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Introductory: Who is Edward Carpenter?

Edward Carpenter was born of middle-class parents in Brighton on 28th August, 1844. He studied Mathematics at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he later became a clerical Fellow and was ordained a priest in 1870. Four years after, he relinquished holy Orders and left Cambridge to take up the newly instituted University Extension Lectures in the North of England. His life took another decisive turn a few years later when he came to live with a working-class family near Sheffield and undertook market-gardening in collaboration with them. From 1881, when he took this step, till his death in 1929, Carpenter's life and works combined to make him seem almost a legend in his life-time.

In Sheffield and district picture post-cards were at one time sold with his photographs and that of his house. Millthorpe, near Sheffield, where he lived for about forty years, was virtually turned into a place of pilgrimage. In 1928, the Sheffield City Council considered a proposal by the Labour Party members of the Council, to bestow the Freedom of the City on Carpenter. A Conservative member of the Council provoked laughter when he showed ignorance about the life and work of Edward Carpenter. The Yorkshire Post published a leading article on 6th June, 1928, in support of the award for Carpenter and commented on the Conservative Councillor's query:

It is many years since a famous judge startled everyone by blandly enquiring, 'Who is Connie Gilchrist?' at a time when that charming lady was the idol of the crowd. Mr. P. Mitchel must sincerely have startled the intelligentsia by a speech which virtually asked, 'Who is Edward Carpenter?'.

Yet no one will be startled today, if the same question is put even in academic circles. Edward Carpenter's name disappeared from the literary scene, even though the subjects on which he wrote have not lost any of their relevance yet; nor have all the things for which he campaigned been achieved. And especially now when, however apologetically, we are beginning to think it worthwhile to give at least two cheers for the democratic way of life, it is more than timely that some interest in one of the passionate advocates of the democratic ideal should be revived. Besides, this late-Victorian writer, in a long and fruitful life, had the unique gift of remaining a modern all his life-time with his vast and various interests, ranging from sex to science. In some of his pursuits, especially in his outspoken attitude to sexual questions, his works form a link between the nineteenth century and our time. In his concern for the individual and his proper relation to society, which constituted by far the most important topic of his prose writings, he remains vitally relevant to our time. The following study while trying to present the life and work of Carpenter historically also endeavours to show his connection with the thoughts of some modern writers, such as D.H. Lawrence and Erich Fromm, for instance.

There were various facets of Carpenter's life and often his admirers were satisfied if the side they wanted to see most were

presented. This is apparent in all the essays and books^{1.} written on Carpenter during his life. His spiritual message was relayed without showing its historical or philosophical connections, which made him appear more as an inspired prophet than a social thinker.^{2.} For this reason, too, he did not receive much attention from the literary critics. To the socialists he became the social prophet who spelled out their ideals in spiritual terms, but they were embarrassed by his mysticism and his essays on sexual subjects. To the large group of Humanitarians, Theosophists and Spiritualists who flourished in the closing decades of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth, Carpenter, on the other hand, was a mystic and an interpreter of Eastern philosophy. Whereas a younger group of writers, like Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon, Bertrand Russell, cared only for Carpenter's courageous essays on sexual topics. E.M. Forster and a few others of the Bloomsbury group admired him for his "teaching and example about personal relationships",^{3.} and ignored his mysticism. What is, however, most interesting is that Carpenter drew all these various groups towards him and this itself indicates the important position Carpenter held as a man of letters between 1890 and 1920.

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1. See Bibliography. Most of the books were nothing but a chain of quotations from Carpenter's various books - with a few biographical facts interlarded.
 2. This was the main defect in the most important book on Carpenter, namely Edward Carpenter: An Exposition And An Appreciation (1915), by a Congregational Minister, Edward Lewis. Lewis did not show any awareness that Carpenter was influenced by Indian philosophy, and that he was a homosexual and wrote on that subject, as it would have tarnished the portrait of a prophet.
 3. MSS. 387. Carpenter Collection, letters from E.M. Forster to Gilbert Beith [March 14, 1944.]

A committed man throughout his life, Carpenter yet had the intellectual insight and detachment which enabled him to see ahead of the issues involved in action. Thus his life and works were linked up with a significant part of the social history of his time. So we have tried to show his life and work in the light of the intellectual, political and religious movements of the later half of the nineteenth century. But as we are most interested in the issues and ideas that still have some relevance to our time, we have proportionately given more importance to his sociological ideas than to his spiritual message. We have also skipped over his activities during the First World War, when he wrote various essays against war and conscription and, owing to his balanced estimate of the problems had a considerable influence; but they did not seem to strike any new note. The war did not shake him out of his faith in the possibilities of humanity.

We have devoted a whole chapter on Carpenter's connection with India and mysticism because Indian thought played a major part in shaping his philosophy. Besides, we think that Carpenter's importance as a mystical poet (or writer if you will) has been rather undervalued. His reputation as an 'imitator of Whitman' (he was called by many 'the Walt Whitman of England') or 'an anarchist poet', has led the anthologists and interpreters of Mysticism to ignore the mystical vision of Towards Democracy. The mysticism of this book is, of course, not Christian in the sense that it does not depict 'contemplation and self-surrender to obtain union with the Deity'.¹

1. Definition of mysticism given in The Concise Oxford Dictionary.

Carpenter's Vedantic mysticism of cosmic egotism, where the soul identifies itself with the universal forces of nature and even usurps the role of God, may therefore be easily dismissed as simply an imitation of Walt Whitman.

But mysticism does not necessarily imply a direct personal contact with God, and may also represent a psychological sense of unity. To apprehend the Divine Ground or the Greater Self in every human being is to realise this unity with the higher purpose of life. In the unitary thought of the Hindu philosophical works, The Upanishads, there was no room for two absolutes so atman and Brahman must be one. The early Christians also, at least those who were brought up in the schools of Neo-Platonist philosophy, had a similar conviction. If the soul is infinite and immortal in its nature, it cannot be anything but God.¹ So the religion of the Upanishads is not so much a revelation to be attained through faith as an effort to unveil the deeper layers of man's being and get into supreme understanding with them.² This was exactly what Towards Democracy tried to present as the new spiritual message.

Carpenter connected this mystical, idealistic faith with his sociology, derived from such different sources as Rousseau, Ruskin, Marx, Morgan, Herbert Spencer and Whitman. He put self-realisation at the root of all social hope, as it appeared to him that 'there was no ultimate antagonism'³ between individual fulfilment and social good.

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1. Theosophy or Psychological Religion (1893). Max Müller, Pp.93-94
 2. Eastern Religion And Western Thought (1931), S.Radhakrishnan. P.21
 3. Civilisation: Its Cause And Cure (1889), P.124

To honour the immeasurable gift of one's own personality is to admit the same possibility in others, and that is the base of the law of equality. To realise this law of equality is to attain the larger life, which, according to Carpenter, was the aim of socialism. For this view of socialism, which tried to reconcile libertarian individualism with socialistic collectivism, his writings were a source of great inspiration to the early socialists in England. The historian of Radicalism, Dr. Macoby, considered Carpenter's works even more important than those of Morris in this regard.^{1.}

Not only as a writer but also as a lecturer on socialist platforms, Carpenter exerted considerable influence. Of course, he was not an orator in any sense of the term; yet he seemed to have radiated charm. The historian of the socialist movement in Bristol, Samson Bryher,^{2.} records how Carpenter's speeches made many converts in that city. Another important contribution Carpenter made to socialism in Bristol was to help the socialists there financially to establish a small library. This gave Ramsay Macdonald, then a youth of 18 who had just come from Scotland to take up an appointment at Bristol, his first socialist task as a librarian. Macdonald always remained an admirer of Carpenter, and after his election as a Prime Minister, wrote from Chequers on July 26, 1924^{3.}:

Your note is very heartening. The good will of few others is so pleasing to me. I have a heavy burden and I can rarely do all I want to do. I can but turn my face in the right direction and stagger on a few steps; then a rest and on again. Your note brings back memories of summer days...In the evenings I often think of you.

1. English Radicalism (1853-1886), P.332.

2. See An Account of the Labour And Socialist Movement in Bristol (1929)

3. MSS 386. Carp. Colln.

On Carpenter's 80th birthday, Macdonald's cabinet presented him with a signed autograph book in vellum in grateful recognition of his service to the Labour movement.

As a socialist Carpenter had the reputation of being above all party conflicts, though he was philosophically more an anarchist than anything else. In the 'nineties, when bickerings between different socialist groups were at their height, he was the centre of unity. He urged upon his comrades the need for a "larger heart": 'A larger heart we want towards each other', he wrote in the Clarion for November, 1894, 'and through the labour movement':

"Such a big thing it is, and is going to be - such immeasurable work to be done, of all sorts, of all kinds. Burns at his hand, Keir Hardie at his, Nanquam (Robert Blatchford) at another, Morris and Kropotkin at another, and the unknown equally important workers each at theirs."

Owing to this generous attitude he had the honour of winning trust from all the leaders of the socialist movement, Morris, Hyndman, Prince Kropotkin, Blatchford and Keir Hardie. The Fabians were, however, not always polite. They were often embarrassed by his mystical utopian vision and his forthright essays on sexual subjects. Carpenter says in his preface to the 1920 edition of Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure, that he would not easily forget 'the furious attacks' which were made upon the title-essay when it was first read to the Fabian Society in 1888. Among the Fabians, George Bernard Shaw was most intimate, but according to Henry Salt, who was equally friendly with both, 'these two most remarkable men in the socialist movement did not fully understand each other'.^{1.} Shaw was once

1. Seventy Years Among Savages (Autobiography). H.S. Salt. Pp.87-88

unkind enough to use a phrase, 'these illusions and Carpenterings', in an essay he contributed to the Forecasts Of The Coming Century (1897) which Carpenter edited. Carpenter was quick to take offence, and his own contribution to the anthology, 'Transitions to Freedom', was apparently written in answer to Shaw's arguments, showing that the Fabian brand of state socialism was only a transition to the 'voluntary socialism' that the anarchists dream of. The title also echoes Shaw's essay 'Transitions To Socialism' in the famous Fabian Essays (1889).

To Carpenter and other pioneer socialists, the Labour movement was 'a big thing'; it was 'the Cause', and Carpenter often referred to it as 'the millennium'. Upon the assumption of this hope of a great change, Carpenter built a theory of the growth of consciousness, where mysticism and sociology combined, to envisage a third possible stage in the scale of social evolution when the individual would attain universal consciousness. This would end all social and moral problems, as all our problems basically arise from a sense of antagonism between the individual and society. Carpenter however did not put forward this theory simply as a "metaphysical utopia", but tried to make it scientifically plausible, by presenting consciousness as a part of the physiological process. In this regard he was not outside the school of the advanced scientific and philosophical thinkers of the early decades of the twentieth century,¹ when mysticism and science came to be closely allied. The vision of the third stage helped Carpenter to bring all his social, moral and religious hopes into focus. It

1. See Does Consciousness Exist? (1904), William James. Also see Science And The Modern World (1927), A.N. Whitehead, pp.129-136.

provided a splendid metaphysical colouring for socialism, and at a time when there was 'a general flight of emotion away from the service of God to the service of man',¹ Carpenter became one of the most inspiring writers to a great many admirers.

Carpenter's reputation as a writer was at its zenith in the decade before the first world war. T.P's Weekly for February 26, 1916, said that whereas Towards Democracy had sold only 11,000 copies in the previous nine years, in 1910 it sold 900 copies in one year. Most of the respectable newspapers and periodicals, which had more or less ignored Carpenter earlier, now came out with special articles and reviews of his works and set themselves seriously to assessing the quality of his reputation. The Times (22 June, 1916) remarked that he was 'one of the most significant and interesting figures of a transitional time'. The Spectator said on August 12, 1916, that 'as a literary artist Mr. Carpenter is delightful. As a professor of omniscience he is a miracle of complacent ineptitude'. The Times Literary Supplement published a long review of Towards Democracy on September 20, 1917, and said that this work posed a problem in literary criticism. Stylistically Carpenter could be called a 'dowdy writer', as dowdy as the uninspired Wordsworth. But something happens when you start reading Carpenter. You forgive his faults, or rather you do not even forgive them, you cease to notice them. You realise that something remarkable has happened to this writer and it becomes your business to find it out. The New Statesman (July 10, 1915) commented,

1. My Apprenticeship (1929), B.Webb, P.150

on the other hand that 'the only way to look at Carpenter is not as a philosopher, but as an artist. It is indeed as an artist, as an impressionist and pictorial artist, that Carpenter must stand or fall. Far and away his best work is Towards Democracy, not because of his teaching but because it contains innumerable and delightfully graphic vignettes of social life'. These contemporary comments were various and often contradictory. The only common factor in them was the recognition of Carpenter's reputation as a writer. Those who knew Carpenter personally, as E.M. Forster did, valued his personality more than his works. Forster said, 'his greatness scarcely got into his books, but the spell of his personal influence was tremendous'.¹ So when the personality disappeared from the scene, his works disappeared from public notice. But more probably the demise of Carpenter's reputation can be accounted for with reference to the disrepute in which the Victorian vein of prophetic writing came to be held after the First World War. Added to this was the ascendancy of the influence of the French symbolist writers which introduced into critical discussion an extreme self-consciousness and ushered in the present era of 'critical specialism',² to borrow a phrase from Raymond Williams.

But criticism of Carpenter's works purely on grounds of style may appear a little unjust, as he consciously abandoned stylistic pursuits in reaction against the prevailing literary vogues. He was more concerned with the conveyance of an emotion or impression with the utmost force and directness from himself to another person. In

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1. 'Some Memories', in Edward Carpenter: In Appreciation (1931) Ed. Gilbert Beith. p.75.
 2. Culture And Society (Pelican, 1961). p.165.

short it was the message and not the style that he held as important. In one of his critical essays, Carpenter says that 'an art-work cannot be dismissed by a simple reference to perfection of execution without any consideration of the grandeur and beauty of the motive'.^{1.} And we have to take proper note of this conviction while trying to appreciate a work like Towards Democracy. In grandeur of motive, certainly, this book does not deserve the neglect it has met with in our time. In a review of the book The Times Literary Supplement^{2.} truly said:

The whole book is an effort, not an achievement. And as for those who say that all books are futile which are not achievements, they do not know that the very achievement they admire would never have existed, but for the effort they despise.

Without some amount of sympathy for the attitudes of the writer, it is difficult to do justice to Carpenter's works. If one is revolted by Carpenter's basic democratic attitude, one can become very petulant indeed when trying to judge his writings. We have adduced elsewhere^{3.} Sir Henry Maine's remarks on Towards Democracy in this regard. Recently Professor A.J.P. Taylor betrayed a similar intemperance in his introduction to the second volume of The British Pamphleteers (1951). Professor Taylor was surely in no mood for the appreciation of Carpenter when he was trying to applaud Carlyle's essay on "The Nigger Question". He found Carlyle's essay 'a thousand times more sensible than Carpenter's soft-headed ramblings'. Carpenter seemed to him 'individualism at its worst'. In exasperation A.J.P. Taylor

1. 'Nature And Realism In Art', in Angels' Wings (1898) p.46

2. Sept. 20, 1917.

3. See below Chap. 3, p. 105.

went on to say that Carpenter really thought

'that if he let his beard grow, wore homespun tweed lived on grated carrots and preached (though without much practice) free love¹; he became a remarkable man'.

We hope the following study will at least show that Professor Taylor's judgement was based on half-truths.

Carpenter was certainly no faddist, even though he was unconventional in dress, wore sandals he had made himself and pleaded for simplification in life. As the New Age (October 5, 1916) pointed out, he had 'the quiet English chuckle at all fanaticism'. Of course, the cranks from all over the country and abroad did swarm to Millthorpe and he had a difficult time in warding them off as he has recounted in his autobiography². But no one who knew him or has read any of his important works could ever think of him as a crank. The Times (22 June, 1916) truly remarked, that Carpenter's 'differentia as a faddist and rebel has always been his realisation of human nature as composed of body, mind and spirit: and the driving power of his career, literary and practical, has been the hunger of the spirit in which the whole of a man is summoned'. This concern for wholeness amounted almost to a passion in Carpenter, and his metaphysical construct of 'the third stage' of development in human consciousness was primarily

1. Incidentally Carpenter did not preach free-love. In answer to criticism from a champion of free-love, he wrote in The Free Review, October, 1896:

Though I advocate freedom, I am not in the free-love box, because I certainly insist rather strongly the advantages and desirability of the faithfulness, even life-long in cases, of a pair to one another.

2. See Ch. 'Millthorpiana', in My Days And Dreams (1916)

an answer to it. 'The diseased self-consciousness'¹ which Carlyle and many representative Victorian thinkers considered as the curse of their time, Carpenter sought to overcome by proper psychological adjustment of the individual to society. Philosophically his interest in Hindu thought was also connected with this psychical concern for a unitive experience where the human being would regain his wholeness. From this point of view his 'dabblings in Eastern mysticism' was not just acceptance of a prevailing fad.

We have said earlier, that Carpenter's reputation was most widespread in the first decade of the twentieth century. It was more or less an international reputation. From Russia Tolstoy acclaimed him as the true inheritor of the tradition of Carlyle and Ruskin. Tolstoy wrote a long article in The New Age² praising Carpenter's essays 'On Modern Science'. His books were translated into most European languages, and Japanese. In Italy there was practically a school of Carpenter's disciples. Among them were Ricardo Nobili, a Professor of Modern Art in the University of Florence; Guido Fernando, of the British Institute of Florence, who translated several of Carpenter's works into Italian; Robert Assiagisti, a journalist and author, leader of this small but important group of advanced thinkers. A friend of Carpenter, George Herron (an American socialist who lived in Florence), first wrote to Carpenter about the existence of this group. He said³ that all of them were either

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1. 'Characteristics' (1831), Scottish And Other Miscellanies (Everyman) P.204.
 2. March 31, 1898. See also MSS 386-119 Carp. Colln., letter from Tolstoy.
 3. MSS 386-167. Carp. Colln.

socialists or philosophical anarchists and that 'they have by their writings exercised a very wholesome and rehabilitating influence upon Italy both intellectually and spiritually'. They were turning the best young minds of Italy away from the decadence of D'Annunzio¹ and his school and were linking the new generation, not to the one immediately preceding it, but to the generation of Mazzini. Assiagisti told Heron that the four greatest influences on his life had been Whitman and Emerson in America and Carpenter and Ruskin in England. George Herron was writing to Carpenter in connection with the latter's visit to Italy. He added:

You may be sure that there will be quite a school of disciples to sit at your feet when you come.²

One of the members of this group tells us in an essay he contributed to Edward Carpenter: In Appreciation (1931), that Carpenter's Love's Coming Of Age (1896) induced many of them to found a 'Union of Young Men' for the discussion of sexual problems from a moral and religious point of view.

This formidable reputation survived till about the middle of the 'twenties, as it is apparent from the wide notices of Carpenter's 80th birthday in the press in August, 1924. The accolades came from the cabinet, the Trades Union Congress; an address from the citizens of Sheffield and congratulatory messages from friends all over the world. But already the addresses have taken on the nature of ancestor worship.

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1. Gabriel D'Annunzio (1863-1938), Italian poet, novelist, dramatist, journalist, who presented himself as the apostle of a new renaissance.
 2. MSS Carp. Colln. 386-167. Nov. 8, 1908.

Though Carpenter did not forbear from giving his blessings to the Syndicalists and other leftist factions of the Labour movement, by the 'twenties he was being more or less assimilated into the Establishment, as one of the spiritual heads of the socialist movement.

In 1922 Carpenter left his Millthorpe cottage (near Sheffield) where he had lived nearly forty years. He needed a warmer and sunnier place for health reasons, and he chose Guildford in Surrey. His house at Millthorpe was turned into a guest house for some time, but the property eventually passed into private hands, though the house is still called 'Carpenter House'.

Carpenter's literary activities continued till 1927 when he brought out a book, Light From The East, in memory of his friend P. Arunachalam. The book was a collection of letters and essays by Arunachalam with an introductory chapter by Carpenter himself. But his health began to deteriorate sharply from January 1928, when his life-long companion, George Merrill died and he was 'bowed down with grief'. Visiting Carpenter in February that year, Alf Mattison of Leeds found him most 'pathetic to look upon as he spoke of his loneliness'.^{1.} Soon he lost his memory and could not remember even the closest of his friends. Carpenter died on Friday, June 28^{1929,} at the age of 85.

Much to the surprise of many of his old friends, he was given an orthodox Church of England burial at Guildford cemetery,

1. MSS Journals (1928-1944) Vol.2., by A. Mattisen, Reference Library, Leeds. Alfred Mattisen (1868-1944), a mechanic by profession and one of the early socialists, was a life-long friend of Edward Carpenter.

though most of his life he stood uncompromisingly away from all church connections. Mattisen records in his 'Journals':

Somehow all this seemed alien to all who had known Edward Carpenter intimately.

However, when the regular service ended, Captain Green, one of Carpenter's literary executors, recited a part of Towards Democracy, called 'Into the Regions of the Sun', and H.W. Nevinson, the famous journalist and pacifist, made a speech summing up Carpenter's life and teaching.

In Sheffield, Carpenter's friends and admirers organized a Carpenter Fellowship and an annual 'Memorial Service' to celebrate his death anniversary. They used to meet every year in front of his old house at Millthorpe; this celebration went on till 1948. The socialist Mayors and Aldermen of the City Council lent to this annual pilgrimage to Millthorpe almost an official dignity. But in spite of that enthusiasm they could not raise enough money to buy up Carpenter's property at Millthorpe in order to keep it as a Carpenter museum. In 1944, E.M. Forster, Gilbert Beith and other friends of Carpenter tried desperately to revive interest in his works by holding a centenary celebration. Forster gave a talk on the B.B.C. on September 25, 1944, in connection with the celebration. Special articles were published on the life and works of Carpenter in The Times Literary Supplement, The Spectator, The Listener and The New Statesman. A new edition of Towards Democracy was issued by George Allen & Unwin in 1949, but I was told the sale figure was disastrous.

Carpenter's reputation which reached its zenith before the First World War did not long survive it. Not only Carpenter himself but the whole period in which he flourished, came to be dismissed by the post-war generation as uninteresting. Professor A.N. Whitehead characteristically castigated the last two decades of the century in his Lowell Lectures of 1925 as 'one of the dullest stages of thought since the time of the First Crusade'.¹ But Carpenter's mind was formed in the 'seventies, the period of 'enlightenment'² in English history. He was a rebel in the 'seventies; material science and the middle-class ideal of respectability were his principal targets. Yet he did not remain negative, as most of the critics in the 'seventies tended to do. Under Whitman's influence and owing to his interest in mystical philosophy and social revolution, he was able to create a positive faith of spiritual self-realisation. He published most of his important works in the 'eighties and by the 'nineties he was acclaimed as "one of the few original thinkers"³ of the time. He was considered original because he had the reputation of writing from first-hand experience, because he was not 'aesthetic' or 'literary', in fact, because he did not exactly belong to the 'nineties. It was one of Carpenter's qualities that throughout his career he stood on the periphery rather than in the centre of his time. It is easy for this reason to leave him out of consideration when one reviews the period of his activity. But this also

1. Science And The Modern World (Mentor Books, 1960) P.96

2. See History of Freedom of Thought (1913), J.B. Bury, pp.167-170.

3. See The Academy, 'Review of Towards Democracy', August 13, 1892.

constitutes his strength. Because of this somewhat aloofness of his position, his works have the mark of an original insight which would have been otherwise absent from his treatment of the popular themes. In this regard The Athenaeum (Aug., 1916) once compared him to Samuel Butler:

Carpenter has developed along the lines of the lovably sympathetic and serious humanist, whereas Butler, also a humanist, carried out his work in a satirical vein, using an irony and subtlety that were bound to delay his general reputation.

But Butler's reputation has soared since that article was written, and that of Carpenter has declined. I am sure, however, that if we can overcome our resistance to this 'lovably sympathetic' manner of Carpenter's writings, we will find much to approve of in his works. It is as true today, as it appeared to the writer in The Times Literary Supplement on September 2, 1944, that Carpenter's 'idealization of the individual, his passion for the growth of democracy, deserves to be recalled. And when we have grasped what the idea of democracy and human brotherhood meant to him and could mean to the world, we may appreciate his lofty instructions'.

The following study endeavours to show that there is still considerable relevance of some of his works to our time and that his life deserves to be rescued from the half-truths and hearsay with which it is surrounded now.

CHAPTER 1.

From Brighton To Cambridge: Childhood And Education (1844 - 1874)

The Carpenters like to trace their pedigree to one Hugh Cressingham of Berkshire, a medieval soldier, who earned the surname of Carpenter circa. 1274 'ab officio non artis sed ingenii'. It is said that during a war between England and Wales he devised a subtle military subterfuge by cutting a bridge in the middle and keeping it dexterously together, till the enemy stepped onto it and half of their army was drowned.¹ This martial connection was predominant in the Carpenter family.

Edward Carpenter's immediate ancestors on the male side served in the Royal Navy. His grandfather, James Carpenter, retired in 1845 as an Admiral after more than sixty years of service. He was a veteran of many naval actions in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. As a flag-captain he was once taken prisoner of war to Spain but was exchanged for a colonel and two other officers. Carpenter's maternal grandfather, Thomas Wilson of Walthamstow, was also in the Royal Navy, but he left it for business in a shipping

1. See Appendix 1, 'Carpenter Family Pedigree'.

firm and made a considerable fortune. Carpenter's father, Charles Carpenter, joined the Navy in 1810, as a matter of course rather than for any choice, but retired on half pay after ten years' service on grounds of ill health. His naval connection however continued and, more than fifty years after his retirement, he was granted the rank of a commander. In Carpenter's own generation, his younger brother Capt. Alfred Carpenter served for fifty years in the Royal Navy and won the Albert Medal and the D.S.O. One of Carpenter's elder brothers, George Carpenter, was in the army. Carpenter's nephew, Vice-Admiral A.F.B. Carpenter, son of Capt. Alfred Carpenter, carried on the naval tradition and won the Victoria Cross in the battle of Zeebrugge in the First World War, where he commanded H.M.S. Vindictive.^{1.}

After his retirement from the naval service, Edward Carpenter's father studied for the bar, to which he was called in 1829. But he did not continue his legal practice long, as it was arranged that he should live with his father-in-law at Walthamstow after his marriage in 1833. At Thomas Wilson's death in 1841 the Carpenter family moved to Brighton and settled down in the fashionable Brunswick Square as one of the respectable rentier class. In 1849 Charles Carpenter was appointed an honorary magistrate for the county of Sussex and was elected J.P. for Cornwall, where he had his family home.^{2.} For many years he held the position of chairman of the Hove Bench, and at his death in 1882 the town remembered his service gratefully

1. See his book The Blocking of Zeebrugge (1921)

2. 'Moditon Ham', An engraving of the house may be seen in Davies' (Gilbert). History of Cornwall (1838)

by presenting his portrait to the town; this still hangs in Brighton Public Library.

Charles Carpenter held advanced views in politics and religion and might be called 'emancipated'. He subscribed to a kind of Broad Church faith derived from reading Coleridge and sustained by direct acquaintance with the works of the German mystical writers. He was a friend of the Rev. F.W. Robertson (1816-1853) whose life and teaching were an inspiration to all who were inclined towards liberal views in religion. In family circles Charles Carpenter was noted for his 'dangerous heresies'. One of his daughters reported, in a letter¹ to Edward Carpenter, how a friend of hers was nearly brought to tears by their father's views:

Just imagine one evening she and I were sitting by the fire, Papa came ominously and sat down by us and neatly twisted the conversation on to the poor unfortunate Church. There he dropped a few heresies, left the room, and returned with Voysey's² 'Articles of Belief' or some such paper, and read slowly out one d.ble assertion after another...I glanced at Stephie and saw her face, flaming eyes and all.. I thought she was going to cry, but she was too thoroughly indignant for that.

In politics³ Charles Carpenter was a philosophic Radical and gave strong support to the attempt of Professor Fawcett to secure election at Brighton in 1864.

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1. MSS. 342. Carpenter Collection
 2. The Rev. Charles Voysey (1828-1912): He was ejected from his living in Yorkshire for publishing a book called The Sling And The Stone (1868) where he denied the efficacy of the Atonement and was accused of denying The Divinity of Christ. His appeal against the judgement was rejected by the Privy Council in 1871. Later he founded a theistic ethical church in London.
 3. The information regarding Carpenter's parents and family are derived from E.Carpenter's autobiography, My Days And Dreams (1914). See Ch. 'My Parents' -unless otherwise stated.

The Carpenters were a large family - six daughters and four sons, Edward Carpenter being the seventh child. Their mother was of Scottish descent. She was not so much imaginative or intellectual as practical and courageous. Her life, says Carpenter, was a continuous sacrifice, first to her parents and then to her husband and children. In her beautiful gazelle-like eyes, he saw an unspoken tragedy, the tragedy of numbness. For companionship within the family, Carpenter had to turn to his elder sisters. Ellen Carpenter, (later Mrs. Francis Hyett) with an eye for landscape, took him out for long walks, which remained a life-long passion with him. Eliza Carpenter taught him music and played Beethoven's sonatas. This sister, somewhat semi-invalid all her life, had a highly poetic and sensitive temperament and in her Carpenter found the friendliest spirit in the family. Eliza Carpenter (later Lady Daubney) also scribbled sonnets of a mystical sort, after the manner of Mrs. Browning, whom she adored. In almost all things both the brother and sister were in agreement, as she herself says in one of her letters¹ to Carpenter when he was at Cambridge:

I think, dear old Ted, that you and I never will misunderstand one another in these matters (the reference is to religious matters). I think I could go with you to any heights or depths and it is a great comfort to me to think so.....

Carpenter dedicated his first efforts in poetry, Narcissus... (1873) to her.

1. Carpenter Collection, MSS 342-23/3 n.d.

Edward Carpenter's eldest brother, Charles, was a kind of hero in the family and at the Brighton College. He was brilliant both in Academic and athletic fields. While still at school, he took the examinations for the Indian Civil Service and stood second among fifty successful students. He went to India in 1857, just after the Mutiny. In service he rose rapidly, but unfortunately died of an accidental fall from his horse in 1876 when he was only forty, a shock from which his parents never recovered. His letters from India showed a lively ebullient spirit and were treasured in the family. It is certain that these letters were greatly responsible in rousing in Carpenter that personal love and attachment which he always felt for India. Charles Carpenter also sent home a large collection of arms surrendered by the mutineers which decorated the Carpenter drawing-room in 45 Burnswick Square.

Edward Carpenter was only thirteen when his elder brother went to India. Their correspondence reveals that no two persons could be more different from one another than they were. Each was almost the other's anti-self. Charles was robust, confident, happy and social; Edward was rather timid, shy and sickly. The elder brother remembered in a letter¹, that as a boy, Edward was a 'skinny sprat..with a tearing cough (or wearing was it?)'.

To Edward Carpenter the memory of his childhood in Brighton was, on the whole, one of discomfort. He hated the fashionable society

1. Carpenter Collection. MSS 349.

of his surroundings. In the mid-nineteenth century¹, the large houses of Brunswick Square were inhabited mostly by wealthy London residents who turned the place into a Seaside Belgravia. In a society where life consisted of the show of riches, petty accomplishments and empty talk about balls and dinner parties, Carpenter felt himself 'an alien, an outcast and a failure'. Home life was also anything but pleasant. His father was constantly suffering from anxiety about the fortune of his investments and about the future of his unmarried daughters. The sisters were growing up with but one aspiration, that of 'taking their proper place in life' - with nothing to do except 'dabble in paints and music' as 'the young ladies' of the time were expected to do. Carpenter says in his autobiography that it used to make him intensely miserable to return home and see what was going on there. The Brighton Downs were his favourite refuge. On a sunny day he would wander on for miles in 'a strange broody moony stage'- glad to find some hollow, (like that described in Jefferies' The Story of My Heart) where he could lie secluded for any length of time.

A sense of inadequacy gnawed at his heart. He wished that he could be like Mr. Cass, the handsome curate in one of the churches they attended. He was so well-mannered and preached such nice sermons, that everyone admired him. It was this admiration for Mr. Cass that gave Carpenter a deep religious bias and made him look forward to a vocation in the church. Carpenter remembers in his autobiography that when he was about fourteen, lying awake at night, he often thought that

1. For a social history of Brighton of this time see The Capital By The Sea (1953). H.P. Clunn. pp.122-123. And Fashionable Brighton (1820-1860) by A. Dale.

if the house were to take fire he would save his prayer book.

Carpenter went to Brighton College (but was hardly a distinguished scholar.). He climbed slowly up through the classes. When he was thirteen, after his elder brother's departure to India, the family spent a year in France, and Edward and his younger brother Alfred attended the Lycee Hoch, near Versailles. Here they learned French 'by sheer necessity' and nothing much else. (Edward's record at school was good but not remarkable - he was slow to mature). He kept an equal interest in classics and mathematics and was not sure which to take up when he thought of going to Cambridge. His elder brother advised him to read classics, as he thought that a classical training not only improved the powers of the mind but was of assistance in every day life.¹ Later in life Carpenter seemed to have come to the same conclusion, but then he set his mind on reading mathematics.

Carpenter left school at 19 and was half inclined to take Orders straight away. But neither his elder brother nor his father was sympathetic to that idea. The brother intervened from India again saying that he thought the church would be a very suitable profession for Edward, but it was a mistake for a man to take Orders too young:²

A man ought to acquire all possible experience, to see as much of all kinds and classes of people as he possibly can before entering the church; because after entering it the door of experience if any .. is closed except in a particular line or direction. And unless a man has acquired experience and knowledge of the world beforehand, I think there is a danger of his becoming narrow minded and illiberal afterwards.

1. Carpenter Collection MSS 349

2. " " " "

But it was difficult to be narrow-minded after a proper acquaintance with the higher criticism of the Bible which flourished in Germany at that time. So Carpenter's father sent him to Heidelberg where he stayed for five months with a German professor. The latter talked to him about biblical criticism, took him to attend Baron Bunsen's lectures and chided him for going to the English Church on Sundays in a tall hat. During this stay Carpenter improved his German and became so disgusted with the tall hat that when he returned home he placed it in his carpet-bag.

In 1864 Carpenter went to Cambridge. He chose Trinity Hall, once more against the advice of his elder brother, who urged him to go to a bigger college like Trinity, providing a wider scope for competition. Edward Carpenter was not sure of himself, and even a small college like Trinity Hall held terrors for him. He thought that he was 'too lamely taught at school' to be able to stand up to the needs of the university. But much to his surprise, he did well in his examinations and came out 10th wrangler in the mathematical Tripos results of 1867. This was a sufficiently high degree to justify a Fellowship.

But the offer of the Fellowship came before the Tripos results were announced. Leslie Stephen, who was a clerical Fellow of the Hall since 1854, lost faith in the historical evidence of Christianity and felt himself unable to continue chapel service. He resigned from this duty in 1862 but was allowed to retain his Fellowship, owing apparently to the influence of his friend Professor Fawcett,¹ till 1867. In May that year, before Carpenter had taken his Tripos examination, the senior tutor, Henry Latham, asked him if he would like

1. As to Fawcett see below p. 32.

to accept the vacant office. It was highly flattering to have an offer of a Fellowship before the examination results were out. And as Carpenter was more or less certain to take Holy Orders, the condition of the Fellowship that the incumbent had to be ordained within a year, created no problem for him. He immediately wrote to his father asking his advice:

I have just had a very good offer. Mr. Latham tells me that one of the Fellows, Leslie Stephen, is likely to resign his Fellowship soon, and asks me if I would like to take his place. Mr. Stephen has been assistant tutor and lecturer here and holds one of the clerical Fellowships which I believe are not vacated by marriages, but which you may keep as long as you remain in office in the college. It is a very good offer indeed in a money point of view, as besides holding a lectureship and Fellowship, I should probably be able to take pupils, which is a profitable trade.

I had scarcely thought of such a thing before so I asked Mr. Latham to give me a few days to think about it, and I write to you to help me to decide. I have always thought that the life of a Don is rather a stagnant sort of life and I do not think I could make up my mind to settle down altogether as such.

At the same time I do not think that I ought to refuse such a good opening, because even if I do not remain here altogether, it will be very likely to lead to something else, and a few years spent here would not have been wasted.¹

Carpenter was wrong in believing that the Fellowship could be retained even after marriage. In fact, Stephen's Fellowship lapsed on his marriage in 1867.² Probably Carpenter used this argument only to persuade his parents that the offer carried no impediment to normal life. It is interesting to note that the Fellowship was most welcome

1. MSS 339-7, May 28, 1867.

2. See Dictionary of National Biography (2nd Supplement), 'Leslie Stephen'.

from the 'money point of view'. The offer did not pose any religious problem for Carpenter at all; his only suspicion was that he might not like the 'stagnant life' of a Don. The family was immensely pleased at Carpenter's achievement and the elder brother greeted him from India in his inimitable way:

'How big are you? I want to have you here just for five minutes. Either to punch your head or let you punch mine. It would even relieve me to throw something at you. I am immensely pleased to hear of your having a Fellowship offered to you'.
(MSS 349. June 1867, Carpenter Collection)

ii.

In the 1860's the intellectual climate of England was one of great fermentation. The time was such, 'that even sluggish minds were caught by the currents and swept into new regions'.¹ This was the age inaugurated by Darwin's Origin of Species. And it would be probably difficult to name any one year in the whole history of mankind, when the human spirit was so profoundly stirred. The impact on religious belief was most revolutionary. In fact, the whole of the 'sixties were a ceaseless battle between the forces of orthodoxy and freedom in religious thought, with the latter winning ground more and more.

The famous Essays And Reviews, whose seven authors came to be popularly known as 'the seven against Christ', were published

1. Memoir of H. Sidgwick P.403 by A.S. and E.M.S. See also My Life, Havelock Ellis. pp.40-42.

in 1860. The essayists sought 'to illustrate the advantage derivable to the cause of religion and moral truth from a free handling of its dogmas'.¹ Two of its authors, being Anglican priests, were prosecuted at the ecclesiastical court - though the judicial committee of the Privy Council annulled the verdict. In 1862 The Bishop of Natal, J.W.Colenso, published the first volume of The Pentateuch And The Book Of Joshua Critically Examined, showing the groundlessness of the notion of Scripture-inspiration, which so many have long regarded as the very foundation of their faith. Another epoch-making book depicting the life of Jesus as an historical figure, Renan's Vie De Jesus, appeared in 1863, and the English translation in the following year. Professor Seeley's Ecce Homo, published anonymously in 1865, carried on the same spirit of historical investigation. Not only in theology but also in the fields of social studies important works appeared during this period. Sir Henry Maine's Ancient Law (1861) threw new light on human history showing matriarchy as more primitive than patriarchy. In economics Ruskin challenged the reigning political economists by a series of sensational articles in the Cornhill Magazine, in 1861. The war between the South and the North in America brought in a new impetus towards the spread of democracy. And, of course, the greatest political event of all in the 'sixties was the reform bill of 1867.

Compared with the general stirrings of the time and the part played by Oxford scholars in it, Cambridge, on the whole, was quieter. The Cambridge scholars were more concerned with reform within the university. The resident members were fighting to abolish statutes

1. Preface to the 4th Edn. Essays and Reviews (1861)

regarding religious tests and other vestiges of clerical domination, and solved the broader religious issues by showing dislike for 'abstract speculation'. They liked to keep their feet on the ground. The average Cambridge Don of that time, says Leslie Stephen,¹ was a man rational enough to see that the old orthodox position was untenable, but he also thought that religious belief of some sort was necessary. He assumed that the dogmas could be explained away or rationalised and he considered himself to be a genuine believer. To be sure, Carpenter had the same attitude to religion when he accepted his Fellowship,

As an undergraduate at Trinity Hall in 1864, Carpenter found himself in the midst of a boating set. The Hall was the head of the river at that time; Carpenter even became the secretary of the Boat Club for a year, though he had not much success as an oarsman. Only after being elected a Fellow did the real intellectual life of Cambridge open before him. He began to make acquaintance with members outside his college. At that time Trinity College was the effective intellectual centre; - the size of the college and the presence just then of an exceptionally brilliant circle of talented youth 'made it the ground for propounding and testing new ideas'.² And W.K. Clifford was the leading spirit among the young intellectuals of Trinity.

William Kingdon Clifford (1845-1879) was second wrangler in 1867 and was a Fellow of Trinity College from the following year till 1871, when he went to King's College, London, as Professor of Applied Mathematics. Clifford's daring intellect has earned encomiums from a

1. See Some Early Impressions (1924) pp 59-60.

2. 'Cambridge in the Seventies', The Eighteen-Seventies Ed. H. Granville-Barker (1929) p.104.

wide circle of friends, admirers and students.^{1.} In mathematical studies he is known as one who criticised the analytical bias of the Cambridge school; he was among the first in England to call attention to the philosophical ideas related to the foundations of geometry. A younger man, J.M. Keynes, remembered how his companions marvelled at the varied and flexible play of Clifford's thought and the boundless range of his interest and sympathies. Carpenter frequented a circle presided over by Clifford which met every Sunday.

In the 'seventies Clifford's essays and lectures were notorious for their aggressive views on religion which often bordered on atheism. But though Clifford dismissed all speculation on the future or unseen world, he never gave up interest in constructing a metaphysical system on mathematical and scientific principles, and wrote approvingly of the 'cosmic emotion' of Whitman's poetry. In his earlier philosophical essays he agreed with Berkeley that the mind is the ultimate reality, but held that consciousness as it is known to us is built up out of simple elements or atoms of 'mind-stuff'.^{2.} Professor Pollock described Clifford's philosophical position as that of an idealist monist.

Clifford was a passionate advocate of freedom, in all the philosophical and political connotations of the word. Freedom was the

1. See Introduction by J.R.Newman to The Common Sense of the Exact Sciences (Dover Paper Back, 1959); and an appreciation of Clifford by Bertrand Russell in the same book. Also, Essays In Biography, J.M.Keynes (Essay on Marshall); Introduction by F.Pollock to the Lectures and Essays of W.K. Clifford (1879) Eds. Pollock & L.Stephen.

2. Carpenter made some use of this Mind-Stuff idea in The Art of Creation, (1904.) See P.21

one aim and ideal of man and it forbade one from binding oneself irrevocably to any theory whatever; that alone was right which was done of one's own inner conviction and inner motion. The one commandment of freedom was 'thou shalt live and not formulise'. Carpenter records in his autobiography¹ that Clifford invented a kind of inverted doxology which ran as follows:

O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost -
We wonder which we hate the most.
Be Hell which they prepared before
Their dwelling now and ever more!

In politics Clifford was a Republican and was the secretary of the Cambridge Republican Club, for a year. The guiding spirit of the Club was Henry Fawcett, the blind Professor of Political Economy and later Post-Master General in Gladstone's ministry. The Cambridge Republican² Club was in existence for more than ten years and was nothing more than a meeting place for a set of friends. But in the '70's, what with the panic caused by the stories of the Paris Commune and the moral support which many British Radicals offered to the Communards, the Republican Clubs became butts of attack in the press. The Quarterly Review described them in 1871 as 'a small but savage band'. In these early years of the '70's an anti-monarchical agitation was also brewing up in England. Dilke was lecturing on the cost of the Crown; Bradlaugh published his Impeachment of the house of Brunswick (1872). Professor Fawcett himself played some part in the agitation by voting against Gladstone's Dowry Bill for the royal family. It was against

1. My Days And Dreams p.60

2. See Life of H. Fawcett, L. Stephen (1885) p.286 ff. Also English Radicalism (1853-1886) S. Maccoby, passim.

this background that the news of the Cambridge Republican Club with its manifesto announcing 'hostility to the hereditary principle as exemplified in monarchical and aristocratic institutions',¹ got considerable publicity. It disturbed Fawcett's constituents in Brighton. One of Carpenter's elder sisters wrote to him about it:

I am glad you refused any connection with the Republican Club. Mr. Fawcett is going mad I think?²

It is apparent that at this time Carpenter had no positive political affiliation. He even considered for some time whether he should accept an offer of a tutorship³ to Prince Albert Victor and Prince George of Wales. On Carpenter's refusal the tutorship was accepted by his senior friend the Rev. (later Canon) J.N. Dalton.

It was through his contact with the Clifford circle that Carpenter's political awareness began. One of the books that Clifford's Sunday group studied was Mazzini's The Duties of Man (1862). Mazzini was the Italian prophet who roused the youths of his country in the 'thirties and 'forties to political agitation for freedom and unity. His national republicanism was however different from the French and English brands, as it almost amounted to a religious faith: 'Not rights but duties, not self-interest, but martyrdom', was the soul of Mazzini's teaching.

Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872) spent the greater part of his life in exile and most of it in England. He came here in 1837 and

1. Life of Fawcett, p.286

2. MSS 342-26, Carpenter Collection.

3. Reported in The Manchester Guardian, Aug.29,1944. See In Appreciation of E. Carpenter (1931). P.226. A photograph of the Princes given to Carpenter when he ~~later~~ visited ^{the} Royalty at Windsor-is in the Carpenter Collection, Sheffield City Library.

became widely known as a result of Carlyle's protest on his behalf against the censorship of Mazzini's correspondence in 1844. Mazzini was a friend of Mrs. Carlyle and Carlyle wrote eloquently in testimony of the Italian prophet's noble character in a letter to The Times, (June 19). He, if ever Carlyle had seen one such, 'was a man of genius and virtue, a man of sterling veracity, humanity and nobleness of mind. One of those rare men....who are worthy to be called martyr souls'. Many thought that Browning's poem 'The Italian in England' (1845) was also about Mazzini, though it was in fact written with another Italian exile in mind.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Italian revolution evoked great sympathies in all ranks of people. Mazzini's presence in England was to a great extent responsible for creating this fund of good will for the revolutionaries. The reception of Garibaldi in 1864 was one of the most exciting events of English history of the time. A society of the 'Friends of Italy' was founded in 1851 of which among many eminent literary men, Tennyson, Browning and Dickens were patrons. The young poets and intellectuals like Swinburne, Clough, Tynbee and Hyndman, were his devoted admirers. Swinburne dedicated his famous Songs Before Sunrise (1871) to Mazzini in words that seemed to have alluded to the presentation of a sword by Tyneside miners to Garibaldi when the latter came to their port on board the Commonwealth in 1854:

I bring you the sword of a song,
The sword of my spirit's desire
Feeble; but laid at your feet,
That which was weak shall be strong,
That which was cold shall be fire,
That which was bitter be sweet.

Between the collapse of the Chartist agitation and the rise of the political agitation of the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the Italian revolution exercised considerable inspiration to the Radicals in England. The Radical leader Joseph Cowen sent out Mazzini's prescribed literature to Italy concealed in the famous bricks he manufactured at Blaydon.¹

Obviously, Mazzini was the right author to be discussed in an avant-garde University society. The young deacon, as Carpenter was so ordained in 1869, was greatly moved by Mazzini's prophetic writings, even though Mazzini was very anti-clerical. Traces of Mazzini's influence can be seen in Carpenter's sermons preached at the Trinity Hall chapel and later at St. Edwards' Church during 1870-1872. One of Mazzini's pronouncements was that the French revolution marked the close and not the opening of an epoch, the epoch of individual rights; which after a period of chaos was to be succeeded by the epoch of association or of collective life. Duty and association were two of Mazzini's sacred words: 'We cannot relate ourselves to the Divine,' says he,² 'but through collective humanity': And 'Right is the faith of the individual, duty is the common collective faith': 'Right can but organise resistance; it may destroy, it cannot found'. In all these statements Mazzini's anti-individualistic attitude and the religious fervour of his republicanism are clearly expressed. This religious

1. Garibaldi and the Thousand, G.M.Trevelyan (1926) pp.22-25.

2. Essays (1837) edited by W. Clarke pp 37-38. For information on Mazzini I am indebted to the Introduction by Clarke; The biography of Mazzini (1902) by Bolton King; Mazzini: Prophet of Modern Europe (1932), G.O. Griffith; The Duties of Man And Other Essays (Everyman) with an introduction by Thomas Jones.

tone of his voice made his social criticism resemble very much that of F.D. Maurice though the latter was far from being 'republican, let alone a revolutionary.

The Rev. Frederick Denison Maurice (1800-1873) was one of the 'seminal minds'^{1.} of the mid-nineteenth century. Tennyson who was a Cambridge friend of Maurice and who together with him founded the famous The Apostles Society in the University, considered Maurice as 'the greatest mind of them all'.^{2.} Gladstone described Maurice in his characteristic style 'as a spiritual splendour'.^{3.} Leslie Stephen^{4.} tells us that during the 'fifties, young men who were not prepared to 'swallow formulas' nor follow Carlyle in denouncing all clothes of orthodoxy, read Coleridge and found 'the most attractive contemporary leader in F.D. Maurice. He, they thought, might be taken as guide to the promised land where orthodox dogmas in alliance with philosophy could also be reconciled with science and criticism'.

Besides his religious and intellectual leadership, Maurice is remembered for, what J.S.Mill^{5.} called, 'the noble origination of the Christian Socialist movement' in 1848, just at the time when England was brought to the verge of a revolution by the Chartist agitation. Maurice's teachings turned the attention of many clergymen to the consideration of the great social problems of the age. Charles Kingsley^{6.}

1. The Victorians and After (1938) Prof. B. Dobré (ed) p.186.

2. Quoted by C.P.E.Raven in Christian Socialism (1848-1854) p.71.

3. Life by Morley, Vol.I. p.455.

4. Some Early Impressions. p.63.

5. Autobiography p.88

6. See Life of Charles Kingsley, Vol.I. p.166

declared to a meeting of the Chartist leaders, presided over by Maurice himself, in the summer of 1848, that he was a Church of England parson and a Chartist. Dean Stubbs^{1.} rightly says, it was the Christian socialists who for forty years kept the whole forward movement in the social and political life of England in union with God and identified with religion. The Christian Socialists sanctified the word 'association' and declared that co-operation was not new and revolutionary but a vindication of God's order. Since Christ had created the universe and mankind by sacrificing Himself, the true law of creation is the law of sacrifice and love.^{2.} Like Carlyle and Mazzini they were against the 'dismal science' of the political economists. Kingsley declared^{3.} that a century hence mankind would be looking back upon the social philosophy of his day as they did upon 'the witch manias' of their forefathers. He added that though any scheme of Maurice's might appear to have failed, he would rather live in hope, beholding it afar off, 'confessing himself a stranger and a pilgrim in a world of laissez faire'. Though in the early 'seventies the Christian Socialist Movement was dead, and not to revive for nearly ten years, yet it left its permanent mark in English thought and especially in the conscience of the Anglican Church. In 1877 Stewart Headlam carried forward the work of Maurice and others by starting a new Christian Socialist society with its headquarters in the East End of London.

In Carpenter's sermons we notice the influence of Mazzini and Christian Socialist ideas. In several of his sermons he took up

1. Quoted by C. E. Raven, *Op cit.* p.75.

2. See Origin And History of Christian Socialism, T. Christensen, D.D.(1962) p.23.

3. Life, Vol.2. pp.36-37.

the concepts of duty and fellowship and criticised the popular Victorian ideal of 'getting on'. Carpenter said that this craze for personal advancement made a man think of society 'only as a thing to trample on in order to make his way to the highest point possible'. As the Christian Socialists preached 'let each man learn to govern himself, not in solitude, but in fellowship', so did Carpenter disapprove of all escapisms, 'the silence of the convent or the seclusion of a hermit life', because it meant a forsaking of the 'most obvious posts of social duty'. He insisted:

We owe a debt to society. It is much if a man only recognises that he has such a duty; for then, his profession whatever it may be, becomes, besides a means of advancement to himself, a means of good to his fellow men.

He concluded another sermon with two lines which almost verbally echoed Mazzini:

We have talked for centuries about our rights, let us go and fulfil the duties that we have not spoken of.

That Mazzini was one of the dominating influences on Carpenter at this time was also evident from his sonnet 'Genoa', the birth place of Mazzini which Carpenter visited in 1872. While walking down the high crescent-shaped bank of the mediterranean, the poet visualised how once,

Here young Mazzini, while for men he yearned,
Another world within their eyes discerned-
The one republic without place or date.

And how this utopian vision was frustrated by the course of events and Mazzini 'died execrate'. In spite of all setbacks, perhaps the

most characteristic quality of Mazzini's thought was his faith in humanity. It is on this point that he found his friend Carlyle so deficient. 'It is sad, very sad', Mazzini said¹, 'in the case of a man of such singular power as Carlyle, to see the consequence of the absence of a fixed belief as to the law, mission and the destiny of humanity'. It is for this faith in the destiny of humanity, that Carpenter found Mazzini's writings so inspiring.

iii.

We have said earlier that when Carpenter accepted the clerical Fellowship in 1868 he had no mental reservation as to the religious claims of the office. From his childhood he had been looking forward to this vocation. Besides, being brought up in the liberal broad church views of his father, the onslaught of modern knowledge did not threaten his belief. By the late 'sixties the Church seemed to have come to terms with the historical and scientific problems of the time. Darwinism was after all not unamenable to spiritual explanation, as Darwin himself said in The Origin of Species². The theistic explanation was strong in his mind when he wrote the book, Darwin said³ later. The knowledge of comparative religions had taken away most of the emphasis from the uniqueness of Revelation. The doctrines of the Church as interpreted by Maurice and Dean Stanley

1. Essays, 'Carlyle's French Revolution', p.172.

2. The Origin of the Species, p.670.

3. Quoted in 1859: Entering the Age of Crisis, pp.65-66, Ed.Appleman (1959)

were deep and wide enough to absorb any problem of belief. Crowning this wave of liberalism in theological thought came the verdict of the Privy Council^{1.} in 1861, which said that though the Scripture contained the word of God, it is not in itself the word of God. It thus made Biblical criticism legally unassailable. Between this date and 1872, the judicial committee of the Privy Council delivered several judgements on ecclesiastical matters, and except for the Voysey case annulled most prosecutions.

Against this background of freedom of religious opinion, Carpenter did not have to think seriously about his doctrinal position. He was ordained as a deacon in June 1869 and soon he started his chapel services. He found them somewhat disappointing, as the congregation was indifferently religious. They showed, as Carpenter put it, 'gaping signs of unconcealed boredom'.^{2.} So, expecting something serious to turn up, he took a curacy at St. Edward's. Meanwhile he had successfully competed for the University Burney prize for 1869 which was worth £100. The subject of the essay was 'The Legitimate Province of Architecture, Painting and Music in the Service of Religion'. The essay was published in 1870 as The Religious Influence of Art and was thus Carpenter's first publication.

The topic was interesting. Since the Oxford movement of the 'thirties the Church on the whole had come to appreciate more and more the beauty of worship and the external aids to service from art and music. But Cambridge was largely Evangelical in this field. Carpenter's

1. Quoted in Victorian England, G.M. Young p.120

2. My Days And Dreams. pp 52-53

attitude reveals a balance which could be considered as the characteristic opinion of the Cambridge school. Carpenter admits that art is cognate with religion and that all religions from the earliest to the most enlightened have embodied the ideas of personality and mystery. But he wanted to be wary about the use of external aids in making the ordinary worshipper realise direct sensation of the mystery. 'Ritualism is good', he says, 'for those to whom it conveys a sense of something which transcends all ritualism; bad for those to whom it is in itself all in all'. Further he pointed out that, if the Church is to be the instructor of the great mass of the people, she must address herself to the whole, and not only to those who through their wealth and education could develop tastes for higher art. Though much cannot be made out of this prize-essay, yet it is evident that Carpenter did not err to the right.

At St. Edward's, Carpenter came in for greater disappointment. The sleek commercialism of the town congregation was worse than the undisguised heathenism of the Chapel. Besides, much to Carpenter's annoyance, the preacher here was a 'dry Evangelical of the steelknife and lemon juice type'.¹ The hollow ring and the sour edge of his voice, the discordant choir, the ignoble scenes at the vestry and the resumed saintliness on returning to the church, expelled from Carpenter's mind all sentiments of romance in connection with ecclesiastical affairs. However he did not torment himself unduly pondering over it and continued preparing himself 'quite philosophically'

1. My Days And Dreams. p.53

for his ordination as a priest in 1870.

In the Bishop's examination prior to the ordination the candidates had, among other things, to write a 'Life of Abraham'. Carpenter was so optimistic about the breadth of the episcopal mind that he committed to paper views gleaned from advanced sources. That Abraham's intended immolation of Isaac was a relic of Moloch worship and of the old practice of human sacrifice; the voice of God which bade him to substitute the ram did indeed figure the evolution of the human conscience to a higher ideal of worship. The Bishop, Harold Browne, was shocked to find such rank heresy at the level of a young aspirant to the Church. Carpenter was called in to his study to explain the passage as according to the accepted dogma, the sacrifice of Isaac was the prefiguration of the sacrifice of Jesus. Long arguments followed on the doctrines of atonement. Carpenter realised that his ideas were vague but he told the Bishop plainly that he did not believe in the historical accuracy of the Old Testament. In spite of that, however, the Bishop did not refuse to ordain him, though he politely pointed out to Carpenter that his views were not those of the Church of England. And Carpenter returned to his post as a priest.

When the list of the ordained priests came out, one of Carpenter's friends wrote to him, 'in the van of such an army, you are going to lose your bet and become a Bishop before you are sixty'. In case, he prophetically added a parenthesis, ~~in case~~ Carpenter did not take advantage of the Act.¹ The list of new priests greatly

1. The Clerical Disabilities Act (1870) - made voluntary relinquishment of Holy Orders possible. Previously clergymen were allowed to resign but they were still considered as clerics in the eye of the law.

amused Carpenter's friend. It presented to him 'a comet like appearance'. With Carpenter and.....(illegible) at its head and 'a hideous list of swells' forming its 'magnificent and glittering tail' it was sufficient, he said, to 'fill most orthodox people of the cantful type with dim forebodings of the collision of that comet with their own world of mist and cloud and vapour'.¹ Carpenter was however not apprehensive of such a clash immediately.

Early in 1871 a change occurred at St. Edward's. Carpenter's superincumbent left on being made a canon of Carlisle and was succeeded by no other than the Rev. F.D.Maurice. Maurice had been in Cambridge since 1866 as the Knightsbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy. Earlier he was at King's College, London, but was forced to resign on account of his Theological Essays (1853).² From 1854 he acted as the Principal of the Workingmen's College which he and the Christian Socialists founded that year.

Carpenter was obviously delighted to find Maurice as his immediate superior. He gained a new much needed inspiration. Maurice asked him to organise the choir as Maurice thought he himself had not much ear for music. At this time we know how Carpenter felt about his duty from a letter of his sister Lizzy. 'I am glad', she wrote, 'Maurice has brought the odour of heaven to you; it is almost a necessity to have such an odour when one is surrounded by commonplace smells. But

1. MSS 386-8. Carpenter Collection, Letter from E.A.Gray.

2. Tennyson composed a poem on the occasion, called 'To The Rev.F.D.Maurice':

Should eighty-thousand college-councils
Thunder "Anathema," friend, at you;

Should all our churchmen foam in spite
At you, so careful of the right,

Yet one lay-hearth would give you welcome
(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight;

don't overwork yourself though on his behalf, my dear boy'.^{1.} This enthusiasm however did not last long.

Maurice, in spite of his personal charm, saintliness of character and breadth of vision, was by his very nature incapable of entering into other people's situations and of understanding their troubles. He was only capable of helping those who had problems very much like his own. Having been brought up in a family with incessant religious differences (his father was Unitarian, mother an Evangelical and a sister Baptist), Maurice's fundamental psychological need was assertion of religious unity. He was always frightened by others' apostasy. For the same reason he refused to support Colenso though he had much in common with the latter's position. He refused to entertain doubts, and his success as a theologian depended greatly on his power of asserting faith against all odds. 'Anything is better than the dark self', he says elsewhere.^{2.} He distrusted religious questionings on the ground that man's doubts and despair came from slavery to selfish objects and as a result of the dissatisfaction with the temporal.

Maurice's religion was founded on the nature of God and not on man's notions concerning Him. Theologically Maurice's thought approximated closely to the Logos theory of the Greek Fathers, though he laid more stress upon the spiritual aspect and proportionately less

1. MSS. 342-26. Carpenter Collection.

2. Quoted by Elliott Binns. See Religion In The Victorian Era, p.144. See also, Leslie Stephen's article On 'Mr. Maurice's Theology', in The Fortnightly Review, Vol.21, 1874.

upon the intellectual aspect of man's relation to God. His appeal was always to the common believer, and his central faith was that God has revealed Himself and not a dogma about Himself. Religion sprang from the inner nature of man and consisted in experiencing God as the cosmic harmony. This mystical nature of his theology is nowhere more apparent than in his explanation of the notion of eternal punishment. He argued (incidentally, it was responsible for the loss of his Professorship at King's College) that God's punishment was not excessive. Eternity was not time extended, but time abolished; therefore, eternal damnation meant separation from God and not rotting in hell-fire. By learning to know God men come to share in eternal life, and at the same time to surrender their individual lives, 'to that universal energy which is the very life of God'.¹ No doubt such ideas profoundly influenced Carpenter.

But the problem for Carpenter was not so much a doctrinal one as one of personal sensibilities. In fact, for this his friend and predecessor at St. Edward's, the Rev. J.N. Dalton, gently reprimanded him long ago. Dalton pointed out in a letter that just because one saw 'a man with a red beard gushingly describing Elijah being rapt to heaven and an admiring congregation murmuring softly an exquisite applause', one must not draw the conclusion that all sermonising 'was hateful'. Dalton highly admired some of Carpenter's sermons and even invited Carpenter to preach at his church. So he urged Carpenter to carry on his duty:

1. Quoted by Elliott Binns, Ibid. p.144.

As long as you have an opportunity of announcing such wholesome truths from a church at Cambridge it would be a base dereliction of duty to shirk from so doing merely because there are some concomitants of the situation not altogether pleasing.¹

He reminded Carpenter that the latter had already helped to lift from some hearts, 'the too heavy loads of traditional literalism' and 'conjured' him to carry on with the job of 'kindling minds into new life'. If Carpenter gave way to despair, Dalton said, it would only mean surrendering to the forces he must despise: 'Mrs. Geldert (the fanatical Evangelical wife of the Master of Trinity Hall)² and King's Parade tradesmen', in fact, to philistinism. But Carpenter found it difficult to understand how one could hold rational philosophical views on religion and yet continue preaching to a congregation who received the Scriptural facts in their crudest sense. How could one remain sincere to one's beliefs in such a position, that was Carpenter's problem.

In one of his unpublished essays (undated, but probably written at this period), Carpenter remarks:

It is a thousand times more difficult to be sincere than to be veracious. Veracity is an affair of words, but to be sincere is a task so hard that it is safe to say that no man has accomplished it.

To Maurice such a problem did not exist. Leslie Stephen³ tells us that Maurice once remarked to a theological class, finding it difficult himself to accept the usual apologies for Jacob's questionable behaviour

1. MSS, 386-6, 6 Nov., 1870, Carpenter Collection.

2. See My Days And Dreams, p.56.

3. Some Early Impressions. p.69

to Esau, 'after all, my brethren, this story illustrates the tendency of the spiritual man in all ages to be a liar and a sneak'. Stephen adds that this tendency may lead the spiritual man to do quite innocently what other man can do by deliberate self-mystification. Leslie Stephen never meant to say that Maurice was insincere, nor did Carpenter. The latter had spoken of Maurice's 'profundity of earnest innocence'¹ as the most characteristic of him. At this time Carpenter seemed to have been much troubled by the problem of insincerity. He preached in one of his sermons:

We owe to ourselves to be perfectly sincere, there is nothing so easily blights all religion as insincerity; therefore if a belief is not really a living faith, the least we can do is to keep it in suspense, as it were, till we feel it distinctly our duty to discard it or adopt it.

Here it is obvious that Carpenter was addressing himself as much as to his congregation. Until the problem of sincerity could be solved, his position as a priest would be based on hypocrisy. But what worried him further was that his duty as a priest also induced hypocrisy in others. For instance, entering an almshouse he would often see an old woman shuffling a Prayer Book or a Bible on to her table; a falsity imposed on her by his position.

Meanwhile other influences were at work. We have mentioned those of Clifford and Mazzini, who were extremely anti-clerical.

Clifford asserted in one of his essays:²

If there is one lesson which history forces upon us in every page, it is this, keep your children away from the priest; he will make them enemies of mankind.

1. My Days And Dreams. p.57

2. 'The Ethics of Religion', in The Scientific Basis of Morals and other Essays, p.45

And he added, he did not mean 'only the priest of Catholicism...' but 'the more familiar clergyman or ministers of Protestant denominations'. Another friend with whom Carpenter consorted a good deal at this time, B. Fosset Lock of King's College, once having had to write a prize-poem for the University, wrote the following under cover of a republican utopia:^{1.}

Since they traded in holy things, and treated the people
like beasts,
The priests shall be slain and the kings shall be drowned
in the blood of the priests.

The tragedy is that the young priest found nothing ennobling in his own experience to counteract such opinions. On the contrary he felt drawn to this heretic circle to rid himself of the shock of his own loss of faith.

Another such influence on Carpenter at this time was that of a lady connected by marriage with one of his sisters. A woman twenty-six years his senior but still 'retaining traces of an exceedingly handsome youth'.^{2.} Carpenter has remarked in his autobiography that she was the only woman, except for his mother, who came to him as a strong motive force or inspiration or as a help or a guide in doubt or difficulty. But neither in My Days And Dreams nor in his Sketches From Life, where he draws a pen-portrait of her, did he reveal her full identity. However it has been possible to deduce that she was Mrs. Jane Olivia Daubeney, the daughter of Edward Villiers-Rippingille (1798-1859),^{3.} who was quite famous in his days as a 'subject painter'.

1. Quoted in My Days And Dreams. p.61.

2. Ibid. 169.

3. E.V. Rippingille was born in King's Lynn. A self-taught artist - he practised in Bristol, exhibiting at The Royal Academy from 1819. His subjects were taken from English rural life, until he visited Italy in 1837 when for some years his inspiration was Italian. He lectured on art & contributed articles for various periodicals. Some of his paintings can be seen in Glasgow, Liverpool and Victoria and Albert Museums. See E. Bénézit's Dictionnaire-des Peintres...etc & Bryan's Dictionary of Painters & Engravers.

Carpenter tells us in his sketch of Mrs. Daubeney, whom he calls 'Francesca',¹ that she had evil memories of her father who treated their mother shabbily and cared for the children less than nothing. Her mother died young and she was brought up by two liberal minded maiden aunts in Italy. She grew up happily there, Carpenter says, 'to a beautiful, free, pagan creature'. Quite early in her life she revolted against religion. Nothing would induce her to read a word of the sacred books or to speak even with toleration of parsons and clerics, and pious people generally. She was married at eighteen to Major F.S. Daubeney, who was then stationed at Gibraltar. But her 'ardent truthful nature with all-or-nothing bent of mind' led to an early separation. She settled in London with her child, but unfortunately, the baby died and she was left alone to live 'her tragic but no less proud existence'. Carpenter says that 'her keen feeling, her heart hungering for something loveable and beautiful, eventually prompted her along the line of philanthropy'. During the American Civil War, when large numbers of working men were thrown out of work and there were famine conditions in Manchester and other industrial places of the North, Mrs. Daubeney went there for relief work. It was a great strain on her health, her hearing was nearly gone, and she became prematurely old. Carpenter must have met her after this period as his sister, Emily Carpenter, was married to the Daubeney family only in 1868. 'Even in the ruin of her health', Carpenter adds to his sketch, 'she seemed like the torso of some sculptured goddess, still aglow with the romance and fire of a past age'.²

1. He calls her 'Olivia' in My Days And Dreams.

2. 'Francesca', Sketches From Life.... p.101. The previous quotations are also from this sketch.

At this critical period of Carpenter's life, namely, after his graduation and ordination, Mrs. Daubney's influence counted a great deal. He admired her ardent truthfulness, her passionate admiration for the things she liked. There were violent disagreements, yet her criticism of art, her views on marriage, on religion, her taste in literature were helpful to him. She would go to the art galleries and 'look out for the best' pictures to show Carpenter. When she took lodgings near Kensington Museum, she wrote to Carpenter:

My lodgings promise well being upstairs and clean and best of all, have a spare bed room which will be always ready mind you, only don't let it stand empty too long! 1.

She occasionally called Carpenter 'Bruno' (incidentally, Carpenter gave this name to his dog); or sometimes 'the brown bard' and after copying out his poems, she would sometimes add, 'I do not think it at all worthy of the brown bard though'. Carpenter introduced her to Whitman's poems, and she wrote enthusiastically:

I have had that warm living hand of his put into mine; he strikes fire body and soul, the one ennobling the other, ah! where have I lived my long life and how much I have to thank you for. Now goodnight Camerado. 2.

We will consider this relationship in more detail at a later stage; here we are more concerned with the anti-clerical influences that were at work on Carpenter's mind.

Carpenter's doubts about continuing in his vocation began to deepen in 1872. When F.D. Maurice died that year his personal ties with the Church became weaker still. Indecision tormented him, and towards the close of that year he was obviously ill and incapacitated.

1. MSS 350, Carpenter Collection.

2. - ditto -

He asked for leave which was readily granted. About this time Mrs. Daubeney wrote to Carpenter:^{1.}

I ought not to write this morning caro mio, I am too depressed. It is terrible to me to know how you suffer. Your letter last night made me cold to the finger-ends. One thing is clear anyhow, your present life is intolerable, Change it you mustWhen you get away from the depressing influence of your present life with all its worries you will breathe and clasp your hand and thank God!

Carpenter was however still undecided. In Cambridge 'there was a general opinion', that his illness 'was affectation'. Carpenter writes to a college friend commenting on this point on 15th January, 1873.

Ugh! It is hard to meet people daily on such terms of (mis)understanding....I am going to Italy, Florence first, but if the cold is serious, to Rome and Naples. 2.

He stayed in Italy for four months, and mentally more or less prepared himself to abandon Orders. But this perhaps amounts to misrepresenting Carpenter, as he says conscious arguments brought him no nearer to a decision. It was certainly not for any heretical conviction that he thought of resigning from his office. Apparently he did not disagree much with his intimate friend E.A.Beck,^{3.} who wrote to him at this time urging him not to resign. Beck said:

It is not men of the distinctive type of Bradlaugh or Lock of King's and any of those, that can really build up these rude bricks till they catch the sun: it is men like Robertson and Maurice and Stanley: who supply new motives while they take away old props, and feed the starving man by little and little. A man who moves apart from the struggling mass and stand on a hill and avows his naked conviction, retards those who might be made his converts. 4.

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1. Quoted in My Days And Dreams, p.70
 2. Letter to C.G.Oates. MSS. 351, Carpenter Collection. C.G.Oates of Meenwoodside, Leeds, graduated from Trinity Hall in 1870 and was called to the Bar in 1871. Unmarried with homosexual leanings, he was Carpenter's life-long friend. Oates died in 1902.
 3. For a note on Beck, see Ch.7 p. 249.
 4. MSS. 386-9, Carpenter Collection.

Carpenter had no intention of following the trail of Bradlaugh and the secularists, yet he wanted an amount of freedom which was incompatible with his holy office.

In Italy a new interest developed which wanted even more freedom. The Greek sculpture had a deep effect on his mind. This was the climax of an instinctive urge which, he thought, he had felt from his early childhood. He used to suppress this instinct, but with the influence of Whitman's poetry increasingly dominating his mind, he began to seek its expression. That is an unashamed admiration for the beauty of his own sex. In Greek sculpture what struck him most was 'the marvellous beauty and cleanliness of the human body as presented by the Greek mind'; the way in which the 'noblest passions of the soul were united with the corporeal form'. Such superb expression in art made him understand 'the Greek ideal of the free and gracious life of man at one with nature and the cosmos, which was so remote from the current ideals of commercialism and Christianity'. He also realised that it was to such a view of life that Whitman's poetry pointed its way. He felt that the consciousness of this new ideal has 'as it were planted the seed of a new conception of life'.¹ And he must get away from Cambridge and the Church, where the seed could never come to life.

For the first time he seriously entertained the idea of taking up literature as a profession. He had been scribbling poems for some time in the prevalent academic manner, expressing interest in mythology, painting and art, along with something of the current religious piety. He collected them into a book, Narcissus And Other Poems,

1. My Days And Dreams p.67

and was published in November, 1873, by Henry S. King & Co. It did not get much attention from the press, and the few who did take note of it rather depreciated it. In the light of Carpenter's later development as a poet this book has hardly any importance, except that there is a vague sentiment for nature and humanity. A weekly newspaper, The Hour, wrote approvingly of the poem 'Narcissus' as a 'finished and scholarly poem' and added that the 'aim of Carpenter's art was 'to deal nobly with precious legendary material'. Which however was not enough as Carpenter did not seem to realise any depth of interpretation in his treatment of the myths. The Athenaeum (Nov. 15, 1873) found in it only a 'token of culture and Keats' and pointed out that it was 'Keats writ indeed in water'. And the reviewer went on to say that the contrast between the happy love of Endymion and the sad passion of Narcissus is not so great as the contrast between the poems.

The failure of this first venture in poetry led Carpenter to further reflection about his future. It had become quite imperative for him that he should make some distinct announcement about it in the Fellows' meeting at Christmas (1873). He had come to realise that it was not merely religious difficulties that troubled him; but the so-called intellectual life of the University was beginning to pall on him. 'There was a vein of painful earnestness'¹ in his character which made it difficult for him to adjust to the claims of the academic existence. The everlasting discussions which never came near actual life, the cheap philosophising, the ornamental cleverness, the endless book learning, and the queer cynicism and boredom underlying all, which he came to associate

1. My Days And Dreams, P.63

with the contemporary academic life, filled him with a sense of emptiness.

Ever since his interest in Mazzini's writings had begun, the idea of duty towards society had captured his imagination. Moreover the writings of Maurice, with their emphasis on 'social morality'¹ had taught him that true religious life was some kind of social service. He preached in one of his last sermons echoing this Christian socialist idea:

Christ lived on the contemplation of a new era and a new order of social life. He looked forward to a kingdom of heaven and by a whole life spent among the degraded and the ignorant he worked for it. 2.

Carpenter's political awareness was also increasingly moving towards the left. In a sermon preached in 1872 we find a reference to the programme of the International Workingmen's Association formed by Karl Marx in 1867. Carpenter was referring to a lecture by Professor Fawcett on the 'Programme of the International'. He says that the Professor of Political Economy was no doubt trying in the very best way possible, to avert what may be one of the greatest dangers of our age, 'that sudden and untimely revolution of European society'. Yet Carpenter pointed out, 'we cannot but admire the nobility of mind', revealed in the Programme which dictated 'such maxims as the brotherhood of nations and abolition of all standing armies, impractical for the present though they may be'. He reminded his congregation that 'class feeling or class exclusiveness is one of the greatest curses of England... and the foe of that ideal state of society for which we look'.

1. The twenty-one lectures that Maurice delivered in Cambridge from 1866 were published as Social Morality (1869).

2. MSS. 'Sermons', Carpenter Collection.

In December, 1873, Carpenter was at Cannes, south of France, nursing his sick sister Lizzy, when the reviews of Narcissus appeared. Though later he himself realised that 'there was nothing of moment in the book', yet it was disheartening to see his first publication fall so flat. So while returning from Cannes alone on his journey homewards, he was reassessing the whole situation. And it suddenly flashed upon his mind, he recalls in his autobiography, like an illumination vibrating through his whole being that he would and must somehow go and make his life with the mass of people and the manual workers. And this must be final, he decided; he must escape from Cambridge and throw the whole thing overboard. He informed the Fellows at Christmas. They thought it was a trifle quixotic, and the Dean said it was sheer tomfoolery to be so scrupulous about what one believed and what one preached: 'Look at my sermons in the Chapel now', he said, 'are they not models of unaffected piety?' You let the matter drop and it will all blow over!¹ But it was not to be so. Carpenter applied for voluntary renunciation, and in pursuance of his urge to go and live with the mass, approached Professor Stuart² who was organising the University Extension Lectures at that time. Meanwhile the Fellows were not decided whether Carpenter was to be allowed to retain his Fellowship after relinquishing his Orders; so he stayed on at Cambridge till the end of the long vacation of 1874.

1. My Days And Dreams, p.74

2. More on Professor Stuart and the Extension Movement in Chap.3.

iv.

Early one morning, some time between his resignation and the acceptance of the duty of an Extension lecturer, he had awakened from sleep, in the midst of a heavy thunderstorm, with an extraordinary vivid conception of Moses on the top of Sinai. Then and there he wrote a long soliloquy, which was afterwards expanded to a full length dramatic poem in blank verse. The drama is an allegory of a pioneer. Moses is the leader, one not unlike Mazzini who foresaw victory with prophetic insight, one who knew he had been given the task of leading a people to freedom but was handicapped by the apathy among them. The Bible story is handled rationally, explaining the miracles as coincidences. The book begins with two epigraphs; one from Bacon's preface to the Wisdom Of The Ancients to the effect that underneath ancient fables sometimes we come across bits of real history; the other epigraph was from George Eliot's, which explains psychologically why an inseparable identification of self with a purpose often leads a man to an imperious domination of his fellows. This, Carpenter shows, is why the noble and life-long devotion of a Moses hardens at last to a tyrannical determination to carry on his ideal at all costs. The drama, Moses, was published in 1875, by E. Moxon & Co. London.

The soliloquy which opened the play and is now placed at the beginning of Act 2, Scene 1, did in fact provide a correlative to his own situation at the time. His anti-clericalism found full expression

in the character of Aaron. 'I have made Aaron such an infernal sneak', he wrote to a friend, 'that I am ashamed of him. He will be a scandal to priesthood for ever'.¹ In the situation of the hero Carpenter found much resemblance with his own. Like Moses he has escaped from captivity to freedom. He bids farewell to his past associations and resolves to pursue his new vision:

till this one green vale
Becomes the cradle of another world.

He has no illusions about the hard task ahead of him, and he knows:

Ah! lonely must his life be who would lead
And would not lie.

The Westminster Review² saw this point of resemblance, when it noticed a reprint of the book in 1910:

In working out this drama, Carpenter must have been picturing much of his own experience in his attempt to lift his generation to a higher level of thought and action.

When however the book was first published in 1875, it did not receive much praise from the reviewers.

The Athenaeum³ called it a very pretentious failure, and took the writer to task for 'looseness of thought and expression as it is absolutely fatal to poetical truth or power'. The exasperated reviewer ended his comment with the remark that 'certainly Narcissus... if not much to boast of, was infinitely better than Moses'. One can see that the reviewer was more annoyed with the conception of the play than anything else. In the "seventies one was quite used to handling

1. 'Letter to C.G. Oates'. MSS. 351, Carpenter Collection.

2. June, 1910.

3. Oct. 2, 1875.

mediocre poetry with much musicality but little thought. It was a period of hush, a hush of exhaustion rather than of expectancy".^{1.} The great Victorian poets had already published their best works. Tennyson completed his Idylls in 1869 and Browning his Ring And The Book in 1868. Arnold virtually stopped writing poetry after 1867. Rossetti, Swinburne and Morris had similarly established their characteristic reputations before 1870. All through the 'seventies these poets ruled literary taste and it appeared as if 'the great figures like old beech trees would not let any alien growth to spring up in their shadows'.^{2.} The verse making continued in this period only as a backwater or an overflow. The Academy for August 1873, even went so far as to say that the poets were only a "survival" and the currents of intellectual energy then ran to science, politics, history and prose fiction.

At such times it is difficult to recognize any originality in conception or imagination if it is not also immediately gripping with the power of its expression. Besides Carpenter surely lacked power to construct a play; he visualised the central situation quite passionately, but failed to maintain the same concentration throughout the play. The speeches of Moses and his sister Miriam are excellent both in thought and expression. Similarly a few situations are extremely well-conceived both in dramatic power and relevance to the story. The reviewer in

^{1.} The Eighteen Seventies, op.cit. p.104.

^{1.} Also see, 'Lesser Poets of the Middle and Later 19th Century', by George Saintsbury, in Cambridge History of Literature, vol.13 and Hugh Walker, The Literature of the Victorian Era (1910), ch.vii, 'Later Development'.

2. The Victorian Sunset, E.Wingfield-Stratford, 'England in 1870's', p.61.

The Athenaeum had expressed his own inability to appreciate the strength of the book by calling it 'pretentious'. And by preferring Narcissus to Moses, he was revealing the taste of his time; it would rather have a peaceful backwater than a muddy stream.

As a transition from Narcissus to Towards Democracy (1883) Moses is an important link. The prophetic tone of his later writings appears in it. It shows a more active play of intellectual imagination than the first book did. Moses was reissued in 1910, with very little alteration, as The Promised Land, and ran into three editions. By this time, however, Carpenter had established himself as a writer and thinker. So what appeared pretentious to the reviewer in 1875 was now accepted as prophetic power. The socialists found it 'full of inspiration and hope for those who are working for the deliverance of the nation from the pharoanic rule of modern capitalism'. The Labour Leader for April, 1910, concluded, 'the elements of the story are true for all time'.

CHAPTER II

Whitman And Carpenter

Perhaps the most important thing that happened to Carpenter during his stay in Cambridge was his acquaintance with the poetry of Walt Whitman. After the republication of Whitman's collected works in 1867, a new interest in the American poet was shown by the British reviewers. William Michael Rossetti wrote an admiring estimate of Whitman in The Chronicle for July 6, 1867. And it seemed to have started its 'concentric circles of consequences'¹. which led eventually to what Swinburne unkindly called 'Whitmania'. Swinburne, however, was himself an admirer of Whitman. In 1866 he concluded his critical essay William Blake (dedicated to W.M. Rossetti) with a long comparison between Blake and Whitman. He praised Whitman's 'exquisite lyrical excellence' and remarked that the words of Blake and Whitman, 'strike deep and run wide and soar high' and that their poetry partook of the 'powers and faults of elemental and eternal things'². In 1871 on the crest of his enthusiasm for republicanism he apostrophised Whitman

1. 'Prefatory Notice', Poems by Walt Whitman (1868). p.1.
2. William Blake (1866) p.301-303.

as the symbol of liberty and wrote a poem 'To Walt Whitman In America'
invoking:

Send but a song overseas for us,
A song to put fire in our ears,
Whose burning shall burn up tears,
Whose sign did battle reform.

Though Swinburne later recanted this enthusiasm, his earlier sentiments truly represented the mood of many at that time. The book which was primarily responsible for creating such admiration for Whitman in England, was W.M. Rossetti's selected edition of Whitman's poems in 1868.

In the 'seventies, as we have said earlier, a hush of exhaustion prevailed on the poetic world. It was 'a slack time of puny bards, and pessimistic rhymes', said Punch.^{1.} The critics were lamenting 'the systematic refusal of the poets to give expression to the main aspects of contemporary life'.^{2.} Robert Buchanan made his famous attack on 'The Fleshly School Of Poetry' of Rossetti and Swinburne in the Contemporary Review for October, 1871. Previously he had published several essays^{3.} criticising the general trend among his fellow poets of rejecting the contemporary life as 'unpoetic' subject matter. Though Buchanan was personally too hamstrung by his janus-faced aesthetic norms and moral prudery to found a new school for poetry, he had a basic critical insight. He disliked the growing wave of aestheticism in literature and he knew what he disliked about it. Under Pre-Raphaelite influence poetry had tended to be too closely allied to painting. Buchanan thought, 'literature, and more particularly poetry, is in a very bad way when one art gets hold of another and imposes upon it its condition and limitations'. A painting can be

1. April 9, 1892, in an obituary verse on Whitman.

2. 'The Quarterly Review', May 1872. 'Modern English Poetry'.

3. See David Gray And Other Essays, Chiefly on Poetry (1868) p.292.

judged by the cleverness of its execution, by its colour and form. But a poem is a poem 'first as to the soul, next as to the form'. A great poet is recognized as such because he brings 'great ideas and new light, because his thought is a revelation'.^{1.} Speaking about his own literary practice, Buchanan said that he never took any interest in words in themselves:

Words have been valuable to me purely as a means of expressing meaning, nor have I introduced epithets or tricks of style to satisfy the vulgarity of Schoolmen.^{2.}

When we bear in mind Mallarmé's classic statement that 'poetry is not made with ideas, but with words',^{3.} we see how accurately Buchanan differentiated himself from the new aesthetic attitude. Surely, Buchanan's attack was not just an expression of malice on the part of a 'poeticule' against established reputations, as Swinburne made it appear in his intemperate reply, Under The Microscope (1872). Hugh Walker rightly said, that Buchanan was 'the spokesman of a generation rising into manhood when the impulse of the great Victorian poets was beginning to fail'.^{4.} In an essay entitled 'On My Own Tentatives', Buchanan announced that his ambition was to herald the dawn of a 'poetry of humanity'.^{5.}

Another important attack upon contemporary poetry came from Alfred Austin in The Poetry Of The Period (1870). Austin's great ideal was Byron and by the standards of his master's achievement he found his

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1. 'The Fleshly School of Poetry', The Contemporary Review, Oct.1870.
 2. David Gray etc. p. 307.
 3. Paul Valéry quotes Mallarmé's statement in 'Poetry and Abstract Thought' See, Essays On Language And Literature (1957). Ed.H.L.Hevesy. p.85
 4. The Literature of The Victorian Era (1910), p.585
 5. David Gray..... p.297.

contemporaries 'little things': 'despite all the nonsense that has been written to the contrary'. Austin considered the age they were living primarily responsible for that:

Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Browning and Mr. Swinburne are mental phenomena of the period - a period which, however distinguished for smaller characteristics, is incapable of doing really great deeds in producing really great poetry. (p.110.)

He quoted a statement made by Swinburne himself in Notes On Poems And Reviews (1866) and asked where was 'the literature that deals with the life of man and the whole nature of things?'¹. Austin, of course, saw signs of it in Walt Whitman, but the American poet's democratic ideal revolted him, inveterate Tory as he was. Yet who else but Whitman could have satisfied the claims Austin and Buchanan made for poetry? The younger generation, with more natural sympathy for democracy than Austin had, at once claimed Whitman as the poet of the future. They hailed William Michael Rossetti's remark that the Leaves of Grass was 'par excellence the modern poem'.²

Scholarly appreciation of Whitman's poetry gradually began to appear. In July 1871, Edward Dowden's article 'Walt Whitman: The poet of democracy' was printed in The Westminster Review after being rejected by Macmillan's Magazine and the Contemporary Review. Whitman scholars agree that this article put the first seal of academic approval on Whitman's poetry in England. In 1874, George Saintsbury wrote in The Academy (October 10, 1874) from a more aesthetic angle, saying that 'it is not so much in the ^{matter as in the} manner of his evangel', that the strength of

1. The Poetry of The Period. pp.83-84.

2. 'Prefatory Notice', Poems by Walt Whitman. (1868)

Whitman lay. John Addington Symonds who valued Whitman much more than a mere poet, later carried on Dowden's arguments even further by trying to define the qualities of the new 'Democratic Art'.¹

To Symonds, as to most young people of the 'seventies, democracy was an accepted fact of the decade. And they were sure this new outlook on life would give rise to a new art. Whitman was a beginning; he was the poet of the coming age of democracy. In fact Symonds quoted Thoreau's remark that 'Whitman is democracy'. Broadly speaking, Symonds argued, democratic art is an art 'free in its choice of subject'. It is an art which 'has recovered the sobriety after the delirium of romantic revolution' but which 'retains from that reactionary movement one precious principle', namely, that nothing in nature or man is unpoetical; if treated by a mind which feels its poetry and can interpret it.

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the historian of Whitman's influence in England tells us, the American poet became a part of 'a genuine youth movement'.² Young critics and journalists trying to get a foothold in the London literary world were more likely to seize upon Whitman for their material. But Carpenter's interest in Whitman was slightly different from this enthusiasm; Whitman touched in him a deeper personal chord. Carpenter had felt from his early childhood a strong craving for passionate friendship, but it remained 'unspoken and unexpressed'. It was as if, Carpenter says, 'a magic flame dwelt within one, burning, burning, which

1. 'Democratic Art' (with special reference to Walt Whitman). See Letters And Papers by J.A.Symonds, Ed. Horatio Brown.

2. Walt Whitman in England, Harold Blodgett, p.190

one could not put out and yet whose existence one might on no account reveal'.^{1.} But Whitman in his 'Calamus' and other poems celebrating comradeship, had broken the silence and gloriously expressed what he himself had so long suppressed. Even Plato and the Greek writers, Carpenter thought, left something unsaid.

It was a Fellow colleague of Trinity Hall, H.D.Warr, who first brought a copy of Rossetti's edition of Whitman's Poems to Carpenter, some time in 1868-1869. Carpenter pored over the book for hours, puzzled at first, but profoundly attracted all the same. He ordered Whitman's books and a new interest set in which was to colour his whole attitude to life and literature. Carpenter's interests continued on surface in its normal way; he wrote poems in the periodic fashion, but inside him the current of his spiritual life was silently altering its course. At a time when thoughtful young men felt fragmented and were torn with conflicts, while constricted by morality and respectability, Whitman showed the way to celebrate the whole personality. Havelock Ellis spoke for his generation when he said that in this regard Whitman had a significance to them which they could scarcely overestimate.^{2.} Whitman represented, he said, for the first time 'since Christianity swept over the world, the reintegration, in a sane and wholehearted form, of the instincts of the entire man'.

That this message of Whitman went to Carpenter's heart was evident in his life-long concern for the integration and wholeness of human personality.

1. My Days And Dreams, p.77

2. The New Spirit (1890), p.31

Carpenter was slowly moving away from his old moorings and the voice of Whitman was in that proportion growing louder within him. Later he said^{1.} that Whitman 'filtered and fibred' all his blood. Whitman meant to him literally as well as metaphorically a new departure. It is interesting that he chose to write to Whitman for the first time at the moment when he had finally decided upon the course his new life was to take. It was just dawn on July 12, 1874, and the birds 'in their old sweet fashion' were chirping in the College garden outside, when Carpenter took up his pen to communicate to Whitman his new dedication.

The first thing he assured the poet was that he was not a new 'enthusiast': 'I am not drunk with new wine', he pointed out. He had known the poet's works for over six years. Thus Carpenter advanced in this long letter,^{2.} hesitant and bold alternately, as he moved from personal to public matters. His first reason for writing to Whitman, he said, was to let the poet know that there were many in England to whom his 'writings have been as waking up to a new day'. He went on:

I dare say, you do not care, particularly, how your writings, as such, are accepted; but I know that you do care that these thoughts you weary not to proclaim should be seized upon by others over the world and become the central point of their lives, and that something even transcending all thought should knit together us in England and you in America by ties closer than thought and life itself.

Whitman must have understood what mystic bond of brotherhood Carpenter was claiming, as he remarked to Traubel about this letter:^{3.}

1. 'A note on Towards Democracy', Labour Prophet, May 1894.

2. The letter is printed in Horace Traubel's With Walt Whitman in Camden... (1906) pp.158-161.

3. Traubel op.cit. p.158

I seem to get very near to his heart and he to mine in that letter: it has a place - an important place - in our personal history.

Surely it had for Carpenter. He saw in Whitman's message the light towards which his own life and also that of his time were moving:

All that you have said, the thoughts that you have given us, are vital - they will grow - that is certain. You cannot know anything better than that you have spoken the word which is on the lips of God to-day. And here, though dimly, I think I see the new, open, life which is to come; the spirit moving backwards and forwards beneath the old forms - strengthening and reshaping the foundation before it alters the superstructure..

There is no hope, almost none, from English respectability. Money eats into it, to the core. The Church is effete... The Men are blindly material; even - to the most intellectual - art and the desire for something like religion are only known as an emotional sense of pain.

Carpenter pinned his faith in the new awakening of women:

Yet the women will save us. I wish I could tell you what is being done by them - everywhere - in private and public.

And the artisans, they too were shaping themselves,

While society is capering and grimacing over their heads, they are slowly coming to know their minds; and exactly as they come to know their minds they come to the sense of power to fulfil them: and sweet will the day be when the toys are wrested from the hands of children and they too have to become men.

Then Carpenter comes to his most intimate note and the manifesto becomes a confession:

Yesterday there came (to mend my door) a young workman with the old divine light in his eyes - even I call it old though I am not thirty - and perhaps, more than all, he has made me write to you.

Because you have, as it were, given me a ground for the love of men I thank you continually in my heart. (And others thank you though they do not say so.). For you have made men to be not ashamed of the noblest instinct of their nature. Women are beautiful; but, to some, there is that which passes the love of women.

Whitman appreciated this mood very much and commented that 'Carpenter was never more thoroughly Carpenter than just there, in that tender mood of self-examination'.¹ But Carpenter moves out of the personal note again to the social ground; the vision of eros leading to the vision of demos:

Between the splendid dawn of Greek civilisation and the high universal noon of Democracy there is a strange horror of darkness on us..(but) slowly-I think - the fetters are falling from men's feet, the cramps and crazes of the old superstitions are relaxing, the idiotic ignorance of class contempt is dissipating.

Carpenter based this hope of social regeneration on what he considered the most important message of Whitman, the importance he laid on the human personality. In Whitman's own words:

'And, nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self' ('Song of Myself').

This was not egotism or vanity in the ordinary sense, but the ground for mutual respect and recognition. Carpenter interpreted this teaching of Whitman as follows:

If men shall learn to accept one another simply and without complaint, if they shall cease to regard themselves because the emptiness of vanity is filled up with love, and yet shall honour the free, immeasurable gift of their own personality, delight in it and bask in it without false shame and affectations - then your work will be accomplished: and men for the first time will know of what happiness they are capable.

In conclusion Carpenter says a few words as to his identity and intention:

I was in orders; but I have given that up - utterly. It was no good. Nor does the University do: there is nothing vital in it. Now I am going away to lecture to the working-men and women in the North. They at least desire to lay hold of something with a real grasp.

1. Traubel, op.cit. p.158

Farewell: wherever the most common desires and dreams of daily life are - wherever the beloved opposition is, of hand to hand, of soul to soul. - I sometimes think to meet you.

I have finished this at night. All is silent again; and as at first I am yours.

Edward Carpenter.

The letter delighted Whitman. It was 'beautiful like a confession', he commented.

A confession indeed it was. A confession made in the early hours of dawn about as to what an awakening experience Whitman's poetry was to him. Carpenter took up Extension Lectures from October, 1874. In April, 1877, the promised visit to Whitman materialised, and he made his first pilgrimage to America to meet the poet. Carpenter visited him again in 1884.

What struck Carpenter most about Whitman at his first sight of the poet was the 'impression of immense vista and background in his personality'. He elaborated this point in a letter to a friend, written from the Montgomery Hotel, Philadelphia, on May 4, 1877:¹

The thing which strikes one about his face is the great interval between his eyes and eyebrows. That space, in which the soul seems to move, is very large. As to his eyes of course it is impossible to put them into words - the impression they produce on me is of immense, immense background: yet it is very characteristic of them that the pupils are small and distinct, the likeness of Christ is quite marked. I suppose it comes in the high eyebrows.

To bring home this point he added a pen-sketch of the face of the poet showing resemblance with Christ. This first impression sets the stamp of reverence in which he always held Whitman. To him

1. MSS, Ohio Wesleyan University. Thanks to J.H.Lancaster, Director of the Library, who sent me copies of two letters of Carpenter to 'Benjamin' (?Ford).

Whitman was not just a poet with a new manner of expression. For Carpenter Whitman symbolised at that time all that was best and was to come. The contemporary trends in politics, philosophy and religion, were all prefigured by his writings. But Whitman insisted on identifying his ideal of democracy with America and expected his admirers¹ to pin their faith on the destiny of America as well. Carpenter says in another letter to the same friend, that 'hardly anything' pleased Whitman more 'than to find that his writings drew people to America'. Carpenter however seemed to be straining himself somewhat when he came to register his own comments on America. He said that he was 'charmed with the American people'. But added, 'I mean the working folk for the commercials are very sordid'. And about the people and their customs, he liked everything 'except spitting'. He liked the plans of the American towns and their climate and with a flourish added: 'The whole thing is a magnificent sketch, a sketch on the grandest scale of what is to come'.²

Carpenter stayed in America for nearly two months. He visited Emerson, Wendell Holmes, Lowell and a few other American authors. But before his homeward journey, he returned to Philadelphia for a few days and stayed at Mrs. Ann Gilchrist's house, where Whitman had a room and spent a good part of his days. Mrs. Gilchrist, an English lady, the widow of the biographer of Blake, fell passionately in love with Whitman's writings and came to stay near him. It was a tragic attachment. Carpenter gives a description of the atmosphere

1. Whitman says in Democratic Vistas, p.3. "I shall use the words America and Democracy as convertible terms".

2. MSS, Ohio Wesleyan University, dated 20 June, 1877.

of the household in Days With Walt Whitman (1908). Here Carpenter had an opportunity of meeting his poet-prophet at close quarters and reported to his friend Benjamin on 20th June, 1877, what he saw:

I write from the abode of Gods.... I visited Emerson, Holmes and the rest...And he seems to tower higher and more splendid than ever. And he has taken me to himself.... He is staying here now, and so am I. Domestic life with him is a fulfilment. He seems to bring with him an atmosphere of perfect rest and union.¹

In the evening they sat in the porch, Whitman in a chair in the middle, holding someone by the hand, 'and looking like a great God in the twilight or moonlight'. He found Whitman's reading 'vast and varied'. But though he had such a wide range of subject and interest, and seemed to 'look out like a mountain over the world', yet, Carpenter found, Whitman's greatest delight was in 'doing the smallest little acts of kindness'.

The other important fact of Whitman's life which impressed Carpenter most was his intimacy with the common people. Whitman took him out for a walk and this was what he saw:

Walking through the streets with him - he leaning on my arms, for one foot is still paralysed - it was a sight (a sight for which I know you will bless him) to see the working people come around. The bus driver, the ferry boat men, jacks of all trades, stopped his way with greetings....

One can see how it is that he has this wonderful personal influence. He is full of kindness, yet he unites his tenderness with the most wonderful strength and persistency and selfnes(sic) of character that I ever saw in any one. That union of the two is what I cannot get over - it alternately fascinates and awes one. ².

Carpenter returned home after this first visit with a heart full of impressions that never ceased to haunt him. And within a few years,

1. Ibid.

2. MSS, Ohio. op.cit.

he himself embarked on a new way of life which brought him into close touch with the people.

Carpenter was not a voluminous correspondent, yet he wrote quite regularly to Whitman. He often worked as an agent for Whitman, selling his books to friends and occasionally collecting donations for the poet from his admirers. Whitman's letters to Carpenter were mostly chatty and short.^{1.} We know however from Horace Traubel's notes on With Walt Whitman In Camden (1906), that Whitman highly prized Carpenter's letters. Perhaps the intimate affection in which Whitman held Carpenter may be best realised from an episode Traubel relates. In one of his letters Carpenter happened to have addressed the elder poet as 'Dear Walt Whitman' instead of the usual 'Dear Walt'; Whitman was quick to notice this change. He saw in it 'some sort of reserve' that he had not 'noticed formerly in Edward'. 'What is the truth of it?' he asked Traubel. Did it denote any change of attitude or was it 'only the English of it?' (p.169)

Whitman had however nothing to fear; all his life Carpenter remained, as Blodgett remarks, 'one of the worthiest of Walt's friends'. After Whitman's death in 1892, Carpenter published some of his notes which he took on his visits. But it is wrong to say, as Blodgett does, that Carpenter had little to do with Whitman's vogue in England prior to 1892.^{2.} Since the publication of Towards Democracy (1883), both in the press and public Carpenter had been popularly referred to as 'The Walt Whitman of England'. In interpreting the spirit of Whitman's poetry no one had played a greater part than Carpenter in England.^{3.} In 1906 Carpenter published his Days With

1. Most of these letters are in 'The Humanitarian Research Centre', in the University of Texas.

2. Walt Whitman in England (1934) p.201.

3. See J. A. Symond's Walt Whitman (1893) p.147.

Walt Whitman which included the biographical notes published in 1892 and four more essays bearing on the poetic form of Leaves of Grass and Whitman's prophetic power. Whitman critics agree that this book supplied the most valuable study of Whitman's personality, 'far surpassing in penetration the personal estimates of Conway and Buchanan'.¹

One of the points Carpenter made in this book was what he called Whitman's 'cussedness'; his contrary nature, which by its antagonism to 'his ample loving humanity formed a great tragic element in his nature'. He said 'Whitman celebrates in his poems the fluid, all solvent, disposition but often he was less the river than the rock'.² It is also interesting to compare the first letter he wrote from America about Whitman's physiognomy likening Whitman's eyes to those of Christ, and how he interpreted the same impression 20 years later:

In the slow downward slope of his head from back to front and in the lines of his eyes and brow, tenacity was written; it looked out upon you from the small well-defined pupil set under its long curtain-like lid; and there was at times in his face, as I have said, the look as of a precipice, sheer with breakneck ledges.

These two apparently contradictory impressions of Whitman's eyes give us the proper clue to the poet's character. And therein Carpenter saw the tragic element; the 'imperious craving for love and friendship', his tenderness, and the rock-like tenacity, apartness and selfhood of his character. It is interesting that Carpenter should emphasize this point so sharply as it almost defined his own character in relief. Though Carpenter was often called 'Walt Whitman of England',

1. Blodgett, op.cit. p.204.

2. Days With Walt Whitman, p.47

he lacked both the glory and the gloom of being a Whitman owing to the absence of this tragic strain in his nature. Compared with Whitman's sensibility, as Havelock Ellis pointed out, Carpenter was a more passive and feminine nature. Though he imitated Whitman's prophetic tone, his voice was rather 'more yielding and insinuating'.^{1.} And for this very reason, in spite of their resemblance in form, Leaves of Grass and Towards Democracy make somewhat different impression on discerning readers. Whitman radiates energy, yet he hardly succeeds in expressing tenderness and joy; 'to feel exquisitely the pulse of gladness and joy', Havelock Ellis truly says, we must turn to Towards Democracy.^{2.}

Yet without Whitman's example Towards Democracy could not have been written. So it is important to consider what conclusions Carpenter drew about art and the practice of verse from Whitman's example. We must remember that the critical opinions in the 'seventies were getting impatient of the 'literary school' of poets. Carpenter himself expressed in a letter written in 1873, how sick of 'affectation and would-be poetical word-slobber' everyone was and how they would welcome 'a real and straightforward man'.^{3.} His own ambition as a poet, he says, was to write some sort of 'a book which should address itself very personally, and closely to any one who cared to read it'.^{4.} For this Whitman provided the example: 'whoever touches this book touches a man'. Then, in reaction against the prevailing literary vogue, Carpenter and many others seemed to have given a disproportionate

1. Blodgett, op.cit. p.205.

2. The New Spirit, p.120

3. 'Letter to C.G.Oates', MSS 351, Carpenter Collection.

4. 'A Note on Towards Democracy', Labour Prophet, May, 1894.

importance to Whitman's statement that no one will understand his poetry 'who insists upon viewing them as literary performance, or attempt at such performance, or mainly towards arts or aestheticism'.^{1.} Carpenter insisted that Whitman's poetry transcended art; the prophetic voice which Whitman commended had 'no need to seek for unity and beauty, because in uttering the Self these things are already given and found'.^{2.} Reading of such poems is a spiritual experience - 'before the deep music and beauty of these greatest poems we can only stand silent'.^{3.} Carpenter did not say this type of poetry meant a neglect of art, but that it transcends art - 'where technical art and all its devices are only a very small part of the apprenticeship'.^{4.} To be capable of such utterances as Whitman's poetry represented, one has to have some special inspiration or mystic illumination - when the voice arises spontaneously from within 'below the ordinary consciousness'. The poet's mind lies passive in presence of his soul or the world of experience; a state of mind in which, as Rimbaud put it in one of his letters, 'it is a mistake to say: I think. One ought to say: I am thought'.^{5.}

Carpenter adduces Dr.R.M. Buck's Memoirs of Whitman to the effect that Whitman had such an illumination between 1853-1855, when he was writing Leaves of Grass. Whatever the truth of that assertion may be, as a piece of autobiography this criticism is interesting.

Carpenter thought that his Towards Democracy (1883) was written in

1. Quoted by Carpenter in Days With Walt Whitman, p.125.

2. op.cit. p.124.

3. op. cit. p.125.

4. Ibid.

5. Rimbaud (Penguin Poets, 1962), p.6.

Translated and edited by Oliver Bernard.

such a state of mind. And being a prophetic poem, the tradition of which comes down from the days of the Old Testament, it of necessity stood above the limits of art. In the first decade of this century when such a vogue of prophetic writing was growing in Europe, a Russian critic tried to theorise¹ about this literary mode and said that it was a reaction against 'symbolism' and aestheticism in poetry. He said art in this type of spiritual creativeness, 'affirms itself not as a conditioned sphere of culture, but as a part of the cultural energy - manifesting itself in fluid form...; a form struggling towards formlessness or unceasingly breaking up the old forms being unable to accommodate in them its disproportionate ideas'. I think there is some point in the argument that such works are very often 'a part of the general cultural energy', and usually such works are composed in transitional epochs. Whitman must have understood the nature of his work in a similar light when he concluded his preface to the first edition of Leaves of Grass (1855) with the remark that,

The proof of a poet is that his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it.

On the strength of such conviction Carpenter drew the conclusion² that none of the 'tribes of literary people...of the Popes, Drydens, Swinburnes, Paters, the Brownings and Tennysons, not to mention hosts of lesser names', will be 'affectionately remembered': 'The purely literary work has its interest, has its place; but its appeal is so limited'. To Carpenter the great thing about Whitman was that he could rid himself of 'all literary attitudinising' and thus start a new era in literature - 'a literature appealing to

1. See Viacheslef Ivanof's 'The Theatre of The Future' translated in The English Review, March, 1912. Also see From Prophecy to Exorcism (1965) Michael Hamburger about 'A Proliferation of Prophets'.

2. Days With Walt Whitman, p.103

all who deal with life directly'. In other words, Whitman rehabilitated 'the normal or average man' into the realm of literature. And this is the type of literature Carpenter asserted, 'which will be read and lovingly absorbed by the millions as time goes on'.^{1.}

So Carpenter abandoned his old muse, and published no poetry between 1873 and 1883. And when in 1882 he completed the first draft of Towards Democracy, it was to Whitman he communicated the news. He wrote from Bradway, near Sheffield, on 16th March, 1882:

Dear Old Walt,

I should like a line from you.... I have about finished what I am writing at present. It is in paragraphs, some short, (half a line or so), some long, in the ordinary prose form, though poetical in character. It is a good deal made up of previous writings of the last five or six years squeezed out-a drop or two here and there. I have thought for some time of calling it Towards Democracy and I do not see any reason for altering the title - though the word democracy does not often occur in it.

With love to you as always,

Your friend,

Edward Carpenter.

Whitman might not have been very greatly impressed with the performance of his young friend, but he had high hopes of Carpenter and remarked 'Edward is young: his time is still to come'.^{2.}

1. op.cit. p.105.

2. Traubel⁽¹⁹⁵³⁾ op.cit. p.278. For the letter see Traubel (1906), p. 252.

CHAPTER III

Towards Democracy.

In Carpenter's first letter to Whitman he asserted that 'yet the women will save us'. He was impressed by what they have done 'everywhere, in private and public'. To be sure, it was not the least of their achievements, that a women's organization provided the initial impulse for the institution of the University Extension movement which Carpenter was about to join when he wrote to Whitman in 1874. The North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education For Women (estd. 1867), invited James Stuart, then an assistant tutor at Trinity College, Cambridge, to deliver a course of lectures to the ladies at Leeds, Liverpool and Sheffield during 1867-1868. For long it was one of Stuart's ambitions to work for the establishment of a 'peripatetic university, the professors of which would circulate among the big towns'¹. and thus give a wider opportunity for the people to acquire higher education. His experience with the ladies encouraged him. In 1868, he was also

1. Reminiscences (1911), James Stuart, p.153. James Stuart (1843-1913) was educated at United College, St. Andrew's and Cambridge University. He was Professor of Mechanism at Cambridge from 1875 to 1889 and Liberal M.P. for Shoreditch and Sunderland in 1885-1900 and 1906-1910.

invited to lecture to the Mechanic's Institutes at Crewe and Hull, and to the members of the Rochdale Pioneers. The response of these different audiences confirmed him in his belief that there was a widespread desire all over the country for some form of higher education; the two ancient universities, he felt, must come forward to supply that demand. He was sure that the universities would before long have to face a fire of criticism unless this obligation was carried out.

Stuart did not have to try very hard to persuade his University about this point. Four memorials making submission to the University on the need for Extension Lectures were submitted on behalf of The North of England Council For Higher Education of Women, the Mechanic's Institutes, The Rochdale Pioneers, and the Mayor and other inhabitants of Leeds. A special syndicate, of which Stuart was the secretary, reported that there were sufficient grounds for the experiment being made. In October, 1873, the first course of lectures under the auspices of the University of Cambridge took place in Nottingham, Derby and Leicestershire. Stuart also persuaded Trinity College to permit its Fellows to retain their Fellowships beyond the statutory period provided they were engaged in extension lecturing. But this ultimately fell through and was not accepted by other Colleges.

It is during this period that Carpenter approached Stuart for an appointment as a Lecturer in the Extension Movement. Had Stuart's proposal with regard to Fellowship been accepted by the University, there was still a faint chance that Carpenter would have

retained his association with Trinity Hall after relinquishing holy Orders.

The Extension Movement spread rapidly. In 1876 Oxford instituted her own Extension Lectures. London University followed this example after two years: 'The idea of higher education for adults - whenever put forward, won hearty adherence from all classes'¹, says a contemporary brochure on the subject. But it seems that the students for the lectures were mainly drawn from a limited section of the people. The ladies, who outnumbered the rest and played the most important part in organising the lectures; a few extra-intelligent young students, the professional group of old clerks and young businessmen, and a few artisans. As the cost of the lectures had to be borne by the students themselves, the movement failed to attract a large number of workmen.

What was perhaps most important about the Extension Lectures was that they tried to combine the nature of popular lectures with the discipline of university training. Though the instruction was often at an elementary level, the students were encouraged to participate actively by taking notes and presenting written work. To ensure this, each lecturer summarised his subject in the form of a syllabus which was printed and distributed among the students. The school work was helpful especially for those who intended to go to a university later on. A provision was made in the statutes of Cambridge University in 1886 for accepting students who had passed through the

1. The University Extension Movement, R.G.Moulton, p.21.

three year course of study at an affiliated centre. Oxford followed this example in 1893.

Carpenter first lectured at Leeds, in the circuit which included Leeds, Halifax and Skipton. He stayed in Leeds for two years; then he moved to Nottingham and after a year there to York. He came to Sheffield in 1877 to lecture in Sheffield, Chesterfield and Barnsley. At the beginning Carpenter found the lectures very interesting. The students took a real interest in their work. In contrast to his experience of tutoring the 'poll men' at Cambridge, 'whose dullness and distaste for their work were crushing'¹, he found teaching now a pleasure. In one of his letters² to Whitman he gave an account of his work. It was in 1878:

My winter's work of lecturing is over now: I have had a very pleasant time of it - though leading a rather solitary life... It is interesting work because one has all sorts of people - men and women, young and old, of all conditions of life - except the poorest. And one gets to know a good many of them. We had a jolly excursion the other day into the country near Sheffield, a sort of geological ramble - open air science. About seventy people came, old and young, respectables and non-respectables, and it was very friendly and pleasant.

Usually, however, the job of an Extension Lecturer was rather a lonely one. He had to move from place to place lecturing to a composite audience without making any real contact with the students.

After coming to Sheffield the situation changed somewhat. The Extension centre in Sheffield, which was one of the most enterprising in those days, had an active Students' Association. They

1. My Days And Dreams. p.81

2. With Walt Whitman in Camden (1953), H. Traubel. pp.391-392.

not only helped to organize the Lectures but used to meet privately to discuss subjects of varied interests; they organized excursions and recruited new students. Carpenter took to this Association warmly and helped the organization in various ways. At the end of the session in 1879, the Association called a special meeting to thank Carpenter and presented him with an address with 80 signatures. The address expressed the students' indebtedness to Carpenter for his lessons in 'practical astronomy' by the aid of a telescope, whereby they were 'enabled the more fully to comprehend and to admire those wonders of the stellar world'. They hoped that Carpenter might be long spared to continue to impart the 'knowledge of that science, which when understood must tend to impress on mankind the greatness of an Almighty Being'.

Besides Astronomy, Carpenter lectured on Sound, Light, history of science and history of music. A course of lectures was usually spread out into twelve lectures and the syllabuses of all these lectures had to be prepared in advance. It called for hard work. Besides as a lecturer in Science Carpenter had to carry his instruments with him often travelling a long distance. This began to tell upon his health, which was never very good. But what annoyed and tired him most was that often after a lecture some local manufacturer or patron would carry him off 'to meet a few friends at supper, and to talk and be talked to till the small hours of the morning'.^{1.} It was also a disappointment for him because he joined the Extension Movement primarily to mix with ordinary people, but as

1. My Days And Dreams, p. 93-94

a matter of fact it brought him more in contact with the commercial classes. Carpenter's enthusiasm for the Movement was definitely waning by the close of 1879. He felt that his health was deteriorating and he must give up lecturing to find his health again.

For one thing at least Carpenter had to be grateful to the Extension Movement, that it took him to the Northern towns and he made his discovery of Sheffield. The people of the town charmed him. Their rough heartiness and hospitality formed a pleasurable contrast to the life he knew in Cambridge and Brighton. Though extremely backward 'twenty or thirty years in date behind other towns and very uneducated',¹ he took to them at once. He wrote to Whitman² after the first few months in Sheffield that he was 'very well and happy'. Its magnificent countryside fascinated him, but he also came face to face with squalor and ruggedness and glaring contrast of poverty and riches. The elegant villas on hill tops, and in the valley below 'one enduring cloud of smoke and^a pale-faced teeming population, and tall chimneys and ash heaps covered with squalid children picking them over; courts and houses half roofless, and a river running black through the midst of them'.³ There was a great deal of distress at that time owing to large unemployment and it was difficult to pass through the streets without seeing it in some form or other. He wrote to Whitman that a man burst into tears one day when he gave him 'a bit of silver':

But each individual is such a mere unit in a great crowd,
and they go and hide their misery away easily enough.

1. Ibid. p.92

2. 19 December, 1877, letter quoted by Traubel, (1906) op.cit. pp 189-190.

3. Ibid. p. 92

Whitman was greatly moved by this letter and he commented:^{1.}

The best of Carpenter is his humanity; he manages to stay with ~~the~~ people; he was a university man, yet managed to save himself in time: plucked himself from the burning.

Whitman thought no ^{other} 'living literary man of like standing' could have written such a moving letter. This letter shows the direction in which Carpenter's sympathy was moving. Two years later he wrote to his friend Charles Oates of Leeds that he was making a large number of friends 'and mostly^{2.} non-respectable class'; and added that he would not like to leave Sheffield for this reason.

Though later Carpenter came to think that during the seven years he spent in the Extension Movement, he 'served a Leah instead of the Rachel of his heart's desire',^{3.} yet it was through these lectures that he made one very important acquaintance. Two of his students at Sheffield were Albert Fearnough, a scythe maker, and Charles Fox, a small farmer. Carpenter has drawn an endearing portrait of the latter in Sketches from Life (1908). These two persons impressed him so much that he soon formed a plan of living with them while carrying on his lectures from the country. They lived in Bradway, near Sheffield, in a farm owned by Fox. Fearnough was a muscular powerful man of Carpenter's own age: a man whose 'ideal was the rude life of the back woods and who hated the shams of commercialism'.^{4.} Friendship with such a man must have satisfied one of Carpenter's deep-rooted psychological needs. For long he had been haunted by

1. Quoted by Traubel,⁽¹⁹⁰⁶⁾ *Ibid*, p.189.

2. MSS, Carpenter Collection, 'Letters to C. G. Oates'.

3. My Days And Dreams, p.79.

4. My Days And Dreams, p.102

the vision of 'the clear hard lines of a workman's face', and here at last he got the opportunity of living in close contact with a workingman.

ii.

The year 1877 was an important watershed both in personal life of Carpenter and the political life of the country as a whole. It is the date when 'the Eastern Question' was stirring radical opinion all over England. Even men like William Morris came out from the seclusion of their artistic pursuits into the hurly burly of political controversy. In this year Carpenter visited Whitman and came back inspired to carry on the work Whitman had begun. He said in a letter, 'you have opened the way: my only desire is to go onward with it'.^{1.} 'The immense change that is taking place', he tells Whitman, in another letter, 'is absorbing my whole attention. And your writings are the only ones that come close to the great heart of it'.^{2.}

But Whitman usually shied away from any direct plan of reform and thought that the time was not yet ripe, 'though ripening', for his sort of protest, 'for the human'^{3.} protest'. It was John Ruskin who made people realise the sense of urgency for reform. Since 1860 when he began his first onslaught against Political Economy,

1. Quoted by Blodgett, op.cit, p.202.

2. Letter to Whitman, Dec. 1877, quoted by Traubel ⁽¹⁹⁰⁶⁾ op.cit. p.190.

3. See Blodgett. Ibid. p.202.

in a series of articles showing the inhumanity of this boasted science, he was devoting most of his attention to the social question. In 1865 in the middle of The Study of Architecture, he announced that he must withdraw from the study of art and give himself wholly, 'as in a besieged city, to seek the best mode of getting bread and water for its multitude'.^{1.} He kept up this embattled spirit throughout the later part of his life. From 1871 he was writing regularly the Fors Clavigera letters to the workingmen of England where he tried to communicate the same spirit. He declared in the first letter, 'I will put up with this state of things, passively, not an hour longer'. In July 1877 he announced his plan for the St. George's Guild and chose Sheffield as the first place for the experiment because he 'was impressed with the spirit of co-operation and discipline' shown by some of the Sheffield workingmen. In the same year Carpenter came to stay in Sheffield delivering his first lecture on 'Comets'.^{2.}

There was a strong secularist movement in the mid-nineteenth century in Sheffield. Its members held large meetings at the Owenite Hall of Science in Rockingham Street and started the famous newspaper The National Reformer in 1860, with Charles Bradlaugh ('Iconoclast') and Joseph Barker as editors. A number of secularists also ran a small group called the 'Mutual Improvement Class', which met every Sunday morning. It was in this group that a member once read a paper on a community settlement and eventually attracted Ruskin's notice.

1. See Works, Cook etc., Vol. XIX, p.38.

2. Reported in The Making of Sheffield (1865-1914), J.H.Stainton.

The group, which included, besides secularists, a Unitarian and a Quaker, did not wholly approve of Ruskin's idea of the 'necessity of severe laws', but they agreed to accept Ruskin's offer of 13 acres of land in Totley, near Sheffield, to start a settlement in St. George's Farm.^{1.} Ruskin christened them the 'Life Guards of The New Life'. None of the members however knew much about agriculture, 'being chiefly bootmakers, ironworkers, opticians and the like'. They employed a practical man to look after the Farm. But soon trouble started among those interested in the project; Carpenter gave an account of this to the following effect:

The usual dissensions arose - usual, I would say, whenever work of this kind is ruled by theories instead of by practical human needs and immediate desire of fellowship - and in a very short time the members of the community were hurling anathemas at each other's head - not to mention more solid missiles! The wives entered into the fray; and the would-be garden of Eden became so far a scene of confusion that Ruskin had to send down an ancient gardener of his (with a pitchfork instead of a flaming sword) to bar them all out, and occupy their place.^{2.}

At this time one William Harrison Riley came into the picture. He was known to Ruskin through his forceful journalistic writings and was made the Master of the St. George's Farm; this was in accordance with the rules of the St. George's Guild, but was not approved by the communitarians. Riley however met their remonstrances with sneers and 'even with threats of violence'.^{3.} So the Life Guards of The New Life quietly dispersed.

1. For a history of the St. George's Farm, see Professor Armytage's, Heavens Below, pp.290-298.

2. Sketches From Life, p.198

3. The Commonweal, May 25, 1889, Letter by Mrs. M.A.Maloy. For further information on Riley, see Armytage, op.cit. p.274-296, and S.Bryher, An Account of Labour and Socialist Movement in Bristol, p.13.

Riley was a member of Marx's First Socialist International. Son of a Methodist preacher in Manchester, he travelled in America during the 'sixties, met Walt Whitman and wrote a series of ten revolutionary Yankee Letters To British Workmen. Coming back to England, Riley became the editor of the organ of the London section of the International, and continued as such till 1875. After a short stay in Bristol, Riley came to Sheffield in 1877 and started a penny news sheet, The Socialist, which ran for six months from July to December, 1877. Around Riley a few socialists of the old Chartist tradition gathered, among them being Joseph Blount, John Furniss and George Pearson. Carpenter befriended this circle and thought highly of Riley. He described him as one of those who did 'great work in their time, bridging over the interval between the old Chartism of '48 and the socialism of the early 'eighties'.^{1.}

Riley and Ruskin were however proved to be temperamentally incompatible. Riley was removed from St. George's Farm and was later repudiated by Ruskin as 'no friend of mine'.^{2.} It was on behalf of Riley that Carpenter first wrote to Ruskin. He pleaded with Ruskin to retain Riley in the Farm. To which Ruskin replied as follows:^{3.}

My Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to your note about Riley but I fear there is more than you think. He has been sending me texts when the whole business was that he liked smoking better than digging and I know of no texts in favour of any sort of smoking tobacco least of all. I entirely decline managing that kind of person.

Ever truly yours,

John Ruskin.

1. Sketches From Life..., E.Carpenter. p.209

2. The Commonweal, May 25, 1889. See Works XXIV, p.670

3. MSS 386-16, Carpenter Collection, Sheffield.

After this Riley migrated to Massachusetts, America, and settled there as a farmer. Though much muted, his interest in socialism continued, and he occasionally appeared in the British Press with a letter to Justice or The Commonweal. Riley died in 1907.

St. George's Farm reverted to a fairly ordinary tenure and a friend of Carpenter, George Pearson, of Topley, took the holding and turned it into a private farm though he retained the name of St. George for it, which the farm still bears. For Ruskin the whole venture was a bitter disappointment. Referring to his nervous breakdown in 1878, he wrote in Fors (August, 1880):

The doctors said that I went mad from overwork.
But I went mad because nothing came of my work.

Yet the experiment of St. George's Farm was not without significance for our purpose. It taught Carpenter the futility of such utopian ventures. In reply to 'A query' by George Sturt, in The Commonweal (April 20, 1889), as to why Ruskin's experiment failed, Carpenter suggested an answer in the May 4th issue of the paper. He said that all these little communal schemes fail because of 'their narrowness'. It is a good thing, he said, they do fail; though it is also a good thing that they are started. As for himself, Carpenter added, he would not like to belong to any community of fewer than a million. With that number one might feel safe - but with less, 'there would be a great danger of being watched'. In a large body an immense variety of opinion and practice would be represented and allowed for; and only under these circumstances 'communism would be a splendid thing', Carpenter concluded.

Whatever may be his judgement on Ruskin's reform plans Carpenter was profoundly influenced by Ruskin's writings. He could have said in the language of William Morris that it was from Ruskin's criticism of contemporary society that he 'learnt to give form to his discontent'.^{1.} What is more, he derived considerable inspiration from Ruskin's writings in the sense that he too meant to change the course of his life and come to live with the working people. Ruskin had insisted in Fors^{2.} that it was time for 'honest persons to separate themselves from knaves, announcing their purpose..to live in godliness and honour, not in atheism and rascality'. Ruskin repeatedly pointed out that honest living meant living on one's labour. He emphasized the need for some kind of manual labour as essential to all:

No one can teach you anything worth learning but through manual labour; the very bread of life can only be got by rubbing it in your hands.^{3.}

In 1879, the year which Carpenter says was the dim beginning of a new life for him, he took lessons at a Joiner's shop in Brighton to be able to undertake some fruitful manual work. In 1880 when he moved to live with the Fearnoughs, he wrote to Ruskin that he was trying to realise some of Ruskin's ideas in personal life. Ruskin was most eager to know more about Carpenter:

I cannot make out from your's what position of life you are in, though I see you to be a gentleman and in connection with Cambridge, but of what not. It is curious you don't tell me more and that you should have worked with me so long without telling me so much! Please let me know whatever it is not displeasure to you to tell me of your position and purpose.^{4.}

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1. See The Commonweal, May 15, 1886; Morris's footnote to an article attacking Ruskin.
 2. Letter, December 1877.
 3. Letter LXII, 1875.
 4. MSS, 386. Carpenter Collection.

It must have been very satisfying for Ruskin to know that an educated middle-class young man had gone to live with a working class family, sharing their life and labour. One wonders if the Fors. letter for August 1880 was not written with Carpenter in his mind:

The entire body of teaching throughout the series of Fors.... is one of steady assertions of the necessity that educated persons should share their thought with the uneducated and also take a certain part in their labour.

Anyway, that was certainly one of Carpenter's main intentions.

Carpenter later said that he came to choose this life, not in pursuance of any great theory of social salvation, but because he thought an existence of this kind was more honest and healthful than the alternative course which was open to him, namely, the life of a literary man with an independent income. We have to take some note of this fact because Carpenter was often mistaken for a communitarian or a Tolstoyan moral reformer. Carpenter's gesture was basically an individual one; and it was as much a pursuit of individual well-being as it was a protest against social evils. If by a reformer one usually means someone who sacrifices his own happiness in his concern for others, then Carpenter was certainly not one of them. He was more of a social philosopher than a reformer.

It is interesting to note how one of Carpenter's close literary friends, H.B. Cotterill, took his decision to live the simple life. Cotterill (1846-1924) was himself a writer of some eminence and wrote¹ from Switzerland, where he was self-exiled most

1. MSS. 366, Carpenter Collection. Cotterill was a graduate of St. John's College, Cambridge, and author of several books on history and art.

of his life. He said he was pleased to hear that Carpenter was going to undertake manual labour, and he thought that it was the only way for the contemporary writer to save himself and his art. There was nothing more harmful and hateful than 'the bland superiority' which was visible 'in the looks of the modern literary men'. The literary man, he said, 'should go and turn ploughboy and eschew all books for ten years' and then 'he may have something to say worth hearing'. Cotterill himself went to Africa and lived the hard primitive life for a couple of years, and published a book on African Slave Traffic (1877). To simplify one's life, to live close to nature so that one could get deeper into things than the habits of 'a frivolous age'¹. would permit, that was one of Carpenter's motives when he chose the new way of life. In that sense it was as much a literary reaction, against the oncoming of aestheticism, as what it turned out to be - a social protest pioneering the coming struggle for socialism.

iii.

The new life, in simple surroundings, spent mostly in open air, appeared so native, so unrestrained, that it liberated in him all the feelings which through suffering and distress he had sought to stifle. His physical health improved. There seemed to be a new beauty over the world. A sense of spiritual freedom and joy

1. See The Victorian Sunset, E. Wingfield-Stratford, p. 20: "If we must provide decades with nicknames, The frivolous 'seventies would seem a good deal more to the point than The Naughty-Nineties".

buoyed up his mind. He remembered, later that all this time he was haunted by an image:

A vision within me, of something like a bulb and bud, with short green blades, of a huge hyacinth just appearing above the ground.¹

Perhaps it represented a new vigour and a sense of abounding life which he felt at that time. He felt that his life had at last taken roots and was beginning to grow. Going home to Brighton for a short visit, he felt for the first time in his life that he had no regrets.² This was the happy background against which he wrote the long poem Towards Democracy.

At this time two important things happened to him. His mother died on January 25, 1881. To Carpenter this final severance of ties with his mother was a great emotional shock. He says in his autobiography that though there 'had been so little in the way of spoken confidences' between him and his mother, they were united 'by a strong invisible tie'. Her death exercised a great 'etherializing influence' on his mind, drawing his emotions and thoughts 'towards another sphere'.³

In this state of mind he read for the first time the Indian philosophical poem The Bhagawat Gita. And this worked as a great catalytic agent: all at once he found himself in touch with 'a mood of exaltation and inspiration', a kind of 'superconsciousness'; he became conscious of such depth and expansion of self or the ego that the ordinary limits of personality vanished from his mind. It seemed

1. My Days And Dreams, p.105.

3. My Days And Dreams, p.106

2. MSS, Letter to Oates, Carpenter Coll'n.

to have brought a new sense of harmony and relatedness to his ideas and feelings. In this mood of mystical inspiration he completed his long poem of seventy sections, where all that he learnt from Whitman, his awareness of contemporary, social and philosophical questions, seemed to have found utterance. In order to devote himself wholly to writing Towards Democracy he resigned his job as an Extension Lecturer in 1881. The book was published by John Heywood of Manchester anonymously in 1883.

Carpenter considered this long prose poem as the kernel of all his later work: the 'centre from which all other books have radiated'¹. So though he kept adding new poems to it throughout his life, he never changed the title of the book. Here he was able to crystallise his world-view, and prophetically enough the poem gave expression to some of the salient features of the coming age. As Godfrey Elton put it, among other things, 'the soul of the Labour movement found expression in this book before as yet there was a Labour movement'². The book breathed the spirit of a democracy which was not merely a method of government but a religion, which men like Keir Hardie could easily admire. It also expressed in spiritual terms what the idealist philosophers³ in Oxford were trying to inculcate with their concepts of freedom and self-realisation. Even more important, Towards Democracy expressed the new spiritual outlook which was a by-product of the mid-nineteenth century conflict

1. 'A Note on Towards Democracy', Labour Prophet, May 1894.

2. England Arise! (1931), p.74

3. Especially I find T.H.Green's On The Different Senses of 'Freedom' (1879) very relevant, though I don't think Carpenter read this lecture before writing Towards Democracy. Besides they drew different conclusions. Green was a collectivist where Carpenter was an anarchist-individualist.

between science and religion, on the one hand, and the laws of political economy and the claims of social morality on the other.

By the close of the 1860's most advanced young men came to believe that dogmatic religion was untenable. Yet they were convinced that some kind of religion was conducive to the good life. They believed that man's nature was essentially religious and he could not live without it. In 1874, lecturing to an audience at Leeds on 'Materialism',¹ Carpenter said that it was 'suffocating' as a faith. He could not accept the mechanical notion of the world which was so arrogantly proclaimed by the mid-Victorian scientists. It is wrong to say, Carpenter submitted, 'go with the great machine and you will prosper, resist and it will crush you'. Life does look terrible at times, but it is not so: 'It is a mask that hides a mystery - and we must learn to see through it. Life urges us to be strong, and even demands of us to stand without religion, for the sake of truth'. By religion, of course, he meant dogmatic or conventional religion. He himself had relinquished holy Orders only a year ago on the same ground, in search of a more satisfying faith. Not many who lost faith in Christianity at this time declared themselves as 'agnostics' or atheists; most of them looked for some substitute religion. It was characteristic of the time that the Positivists who glorified science in all ways took to some form of ritual to cater to the religious nature of human mind. Even T.H. Huxley and Tyndall, who were responsible for propagating the aggressive scientism of the mid-nineteenth century, were not prepared to call themselves 'materialists'. Huxley said,² 'the materialist position, that there is nothing in the world but matter, force

1. MSS, Lecture Notes, Carpenter Collection.

2. Essays Vol.1. p.162. 'On The Physical Basis of Life'.

and necessity, is as utterly devoid of justification as the most baseless theological dogmas'. Huxley called himself an agnostic,^{1.} because, he said, the ultimate cause of existence seemed 'out of reach' of his 'poor powers'. Tyndall, who created a great sensation by his presidential address to the British Association in 1874, admitted that 'the wise teacher of humanity must meet the demands of the religious feelings of man'.^{2.} This so called 'Belfast Address' of Tyndall in which he threw a challenge to the religionists, on behalf of science, saying -

We fought and won our battle in the middle ages.
Should we doubt the issue of another conflict with
the broken foe?
We claim, and we shall wrest from theology, the
entire domain of cosmological theory. All schemes
and systems which thus infringe upon the domain of
science must.. submit to the control of science.

This raised a regular hornet's nest of answers and protests, and in desperation Tyndall admitted in an 'Apology For The Belfast Address' that -

'the world will have some kind of religion, even though it should fly for it to the intellectual whoredom of Spiritualism'.^{3.}

Spiritualism^{4.}, in the sense of communication with the spirits of the dead, had a great vogue in England in the 'seventies. The Quarterly Review for October, 1871, noted that there was a

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1. Essays, Vol.1. p.245.
 2. Fragments of Science (1899) Vol.2. p.196.
 3. See Fragments of Science (1899) Vol.2. pp.196-197. See also The Metaphysical Society, by A.W. Brown, p.238.
 4. Spiritualism started in America with the experience of the Fox sisters in Rochester, New York, in 1848. In England the movement spread in the 'fifties primarily through the mediumship of D.D.Home, whom Browning immortalised in literature by his savage satire 'Mr. Sludge: the Medium'.

regular 'spiritual epidemic' in the country. In a way, this was a characteristic outcome of the efforts to evolve a purer religion, free from dogma and rationally justifiable. The result was the hybrid materialistic religion based on direct evidence of the existence of spirits after death. The spiritualists wanted to have the best of both the worlds of science and religion. Powerful support was given to this cult by a large number of eminent scientists, such as A.R.Wallace, Sir William Crooks and Professor De Morgan. Wallace wrote a series of articles 'In Defence Of Spiritualism' in The Fortnightly Review, later published as a book in 1874. The same year Crooks published his Researches In The Phenomena Of Spiritualism which he carried on with the irresistible Florence Cooke.^{1.}

But surely it is not so much for man's faith in scientific evidence that a cult like Spiritualism caught on. What attracted most of its adherents was that it sought to satisfy certain emotional needs, in people deprived of belief in personal immortality by the spread of materialism. The Anglican (Protestant) Church of the day was also partly to blame, says Elliott-Binns, because it was dogmatically "opposed to prayers for the dead, and in the Burial service seemed to put all the emphasis on the sorrow of parting, and neglected the note of Christian joy".^{2.} Spiritualism provided lively encounters with the dead, whereas most Victorians treated death with solemn gloom. The craving for some assurance of joy in immortality led many to spiritual experiments. F.W.Myers asserted that 'the universe

1. It has now been convincingly proved that Sir William was having an affair at that time with young Mrs. Cooke, who was by all reports irresistible. See The Spiritualists (1962), Trevor Hall.

2. English Thought: The Theological Aspect? 1860-1900, p.328.

cannot advance to moral glory over the crushing of individual hearts: 'I know', he said, 'that my nature imperatively craves a personal, an unbounded, and endless career of life and joy'.^{1.} Instead of seeking this in pure mystical experience, Myers, with Henry Sidgwick and Edmund Gurney, formed the famous Society For Psychical Research (1882) which could claim later among its eminent members, personalities like Professor William James, Bergson and Freud.

Carpenter's attitude to Spiritualism, as such, was one of curiosity but of scepticism. He accepted the psychological ground of mediumship, that the total human personality, the Unconscious, has immeasurable powers of prophecy and memory. And for this faith he needed no evidence from the dead but from the living heart. He said in Towards Democracy -

'Not science, 0 beating heart, nor theology, nor rappings, nor philanthropy, nor high acrobatic philosophy',

could take the place of self-realisation.

What one may call the new spirituality of the last decade of the nineteenth century sought answers to all these problems of science, religion and social morality. Among religious thinkers the influence of F.D.Maurice now spread more widely. The revival of interest in Greek theology which Maurice inaugurated, helped to develop the immanentistic concept of God in theology.^{2.} The famous Lux Mundi (1890) essays of the Oxford theologians breathed this spirit.

1. Fragments of Prose & Poetry (1904). p.53

2. See, Elliott-Binns, op cit. p.223 and pp 244-250. Also, A Study of Religious Thought In England From 1850, Professor C.C.J.Webb, Passim (1931)

The idea of Revelation was gradually overshadowed by that of Incarnation. On this view, God does not stand outside the world but is continually active in human affairs and the world has never been without a witness of God throughout history.

The modern religious student found science not irreconcilable with religion. He would restrict himself 'neither to the work (nature as revelation of God) nor to the Word, but would interpret one with the help of the other'¹. Inasmuch as science asserts a unity of substance and harmony of operation underlying all phenomena, science is pantheistic. On this notion developed the popular late nineteenth-century creed of a 'higher pantheism'. Tennyson wrote a poem on this theme to inaugurate the Metaphysical Society (1869-1880) on June 2, 1869.² The higher pantheists insisted on the substantial identity of God, the world and man, considered all Being as essentially divine, and saw in the distinctions which pervade the world only differences of condition. This new creed sought to preserve human personality which the older pantheists were alleged to have denied. It supposed consciousness to be the root of all Being, thus making the dichotomy of matter and consciousness irrelevant. Against this background mysticism, for so long a word of theological abuse,³ began to gain acceptance even among orthodox Christians: Dean Inge's Bampton Lectures on 'Mysticism' (1899) was thus a characteristic product of the time. The spread of Indian philosophical thought, through

1. The Meaning of The Age (1869), E.Maitland. p.15.

2. See The Metaphysical Society (1947), A.W.Brown, passim. 'The Metaphysical Society' was a very characteristic organisation of the time composed of poets, philosophers, scientists, Divines as well as avowed agnostics.

3. Both Maurice and Newman were dismissed as mystics by their critics. Charles Kingsley sought to rid himself of mysticism by studying it. See Religion In Victorian Era, Elliott-Binns, p.238.

various channels, i.e., the Orientalists, the American Transcendentalists, the German scholars and finally through the Theosophical movement, may also be considered partially responsible for the new trend. But it was the logical outcome of the influence of the writings of Coleridge, Carlyle and F.D. Maurice.

For all these developments in thought the early 1880's were a time of general anticipation for some great change in the spiritual basis of society. There were numerous prophecies in the air; that of Mother Shipton had become a part of folk lore:

The world to an end shall come,
In the eighteen hundred and eighty one.

Edward Maitland and Dr. Anna Kingsford organised their 'Hermetic Society' in 1881, with the avowed aim of preparing the world for the new dispensation.^{1.} Maitland lived in Brighton and was a friend of the Carpenter family. He was better known as the novelist of The Pilgrim And The Shrine (1874), but he also wrote numerous other things. A higher pantheist in religion, in politics a follower of Herbert Spencer with passionate love for freedom, a vegetarian and one of the earliest anti-vivisectionists, Maitland's writings had a considerable influence on Edward Carpenter. Later they collaborated on a book on Anti-vivisection (1893).

The Hermetic Society was presided over by Dr. Anna Kingsford, one of the earliest lady doctors in England. She was the wife of an Anglican priest, though by birth and upbringing she was a Catholic. From all reports Mrs. Kingsford was an extremely beautiful woman.

1. The Life of Anna Kingsford, Ed.Maitland, Vol.I., p.416

Maitland describes her as 'tall, slender, and graceful in form, fair and exquisite in complexion, bright and sunny in expression; the hair long and golden, of the Mary Magdalen hue, but the brows and lashes dark, and the eyes deep-set and hazel, by turns dreamy and penetrating... more fairy than human, and more child than woman'.^{1.}

Maitland met Mrs. Kingsford when she was 28 and he was a widower at 50. At once they dedicated themselves to each other in a spiritual partnership. In the 'Hermetic Society', she was the prophetess with intuitive vision and Maitland played the part of her interpreter. The result of this joint spiritual exploration was their book, The Perfect Way (1881), which they thought, fulfilled metaphorically the popular prophecies of the time. The old world had indeed come to an end. They had given the last blow to the old dogma-ridden religion and material science. But they also made it possible to rehabilitate religion on 'reasonable and scientific grounds' by showing the new way of interpreting the myths of religions in terms of allegories and emblems of the drama of each human soul. The year of spiritual regeneration of the word had started in 1881, they declared, and saw signs of it in numerous contemporary events, including 'the introduction of lighting by electricity'. In this last phenomenon they recognized a 'parallel to the vast enhancement of spiritual light through the new interpretation'.^{2.}

This assumption, that their book was the harbinger of the new spiritual society, led them to great self-delusion. Edward

1. The Life of Anna Kingsford, vol.1, p.31

2. -ditto- vol.2, p.25.

Carpenter who was himself considerably influenced by this idea of spiritual rejuvenation was, however, repulsed by their 'heavenly conceit',^{1.} and found them 'foolish and intolerable'. He, of course, attended many meetings of the 'Hermetic Society'; it continued its existence till 1888, when Mrs. Kingsford prematurely died. Whatever Carpenter thought of Maitland and Kingsford's heavenly conceit, his Towards Democracy certainly reflected many of their hopes and aspirations about the future of the world:

I take wings through the night and pass through all
the wilderness of the worlds, and the dark holds of
tears and death - and return with laughter, laughter,
laughter: . . .

I conceive a millennium on earth.

iii.

Reviewing the second edition of Towards Democracy in 1886, E.R. Pease, the historian of the Fabian Society, remarked that at that time everyone was getting weary of love songs: 'most minor poets produce little else'. So it was rather to Carpenter's credit that he was able to write 'a long book about life in its relation with the world at large'. Here was a poetry, Pease said, 'for grown-up people': 'a very rare and very precious commodity in this and perhaps in any age'.^{2.} Carpenter himself uses a statement several times throughout Towards Democracy repeating it as a musical phrase asserting:

1. My Days And Dreams, p.241

2. To-day, August 1886.

These are not the times, remember, of canary birds,
- when the thunder growls along the horizon.

It was not time for trifling with 'art and philosophy and impertinent philanthropic schemes'-:

'This is the time for grown men and women'.

So quite deliberately Carpenter had abandoned all the limitations of metrics and other poetic conventions in his poem.

Yet if one reads the poem carefully, a sense of pattern or general structure becomes evident, though it is far from being systematically worked out. One gets a vague feeling that the pattern is musical rather than literary. Carpenter was a serious student of music and wrote several essays analysing Beethoven's musical structure. Even a cursory reading of the first few sections of the poem will make one notice three words, 'freedom', 'equality', 'joy' introduced unmistakably in imitation of musical notes. They remain the key notes throughout the poem. The main body of the poem can be divided into two parts, the first showing a progressive development of thought and the second somewhat stationary and recitative. The musical pattern in the growth of the first part of the poem was pointed out by one of Carpenter's early critics, R.W.Rowlandson, in an article in The Dublin University Review for April, 1886. He drew attention 'to a singular feature of the poem, its curious spiral movement':

We have travelled through the themes of equality Democracy, England; and now we arrive at Equality again, and the poet will next proceed to deal with Democracy and conclude again with England. But this time he takes a wider sweep, his thought is fuller and deeper; there is not less fervour than before, but it is rather on the affirmative than on the negative or denunciatory side.

A note of exalted optimism characterises the second half of the poem. The vision of Democracy is embodied in the messianic figure of Walt Whitman who understands all, sympathises with all and help unravel the true self in every one:

This is the clear-browed, unconstrained tender-face, with full lips and bearded chin, this is the regardless defiant face I love and trust;
Which I came^{out} to see, and having seen do not forget.

.....

There was a time when the sympathy and the ideals of men gathered round other figures;
But now before the easy homely garb and appearance of that man—
As he swings past in the evening, all these others fade and grow dim. (Sec.XXX)

After the achievement of this positive note the main task of the poem remained to be the celebration of joy, and Carpenter did it in a manner as if he was trying to imitate the choral outburst of Beethoven's 9th Symphony. This part of the poem is recitative in nature and many of the paragraphs start with the same phrase 'I arise and pass', meaning perhaps the joy of resurrection. This phrase is finally taken over by the more direct statement, 'Joy, joy and thanks for ever'. The musical analogy is unmistakable here. And so it is in the close, when the mystical ecstasy dies down and the poem reverts to the quiet tone of the beginning, repeating an image from the earliest part of the poem:

The little red stars appear once more shining among the hazel catkins; the pewit tumbles and cries as at the first day, the year began. (See LXX)

There is another element in Towards Democracy which reminds one of musical construction. The poem contains numerous short impressionistic vignettes and story-like pictures or 'episodes' which help to relax tension and elaborate feelings. Some of these short pieces were set to music by Rutland Boughton in a symphonic poem called Midnight (1909).¹

But Towards Democracy gained its audience not for its art but for its message. And we must try to point out here the main outlines of the thought pattern of the poem. As we have said earlier, three words, Freedom, equality, and joy, dominate the movements of this rhapsodic prose-poem. These words connect themselves, no doubt, to the libertarian tradition of the nineteenth century, but Carpenter uses them more in the Idealistic philosophic tradition and in the mystical manner of the Bhagawat Gita and Walt Whitman.

Whitman's ideal of democracy was not just a political programme; it stirred deep religious feelings, and in the case of Carpenter almost amounted to a faith. Sir Henry Maine missed this point when he quoted a few lines from Towards Democracy in his book Popular Governments (1885)². to show how preposterous Carpenter's paean to democracy was, considering that as an experiment in government it had never been particularly successful. Henry Maine remarked that if the poet knew the answer of Hobbes to his question, 'What is Freedom?', his poetical vein might have been drowned but his mind would have been invigorated by the healthful douche of cold water. But Sir Henry would not have considered Carpenter's question so ridiculous had he consulted Fichte and Hegel, or T.H. Green for that matter in his lecture 'On the Different Senses of Freedom' (1879). According to this school of thought

1. This was performed with great success at the Birmingham Triennial Festival in 1909.

2. See pp.69-70.

'freedom' is that state of mind 'in which man shall have realised his ideal of himself'; that is, 'he shall have become all that he has in him to be, and so fulfil the law of his being, or live according to nature'.¹ Carpenter used the word freedom in this sense and not in the Hobbesian sense that 'freedom is a political power divided into small fragments'. Sir Henry Maine's criticism only shows the absurdity of judging the utterances of Whitman and Carpenter from the standpoint of political science.

How Carpenter interpreted Whitman's idea of democracy may be seen in one of his letters to the American poet:

The freedom, the large spaces you make all round one, fill me with continual delight. I begin to see more clearly the bearing of it all on Democracy: that thought surges up more and more as the end and direction of all your writings....Your writings seem the only ones that come close to the great heart, and make it a living thing to one, with all its fierce passions and contradictions and oceanic sort of life. (Italics mine)²

Here in this last phrase we find the fundamental feeling which Carpenter sought to express in Towards Democracy. The oceanic sort of life is as much within one as it is outside. He says elsewhere that the notion of I or the great self is 'space within the soul'.³

So the ideals of democracy and freedom which the book celebrates have very little in common with the popular meaning of the words:

Of that which exists in the soul, political freedom and institution of equality, and so forth, are but the shadows. (T.D.,vii)

To realise true freedom, Carpenter says, we must enter into two relationships. One is with our own body; that is we must accept

1. Green, op.cit. p.17

2. Quoted by Traubel, op.cit., p.189, dated 19 December, 1877. (1906)

3. 'The Inner Self', a lecture delivered on Nov. 7, 1912.

our body and its needs as sacred:

Sex still goes first, and hands eyes mouth brain follow;
from the midst of belly and thighs radiate the knowledge of self,
religion, and immortality. (T.D.sec,xi)

The second is our relation with the outside world:

If I am not level with the lowest I am nothing;
And if I did not know for a certainty that the craziest
sot in the village is my equal, and were not proud to
have him walk with me as my friend, I would not write
another word. (T.D. Sec.iv)

The equality that Carpenter affirms here is not merely a matter of sociological equality. In fact to realise this spirit of equality one has to stand out of the social-material framework where comparison of cleverness and riches are the measuring rods. To realise this equality one has to stand naked before God. And in Carpenter's sense God is not different from the great incorruptible self that resides in every one of us, and awaits discovery and 'disentanglement'. It is this Self within us that connects us to the whole of our species, and to be able to contemplate it is the unique power of man. To realise this self is to realise the common life within us. Carpenter remarked somewhere that he called his poem Towards Democracy because democracy indicates 'the world of Demos, that is common life within all'. The coming of that will 'transform, not only our institutions, but will transform our sense of morality'.^{1.}

To realise this view of life is to attain self-mastery and so freedom:

Laws and limitations fade, time and distance are no more,
no bars can hold me, no chamber shut me in. (Sec.LV)

1. See 'The New Morality' in Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure (1920)

When such freedom was achieved the whole life would change, but perhaps it would take hundreds of years for man to realise it:

The world travels on, and shall travel on.
A few centuries shall not exhaust the meaning of it.

Yet it is no mere wistful thought but an unswerving faith in the potency of the ideal:

When the Ideal has once alighted, when it has looked forth from the windows with ever no passing a glance upon^{the} Earth, then we may go in for supper, you and I.....the rest will be seen to; (Sec.XXXI.)

It is this affirmative hopeful spirit of Carpenter that endeared his writings to so many who were working for a social revolution.

Carpenter's appeal was to the heart of the individual man:

History shrivels before the will, even if it be^{only} of one man. (Sec.XXXIV.)

So every man must affirm. And if one man says from the depth of his heart, 'this shall not be: behold something better', his word is likely to be stronger than all institutions and traditions. So the source of social revolution lies within man's heart. And this is not different from the process of individual self-realisation:

Outwards all proceeds: Brahma from himself sheds and shreds the universes; I from myself, you from yourself.
(Sec. XXXII)

This part of the message was appreciated by many of Carpenter's contemporary readers. A.R.Orage^{1.} wrote to Carpenter, in 1896, that it was needed by thousands' like himself at that time, as it 'provided a sure foundation in one's own soul for the more or less superficial and transitory beliefs, intellectual, physical and ethical'.^{2.}

1. Orage (1873-1934) was the editor of The New Age from 1907 and later edited The New English Weekly. He was an admirer of Nietzsche and wrote several books on the German philosopher. Since 1906, when he came to London as a journalist, leaving his job as a school teacher in Leeds, he had been at the centre of the avant-garde of the time.

2. MSS. 386-63. Carpenter Collection.

There is some danger that this positive content of Towards Democracy may be missed by many readers; they are likely to be swept onward by the vehemence of Carpenter's denunciation of middle-class respectability. About twenty sections of the poem were devoted to this attack. The cult of the gentility, he maintained, had emptied out all vitality and spontaneity from individual life: 'weariness has taken possession of the souls of the rich' owing to this excessive concern for social respectability. It has made them ignore the real source of power which is in the 'burning glowing depths' of the Self, and led them to worship 'so many withered emblems of power-dead scoriae nodding and jostling over the living ^{lava-stream} (Sec. XXXIV). But if man fails to realise the secret of his strength within himself, any political change can only mean 'changing one tyranny for another' :

One skin cast leaves another behind and that another
and that yet another. (Sec. LXVIII).

The true revolution must work from within outwards, the self must exfoliate itself. And Carpenter had no doubt that it would if only the suffocating coverings were removed.

We must bear in mind these arguments of Towards Democracy to understand the nature of Carpenter's participation in the socialist movement of the 'eighties. In 1883, when the book was published, the Labour movement, as such was yet to be born and most readers could not easily see the trend of the poet's thought. Many dismissed it casually as 'too palpably an imitation of Walt Whitman',¹ as Symonds did for instance. But soon it began to filter down. The new currents of

1. J.H.Symonds Letters And Papers , Ed. H.F.Brown, 'Letter to Henry Sidgwick', Dec.4, 1883. p.161.

mystical and political thought that were coming to surface towards the last decade of the century found the message of the book allied to their own. The book received some attention from the radical secular press. Dr. Edward Aveling, later the English translator of Karl Marx's Capital and his son-in-law, reviewed it in Progress (Sept., 1883). He found many of the sentiments of Towards Democracy acceptable but regretted that, like most modern poets, the author of the book was still under the spell of the word God:

Not under that of the idea. But the word as such rides rough-shod over the truer thought. Truly he carries us back to the Sun Gods and some of his phrases give a half-taste of the old life of Greece. Truly he carries us forward also to the days when the word will have vanished from our vocabulary. Truly he tells us that man is God....But the hated word is used'.

On the other hand because of the 'hated word', perhaps, Towards Democracy found readers among those who were bringing a residuum of religious emotion to social reform. The book introduced Carpenter to the new social movements.

CHAPTER IV

The Socialist in Sheffield.

In April 1882 Carpenter's father died and he inherited a sum of about £6,000. Immediately he looked for a plot of freehold land to start farming. Already he had been pursuing this life in a small way, helping the Farnhoughs in their farm and living on a meagre income of about £50 a year. In November 1882, Carpenter bought seven acres of land at Millthorpe, right up against the Derbyshire moors, about eight miles from Sheffield. The fields were nicely situated with a brook running at the foot of them. Millthorpe itself was then a small village of a dozen houses or so with a beautiful wooded valley around. Carpenter started building a house and persuaded the Farnhoughs to come with him. In October 1883, they moved in. "The Farnhoughs are great and good people, father, mother and two children", Carpenter wrote to a friend.¹

They were cultivating about two acres, for fruit, flowers and vegetables; and about two and a half acres, part wheat for

1. Letter to Oates. Mss 351, Carpenter's Collection.

themselves and part oats for the horse. The whole winter of 1883-1884 Carpenter spent in hard work. It was a great excitement, "that strange oestrum of manual work, and digging down to the roots of things",¹ nearly possessed him; he never felt so happy and healthy before. But the snag about the fields in Millthorpe was that they were far away from any market. And when it came to marketing their fruit and vegetables, things became difficult. On market days they had to leave home at 6.00 a.m. and stand behind the stalls till 1.00 or 2.00 p.m., This trade was a new experience to Carpenter. Later he said he found the market, on the whole, "with all its chicanery, its worship of cutness, its besting and bluffing"² an intensely human institution. But he came to feel very soon that it was against his temperament. "To feel that you are working for the market, kills all interest in your work",³ he later said. The whole business began to appear mechanical and material with worries about a hundred and one things. This made him feel "deceived". He wanted to escape from "the blessed civilisation altogether", but he found himself tied up worse than ever, on its commercial side. It was also at this time that he was reading Thoreau, who said "trade curses everything" and that it was against human nature. The reading of Walden made him feel paralysed; he realised that he was on the wrong track altogether.

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1. My Days and Dreams, p.112.
 2. "Trade", in England's Ideal (1887), p.136.
 3. "Trade", Ibid., p.136.

But now he had already committed himself to a course of life and had also involved another family with his schemes, so there could not be any complete reversal of them. All he could do was to hand over the trade part of the enterprise, to Fearnough who was not himself much gifted for it either.

It is, however, not Towards Democracy alone but this story of living the "simple life" on one's own labour that made Carpenter's name known to many. Young men from the Universities like Harold Cox¹ and Goldsworthy Dickinson came to stay with him at Millthorpe. And after Carpenter's example they also started a farm² in Surrey with the help of a family of labourers. The land was not good and the experience of a winter and a spring were enough for them. In 1885 Cox went to India as a Professor of Mathematics and Dickinson returned to Cambridge. It was the story of simplification that first attracted Symonds to Carpenter. In 1883 Symonds wrote to Henry Sidgwick who sent him a copy of Towards Democracy:

"I sympathise with the man who wrote it, as I do with, or rather, indeed, as I envy, all the healthy young men who feel impelled to simplify (as the Prussians say) and are able through God's gift of strength and youth, to do so".³

In 1884 William Morris came to visit Carpenter at Millthorpe

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1. H. Cox, the son of the county Judge Homersham Cox of Surrey, was a Radical youth leader. He graduated from Jesus College, Cambridge in 1882. (More about Cox in Ch. VI, p.192).
 2. G.L. Dickinson (1934), E.M. Forster, pp.50-51.
 3. J.H. Symonds's Letters and Papers, Ed. H. Brown, p.161).

and found much to admire. He wrote to Mrs. Burne Jones saying how he listened to Carpenter "with longing heart".¹ The life he saw at Millthorpe brought to him the "vision of a decent community as the refuge from our mean squabbles and corrupt society". It seemed to him that the real way to enjoy life was "to accept all its necessary ordinary details and turn them into pleasures by taking an interest in them". Morris was charmed by Carpenter's life but he thought he was too old then to change his own course of life, "even if it were not dastardly to desert".

It is not exactly clear² what Morris meant by the last sentence; surely he did not think of Carpenter's way of life as a cowardly desertion. Probably he thought of Thoreau's schemes, as apparently *talked a good deal about it with Carpenter and* he took away a copy of Walden with him. After reading the book he wrote to Carpenter:

"It seems to me he looks on life as a spectator only; that is convenient and pleasant position to take up! but apart from the fact that one ought to do so or not, very few people can: passions have to be reckoned with by almost every one; and thence comes all kinds of entanglements which we could not wholly get rid of in any state of society; though it be such an immense gain to get rid of hypocrisy and other artificialities concerning them which multiply so prodigiously. I don't object meantime to a one-sided way of looking at matters so long as we understand that it is onesided. I know from experience what a comfortable life one might have had if one could

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1. Letters (1950), Ed. P. Henderson, 24th December, 1854.
 2. ib. l. p. Of course Morris could have meant the desertion of his colleagues in the art business, but I think, and as the following comment on Thoreau will indicate, Morris's remark also implied a judgment on the whole concept of "simplification".

be careful not to concern oneself with persons but with things; or persons in the light of things. But nature won't allow it and we must ever make the best of it and (when we can) sing under the burden instead of groaning under it". 1

At a time when Carpenter was most excited about Thoreau's ideas, this judgment of Morris must have helped him a great deal in taking a sober, pragmatic stand about "simplification of life", as Carpenter eventually did.

Carpenter was temperamentally as well as by conviction against all kinds of asceticism. As a priest he had preached against it, recalling that "Christ came eating and drinking".² The life of a recluse or an ascetic was not his ideal. Carpenter's plea for "simplification" was mainly a plea for healthy living - shorn of luxuries and indulgences. He regarded man as essentially a social being, and for the sake of "good fellowship and sociality"³ he was prepared to break all rules. Though a vegetarian he would take meat, and would not object to "stimulants" though he was generally an "abstainer". His plea for simplicity was bound up with his insistence that "the golden hand cuffs" and the prison life of genteel respectability must be forsworn. Though his notions of "disentanglement of the self" and the "path of indifference" have a touch of Oriental asceticism, Carpenter welcomed these ideas only on

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1. Letter to Carpenter, dated May 2nd 1885, MSS 386-20, Carpenter's Collection.
 2. "Sermons", MSS 8, Carpenter's Collection, March 20th, 1870.
 3. "Simplification of Life", England's Ideal, p.102.

psychological grounds; as antidotes to enervating trivialities and obsessive anxieties in which the middle-class man is deeply immersed. Carpenter said that simplification should be practised as an art of living. And for this reason even the arch-aesthetic Savoy¹ asked him to contribute an article on this topic. Above all, simplification of life meant to Carpenter a philosophical approach to the "clearing away of the husks and conventions that have accumulated round life in the course of the centuries, and basing of our actions on the real facts of existence."² Carpenter understood that Thoreau's example could not be taken as an absolute guidance for life. But in a transitional period "when every social institution is on its trial", and "a new start has to be made from the very trunk and roots", it seemed to Carpenter "almost a biological law that organisms tend for a time to strike back to their more primitive and elementary forms". And Thoreau more than any other representative man of the nineteenth century, Carpenter thought, "sought back to the foundation principles of his own nature, and gave us in doing so, a clue towards the building up of new forms of social life more truly human than anything our boasted civilisation can show". This was what he considered to be the real contribution of Thoreau, Carpenter said in a letter to

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1. See The Savoy, July 1896.
 2. The Simplification of Life: from the writings by Edward Carpenter. Selected by Harry Roberts 1915, See Preface.

The Humanitarian (August, 1917) in connection with the centenary celebration of Thoreau.

ii.

While Carpenter was starting his new life near Sheffield, and writing Towards Democracy, new forces of social revolution were arising throughout the country. Widespread frustration with the Liberal party was making young and old alike eager to welcome them. Even Matthew Arnold, who was not known for his sympathy with the political aspirations of the working class declared himself "converted" to an audience at the Ipswich Working Men's College in 1879, and said that he was turning to the people. For twenty years he had been vainly urging upon the middle classes that "for modern civilisation some approach to equality is necessary". "Now I urge it upon you," Arnold told his working class audience: "Carry it forward yourself, and insist on taking the middle class with you".¹ In another article called "The Future of Liberalism" in The Nineteenth Century for July 1880, Arnold expressed his disappointment with both "the great parties in the state". He called himself a Liberal of the future, "when the whole body of society should come to live with a life worthy to be called human".

1. Noted by Lord Elton in England, Arise! (1931), p.39.

Among middle-class radicals like William Morris the frustration with the Liberal party was complete when the Liberal government brought in the Irish coercion Bill in 1881. Meanwhile Henry George with his brilliant Progress and Poverty (1880) enthralled many young radicals with his call for land nationalisation and "furnished an intellectual bridge over which many people passed from individualism to socialism".¹ George was, however, not a socialist. He considered the land monopolies as the root cause of poverty but never considered commercial capitalism itself as an evil. But owing to the acute agricultural depression² of the time and the widespread concern over the Irish land question Henry George's proposals for land reform received a wide acclaim.

Henry Mayers Hyndman was a friend of Henry George. He also read Karl Marx's Das Kapital, on his way to America, in 1880, and at once set his mind on introducing Marx's ideas to English readers. Educated at Eton and Cambridge, an unsuccessful Conservative candidate for Marylebone in 1880, a stockbroker by profession, Hyndman was a rather strange convert to Marxism. But he never wearied of prophesying the impending revolution in true Marxist fashion.

In 1881 he organized a "Democratic Federation" a "curious political club", reported a Sheffield weekly,³ "which included outcasts of nearly all parties". In January 1881, Hyndman wrote an article

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1. England in the 1880's, H.M. Lynd, p.143.
 2. A History of Socialist Thought, Vol. II, G.D.H. Cole, p.211.
 3. The Sheffield Town and Times, March 12th, 1881.

called the "Dawn of a revolutionary era" in the Nineteenth Century social revolution of the world as she did in the in which he called upon England to give a lead in the liberal revolution of the century. Hyndman also published a monograph, England for All (1881) putting forward a plan for social reform. The book contained eight essays, two of which, on labour and capital, were based on Marxian theories, without acknowledging it, for which Marx never forgave him. Marx admitted, however, that Hyndman's little book, "so far as it pilfers Das Kapital, makes good propaganda" although he thought Hyndman himself was "a weak vessel".¹

Edward Carpenter read England for All in 1883 and his vague socialist ideas took definite shape under its influence. He joined Hyndman's "Social Democratic Federation", as it was then called, and gave the committee £300 to start their weekly organ Justice from January 1884. Apart from that he does not seem to have taken any great interest in the organisational matters of the party. Socialism in those days was mostly a metropolitan affair, and Carpenter who was busy at that time in market gardening at Millthorpe had very little time for political propaganda. In his autobiography, Carpenter says that two things primarily attracted him to the socialist movement: firstly it provided "a text"² for a searching criticism of the old society and the lives of the rich, and secondly, it enshrined a most glowing and vital enthusiasm for the realisation of a new society.

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1. Selected Correspondence (1934), p.397.
 2. My Days and Dreams, p.126.

But political organisation as such could not have much appeal to him; as we have seen in our analysis of Towards Democracy he put greater emphasis on individual self-realisation.

It seems Carpenter's first lecture on a more or less socialistic line was the one he delivered at the Sheffield Hall of Science on March 18th, 1883. The subject was "On Co-operative Production" with reference to the experiment of Leclaire. E.J. Leclaire (1801-1872) was a house decorator in Paris who experimented successfully from 1842 with workers' participation in management of his firm and profit sharing with them.¹ Carpenter's information on the subject was based on W.H. Hall's pamphlet on Leclaire (1880), and the tone of his address was primarily Ruskinian. He criticized in Ruskinian vein, "the craze for cheapness" in the world of commerce which had banished honesty from trade and pleasure from work, a theme on which Ruskin wrote eloquently in his essay "On the Nature of Gothic".² (It constituted a chapter in The Stones of Venice). Carpenter also criticised that widespread Victorian ideal of "getting on" and pointed out that the spectacle of a "whole nation... occupied in scrambling insanely up into high places of display and lucre over the tops of each other's heads" were undermining the whole fabric of society. Here Carpenter was expressing a repugnance which

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1. Leclaire's experiment was drawing considerable attention in England at that time. William Morris thought of trying Leclaire's scheme in his own art business but the prospect of endless book-keeping deterred him. See Introduction to The Collected Works Ed. May Morris, P. xvii, vol. I.
 2. William Morris printed this essay separately with a preface in 1892.

[a repugnance which] most representative thinkers felt towards this travesty of the idea of progress in the Victorian era. Arnold satirised it in Culture and Anarchy (1869), Mill repudiated it in the 1871 edition of his Political Economy (p. 748), Froude in his Short Studies (Vol. II, p.206), Clough in his poem "Jacob" (ll. 81-90), and Carpenter himself poured his rhapsodic scorn on it in Towards Democracy.

Carpenter's Towards Democracy led him to an acquaintance with a young group of humanitarian idealists who were organizing "The Fellowship of the New Life", in London in 1883. The group originated from the personal influence of the ethical philosopher Thomas Davidson (1840-1900), whom Havelock Ellis described after his first meeting with him, as "the most remarkable man"¹ he had ever met. Davidson was a graduate from Aberdeen, but lived the life of "a wandering scholar" travelling through Canada, America, Greece and Italy. At the last place he spent a year in a monastery writing a book on the Italian ethical philosopher Rosmini. Coming to London in 1881, he was soon able to influence a group of advanced young men, to start the Fellowship of the New Life.

This group of friends met regularly at Davidson's rooms in Chelsea during 1881-1883, and as Professor William Knight has remarked,² it may be said without fear of exaggeration that these meetings were the origin of the late nineteenth-century ethical

1. My Life, p.160.

2. See Memorials of Thomas Davidson, William Knight.

movements. The common points of agreement among the members of the group were that they were all interested in religious thought, ethical propaganda and social reform. They drew up a manifesto entitled "Vita Nuova" with a motto from Goethe to the effect that every individual must be "resolute to live in the whole, the good and the beautiful". Carpenter attended their meetings without becoming a full member and gave an account of their work in a preface to Mrs. Havelock Ellis's book The New Horizon in Love and Life (1921). He said that there was a general urge towards socialism among the members, but it was not to be understood in political terms alone:

"There was a great determination to simplify life as much as possible; servants were to be dispensed with or adopted as friends; manual work to be cultivated side by side with intellectual; education to be greatly reformed. There were schemes for settlement on the land; and schemes for co-operation or community in household life. And always these schemes and reforms were to be carried out as far as possible personally and by the personal efforts of the members. They were not to be merely philosophical propaganda applicable in a distant and general way to society at large".

The Fellowship's plans, Carpenter says, were based on the Kantian principle that no one should be made merely the means to another person's ends.

The Fellowship suffered a split a few months after its inception. Thomas Davidson had little sympathy with socialistic ideas in their political aspects and he wanted to shape the organisation

on monastic lines. On the other hand, the more political-minded members were suspicious of Davidson's religious bent. The latter group decided to secede and formed a new group for which Frank Podmore gave the name "The Fabian Society". Thomas Davidson migrated to America where he carried on his own ethical movement. The Fellowship continued with the moderate group, Mrs. Havelock Ellis being its most dedicated organizer. Along with Ramsay Macdonald, who was secretary of the Fellowship for some time, she organized a co-operative household in Doughty Street, London, where some members of the Fellowship made their home and tried to illustrate the advantages of community life. Edward Carpenter was more in sympathy with this group than with the more political Fabians, though he was a member of that body as well.

We have now introduced the principal social and political organizations to which Carpenter felt drawn in the early eighties. But Carpenter was not much of a party man; rather, he was broadly interested in the advance of the "cause". So he had a unique position among the socialists, who were full of party bickerings. Besides, Carpenter had the reputation of one who not only preached his doctrines but practised them consistently. For these reasons his house at Millthorpe soon turned into "a resort for comrades" who dropped down on him "from the surrounding hills, like Northern hordes" as Henry Salt put it.¹

1. Seventy Years Among Savages, p.88.

In the conflict between Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation and William Morris's Socialist League, Carpenter was in more sympathy with the latter group. Like Morris he thought that education towards socialism and revolution was more important than mass agitation. Morris looked forward to a "total change of the basis of society"¹ and was suspicious of Hyndman's hobnobbing with the major political parties. He thought all plans for piecemeal reform would frustrate the cause of socialism: "To palliate a system is to perpetuate it",² was one of the Socialist League's slogans.

Morris, like Carpenter, was at heart an anarchist and could not accept the collectivist ideal of state socialism whether embodied in the utopian vision of Edward Bellamy, or propounded through the "permeation" tactics of the Fabians, or preached through agitation by the S.D.F. But Morris's acquaintance with the blood and thunder revolutionary anarchists made him also realise that anarchism was not possible. In 1890 he admitted, much as he disliked it, that state socialism for the time being was inevitable: "people have really got their heads turned more or less in that direction".³ The progress of Morris's political affiliation was very much like that of Carpenter, though the latter did not plunge himself so passionately into political activity as Morris did. Both of them

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1. Signs of Change (1888) pp. 22.
 2. See The Commonweal, May 15th, 1885.
 3. The Commonweal, November 15th, 1890.

cherished, whatever may be the present trends, the ultimate ideal of society should be a sort of anarchism.

It is in respect of matters usually ignored by the politicians that anarchism is strongest. The anarchist thinkers¹ pay great attention to art, human relationship and the joy of life, which the practical-minded socialists overlook. William Morris once said "the aim of socialism should be the founding of a religion."² That is why the anarchist philosophers never look forward to changing society through any governmental machinery. Capturing political power means nothing to them except perhaps to do away with all prohibitive power and leave man free to evolve or, as Carpenter would put it, to "exfoliate". The final appeal of the anarchist thinkers is to human nature, which they accept as intrinsically good, and capable of perfection in a free condition.

The difference between the anarchists and the socialists, however, did not become prominent in England till the 1890's. The only organized anarchist group, the Labour Emancipation League, joined the S.D.F. in 1884 and came over to the Socialist League when it split away from that organization. But the Socialist League included many Marxists, who were the bitterest opponents of the anarchists.

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1. See Bertrand Russell's Road to Freedom (1918), p.210.
 2. Quoted by S. Eryhen in Labour and Socialist Movement in Bristol (1929), p.21. Sir Herbert Read, an anarchist philosopher of our time, writes in Anarchy and Order (1954), "It is possible to conceive a new religion developing out of anarchism", p.48.

Carpenter joined the League towards the end of 1885, but never took any partisan attitude. Though philosophically an anarchist, Carpenter had a strong vein of English pragmatism which never allowed him to be wedded to any one doctrine. Carpenter constantly urged upon his comrades the need for a larger heart towards each other and to forget the conflicts of party principles. Within the Socialist League, however, the squabbles never stopped. After their secession from the parent Social Democratic Federation, the parliamentarians and the revolutionaries (alias the marxists and the anarchists), began to clash. The parliamentary group left the League in 1887, as Morris hated "anything parliamentary like poison", Engels wrote¹ to a friend. But when this further split occurred Morris was left alone to face the extreme anarchist group, which eventually forced him to resign and give up the editing of The Commonweal in November 1889.

During 1885-1887, it was the S.D.F. who ^{former} were the most effective socialist group. They created a considerable stir in London by organizing various agitations among the unemployed workers. Two incidents stand out most prominently among them. One was the riot in the West End of London on February 8th 1886, when shop windows were broken and several shops were looted by an unemployed procession. The incident focussed national attention on the unemployment problem,

1. Selected Correspondence (1934), p.468. How bitterly Morris detested Parliament is also evident in the News from Nowhere, see p. 32; p.85.

and a Mansion House relief fund was created to provide relief for the unemployed. The other incident, and perhaps the most important in the history of the Labour movement, was the Trafalgar Square clash between the police and the crowd which gathered for a meeting on Sunday, November 13th 1887. This is popularly known as "Bloody Sunday" when two working men died of injuries and about a hundred others were wounded. Bernard Shaw gave an account¹ of the day to the following effect:

"All the Labour forces marched to hold a meeting there and were broken up in every avenue to it by squads of police, and a detachment of Cavalry kept riding round it with a magistrate in front to read the Riot Act. Carpenter was clubbed, as in his fury he wrote 'by that crawling thing a policeman'... John Burns and Cunningham-Graham tried to break into the Square and were arrested. Graham also was clubbed and spent his prison time in hospital".

When Burns and Graham were tried for "rioting and holding unlawful assembly", Carpenter appeared as a witness in defence. Being asked if he had seen any rioting, he replied: "Yes, on the part of the police". Asquith, later a Liberal Prime Minister, appeared on behalf of the accused.

The Trafalgar Square incident had two positive results. The moderate socialists realized that it was utterly futile to organize a confrontation with the police. It left them convinced, as a Fabian

1. Preface to Stephen Winsten's Salt and his Circle (1951), p.13.

journalist, Williame Clarke, expressed it,¹ that "the new revolution was not to be fought at the barricades, but in the newspapers and on the lecture platform". The other reaction was what a friend of Carpenter guessed from Sheffield:

"I should think the Trafalgar Square affair ought to strengthen Morris's party. It seems to show so clearly that we shall have to fight in the end. Don't you think the Liberal Radicals behaved very cowardly in leaving the Square and going to Hyde Park? I think if they had kept it up for a few weeks, the result would have been that Government would have been thrown out neck and crop". 2

This is the conclusion most of the militant socialists drew from the Trafalgar Square melée and it considerably helped the anarchist groups in the early '90's. The Socialist League used to observe the anniversary of "Bloody Sunday", till it was superseded by the more international anniversary of the Chicago Martyrs (11th November, 1888).

This period of national agitation led Carpenter to take a more direct hand in organization by starting a "Sheffield Socialist Club". Also, the excitement of the period inspired him to compose one of the most memorable songs of the Labour movement, "England, Arise", which was set to music by Carpenter himself. This song was considered so representative of the early days of the Labour movement that Lord Elton called his "study of the pioneering days of the Labour movement", England, Arise! (1931). Bernard Shaw, similarly trying to

1. Quoted, E. Rhys's Everyman Remembers (1931), p.162.
 2. MSS letter (362-11), Carpenter's Collection.

recreate the atmosphere of this period of agitation in his play On the Rocks (1933), printed a part of the song without getting the necessary permission from Carpenter's literary executors, which brought him into trouble.¹ The song² had twelve stanzas, and embodied the enthusiasm, hope and determination of the pioneering days of the socialist movement. It used to be sung in every Labour meeting and rally and the first quatrain especially was in everyone's hearts:

"England, arise! the long long night is over
 Faint in the east behold the dawn appear.
 Out of your evil dream of toil and sorrow.
 Arise, O England, for the day is here."³

111.

We have noticed that there were two important leanings in Carpenter's ideas about socialism. With regard to the ultimate ideal he was an anarchist and looked forward to a "Non-governmental society".³ And his criticism of the contemporary society was tinged with ethical emotion rather than dominated by any doctrinaire principle. So when he came to write the manifesto of the Sheffield

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1. See Sir Stanley Unwin, ^{The} Truth About a Publisher (1960), pp.180-181. Shaw paid ten guineas to settle the matter amicably.
 2. For the complete song see Ed. Carpenter's Sketches from Life.
 3. This is the title of a book of essays Carpenter published in 1912.

Socialist Club, both these leanings were reflected.

The Sheffield Socialist Club remained independent of the national socialist groups, though they were ready to co-operate with them on all occasions. The manifesto declared that purely economic measures to heal poverty were not enough, and set for its ideal, "a true brotherhood of workers and the establishment of a true and a living society". That is a society governed by natural laws "like that of the human body", where co-operation is a matter of unconscious natural needs and not of compulsion. In all anarchist utopias this idea was uppermost. Two images occur time and again in Carpenter's writings, when he considers social organisation; the human body and the exfoliation of a flower. He assumes that society is an organic structure with inherent relationships, and not a congeries of lifeless atoms upon which relations must be imposed.

There was no organized socialist group in Sheffield prior to 1886. We have mentioned earlier that in 1877 Riley started a news-sheet called The Socialist. Along with Riley there was one John Furniss, a thorough-going Christian socialist, and according to Carpenter, "perhaps the first to preach socialism in the streets of Sheffield".¹ But though organized socialism came comparatively late to Sheffield, from the Chartist days the city had been the most radical of all British cities. It was even feared that the Chartists

1. My Days and Dreams, p.133.

planned to burn the city and take over its administration.¹ In the 'sixties the Trade Union outrages similarly kept the authorities in panic, and caused the institution of a Royal Commission to investigate the troubles; this eventually gave legal status to the Trade Unions. Both radical republicanism and secularism, the avant-gardes of the mid-nineteenth century, had strongholds in Sheffield. By all reports² Sheffield, during the nineteenth century, was the most eager city to respond to any radical appeal.

But Carpenter's Socialist Club did not set out to rally mass support. The Club was rather in the nature of a "face to face group", where members were trained more for propagating socialist ideas than agitating for them. They used to meet either in a café or at one of the member's houses, once a week. Their first task was to train speakers; which they did by making every member read a short paper in turn "from week to week" and making it customary for "each one present... to speak about five minutes at least on the question introduced by the speaker".³ Another interesting custom of the Club was to organize excursions to places outside the city, where they tried to organize small meetings for propagating socialist ideas. In the early days of the socialist movement these excursions played a considerable part, not only as propaganda but as instruments for

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1. See The Making of Sheffield (1865-1914), J.H. Stainton, p.63.
 2. See Peeps into the Past (The Diaries of Thomas Arline Ward) S
1806-1871. Passim.
 3. MSS Carpenter's Collection 362-5. Letter from George Hukin; Hukin was the secretary of the Club.

self-education. Many socialists from Manchester and Leeds also came to join Carpenter in these outings. And through these direct contacts Carpenter was able to create a large body of friends who came to share not only his views on socialism but much of his world-view.

Among other ventures of the Socialist Club which attracted some notice was the Commonwealth Café which they opened with Carpenter's financial assistance in Scotland Street. This district was one of the poorest in Sheffield at that time and the Club arranged to give free "teas" to the neighbouring slum children. But they had to abandon this humane gesture, Carpenter says, "on account of the poor little things tearing themselves and each other to pieces... in their frantic attempts to gain admittance."¹

The upper floor of the Café consisted of a large room and a few smaller rooms. The main room served as a meeting place, and the rest of the rooms were used to organize a joint residence for the members. Carpenter himself stayed here for the greater part of a year in 1887. The Café, however, did not thrive as a commercial proposition, though it provided a place for lectures and occasional social evenings for the members and their families. It was finally closed in 1888 and the Club shifted its venue to the Temperance Hotel, which was run by two of the Club members.

1. My Days and Dreams, p.134.

Perhaps among its social activities in Sheffield, the most important task that the Club undertook was its publicity against the "smoke nuisance" in the city. Carpenter delivered numerous lectures on this subject; wrote several letters in the local press, and published a long scholarly article in MacMillan's for July, 1890. This helped to create an awareness of the gravity of the problem and Carpenter's lectures were elaborately reported by the Sheffield Telegraph and other papers. In the municipal election of Autumn 1890 the Socialist Club made this issue a condition of their support to the candidates. George Hukin, the secretary of the Club, wrote to Carpenter who was away on the continent at that time:

"All the candidates for municipal honour have pledged themselves to go straight for the smoke fiend". 1

The club did not create any sensation in Sheffield, and its members did not exceed more than a hundred, of whom about twenty or so were really active. They invited lecturers from all over the country to talk to them on socialistic subjects and occasionally issued some pamphlets on important topics. One of these publications was A Letter to the Employees of the Midland and Other Railway Companies (1886) in which Carpenter, as one of the shareholders, gave out many secrets from inside, and appealed to the workers "to agitate for the

1. Letters from George Hukin, MSS 362-38, Carpenter's Collection.

nationalisation of the Railways". The letter caused considerable stir among the workers as there was large scale unemployment in the Railway companies at that time. As a recognition of the Sheffield Socialist Club's activities and their independence as a socialist group, they were asked to send a delegate to the Paris Socialist International of 1889 and Carpenter attended the Congress.¹

It was not easy for Carpenter in the early days of the socialist movement to organize this Club in Sheffield. With memories of the Trade Union outrages not very far back in mind, the people were rather suspicious of all radical organizations. "Dynamite and daggers were assumed by outsiders to be indispensable parts of our equipment",² Carpenter says in his autobiography. But this notion was gradually dispelled. Meanwhile a different sort of legend was growing around Carpenter, whom the Sheffield Telegraph once described as "the most engaging personality of the socialist movement, and by his intellectual eminence, the most dangerous opponent of the existing order of society."³ A more sympathetic radical paper the Sheffield Weekly Echo printed as early as 1887 (July 17th), a report "By one of our representatives" of a meeting in the Club where Carpenter lectured on "Small Holdings". It described the lecturer as "tall, spare, with brown bearded face", and remarked that he "was no oratorical swash-buckler or smug setter of traps for applause". In fact the reporter was so impressed by

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1. A report of the Congress was published by Carpenter in Sketches from Life, "An International Socialist Congress", (Paris, 1889).
 2. My Days and Dreams, p.130.
 3. January 5th, 1905.

the quiet setting, the simple heart-to-heart talk of the lecturer, that he played significantly on the name Carpenter:

"But there was another Carpenter not a bit more exclusive; one who had no where to lay his head; who wore purple only once, and then in bitterest mockery. Is there no light on the matter there? If not our socialist friends err in good company."

It was in such light of loving reverence that a large body of the Sheffielders came to regard Carpenter.

iv.

Carpenter did not play a very active part in the organisational work of the Sheffield Socialist Club. His literary activity and lecture tours used to take him away from Sheffield quite often. But he was kept informed about the Club's activities by George Hukin who was the secretary of the Club. Towards the close of the 'eighties, he reports a falling off of attendance in meetings, rivalries and petty quarrels among members, and generally of waning enthusiasm. Besides, a revolutionary anarchist group was getting the upper hand in the Club. There was one Bingham, a grocer by trade, of somewhat fiery spirit and Broadhead¹ leanings. There was another, John Sketchley

1. Charles Broadhead. The main-spring of the Sheffield Trade Union outrages of the early 'sixties. Charles Reade's novel Put Yourself in his Place (1870) describes Broadhead's terrorism. For a recent sympathetic study of Broadhead's activity see S. Pollard's essay, "The Ethics of the Sheffield Outrages" in Hunter Society Transactions vol. vii, 1957.

a professional agitator who later organized a Midland Social Democratic Party. Then, there was Fred Charles who was later sentenced to ten years' imprisonment on a charge of manufacturing explosives at Walsall Socialist Club. But the worst of all was one Dr. John Creaghe, an Irish man who set himself up as a physician at Attercliffe in 1890. He dispensed medicine cheaply and was thus known as "six-penny doctor".

Creaghe made friends among the anarchist faction of the Club. He offered employment to Fred Charles who was then without a job. And very soon was able to form an independent anarchist group in Sheffield. George Hukin wrote to Carpenter, who was then travelling in Ceylon and India about this new development:

"I've not been to the Club more than two or three times since you left (October, 1890). I don't think I can get along with these anarchists somehow. I think the whole thing will collapse very soon and a fresh start has to be made on the old lines". (January 15th, 1891. MSS. Carpenter's Coll., 362-43).

A week later he reported again that "Creaghe, Charles and the rest" were going to unfurl a new banner with the motto "no God, no master". And so they did. They also issued a news-sheet called the Sheffield Anarchist from July 1891. This practically ended the Socialist Club, and as Hukin suggested, a fresh start had to be made. In 1896 a new "Sheffield Socialist Society" was formed with Edward Carpenter as president; but by then the Labour movement had entered into a different era.

Dr. Creaghe created quite a sensation in Sheffield within a very short time. His first encounter with the law came when he stopped paying rent and the landlady had resort to a bailiff. The bailiff and a policeman broke into Creaghe's rooms, but the stalwart Irishman proved more powerful than both of them, with the help of a kitchen poker. Creaghe was summoned and fined £2. 18s. for assault. The prosecuting judge, however, did not approve of the bailiff breaking into Creaghe's apartment and remarked that had Creaghe used only a walking stick or such less dangerous weapon he would have let him go free.

Creaghe considered the whole episode as a success for the "cause" and decided to build up a "no rent campaign". He called upon the Sheffielders to "resist the robbery of private property, beginning with the savage assault of bailiffs". He drew their attention "to the great tradition of Sheffield, where such men as Broadhead have given an example far more valuable than any in Ireland of combined resistance to oppression".¹ An "Anti-property Association" was formed. It aimed at "encouraging every attempt against property and law, by assuring support to the families of men who go to prison for resistance to property". Accordingly they supported a poaching raid on the Duke of Devonshire's preserves at Chatsworth, where some of the men were captured "after a smart fight with the keepers".²

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1. Letter to the Editor, the Sheffield Independent, March 26th, 1891.
 2. Sheffield Anarchist, July 18th, 1891.

The Commonweal¹, which was then the mouthpiece of "revolutionary anarchism", commended Creaghe's heroic activities in Sheffield. Creaghe, however, could not make much headway with his "Anti-property Association" and the Sheffield socialists began to shy away from him. Meanwhile he got involved in a libel action and was bound over for £25 not to offend again. The Sheffield Anarchist ceased to appear from November 1891, and shortly after Creaghe decided to try his luck, and that of "anarchy", in Liverpool.

Creaghe was not very successful in putting across his slogan of "propaganda by deed" to the Sheffield socialists, and this showed Carpenter's hold upon them. Creaghe was quick to realise it, so as a parting gift to the comrades he launched an attack on Carpenter in The Commonweal.² He said he was disgusted to see the Sheffield socialists making "an idol" of Carpenter, who says, "I am an anarchist, but pillage and dynamite, Oh, no". He pointed out that Carpenter's influence was "doing harm to our glorious cause". He was convinced that "the only logical way for a revolutionist to make a livelihood is pillage of some kind on the enemy". According to Creaghe, William Morris and Edward Carpenter opposed the true principles of anarchism when they condemned violence. The latter, Creaghe pointed out, "has published some pretty (sic) verse most thoroughly anarchist in sentiment" which directly incited the workers to the pillage of the robbers and contempt for all the nonsense of law and authority:

1. July 25th, 1891.
2. November 28th, 1891.

"And yet the same Carpenter in conversation disavows all connections with the Anarchists, belauds Fabians and Trade Unionists, who, he must know, are doing harm, if he be logical; he has never supported our propoganda in Sheffield except in a half-hearted way... For my part I do not understand such people and to the devil I pitch them, be they ever so literary or artistic.

All he wanted, Creaghe went on, was a group of 15 or 20 volunteers who were "willing to die if necessary for anarchy"; he assured them they would bring better results "to our cause than all the rest who only preach and write verse". Creaghe, however, did not find the select band and drifted from place to place, not making much impression on the "oppressors" but being quite a nuisance to the Labour speakers.

Creaghe's attack brought forth a few replies from readers defending Carpenter's position, but the editorial opinion of The Commonweal was not much different from that of Dr. Creaghe. However, they published a reply from Carpenter on December 5th, 1891, which put Carpenter's political position very succinctly:

"Certainly comrade Creaghe, I stick up for the Fabians and the Trade Unionists just as I do for the Anarchists. I have never disavowed the Anarchists. What can be more obvious? We are travelling along the same road why should we be snarling at one another's heels? I know that some of the Fabians look upon the Anarchists as bloody fools, and I tell them I disagree with them; and I know that some of the Anarchists (so called) would like to send all Trade Unionists and Fabians to the Devil, and I tell them I disagree with them. Hence much trouble and misunderstanding. After all there are so many sections among Anarchists. There are

the Anarchists who denounce the blacklegs (I am the blackleg this time) and Anarchists who cherish and embrace the blacklegs: then there are the academic Anarchists (as Creaghe calls them) and the Bloody Anarchists, the real B.A.'s of whom I suppose Creaghe is one. I take it we have all our work to do in our own line. For goodness sake let us do it without so much jaw".

Perhaps it would have been truer for Carpenter to say that he never "disavowed anarchism", because he did write to Alf Nattisen of Leeds M on July 29th, 1891 that though the Anarchists were "going ahead," he did not "feel moved to work with them".¹

Before 1890, anarchism in England was mainly a theoretical attitude and the revolutionary activities were a concern only of the political refugees from Europe. The picture of saintliness² and sobriety which personalities like Prince Kropotkin, Carpenter and Morris gave to the anarchists in England was considerably changed in the 'nineties. The Commonweal became a vociferous organ of "revolutionary anarchism" and began to preach the slogan of "propaganda by deed" which had been accepted as a general policy by the Anarchist International of Paris in 1889. The stories of murder and attempted murder of European heads of state by the anarchists made them figures of horror in popular imagination. In England, too, the activities of the anarchists were drawing much attention from the press and the police. The Annual Register for the early nineties reported

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1. MSS, the Brotherton Library, Leeds. Alf Mattisen Collection.
 2. See Oscar Wilde's reference to Prince Kropotkin in De Profundis (1905) p. 120-121

several anarchist meetings in London broken up by the police, and of speakers being chased by the crowd. The celebration of the Chicago Martyrs on November 11th, every year, usually took some gruesome turn; a speaker would often kneel down and vow revenge on the enemy, blood for blood.¹ These activities came to a crisis on January 7th, 1892, when the Walsall Socialist Club was raided by the police; they arrested Fred Charles (erstwhile of the Sheffield Socialist Club), Charles Deakin and two Italian political refugees.

The trial created some sensation in the press. Lurid literature invoking the "propaganda by deed" imported from the continent, were read in the court. And though the Walsall socialists never intended the use of bombs in England, and the making of bombs to be sent to Europe was usually connived² at by the police, the prosecution took the opportunity to break the back of the English anarchist movement. Three of the accused were sentenced to ten years' penal servitude and one for five years, which even the Times³

1. See "Letter from Hukin", MSS 363-39. Carpenter's Collection.
2. See Anarchism by G. Woodcock, p.415.
3. April 5th 1892. Apart from printing long reports of the trial (April 1st - April 5th), the Times published a leading article on the judgment. It admitted that the sentence was severe but commented that it was "no time to deal lightly with such crimes" considering that the Walsall crime was "part of a great system with definite tenets and recognised apostles". The article also pointed out that the trial was "of grave public importance" and the government had rightly treated it so by making the Attorney-General appear on behalf of the prosecution. The members⁵ of the jury were relieved of further duty for their lives as a recognition of their service in this important trial. Considering⁹ the sensation this trial caused in the contemporary press, it is surprising that the historians of anarchism in England (Cole, Woodcock, Joll etc.), have not even mentioned the Walsall episode in their studies.

considered rather harsh.

In such situations men like Morris and Carpenter felt very uncomfortable. They could not disavow anarchism, however much they disliked the violent tactics of the anarchists. So Carpenter came forward in defence of the accused and acted as the treasurer to the "Walsall Anarchist Defence Fund". He also appeared as a witness for Fred Charles testifying to his "generous, noble and tenderhearted nature". Carpenter had no qualms in saying so as he genuinely liked Charles and knew him intimately in Sheffield. He, however, made it clear in a letter to Freedom (December 1892), that "it would be absurd to speak as if none of the anarchists ever contemplated the use of violence". William Morris similarly came forward to stand bail, when the police arrested the editor and the publisher of The Commonweal in the wake of the Walsall trial, though Morris had no relation with the paper at that time, and the accused Nicoll and Mowbray were the people who forced Morris to resign from the Socialist League. Henry Salt expressed the annoyance and misgivings such situations caused them:

"One does not know quite how to feel towards anarchists at these crises. They are always talking about bombs yet when they are found in possession of them, then they seem to take the ordinary lines of defence. It is a pity the party has no control over its advanced members; for that two or three individuals should take upon themselves to plan dynamite and plan it badly - is a criminal outrage against socialism, whatever it may be against society! So at least it seems to me."

(MSS 356-6. Carpenter's Collection).

Nevertheless, Salt paid his contribution to the Anarchist Defence Fund.

Carpenter came up for some criticisms in the press for his support to the Walsall anarchists. The Saturday Review¹ pointed out how deluded Carpenter was in asserting that "violence is not an integral part of true anarchism". And said that Carpenter was behaving like one "of those ingenious young gentlemen who hailed the dawn of the French Revolution" but fell victims to the guillotine shortly after. The Oxford Magazine,² reviewing a new edition of Towards Democracy, felt itself called upon to protest against the rhapsodic utterance of the book on the ground that there were persons to be found, 'incredible as it may appear', who:-

"Take Mr. Carpenter seriously and translate into action his ravings; so it becomes necessary to protest against the production of such inflammable rubbish".

They pointed out, in support of their argument, the activities of the Walsall Anarchists, and reminded their readers that Carpenter testified to the character of one of the "Walsall ruffians" as "a gentleman, generous to a fault". These comments show how bitterly a section of the press felt about the anarchist activities in England during the nineties.

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1. April 9th, 1892.
 2. Summer, 1892.

v.

In the nineties Labour politics had definitely come to a decisive turn. The Socialist League played itself out. The Social Democrats with their constant talk of revolution and doctrinaire *the ethical impulses that were stirring among all sections of* socialism, and their failure to appreciate the strength of society, found themselves flying the red flag over an empty fortress. Among the middle classes the Fabians caught on. As an indication of their success, the Fabian Essays (1889), edited by Bernard Shaw, sold more than 27,000 copies in two years. In 1892 the Fabians registered another triumph by capturing a large number of seats in the London County Council election. How this success inspired socialists at that time can be visualised from a letter Carpenter wrote to George Hukin in March, 1892:

"What an L.C.C. election. Oh my! is the British lion really awakening? The old order changeth yielding place to Sydney Webb and Fred Henderson. Wonderful things are happening... I can't get over the L.C.C. election, and the evidence here¹: (splendid audience, yesterday, 1,000 people and lecture quite a success) of how things are going ahead make me think millennium is nigh". 2

The creation of the Independent Labour Party in 1893 brought this hope another step nearer. The Socialist movement was moving away from old group organizations and becoming a national mass movement.

The Independent Labour Party brought a new type of leadership

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1. Carpenter was lecturing at Bradford.
 2. Mss 361, Carpenter's Collection.

in the personality of Keir Hardie, a man cradled in poverty and trained in the Temperance movement, whose appeal was emotional and ethical rather than intellectual. It was through the Independent Labour Party that the Trade Unions and the Co-operative organizations were brought closer to the Labour movement. Meanwhile the Trade Unions themselves were getting more militant and were shaking off their Liberal connections. Some of these new Trade Union leaders, such as Tom Mann and Ben Tillet played a considerable part in the creation of the Independent Labour Party.

There was some suspicion at the beginning between the purely middle-class body like the Fabians and the Independent Labour Party, but it was soon overcome. Only the Social Democratic Federation of Hyndman remained isolated and Independent Labour Party leaders dismissed them as "hare-brained chatterers and magpies of continental revolutionists".¹ It was generally believed that the Independent Labour Party was able to restore "the real English tradition"² to the Labour movement. Carpenter welcomed the new organization and spoke from its platforms. But he had one reservation: "Hope it will keep broad", he once remarked.

In the eighties most of the socialists were averse to religion. If not atheists or agnostics, most of the early socialists were secularists and free-thinkers. In 1884, Dr. Aveling was

1. See The Origins of the Labour Party, H. Pelling (1954), p.124.
 2. Mss 386-110. Letter from Bruce Glasier to E. Carpenter. (Carpenter's Collection); see also Memoirs of Tom Maguire Ed. E. Carpenter, p.xii.

speaking on behalf of most socialists when he put science and socialism together and said that, as the former had shaken off all relations with religion, so this great idea, socialism, "will pursue its majestic way humanising people, unhampered by any dreams of the supernatural."¹ In the nineties, however, this picture changed. The gap between the social movement and religion was narrowing. The Anglican Church, under pressure from its vocal Christian Socialist group (Etd. 1877), and their leader Stewart Headlam (1847-1924), came forward to take a sympathetic interest in the Labour movement. H.H. Champion was invited to address the Church Congress in 1887 and the following year the Lambeth Conference appointed a commission to report on socialism. This move on the clergy's part towards social and political involvement was not restricted to the Anglican Church alone. In the National Triennial Conference of Non-Subscribing Churches (1891), Ben Tillet was invited to speak. Keir Hardie spoke at the Congregational Union in 1892.²

Keir Hardie claimed for socialism that it was "the embodiment of Christianity in our industrial system".³ He welcomed the efforts of John Trevor, a Unitarian Minister, who had been running a "Labour Church" in Manchester since October 1891. It was Trevor, Blatchford and a few others who first started an Independent Labour Party in Manchester, before the national Independent Labour Party

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1. To-Day, January 1884.
 2. See Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England, K.S. Inglis, p.252.
 3. Quoted by Pelling, Ibid., p.124.

was born. Trevor embarked on the venture of the Labour Church because he was dissatisfied with contemporary socialism, which "was so willfully blind to the larger issues of life".¹ Trevor wanted to rouse the religious nature of the Labour movement into self-consciousness. The notion of God as immanent which was becoming popular among the theologians of the time, was also the doctrinal basis of the Labour Church, it declared that God was at work here and now, in the heart of the Labour movement. The true religion was co-operation with the divine energy, which was still at work in the world.

The Labour Church movement flourished mostly between 1892 and 1898. In 1893 a "labour Church Union" was formed with twenty five affiliated churches. The Independent Labour Party officially recommended the establishment of Labour Churches to its units in May, 1894. A monthly organ, Labour Prophet publicized the objectives of the movement from 1892 till 1898 when it became defunct.

Edward Carpenter's influence on the Labour Church movement, like his influence on the middle-class ethical societies, was considerable. The first service of the Labour Church, on October 4th 1891, ended with the singing of Carpenter's "England Arise".

1. My Quest for God (1908), p.xvii.

Both Dr. Pelling and Professor Inglis, who have studied¹ the movement exhaustively, say that Carpenter was one of the most popular lecturers in the Labour Churches. In their services many of Carpenter's poems (along with those of Whitman), were sung as hymns. Carpenter also contributed poems and articles to the Labour Prophet. Trevor himself says² in his autobiography that the "natural religion" which he sought, "a religion which shall relate the part to the whole without sacrificing the part and which shall dare to look on life naked and unashamed", he found embodied in some of Carpenter's works. It may be doubted whether the Labour Church movement had much effect on the Labour movement, but, as regards Carpenter, it was a move in the direction which he wanted the socialist movement to take. It kept the thought of a larger life in front of those who advocated socialism.

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1. For a history of the Labour Church movement, see Dr. H. Pelling's The Origins of the Labour Party (1954), and K.S. Inglis's Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (1962); also for a controversy between the two authors, see the International Review of Social History, Vols. iii & iv, 1958-59. Dr. Pelling thinks that the Labour Church movement was "rather a symptom of religious decline". But if we accept that a new spiritual outlook was developing in the 'nineties, in contrast with the triumph of material science in the 'seventies, for instance, then we could take the Labour Church movement as another expression of the same tendency and not necessarily a reaction against the Anglican Church or Non-conformity.
 2. My Quest for God, p.xix.

CHAPTER V

The Anarchist Humanist.

Carpenter was primarily a social philosopher and only incidentally a reformer. So it is his writings that really matter, and not his participation in the political movements. To one who believed that "When the Ideal ^{once} is alighted... we may go to supper, ... the rest will be seen to",¹ it was in the realm of ideas that any true revolution originated. But ideas were not merely materials for abstract philosophy to Carpenter; he sought to apply them to life.

A reviewer in The Athenaeum² once remarked that "by the middle-nineties Carpenter's influence was incalculable", especially among the young, who were rightly captivated by life rather than by theory, and who found in Carpenter a man possessing the strength to live what he taught. Another factor that was responsible for Carpenter's popularity, the reviewer thought, was that in Carpenter "the man himself as well as in his books, there was a hopefulness and sunshiney

1. Towards Democracy, P.45 Sec. xxxi.
2. April 2nd, 1921.

exhilaration that filled his readers with responsive joy, like the sight of the mountain or the smell of the moorland air^m. One cannot improve upon the description of the two sources of strength in Carpenter's writings. A concern for life, the whole life, not any theory or attitude about it, whether socialistic, aesthetic or moral; and his radiant hopefulness.

Carlyle, Ruskin and Arnold criticized Victorian society in more effective literary style, but they hardly struck a hopeful chord. They were overwhelmingly conscious that the world was not going their way. The younger generation of the 'nineties, in spite of their admiration for the great masters, could not see how Carlyle's "hero-worship", Ruskin's patriarchal Toryism, and Arnold's detachment and disinterestedness could provide any guidance to them in their new social context. The later writings of Carlyle often bordered on misanthropy; especially his contempt for the thirty thousand distressed needlewomen; and this caused revulsion among the socially aware younger generation.¹ In contrast with the attitude of Carlyle they found the teaching of Whitman, and Carpenter for that matter, with its emphasis on human sympathy and instinctive love towards men and women, more congenial.

Another cause of disappointment on the part of the younger people with the Victorian prophets was that they, with one voice, insisted on the need for external authority. Whereas with the collapse of

1. See Principles of Social Reconstruction, Bertrand Russell (1916), p. 34.

the old religions, and the growing desire for action against social injustice, what men needed was a faith in themselves. On questions of social reform the prophets were extremely apprehensive. What Collingwood said of Ruskin may be applied to all of them; Ruskin, he said, "did not demand - and this is important to note - he did not demand a state of society hopelessly unlike the present".¹ This led them to many intemperate answers and contradictions. Ruskin might declare himself "the reddest of the red",² but he could not see eye to eye with any other political reformer. Most of the socialists considered Arnold basically insincere. Bruce Glasier once wrote about him saying that "there has seldom been found a man having such a clear perception of religious and social error, who so sweetly ordered his own conduct that he might not disturb error or inconvenience himself".³ Perhaps that was a little unjust. But what Bruce Glasier meant was that, owing to the contradictions in his attitudes, - "an atheist in conviction, he was a churchman in practice; in perception a social reformer, in personal disposition a Tory" - owing to these contradictions his criticism became ineffectual, as far as the socialists could see it. Glasier concluded that his writings passed "through the minds of his countrymen without stimulating them to a single honest impulse to forswear falsehood, a single brave endeavour toward social and intellectual freedom".⁴

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1. Quoted by Sir Oliver Lodge in the Introduction to Unto This Last (Everyman). n.d.
 2. See Fors Clavigera Letter VII, and Letters 66 and 67 (1876).
 3. The Commonweal, December 20th, 1888.
 4. Ibid.

This was the judgment of a time when society was deeply stirred by the need for social change. In such times the writings that helped to generate "a single honest impulse" for change were worth more than those which spread suspicion about social action, however enduring as literary productions these works might be.

While Carlyle and Arnold with their talk of "shooting Niagra" and "anarchy" did undermine rather than stimulate the impulse to social action, the whole emphasis of Carpenter's writings was to revitalise hope and strength in man and to help build a new society of social relatedness:

"To build up this supreme life in a people - the life of Equality - in which each individual passes out of himself along the lives of his fellows, and in return receives their lives into himself with such force that he becomes far greater as an individual than ever before... To build up this life in a people may well be a task worthy of the combined efforts of poets, philosophers and statesmen. The whole of history and all the agelong struggle of the nations point to this realisation. Even now the society like a crysalis writhes in the birth-throes of the winged creature within." 1

This faith in the process of history was a quality which basically differentiated Carpenter's writings from the major Victorian writers we have mentioned above. This faith made him hopeful. William Morris once aptly remarked "all intelligent persons who are not socialists are pessimists."²

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1. England's Ideal, p.164.
 2. The Commonweal, June 22nd, 1888. Morris was commenting on Ibsen's Doll's House

Carpenter's first important essay "England's Ideal" appeared in To-Day in May 1884, a periodical edited by the doctrinaire Marxist, E.B. Bax. It occupied the first few pages, which is why the editor added a footnote to the effect that it was not to be taken as a representation of the official views. Whatever Belfort Bax thought, however, about the article in terms of socialist doctrines, it had a considerable impact. This was one of Carpenter's most vigorous attacks on the values of the Victorian middle class. It had the vehemence of Carlyle and the directness and irony of Ruskin's Forg ... essays. "What is the ideal of England now?" Carpenter asked, to answer:

"To live independent on others, consuming much and creating next to nothing (by fine irony called having an independence)...
To be a kind of human sink into which much flows but out of which nothing ever comes - except an occasional putrid whiff of charity and patronage".

But this idle life carried the stamp of gentility or respectability. So Carpenter proceeded to pour his scorn upon this supreme ideal of the Victorian world:

"The modern ideal of gentility is hopelessly corrupt and it must be our avowed object to destroy it. It is incompatible with Christianity (at least as Christ appears to have taught it; it gives a constant lie to the doctrine of brotherhood...
The wretched man who has got into its toils must surrender that most precious of all things - the human relation to the mass of mankind."

Carpenter knew only too well that when an ideal of this sort established itself in a hierarchical society it rapidly corrupted the whole nation. He appealed to the working men and women to desist from imitating this ideal; he urged that they should not look forward to a days:

"... when you shall turn your back on your brothers and sisters, but that you shall look to a new ideal, the ideal of social brotherhood and of honesty..."

Carpenter never believed that any change other than in the realm of ideas could achieve this result. For this he said the modern "cheap-jack" education which only teaches "the art of keeping up appearance", where the children are brought to feel "far more shame at any little breach of social decorum" than at glaring acts of selfishness and uncharitableness"; this false education has to give way to a nobler one if England is to realise the higher ideals:

"Education if decently conducted, does not turn a man into a creature of blind wants, a prey to ever fresh thirsts and desires - it brings him into relation with the world around him". (Italics in the text)

This seems to be the burden of Carpenter's whole work.

England's Ideal was printed in book form in 1887 with eight other essays. The basic contention of these essays is that the hope of regeneration for England lies not in one class alone, "but in an awakening of the national conscience".

Before we proceed to analyse the arguments of other important essays in the book, we must point out that Carpenter does not use the word "ideal" as a mere intellectual concept, something fixed and external and appealing to the mind alone. To Carpenter an ideal is effective only when it is sustained by feelings and emotion rather than by any intellectual conviction. Probably Carpenter thought it was necessary to emphasize this point as there were too many idealistic philosophers who devoted all their attention to logic-chopping. The motive force of life is within. The ideal is the objectivisation of the forces generated within. The growth should be from within outwards:

Each petal is pushed out by the next. A new growth of the moral sense takes place within the individual - and this gives birth to a new ideal, something to love better than anything seen before. There is the light of this new love, this more perfect desire, than what has gone before and the actually existing thing appear wizened and false, i.e. ready to fall like petals". (pp. 66-67).

Carpenter thought that the failure to take proper cognition of this inner source of all a great - social change was the great inadequacy of the "profoundest hitherto" social philosophers, Buckle, Comte, Marx, Spencer¹ and Morgan. "The more I think of it the more I am

1. It seems Carpenter here unjustly included Spencer's name. It is on this very ground Spencer quarrelled with the Positivists, saying, "ideas do not govern the world; the world is governed by feelings, to which ideas serve only as guides. The social mechanism does not rest finally upon opinions, but almost wholly upon character..." Quoted by John Fisk in Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy (1874), vol. 2, p.242.

persuaded", Carpenter says that —

"the true explanation, theories, of the social changes which we see around us, that the forces which produce them, that the purposes which they fulfil, lie deep, deep down, unsuspected". (p.56). (*italics mine*)

And in the deeps of his individual heart a man touches also the heart of the society. There lies the great importance of the authentic individual impulses:

"When one man feels any such impulse strongly, the hundred thousands are nearer to him than he suspects". 1

But no ideal of society is inviolate completely. The politician or reformer who regards his own pet ideal as containing the whole secret and redemption of society commits the same error as the theologian who looks upon any doctrine as necessary to salvation:

"There is a millennium, but it does not belong to any system of society that can be named, nor to any doctrine, belief, circumstance or surrounding of individual life". (P. 61).

But the secret of realising this is everywhere:

"It is within the grain of mustard seed;... it may be held but not thought, felt but not represented,— except by life and history".

Every individual so far as he touches this stands at the source of social progress"... (74).

1. "Social Progress and Individual Effort", England's Ideal, p.73. The following quotation is also from this essay.

And if only one man, speaking from the depth of his heart, says about a social custom:

" "This shall not be: behold something better; his word is likely stronger than all institutions, all traditions... Somewhere within yourself, be assured, the secret of that authority lies". (66)

This was the ringing voice of affirmation which to many of his contemporaries appeared "better worth hearing than Carlyle".¹

When one held such faith in the individual man and in the social potentiality of his self-realisation, the idea of doctrinaire socialism as merely an outcome of historical class conflict was bound to be unsatisfying. "Socialism must spring from the basis of a new sentiment of humanity, a better sort of morality" (71), that is how Carpenter thought about it. This also implied the rejection of state socialism or parliamentary socialism as the goal to aim at. For the same reasons he also did not claim that socialism was the final answer to all human miseries. No picture of utopia can exhaust the potentiality of life, so long as life and not the excellence of a social organization is what is really aimed at:

"One social movement succeeds another... there can be no stereotyping: not to change is to die - this is the rule of life; because one form is not enough to express the secret of life. To express that requires an infinite series of forms". (England's Ideal, p.60).

1. The National Reformer, April 24, 1892, review of Towards Democracy

This faith leads Carpenter to a philosophical position in which only anarchism is politically tenable, because only the anarchists believe in keeping alive this condition of permanent revolution. Carpenter puts the case for it himself:

"The war against the continuance (as a finality) of any institution or order, however good it may be for the time, is a necessary element of social progress, is a condition of the very life of society".
(England's Ideal, p.62).

So Carpenter looked forward to a "non-governmental" society, as the ultimate ideal and looked upon state-socialism as only "transitions to freedom".¹

But when we call Carpenter an anarchist we must qualify the statement a little, because the core of his writing was more humanistic than anything else. His anarchism was essentially the result of a thirst for spiritual freedom - what he calls "that eternal freedom, which cannot be represented, that peace which passes understanding".² He could not have agreed, for instance, with such a characteristic anarchist statement as the following:

"Above all our task is to destroy, to destroy every obstacle that now stands in the way of free development of social law, and also to prevent the reconstruction

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1. The title of the essay Carpenter contributed to The Forecasts of the Coming Century (1897).
 2. England's Ideal, p.74.

of these obstacles, no matter in what form, or the creation of new ones. It will be for the free and fertile functioning of the natural laws of society to accomplish the destinies of mankind". 1

To Carpenter it was not the "natural laws of society" but man that was "the essential fact of life" and the external forces, so called, were in some way, "subsidiary to this fact".² They may help or hinder his growth, but they cannot annihilate the possibilities of man. To show how exultant was Carpenter's humanistic faith, one may quote the epigraph from Swedenborg before one of the most important essays of England's Ideal, "Social Progress and Individual Effort":

"The universe could not have been created if God were not a man".

But he was not an individualist for holding such a view. He believed that human personality can only develop through social relationship:

"For the true Self of man consists in his organic relation with the whole body of his fellows; and when the man abandons his true Self he abandons also his true relation to his fellows". 3

So it is man and his attitudes to nature and society that constitute the main theme of Carpenter's next important prose work,

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1. A quotation from one of Malatesta's speeches given by G.D.H. Cole in Socialist Thought: Marxism and Anarchism (1954), p.360.
 2. Civilisation, its cause and cure, p.13.
 3. Civilisation, its cause and cure, p.28.

Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure (1889). In the primal situation man was a unity, but with the progress of civilisation man has been increasingly fragmented, and the central power or the vitality of the self is being stamped out. As a result man has lost freedom outwardly, from the pressure of social institutions and government, and inwardly, from lack of spontaneity and loss of the natural urge for self-realisation. By living continually farther and farther from nature, he has come to doubt if there is any "natural" human life. This is one of the reasons for his loss of "all gladness and faith". To retrace man's way back to the original state of harmony was, however, not possible and perhaps not desirable. Man had to become conscious of his destiny by losing his primitive oneness with nature. So what was needed, according to Carpenter, was to advance in a direction in which the old freedom and harmony would be compatible with the state of social advancement. To keep the impulse of life alive under the suffocating covers of civilisation, some amount of "savagery" has to be rehabilitated. On this ground he based his appeal for simplification of life, that is, simplification in dress, food, habitation and manners. He pleaded for sunbaths and nudity, "within decorous limit", without caring for the injunctions of Mrs. Grundy.

It was characteristic of the anarchist thinkers to look into the earliest history of man to confirm their ideals. The anarchist utopia is of necessity a pre-industrial world. And here the knowledge of primitive societies made available by the cultural anthropologists

became very useful. Carpenter was considerably influenced by one such work, ~~The Ancient Society~~ of L.H. Morgan. This book, published in 1877, was a study of the progress of human civilisation based on observation of the Red Indian societies still extant in America. But Morgan was more than an anthropologist; he was a social philosopher who looked at the past only to find goals for the present society to pursue.

Morgan divided the whole human story into three stages, savagery, barbarism and civilisation. In this three-tier progress of human history, what was achieved by man in the stage of "barbarism" far transcended in relative importance all his subsequent gains. The stage of civilisation, Morgan said, started with the concept of property. Very soon this institution turned out to be "an unmanageable power and the human mind stared bewildered in the presence of its own creation". (p. 15). Morgan, however, looked forward to a time when:

"the human intelligence will rise to the mastery over property, and define the relation of the state to the property it protects, as well as the obligation and the limits of the rights of its owners. The interests of society are paramount to individual interest, and they must be brought to just and harmonious relation. A mere property career is not the final destiny of mankind, if progress is to be the law of the future as it has been in the past... Such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. It will be a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes". (p. 562).

We have selected these few points made by Morgan to show where Carpenter was most indebted to him. He gave a scientific, rational foundation for the belief in the development of society to a higher stage, which was inextricably connected with Carpenter's concern for social reform.

Another point made by Morgan is worth a moment's notice, not only for its influence on Carpenter, but as it explains a basic tenet of the anarchist faith. Namely, that society and government are two different growths. The former is founded on individuals and relations, purely personal, but the latter is based on territory and upon property. In the primitive society there were no governments, but society already existed. The "gens" was the unit of organisation; it was a society of equals founded upon blood relations.

From this difference between "societas" and "civitas" between society and government, arises the difference between custom and law. To all anarchists laws are anathema, but they are not so vehemently opposed to custom. Primitive men, Carpenter says, had an instinctive feeling that to forsake custom would be to launch out on a trackless sea where life would cease to have any special purpose or direction, and morality would be utterly gulfed:

"Custom for them is the line of their growth... Till he grows to manhood, the human being cannot do without it". (Civilisation, p.155).

This notion of the difference between law and custom is of considerable importance to those who plead for an anarchist polity in which the state will wither away. It helps them to protect their envisioned

society from the fear of falling into chaos. It also gave them an opportunity to draw a line, as the preceding quotation from Carpenter indicates, between the simple primitive and the highly developed "anarch".

Society at the initial stage needs the protective sheath of custom, but it has the inherent danger of inducing man to accept a mechanical subordination of habits and prejudices, under whose tutelage, Carpenter was aware, "we remain only half alive". So in anarchist society social revolution will give place to individual rebellion:

"The sheath of custom must be kept slowly changing... The battle of the heroes of the future... will be against the apathetic routine and inertia of the human masses". (P. 123).

In a sense the rebel or the criminal (as every society would consider its rebels criminals before they call them martyrs), will keep alive the vital force in society.

Civilisations: Its Cause and Cure, besides the title-essay, included six other essays.¹ This was one of Carpenter's best known prose works and had eighteen editions between 1889 and 1921. More than any other book, it created the popular image of Carpenter as one who had pleaded a return to nature.² The background of Rousseau's

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1. Modern Science: a criticism; The Science of the Future; Defence of Criminals: a criticism of morality; Exfoliation: Lamarck versus Darwin; Custom; The New Morality.
 2. Bernard Shaw says in Sixteen Life Sketches "we called him the Noble Savage", p.67.

thought was unmistakably there. But, taking his clue from Morgan, Carpenter insisted that civilisation need not regress towards primitivism, nor has it to remain static as an ideal that has achieved its goal. It can make further progress toward a state of society combining the best of both the past and the present. To attain this we must give up the nineteenth-century assumption of the moral superiority of our present civilisation. Carpenter was primarily reacting against the popular Victorian idea of progress, when he presented the modern civilisation as diseased. But he did not oppose the idea of historical development, as such; only the nineteenth-century habit of identifying material progress with civilisation and the consequent assumption of moral superiority over the "uncivilised". For one who truly believes in progress, the word "civilisation" must not carry any commendation; it only marks a stage of historical development. Such was Carpenter's basic attitude.

From this position, Carpenter fires off his criticism in all directions against the institutions and the ideals of contemporary life. Since he had accepted Morgan's notion that civilisation started with the dominance of the concept of property, the Victorian attitude to property becomes the major target. In this regard Civilisations: Its Cause and Cure truly stands as a sequel to England's Ideal. Since its concluding essays were on "private property" Carpenter argued that to his contemporaries property meant only legal ownership, "without any living and human relationship to the object

owned". Without such relationship, ownership is a mere form, "it may be legal, but it must be dead, and therefore harmful". For true ownership, "there must be use, which means 'mastery' which means exercise of will, of human power"¹. The moment property accumulates without being used, "disease sets in". Carpenter's solution to the problem of property, as it appeared in England's Ideal, was Ruskinian in character: property should be used as a trust and not for selfish purposes alone. Where Carpenter goes beyond the Ruskinian approach is in his taking a historical view of the growth of the present attitude to property. This leads him to enunciate the idea of the three stages of human development, which he treats elaborately in Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure and later, more philosophically, in The Art of Creation (1904).

Carpenter argued that men in primitive society had owned property in common. At that time the individual self was one with the tribal self. When the concept of private property developed, the individual fell apart from the tribe; and not only so, but private property raised a permanent barrier between man and man, man and society, and eventually between man and nature. When property was shorn of all human relationship, it became a kind of fetish worship:

1. England's Ideal, p.151.

"He hoards it, he hides it, he pursues it, he dances round it, hugs it, kisses it, puts it on his head, circles his arms, his fingers with it - falls down and worships it". 1

Carpenter's criticism of private property and the analysis of its effect on man and society is similar to that of Marx's classic definition of alienation. Alienation did not mean merely estrangement, but in an old sense of the French word, *aliéné*, also insanity. By idolatrous worship of property, man gave away his strength to an idol which he should have considered as "only a sign and emblem".

So, Carpenter argues, "setting up material property as our deity we have dethroned the ruling power in our own nature". And this leads him to the central argument of Civilisation. The vital force within man has been stultified. The central concern of man, which should be for life, has been usurped by peripheral interests. Carpenter puts it in language borrowed from physiology:

"Man to be really healthy must be a unit or entirety... And the condition of disease and of sin, under the same view, was the reverse of this. Enfeeblement, obscuration, duplicity - the central radiation blocked lesser and subordinate centres establishing and ascertaining themselves as against it..." (Civilisation, p.14).

Hence the sickness in society. The only remedy is that the central power in man should be restored and allowed to function freely; he called this central power variously the soul, the divine man within

1. England's Ideal, p.157. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 1881, p.77.

man, the universal self and at times, the true self. But whatever the name there was nothing mysterious about it. It was something which was even acknowledged by materialist philosophers like Feuerbach - who called it man's "twofold life":

"The brute has only a simple, man a twofold life; in the brute, the inner life is one with the outer. Man has both an inner and outer life. The inner life of man is the life which has relation to his species - to his general as distinguished from his individual nature". 1

In the nineteenth-century ideal of individualism this fact was increasingly ignored. The individual and society, or the species, were most completely split apart when the doctrine of the struggle for existence was accepted as applicable in the social field as well. To emphasize the gravity of this split or "crack" as Carpenter called it elsewhere, was a basic theme of his writings.

The split has not only enfeebled society but also the individual - and it has made man physically as well as morally sick. To regain his health man must integrate himself:

"his more external and momentary self standing in some kind of filial relation to his universal and incorruptible part - so that not only the remotest and outermost regions of the body... but even thoughts and passions of the mind itself, stand/direct and clear relation to it, the final and absolute transparency of the moral creature". (Italics are mine).

1. Quoted by K. Marx in Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, p.77.

It is very likely that this ideal of transparency was derived by Carpenter from Rousseau. It figured so prominently in Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts and Les Confessions, that Carpenter could not have missed it.

In primitive society, Rousseau said, though human nature was not probably any better, men found security in the ease with which they could trust and understand each other. Before the appearance of elaborate language and manners, there was no real gulf between appearance and reality, but in civilised society it is next to impossible to find out what is really true from what is presented as so. This fact, according to Rousseau, has corrupted society root and branch^{and} since this has come to pass, a veil has covered everything; man's relation to man, as well as his relation to nature, and consequently everything has become ugly.

When Carpenter makes the restoration of absolute transparency the final goal of man he has surely Rousseau's sense of the word at the back of his mind. In his criticism of the cult of gentility and plea for honesty as the ideal of human relationship, he has already made partial use of the idea of transparency. But in the context cited above, and at various other places in Towards Democracy, where the word appears, Carpenter seems to have given a twist of his own to the sense of the word. Rousseau when he spoke of transparency¹, was

1. I am indebted to Peter Gay's The Party of Humanity (1964) for drawing my attention to J. Starobinski's Jean Jacques Rousseau: La Transparence et l'obstacle (1957), which considers the ideal of transparency and what part it played in Rousseau's life.

concerned with the obstacles of communication in a civilised society. Carpenter internalises the idea, and pleads for transparency within oneself. The veil between the phantasmal and the true self must be lifted: the knowledge of the true self: "to know whom and be united with whom is alone salvation",¹ must be made possible. The word also meant to Carpenter the complete understanding of one's bodily needs and desires. Only-

"when your body is become shining and transparent before you in every part (however deformed)," 2

can you understand and accept its needs; only then can the starvation of the instincts and the stultification of the true self be overcome. Also, when the body becomes transparent, a truer relation with nature will be possible: "The least thing will speak to you words of deliverance". In fact, the objects of nature will be "a finished and beautiful transparency of your own body". That is, once a perfect rapport is established between the human body and the world of nature, man will become acquainted with himself through the objects he contemplates just as society will understand the universal, natural laws.

To comprehend the universal laws of nature is the road to freedom. Such an understanding presumes a unity that governs man and nature. Carpenter has emphasized this unity in another essay:

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1. Civilisation, p.14.
 2. Towards Democracy, Section LVI.

"Nature is one; she is loyal to herself from the centre to the very circumference. Till you have established a right relation with the centre, till you have loyally sought and found within yourself the password, do not think she will be such a fool as to surrender to you her outposts." 1

Parallel to this unity in Nature is the unity in human nature:

"For^{the} man is no organ, resides in no organ, but is the central life ruling and radiating among all organs, and assigning them their parts to play". 2

When this principle of autonomous oneness with nature is realised, the concept of freedom is perfectly realised. Because freedom does not mean doing as one likes, but living in true relation with the universal laws of life. When such freedom is realised, the true region of equality is reached. Freedom and equality "comes to the same thing", Carpenter says in Towards Democracy. Because, as freedom brings a sense of space, realization of equality releases the soul of man from all constricting psychical inhibitions through boundless sympathy:

"Here, in this ocean (of equality), everything debouches; all interest in life begins anew. The plantain in the croft looks different from what it did before. (Towards Democracy, Section vi.).

When one abandons one's sense of superiority over others and is convinced of one's "entire indefensibility, that the world opens out with comrade faces in all directions".³ This is the real ground in

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1. England's Ideal, p.161.
 2. Civilisation, p.15.
 3. Ibid., p.155.

which true human relationship can be realised. When we consider that each human being is unique and is governed by incorruptible universal laws, the obstacles of communication disappear. Then we will have (as Carpenter says elsewhere), the celestial city of lovers and equals.¹

To sum up the argument so far; Carpenter insisted that civilisation founded on property had broken up the unity of man's nature. The words "wholeness", "holiness" and "health" Carpenter reminds us², are derived from the same root. So all our problems started from the same event; man's alienation from man and nature through the institution of private property; the sense of sin coming from the sense of separation, and man becoming a prey to all sorts of nervous sickness, owing to the split within his personality. The central power within man has become devitalised, and instead of him ruling himself from within man is now ruled from outside, and that "crawling phenomenon", Carpenter says with a withering contempt, namely, the policeman, makes his ubiquitous appearance. He points out that the eighteenth-century French philosophers very aptly used the word nations policées³ as a substitute for civilised nation, because nothing marks the "civilisation period so distinctly as the appearance

1. The Art of Creation, p.91.
2. Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure, p.11.
3. May be Carpenter was thinking of Rousseau's phrase people police in Discourse (p. 100). The French phrase, however, does not refer to the police as such, but to the fact that owing to the civilised manners, man became a willing slave for life surrendering his original freedom.

of the policeman."¹

So to Carpenter the greatest problem waiting to be solved is that of restoring unity within man. Enlarging upon the idea of the two selves, the local or individual self and the universal self, Carpenter envisages a society where "a rule of the mass-man or Demos, in each unit man" or the realisation of common life within all, would finally solve the problem of man's separation from the society and also would guarantee the uniqueness of the individual. To speak of a "true self" inherently smacks of dualism, but Carpenter guarded himself against it: the two selves instead of marking a contrast only form a continuity:

"for between the little mortal man who dwells here and now, and the Divine and universal man who also forms a part of our consciousness, is there not a perfect gradation of being, and where (if anywhere) is there a gulf fixed? Together they form a unit, and each is necessary to the other". (Civilisation, p.13).

Only the present ideals of materialism and selfish individualism have created the consciousness of a split between the two selves and thus have blocked the harmonious development of the whole man.

1. Civilisation... p.5.

ii.

In the books discussed so far, namely England's Ideal and Civilisation: its Cause and Cure Carpenter never assumed the existence of any inherent conflict between the individual and society, or liberty and authority; though the eighteenth century philosophy had deeply impressed this conflict upon European thought by assuming a split between nature and reason. Freud, an inheritor of the tradition, made such a conflict the basis of his sociological writing; to him, it was the inevitable and insurmountable source of discontent in civilisation. So it needs to be said that Carpenter's "mass-man" has nothing to do with Freud's "super-ego". According to Freud the super-ego is the coercive agent of society, gradually built up in the human psyche. Hence it does not bridge the "crack"; it only internalises the conflict. To Freud, all depends on the ego, with its incessant struggle and adjustment to the unconscious on one hand and society on the other. Whereas, in Carpenter's "unitary"¹ thought there is no room for such conflict.

Romain Rolland (incidentally a friend of Carpenter, whose monograph on Beethoven (1917) was published in English with an introduction by Carpenter), wrote to Freud once about the existence of "an oceanic feeling" in man, on which, he thought, a future religion might be based. Freud conceded² that such a feeling might

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1. I am using the word in the sense adopted by the modern philosophical writer, L.L. Whyte, especially, in his book The Next Development in Men (1944).
 2. See Civilisation and its Discontent, p.21 ff.

exist in some people, but he was not sure if this so-called oceanic feeling was not an attempt "to reinstate limitless narcissism". Because, Freud argued, "its ideational content, the feeling of oneness with the universe", appeared to him like another device to obtain the consolations of religion - another way for the ego to deny the dangers of the external world.

The difference here between Freud and Romain Rolland or between Freud and Whitman or Carpenter, for that matter, with regard to "oceanic feeling" goes to the root of two philosophies. Freud accepted the split within man as the inevitable price of civilisation; and he also considered the continuation of civilisation as itself more important than the happiness of man. In his view, the source of individual fulfilment, that is, the life of instinctual gratification, is at war with the needs of civilisation. So man must hide his sorrow and be prepared to pay for the comforts and security of civilisation with his personal everlasting discontent. In Carpenter there was no genuine ground for conflict because he held that "the instinct of man is towards an orderly life".¹ And as long as law genuinely reflects this instinct, there is no conflict between man and the law. In fact from this point of view law has a purpose and an influence, as much as the "sheath has for the flower or

1. England's Ideal, p.64.

the shell of a crab on it". The husk or shell only prepares the force within which is to reject it. There is a time when the sheath and the shell have to give way, otherwise there would be only a dead flower or an empty shell. Carpenter was never weary of this analogy.

There would be no conflict between man and society if only man would try to understand their relationship:

"A man in a healthy state does not act for himself alone, practically cannot do so. Nor does he talk cant about 'serving his neighbour' &c. But he simply acts for them as for himself, because they are part and parcel of his life... Every man contains in himself the elements of all the rest of humanity... Sometime or other to every man must come the consciousness of this vaster life". 1

I have underlined the word healthy as it is important to keep this word in mind; otherwise Carpenter's arguments would appear unduly optimistic. The ideal of competitive individualism of our society is only a pathological symptom. And what Freud² wrote:-

"of society perpetually menaced with disintegration through the primary hostility of men towards one another",

- is really the study of a sick society which should not be presented as the true condition of man. Carpenter makes this point clear when he says:

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1. Civilisation... pp.127-128.
 2. Civilisation and its Discontent, p.25.

"At present, since our most important relation to each other is conceived of as one of rivalry and competition, we of course think of the objects of Nature as chiefly engaged in a struggle for existence with each other; but when we become aware of all our senses and feelings, and of ourselves as individuals, as having relation to the absolute and universal, proceeding from it, as the branches and twigs of a tree from the trunk - then we shall become aware of a Divine or absolute science in Nature; we shall at last understand that all objects have a permanent and indissoluble relation to each other". 1

Carpenter's language tends to fall into traditional religious expressions. However, it is not the Absolute that he is trying to affirm here, but the "indissoluble relation of all objects to each other". Without realising this relationship we cannot have any human institution or ideal that will be intrinsically sane.

1. Civilisation..., p.91.

CHAPTER VI

India, Mysticism and World-Religion.

Towards the close of the eighteenth-century a large number of British Orientalists, under the eminent leadership of Sir William Jones (1746-1794) roused the intellectual curiosity of Europe about ancient Indian literature and philosophy. England was at that time ripe for a poetic revolution, and the researches of the Orientalists helped to sharpen the imaginative sensibilities of the romantic poets of the early nineteenth century. As early as 1771, Jones had considered how a knowledge of the Eastern literatures might influence poetic modes at home:

"I cannot but think that our European poetry has subsisted too long on the perpetual repetition of the same images and incessant allusions to the same fables; and it has been my endeavour for several years to inculcate this truth, that if the principal writings of the Asiatics were printed with the usual advantage of notes and illustrations, and if the language of the Eastern nations were studied in our great seminaries of learning..., a new and ample field would be opened for speculation; we should have more extensive insight into the history of the human mind; we should be furnished with a new set of images and similitudes; and a number of excellent compositions would be brought to light which future scholars might explain and future poets imitate." (Works, vol.1, pp.198-199).

Jones's expectations were more than fulfilled. His scholarly works, translations and adaptations were eagerly read by most literary men of the nineteenth century. As A.J. Arberry has said, from Gibbon to Tennyson there was hardly any major writer who did not refer to Jones's works in his footnotes.¹ Southey and Thomas Moore were full of such references in their copious notes. Among Jones's poetic adaptations, Hymns showed great accomplishments and inspired several poetic efforts. We know from the Notebooks of Coleridge how his attempts to write hymns entitled "Spirit", "Sun," "Air", "Water", "Fire" and "Man" finally led him to the theme of "The Ancient Mariner".² Shelley's Queen Mab and his "Hymn to intellectual beauty" have various echoes of Jones's A Hymn to Narayene³ and Palace of Fortune. Tennyson's first attempt at verse, Poems by Two Brothers (1827), has two references to Jones's translation of the Gita Govinda (a mystic erotic poem unsurpassed in Indian literature for its verbal music). As well as having the direct influence on various poets, Jones created a general interest in Asiatic literatures.

In the later half of the nineteenth century, owing primarily to the religious unrest of the time, this literary interest was superseded by an interest in Indian mystical thought and religious philosophy. The English writers were mainly dependent upon German philosophers and poets, who devoted great attention to the subject.

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1. Asiatic Jones (1946), A.J. Arberry.
 2. Notebooks of Coleridge Ed. K. Coburn, See vol. I, pp.236, 240, 32ⁿ.
 3. For a perceptive essay on Jones's influence on English poetry and a comparison of the style and measure of A. Hymn to Narayene with Shelley's "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" see Professor R.M. Hewitt's "Harmonious Jones" in Essays and Studies, vol. 28, 1942.

Frederick Denison Maurice acknowledged his debt to the German writings in his study of the Religions of the World (1847). He specially mentioned F. Schlegel's The Language and Wisdom of the Indians (1808). Maurice said:

"This little book has illuminated many dark and dull reports and has enabled one to feel the connection between the thoughts of other periods and countries and those which characterise our own time (p. xiii).

It was another German scholar, Max Müller (1823-1900) who provided the most solid ground for interest in Indian religious thought by translating the Vedas into English between 1849-1862, and editing most of The Sacred Books of the East in fifty volumes, the first of which appeared in 1879 and the last, ten years after Max Muller's death.

Another great influence in this direction was the writings of Emerson. In the later half of the nineteenth century Emerson's influence in England was perhaps only equalled by that of Carlyle. Emerson learnt about Indian philosophy not only from the writings of Jones, but also more directly from the works of an Indian scholar. He was Rajah Ram Mohan Ray (1773-1833) who made a considerable impression on Unitarian circles during the 1820's by his polemical writings against some Christian missionaries in India. The Rajah's partial translation of the Upanishads and the Abridgement of the Vedanta (1817) greatly influenced Emerson. Emerson was elected a Unitarian Minister in 1829, but his revolt against rationalist philosophy and

theological formalism¹ made him resign from his living in 1832. The Transcendentalist movement which he helped to create in America (1835-1845), and the eclectic idealistic philosophy that he preached in his essays and lectures, owed considerably to his interest in Hindu philosophy. Especially his concept of "the Over-Soul" which he enunciated in 1836:

"that unity, that over-soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other", 2

was drawn after the concept of the Vedantic Brahma. This essay on "The Over-Soul" influenced Carpenter's thinking a great deal. He eagerly accepted the idea of the Great Mind or the Divine Mind or the Universal Self, as Emerson put it variously; the interest of his generation in psychology and immanentist theology gave more credence to such a concept than to a transcendental God. In an unpublished essay (undated, but probably written during his Cambridge days, circ. 1870), called "The Divine Mind and Other Minds",³ Carpenter speculated thus:

"In fact since matter (for me) is really mind; my action in imparting a thought to a friend consists in communicating the thought directly to that mind, who in turn conveys it to the mind of my friend. Thus we have entry each to the mind of the other only through the larger mind which includes all these lesser ones alike; and as I think, Emerson puts it there, is a third party to each contract." 4

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1. Apparently Emerson resigned because of difference of views about the Communion Service and the voluntary prayer of the Unitarian Church.
 2. Works (1866) Vol. I, "Over Soul", p.112.
 3. MSS 4, p.12. Carpenter's Collection, Sheffield.
 4. The last line is a quotation from "The Over-Soul".

To be conscious of the presence of this mind is to be conscious of one's relation to the whole. Thus, in this characteristic way, Carpenter brings his mystical and sociological interests to a unity. And in this field Emerson was the great pioneer. When Carpenter visited America in 1877, he went to pay his respects to the American philosopher and stayed with him for one night. Carpenter records in his autobiography that Emerson showed him his translation of the Upanishads and talked about Carlyle, Tennyson and expressed his disapproval of Whitman.¹

In mid-nineteenth century England, there was no dearth of information about India. Buckle in his famous History of Civilisation (1857) chose India and Greece for special study, because, he said,² "our information respecting these countries is most extensive, and has been more carefully arranged". F.D. Maurice, under whom Carpenter was a curate in Cambridge, had also shown favourable interest in Indian religion. He especially drew attention to the Bhagawat Gita by giving a prose resumé of the book, in his study of Ancient Philosophy (1850). He commented that the commercial civilisation of the West had a lesson to learn from the Hindus, who thought that knowledge of the Divine was the end of life, that "man is made for something else than to buy and sell, to eat, drink and die".³ Another important author of the time, J.W. Colenso, the Bishop of Natal, after showing

1. See "Whitman and Emerson," in Days with Walt Whitman (1906),

2. P. 147.

3. Maurice, p.243.

the groundlessness of the notion of Scriptural inspiration in his famous book The Pentateuch (1863-1878) felt called upon to supply the loss, "to fill up the aching void", by referring to a few Indian hymns. They expressed, according to the Bishop, the same living trust in God's love, though they had "no Pentateuch or Bible to teach them".¹ These references to Indian spiritual thought by important religious leaders show a strong interest in Indian thought around the middle of the century.

ii.

Edward Carpenter was mystically inclined from childhood, and naturally welcomed the spread of interest in Indian philosophy and religion in the mid-nineteenth century. Also his elder brother Charles Carpenter had been in India since 1857 as a civil servant and this made India more than an imaginary country to him. In his short career (he died in 1876) Charles Carpenter showed considerable dedication to India, for example, in the following letter (1863):

"Now that we can look calmly back on 1857 one sees the meaning of that year. It was just the beginning of India's life, and without it India would have been going on in her deadly-lively course".²

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1. Colenso, Vol. V, p.154; Vol. VI, pp.484-487; pp.750-756.
 2. Memoir of C.W. Carpenter.(n.d.), by S.W.C., p.53.

The elder brother must have communicated to Edward Carpenter some of his warmth of interest in the future of India.

Carpenter's personal interest in India was further enhanced by his friendship with a Tamil Ceylonese, P. Arunachalam,¹ who was a student of Christ Church, Cambridge from 1871 to 1875. They remained life-long friends, and it was at his invitation that Carpenter visited India and Ceylon in 1890. His letters to Carpenter on Indian religion and philosophy were published by Carpenter with an introductory chapter by himself, after Arunachalam's death. The book was called Light from the East (1927).

In 1873, just before relinquishing Holy Orders, Carpenter wrote a letter to his friend C.G. Oates which showed that Carpenter was studying Indian philosophy at that time. Oates was suffering from what he called "dēspair and strangulation" from a "feeling of antagonism between thought and action", and Carpenter elaborated on this point in his letter:

"I fancy there is a crack down all creation so -
and the more nearly people come to understanding
creation the more do they feel this crack in them-
selves. Life is bridging of the crack. The
oriental mind says that the crack cannot be bridged
and the best thing is Nirvana or the retirement...
The Western mind says it can, and the chain of life is
conscience and the moral obligation. At this point
the question remains.

Still I think the Eastern philosophy right - which
says that Brahma, the God, being tired of being alone
went out one day behind Himself - thus ^B and came
up on the other side. Thus producing a crack between
Himself 'B' and his reflection 'b'; that he then

1. B.A. in 1875. Called to ^{the} Bar the same year. Entered Ceylon Civil service and held many responsible positions; was knighted in 1915.

perceived Himself as not-Himself which thing was the beginning of general existence; and that He was so amused at this bit of self-deception that he laughed - which laugh is the world!

Depend upon it the crack is not to be taken wholly seriously. Only by a furtive laugh do you assert your kinship with Brahma. But now to sense..."

Apparently Carpenter did not take Indian philosophy all that seriously at this time, as is evident from the last line; the bit about Brahma was partly derived from Maurice's chapter on Hindu philosophy in Ancient Philosophy. Carpenter did not seem to have understood the full implication of the myth; it was intended to show that "the consciousness of the crack" is an illusion and that it is overcome by a sense of bliss.

What is interesting for us in this letter is Carpenter's concern for bridging the "crack" the mystical longing for a unitive experience, which remained a major theme in all his works. The furtive laughter, the implication of which Carpenter did not fully comprehend at this time, attained its proper proportion in Towards Democracy, where the poet contemplated the vision of mystic joy:

"O beckoner of companions, hastening onward -
winged spirit Divine, girt round with laughter,
laughter, laughter". (Towards Democracy, Section XLIII).

Carpenter also realised later that Nirvana was not a retirement from the problem of "the crack", but the "bliss inexpressible" where

the little self is identified with the great self. Besides the discipline of Yoga or gymnosophy is basically intended to bridge the split in consciousness. Yoga etymologically means "to join", a fact Carpenter repeatedly mentioned in his later writings; it seems to have increased his interest in the system.

Among the Indian religious books, The Bhagawat Gita caused the greatest interest in the late nineteenth century. Though the first translation of the book appeared as early as 1785,¹ it was not till 1855 that another translation appeared in England. But between 1855 and 1888 six more translations appeared in England alone, not to mention several others published in India and on the continent. The words like "karma" and "incarnation" which gained considerable currency in the later half of nineteenth century were derived from The Bhagawat Gita.

Carpenter says in his autobiography that a copy of this Indian scripture came to his hand about 1881, and gave him "the keynote" to a new experience, "a mode of exaltation and inspiration" and a kind of "superconsciousness". It brought to his mind a strange kind of harmony which he had never experienced before. And this helped him to crystallise the idea of Towards Democracy (1883). The part of the Gita which seemed to have impressed Carpenter most was the mystical identification of Krishna with the entire universe. This revelation of the infinite "I am" and the vision of indifferentiation,

1. It was translated by Charles Wilkins and was published with an introductory note by Warren Hastings. This was the first sanskrit work ever to be translated directly into any European language.

or "the transcendental democracy", as he calls it elsewhere;¹

"When man knows that Atman, is the Atman in all creatures".
(Gita, p.70),

This provided the metaphysical ground for Carpenter's philosophy of democracy - the rule of Demos or common life in all, or the rule of "the mass-man" in the unit-man as he put it in Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure.

Carpenter reproduced in Towards Democracy the whole spirit minus its theistic connotation of the eleventh chapter of the Gita, where God reveals to His disciple and friend His supreme powers of identification with the universe. Instead of God standing before man, and calling upon man to recognise Him, Carpenter introduced the "Great Self" calling upon the "little self" of man to realise himself through the recognition of the Great Self:

I, Nature, stand, and call to you though you heed not:
Have courage, come forth, O child of mine, that you
may see me...

I am the ground; I listen to the sound of your feet,
They come nearer, . . .
I am the trees... etc. (see v.)

or

I am come to be the interpreter of yourself to yourself:
(Do I not stand behind the sun and moon, do
I not wait behind the air that you breathe, for this!)
Born beyond Maya I now descend into materials". (Section 44).

1. From Adam's Peak to Elephanta, p.331.

Most of Carpenter's contemporaries considered this part of Towards Democracy to be sheer egotism, as they failed to see the connection between this cosmic stance of the poet and the mystic prophetic vision of the Gita. They thought it was just an imitation of Whitman's "Song of Myself", but whereas it suited the "real Dionysus Walt Whitman" it looked a little presumptuous in a Thyrsus, bearer."¹ In fact, however, Carpenter's interpretation of this cosmic egotism is more mystical and philosophical than that of Whitman.

It is a pity that Carpenter's reputation as a social reformer or "anarchist poet" has overshadowed that of the mystic. Otherwise objective analysts of mysticism would have found enough in Towards Democracy to illustrate the nature of mystical experience. The state of mind or knowledge which is expressed in this poem is what in mystical literature is called the unitive experience; meaning that the subject and object of apprehension are united in a moment of vision, from which comes a peace or joy that passes understanding.

Carpenter tries to describe this vision at various levels. In one place (as mentioned before) it is embodied in the messianic figure of Whitman, towards the close of the poem it is expressed

1. "Review of Towards Democracy in The Dublin University Review (April, 1886).

metaphysically as the revelation of the Great Self, the infinite "I am". In another place, it is represented as the union of mother and child:

"A tiny infant am I once more, leaning out from my mother's arms as one leans out from a balcony. But the world hangs flat before me like a painted curtain: The sun and the moon and men's faces are all alike".
(Section LV).

Carl Jung once tried to explain the mystic state of mind as harking back to the mother's womb:

"An unmistakable symbolism... the confluence of subject and object, the reunion of mother and child". 1

The images of enclosure in Carpenter's lines, the mother's arms, the balcony, and the flatness and the undifferentiated vision of the world, give some evidence for the view of Jung, that the poet was looking back to pre-natal peace.

That Towards Democracy was a poem of intense mystical inspiration was noticed by Professor William James. He came across the book when he was preparing his Gifford lectures on mysticism in 1901; they were published a year later as The Varieties of Religious Experience. He at once wrote to Carpenter to express his admiration:

1. Psychology of the Unconscious (1919), p.361.

"I cannot refrain from expressing to you the extreme delight which many parts of your Towards Democracy have given me. I am ashamed to say that I had never heard of it till lately, when a reference in H. Ellis's New Spirit called my attention.

It is a book inspired with vitality and veracity, and often very beautiful in verbiage, and will no doubt soak in and play its part profoundly in shaping coming ideals.

I wish you had been a little more articulate in your metaphysics towards the end and elsewhere". 1

Professor James found the metaphysics "elusive" and he also failed to see the connection between the last section of Towards Democracy and the Bhagawat Gita. In any case, James was not very sympathetic to metaphysics. The purpose of his Gifford lectures, he said, was "to rehabilitate the element of feeling in religion and subordinate its intellectual part".² James used several passages of Towards Democracy in his lectures to illustrate the feelings of "enlargement, union and emancipation" experienced through mystical vision. But Carpenter, too, was suspicious of metaphysics and other philosophical abstractions. He said emphatically that he only wanted to express his feelings and any one who came to judge them by intellectual analysis would be disappointed. He said:

"Take care how you touch these words: with curious intellect come not near, lest I utterly destroy you; but come with bold heart and true and careless, and they shall bless you beyond imagination". (Towards Democracy Section 63).

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1. MSS 251-258, Carpenter's Collection.
 2. The Varieties of Religious Experience (1902), p.501.

Carpenter's attitude to democracy and socialism was connected with his mystical feelings. "Joy, joy and thanks for ever" which Carpenter repeats rhapsodically towards the close of Towards Democracy, is the joy all mystics affirm as a result of their experience. This is the millennial hope of their visions. And in the case of Carpenter it found itself in harmony with the hopes of the pioneer socialists in the early 'eighties. But it is not to be confused with the smooth Fabian dream of socialism. The mystical vision is by its very nature catastrophic, politically speaking more anarchical than socialistic:

"I hear the electric thunderbolt strike the earth:
It shivers and it staggers in its orbit". (Towards Democracy, Section (XV)).

It is not the vision of social revolution, but of self-realisation which is at the same time the hour of extinction for the little human ego. The terror that Carpenter envisages in Towards Democracy is more akin to that of the Bhagawat Gita where, awestruck, "overcome with wonder", trembling, the soul of man saw the vision of God:

"Terrible with fangs, O mighty Master,
All the world is fear-struck as I am". (Chapter XI, p.119).¹

So to call Carpenter simply "an anarchist poet" is to make his poetry

1. All quotations of the Gita are from C. Isherwood's translation. Phoenix House, London. 6th Impression, 1960.

appear limited, and expose him to the ignorant reviewers who would condemn Towards Democracy as "inflammable rubbish", as The Oxford Magazine did in 1892 for instance.

Though Carpenter's interest in Indian philosophy and religion continued throughout his life, it did not, however, lead him to "The Theosophical Society". He thought Madame Blavatsky's esotericism "utter rot and confusion".¹ Mrs. Besant appeared to him "essentially naive" and he did not think she had² "the mystic quality of mind" which alone could make her understand the old Vedantic reality. He wrote once to a friend at Leeds that he had an "invincible objection to speak for the theosophists".³ The Theosophists, however, regarded Carpenter's work as contributory to their cause and always recommended his books to their members.⁴ Mrs. Besant herself once told Olive Schreiner that whenever she was depressed and doubtful about life she read Carpenter to revivify her spirits.⁵

1. My Days and Dreams, p.244.

2. Ibid., p.222.

3. Letter to Alf Mattison. MSS. Brotherton Library, Leeds.

4. It is evident in their review of From Adam's Peak to Elephanta in Lucifer, February 1893 (unsigned):

"The general reader will find much food for thought, to which he will probably pay more attention than if the same thing had been presented to him from the pen of an avowed member of the Theosophical Society. For 17 years the T.S. has been pleading for the same recognition of wisdom of the East for which our author now pleads and pleads so eloquently".

5. MSS letter from O. Schreiner to C. Carpenter, Carpenter's Collection 359-75.

iii.

Since he was a socialist, Carpenter's interest in India was not confined to philosophy alone; he took a great interest in the political situation of the sub-continent. His friend Harold Cox who went to India in 1885 as a professor of Mathematics in Aligarh, North India, sent him news about the political aspirations and discontents of the people. Cox was a radical when he went to India and he at once felt "the absolute unsatisfactoriness of the English in India". He saw a "sea of discontent seething beneath the smooth surface of English rule". Cox stayed in India only two years and within this period India began to pall on him, he became homesick, and he felt it most, he said in a letter,¹ when he was in the company of the English people in the station:

"They are the most deadly dull sort of creatures that the ingenuity of an Almighty God could create. He probably intends to send them² to Hell as a new torture for the people already there".

It is interesting that Cox later changed his views about this deadly dull set and glorified their heroism instead.² Coming home Cox swerved violently away from the old radicalism and spent the rest of his life in journalism and politics³ as a staunch opponent of

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1. Cox's letters from India, see MSS 251-258 Carpenter's Collection.
 2. For Cox's later life see obituary note, The Times, May 2nd, 1936. Contact with the Indian scene developed this reaction in many Liberal minds. For an interesting study of this subject, see The English Utilitarians and India (1959), Dr. Eric Stokes.
 3. Cox was editor of the Edinburgh Review from 1912-1929. He was a Liberal member of parliament for Preston 1906-1909 and Alderman of L.C.C. 1909-1912.

socialism at home and constitutional democracy in the colonies.

Carpenter valued greatly the political insight Cox showed in some of his letters from India. But what gives Cox's visit to India its chief place in the biography of Carpenter is that he sent to Carpenter a gift of two pairs of Kashmiri sandals, one of leather and one of straw. Cox knew Carpenter had a "fancy for sandals" and expected that from these examples he might "get some ideas" about how to make them. In an accompanying letter Cox wrote:

"For dry weather, it seems to me, that either form of sandals is superior to the English boot, but the latter has many advantages in wet weather. What is silly is that people in England, because they have found out the utility of shoes on various occasions, proceed to decree by stern custom, that shoes must always be worn, even when the occasion is most unfit (e.g. if I have been walking in the mud and go to call a lady, the naturally polite thing to do would be to leave my shoes at the door, as the orientals do. But our English lady would be more horrified at seeing my bare foot than seeing mud on her carpet). Except in winter I see no use for wearing any foot covering at all in the household; it is as absurd as to go about all day with gloves on".

Carpenter agreed eagerly with the sentiments expressed in the letter.

With these pairs of sandals as models, he made sandals at his home in Millthorpe for himself and friends; he even took out a patent, when the vogue for sandals began to spread. Shaw says this about Carpenter's sandals in Sixteen Life Sketches:

"We called him the Noble Savage. He induced me to wear sandals, which I discarded after my first long walk in them ended with bleeding feet". (p. 67).

Besides Cox there was another Cambridge man who was of considerable help to Carpenter in his effort to understand the social and political scene in India. He was Theodore Beck (1859-1899), the Principal of the Anglo-Oriental College, where Cox was teaching Mathematics. Beck's Essays on Indian Topics (1888) was a very helpful guide in cultural matters. Carpenter also fully approved of Beck's basic contention that all degrees of friendship between the Anglo-Indian and the native subjects were possible and that unless some communications were established between the English living in India and at least some section of the native people, the end of the British Empire in India was not far distant.¹ During his visit to India, Carpenter stayed with Beck and made several friends among the members of the native staff. Notable among them was Dr. Bhagawan Das, who achieved great eminence as a scholar and social reformer in India. So when Carpenter came to India in 1890, he was able to obtain an inside view of the country, and it was no wonder that he was able to write one of the most provocative books on India, namely From Adam's Peak to Elephanta (1892).

Carpenter sailed for Ceylon in October 1890, and stayed there with his old friend Arunachalam. In Cambridge his friend had become completely anglicised, "and like many Hindus who came to England",

1. Beck, Ibid, p.88.

Carpenter remembered, "did for a time quite out-Westernise us". But by 1890 experience had mellowed him much, and Carpenter found him undergoing "a reaction in favour of the religious tradition of his own people". This helped Carpenter considerably since he came to India "to renovate his faith, and unfold the frozen bud which civilisation and fog have nipped".¹ He wanted to find out for himself how much of the spiritual forces of its ancient past were still vital.

In a travel book, a reader expects detailed and lively pictures of people and places, and there Carpenter does not excel. The importance of the book is to be sought in other fields. Carpenter made wide contacts with Indians in the lower and middle classes, and all through his travels they acted as his guides. Also, he sat at the feet of a traditional Hindu scholar and studied at first hand the spiritual teachings of ancient India. There was nothing magical about this scholar, which made a change from the balderdash about Tibetan Mahatmas then being made current by the Theosophists. Thirdly, Carpenter made some acute observations about the political situation in India, and gave a sympathetic description of "A Night festival in a Hindu Temple" (Chapter vii), also a knowledgeable report on Indian classical music; all this made From Adam's Peak to Elephanta a pioneering work of great importance, the spirit and contents of

1. Letter to C.G. Oates, MSS 352, Carpenter's Collection.

which found their most artistic expression in E.M. Forster's Passage to India.

The chapters on his "visit to a Gnani" (chapters viii - xi), were later issued separately, when pirated editions began to appear in America - there was a great demand for theosophical literature in that country. The authorized American edition, published by Alice B. Stockham (1900), refers to the existence of several such editions. What is really striking about these chapters on Indian philosophic thought is their extreme lucidity. Also, his treatment of the subject did not suffer from uncritical adulation. He knew of the existence of "pious fraud" (p. 65), and the absolute incapacity of the Hindu mind for "any reasoned observation on religious matters" (p. 214). Further he was conscious that teaching in the East was entirely authoritative and traditional. The pupil was not expected to ask questions of a sceptical nature or expressive of doubt. The teacher did not go about to "prove" his thesis to the people or support it with arguments drawn from the plane of the pupil's intelligence; he simply handed on to him, with fixed order and timing, the doctrines which had been taught him and had since been verified by his own experience. In spite of these reservations Carpenter had sufficient sympathy to understand the salient features of Hindu thought.

There is an element of "philosophical anarchism" in Hindu religious thought, not only in its emphasis on the ultimate value

of individual experience in matters of doctrines, but in the custom of retirement to the forest known as vanaprastha.¹

Carpenter describes several cases of such retirement with great warmth of emotion. The case of Tillinathan Swami, who was a wealthy shipowner of high family, but who in the height of his career wound up all his affairs and went off stark naked into the wood, especially fascinated him, as is evident from the five pages he devoted to the description of Swami. To Carpenter he appeared as a kind of super-Whitman:

"It was common and apparently instinctive practice with him to speak of the great operations of Nature, the thunder, the wind, the shining of the sun, etc., in the first person - the identification or non-differentiation from, the universe (which is the most important of esoteric doctrines), being in his case complete. So also the democratic character of his teaching surpassed our Western records. He would take a pariah dog - the most scorned of creatures - and place it round his neck or even let it eat out of one plate with himself". (P. 145).

The gnani or wise man, at whose feet Carpenter sat, was himself a disciple of this strange personality.

Carpenter's encounter with his Indian spiritual teacher was a turning point in his career. So far only Whitman had stood out in his experience as a remarkable man, but now he knew another striking face:

1. The fourfold succession of the stages of life prescribed by Hinduism are those of student (brahmacari), householder (grihastha), forest recluse (vanaprestha) and the free super-social man (sannasin).

"In this face you discern command, control, gentleness, and the most absolute unity, serenity and peace;... selfhood in any but the highest sense has vanished - the self has, as it were, returned to its birthplace - leaving behind the most childlike, single-hearted, uncensorious, fearless character imaginable". 1

Carpenter conceded that Whitman's face was the more human of the two, but the face of serenity and inward unity now became the object of his adoration. In the two chapters "Consciousness without thought" and "Methods of attainment" he described what he heard from the gnani about the ways of attaining the unified state of mind.

Another aspect of Hindu religion and society received considerable attention from Carpenter. Being a passionate advocate of freedom from all sexual pruderies, he was deeply interested by the Hindu approach to sex. They were more outspoken than the English, he thought. The chapter "A Night festival in a Hindu Temple" is a detailed description of a ritual, rich in sex symbolism.

Carpenter's chapters on Indian religion and philosophy, written with dispassionate sympathy and intimate knowledge, spread an impress of authenticity over the whole book. Its political comments aroused all the more interest both in India and England. His treatment of Indian society as well as that of the Anglo-Indians was sympathetic and manifestly fair. He understood how, even to a well-meaning Westerner, India could be exasperating:

1. Days with Walt Whitman, p.51.

"The first glance at the streets of an Indian town makes one conscious of something antagonistic to humanity, in the broad sense by which it affords a common ground to the meeting of any two individuals. A sort of chill strikes one: a noli-me-tangere sentiment, which drives one to find some of the most grateful company among the outcasts". (pp.329-330).

Yet he pointed out that the people were friendly and in fact sensitive and clinging by nature. Instead of abandoning all attempts to bridge the gulf that separated the rulers and the ruled, it struck him "how much a few unpretending and friendly Englishmen might do to endear our country to their people". (p.322).

But he did not minimise the difficulty that lay in front of the administration. He was acquainted with several Civil Servants and knew them to be "very able, disinterested and hard-working men". But as the basic assumptions and values of the Englishman differed from those of the Indian his efforts to administer justly were bound to fail unless he tried to understand them. Carpenter realised that such efforts were very difficult for an English Civil Servant to undertake:

"A young man at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three comes out to join the official ranks. He finds two societies existing quite sundered from each other. He cannot belong to both... He must join his own people. As a mere lad, even though of strong character, it is impossible for him to withstand the tremendous pressure which the Anglos will bring to bear on him. When he is forty, he will have accommodated his views to his position. Thus the gulf remains as wide as ever". (p.273).

Carpenter felt that this social gulf was pregnant with foreboding. From his contact with the educated middle-class Indians, he realised that before long "the Congress movement was destined to become a great political movement". It seemed to him that once this movement gained momentum it would lead to one of the following results: if the British Government opposed with determination the activities of the Congress, there would be violence or civil war. If the British Government granted more representative power to the people then, "in the immense growth of political and constitutional life among them", British rule would be "drowned out", Carpenter recognised a third possibility, namely,

"the withdrawal of our government, owing to troubles and changes at home". (p. 359).

All three involved "the decadence of our political power in India".

He could not imagine-

"any other conclusion, situated as we are, unable really to inhabit the country and adapt ourselves to the climate, and with the growing breach between the two peoples". (Ibid.).

To hold such views in the 1890's, when the enthusiasm for the Empire was at its highest pitch, was highly provocative. Most English reviews were indignant and scoffing; the Anglo-Indian press was almost shrill.

The Pioneer¹ of Allahabad, one of the oldest Anglo-Indian newspapers, told Carpenter that the English people did not come to India to "Orientalise", or to study philosophy, "but to rule the country on sound and civilized principles". So it was nonsense to criticize the rule of the English people "by their backwardness or forwardness as metaphysical students". The reviewer pooh-poohed the importance given by Carpenter to the Indian National Congress; and the prophesied decay of British rule in India, he said:

"would be a huge phenomenon of human retrogression, which no one believing in progress (without saying anything of providence) ought to entertain as possibly entering into the scheme of things".

The Pioneer, however, admitted:

"We cannot wisely attempt to transform Indian people into harmony with our ideals, but we do say that the work of ruling India has been carried on these hundred years by the English people, on the whole, in a spirit of generous aspiration towards the elevation of the Indian people on the scale of civilisation".

The Athenaeum (January 7th, 1893), took almost a similar view. The reviewer quoted Professor Seely^e's very popular book, ^{the} Expansion of England (1883), to the effect that the British rule in India was one of "the greatest blessings ever conferred on mankind" and its

1. January 10th 1893. The Pioneer (Est. 1865), was one of the famous Anglo-Indian newspapers where Kipling worked as a sub-editor for a period.

overthrow would be a political crime. It took Carpenter to task "for being so light-hearted" about this sacred assignment. Then the reviewer drew a red herring across the track by pointing out that in India, among other things, Carpenter was heartened to know of the existence of a secret Nudist society¹ in Bombay "among our own folk" and added, "from this example the reader could judge what is the real value of the author's guidance through the Eastern labyrinth". The Saturday Review (24th December, 1892), remarked that Carpenter took the Congress as seriously as a delegate to it would, "by its own measure of value". Then it went on to accuse the author of effrontery for saying that "The Pagetts M.P. may be ponderously superficial - but the Kiplings merry are at least equally far from truth". The reviewer said "this is how Mr. Kipling is weighed in the balance of the casual tripper". Another paper, The National Observer, also mentioned Kipling. It said that the most amusing thing about the book was that Mr. Carpenter pretended to know more about India than Mr. Kipling.

It was indeed daring on the part of Carpenter to prophesy the fall of the Empire just after the meteoric rise of Kipling in

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1. Called "The Fellowship of the Naked Trust" (Est. 1889). Carpenter was made an honorary member of the Fellowship. The President of the Society was a District Session's Judge in Bombay. He requested Carpenter to omit his name, and the fact that he was an "official even", on the ground that "the Government of India being the meanest of mankind", are quite capable of calling upon every official in its service to disavow membership of any such society, should what you say attract any public attention which I hope it may". (MSS Letter, 3rd June, 1892, 386-40), Carpenter's Collection.

the early 'nineties - which had excited so many readers with a new enthusiasm for it. Kipling had many merits as a writer, which are being rediscovered by modern critics,¹ but he nowhere realised a basic fact - that the "white man's burden" was spiritually degrading for both the parties. The obsequious natives by their perverse prostrations were spreading the rot from their own hearts to those of the masters; and he did not feel it, whereas Carpenter felt it immediately:

"Walking through an Indian city is as bad as walking through a Devonshire parish, where the Parson and the Squire have done their deadly work, and the school children courtsey to you and the farm labourer pulls his forelock and calls you 'Sir' if you only ask the way. I have walked alone through a crowded city in this part of India (Allahabad) for two or three hours without seeing a single white face - one among scores of thousands - and the people officiously pushing each other out of the way to make room for me, the native police and soldiers saluting and shouldering arms as one went by, and if one chanced to look too straight at a man he covered his face with his hands and bowed low to the ground! ... It is a strange experience, impressing one no doubt with a sense of the power of the mother country ten thousand miles away... but impressing one also with a sinister sense of the gulf between man and man which that prestige has created. (Italics mine, p.273).

This kind of situation soon convinced an average Anglo-Indian that he belonged to a superior order of beings. Carpenter thought this self-deception was deliberately fostered by the rulers to overcome their own timidity:

1. See Appendix 4.

"I myself am inclined to think that timidity has a good deal to do with the policy of the English to-day. Conscious that they are not touching the people's hearts, they magnify the perils of their own position, and intrenching themselves, by so doing create the very danger they would avoid". (P. 276).

We find the same diagnosis in some of Conrad's stories of Africa, i.e. "The Outpost of Progress", though the people described are much rougher.

Carpenter returned from India after a stay of three months with somewhat mixed feelings. His idealism and his interest in mysticism remained intact, but he was shocked by the "dreadfully submissive spirit of the masses" and he wrote to Mrs. Salt, in one of his letters from India, that "a dash of Western materialism will be good for them".¹ But the visit to the sub-continent enabled him to break fresh grounds in his writing. His interest in politics had somewhat waned by now, giving place to wider social and philosophical issues. From 1894 he started a series of pamphlets on sexual subjects, pleading for a saner attitude. He took an increasing interest in a synthetic philosophy, combining the psychological understanding of the East and the material knowledge of the West.

Towards the close of the 'nineties, when the Boer war broke out and there was a great excitement over the Empire, Carpenter

1. MSS 354-4. Letter to Mrs. K. Salt. Carpenter's Collection
24 November, 1890.

and ethical philosopher, Dr. Stanton Coit, defending Carpenter's poem against the charges of "blasphemy" and wilful exaggeration, went as far as to claim that "since Edmund Burke, there has appeared in the literature of politics no simple magnificence of imagery equal to Carpenter's poem".¹ In this poem as well, as in a lecture, "Empire in India and Elsewhere" published in the Human Review for October 1900, Carpenter exhorted England to realise that she had a moral mission to the people in her Empire; only that could save her. England repentant would be the sublimest moral figure in the world. On this emphasis of Carpenter's poem, Dr. Coit commented:

"There are two Englands, just as there are two Israels - one worshipping Baal, the other serving God; the one numerous, the other a small, remnant. Edward Carpenter's England was God's England".

1. The Ethical World, July 28th, 1900.

iv.

In 1903 Carpenter was asked to deliver a memorial lecture at the William Morris Labour Church at Leek, Hanley. Appropriately he called the lecture The Art of Creation. In 1904 this lecture and several essays bearing on the same theme appeared in book form bearing the title of the lecture. The central theme of the book is that creation is not mechanical, arising out of extraneous matter, "not a fortuitous concourse of material atoms",¹ but a panorama of conscious life ever pressing forward toward expression and manifestation. The creation is an unfolding from within, it is an art; and for true knowledge about the art of creation one must examine the processes of the human mind.

So in a way this book records a further development of the enquiry which Carpenter started with his criticism of modern science in 1885.² He found fault with "modern science" for taking "a machine view" of things, for thinking that consciousness is just an incident of the human machine. He accused science of going away from the human centre into a mesh of shadowy intellectual generalities, where all human concern disappears. Not, he said, till we knew the "law of ourselves, shall we ever know the law of the emerald and the orange or of Nature generally".³

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1. The Art of Creation, pp.30-31.
 2. Carpenter wrote three essays on "Modern Science". They were all collected in Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure (1889).
 3. Civilisation... pp.89-90.

As an Idealist in philosophy Carpenter believed that only consciousness has true existence. His visit to India, and his talks there with the gṇani had convinced him that this was the age-long assumption of the Indian philosophers and religious thinkers. Also, mankind is moving towards the birth of a higher consciousness -

"Which is not the consciousness of sensation and which is not the consciousness of self - or at least which includes and entirely surpasses these - a consciousness in which the contrast between the ego and the external world, and the distinction between subject and object, fall away". 1

Accepting this growth of the mystical consciousness as the ultimate ideal for mankind, Carpenter proceeded to examine how far the belief was supported by scientific studies of ordinary consciousness. He believed that the assertions of the Eastern metaphysicians could be supplemented or justified by Western science and philosophy, and that the time had come for "a great synthesis of all human thought".²

No doubt Carpenter was ably qualified for this work, as he could bring to bear upon his gleanings from various sources the weight of his own mystical understanding. This was what G.L. Dickinson meant when he reviewed The Art of Creation in The Independent Review for January, 1905:

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1. From Adam's Peak..., p.155.
 2. The Art of Creation, p. vii.

"Mr. Carpenter has long been known as one of the few living writers who are original in the only sense in which originality counts for anything - the sense, that is, not so much of new ideas as of first-hand experience. And in none of his works is this quality more apparent than in this, his latest, ripest and most comprehensive. He gives us here a view of the world which is the outcome of long years of meditated life; a vision flooded with emotion and illumined by thought. It is a religion as well as a philosophy (italics are mine); a religion freed from dogma, and cast into form by a widely cultured intelligence, in touch with all the currents of modern life and thought.

Dickinson could see the beauty of the book without agreeing with Carpenter's assumption that the mind or consciousness is supreme . Incidentally, Carpenter however did not take the extreme Idealist position, that ~~the~~ that matter does not exist; he held that, without consciousness projected from the mind it has no meaning. His philosophical views were derived from Berkeley and the German Idealist philosophers before he discovered the thought of India. The Hindu concept of "Maya" which is popularly translated as "illusion" originally meant "the power to produce forms". The word is derived from "ma" which means "to form, to build": God created the universe by means of the two elements of his Being, matter and consciousness, the world was said to be the Maya of God.¹

Carpenter did not posit this creative or formative power in God, but saw it as immanent in Nature and a condition of life.

1. See Introduction to The Bhagavad Gita (1947), S. Radhakrishnan.

From his physiological studies Carpenter had learnt that "concentration of the mind can exercise great influence on the growth of the muscles".¹ If it were true, Carpenter argued, then the human race was arriving at "the conscious use of the formative power" and this was going to be an "important turning point in the history of the race":

"The Self is entering into relation with the Body. For, that the individual should conceive and know himself, not as a toy and chance-product of his own bodily heredity, but as identified and continuous with the Eternal Self of which his body is a manifestation, is indeed to begin a new life and to enter a hitherto undreamed world of possibilities". (p. 220).

This is how Carpenter tries to give to his metaphysical vision a plausible scientific explanation. The formative power of the self and the universal formative power are not operating at different levels but in unity.

Then Carpenter goes on to examine how this evolutionary consciousness is reflected by the course of human history. Three stages of development had already been introduced, by his earlier sociological studies. Now he tried to present the same theory of development in terms of the growth of consciousness:

1. The Art of Creation, p.219. The following quotations are from this book unless otherwise stated.

"Consciousness is existence; and the perfect consciousness is the perfect and true existence. That universal consciousness by and in which the subject knows itself absolutely united to the object is absolute existence, i.e. Being". (p. 68).

In the evolutionary scale, the first was the stage of "simple consciousness", in which the knower and the things known were still undifferentiated. This consciousness was predominant in man in primitive society. Most of the human race are at present in the second stage in the growth of consciousness, that of self-consciousness. In this stage -

"The subject and object of knowledge drift farther and farther apart. The self is left face to face with a dead and senseless world. Its own importance seems to increase out of all reason... Objects are soon looked upon as important only in so far as they minister to the self, and there sets in the stage when self-consciousness almost becomes a disease". (p. 58).

Physiologically, this period is marked by the "conflict of the cerebral portion of the brain with the Great Sympathetic system - which, without doubt, is the great organ of emotion". (p. 59). In short this is a period when the emotional or instinctual life is in conflict with the intellectual side of it, a period of split consciousness, or in Carpenter's word, of "the crack". In society this is the period of heartless individualism, laissez-faire economics and materialistic philosophy. But in the third stage of development this split will be overcome -

"by a sudden consciousness of unity. The object is suddenly seen, felt, to be one with the self". (p. 60).

This is a stage of harmony between the individual and society, or man and nature.

As Dickinson said, The Art of Creation envisaged both a religion and a philosophy. It satisfied all utopian longings about man and society. But Carpenter emphasized that this heightened consciousness, so far from being abstract and airy, was the result of the total physiological commitment of man. He believed that "the total physiology of man is, or should be, the nearest expression of divinity complete, and the replica or image of the physiology of the cosmos itself". It is apparent from this that he believed consciousness to be a function of human physiology, and not spiritual entity. The book does not always make the point clear, and to that extent it is unsatisfying to a modern reader. But the trend of Carpenter's thought had unmistakably pointed to that direction; this can be seen in the use of phrases such as "when consciousness deepens" in the following passage:

"When the consciousness deepens to that of the universal life, and to the point whence, as it were, the different races have radiated, then the figures of the gods grow dim and lose their outline, the rivalries and mutual recriminations of the various human ideals cease to have the old poignancy and interest; and their place is taken by a profound sense and intense realisation of unity and common life of all races and creatures; by a strange and novel capacity of understanding and entering into the habits of distant beings or peoples; and by a mysterious sense of power to "flow down" into these forms and embody therein a portion of the life

universal. And with all this comes naturally great changes in the institutions and political forms of peoples, and the spreading of the genuine Democracy and Socialism over the earth". (p.228).

Here Carpenter treats the sociological conclusions as a necessary result of the new heightened consciousness; thus, he saw the attainment of the third stage of consciousness as the necessary ground for a new religion and a new way of life.

Apart from this added sociological twist, the main philosophical position of Carpenter agreed with a general contemporary trend. Recent studies in electricity and embryology, perhaps also psychology, had changed the old dichotomy of matter and mind. More and more the concept of a reality that worked inwardly challenged the Darwinian theory of external and accidental variation. Samuel Butler had been battling with Darwin since 1878 with the publication of his Life and Habit. Butler pleaded for the Lamarckian notion of variation; that it takes place owing to the consciousness of need, and that the evolution occurs through the agency of acquired habits transmitted by the unconscious memory of the instincts. Towards the close of the century Nietzsche glorified the creative will:

"An inner creative will in the living organism which ultimately makes environment and natural conditions subservient and subject". 1

1. Quoted in Nietzsche: His Life and Work (1910), A.M. Ludovici p.69-70.

Carpenter had already called himself a Lamarckian in Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure (1889)¹ and cast his faith on a purposive unfolding of the universe. This trend of thought found its most able exponent in Henry Bergson, whose L'Evolution Creatrice appeared in 1906. In the first three decades of the twentieth century theory of creative evolution had great influence on British philosophy. Professor Alexander and Lloyd Morgan's theory of "emergent evolution", and Huxley and Haldane's "pantheistic vitalism" were based on the idea; so that Carpenter's The Art of Creation fell on sympathetic soil. Between 1904 and 1916 it had three editions.

The Art of Creation was a very ambitious book. Carpenter sought to establish a basis for consciousness harmonizing all conflicts in religion, politics and philosophy. By accepting a universal formative process in man, continually at work - "shaping and giving form not only to his body but largely to the world in which he lives" - he sought to establish man at the centre of creation. And by conceiving the "world of Nature as continuous with that of man" (p. 32) he looked forward to bridging the gulf of duality which was the common basis of Western thought; he asserted that there was "a vast unity underlying all". (p. 74). But by positing "creation as a process" and "not an almighty fiat" (p. 31), he ruled out the traditional substratum of such a unifying concept

1. See "Exfoliation": Lamarck versus Darwin p.129 ff.

in God. The unity lies in the process or the "exfoliation" of conscious life, ever straining towards expression. The universal self is only the recognition of the common nature of the innumerable selves that are in Nature; because of the consciousness of this common ground, they labour to express themselves by entering "into touch and communication with each other" (p. 32). Thus Carpenter conceived a metaphysical background to his social utopia.

As another way of attaining the third stage of consciousness, Carpenter offered his concept of love. Love, whether taken in its most ideal or its most sensuous signification, Carpenter said, is a form of the cosmic consciousness. He quoted with approval his younger friend, the Hegelian philosopher, McTaggart (1866-1925), on this point:

"It is by love only that we can freely enter into that harmony with others which alone constitutes our own reality and the reality of the universe".

Love, the passionate, all-absorbing, all-consuming love of one person for another, could be felt as summing up the whole universe, both McTaggart and Carpenter asserted. McTaggart¹ like Carpenter constructed on this basis a philosophy of ultimate peffection and harmony, though their political conclusions were poles apart.

1. McTaggart was a lecturer in the Moral Sciences at Trinity College, Cambridge, from 1897 till his death. For McTaggart's life and philosophy see J.M.E. McTaggart (1931), G.L. Dickinson.

A modern reader feels a resistance to The Art of Creation for its perfectionism. The idea of the universal heightened consciousness as the source of all future social and moral advance sounds rather lofty. But what makes Carpenter's book still interesting is the way he brought his knowledge of physiology, psychology and Eastern and Western philosophy to bear upon his vision of harmony.

"Throughout", to quote a remark from Henry Bryan Binns's review of the book, "it is an interesting example of the value of scientific training to the seer".¹ Two chapters of the book will be of especial interest to the modern reader, "The Gods as apparitions of the race life", and "The Gods in the physiological centres". They foreshadow Jung's theory of the collective unconscious and D.H. Lawrence's physiological theories in Fantasia of the Unconscious (1923).

Carpenter traced the idea of a race memory to Plato's theory of "recollection", but modernised it by making it physiological rather than purely intellectual:

"The idea though it may have intellectual structure on its outer side, is in its inner side essentially feeling". (p. 125).

The race-consciousness is inherited through our bodily organisations, and accessible to the mind only through the body. This leads

1. The British Friend, February 1905.

Carpenter to emphasize the sacredness of the human body. The total physiology of man is the nearest expression of God's creative process. So Gods may be conceived as powers that "dwell in some sense in the organic nuclei and plexuses of the body"; in fact, or at least Gods are "the centres and plexuses of the body", "the centres of command and service there". Anyone acquainted with Lawrence's psychological essays will recognise these familiar phrases.

As already said, The Art of Creation "envisaged both a religion and a philosophy". But Carpenter did not discuss religion; as such, in this book. Though he said that, with the deepening of consciousness to the universal life, the figures of the gods will grow dim, he did not set out here to think of a world religion based on the third stage of consciousness. This he did in Pagan and Christian Creeds (1920), his last major work. Carpenter had learnt from the study of comparative religion that "there has been in fact a world religion"; the task was to discover the positive content of this religion. And this he undertook in Pagan and Christian Creeds by making an extensive study of comparative religion and cultural anthropology.

The world religion, if it ever comes, will simply be an aspect of the "third stage of consciousness". The study of primitive religions had convinced him that the simple undifferentiated consciousness really existed in primitive society. The concept of sin or separateness arose in primitive society only with the growth of self-consciousness:

"Sin or separation. That is probably the etymology of the word - that which sunders (German sunde means sin, and sonder, separated; Dutch Zonde, sin; Latin sons - sont-is, guilty, etc.). The essence of sin is one's separation from the whole (the tribe or god) of which one is a part". 1

The third stage in the evolution of consciousness, of which there have been perpetual intimations in the lives of the mystics all over the world, will be the return of the first consciousness extended and deepened by the experience of the second. It will in fact be the homecoming of the spirit of man, Adam will be restored to Eden. It will not be a return to the state of nature, however, but something higher and nobler than that. In this stage man will be responsible for himself as a part of the whole. The present stage of decadence, where "there are hundreds of thousands of people dying of mental or bodily diseases - their nervous systems broken down by troubles connected with excessive self-consciousness - selfish fears and worries and restlessness" (p. 232), will be overcome. And the way to overcome this, Carpenter says, quoting from one of the Upanishads is that "the mind must be restrained in the heart till it comes to an end". It will end in the third stage of development, when the mental consciousness is replaced by a higher form of undifferentiated universal consciousness.

Carpenter, however, did not think that this world religion

1. Pagan and Christian Creeds p.142. The following quotations are from this book unless otherwise stated.

would be a synthetic religion, combining the rites and dogmas of all existing ones. He had seen how the hotch-potch of ritualism and rationalism concocted by the Positivists failed to hold its ground in mid-Victorian England because "the seed of life was not in it"¹. He had seen how the Theosophists had entrenched themselves gradually into isolation owing to their devotion to the esoteric mysteries of the Eastern religions. So it was clear to Carpenter that "even if the hour of exodus" had come for the Christian Church, it would not serve the purpose for "any other religious organizations to step into the gap". (p. 268).

In order to move toward a world religion, what we must first recognise, is that there is "profound solidarity of human thought and aspirations", from the dawn of civilisation down to the present day. Secondly, we must bring home to every one that the positive content of all religions is -

"the instinctive sense, whether conscious or unconscious,
of an inner reality and continuity with the world around".
(p. 57).

This is the stuff out of which religion is made. And it will be profoundly realised in the "third stage of consciousness", when there would be no need for man to "dwell in the land of superstition and formulae". A new morality will develop based on the recognition of common life in all. The sense of kinship with nature and the animal world will be restored:

1. Pagan and Christian Creeds, p.264.

"The sense of kinship with all the races of mankind will grow and become consolidated; the sense of the defilement and impurity of the human body will pass away; there will be no form of Nature, or of human life, or of the lesser creatures, which will be barred from the approach of man or from the intimate and penetrating invasion of his spirit". (p. 270).

Only on the basis of such a higher pantheism could Carpenter think of a World religion. He thought it would spread first among individuals and afterwards among large bodies over the world.

There is much^{of} direct interest in Pagan and Christian Creeds. Though Carpenter goes into great detail about the theories of the origin of religions and primitive rituals, the book is not a dull catalogue of information on the subject. The reviewer in The Athenaeum¹ rightly pointed out that the author had a "wholly commendable way in trying to enter poet-fashion, into the feelings of the primitive animist or totemist". This enabled Carpenter to revivify that "simple consciousness which has not yet lost its at-one-ness with nature". "This may not be science" the reviewer added, "but it helps". The English Review² pointed out another attraction of the book:

"Few men write English more beautifully than Edward Carpenter, whose limpid expression flows, as good manners spring from the heart, from the clarity of his mind".

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1. February 20th, 1920.
 2. April 2nd, 1920.

These two reviews bring out the most attractive qualities of the book. It was written so much from the heart that, though outwardly a study of world religion, it reads like a confession of faith.

C H A P T E R V I I

The Pioneer in Sexual Studies.

To realise true freedom, Carpenter said in Towards Democracy (1883), we must enter into ^{two} relationships: one is with the world or the universe; the other with our own body, that is we must accept our body and its instinctual needs as sacred:

"Sex still goes first and hands, eyes, mouth, brain follow; from the midst of belly and thighs radiate the knowledge of self, religion and immortality". (section xi).

How revolutionary was this statement in the context of the Victorian attitude to sex must be apparent to any one with any knowledge of nineteenth century social history. A recent historian¹ tells us that the Victorians saw sex not only as something sinful, but as something bestial. Sexual pruderies went so far that it almost became a crime, Carpenter said elsewhere,² to mention by name any portion of the human body "within the radius of about twenty inches from its centre"

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1. Sex in History (1953), G.R. Taylor, p.209.
 2. Pagan and Christian Creeds (1920), p.196.

To oppose this pathological reticence about sexual questions, Carpenter and other pioneers such as Havelock Ellis sought to introduce healthy discussion. Sexual issues, they said, could be ignored only at the peril of individual and social sanity. To Carpenter sex was sacred and to cover it with an impure hush was a sacrilege.

In this respect Carpenter was greatly indebted to Walt Whitman, whose robust celebration of the physical aspects of life and love had deeply stirred him. Whitman's poems taught Carpenter about a purity and healthfulness of sex, which had only been realised in the past, he felt, by the Greeks. His first letter to Whitman, in 1874, had said:

"Between the splendid dawn of Greek civilisation and the higher universal noon of Democracy, there is a strange horror of darkness on us". 1

Carpenter dedicated himself to work for this high ideal of Democracy which he believed could only be attained through a larger view of life and a saner attitude to sex. Sex is the centre of life and no social utopia can be realised without proper understanding of this importance.

So from 1894 Carpenter started publishing a series of pamphlets discussing various sexual issues that he considered important for a healthier social life. Against the Victorian norm of ruthless

1. Quoted earlier in full, see Chapter II.

the militant socialist propagandist, wrote to him on January 11th, 1894:

"It seems to me our duty is to bring about the industrial change first... It is not advisable to do anything or say anything that will hinder the accomplishment of the change... The time is not ripe for socialists as socialists to meddle with the sexual questions". 1

Carpenter knew the time would never come for such socialists to discuss vital issues of life and society if they thought socialism meant only "industrial change". Nor could he agree with a suggestion of Blatchford's that they should ignore sexual questions because:

"If a state of socialism must necessarily precede the change in the sexual relations, it follows that the sexual will not concern us personally, but only concern the next generation". 2

The sexual question did concern Carpenter personally. Besides it would have made nonsense of all Carpenter's social thinking if he had desisted from discussing this problem just because it did not concern him immediately. So Carpenter ventured alone.

In 1894 he published four pamphlets, namely Woman (And her place in society), Marriage in Free Society, Homogenic Love and Sex-Love and its place in free society. (This title was later changed to Sex-passion). All the pamphlets were published by The Labour Press Society of Manchester. In 1896 he brought out a book called

1. MSS 365-46 Carpenter's Collection. Letter from R. Blatchford.
2. Ibid.

Love's Coming of Age which included three of the above essays and a few more bearing on the subject of sexual relation.

His main contention in this book was that the sex relation would not improve unless sex was accepted as "pure and beautiful".¹ And this could never happen unless woman was made free to find her natural relation to man - "and to dispose of herself and of her sex perfectly freely, and not as a thrall must do" (p. 53); and unless "man: the ungrown" (p. 25), meaning the educated middle-class man, tried to develop a more mature and sincere attitude to sex than he had shown so far. He insisted that the present cast-iron division of all love relations only as orthodox and criminal must give way to a tolerant acceptance of its various manifestations. If one looked into oneself, Carpenter argued, one realised in what numerous ways different human relations express themselves. There are inner laws which govern such relations, and they must be allowed to come to the surface, to take the lead, since they alone are powers which can create and uphold a rational society. At present sex-relations in general are the thralls of two slaveries, the slavery to physical passion and the slavery to legal restrictions. But this state of affairs will disappear as soon as love become "sufficient of a reality to hold the sex-passion as its powerful yet willing servant". (p. 148).

The sex-passion cannot be ignored. But whereas the glory

1. See pp.9, 139.

of this passion pervades and suffuses all nature, in man it meets opposition from various forces. In man the sexual object is a person and as such the moral law is involved. The human sex-passion cannot be gratified without taking note of its object - the law of equality and other social codes intervene. For these reasons fierce conflicts arise between man's instinctual and moral self. But he is the master of life, "who, accepting the grosser desires as they come to his body and not refusing them, knows how to transmute them at will into the most rare and fragrant flowers of human emotions". (p.8). There is fulfilment to be derived from the satisfaction as well as ^{the} non-satisfaction of sex-passion. In fact it is not until the instinct of sex "is checked and brought into conflict with other parts of his being that the whole nature of man, sexual and moral, rises into consciousness and reveals its God-like quality". (p. 6).

This being so, sex-passion is not something to be dreaded; knowledge about its nature and expression should be imparted to all. This was certainly the most revolutionary plea in Carpenter's book. He argued that a child at puberty "was eminently capable of the most sensitive and sincere appreciation of what sex means", if such knowledge is imparted to him without embarrassment and without "any shock or disturbance to his sense of shame". And as the special sexual needs and desires develop within the young people they should be instructed on "the need of self-control" and the importance of "affections in all relations with others". Finally, with the maturity of their

moral selves, they should be taught not the extinguishment of desire, but the attainment of the real kernel of it, "the supremacy of the pure human relations," the dedication of one to the well-being of another (pp.9-10).

The attainment of "pure human relations" -- that was Carpenter's ideal in sex and marriage. And he held this also as the ultimate ideal for which all socio-political movements should strive. So he considered the socialist movement and the movement for sexual freedom as roads to the same goal. For this very reason Carpenter took a great interest in the female emancipation movement of the age. Besides, Carpenter prided himself on being one who had both male and female temperaments in his character; he could understand the nature and aspirations of women better than his fellows. So in his chapters on Women in Love's Coming of Age he took upon himself the duty of interpreting them to the masculine world.

Women, Carpenter said, were nearer to the great "unconscious and cosmic processes of nature". Because of this, women served the higher purposes of evolution and that was why their freedom was essential. Sex in man is an unorganized passion; an individual need or impetus, but in woman it may properly be termed a constructive instinct. Woman is more at unity with herself. She does not experience the divorce between the sentiment of love and the physical passion, which is so common with man. So once she is made free -- free to work out the problems of her sex-relations as may seem best

to her, unhampered by legal, conventional and economic considerations - she will use her freedom, on the whole, rationally. And only this could make "a nobler womanhood" and "a saner maternity" possible.

But unfortunately the modern woman has lapsed from many of her natural powers. Man and his society have corrupted her. The real woman was lost in a travesty of womanhood, in its various manifestations as the "lady", "a feminine doll", "the household drudge" and the prostitute. Carpenter was most severe on the lady class:

"The lady of bourgeoisdom, literally, too literally crucified 'twixt a smile and a whimper, prostituted to a life which in her heart she hates - its petty ideals, its narrow horizon and its petty honours - is indeed a pityful sight". (p. 44).

Carpenter knew this class so intimately that he developed a syndrome of love, pity, disgust and contempt at the very thought of them.

That is why perhaps one of the best "episodes" of Towards Democracy is the portrait of a lady:

"In her tall-windowed sitting room - alone -

(The setting sun casts long shafts of light across the path and beneath the trees where knee-deep in grass a milkwhite calf is browsing),

In her tall windowed sitting room, with its antique pier-glasses and profuse handsome ornaments - alone -
The old dowager sits.

Her silver-grey hair lies smooth under a lace cap;
lace and silk are her dress, her thin fingers are well
stocked with rings.

Lonely is the great house; her old life and the voices
of children have long passed way. She goes to the window
to pass the time and through the glass looks out
upon the still landscape; after a while she returns
and rings a bell - a tall young footman appears.

But in a moment what she requires is there, and she is alone again - everything is done for her.

Into her chair once more she resigns herself, to knit an antimacassar". (Section xlix).

In man's world she is a prisoner, although every man would rise to kiss her hand. Man has corrupted woman by making her fit into the patterns of his fancy. This has created the "finnikin doll" of the commercial civilisation. Borrowing a phrase from Havelock Ellis, he described her as a "cross between an angel and an idiot". She adorns herself to gratify man's taste. She is "clever and crafty". This is why women distrust each other: "certainly one of the rarest of God's creatures is a truly undesigning female". But dowered with intellect, such as might justify it in being designing, Carpenter argued, "she can become one of the most admirable and beautiful" (p. 50).

Carpenter's essays on women and on sex in general seem to have irritated many of the so-called New Women, though many admired them. The suffragettes, on the whole, were suspicious of Carpenter's work. His friend, C.G. Oates¹ once wrote that the ladies he knew were "either profoundly indignant or highly sarcastic". About Carpenter's essay, Laurence Housman tells us² that in those days the women's movements were morbidly conscious for the preservation of their "respectability".

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1. MSS 352 Letters from C.G. Oates. Carpenter's Collection.
 2. See In Appreciation: Edward Carpenter, p. 109.

For the movement to become identified with some of Carpenter's opinions on sex relations, and especially on homosexuality, or even to be tolerant of them, would at that time have been dangerous. Bertrand Russell, then a young man of twenty-one, had an occasion to stay in the same house with Carpenter and Mrs. Fawcett, the suffragette leader when they were attending a conference on votes for women at Edinburgh. Lord Russell gives the following information in a letter to me:

"Some of us were invited to say with Bartholomew, the inventor of Batholomew 1/2 inch maps... Mrs. Fawcett refused to speak to Edward Carpenter, because he advocated a human attitude to homosexuality, which caused inconvenience to everybody else." (See Appendix 2).

On the other hand, Mrs. Havelock Ellis went as far as to compare Love's Coming of Age, for its revolutionary effect on society, with Marx's Capital.¹

Carpenter's essay on "Marriage" disappointed the rationalist free-thinkers and the champions of free-love. Their organs, ² The Adult and The Free Review, pointed out that Carpenter's notions of "self-sacrifice" and "dedication to the well-being of another", echoed old and discredited ideas. They found fault with Carpenter's insistence on the monogamic ideal, "the desirability of faithfulness -

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1. The New Horizon in Love and Life (1921), p.1.
 2. February, 1897; October, 1896, respectively.

even life-long in some cases, of a pair to one another". Among this criticism from the "free-lovers" Carpenter was touched in a very sensitive point by a remark of Mrs. Salt, in a letter: that there was "a clergyman's vein" in some of Carpenter's arguments. In a long letter Carpenter replied that he was aware that nothing but complete freedom in matters of love would be really satisfying, but he was not sure that human beings had yet attained sufficient maturity to be entitled to such freedom. He had to appear "conciliating" on this issue because he could not offer any alternative that would work:

"The more one abuses the philistine the more one is bound to show him a 'better way' - and the truth is no definite changes could be proposed which did not bring some evil with them".¹

This realistic approach was one of the attractions of Carpenter's pioneering essays on this subject.

On the whole, Loves Coming of Age received a generous welcome from the press. There was hardly any book in English at that time dealing with sexual questions in such a straightforward way, touching its educational, sociological and human implications, in simple language. Though some reviews doubted whether such subjects should be treated so openly, none could call the essays prurient.

1. MSS 354-31, Carpenter's Collection.

The Academy¹ said that Carpenter was "transparently in earnest" and that he handled his subject "with a deep appreciation of its importance". Love's Coming of Age turned out to be one of Carpenter's most popular books. It had thirteen English editions, seven American ones and was translated into French, German, Italian and Swedish between 1896 and 1930. In Italy where Carpenter had a large following, Love's Coming of Age induced many young writers before the First World War to form an organization called the "Union of young men" for the discussion of sexual problems from moral and religious points of view.²

ii.

A pamphlet of 1894 which Carpenter did not include in the first edition of Love's Coming of Age (1896) was called Homogenic Love. It was issued for "private circulation" though the two thousand copies of the first edition must have reached a wide audience. Carpenter thought "homosexual" was a bastard word, half Greek and half English, whereas "homogenic" was derived from two Greek roots, "homo", same and "genos", sex. One is inclined to think, however, that besides

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1. June 1896.
 2. See Guido Ferrando's contribution in Edward Carpenter: In Appreciation, p.67.

this philological reason for the choice of the word there was a psychological one. It helped him to lift the topic from its immediate grosser associations in common imagination.

Carpenter's intention was to show that in essence homosexual love was as honourable and healthy as any other expressions of love obtaining in society. But in a material, utilitarian age, it was natural that man could not understand any relation which was held together "by any but the most sheerly material means". They were incapable of understanding the deep inner feeling which was the basis of comrade-love and tended to condemn it as sexual activity of the crudest kind.

Gordon Rattray Taylor in his interesting study Sex in History (1953) puts forward a thesis that throughout human history two fundamental attitudes to sex are competing with each other for supremacy. He divides human societies into patrists and matrists. The first group arise from the Oedipal situation, where the child tends to identify with his father; and the second where the child identifies with the mother. The attitude of the first group is authoritarian, and exaggeratedly masculine; that of the second group permissive and prone towards femininity. This helps to show why attitudes to homosexuality vary among different races and in different periods of history. According to Taylor the nineteenth century was an aggressively patrist age, but towards the close of the century

a wave of Matrist reaction had set in; he thus explains, on a sociological ground, why such men as Edward Carpenter, Havelock Ellis and J.A. Symonds found large support for their crusade against restrictive attitudes to sex.

At the same time there was considerable external provocation to rouse the missionary zeal of these men. Owing mainly to the sensational investigations of the editor of The Pall Mall Gazette, W.T. Stead, into the traffic in adolescent girls, The Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed in 1885, to make further provision for the protection of females. But when the Bill was going through Parliament the Radical member for Northampton, Henry Labouchère, moved the insertion of a new clause dealing with homosexual offences which was adopted without a discussion. Perhaps it was so easily accepted because the prosecution of the editor of The North London Press for libel on printing a story that male brothels existed in London and had been patronised by leading aristocrats, gave scandalous publicity to the whole thing. The New Amendment unobtrusively altered the existing laws regarding homosexual offences. Sodomy and Buggery still continued to be penalized under the Offences Against the Person Act of 1861 (i.e. ten years' penal servitude, before 1861 the penalty was death), but all other homosexual offences came under the new Act. The Labouchère Amendment, as it came to be popularly known, made offences of this kind, "or any act of gross indecency with another male person", even when committed in private, punishable by two years'

imprisonment, with or without hard labour. By contemporary European standards the penalty against homosexual offences in England thus stood out as the most stringent. The previous harsh laws against Sodomy ^{are?} is understandable in the Christian world as the prejudice against it happened to be mixed up with heresy. But by making punishable "gross indecency" committed in private the new Act opened a wider area for prosecution and made it a happy hunting-ground for blackmailers. The recent biographer of J.A. Symonds tells us¹ that the changing of this law regarding homosexuality had been of intense concern to him since 1835. To Symonds, Carpenter and Havelock Ellis the Act was a personal challenge. Both Symonds and Carpenter were homosexuals in temperament, and even Ellis was "not without a germ of perversion"² himself.

Whether it was owing to the psycho-sociological situation as described by Taylor in Sex in History or to the mere fact of the importance given to the Bible³ in Evangelical England, homosexuality was held in religious horror in the nineteenth century. Even friendship among men was not always held above suspicion. Tennyson's In Memoriam (1850) was censured by The Times⁴ for expressing "amatory tenderness... to a man, even though he be dead". The reviewer objected to a "Cantab" being called "a rose in any

Phyllis

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1. See J.A. Symonds Mrs. Grosskurth, p.282.(1965).
 2. Havelock Ellis; A Biography (1959), A. Calder-Marshall, p.155.
 3. There are six places in the Bible where such practices are severely condemned. See for a scholarly discussion of the subject Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition (1955), The Rev. Dr. D.S. Bailey.
 4. November 28th, 1851.

circumstances". This was typical of the mid-Victorian sentiment when Carpenter was at school. All expressions of tenderness in friendly relations were considered effeminate. Masculinity was flaunted as an ideal for all men. Perhaps it was a necessary concomitant of the Empire building adventure, but it spread to all realms of life and literature. Alfred Austin even applied it to literary criticism. In his The Poetry of the Period (1870), Austin dismissed Tennyson and Swinburne as producing literature only fit for the reading of girls and children. It must be pointed out, however, that Swinburne himself used this argument when he criticized the predominance of the Idylls in contemporary poetry. He said in Notes on Poems and Reviews (1866):

"Its gentle and maidenly lips are somewhat narrow for the stream and somewhat cold for the fire of song. It is very fit for the sole diet of girls; not very fit for the sole sustenance of men".

(Works, vol. 6, p.372).

Austin applied Swinburne's own criterion to condemn his poetry as effeminate. Austin found Browning "a neutral": "A studious writer is neither the complement nor the antithesis of a feminine one". It seems that in the 'seventies masculinity became a recognised measure of excellence for poetry. The Quarterly Review (vol. 132, 1872), for instance, welcomed Swinburne's Songs Before Sunrise (1871) for its "manly tone", but deplored the poet's "effeminate taste" in comparing Italy to a flower. One of Buchanan's charges against Rossetti's beautiful poem "Nuptial Sleep"

(see, "The Fleshly School of Poetry", 1871), was that its sensuousness was "unmanly". E. Wingfield-Stratford says in The Victorian Sunset (1932), that the 'seventies were pre-eminently the decade of beards... spirit of manliness... a moustachless kiss - an egg without salt". (p. 78). The importance of masculinity was preached in the Public Schools. "The Muscular Christianity Movement" which flourished both in Oxford and Cambridge in the 'sixties and 'seventies was but a manifestation of the spirit of the time.

This mid-Victorian cult of masculinity gave a natural stimulus to the later aesthetic reaction, for which the writings of Pater and Symonds were largely responsible. One "Muscular Christian poet" (the Rev. E.C. Lefroy) was right in spotting his enemies, when he wrote in 1877 against "some Oxford teachers" who wanted to bring about a "hellenic revival".¹ He meant Pater, Symonds and Arnold. In "Pater-paganism" and "Symonds-sophistry" he saw sinister forebodings. The new interest in romantic male friendship certainly

1. It must be said, however, in fairness to E.C. Lefroy (1855-1891) that he was no enemy of aestheticism, as such. In an essay in Undergraduate Oxford (1878), he wrote that the "bone and sinew of manliness need suffer nought" from aestheticism: "the hardest wood is that takes the highest polish". Lefroy thought that muscular christianity could reconcile the best that was in "hebraism" with the best of "hellenism". But then he was an exception among the Muscular Christians as Symonds said in his essay on Lefroy's poetry in The Key of the Blue (1893). Symonds paid high compliments to the artistic power of Lefroy's Echoes from Theocritus and other sonnets. Most of these sonnets are about the charm and beauty of athletic young men. Lefroy was a graduate (1871) of Keble College, Oxford. His essay on Muscular Christianity was published by Slatter and Rose in 1877.

owes much to the writings of Pater and Symonds. Carpenter followed their trail eagerly in Narcissus and Other Poems (1873), though he was temperamentally opposed to their aestheticism. What distinguished Carpenter's notion of friendship from others was his emphasis on tenderness rather than on beauty and romance. "Tender" seems to be the key word in most of Carpenter's writings on male friendship:

"The love of man for each other, so tender, so heroic, constant".

was the burden of many of his poems on this subject.

One is inclined to believe that, as such tenderness was considered so alien to the masculine mind in Carpenter's time, he was eager to believe that those men who expressed such emotions were different in kind and belonged to a third sex. Carpenter first presented this idea in an article called "An Unknown People" in The Reformer for July 1897, which was later published as Intermediate Sex in 1908. And the mystique of evolution, which held such sway over all in nineteenth century, made it quite plausible for Carpenter to connect this supposed variation of sex to the growth of a higher type of humanity. Whether convincing or not, this helped Carpenter to counter one of the major arguments against homosexuality, namely, that it is a symptom of hereditary degeneration.

The word degeneration carries a moral overtone, and one has to guard against it. But purely as a physical fact, whether as a cause or an effect, some element of nervous debility is not uncommon in homosexuals. Carpenter's friend Oates surely was not free from it, and Carpenter knew this. Besides, as Freud has pointed out,¹ hereditary degeneration may spread in such a way, in a family, that when it expresses itself as a symptom of positive perversion in a man, owing to repressive habits, the members of the opposite sex may show negative symptoms of it in hysteria. We cannot deny that Carpenter's family showed some signs of nervous degeneration. Three of his sisters suffered from chronic illness: one was a confirmed hysteric and often threatened to commit suicide: the third one did commit suicide, though she was considered quite normal, and indeed brilliant. A cousin of Carpenter reflects² that probably the inner history of this sister bore some resemblance to that of Edward, but unlike him she failed to resolve her conflict, and in the end it broke her down.

1. Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality Complete Works, vol. 7 (1953). P. 236.
2. See Ed. Carpenter: In Appreciation, "From the Family Point of View," by Ida G. Hyett, p.117; also see MSS Letter from Carpenter to Alf Mattisen, June 2nd 1894, The Brotherton Library, Leeds: "I have three sisters on the rampage here - well - poor things, they are rather seedy and ill - one very much so - and have come to a neighbouring farm for change of air. Dear Alf - how do you get on? (Mattisen was out of employment at that time), do you get hopeless and miserable - it is enough to make any one so. How curious life is! There is one of my sisters who you would think had everything she wanted, and yet she is so depressed that she sometimes threatens to put an end to herself".

Another Freudian point regarding "inversion" has some bearing on Carpenter's life. According to Freud, inverts in early childhood pass through a period of intense but short-lived fixation on a woman (usually the mother), and after this childhood experience they tend to regard themselves as women. Carpenter often said that he had been very close to his mother, and he insisted that the Uranian love combined both mother-love and sex-love:

"Lord of the love which rules this changing world,
 Passing all partial love, this one complete -
 The mother love and sex-emotion blended - "
 ("O Child of Uranus", Towards Democracy).
 Pt. IV.

According to Freud inverts look "for a young man who resembles themselves and whom they may love as their mothers loved them".¹ In the case of Carpenter, however, this fixation could have been with one of his elder sisters, Lizzy Carpenter (later Lady Daubney),² to whom he was most attached - he even addressed poems to her. Narcissus... (1873) was dedicated to "L.C." with the following verse:

"This I give thee: to betoken
 Love, whereby thy life has bound me.
 If I speak, the spell is broken:
 Silent love shall still surround thee."

Again, in another poem called "To L.C." he writes:

1. Three Essays... Works, vol. 7, p.145.
2. Married to Sir Henry Charles Burnston Daubney in 1878 when she was forty and Sir Henry sixty-eight. It was his third marriage.

"Ah, when I think of thee, and how my life
 Is set apart from thine that is so pure,
 So much to be desired, on my soul's strife
 There comes a calm; for then I am most sure
 God is, in whom our sundered days draw nigh,
 -- Else were't not good to live or gain to die".

Very likely, Carpenter thought these poems no more than a conventional thanks from a brother. But the psychological roots of a "fixation" are unmistakable.

Freud's theory could thus partly explain the consistent claim of Carpenter to be a woman at heart. Elsewhere Freud considered such delusion as a symptom of the paranoiac mind,¹ which in its turn is often an outcome of suppressed homosexuality. Carpenter says in his autobiography that in school he was conscious of his difference from the normal athletic child and that he passionately longed for the company of the handsome elder boys. But he was repressive and pure-minded and craved for the things of the heart.

Carpenter also said that he never felt any romantic longing for women in his life. But he had many women friends and admirers and some of them carried on a mild flirtation most of the time. Mrs. Salt was one of them, and kept insisting that Carpenter belonged to her "by some elemental law". Carpenter once wrote to George Hukin that he was usually bored by Mrs. Salt's outpourings.

1. "The case of Schreber", Works, vol. 11. Quoted by W.H.B. Stoddart in The New Psychiatry (1915), p.62; a book which Carpenter read and underlined. See copy in "Carpenter Library" in Sheffield (Local History).

However, there was one woman who did exercise considerable emotional and intellectual influence on Carpenter's life.

She was Mrs. Jane Olivia Daubeney, twenty-six years senior to him by age. Psychoanalytically this relation is not without interest for us. Elsewhere Carpenter himself has remarked that everyone knows cases of young men "who only love women of really advanced age, beyond the limit of child-birth".¹

He thought he understood such passion. And after reading Tchaikovsky's Life and Letters (1906) written by the musician's nephew, he felt sympathy for Tchaikovsky's relation with the elderly widow Frau Von Meck. He wrote to Mrs. Salt;

"The relation is strange and tragic in the close. She ill and nervous and he taking offence! His character in many ways flighty and weak - but I feel as I say, a great sympathy with him". (MSS 354-92, Carpenter's Collection).

It is after reading this book that Carpenter wrote his sketch "Francesca" which gives a portrait of Mrs. Daubeney. He also wrote another essay called "The Drawing-Room Table in Literature" because he was exasperated "to have all the real facts of Tchaikovsky's life muddled out of sight in this way" by his biographer.²

1. The Drama of Love and Death (1912), p.58.
2. In this biography the emotional side of Frau^{von} Meck's relation with the musician was suppressed. For the full story see Laurence Elizabeth Hanson's recent biography Tchaikovsky: A New Study of the Man and his Music (1965). Frau Von Meck was nine years older than the musician, and on her part she made it quite clear that she was desperately in love with Tchaikovsky, but the latter wanted to keep the relation at a spiritual level and even refused to meet her personally though Frau Meck managed to appear face to face several times.

Psychoanalytical studies¹ tell us that many homosexuals contract successful partnerships with older women who need an outlet for their motherliness and are prepared to accept a platonic relationship. In Carpenter's anxiety to prove that he was a congenital homosexual, he was inclined later to play down the emotional side of his relationship with Mrs. Daubeney. Yet it was very likely that, if Mrs. Daubeney had not been the physical wreck she was, their relationship would have been more intense. Many of her letters had all the emotional undertones of such a friendship. Once she sent Carpenter the following poem with a note:

"Alas! how easily things go wrong!
A sigh too much, or a kiss too long
And then comes a mist and a weeping game
And life is never the same again.

Alas! how hardly things go right!
'Tis hard to watch of a summer night
Soon the sigh will come and the kiss will stay,
And the summer night is the winter's day.

I am half inclined to put it in the fire but something in it I should not like to die (figuratively) without saying and I want them answered!..Where are you? I have had a pleasant afternoon in that big drawing-room of yours with Lizzy and Emmie. Lizzie says she did not see half enough of you". 2

The poem was not her own but by George Macdonald - a "miniature

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1. See Homosexuality, Dr. D.J. West (Pelican), p.171.
 2. MSS 350-7 "Letters from Olivia," Carpenter's Collection.

masterpiece of the century",¹ Saintsbury called it. She may have felt the verses expressed her own situation in a marriage followed by separation; but why she should send them to Carpenter and "want them answered"? In one of her last letters (Mrs. Daubeney died in 1886), she referred again to the mistakes:

"My Dear Teddie,
I should like to meet you in another world.
I can't say that for everyone! a world remember
where there are no mistakes".

We have no record of Carpenter's letters to Mrs. Daubeney, to find out exactly what emotional attitude Carpenter adopted towards her. In My Days and Dreams he remarks that with the exception of his mother and Mrs. Daubeney he could not "remember a single case in which a woman came" to him as "a motive-force or inspiration". That Carpenter should class Mrs. Daubeney with his mother, of course, furthers the Freudian suggestion that the homosexuals who suffer from a "fixation" are driven by the stress of their emotional situation to associate all genuine affection as an expression of motherly love.

Whatever we think of this "Oedipal" situation of Carpenter's emotional life, it is clear that autosuggestion played a great part in confirming him in his homosexuality; also Whitman's influence buttressed it. The craving for friendship

1. See "Lesser Poets in the Middle and Later 19th Century", in The Cambridge History of English Literature Vol. XIII.

which he felt so intensely became a homosexual cult after he had absorbed Whitman's doctrine of comrade-love. Though Whitman himself denied vehemently "such morbid constructions on the Leaves,"¹ neither Symonds nor Carpenter was prepared to accept the poet's statement on its face value, as psychologically it meant so much to them. Symonds was unhappy when he realised that he was merely a minor poet and that he had no "chance in the long run against poets of superior delicacy of expression and energy of imagination", but he burst out into vigorous literary activity under Whitman's influence realising his mission; "the prophecy of love of comrades as a future institution of democracy"². Similarly Carpenter learnt from Whitman his "yea saying" prophetic voice, accepting all and rejecting nothing. A poem which Whitman included in the 1860 edition of The Leaves of Grass but omitted from later editions, "thinking it to be very personal",³ Carpenter thought, gave him the courage he needed:

"Hours continuing long, sore and heavy-hearted,
Hours of the dusk, when I withdraw to a lonesome and
unfrequented
Spot, seating myself, leaning my face in my hands;

.

Hours discouraged, distracted - for the one I cannot
content myself without...
Sullen and suffering hours! (I am ashamed - but it is
useless - I am what I am);

.....

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1. Quoted in Sexual Inversion (vol. I), Ellis and Symonds, p.27. (Whitman's letter to J.A. Symonds).
 2. Letters and Papers of J.A. Symonds (Ed. H. Brown, 1923), p.11.
 3. Some Friends of Walt Whitman (A study in Sex-psychology) by E. Carpenter (1912), p.9-10.

Hours of my torment - I wonder if other men
 have the like, out of the like feelings?
 Is there even one like me - distracted - his friend,
 his lover, lost to him?

Carpenter found here the answer to his problem.

Whitman had given him the courage to accept, "I am what I am". To help develop oneself according to one's own nature was to exercise true freedom; that became his new philosophy. So to be truly free he had to throw away the restrictive yoke of the Church and take himself out of the "stagnant" life of the university (1874). Whitman had also given him the nobler cult of brotherhood and comradeship which would transmute his instinct for homosexual affection into something socially useful. The urge of his own instincts drove him towards the ideal of democracy, because as Whitman said:

"Democracy infers such loving comradeship... without which it will be incomplete, in vain, and incapable of perpetuating itself".¹

In the 'seventies, when the spread of democratic ideal (Republicanism) was the most radical political inspiration, this connection which Whitman made between the democratic ideal and comrade-love, threw an avant-garde glamour on homosexuality itself.

1. Democratic Vistas, p68.

iii.

In Cambridge, Carpenter had a large number of friends, but one especially seemed to have satisfied some of his passionate cravings. It was his friendship with Edward Anthony Beck, a Classical scholar, later Master of Trinity Hall. Beck was three years junior to Carpenter, but in 1871, when he was elected to a Fellowship in the Hall, they became intimate friends. Among Carpenter's unpublished poems there are two written to Beck. One of the poems has a Greek inscription to the effect, "Behold the stars my star". Carpenter admits in his autobiography that "there was a touch of romance"¹ in their friendship. Being a Classical scholar Beck could reel off names in his letters, calling Carpenter his Ganymede, his Ioláus and such like. But Beck was far from being a homosexual in temperament, and Carpenter's sentiments seemed to have tired him soon. He began to exhibit a good deal of cynicism.

He wrote from his home at Castle Rising, Norfolk, during the long vacation of 1871:

"You have no idea how practical I am. Everybody acknowledges it. I do nothing but drink beer... I have utterly abjured all poetry, both for reading and writing. I looked at the rising moon unmoved - I wad my mental ears against all manner of sentiments. I will not allow myself to cry or ache inwardly at any sorrow or any injustice: I systematically train myself into a consistent brutality. I am utterly

1. My Days and Dreams, p.62.

changed; it is all the reaction from you".¹

In spite of Carpenter's great devotion to Beck their difference began to widen. Even on the subject of Whitman they disagreed. When Carpenter told Beck that he had introduced Whitman's poems to his sister, Beck replied that he thought she was too gentle for Whitman:

"Even brutal I can only stand him in healthy athletic moods, though I know he is always swell, which conviction, by the way, is one of many that I never care to argue about."

Beck could not understand why Carpenter should keep moaning about his unhappiness:

"You people with nerves are much to be pitied and envied; because they must be tried so fearfully and because you can excuse yourself so much".²

A breach between the two men was inevitable; but their complementary natures held them together for some time. In December 1874, Beck got married and the friends parted finally. Carpenter wrote to Charles Oates of Leeds on the wedding day:

"This morning was Beck's wedding day. I have just come back - a sadder and wiser man. Indeed I feel older than Fate itself. The bride looked very happy... How seldom marriage can bring true union, how rare a thing that is. These two in

1. MSS 386-8, Carpenter's Collection. E.A. Beck (1848-1916) was an Exhibitioner of Trinity Hall. He won the Chancellor's medal for English poetry in '68; obtained First class in Classics in '70 and was elected a Fellow in '71. He was the Master of Trinity Hall from 1902 till his death and was Vice-Chancellor for 1904-1905. Carpenter referred to him

some parts of themselves are ages apart and no wall of adamant could sunder them more severely than they are and must ever be sundered." 1

This remained Carpenter's confirmed conviction; that the true aim of love was union and that marriage, more often than not, was contracted for worldly convenience and the reproduction of the species.

Between 1871 and 1873, Carpenter visited Italy several times and discovered that he was greatly moved by the beauty and grandeur of Greek sculpture. Since then he had taken conscious pleasure in admiring naked human figures. He found such pleasure in the sight of the athletic forms on the bank of the Cam, and when he came to live in Sheffield he found the "foot-racing" tracks a pleasurable resort. It was an old sport among the working people of Sheffield, perhaps coming down from ancient time. The races used to be run by young men of fine figures as nearly as possible naked. A pair of light shoes and an almost invisible strip between the legs constituted the only covering. Carpenter used to stroll down alone to the race course in summer afternoons to watch as he says, "these fine free figures and their proud

Cont'd from previous page: as Edward Brown in his autobiography (1st edition). But in the 3rd edition Beck was referred to directly. Carpenter says that as an undergraduate Beck set great store on a literary career, but his mind later took on a cynical cast, and lapsed into the ordinary channels of lecturing and coaching and gave himself up to the work-a-day routine of college life.

2. MSS. 386-9. Carpenter's Collection.

3. MSS. 351 Carpenter's Collection.

1. MSS 351 Carpenter's Collection.

movements¹. He talked to the runners and befriended one of them called Joe Potter who was about twenty years of age. The friendship did not last long as Potter went away to sea. These wanderings among the working people created for him a large number of friends. But his cravings for some deeper relationship was not satisfied till his friendship with George Hukin of Totley started.

This began in 1885. Hukin was a razor-maker by trade. He was young and unmarried. In Carpenter's letters to Oates of this period there are numerous references to Hukin. The two men used to take walking holidays in the Derbyshire hills. Carpenter wrote to Oates on the 10th April 1887: Hukin's "love is so tender, so disinterested, I hardly dare think it true". He was not even willing to take a holiday in Italy with Oates because of Hukin. This period between 1885-1887 was one of the stormiest periods in Carpenter's life. His emotional needs were violently upsetting his balance. Hukin he thought, was his last chance:

"If anything were to go wrong between me and George, Italy would be my only hope",

he wrote to Oates.² His life with the Fearnough family was turning out to be tiresome. His temperamental needs wanted more freedom and a family with two grown-up children was more than he could endure.

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1. MSS 254, Carpenter Collection.
 2. MSS 351, Carpenter Collection.

In June 1887 he went for a holiday¹ in Italy with Charles Oates and even thought seriously at times whether it would not be better for him to live there. On his way back he had an occasion to be nostalgic when he found himself in the railway carriage with an Italian artist: a man nearly forty with black short beard and large "perceptive" eyes: "tender and warm hearted face" yet not too refined - but wonderfully well-balanced. Carpenter said he could have kissed his hand and in fact he would have, had not the artist got off too soon.²

Coming home he was faced with a serious situation. George Hukin was engaged to be married in the winter. Carpenter had "horrible spasms of jealousy" at seeing Hukin so often with Fanny, his fiancée. It took some painful struggles for both Carpenter and Hukin to overcome this awkward situation. Hukin was as sincere as before in his friendship. He told Carpenter that both he and his fiancée loved Carpenter. He wrote:

1. Holidays in Italy were not always above suspicion in the nineteenth century. Calder Marshall in his biography of H. Ellis tells us that "the squalor of male prostitution bedevilled even passages of the saintly Carpenter's life" abroad. It is certain that on this holiday Carpenter did have a young Italian companion for some time, but "squalor" is the last word one would like to associate with Carpenter's relationships... In a letter to Hukin he wrote about this companion:

"I got on pretty well with my Italian youth, Francesco - but we were both awfully silent. Walked for miles without saying a word, only thinking, he of his Clotilde. The road winds from promontory to promontory through a most lovely land - always the blue sea slumbering at one's feet - the scent of orange flowers and accacias in the air..." MSS 361 Letter to Hukin, Carpenter's Collection.

2. MSS 351, Letter to C.G. Oates, June 1887, Carpenter's Collection.

"I do not think we should love each other as much as we do, if we both of us did not love you so much - and you really must come and stay with us when we do marry". (MSS 362-16, Carpenter Collection).

Then, just after his marriage, Hukin wrote again:

"I do wish you could sleep with us sometimes, Ted; but I don't know whether Fanny would quite like it, yet, and I don't feel I could press it on her anyway. Still I often think how nice it would be if we could three only love each other - so that we might sleep together sometimes without feeling that there was anything at all wrong doing so". (Ibid., 362-16).

To Hukin this innocent ménage à trois seemed natural but not to Carpenter. He became desperate, and nearly had a nervous breakdown. Hukin came to see him, and Carpenter wrote to Oates:

"He was so lovely on Thursday morning and kissed me and looked at my eyes so lovingly. It is awful hard to have anything come between us". (Ibid., MSS 351).

But Carpenter found the situation almost overpowering:

"The fierce and frightful urging for a mate, and the mockery of women always thrust in the way".

How true it was, he thought, "he asked for bread and they gave him stone". Carpenter thought it was going to be a life-long struggle - "with defeat certain". "Yet one must go on", he sadly concluded.

This pessimism was, however, soon overcome. And after a few years he could write eloquently in Love's Coming of Age (1896)

about Heine's remark that "the man who loves unsuccessfully knows himself to be God". He made it a point to widen his friendship. He must not depend too exclusively on one person. He also realised how important it was to be able to transmute physical desire into a cult of emotional friendship and "soul union", about which he wrote so much later on. In a poem called "Philoläus to Diocles" he celebrated his friendship with Hukin, where the individuals were heightened by the glory of the myth. He tried to cultivate an equally warm friendship with many others, making habitual embracing and kissing an accepted code of greeting à la Francaise. Carpenter wrote to Oates on December 19th, 1887:

"We are going to form by degrees a body of friends, who will be tied together by the strongest general bond, and also by personal attachment - and that we shall help each other immensely by the mutual support we shall be able to give each other. The knowledge that there are others in the same position as oneself will remove that sense of loneliness when plunged in the society of the philistines which is almost unbearable". 1

Carpenter took a holiday in Whitby with George Adams, a socialist friend and an insurance agent by profession, whose friendship came especially as a rescue at this moment of crisis. A few years later the Adams family came to live with him at Millthorpe when the Fearnoughs left. The relationship with Hukin "as a trio"

1. MSS 351 Carpenter's Collection.

got on better than before, and "jealousy troubled him less and less", Carpenter wrote to Oates on February 19th, 1888.

Adams was different from Fearnough. Town-bred, slight and thin¹ he was of an impetuous nature, humorous and artistic in temperament. Being the son of a cobbler, he was also able to help Carpenter to extend his sandal-making trade. Partnership with Adams, however, did not last long. Carpenter was increasingly feeling handicapped by having to live with a family which included children; household routine had to be so fixed as to serve the needs of the family rather than of his own. Besides the host of friends visiting him throughout the year, and his habit of sun-baths and other Adamite ways needed a freedom he could hardly expect in a household with a woman and children. All this came to a crisis when Carpenter made the acquaintance of George Merrill. Adams scented trouble at once and did all he could to prevent Merrill from visiting Millthorpe. Carpenter felt that Adams was behaving as a watchdog for him and tried to "bark away" many of his friends. This led to their estrangement, and the Adams family left his house in 1898.

Carpenter met Merrill in 1893 in the train from Sheffield to Totley. Merrill was about twenty years old at that time. Carpenter was struck by his "affectionate yet sad and wistful expression". Some understanding seemed to have passed between them

1. Adams died of consumption in 1910.

in the first glance. Merrill got off at Totley and followed Carpenter who was walking down to Holmesfield with a group of friends. Carpenter tells this story in an unpublished essay called "George Merrill: A True History and a Study in Psychology".¹ Carpenter says he managed to fall behind the group of hikers and talked to the young man who was following him. This was the beginning of a relationship which lasted all their lives.

When the breach with Adams became imminent, Carpenter was faced with another crisis. As his relation with Merrill was definitely homosexual, he was not perhaps bold enough, at first, to ask Merrill to come and live with him. But at this time Carpenter was nursing at his house a Polish Jew, a young socialist tailor from Leeds, named Max Flint, who was suffering from tuberculosis. Otherwise, Carpenter wrote to Mrs. Salt, he would have sold his property at Millthorpe and started "a butterfly existence". He also playfully regretted:

"If I only had a nice smug little wife (can't you see her - rather short and short-sighted and dumpy) these things would never have happened. I should have had a 'career' in the world - and probably been a bishop this time. But how - O Lord! It's destiny, and will work out all right - even grandly".²

So it did. On the same evening when the Adams family left, George

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1. MSS 363-17, Carpenter's Collection.
 2. Letter to Mrs. Salt, MSS 354-50, Carpenter's Collection.

Merrill arrived, "trundling with the help of two boys in a hand-cart over the hills, and through a blizzard of snow", which Carpenter thought very symbolic.

Merrill was Carpenter's dream come true. Born and bred in the slums, but of healthy parents of rustic origin, with absolutely no formal education, he spoke a kind of "Elizabethan English" which was a source of great delight to Carpenter's educated friends. Many of Carpenter's friends have spoken about Merrill's humorous nature and disarming repartees. Vigorous and masculine in appearance and build, Merrill's mind was intensely feminine; Carpenter says in his study. He took to the house work "like a duck to water".¹ In a short time Carpenter felt that he was living in a state of comfort both physical and mental such as the preceding years never offered or suggested. In imitation of Whitman's relation with young Pete Doyle, Carpenter and Merrill wrote to each other as father and son. (See appendix 5)

Yet their relation was definitely homosexual, at least at the beginning. Carpenter remarks in his study of Merrill that it was wrong to think that indulgence in sexuality destroyed the finer and more sensitive elements of character. In his own life he did not find it so, though he admits there may be some truth in the supposition. He was inclined to agree with Dr. Molls'

1. Letter to Mrs. Salt, MSS 354-54. Carpenter Collection.



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claim that homosexuals tended to become healthier when their sexual urge was satisfied. Merrill lived with Carpenter for thirty years and his death in 1928 hastened Carpenter's own.

It would be wrong to say, however, that such deep attachment was the result of sexual attraction alone, as no relation whether homosexual or heterosexual can be merely so. The father and son relationship played a considerable part in sustaining this bond. Besides, Carpenter lived his homosexual life at such a level of idealism and mental cleanliness that even his closest friends had no occasion to feel shocked, or suspect morbidity.

iv.

Carpenter's basic contention was that homosexuality was not necessarily gross and crude, as was commonly thought. On the contrary, it is often purely emotional in character. To confuse Urnings¹ with libertines is to do them a great wrong, Carpenter affirmed. The crude~~s~~ kind of homosexuality, what he called Venus Aversa "was rare in the northern countries", Carpenter says in Homogenic Love. Embraces and endearments were

1. A word coined by the German writer K.H. Ulrich from "uragos", heaven. The implication being that the Urning-love is higher than the ordinary heterosexual attachment.

the common intimacies.

On the question whether Urnings were morbid or neurotic, Carpenter was emphatic that they were not necessarily so, though he was willing to admit that they were prone to be of slightly nervous temperament. But this could be the result of external conditions, for owing to social persecution they have to live in a state of fear. He was not prepared to accept Dr. Moll's suggestion that the deflection of the sexual act from the purpose of reproduction itself is pathological. To press this point too far, Carpenter pointed out, would put us in an awkward dilemma since many medical men were already advocating birth-control. The true aim of human love, Carpenter insisted again and again, is union, the physical union as the allegory of the union of the souls. He even suggested in a note on birth-control that the best spiritual effect of the sexual act is derived when orgasm is not reached.¹

In Carpenter's time the most revolutionary idea was certainly

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1. Love's Coming of Age, p.173. Carpenter quotes Dr. Alice B. Stockham's book Karezza (1896) in support of his claim. But Carpenter could also have derived his idea from ancient Indian Yogic (Tantric) and Chinese (Taoist) literatures. Both these schools of thought recommended some form of coitus reservatus as good for mental health and the spiritual wellbeing of the race (see J. Needham's Science and Civilisation in China, vol. 2, pp.148-149 and 427-429). Aldous Huxley writes approvingly of this sexual technique in his account of its practice in the Oneida community of New York in the 1840's. See Adonis and the Alphabet (1956), "Appendix".

that of the bi-sexuality¹ or more precisely psychical hermaphroditism.
 We have pointed out earlier that in the mid-Victorian England the sexes were considered to be so separate that any mixing of temperaments popularly thought to belong to different sexes was considered anomalous. The bi-sexual supposition, put forward rather crudely by K.H. Ulrich (a German author who wrote a series of papers on homosexuality between 1864-1872), suggested that there were many normal human beings with "feminine souls enclosed in a man's body". Carpenter took to this idea with great warmth as he found it to be psychologically true in his own case. He even went so far as to take it as an indication of an "effort of Nature towards a superior form - a form inclusive of the feminine as well as the masculine".² It was not difficult to find enough historical and biographical evidence to show that many men of genius had bi-sexual characteristics. And if it is a fact that the Urnings are of such psychical build then it is probable, Carpenter argued, "that the superior urnings will become, in the affairs of the heart, to a large extent, teachers of the

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1. This was, of course, long familiar in human history. Plato in Symposium spoke of it. The Hermetic concept of man was also bi-sexual. The connection of bi-sexuality and inversion began to be presented scientifically from E. Glay's paper on the subject in Revue Philosophique (1884). Freud has given a history of the growth of this concept in recent times in Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality (1905), p.143. The idea of a third sex was also supported by Professor Julian Huxley in a lecture to the Royal Society of Arts in January 1922, much to Carpenter's pleasure (vide, "A Third Sex?" Daily News, January 19th, 1922).
 2. Some Friends of W. Whitman by E. Carpenter, p.14.

future society".¹ It is also something the law should take note of; if the Urnings belong to a different sexual group they cannot be expected to behave as other people do in sexual matters. Carpenter failed to realize that turning a physical problem into a psychical one does not automatically help to solve it.

Carpenter also made a historico-anthropological² study of The Intermediate Types... (1914) to establish his point. The priests and persons with power of divining in many primitive societies were chosen from people who showed marked characteristics of bi-sexuality. They lived celibate lives in the precincts of the places of worship and were often alleged to be homosexuals. But there was no ignominy attached to their way of life in primitive society. It was the Christian Church in its antipathy towards pagan rituals that first described homosexuality in condemnatory terms. Medieval Christianity constantly associated homosexuality with heresy; to such a degree in fact that the French word hérète or hérétique was sometimes used in both connections. The Hebrew word Kedeshim meaning "consecrated ones" (males), was translated in the Bible as sodomites. So it was clear to Carpenter that the revulsion against homosexuality in the modern world was not a natural expression but an outcome of religious prejudice.³

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1. The Intermediate Sex, p.14.
 2. The anthropological approach to the problem of "inversion" was first started by I. Block (1902-1903). It was very characteristic of Carpenter to be always up-to-date in most matters of his interest.
 3. For an unbiased recent scholarly work on this subject, see Homosexuality and the Christian Tradition (1955), Rev. D.S. Bailey.

It has been substantiated by many scientific studies that homosexuals are not necessarily feeble in mind. On the contrary, this habit is more often found in persons of superior ability. Carpenter pointed out that if it became widely known who were the Uranians in our midst the world would be astonished to find so many of its great or leading men among them. Carpenter was not prepared to include "the frivolous, the feeble and the vicious homosexuals" into the category of congenital Urnings. He said he used the word Urnings "to indicate simply those whose lives and activities were inspired by a genuine friendship or love for their own sex, without venturing to specify their individual and particular habit or relations towards those whom they love."¹ This hedging was the outcome of Carpenter's realization that the "tender discrimination and aesthetic continence"² which he pleaded for did not appear to be practicable to all. Meanwhile, he would not say that homosexuals must not indulge in any physical intimacies. He put all his emphasis on the dedication of one to the other, and thought in that case it could not go wrong.

Carpenter published an anthology of friendship, Iolaus (1902), to show "the degree to which friendship in the early history of the world had been recognised as an institution". Carpenter said that everyone in his heart of hearts was conscious how without a

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1. The Intermediate Sex, p.108.
 2. Love's Coming of Age, p.149; see also Ch. "Affection in Education" in The Intermediate Sex.

close affectional tie of some kind his life was not complete. People will come to realize the importance of this affectional need more and more, Carpenter insisted. Already women were beginning to demand that marriage should mean friendship as well as passion. That a comrade-like equality should be included in the relation of love. Once this was admitted it was futile to discriminate between different types of friendships. In the New Criminal Law Amendment (1885), law had stepped out of its province when it took upon itself the power to censor private morals¹ which functioned entirely apart from social results.

v.

Carpenter's essays on homosexuality exercised considerable influence, coming as they did from a writer whose character and reputation were held in high esteem. Besides Carpenter was the first to discuss the subject in England so openly and to address himself to the ordinary reader. And in this matter he showed great tact in steering clear of both the police and the vendors of pornographic literature. It would be wrong, however, to claim that he converted anybody who had strongly opposed him. On the contrary, he provoked such people to exasperation by representing

I. See Wolfenden Committee Report (1957), pp.1-11.

homosexuals as superior beings. The British Medical Journal (June 26th, 1909) scathingly criticized his book The Intermediate Sex¹ (1908). They published a rhyme called "The Uranians" in imitation of the nursery rhyme "Walrus and the Carpenter", where Edward Carpenter was shown hand in hand with an Urning, "shedding a sterile tear". The reviewer advised Carpenter to emigrate to a country where laws were more lenient, so that "the serious people in England might be spared the waste of time consumed in reading a low-priced book of no scientific or literary merit". Another reviewer Dr. Charles Whitby, M.D., in The Free Woman for January 18th, 1912, castigated Carpenter's writings on homosexuality as objectionable. He argued that, in view of the brutal misconceptions still obtaining among a large section of the people, it was inopportune to write as Carpenter did, encouraging the uranians to come out in the open, and flaunt their sexual vagaries as a token of superiority to the profane herd.

We must realize that Carpenter was defending himself as much as pleading for a cause. Certain exaggerations were inevitable. Besides, if we are prepared to limit homosexuals to the band of devoted friends born with temperamental likings for their own sex,

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1. It is a collection of essays on homosexuality which Carpenter published earlier, namely "Homogenic Love" (1894); "An Unknown People" (1897); "Affection in Education" (1899); The only new essay was "The Place of the Uranians in Society".

as Carpenter did, we have less ground to grumble at the claims he made on their behalf. Carpenter genuinely believed that in those cases their habits were "twined in the very roots of the individual life and practically ineradicable".¹ Modern psychotherapists do not accept this statement, but that does not concern us here. The fact is that there are a large number of homosexuals in society, and Carpenter's arguments can still help to instil a sense of self-respect in an urning's heart and make him guard against vulgarisation and perversity.

In spite of the healthy idealistic impression which most of Carpenter's essays on this subject left on a reader's mind, the author did not escape all troubles. His essay "Homogenic Love" (printed privately in Manchester Library Press), came out in January 1895, and a few months later the Oscar Wilde trial² created a national sensation. This caused such a panic that Carpenter's publisher, ^{T.}Fisher Unwin shook off all connection with him. He even refused to handle any more of Towards Democracy. But the worst trouble came after the publication of The Intermediate Sex (1908), in the activities of one M.D. O'Brien of Dronfield, Sheffield.

O'Brien was a rabid anti-socialist and belonged to the "Liberty and Property Defence League". On March 19th, 1909, he wrote

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1. Homogenic Love (1894), p.18. This pamphlet really appeared in 1895.
 2. Carpenter did not know Wilde personally. But he was most distressed by the events. Adopting a pseudonym, he wrote in The Star (May 11th, 1895), protesting against the hasty pre-judgement "of removing Wilde's name from play bills and other acts of Christian charity".

a letter to the Sheffield Telegraph under the heading "Usefulness of Competition". But in the middle of his letter he turned round on the socialists to say that there were many among them, "the loving and ultra-sociable people" who practice things which St. Paul condemned as "worthy of death". He pointed out that the very same things were held up for approval "by one of the ablest leaders in the socialist movement". And the "infernal thing" was called comradeship as a clever ruse. He challenged Carpenter to a public debate on the question, "Is Socialism Morally Sound?"

Carpenter was in Italy at that time. A few days later O'Brien printed a pamphlet called Socialism and Infamy and distributed it from house to house in Millthorpe. He told Carpenter's neighbours that he wanted Carpenter to sue him for libel and he would prove his case up to the hilt. It caused great anxiety among Carpenter's friends. Strange stories were afloat. Two different women told Mrs. Hukin that a number of women at Dronfield were anxious to know when Carpenter would be returning that they might waylay and mob him. Someone had written to the Vicar, the Rev. Charles Bradshaw, begging him not to preside over any Parish Council meeting as long as Carpenter was a member of it. But Bradshaw spoke up for Carpenter, and as a consequence O'Brien issued a leaflet against the Vicar, accusing him of being in league

with Carpenter and challenging him to sue for libel. Meanwhile he was telling the villagers that Carpenter had left England for good and would not dare return. Carpenter soon answered, in a short letter to the Sheffield papers. He said he would not go to the law courts for this matter as he did not believe in such legal actions. He pointed out that his views were all written out in his books, and could be read with much more advantage there than in the garbled version which O'Brien had printed. Carpenter's outward composure won the day, but he was badly shaken at heart. He asked some of his "respectable" friends to come and stay with him at Millthorpe to create, a good impression among the villagers.

In spite of these hurdles, Carpenter's reputation as a writer was at its zenith during the first decade of this century. Public taste was moving in his direction. There was growing interest in mysticism. The questions of sex which he treated so openly and ardently were gaining serious attention. It was one of Carpenter's many contributions to the spread of sexual education that he helped to found¹ the British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology in 1911; he was its first president. On August 29th, 1914, his seventieth birthday, Carpenter was presented with a congratulatory address signed by two hundred representative writers drawn from all over the world.

1. See Edward Carpenter (Monograph) by Dr. Cecil Reddie, 1932.

Even a younger writer like Robert Graves, who was still at school in Charterhouse, wrote grateful letters to the prophet of comradeship. Graves wrote how deeply indebted he was to Carpenter for his Iolaus and The Intermediate Sex which had "absolutely taken the scales" from his eyes, and caused him "immense elation".

He added:

"You have provided a quite convincing explanation for all the problems, doubts and suspicions that I have been troubled by in my outlook on sex and I see everything".

Graves pointed out that there were many who (without understanding the subject) were ashamed of it. One such was Richard Middleton, the poet, who died in 1911 "without understanding himself". Middleton was definitely an urning, but when he wanted to confess his love for a boy in a poem he put the words in the mouth of a childless mother or a girl: "old evasions which I have often myself employed", Graves remarked. He affirmed from his own experience that the mutual attraction between boys "even in Charterhouse" are the purest and most inspiring factors in school life. Graves also offered to supply case-histories of the homosexuals he knew in his school to help Carpenter fight "this damnable conspiracy of silence and repression".¹

Another young man who thought after reading The Intermediate Sex

1. MSS 386-234, Carpenter's Collection, Sheffield.

that "a new life had opened up" before him was Siegfried Sassoon. He wrote to express his gratefulness for the knowledge of himself the book had given him:

"I was in such a groove that I could not allow myself to be what I wished to be and the intense attraction I felt for my own sex was almost a subconscious thing and my antipathy for women a mystery to me... I cannot say what it (the book) has done to me. I am a different being and have a definite aim in life and something to lean on, though of course the misunderstanding and injustice is a bitter agony sometimes". 1

Sassoon added he had learnt from Carpenter "the nobler way" and how "to avoid the mire". He visited the prophet at Millthorpe. And during the First World War, when ^{while} serving as second lieutenant in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, and after winning a military cross, he made the notorious statement in July 1917, "in wilful defiance of military authority," against the prolongation of the war, he was in close touch with Carpenter. Sassoon said, in his statement, that he like many other soldiers, on whose behalf he claimed to be speaking, entered the war as "a war of defence" but it had now become a war of aggression and conquest". The pacifists celebrated Sassoon's heroism in ballads, one of which Carpenter sent to Craiglockhart War Hospital, where Sassoon was recuperating. In one of his letters Sassoon wrote to Carpenter "my wound is only a bullet graze on the

1. MSS 386-179, Carpenter's Collection.

scalp... I only consented to come here because I should otherwise have been sent to a proper lunatic place... I am glad you think I have done a little good". Sassoon was so inspired by Carpenter's teaching at this time that he even tried for a discharge from the army so that he could come and live in Sheffield as an ordinary labourer.

Carpenter's fame as the champion of homosexual love was not restricted to England alone. He used to receive letters from admirers all over the world saying how grateful they were for his "spiritual love message". A Maharajah from India, to whom Carpenter's works had been introduced by G.L. Dickinson¹, wrote long letters of appreciation to Carpenter. He said that he found in Carpenter's works "nothing but heavenly light pervading" which could dissolve all the powers of darkness and added that his life would have failed in its main purpose unless he saw Carpenter. He implored Carpenter to come and see him in India and "save a poor man's soul before it was too late". The Maharajah offered to

1. Maharajah Viswanath Singh of Chattarpur, a remote native state in the Bundelkhand. E.M. Forster mentions him in his Life of G.L. Dickinson (1931). Forster and Dickinson visited Chattarpur in 1912.

Dickinson approved of much that Carpenter wrote on sex. After reading Love's Coming of Age, he wrote to Carpenter that it was "a real deliverance" to him and remarked "at bottom I feel very close to you - though I suppose my proper planetary situation is one hundred miles N.W.". (May 22nd, 1896). MSS 386, Carpenter's Collection.

pay for his passage, and also offered to make his resources available to maintain Carpenter's dependents, as he considered that his "sacred duty". The correspondence¹ continued for twelve years but Carpenter could not be persuaded to visit him. It was perhaps a difference between Carpenter and most of those who fortunately or unfortunately acquired a large number of disciples that he retained a strong sense of the ridiculous.

1. See MSS 378; Letters from Maharajah of Chattarpur 1812-1924, Carpenter's Collection.

CHAPTER VIIIConclusion.

When we come to consider the importance of Carpenter's thought, it is its unity rather than its originality that strikes us most. Everything he wrote, everything he publicised and performed, radiated from a spirit which was unified. This gave to his writings an unmistakable feeling of urgency and to his personality that poise and serenity which his contemporaries so much admired.

In our analysis of Carpenter's sociological works attention has been drawn to one fact particularly, that is, his abiding concern for the relation of the individual to society. One might, in fact, call Carpenter primarily a critic of Victorian individualism. But he was not pleading for collectivism either. At a time when the social thinking was veering round to the problem of social amelioration, he insisted that it was not the creation of a perfect society but of the perfect man which should be the ultimate end.

Taking up a phrase often used by biologists that "function

precedes organisation", Carpenter said, that it might be supplemented by a second one, namely, that "desire preceds function."¹ Here he took his cue from Lamarck's idea of evolution, and he called it "exfoliation", a word Whitman first used. Human beings unfold themselves through the vehicle of desire, from within outwards. And what is the primary desire in man?

"Desire-as it exists in man - look at it how you will - as it unfolds and its ultimate aim becomes clearer to itself, is seen to be the desire and longing for the perfect human Form... Round this ultimate disclosure of the ideal Man, all creation ranges itself, as it were, like some vast flower, in concentric circles",²

So all questions of social life ultimately depend on the individual's own life: What is the true relation of man to material things? That is the most important question. When the key to that is found, all social problems will be solved. In human relationships the most ideal relation conceivable is that of love. Love is the sum and solution of all desires in man:

"In our bodies it is a desire for the bodily human form; in our interior selves it is a perception and worship of an ideal human form, it is a revelation of a splendour dwelling in others, which - clouded and dimmed as it inevitably may come to be - remains after all one of the most real, perhaps the most real, of the facts of existence".³

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1. Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure, p.132: "Exfoliation".
 2. Ibid., p.141. ¶ P. 147.
 3. Ibid., p. 141.

By this doctrine of love Carpenter was able to emphasize not only the need for individual bodily and spiritual fulfilment, but the recognition of the "splendour" dwelling in others. The celestial city he dreamed of was that "of Equals and Lovers".¹ So it was not a love of merging, of being merely one with the object of love, of limitless narcissism, as Freud would have us believe.

The ideal of self-realisation was greatly prized by many nineteenth-century thinkers. In a way, it was the popular "idea of progress" viewed inwardly from the point of one's spiritual perfection. John Stuart Mill and Matthew Arnold gave powerful expression to this ideal, not to speak of Emerson, Professor T.H. Green and the idealist philosophers, to whom it was a cornerstone of their philosophy. Mill, criticizing Calvinist morality in his essay On Liberty (1859) remarked that:

"a higher type of human excellence could be realised through cultivation and unfolding of all human faculties without rooting out any".²

Arnold championing the Greek ideal, spoke of "harmonious expansion of all powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature".³ Carpenter obviously took his stand in this tradition, as the

1. The Art of Creation, p.91.
2. On Liberty (1868), p.36.
3. Culture and Anarchy, p.11.

similarity of his language with that of Mill will indicate. But whereas, in the tradition of Mill and Arnold, self-development involved a certain detachment, a quality more conceivable in an élite, Carpenter and Whitman recommended it univeřsally. The great respect shown by Carpenter (and of course by Whitman) for the average, as the ground-level of all that is exceptional and illustrious, made self-development not a course of individualism but a process of universal becoming. One does not realise oneself in order to be different or superior to the rest of humanity:

"The course of all is the same; they are tossed up thinner and thinner, into mere spray at last - like a wave from the breast of the ocean... and fall back again.

You try to set yourself apart from the vulgar. It is in vain. In that instant vulgarity attaches itself to you...

To be yourself, to have measureless trust..."

(Towards Democracy, Section 28).

That, he maintained, is all one should do.

The emphasis on the average is open to misunderstanding, and must not be isolated from other statements on individuality. Glorification of the average would make nonsense of all talk about the ideal of the perfect man and his mystical cosmic ego. But the average has yet to be recognised as the basis on which and for which all social development must be orientated. The average is universal - "these contain you". Perhaps to assign proper importance to this respect for the average one must look at it

against the background of the minority cult within the libertarian tradition. To both Whitman and Carpenter this was abhorrent owing to the religious nature of their democratic ideal. Mill wrote, in defence of the man of genius:

"Persons of genius, it is true, are, and are always likely to be, a small minority; but in order to have them, it is necessary to preserve the soil in which they grow".

(On Liberty, p.38).

That soil is the liberty to be different from the average. The man of genius "is the salt of the earth" and unless "there were a succession of persons whose ever-recurring originality prevents the ground of belief and practices from becoming traditional", society will be stunted.

There was no disagreement between Mill and Carpenter on this point: regarding the necessity of resisting. the tendency in the beliefs and practices of human beings to degenerate into the mechanical. Anarchist as he was, Carpenter merely extended the scope of the libertarian argument. It is not only the great man, the hero, but also the criminal who resists social stultification:

"If no one were to break the law, public opinion would ossify and society would die". 1

It may not be extravagant to suppose, Carpenter says, that it is

1. "Defence of Criminals" in Civilisation... p. 100.

the criminal ("so-called") who keeps alive the springs of life in society. In the content of the argument there is no difference, here, between the attitude of Mill and that of Carpenter. But where the two attitudes seem to part is in this: Mill hoped to save democracy by cultivating the minority who are original. Whereas Carpenter relied on the growth of a "sympathetic relation" of the individual "with his fellows" so that "his actions come to flow directly from the very same source which regulates and inspires the whole movement of society". It was Carpenter's belief that this social relatedness "far from dwarfing individuality, enhances immensely its power". Instead of putting our sole trust on the saving power of an original minority we should put the question to everyone:

"Whether any of us have got hold of much true life at all? - Whether we are not rather mere multitudinous varieties of caddis worms shuffled up in the cast-off skins and clothes and debris of those who have gone before us, with very little vitality of our own perceptible within? How many times a day do we perform an action that is authentic and not a mere mechanical piece of repetition?" 1

To make a really healthy society every person must be willing to accept his responsibility by making these questions the basic criterion of all his actions.

In Carpenter's thought there was no room for cleavage

1. Civilisation..., p.153. The previous quotations are from pp.117-118.

between the authentic actions of individuals and the good of society. The concept of the "mass-man in the unit-man", is therefore not a totalitarian ideal, where the individual will lose his identity: it is, as he said earlier in England's Ideal, the vision of the supreme life in which each man becomes far greater than himself through social relatedness. In the "post-civilization period", as Carpenter saw it:

"the morning stars will once more sing together, and exiled man will re-enter the gates which the flaming sword so long has guarded". (England's Ideal, 165).

Here the Platonic and the Christian myths cohere to restore man to his primal glory.

Carpenter conceived of Victorian civilisation as diseased because competition and not harmony was its ideal. Marx called human history "pre-history" because only a civilisation of unalienated human beings could be called human. A recent writer of no less importance, Erich Fromm, calls our civilisation "humanoid history" ^{as} still waiting to be humanised. Fromm, who describes himself ^{as} a humanist psychologist, writes with the same glowing faith in humanity as inspired all Carpenter's work. In three books, The Fear of Freedom (1942), Man for Himself (1947) and the Sane Society (1956), Fromm discusses many of the problems which interested Carpenter. The emphasis in all of them is that

man must relate himself lovingly to society, that man must overcome the "inner split"¹ which has tormented mankind so long. Fromm's analysis of the three stages² of human progress in relation to society is similar in spirit to that of Carpenter, though Carpenter was speaking more or less in a theological language and Fromm in the language of an Existential philosopher. Considering that between Carpenter and Fromm lie the works of Freud and the experience of the Second World War, their outlooks have an interesting similarity. At least Fromm cannot be accused of shallow optimism. The following passage from The Sane Society, for instance, echoes some of Carpenter's basic ideas:

"The mentally healthy person is the productive and the unalienated person; the person who relates himself to the world lovingly and who uses his reason to grasp reality objectively; who experiences himself as a unique individual entity and at the same time feels one with his fellow men". (p. 275).

Fromm as a psychologist has moved away from the deterministic ground of Freudian psychology to a position where "the man is the centre",³ and as a sociologist he thinks that the most important problem of the twentieth century is to discuss ways and means to implement political democracy, and to transform it into a truly human society:

"It cannot be doubted that we are more in need of a human renaissance than we are in need of airplanes and television" (op.cit., 282).

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1. Man for Himself, p.41.
 2. See Freedom from Fear, pp.15-24. And for Fromm's concept of love and self-realisation which Carpenter would have approved, see p.222.
 3. See The Fear of Freedom (1942), p.10.
 4. P. 155 "Custom".

This was also Carpenter's most important message.¹ Assertion of faith in man and the strength and possibility of humanity was Carpenter's life-long pursuit:

"The period of human infancy is coming to an end. Now comes the time of manhood and true vitality".

Carpenter announced that in Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure.²

But to understand the implications of this new departure in human history it will possibly need many more centuries. And to that extent Carpenter's works remain relevant for us.

Though Carpenter's formulation of his theory of consciousness may appear characteristic of late-nineteenth century spirituality in its lofty musing on the ultimate nature of things, yet we cannot ignore the importance of the basic experience which lay behind it. The need for harmony and unity within man and between men and also between man and nature interest us as profoundly as it did Carpenter; it is shown by the great popularity of the writings of Erich Fromm. ^{Another philosophic writer} Lancelot Law Whyte, who has been writing since the nineteen-thirties, but who has not yet gained as wide an audience as he deserves, is also trying to elaborate "a unitary principle" of thought and life to which Carpenter would have heartily assented. He admired Carpenter's works as a scholar in Bedales School, where he grew up under the shadow of Carpenter's

1. In an article called "Edward Carpenter's Writings" in The Human Review for July 1903, Henry Salt remarked that "Humanity may be fairly taken as the watchword of Carpenter's doctrine."

2. P. 156.

ideals,¹ since the headmaster, John Badley, also admired them.

Whyte shows many of Carpenter's preoccupations. Both writers are keen on linking physical and mental phenomena. To them the words "spiritual" and "material" are not mutually exclusive. In his book Next Development in Man (1944) Whyte speaks of a "universal formative tendency" operating in man and nature which Carpenter had visualised in The Art of Creation (1904). Man finds himself, says Whyte, "by finding the universal process within himself". In the next stage of development, he envisages, as Carpenter did-

"the recovery of animal harmony in the differentiated form appropriate to man at this stage in history". 2

And the clue to this recovery, he insists, will depend on "the conceptually formulative conviction, at once subjective and objective, that the form common to all processes is that of a formative tendency". When this conviction has become the basic principle of "an objectively established universal tradition", the period of unitary man will have begun: Whyte's exposition of the next possible development in man sounds more plausible than Carpenter did, because he leans less on the mystical nature of unity and harmony and more on the "conceptual conviction". But how far both Carpenter and

1. See Appendix.3. Whyte's letter to the present author; Also Forces and Diversions (1963), L.L. Whyte's autobiography.
2. Whyte, op.cit., p.216.

Whyte agree as to the nature of their utopia may be seen from the following extract from Whyte's book, The Next Development in Man:

"Each individual expresses the universal tendency through a special form of his own system as developed by his ancestry and his own history. Each is unique and yet an expression of the same universal form. This recovery of the sense of unity with nature, which man lost when he became self-conscious, does not carry him back to pagan innocence. In the process of becoming self-conscious he separated his imagination from his senses, and his conscious will from the natural processes around. But while the pantheistic primitive discovered spirits like his own throughout nature, unitary man inverts this identification and recognises the general form of natural processes in the working of his own spirit. This fusion of subject and object is possible because nature is interpreted as the expression of a tendency which has the same formative property as that which man recognises in his own nature". (p. 230).

What Carpenter visualised as the third stage of consciousness, when the period of self-consciousness would be replaced by a consciousness of unity, is also Whyte's object of pursuit. Like Carpenter, Whyte also thinks that the West has something to learn from the philosophy of the East, to overcome the duality of static reason and nature inherent in Western philosophy: "Only then, a new type of man" will emerge, "combining the unity of the East with the differentiation of the West". "The separation of East and West is over", Whyte declares, "and a new history opens rich in quality and majestic in scale".¹ This was also

1. Op.cit., p.261.

Carpenter's vision, and it has not become out of date.

ii.

We have mentioned earlier (Chapter VI, p.216.), that it was very likely that Carpenter exercised some influence on D.H. Lawrence. But we have no acknowledgement to rely on. In the inspired visionary writings of Lawrence there was no room for such acknowledgement. Yet in their attitudes to sex, the problem of self-consciousness, and the physiological approach to the study of consciousness as a whole, their resemblance is unmistakable. Lawrence says in the Fantasia of the Unconscious (1922) that he was grateful to all kinds of scholarly books, "from the Yoga and Plato and St. John the Evangel and the early Greek philosophers... down to Frazer and even Freud and Forbinus". But he adds, "even then I only remember hints - and proceed by intuition". The students of Lawrence, however, will find many parallels in Carpenter's works. In The Victorians and After (1938), the authors¹ commented in a short note on Carpenter that "his attitude was a queer mixture of Whitman and D.H. Lawrence; with sunny gods, however, instead of dark ones".

In The Art of Creation (1904) Carpenter used a physiological

1. Professor Bonamy Dobrée and Edith Batho, p.218.

language to bring home to his reader the nature of the mystical third stage of consciousness, in a manner which we find in Lawrence's psychological essays. Students of Lawrence will probably appreciate that Carpenter revealed the sources of his studies, whereas Lawrence made a mystery of the whole thing by saying that he only took hints and proceeded by intuition. It seems that Lawrence, like Carpenter, had accepted from J.G. Davey's book The Ganglionic Nervous System (1858), the notion that the solar plexus was the first part of the nervous system formed in the embryo; that it and the Great Sympathetic generally exercised an architectural power presiding over the formation and life of the body and the organs; and that to this seat of power even the brain and the spinal chord were subordinate.¹ The result of this physiological assumption was to put mind back into nature. It helped Carpenter and, for that matter, Lawrence to assert the superiority of the instinctual or as Lawrence put it "mind-less knowledge"² over mental consciousness.

Though Lawrence was always suspicious of others' spirituality

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1. J.G. Davey acknowledges his debt to the great eighteenth-century physiologist Bichat and to Dr. Fletcher's Rudiments of Physiology (1837), for establishing "on an immutable basis" the function of the Great Sympathetic nerves. It is apparent that the ideas which Davey brought together systematically were also known to other physiologists. But Davey drew the important conclusion - that the Great Sympathetic nerves perform the vital life-conducting part independent of the mind, and brain is subordinate to it.
 2. "Education of the People," Phoenix (Heinemann, 1961), p. 620.

and laughed at anyone who claimed "cosmic consciousness",¹ he was much imbued with both of them. He said in Fantasia of the Unconscious that he did not believe in evolution, but in the strangeness and rainbow change of ever-renewed civilisations (p. 10); for this reason, he considered some dynamic idea or metaphysics or some vision of the future was needed before any unfolding of new life and art. So apparently he had no reason to quarrel with Carpenter over the latter's visionary hypothesis of a third stage of consciousness. Lawrence has admitted the influence of Theosophical writers on his psychological theories, but that his essays on this subject were not all nonsense, or "polyanalytics", as Lawrence apologetically called them,² and had a scientific basis can only be realised if we compare them to the works of Edward Carpenter.

Like Carpenter, Lawrence posited three stages in the growth of consciousness; but whereas Lawrence studied them in the life of a child, Carpenter studied, with his characteristic sociological bias, the growth of human consciousness through different phases of society. Lawrence's three stages were: primal or dynamic consciousness, when the child does not know his apartness from his mother (the undifferentiated consciousness of Carpenter's first stage); secondly, mental consciousness,

1. See essay in that title in Selected Essays (Penguin, 1950.)
 2. Fantasia..., p.49.

against which both Carpenter and Lawrence lashed their whips; and for the third stage, both of them conceived of a mystical state of unity. In Lawrence's words there is "a definite vibrating rapport between the man and his surroundings" (p. 119). This is like the feeling of bliss - surging from the cardiac plexus; "the great uplift of rapture" - when the child finds his mother a part of himself. Carpenter supposes that in the third stage man feels one with his surrounding - everything around him becomes alive:

"It is not merely that the object is seen by the eye or touched by the hand, but it is felt at the same instant from within as a part of the ego..." 1

And this realisation wakes an infinite response, "a reverberation through all the chambers of being". At this stage "knowledge loses its tentative illusive form of thought... It becomes luminous, with far-reaching interpretations". In describing how this stage of illumination is attained Carpenter speaks in language very similar to that of Lawrence:

"To still the brain, and feel, feel, feel our identity with the deepest being within us is the first thing. There in that union, in that identity, all the sins and errors of the actual world are done away. We are most truly ourselves; we go back to the root from which all that may really express us must inevitably spring". 2

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1. The Art of Creation, p.61.
 2. Ibid., p.220; Cf. Fantasia... p, 120.

From this analysis of the mystical consciousness of unity and its application to educational and psychological questions, both Lawrence and Carpenter arrive at political conclusions; but they are poles apart. No doubt the chief reason lies in the dates of the two books. Carpenter's late-Victorian utopianism led him to discover in the vision of the third stage of heightened consciousness the springs of spontaneous social relatedness: the fruition of the anarchist dream. Lawrence was no believer in democracy with its cult of the "average" and its concept of "merging". Besides, he was writing at a time when militarism was growing in Europe.¹ So Lawrence's dream of the third stage was equally tainted by the spirit of the times. "What about the next step?" Lawrence asks, only to reply:

"Well, first and foremost, that every individual creature shall come to its own particular and individual fullness of being -. Very nice, very pretty, but how? Well through a living dynamic relation to other creatures -. Very nice again, pretty little adjectives. But what sort of living, dynamic relation? Well, (and here he abandons Carpenter's path) - not the relation of love, that's one thing, nor of brotherhood nor equality. The next relationship has got to be a relationship of men towards men in a spirit of unfathomable trust and responsibility, service and leadership, obedience and pure authority: Men have got to choose their leaders and obey them to the death. And it must be a system of culminating aristocracy, society tapering like a pyramid to the supreme leader".

1. Fantasia... was mostly written in Eberstinburg, Germany, in 1921-1922.

Perhaps Lawrence was proved a true prophet by the course of history immediately after his death. But how smeared with blood and dirt his vision seems after the Second World War!

On matters of human relationship Lawrence was weak and was torn with conflict.¹ Though he spasmodically tried to get out of his isolation, he was condemned by his gift, as Huxley says, to an essential separateness. In his essay on "Democracy", which has rightly received great praise from modern critics,² it was the "inscrutable and incarnate mystery of the individual"³ that Lawrence glorified. But this superb essay slithered into a tame close, because of his essential inability to appreciate the strength of human relationships. He ended his essay in a kind of deliberate day-dream:

"We must stand aside. And when many men stand aside, they stand in a new world; a new world of man has come to pass. This is the Democracy: the new order".

Compared to this, Carpenter's voice rings with heroic affirmation:

"If only one man - with regard to social matters - speaking from the very depths of his heart says, 'this shall not be: behold something better'; his word is likely stronger than all institutions, all traditions. And why? - because in the depths of his individual heart, he touches also that of society, of man... Somewhere within yourself, be assured, the secret of that authority lies".⁴

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1. See Aldous Huxley's essay on Lawrence in Essays (Everyman), p.36
 2. See Culture and Society (1958) Raymond Williams, see chapter on Lawrence.
 3. Selected Essays, p. 90.
 4. England's Ideal, p.66.

This again, perhaps, makes Lawrence's voice nearer to our heart as we are all more or less apologetic about the democratic ideal now. But conscious as we are of our "creaturely limitations",¹ as the Christian Existentialist philosophers say, if democracy as a way of life is to succeed we require some of Carpenter's passionate faith.

In our search for links between Lawrence and Carpenter, we find that no resemblance is more striking than in their attitudes to sex. We have pointed out earlier that Carpenter's writings on sex had considerable influence on the younger generation before the first world war. In answer to a query from the present author, Bertrand Russell wrote that he was "a good deal influenced by some booklets" that Carpenter wrote concerning this subject. But Lord Russell "never liked his mysticism". That is quite understandable, as Russell's agnostic Lucretian mysticism and Carpenter's Vedantic mysticism were poles apart.

D.H. Lawrence, however, could not say this. Carpenter's mysticism was little different from his own; but Carpenter's incessant remarks on sociology must have made Lawrence think him unmentionable. It is inconceivable that Lawrence, who had so many interests in common with Carpenter (i.e. Whitman, mysticism,

1. See Reinhold Niebuhr's essay in Freud and the Twentieth Century (1958), p.268.

sex and utopias), did not know his works. They both contributed to The English Review in its first decade. We are told by H.T. More¹ that Lawrence's early friends were all socialists and that he was intimate with the Hopkinses of Eastwood, with whom Carpenter occasionally stayed. It would have been interesting to know what either of them thought of the other's works. Carpenter was admired by both socialists and mystics, and also by those who held advanced views on sex, especially if they had homosexual sympathies. That Lawrence had some sympathetic understanding of the homosexual romance is apparent in his first novel The White Peacock (1911). Whether Lawrence was a homosexual or not he took an active interest in the subject throughout his life. Once he wrote to Henry Savage that he should like to know "why nearly every man that approaches greatness tends to homosexuality, whether he admits it or not".² We have shown in the last chapter that Carpenter almost dedicated himself to the cause of appealing for a more humane attitude to homosexuals. Besides his various tracts on the subject, he compiled an anthology of friendship, Iolaus (1902), which had three editions between 1902-1906. One of its chapters was called "The Poetry of Friendship" which could have suggested Lawrence's chapter heading "A poem of friendship" in The White Peacock written during 1906-1911.

1. The Intelligent Heart, p.352.
 2. Letters Vol. I (Heinemann, 1962), Ed. H.T. More, p.251.

In their attitudes to sex both Lawrence and Carpenter were basically similar. Carpenter hated sexual pruderies as much as Lawrence did. Carpenter hated sex that was simply mental or just physical. He said:

"Sex is not merely for child-birth, and physical procreation, but for mutual vitalising and invigoration.,. and to use it egotistically is to commit the sin of separation". 1

Carpenter passionately condemned what he called the "mawkish milk-and-whiteness" of the Christian attitude to sex, which had made it "thin, attenuated and spiritualised out of all mundane sense of recognition".² Both Lawrence and Carpenter were great admirers of primitive cultures and animal vitality. Carpenter says, in a foot-note to Pagan and Christian Creeds (p. 231), that he used the word "animal-man" not with any flavour of contempt or reprobation, as "the dear Victorians" would have used it, but with a sense of genuine respect and admiration such as one feels towards the animals themselves.

In their reverence for sex Carpenter and Lawrence were most akin. Carpenter cites an example of primitive society in The Art of Creation to bring home this truth to the modern reader:

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1. Pagan and Christian Creeds (1920), p.188.
 2. Ibid., p.192.

"A curious instance of the rousing of the communal or race consciousness is given by the word testis, which signifies both a witness and a testicle, the double significance being illustrated by the fact that among many peoples taking of an oath is confirmed by the placing of the hand on the part indicated". (See "Genesis" Ch. 24, v.2, 9 &c.). More than any other fact this helps us to understand the sacredness with which sex was held in some early times". (p. 191).

In their imaginative attitudes to sex, also, Carpenter and Lawrence strike a similar note. Carpenter showed great interest in the sex symbolism of the older religions. He tried to explain why primitive men so profoundly revered the snake and the tree, in language which was very Lawrencian. The primitive man worshipped the snake, Carpenter said, "as the snake has an unmistakable resemblance to the male organ in its active state".¹ About the attraction of the tree to the primitive man, Carpenter thought "it was beloved and worshipped by reason of its many gifts to mankind - its grateful shelter, its abounding fruit, its timber, etc. - why should it not become the natural emblem of the female, to whom through sex man's worship is ever drawn"?² These two symbols, Carpenter finds, had come down in mysterious conjunction to the Bible story. But as soon as the harmonious sex-instincts were ruptured by self-consciousness, the notion of sacredness disappeared; man began to look upon sex as

1. Pagan and Christian Creeds, p.81.
 2. Ibid.

"the great antagonist", the old serpent lying in wait to betray him. Man did not succeed in driving the snake out of paradise, he drove himself out.¹

Carpenter was sure that man would some day re-enter paradise by attaining the consciousness of a unified being in the third stage of development. And when he returned to paradise, he would find "the good snake there as of the old, full of healing and friendliness, among the branches of the Tree of Life".² Lawrence was not so sure about this utopian vision. It was too much of a Pisgah-sight to him. In fact, Lawrence's words in the Introduction to Fantasia of the Unconscious may be applied to Carpenter:

"Descendez, Cher Moise, vous voyez trop loin... You see too far all at once. Too much of a bird's eye view across the Promised Land³ to the shore. Come down and walk across, old fellow."

Then Lawrence adds:

"Allons, there is no road yet but we are all Aarons with rods of our own".

His rod was the hope of regaining or developing dynamic consciousness. It is certain that Carpenter would not have

1. Pagan and Christian Creeds, p.186.

2. Ibid., p.187.

3. It may be just a coincidence that Carpenter wrote a drama called Moses (1875) which was reprinted in 1909 and there were three editions of the book ^{between} that year and 1916. The new edition was called The Promised Land.

broken Lawrence's rod. They were both willing to creep back to paradise and throw out the apple (i.e., the mental consciousness), and live with the snake happily ever after.

Like Lawrence, Carpenter was fascinated by the snake:

"The fascination of its mysteriously gliding movement, of its vivid energy, its glittering eyes, its intensity of life, combined with its fatal dart of death".

Carpenter wrote this in Pagan and Christian Creeds, which was published in January 1920. Lawrence's famous poem, Snake, was written in July that year. There is a striking similarity of sensibility between the old Victorian-bred ex-clergyman, Edward Carpenter, and the most imaginative writer on sex of our time.

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APPENDIX - I

CARPENTER FAMILY PEDIGREE

Scutum Gentilium Paludamentium et Crista Cognomini Carpenter or
Carpender (The shield of the [high military] family and the crest
of the surname Carpenter) so blazoned Party per Pale indented Or
on Azure and Eagle countercharged of the first and second a Helmet
befitting the Degree a Wreath of the Column etc. This name had
its Original ab officio non artis sed ingenii (by reason not of
trade but of nature) (as Forden relates) about the year 1274 from
the cunning contrivance of Hugh Cressinghame of Abington in Berkshire
who cut a Bridge up on the way so dexterously that it was not per-
ceived by any, he having a piece whereunto he clandestinely fastened
in a Cradle expecting the blast of a Horn which was a sign that half
the Army was over the Bridge which he performed so courageously that
those upon the bridge were drowned, their Army so divided so that
one party might see the other routed, & not able to assist them the
River being between them: which in all probability might have fallen
out otherways, the Enemy being thrice their number: by which means
the English gained the victory over the Welch. And the said Hugh
surnamed Carpenter had for his Crest (as Forden saith) Manum dextram
armatam et clavum ligneum tenentem: (A right hand armed and holding
a wooden nail): And he further adds Filius ejus Johannes Carpenter
eadem ensignia in scuto, sed Cristam alteram portavit (his son John
Carpenter bore the same insignia on the shield, but a different crest.)
Many of the Vulgar have taken the arms of the Company of Carpenters

for their own Arms, and so lie under a mistake. This Hugh married Anna Barton and had Issue John Carpenter a Companion of Piers of Gaveston in the reign of King Edward 2 and accompanied him to Ireland, but did not return with him, but remained there and married a daughter of Donald Fitzgerald and had Issue Thomas, George, Richard and Edward Carpenter who came all over to England in the beginning of the reign of King Edward 3, and Richard accompanied him through all his Wars with France. Thomas married Anna Ceoil and lived in Essex: George was Abbot of Kilkenny in Ireland and afterwards came to be Archbishop of Cashel: and Richard was Commander under Henry 4.

Written by Charles Carpenter 11th May 1879 (father of Ed. Carpenter):

I found among my Uncle's papers at Meditonham, (Cornwall) the original of which the above is a Copy: and I afterwards saw a similar original hanging up on the wall of one of the rooms at Mount Tavy. The words I have underscored with two lines are in red ink and roman characters - those underscored with one line are in black and in roman characters - the rest Italics.

Charles Carpenter

11th May 1879

APPENDIX - 2

From: The Earl Russell, O.M., F.R.S.

29 October, 1964.

Dear Mr. Barua,

Thank you for your letter of 26 October. My connection with Edward Carpenter was very slight. When I was twenty-one I was a good deal influenced by some booklets that he wrote concerning sex, but I never liked his mysticism. The only time that I met him was at a conference on votes for women at Edinburgh. Some of us were invited to stay with Bartholomew, the inventor of Bartholomew's $\frac{1}{2}$ inch maps. Among those staying with him were Edward Carpenter and Mrs. Fawcett, the leader of the constitutional branch of women's suffrage. Mrs. Fawcett refused to speak to Edward Carpenter, because he advocated a humane attitude to homosexuality, which caused inconvenience to everybody else. I never read any of his poetry, nor, indeed any of his writing except the booklets that I mentioned, but on the one occasion that I met him, at Bartholomew's, I liked him.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. Russell

APPENDIX: 3

From: Lancelot Law Whyte,
93 Redington Road,
London, N.W.3.

November 23, 1965.

Dear Mr. Barua,

It was a pleasure to have your letter and know that you are working on Edward Carpenter. I mention him on pp.18-19 of my autobiographical volume Focus And Diversion (Crescent, 1963). I never met him, but I expect he knew Bedales School, co-educational - where I was 1907-15. I did not know, or remember, that he came so close to the conception of a universal formative process, and I shall look at his Art of Creation when I am doing something on the history of the idea. Thanks for this information, and for your reference to my own writings, I enclose a Bibliography prepared in connection with lectures in the U.S.A., which may be useful to you.

I valued Carpenter's general attitude very highly, having read his Love's Coming of Age and other probably round 1913/1915. It gives me genuine pleasure to know that you are linking him with me. That is, in my view, correct and valuable, also some of Fromm's writings are similar.

Very sincerely,

Sd. L.L. Whyte.

APPENDIX: 4

From: N.E. Annan,
The Provost of King's College,
Cambridge.

December 8, 1964.

Dear Mr. Barua,

Thank you for your letter of the 28th November. I am afraid that I cannot help you at all. I have never come across any passage to suggest that Kipling had read Carpenter, and nor has E.M. Forster whom I consulted this morning. (He is just getting over a rather unpleasant attack, which at his age was rather serious, and I know he would appreciate it if you did not write to him as dealing with correspondence he now finds somewhat exhausting.)

The trouble about Kipling's views on India is that they represent so many different levels of experience. At times, as Carpenter obviously felt, he is jaunty about the future of British rule there; at other times however there is a deep strain of pessimism and even of a tragic sense. But I am not at all surprised that a man such as Carpenter found Kipling's cocksureness hard to bear.

Yours sincerely,

Sd. N.E. Annan.

APPENDIX - 5.

Ref: p. 36. A letter from George Merrill. (Nov. 11, 1896)
MSS. 363-13, Carpenter Collection.

My Dearest Dad,

I am pleased you had a nice time at Cambridge.
What a shame dear been mixed up with all these women - don't
let them turn your head with flattery. I shall be glad to
get you back, dear, and have a good hug for I am wanting badly -.
I think of you every night and morning and wish your arms were
round me.