressing much the same thought: "They [Puritans] wanted to make the nation altogether conformable to the Hebrew Bible, which they, and all men, understood to be the exact transcript of the 'Will of God';-- and could there be, for man, a more legitimate aim?" CME, 4, "Inaugural Address" (delivered upon Carlyle's investiture as Rector of the University of Edinburgh, April 1866), 396.

²⁹ Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, I, 2.

³⁰ CL, 15, 239; TC to Karl August Varnhagen von Ense, 19 December 1842.

understood in these ascetically moral, specifically Calvinistic terms. Carlyle's disillusionment, the narrowing and hardening of his prophetic vision especially in the years after Past and Present, and the occasional brutality of his work prescriptions which resulted, is well-known.³¹ From this time Carlyle's social diagnoses became less hopeful, his prescriptions more severe, and work as a concept came increasingly to entail nothing much more than blind submission to any constituted authority. The best example of this phase of Carlyle's life are the Latter-Day Pamphlets (1850), which gave great offence in Carlyle's day and continue to do so today. What is not as well-known, however, is the degree to which this later Carlyle is, in fact, consistent with the earlier Carlyle.

As Chris Vanden Bossche explains, when "we are unable to see exactly what the relationship between early and late is, we fail to understand the precise nature of the problems in the early Carlyle or what really happens in the later works."³² The later Carlyle has been misunderstood largely because the early Carlyle has been misunderstood. When we (as I am arguing we should) recognize work and the effectualization

³¹ The tensions between transcendental and Calvinistic influences in Past and Present have already been noted. Temperamentally, Past and Present can be considered the mid-point of Carlyle's life.

³² Chris R. Vanden Bossche, Carlyle and the Search for Authority, viii-ix. See chapter one, section I.

imperative as the linchpin between early and late, and its centrality even to the Carlyle of the early years, the later Carlyle is less the easily dismissable, psychologically disturbed ranter than the same intense, uncompromising (if less forgiving) moral idealist.

Carlyle's disillusionment itself is a direct consequence of the seriousness with which he took the effectualization imperative and his role as prophet of the gospel of work. Carlyle intended Past and Present's gospel of work to be taken seriously, and to a certain degree it was. As a "gospel of activity" entailing self-reliance, strength, "manliness" and "progress," work was enormously popular. Its amorphousness, its freedom from any theology or dogma combined with an earnest piety, allowed room for both the critical intellect Victorians could not ignore and the essentially religious world view they felt morally bound to retain.³³ Carlyle reluctantly agreed to be photographed for Ford Madox Brown's monumental Work (completed 1863) in 1859, which was widely acknowledged even in its own time as symbolizing the ideals of an entire age.³⁴

³³ See William N. Rogers II, "Arabia Deserta and the Victorians," in Explorations in Doughty's Arabia, ed. Stephen E. Tabachnick (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987), 56. See also A.L. LeQuessne, Carlyle, 72-73.

³⁴ See Kaplan, Thomas Carlyle: A Biography, 406. According to his biographer, Brown owned a copy of Past and Present which "bears signs of frequent perusal," many passages "enunciating the gospel of Work...pencil-marked." Ford M. Hueffer, Ford Madox Brown. A Record of His Life and Work (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1896), 189, 195.

But the concept of work as Carlyle primarily and essentially intended it -- as a practical, religious programme leading to the establishment of an authoritarian moral order -- was widely rejected. Perhaps Brown's standing the Church of England clergyman Frederick Denison Maurice next to Carlyle in Work was symbolic of England's inability to accept Carlyle as a religious (in the strictest sense of that term) authority. In any case, Carlyle's moral prescriptions in Past and Present were accepted, generally, so long as they required lip service and not a practical commitment. By all but the most idealistic or impressionable, Carlyle was regarded as not much more than "a kind of compensation, a menacing yet somehow comforting assurance that a scale of moral values existed which could be rejected in words, even if it was ignored in practice."³⁵ In direct contradiction of Carlyle's intent, almost all contemporary criticism, even that which was on balance positive, found fault with his "impractical" programme. The reaction of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine is representative.

Alas! it is advice such as this that the Christian preacher, century after century, utters from his pulpit, which he makes the staple of his eloquence, and which he and his listeners are contented to applaud; and the more contented

³⁵ Julian Symonds, Thomas Carlyle. The Life and Ideas of a Prophet (Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1952), 240. The English, Emerson wryly commented, regarded Carlyle "as a sort of portable cathedral bell." Cited in Ruth apRoberts, The Ancient Dialect: Thomas Carlyle and Comparative Religion (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 116.

probably to applaud, as, on all hands, it is tacitly understood to be far too good to be practised.³⁶

Carlyle's frustration typical of the years following Past and Present was personal as well as social.³⁷ But in both cases the source of this frustration, of his narrowing and hardening of prophetic vision, was moral. Personally, England's rejection of his programme intensified the doubts Carlyle the Calvinist had always felt about the soundness of his vocation. He had always suspected (and his correspondence, journals, works and recorded conversation are full of examples) that what he did as a writer was not "effectual" enough, was not really work. The arts generally his puritan psyche had always rebelled against, in spite of himself, as sensuous animalism and an indulging of the ego; he had always suspected that his chosen vocation did not reduce him to submission effectively enough. And of course, these doubts intensified as he grew more reconciled to his Calvinist inheritance, and as his attempts to find a more

³⁶ Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, LIV, 33 (July 1843), 122. Despite the idea that to preach a "truth" widely rejected is an indication of prophethood (an association Carlyle encouraged), he did not bargain on such a fundamental repudiation. His firm belief in the practicableness of his prescriptions is indicated by an earlier letter: in it he spoke of "Practical Sermon(s)," which he implied were not normally to be heard "at Church." CL, 7, 100; TC to John Stuart Mill, 22 February 1834. A practical sermon was precisely what Carlyle believed he gave in Past and Present.

³⁷ Symonds, 225.

practical role were frustrated.³⁸

This personal frustration fed Carlyle's social frustration, which grew through the 1840s as it became increasingly apparent to him that England, at least on the level of his own uncompromising Calvinism, did not desire virtue to be effectualized. As the socio-economic crisis of the late 1830s and early 1840s moderated and finally disappeared, England seemed to become increasingly accepting and tolerant of such Carlylean bugbears as "laissez-faire" and undirected democracy. The 1848 revolutions, which had seemed to Carlyle to offer such promise for a general overturning of the status-quo, failed to effect any fundamental change, further

³⁸ What is not universally understood is Carlyle's growing interest through the 1840s in the possibility of taking a part in practical politics. Froude confirmed that Carlyle had considered the idea of securing a seat in Parliament "at the time of the 'Latter-day Pamphlets.'" Carlyle had developed a considerable admiration for Peel beginning with the Corn Law repeal of 1846 (chiefly urged by Carlyle in Past and Present), and after Carlyle's presentation of Cromwell in appreciation (a not-so-subtle hint of Carlyle's further expectations), the two had forged the beginnings of a friendship. It appears this friendship raised Carlyle's hopes of actually being chosen to fill the position of minister of education in a future Peel government, perhaps even under his own scheme for the reform of the executive. (Carlyle proposed in the Latter-Day Pamphlets III and IV that the "ten wisest men" in England be appointed to executive portfolios free of the control of the elected Parliament, which would be reduced to an advisory capacity.) But Peel's sudden death in 1850 and, more significantly, the bitterly hostile public reaction to the Pamphlets from about the same time, effectively ended any hope of Carlyle's for this type of practical role. See Froude, Life in London, II, 27 and 52; Kaplan, 361. Nine years later, in reluctantly agreeing to pose for Ford Madox Brown's Work, the disillusioned Carlyle felt constrained to confide, "I think it a pity you had not put (or should not still put) some other man than me into your Great Picture." TC to Ford Madox Brown, 5 May 1859, cited in Kaplan, 407. For a look at Carlyle's temporary shift in the late 1840s from history and prophecy to journalism, see Jules Paul Seigel, "Carlyle and Peel: The Prophet's Search for a Heroic Politician and an Unpublished Fragment" Victorian Studies: A Journal of the Humanities, Arts and Sciences, 26 (2), Winter 1983, 183, 184 and passim.

undermining his prophetic relevance.³⁹ The Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations (1851) symbolized with its Crystal Palace the reinvigorated "faith in material progress and...shift in the general social outlook of the period."⁴⁰ Obviously, Carlyle "took a very critical view of this self-congratulatory shrine of a complacent Victorian bourgeoisie..."⁴¹

That Carlyle's personal and social frustration was moral at its core is borne out by his correspondence, journals and recorded conversation from the 1840s onward. "Nobody on the whole 'believes my report,'" he wrote in 1848. "The friendliest reviewers, I can see, regard me as a wonderful athlete, a ropedancer whose perilous somersets it is worth sixpence (paid into the Circulating Library) to see.... Not

³⁹ Froude, Life in London, I, 476. Indeed Carlyle was "wildly elated, and soon depressed, by every revolutionary event up to at least 1848." David J. DeLaura, "Carlyle and Arnold: The Religious Issue," ..., 143. It is a reflection of his preoccupation with the effectualization imperative that Carlyle did welcome what can be called the wholesale iconoclasm such large-scale revolutionary events seemed to promise. It was not the case, in other words, that he simply turned from a friend of liberalism and radicalism (in the earlier years) to a conservative reactionary pre-fascist (in the later), as many observers believe. See also Michael K. Goldberg, "Carlyle, Dickens, and the Revolution of 1848," Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian Fiction, 12 (1983), 229-30 and passim.

⁴⁰ Albert Boime, "Ford Madox Brown, Thomas Carlyle and Karl Marx: Meaning and Mystification of Work in the Nineteenth Century," Arts Magazine, 56 (1) 1981, 117.

⁴¹ T. Peter Park, "Thomas Carlyle and the Jews," Journal of European Studies: Literature and Ideas from the Renaissance to the Present, 20 (77), March 1990, 8.

one of them can or will do the least to help me."⁴² A contemporary in 1877 put Carlyle's "sufferings" and "rages" down to his "Scottish dogmatic breeding" and the fact that it could not be made to reconcile with the world as it really was.⁴³ Perhaps C.F. Harrold put it most cogently: "As a Puritan, Carlyle expected much from man, and was disappointed."⁴⁴

Carlyle's themes had become predominately "cowardice" and "hypocrisy." England was cowardly because she was not prepared to undertake the physical and emotional toil attendant upon the work of effectualization, and hypocritical, because, despite her demonstrated lack of a moral centre, she sought to keep up the appearances of what to Carlyle were ineffectual dogmatic churches and a specious (read: ineffectual) social "concern."⁴⁵ To him Christianity

⁴² Carlyle, journal entry (9 February 1848), cited in Froude, Life in London, I, 452. Carlyle repeated his lament twenty-seven years later on the occasion of his eightieth birthday: "They say I am a great man now...but not one of them believes my report; not one of them will do what I have bidden them do." Kaplan, 523-24 and Froude, Life in London, II, 435-36.

⁴³ William Allingham and D. Radford, eds., William Allingham's Diary (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967), 254.

⁴⁴ Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought, 28. Emerson left a famous pen portrait of Carlyle from an 1847 visit to London: "He talks like a very unhappy man, profoundly solitary, displeased and hindered by all men and things about him, and plainly biding his time, and meditating how to undermine and explode the whole world of nonsense which torments him." Kenneth Marc Harris, Carlyle and Emerson: Their Long Debate (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 129-30.

⁴⁵ Carlyle often grouped both of these failings into the epithet "cowardly untruth." For an example, see the journal entry for 29 December 1848 in Froude, Life in London, I, 484.

had become "a paltry, mealy-mouthed 'religion of cowards,' who can have no religion but a sham one..."⁴⁶

In fact the Latter-Day Pamphlets have traditionally been written off as incomprehensible, blindly reactionary rant, inconsistent and irreconcilable with the earlier Carlyle.⁴⁷ But when the whole Carlyle is properly understood, when the connection between "early" and "late" is recognized, they can be seen for what they are-- a very effective critique of the inadequacies of Victorian liberalism. The brute force and frankness of the Pamphlets' anger has blinded many to the consistent and provocative idealism at their core.⁴⁸

An excellent example is Carlyle's criticism of the new, cleaner and generally more humane "model prisons." Carlyle found fault with this particular expression of Victorian

⁴⁶ CL, 11, 229-30; TC to Thomas Erskine, 12 June 1847.

⁴⁷ This traditionally superficial response to the Pamphlets, as Michael Goldberg explains, "has tended to color all subsequent estimates of [Carlyle's] work" as a whole. "Yet the Pamphlets themselves have been largely ignored, and the issues raised by them dismissed or evaded." Goldberg believes that "in many ways" the Pamphlets "are the Carlyle problem." Goldberg, "A universal howl of execration: Carlyle's Latter-Day Pamphlets and Their Critical Reception," in Carlyle and His Contemporaries: Essays in Honor of Charles Richard Sanders, ed. John Clubbe (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1976), 147.

⁴⁸ The nature of the Pamphlets' rhetoric is a good example of what George Levine called the "abuse of Carlylese." Carlylese, Levine argued, hinders the reader's ability to concentrate on the message within. See George Levine, "The Use and Abuse of Carlylese," in The Art of Victorian Prose, eds. George Levine and William Madden (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968), 103. The structure of the Pamphlets exacerbates this problem. Unable to adjust his anger to the requirements of a more artistic whole, Carlyle instead gave free vent to it by covering with separate pamphlets distinct aspects of modern society in as focused and intense a manner as possible.

philanthropy not in itself, but because he saw in the performance of such relatively small and easy social palliations England's justification for disregarding the "continents of dingy poor and dirty dwellings" which remained all around the prisons.⁴⁹ In short, Carlyle was not against benevolence, as many contemporaries and many today still believe. He was profoundly "for it."⁵⁰

The Pamphlets' whole dialectical thrust amounts to what Carlyle believed was England's knowledge of truth, justice and virtue, yet unwillingness to pursue and effectualize it.⁵¹ The notions of Heaven and Hell only came to exist, writes Carlyle, "because men, having hearts as well as stomachs, felt there, and knew through all their being, the difference between Good and Evil..."⁵² The honest and true man knows in his heart "that except by sloth and cowardly

⁴⁹ Latter-Day Pamphlets (London: Chapman and Hall, 1850), II ("Model Prisons"), 12.

⁵⁰ Carlyle's contemptuous dismissal of the English "emancipatory spirit" had a similar moral centre. England, he believed, held her working classes in similar bonds of slavery and yet felt secure enough not only to maintain them in that condition, but also to deny them the guarantees of food and shelter enjoyed by black slaves. See "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question" (1849). While Carlyle could often seem harsh, the source was usually if not always his extraordinary idealism. "The depth of his human sympathy and pity is proportionate to his outrage and exasperation." apRoberts, 116.

⁵¹ That the effectualization imperative is Carlyle's primary point of reference in the Pamphlets is exemplified by his statement, similar to many, that if in "every human law" there does not exist the aim of attaining "the millennium," then that law "is not a human but a diabolic one." Latter-Day Pamphlets, II ("Model Prisons"), 44.

⁵² Latter-Day Pamphlets, VIII ("Jesuitism"), 50.

falsity evil is not possible here."⁵³

Carlyle attempts to achieve some coherence of vision in the final pamphlet, "Jesuitism." Jesuitism is the term he chooses for the belief in a religion, institutions or ideals (philanthropy, for example) for appearances' sake only-- the conscious willingness to accommodate evil for the sake of dogma, power or, simply, ease.⁵⁴ Carlyle asks, what if

it were a false notion [of the universe] which we believed; alas, if it were even a false notion which we only pretended to believe? What battle can there be, in that latter fatal case? Our faith, or notion of this Universe, is not false only, but is the father of falsity; a thing that destroys itself, and is equivalent to the death of all notion, all belief or motive to action, except what the appetites and the astucities may yield.⁵⁵

The enduring image of the Latter-Day Pamphlets and the vision of Carlyle's moral frustration from the mid-1840s is a society corrupt to its very core, a society knowing virtue

⁵³ Latter-Day Pamphlets, VI ("Parliaments"), 45.

⁵⁴ See CL, 20, 227; TC to Thomas Erskine, 11 July 1846. In Jules Seigel's words jesuitism is "spiritual evil, that point from which all social disorder emanates." Jules Paul Seigel, "Latter-Day Pamphlets: The Near Failure of Form and Vision," in Carlyle Past and Present. A Collection of New Essays, eds. K.J. Fielding and Rodger L. Tarr (London: Vision Press, 1976), 167. To Carlyle "the hallmark of corruption is dilettantism and hypocrisy, the loss of spiritual force and conviction, the divorce of profession and performance: unreality." J.W. Burrow, "The Spirit's Trials: Reformation and Renewal," chapter 10 in A Liberal Descent. Victorian Historians and the English Past. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 253.

⁵⁵ Latter-Day Pamphlets, VIII ("Jesuitism"), 6.

yet unwilling to reverence any hero higher than a very rich railway tycoon.⁵⁶ Indeed the image is a universe all one big "Swine's-trough" with no higher duty than the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, a universe in which moral evil is simply "unattainability of Pig's-wash" and moral good "attainability of ditto." The only Heaven striven for is satiation.⁵⁷

III

What this concluding chapter has sought to show is that the effectualization imperative at the core of Carlyle's ascetic Protestantism and concept of work was his guiding, even obsessive moral principle in life, and as such should itself be considered the answer to the question asked by many confused Carlyleans: "What, exactly, was Carlyle's religion-- did he even have one?"⁵⁸

A major cause of the confusion has been the fact, touched upon in the introduction to this thesis, that Carlyle has most often been studied only in one or more of his aspects.

⁵⁶ George Hudson. See Pamphlet VII, "Hudson's Statue."

⁵⁷ Latter-Day Pamphlets, VIII (Jesuitism"), 29. See the "Pig Philosophy," 28-31.

⁵⁸ Once again, for Carlyle the believer's whole activity, his "whole work on Earth is an emblematic spoken or acted prayer, Be the will of God done on earth, -- not the Devil's will, or any of the Devil's servants' wills! He has a religion, this man..." Past and Present, III, xv, 221. And what appears to settle the issue is Carlyle's bald assertion to an acquaintance that Cromwell's Puritan spirit "is at bottom my religion too..." CL, 18, 53; TC to Alexander J. Scott, 30 May 1844.

The way of modern scholarship is specialization, and the specialization paradigm is naturally drawn to those tangential aspects of a personality requiring a smaller research scope and submitting more readily, therefore, to scholarly certainty. As a result, Carlyle has been approached for the most part from the outside-in, as it were, rather than from the inside-out. And this is undoubtedly the major reason that work, while so obviously holding the key to Carlyle's inner being and "religion," nevertheless has been almost completely (as far as comprehensive studies are concerned) neglected.

This in large measure has been the cause of the many misunderstandings and misinterpretations concerning Carlyle's moral purpose. The most common and most fundamental of these, the one which more than any other explains the widespread confusion surrounding Carlyle's religion, is the assumption that Carlyle was more a secularist and a humanist than he in fact was.⁵⁹ C. Stephen Finley sees Carlyle's On Heroes as an expression of "Romantic humanism," of his "marked and widely influential secularism"; Michael Lopez concludes that Carlyle "came to believe in nothing but force. The worship of might took the

⁵⁹ Moreover, as an individual's sense of purpose Carlyle's puritanism seems even less conceivable now than it did in his own day.

place of the worship of God."⁶⁰ While these quite representative assessments contain some truth (the latter very little), they are exemplary nevertheless of the general tendency to mistake Carlyle's means for his end.

When Carlyle's concept of work itself and its relation to the whole Carlyle is investigated in any depth, it is discovered that work's secularist and humanist facade (the pursuit of individual self-realization and material progress, the near-deification of human energy and power) is only the means to the end-- the effectualization of virtue. "Labor" is "the heart of Carlyle's social ideal," wrote C.F. Harrold,

Yet it is labor in a strictly Calvinistic interpretation: it is labor not for the individual but for "the divine," for the whole. The end would be "the moralization of all life," with worldly callings exalted as the means of spiritual expression [emphasis mine].... his point of view is profoundly theocratic. This fundamental fact about Carlyle is rarely given its proper emphasis by critics and expositors.It is only because Carlyle has so effectually removed from his thought and style the more striking features of Calvinist dogma that we seldom realize that, under his fulminations against his time, there actually

⁶⁰ See C. Stephen Finley, " 'Greater Than Tongue Can Tell': Carlyle and Ruskin on the Nature of Christian Heroism," Christianity and Literature: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 34 (4), Summer 1985, 34, 27; and Michael Lopez, "Transcendental Failure: 'The Palace of Spiritual Power'" in Emerson: Prospect and Retrospect, ed. Joel Porte (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 129. Lopez quotes Walter Houghton's The Victorian Frame of Mind (New Haven: 1957), 217. (It should be noted that Lopez' study primarily concerns Emerson.) Both Lopez and Houghton are examples of the widespread misinterpretation of Carlyle's concept of "Might and Right." See chapter one section I and chapter four section III.

lay a frustrated hope of bringing his generation to a belief in the necessity for a theocratic order.⁶¹

Carlyle seems so secular only because he is so religious. In his earnest zeal for effectualizing the spirit of religion, he is eager to ridicule and ultimately discard the forms, dogmas, institutions and "clothings" of religion so many considered (and still consider) to be religion itself.⁶² The best example of this is Carlyle's approach to the relationship of work and religion. He "is careful to portray not religion as labor, but labor as religion."⁶³ In other words, in order to preserve and conserve the spirit and active impetus of religion, Carlyle discards the very concept of "religion" itself and substitutes in its place, work.⁶⁴ And he "takes precautions to guard labor from any

⁶¹ C.F. Harrold, "The Nature of Carlyle's Calvinism," Studies in Philology, XXXIII (July 1936), 482-84. The quoted segments in this passage are Harrold's references to A.M. Hunter's The Teaching of Calvin (London: 1950), 293.

⁶² Typical is Brice J. Christensen's belief of Carlyle's "early repudiation of Christian transcendence." In fact, Carlyle rejected only Christian dogma. See Brice J. Christensen, "Thomas Carlyle: The Ethical Imagination Gone Awry," Modern Age: A Quarterly Review, 30 (3-4), Summer-Fall 1986, 259 and passim. G.B. Tennyson grasped the nature of the problem when he concluded that "A religion without theology is, if not quite a contradiction in terms, at least very difficult to sustain and easily lends itself to distortion..." G.B. Tennyson, "Carlyle: Beginning with the Word," 19. Carlyle unwittingly encouraged the distortion with such comments as: "I have for many years strictly avoided going to church, or having anything to do with Mumbo-Jumbo." William Allingham's Diary, 217 (1872).

⁶³ LaValley, 203.

⁶⁴ In the preceding chapter and at the beginning of this one, we saw the emphatic insistence with which Carlyle defined this relationship. Again: "all true Work is Religion..."; and: "the Prayer which accomplished itself in special chapels at stated hours, and went not with a man, rising up from all his Work and Action, at all moments sanctifying the same, -- what was it ever

imputations of transitoriness, preserving its status as the one enduring principle behind the universe."⁶⁶

To this end, Carlyle "never closely defined his favorite word, work," which fact has contributed to the general haze and confusion surrounding the nature of Carlyle's religion.⁶⁶ To closely define the concept of work and so to transform it into a "doctrine" would be to forfeit its natural, unconscious and dynamic impetus. It would be to render an absolute and infinite imperative relative, finite, transitory and, in sum, ineffectual.⁶⁷ The institutional churches had, in fact, come to define their purposes by means of their dogmas, and in so doing they had rendered

good for?" Past and Present, III, xii, 193; xv, 224.

⁶⁵ LaValley, 203. In sum, Carlyle had "discovered beneath the process of the universe a principle of continuity which was both firmly rooted in fact and yet mystic and spiritual enough for him, deeply connected with both the universe and man, historical and yet transcending history... the religious basis behind all existence." LaValley, 206. Both this and the preceding statements LaValley applies specifically to Past and Present.

⁶⁶ The quotation is Harrold's. See Carlyle and German Thought, 197. See also chapter one, section I.

⁶⁷ We remember from chapter three that Carlyle considered a prime virtue of both his father and Abbot Samson (which he ascribed to Cromwell as well) to be their "silence"-- their reluctance to talk about their religion, their resolution to live it, in effect to effectualize it. For Carlyle, the too-easy faculty of speech was a dissipation of thought and ultimately, then, of purpose. See Two Notebooks, 176. Feeling that he had finished with the subject in Sartor, Carlyle resolutely refused thereafter to discuss in any depth the question of who or what constituted "God." Likewise, where they exist at all explicit, positive and constructive statements on religion, published or otherwise, are either vague, brief and insubstantial, or aborted. Harrold has shown that though Carlyle drew upon Goethe and Novalis "for his doctrines of silence and mystery," the foundation is to be found in Calvin's Institutes. To the Calvinist sense of awe and terror, "speculation about problems of knowledge in the field of religion was futile and blasphemous." Harrold, "The Nature of Carlyle's Calvinism," 481-82. On the Institutes see McNeill, ed., Institutes of the Christian Religion, I, ii, 2 (41-43) and I, vii, 4 (78-80).

their central Christian purpose argumentative and relative; they had allowed it to become separate from the human lives, and thus the daily conduct, of their congregations. Their means, then -- their institutionalization -- had to too great an extent become their end, and Carlyle saw that the inadequacies of this brand of religion encouraged the believer to discard Christian idealism altogether for agnosticism and secularism.

In a sense, Carlyle rejected Saint-Simonism as a religion for the opposite reason he found the institutional churches inadequate, though his perspective was still the effectualization imperative and his prescription still work. As a variety of "Christian socialism" Saint-Simonism had the practical social ideal of which Carlyle could approve. But whereas Carlyle believed the institutional churches had made the mistake of making their means their end, the Saint-Simonians saw only their end and lacked any means. The "one indispensable element" of religion and "the essence of the whole" Saint-Simonism lacked, he wrote to a leading figure in the movement, was "Some SYMBOL or Symbolic Representation, whereby the Divinity was sensibly manifested." That is to say, some practical means by which the social ideal could be applied, made possible, real. This was the symbolical means, believed Carlyle, by which the "Infinite" of man's imagination could be made to harmonize

with his "Finite" understanding. Carlyle calls the highest form of this symbol the example of Christ-- "his Life, and his Biography, and what followed therefrom..."⁶⁸ We saw in both Sartor and Past and Present that Carlyle chose to make his symbolic representation of the divine this "work" of Christ itself. This infinite ideal of work he sought to bring down into harmony with the finite lives of men through the institutionalization of practical "labour" and permanence of contract.⁶⁹ As Carlyle envisioned it, this labour could then become, by degrees of experience and personal growth, true work and a true religion, which could engender -- by degrees -- a true society, a theocratic order.⁷⁰

Work was the embodiment of the effectualization imperative for Carlyle because not only was it a dynamic impetus and the expression of an ideal; it was also "mechanical," practical. It was connected with the real lives of individuals as well as their aspirations.⁷¹ Carlyle's moral

⁶⁸ CL, 5, 278; TC to Gustave D'Eichthal, 17 May 1831.

⁶⁹ See Past and Present, IV, iii ("The One Institution") and v ("Permanence"). See also chapter four, sections IV and V.

⁷⁰ In the letter to D'Eichthal, Carlyle politely asked, "Why keep pointing out the fair Heavenly country, which many men in all nations have already descried; when persons of such faculty as some of you exhibit might aid in furnishing us wings to reach it with, which were the harder service?" CL, 5, 279; TC to Gustave D'Eichthal, 17 May 1831.

⁷¹ Again, Carlyle had discovered in the concept of work a process "deeply connected with both the universe and man, historical and yet transcending history..." LaValley, 206.

thought, generally speaking, is a continual dialectic between the unconscious and the conscious, the dynamic and the mechanical in human nature. This is predominately Carlyle's perspective in the seminal essays "Signs of the Times" and "Characteristics."⁷²

In both essays, Carlyle laments that the Age of Reason had begat an "Age of Machinery" in which it was felt necessary for everything to be made accessible to the conscious mind, rationalized, ultimately mechanized-- even religion. He gives as evidence of the dead mechanical condition of established religion the current belief (as he perceived it) that in order to have religion "we have only to vote half-a-million's worth of bricks and mortar, and build new churches."⁷³ But of course the dynamical faculty was ineffectual on its own. Alone, it lead to "idle, visionary, impracticable courses, and, especially in rude eras, to Superstition and Fanaticism..." To Carlyle it seemed clear

⁷² Published in 1829 and 1831, the essays were the first of Carlyle's efforts in social criticism after his "German apprenticeship" of the 1820s. Sartor, the germinal source of Carlyle's later thought, fleshes out many of the ideas adumbrated here.

⁷³ "Signs of the Times," CME, I, 468. Men "have lost faith in individual endeavour, and in natural force, of any kind," Carlyle laments. "Not for internal perfection, but for external combinations and arrangements... institutions, constitutions,-- for Mechanism of one sort or other, do they hope and struggle." Ibid., 468. It is interesting to remember that in Past and Present Carlyle attacked another manifestation of the Age of Mechanism which he felt had also made for a kind of arid fatalism: the "scientific" historian, "Dryasdust." By concentrating on the mere objects and aspects of the past and forgetting the inner dynamism and idealism, Dryasdust made it seem as though the past was only "inane discord" which must necessarily, therefore, continue on into the present and the future. Past and Present, IV, 1, 230. See also chapter four, sections II and IV.

"that only in the right coordination of the two" faculties dynamical and mechanical, "and the vigorous forwarding of both, does our true line of action lie."⁷⁴

In the sense of his propensity for reconciling opposites, the dynamic-mechanical dialectic of Carlyle's moral thought is reflected in the radical-conservative ambivalence of his political thought.⁷⁵ It is the reason he was and is still claimed by both radicals and conservatives (and by just about every other cause under the sun) as their own. Carlyle was neither radical nor conservative but both at the same time, and many things in between. In all matters both moral and political he was always striving to find and promote as a practical programme the most effective combination of opposing forces. As in the moral realm, the effectualization imperative is the key to understanding the inner consistency beneath the apparent political confusion.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ "Signs of the Times," CME, I, 478. Puritanism, Carlyle understood, could be unrestrainably -- and impracticably -- dynamic. Cromwell was the "mechanical" counterpoise, the hero-king who effectively commanded and directed Puritanism to its proper goal. When Cromwell died, Puritanism died. "Oliver is gone; and with him England's Puritanism...soon goes. Puritanism, without its King, is kingless, anarchic; falls into dislocation, self-collision; staggers, plunges into ever-deeper anarchy..." Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, V, 156.

⁷⁵ When I distinguish "political" from "moral" thought I am in fact making only a superficial distinction, for all of Carlyle's thought was moral at bottom.

⁷⁶ "Carlyle would not have acknowledged a contradiction between his early and late ideas or an ambivalence in his thought at any period, and, on his own terms, he would be right." Harris, 114. Harris doesn't reveal what he thought Carlyle's "own terms" were.

IV

To Carlyle's puritan mentality, religion was a life's purpose, not, in the mechanical sense merely, a day's or an hour's devotion. Taking square aim at the institutional churches, Carlyle found it incredible the idea that "things we are in doubt about, and need to have demonstrated and rendered probable [could] by any alchymy[sic] be made a 'Religion' for us..."⁷⁷ To him, because religion was necessarily an active, effective, twenty-four hours per day way of life, in the true believer there really could be no doubt as to its validity or its relevance. A true religion was of necessity an unconscious, infinite impetus to activity, not a conscious, "demonstrably probable" hypothesis.

We saw in chapter two that to Protestantism generally and to ascetic Protestantism especially, Christian submission to God was to be defined in active not passive terms. According to the example of Christ's "ministry of reconciliation," man was to actively do the will of God, "on earth as it is in Heaven," as his pious, never-ending thanks for God's utterly undeserved gift of grace. "Work while it is called To-day;

⁷⁷ Carlyle, The Life of John Sterling, in The Works of Thomas Carlyle in Thirty Volumes, XI, 97-98. Sterling, "his last meaningful public religious statement, separated Carlyle from every variety of contemporary religious thought." David J. DeLaura, "Carlyle and Arnold: The Religious Issue," in Carlyle Past and Present: A Collection of New Essays, eds. K. J. Fielding and Roger L. Tarr (London: Vision Press, 1976), 131.

for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."⁷⁸ Man's purpose was to reconcile God's virtue with this world; his goal was to effectualize virtue on earth.

To embrace this prescription as the guiding light and goal of Christianity and all earthly life, to attempt to give it a practical significance, was Cromwell's "Apotheosis of Protestantism." Although of Carlyle's works the most representative of his social, political, economic and overridingly moral thought is Past and Present, there is evidence apart from that already treated that to him the most significant was Cromwell. In a disillusioned but still essentially idealistic old age, Carlyle grumbled to a friend, "The only book of mine I care at all about is the Cromwell."⁷⁹ Cromwell, as we have seen, was the kind of heroic practical governor Carlyle came to believe was necessary if the Puritan ideal were ever to be made real.

John Holloway believed Carlyle's philosophy to be, "in a word, anti-mechanism."⁸⁰ But we have seen how Carlyle saw a

⁷⁸ Sartor, II, ix ("The Everlasting Yea"), 173. cf. Ecclesiastes 9:10 (Old Testament); John 9:4 (New Testament). See also chapter three, section III.

⁷⁹ William Allingham made this diary entry in 1874, when Carlyle was seventy-eight years old. He asserts that Carlyle "often said" this. See H. Allingham and D. Radford, eds., William Allingham's Diary, 30. See also Trela, 182.

⁸⁰ John Holloway, The Victorian Sage: Studies in Argument (New York: W.W. Norton, 1965), 23.

role for both anti-mechanism and mechanism. G.B. Tennyson improves on Holloway's verdict when he declares Carlyle's essence to have been his "conviction of the transcendent reality of God." This thesis has argued that Carlyle's central message flowing from his conviction of God's transcendent reality is the moral (and practical) imperative to conform to this reality. Tennyson himself implies as much, adding that "Carlyle was a God-intoxicated man. This was his glory. His tragedy was that he was never able to reconcile his awareness of God with any actual existing system or form for its expression."⁸¹ Leigh Hunt came closer to encapsulating Carlyle than he perhaps knew when, reviewing one of the lectures on the "Revolutions of Modern Europe," he described the latter's serious, melancholy appearance and oratorical effect. It was "as if some [seventeenth century] Puritan had come to life again, liberalized by German philosophy, and his own intense reflections and experience."⁸²

⁸¹ Tennyson, "Carlyle: Beginning with the Word," 17.

⁸² Cited in Althaus, Two Reminiscences, 94. For the entire review see the Examiner, 12 May 1839.

Select Bibliography

A. Bibliographies of Carlyle scholarship

Dillon, R.W. A Centenary Bibliography of Carlylean Studies: 1975-80. Edinburgh: The Carlyle Newsletter, 1983.

M.L.A. International Bibliography of Books and Articles on the Modern Languages and Literatures. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1981- (Annual, CD-Rom).

Tarr, Rodger L., ed. Thomas Carlyle. A Bibliography of English-Language Criticism, 1824-1974. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976.

Tennyson, G.B. "Thomas Carlyle." In Victorian Prose: A Guide to Research. Ed. David J. De Laura. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1973, 33-104.

B. Collections of Carlyle correspondence

Fielding, Kenneth J. and Clyde De L. Ryals, eds. The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle. 21 vols. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1970-93.

Carlyle, Alexander, ed. New Letters of Thomas Carlyle. 2 vols. London: John Lane, 1904.

C. Works by Carlyle

Carlyle, Thomas. "Characteristics." In Critical and Miscellaneous Essays. Vol. II. New York: P.F. Collier and Son, 1901, 344-83.

Carlyle, Thomas. Latter-Day Pamphlets. London: Chapman and Hall, 1850.

- Carlyle, Thomas. The Life of John Sterling. Vol. XI of The Works of Thomas Carlyle in Thirty Volumes. Centenary Edition. London: Chapman and Hall, 1897.
- Carlyle, Thomas. Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches: With Elucidations. 5 vols. 3rd Edition. London: Chapman and Hall, 1849.
- Carlyle, Thomas. On Heroes, Hero-Worship, & the Heroic in History. Ed.-in-Chief Murray Baumgarten, with Michael K. Goldberg, Joel J. Brattin and Mark Engel. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.
- Carlyle, Thomas. Past and Present. Everyman's Library Series. New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1947.
- Carlyle, Thomas. Reminiscences. Ed. Charles Eliot Norton. 1887; rpt. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1972.
- Carlyle, Thomas. Sartor Resartus. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1893.
- Carlyle, Thomas. "Signs of the Times." In Critical and Miscellaneous Essays. Vol. I. New York: P.F. Collier and Son, 1901, 462-87.
- Carlyle, Thomas. Two Notebooks of Thomas Carlyle. Ed. Charles Eliot Norton. 1898; rpt. Mamaroneck, New York: Paul P. Appel, 1972.
- Carlyle, Thomas. Two Reminiscences of Thomas Carlyle. Ed. John Clubbe. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1974.

D. Secondary sources (books)

- Allingham, H., and D. Radford, eds. William Allingham's Diary. Introduction by Geoffrey Grigson. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967.

- Althaus, Friedrich. Thomas Carlyle: A Biographical and Literary Portrait. In Two Reminiscences of Thomas Carlyle. Ed. and Trans. John Clubbe. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1974.¹
- apRoberts, Ruth. The Ancient Dialect: Thomas Carlyle and Comparative Religion. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988.
- Brown, Robert McAfee. The Spirit of Protestantism. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Buttrick, George Arthur et al. The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. An Illustrated Encyclopedia. 4 vols. New York: Abingdon Press, 1962.
- Calvin, John (Jean Cauvin). A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin. Ed. Hugh T. Kerr. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964.
- Calvin, John. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion. 2 vols. The Library of Christian Classics Edition. Ed. John T. McNeill. Trans. Ford Lewis Battles. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960.
- Campbell, Ian. Thomas Carlyle. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1974.
- Chandler, Alice. A Dream of Order: The Medieval Ideal in Nineteenth Century English Literature. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970.
- Durant, Will. The Story of Philosophy. The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers. Toronto: Pocket Books, 1961.
- Flügel, Ewald. Thomas Carlyle's Moral and Religious Development. Trans. Jessica Gilbert Tyler. 1891; rpt. New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1971.
- Froude, James Anthony. Thomas Carlyle. A History of the First Forty Years of His Life. 1795-1835. 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1890.

¹ The biographical sketch of Carlyle by Friedrich Althaus (first published in the German periodical Unsere Zeit in 1866) and Carlyle's annotated comments which form the first of the Two Reminiscences (see "Works by Carlyle," above) are both valuable in their own right. Thus both Althaus and Carlyle have been credited.

- Froude, James Anthony. Thomas Carlyle. A History of His Life in London. 1834-1881. 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1891.
- Harris, Kenneth Marc. Carlyle and Emerson; Their Long Debate. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.
- Harrold, Charles Frederick. Carlyle and German Thought: 1819-1834. London: Archon Books, 1963.
- Holloway, John. The Victorian Sage: Studies in Argument. New York: W.W. Norton, 1965.
- Hueffer, Ford M. Ford Madox Brown. A Record of His Life and Work. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1896.
- Ikeler, A. Abbott. Puritan Temper and Transcendental Faith: Carlyle's Literary Vision. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972.
- Kaplan, Fred. Thomas Carlyle: A Biography. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- LaValley, Albert J. Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern. Studies in Carlyle's Prophetic Literature And Its Relation to Blake, Nietzsche, Marx and Others. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.
- LeQuesne, A.L. Carlyle. Past Masters Series. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Neff, Emery. Carlyle and Mill: An Introduction to Victorian Thought. 2nd. ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1926.
- Richardson, Alan. The Biblical Doctrine of Work. London: SCM Press, 1963.
- Seigel, Jules Paul, ed. Thomas Carlyle: The Critical Heritage. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971.
- Shelston, Alan, ed. Thomas Carlyle: Selected Writings. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1971.
- Storrs, Margaret. The Relation of Carlyle to Kant and Fichte. 1929; rpt. Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Folcroft Library Editions, 1970.
- Symonds, Julian. Thomas Carlyle. The Life and Ideas of a Prophet. Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1952.

- Tennyson, G.B. Sartor Called Resartus: The Genesis, Structure, and Style of Thomas Carlyle's First Major Work. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965.
- Tilgher, Adriano. Homo Faber. Work Through the Ages. Trans. Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Introductions by Ronald Gross and Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1963.
- Trela, D.J. A History of Carlyle's Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches. Queenston, Ontario: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992.
- Vanden Bossche, Chris R. Carlyle and the Search for Authority. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1991.
- Weber, Max. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. Trans. Talcott Parsons. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.
- Wellek, Rene. Immanuel Kant in England, 1793-1838. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1931.
- Whale, J.S. The Protestant Tradition. An Essay in Interpretation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955.
- Willey, Basil. Nineteenth Century Studies. Coleridge to Matthew Arnold. London: Chatto and Windus, 1964.
- Wilson, David Alec. Carlyle. 6 vols. New York (Dutton) and London (Paul), 1923-34.

E. Secondary sources (periodical articles, essays, dissertations, specific chapters in books)

- Altick, Richard D. "Past and Present: Topicality as Technique." In Carlyle and His Contemporaries: Essays in Honor of Charles Richard Sanders. Ed. John Clubbe. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1976, 112-28.
- Baumgarten, Murray. "Carlyle and 'Spiritual Optics.'" Victorian Studies, 11 (1968), 503-22.

- Boime, Albert. "Ford Madox Brown, Thomas Carlyle, and Karl Marx: Meaning and Mystification of Work in the Nineteenth Century." Arts Magazine, 56 (1) 1981, 116-25.
- Buckler, W.E. "Past and Present as Literary Experience: An Essay in the Epistemological Imagination." In The Victorian Imagination: Essays in Aesthetic Exploration. Ed. W.E. Buckler. New York: New York University Press, 1980, 14-35.
- Burrow, J.W. "The spirit's trials: Reformation and renewal." Chapter 10 in A Liberal Descent. Victorian Historians and the English Past. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981, 251-85.
- Campbell, Ian. "Carlyle's Religion: The Scottish Background." In Carlyle and His Contemporaries: Essays in Honor of Charles Richard Sanders. Ed. John Clubbe. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1976, 3-20.
- Campbell, Ian. "Conversations with Carlyle: The Monckton Milnes Diaries." Prose Studies: History, Theory, Criticism, 8 (1), 1985, 48-57.
- Campbell, Ian. "More Conversations with Carlyle: The Monckton Milnes Diaries: Part 2." Prose Studies: History, Theory, Criticism, 9 (1), 1986, 22-29.
- Christensen, Bryce J. "Thomas Carlyle: The Ethical Imagination Gone Awry." Modern Age: A Quarterly Review, 30 (3-4), Summer-Fall 1986, 259-66.
- Clive, John. "Missionary of Unconsciousness." Times Literary Supplement (20 April 1984), 419-20.
- Collini, Stefan. "Manly Fellows." Chapter 5 in Public Moralists. Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain. 1850-1930. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- DeLaura, David J. "Carlyle and Arnold: The Religious Issue." In Carlyle Past and Present: A Collection of New Essays. Eds. K. J. Fielding and Rodger L. Tarr. London: Vision Press, 1976, 127-54.
- Edwards, J.R. "Carlyle and the Fiction of Belief: Sartor to Past and Present." In Carlyle and His Contemporaries: Essays in Honor of Charles Richard Sanders. Ed. John Clubbe. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1976, 91-111.

- Finley, C. Stephen. "'Greater Than Tongue Can Tell': Carlyle and Ruskin on the Nature of Christian Heroism." Christianity and Literature: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 34 (4), Summer 1985, 27-40.
- Francke, Kuno. "Carlyle and Goethe's Symbolum." Philological Quarterly, VI, no.2, (April 1927), 97-101.
- Frye, Northrop. "The Problem of Spiritual Authority in the Nineteenth Century." In Essays in English Literature from the Renaissance to the Victorian Age Presented to A.S.P. Woodhouse. Eds. M. Maclure and F.W. Watt. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964, 304-19.
- Goldberg, Michael. "'A Universal Howl of Execration': Carlyle's Latter-Day Pamphlets and Their Critical Reception." In Carlyle and His Contemporaries: Essays in Honor of Charles Richard Sanders. Ed. John Clubbe. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1976, 129-47.
- Goldberg, Michael. "Carlyle, Dickens and the Revolution of 1848." Dickens Studies Annual: Essays on Victorian Fiction, 12 (1983), 223-32.
- Goldberg, Michael. "Introduction" to On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History, Eds. Murray Baumgarten, et al. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.
- Harrold, Charles Frederick. "The Nature of Carlyle's Calvinism." Studies in Philology, XXXIII (July 1936), 475-86.
- Levine, George. "The Use and Abuse of Carlylese." In The Art of Victorian Prose. Eds. George Levine and William Madden. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968, 101-126.
- Lopez, Michael. "Transcendental Failure: 'The Palace of Spiritual Power.'" In Emerson: Prospect and Retrospect. Ed. Joel Porte. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982, 121-153.
- Mendilow, Jonathan. "Carlyle's Political Philosophy: Towards a Theory of Catch-All Extremism." Government and Opposition: A Journal of Comparative Politics, 18 (1), Winter 1983, 68-87.
- Moore, Carlisle. "The Persistence of Carlyle's 'Everlasting Yea.'" Modern Philology: A Journal Devoted to Research in Medieval and Modern Literature, LIV (3), February 1957, 187-96.

- Morrow, John. "Heroes and Constitutionalists: The Ideological Significance of Thomas Carlyle's Treatment of the English Revolution." History of Political Thought, 14 (2), Summer 1993, 205-23.
- Park, T. Peter. "Thomas Carlyle and the Jews." Journal of European Studies: Literature and Ideas from the Renaissance to the Present, 20 (77), March 1990, 1-21.
- Poston, Lawrence. "Millites and Millenarians: The Context of Carlyle's 'Signs of the Times'." Victorian Studies, 26 (1983), 381-406.
- Rabb, J. Douglas. "The Silence of Thomas Carlyle." English Language Notes, 26 (3), March 1989, 70-81.
- Reifel, Karen Faith. "The Work of Believing: Labor as Self-Definition in Carlyle, Dickens, and Bronte." Ph.D. Dissertation: The University of Texas at Austin, 1990.
- Rogers, William N. II. "Arabia Deserta and the Victorians." In Explorations in Doughty's Arabia. Ed. Stephen E. Tabachnick. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987, 43-61.
- Rowse, A.L. "The Message of Past and Present." New Statesman and Nation, XXV (5 June 1843), 370.
- Seigel, Jules Paul. "Carlyle and Peel: The Prophet's Search for a Heroic Politician and an Unpublished Fragment." Victorian Studies: A Journal of the Humanities, Arts and Sciences, 26 (2), Winter 1983, 181-95.
- Seigel, Jules Paul. "Latter-Day Pamphlets: The Near Failure of Form and Vision." In Carlyle Past and Present. A Collection of New Essays. Eds. K.J. Fielding and Rodger L. Tarr. London: Vision Press, 1976, 155-76.
- Stange, G. Robert. "Refractions of Past and Present." In Carlyle Past and Present. A Collection of New Essays. Eds. K.J. Fielding and Rodger L. Tarr. London: Vision Press, 1976, 96-111.
- Tanner, John S. "When God is Hero: Worshipping God as Hero in Carlyle and Hopkins." The Hopkins Quarterly, 10 (4), Winter 1984, 145-63.
- Tennyson, G.B. "Carlyle: Beginning with the Word." In The Victorian Experience: The Prose Writers. Ed. Richard A. Levine. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1982, 1-21.

END

1 | 5 - 1 | 1 - 9 | 5

FIN