SOME CONSTRUCTIVE IDEAS
IN SWIFT'S GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

APPROVED:

J. M. Darnall
Major Professor

Ruby C. Smith
Minor Professor

J. M. Darnall
Acting Director of the Department of English

I. A. Sharp
Chairman of the Graduate Council
SOME CONSTRUCTIVE IDEAS
IN SWIFT'S GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North
Texas State Teachers College in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Fred Warren Vivion, B. A.

Denton, Texas

August, 1937
TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE ........................................... iv

Chapter

I. SOME AdVERSE CRITICISMS AGAINST SWIFT .. 1

II. SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF MARRIAGE, EUGENICS,
    AND BIRTH CONTROL ............................ 11

III. WAR ........................................... 21

IV. SOME MODERN VIEWS OF EDUCATION ........... 33

V. POLITICAL IDEAS ............................... 50

VI. CONCLUSION ................................... 83

BIBLIOGRAPHY ...................................... 86
I have attempted in this thesis to find in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* some constructive ideas which were far in advance of his time. While doing so, I have, I hope, shown this great satire to have been not a brutal and savage attack on humanity in the misanthropic spirit of cynicism as traditional criticism has pictured it, but that while it was written as a broad criticism of life, it also held up certain ideal standards of civilization. These standards the world has now come pretty generally to accept, but they were startling in the eighteenth century.

I have elaborated on contemporary ideas of education, eugenics, birth control, and government in order to show how much the present age has thought and written about these subjects, and to throw on this background Swift's thoughts, which are not elaborated, but suggested rather. Parallelisms are not exact, of course, because Swift lived in an age when science was in its infancy, while we live in a highly developed scientific age.

Denton, Texas
August, 1937

Fred W. Vivion
CHAPTER I

SOME ADVERSE CRITICISMS AGAINST SWIFT

Perhaps no writer in English literature has been more
maligncd than Jonathan Swift. The early biographies of
his contemporaries, Orrery, Delaney, Sheridan, and Deane
Swift, his cousin, were fragmentary, incomplete, and some-
times even purposely pernicious, as in the case of Lord
Orrery. The first attempt at a fuller life by Dr. Samuel
Johnson was tainted with a strong prejudice against Swift.
Sir Walter Scott took his materials from the early biogra-
phies, including much matter unverified and showing a fail-
ure to sift the hearsay from the real facts. Later, the
savage diatribe of Jeffrey, and the utterly unsympathetic
treatment by Thackeray added to the growing legend.

When the great Dean died, he had already ceased to be
understood by people of his own age, and his imperious
personality took on an almost diabolic aspect. The nine-
teenth century biographies of Stephens, Collins, Foster,
and Craik, while on the whole more sympathetic than the

---

1F. W. Darnall, "Traditional Notions About Jonathan
Swift," English Journal, XIV (1925), 514.

2English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century, p. 31.

3Ricardo Quintana, The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift,
(1936) Introduction p. 11.
earlier ones, have done little to change the traditional notions of him; and the more recent lives by Shane Leslie,⁴ Carl Van Doren,⁵ Stephen Lucius Gwynn,⁶ have continued the traditional conception of him as a morbid, cynical misanthrope, disappointed in his ambitions, and embittered by life.

"To be great is to be misunderstood' holds true of some books as well as some men. The severest critics have not denied the greatness of Gulliver's Travels; but even those who have highly praised its narrative art have often misinterpreted its purpose and meaning. We are told 'that it exhibits a morbid effort to degrade mankind below the level of brutes,' that 'only a cynic or a misanthrope would find anything convincing in Swift's view,' and that 'it is a classic of pessimism.'⁷

Thackeray wrote:

"As for the humor and conduct of this famous fable, I suppose that there is no person who reads but must admire; as for the moral, I think it horrible, shameless, unmanly, blasphemous, and giant and great as this Dean is, I say we should hoot him."⁸

George Atherton Aiken wrote:

---

⁴ The Skull of Swift, an Extempore Exhumation, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1928


⁸ English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century, p. 31.
"In the last part of Gulliver's Travels, the voyage to the country of the Houyhnhnms, Swift's satire is of the bitterest... What made him (Gulliver) most impatient was to see 'a lump of deformity, and diseases both in body and mind, filled with pride, a vice wholly unknown to the Houyhnhnms.'

"It is a terrible conclusion. All that can be said in reply to those who condemn Swift for writing it is that it was the result of disappointment, wounded pride, growing ill-health and sorrow caused by the sickness of the one whom he loved best in the world. There is nothing bitter in the first half of the work, and most readers find only amusement in it. But in the attacks on the Yahoos, consistency is dropped; the Houyhnhnms are often prejudiced and unreasonable, and everything gives way to savage denunciation of mankind. It is only a cynic or a misanthrope who will find anything convincing in Swift's views."9

Nathan Drake asserts that:

"... its principal aim appears to have been to mortify the pride of human nature, whether arising from personal or mental accomplishments; the satire, however, is carried too far, and degenerates into a libel on the species. The fourth part, especially, notwithstanding all that has been said in its defense by Sheridan and Berkeley, apparently wishes to exhibit such a malignant wish to degrade and brutalize the human race, that with every reader of feeling and benevolence, it can occasion nothing but a mingled sensation of abhorrence and disgust."10

John Dunlop laments that the author had:

"... an express design to blacken and cul-

9 Cambridge History of English Literature, IX, 117.
minate human nature, but at least his work displays evident marks of a diseased imagination and a lacerated heart — in short, of that frame of mind which led him to frame that epitaph he composed for himself, to describe the tomb as an abode, ubi sesea indignatio ulterius cor nequit.\textsuperscript{11}

In his treatment of satirists, Hugh Walker, in condemning Swift, says:

"The remaining two parts of \textit{Gulliver's Travels} reveals a deplorable falling off. The voyage to Lapatua shows very little, and the voyage to the Houyhnhnms none at all of the playfulness with which ... Swift relieves his trenchant satire in the earlier voyages. ... But in the main, the voyage to Lapatua suggests a mind perverse and distorted; and the voyage to Houyhnhnms not only confirms but immensely deepens the impression. It is utterly inhuman and the reader has difficulty in believing that the hatred of humanity is any longer accompanied by the love of individual man. The outrage on humanity has not even the merit of being coherent.\textsuperscript{12}

In regard to the last voyage, William A. Eddy states:

"To me the defect of the fourth voyage is not the brutality of the satire, but the stupidity of the Houyhnhnms, whose judgments of Gulliver prove nothing beyond their own incompetence to judge. How is it then that the Houyhnhnms who we are assured are so much more sensible, are unable to realize that the human body is much more suitable than their own for common needs of life? Someone has blundered and I fear me it is Swift. ... In fact, Swift fails to show us any better race in the world about us; he advocates no return to nature, no imitation of the noble savage. The heart

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{History of Fiction}, II, 421.

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{English Satire and Satirists}, p. 195.
of his philosophy is not original for it is identi-
cal with Christian pessimism."13

Another comment comes from Stephen Gwynn, who says:

"If we were to consider the Travels as a work of instruction -- and every satirist is in his own way a moralist, an advocate of the opposite to which he lashes -- it must be said that it defeats its own object. Mankind will not learn from a philosopher in a rage, for then he ceases to be a philosopher. Lilliput may teach us something, Brobdingnag may set us thinking, but there is an instinctive recoil from this final exaggeration. Yet it would be foolish to suppose that Swift had any serious purpose of making his fellow creatures better. In Lilliput he wrote perhaps to please himself, to delight in witty and copious invention; perhaps there is a similar enjoyment even in Brob-
dingnag; but when we come to the Yahoos, the artist is deaf and blind to all but the need of his own impulse; it is a savage chant of detestation toward the world into which he has been born, the cry of a tortured soul seeking the relief it can find only in repose whena-seva indignatio ul-
tering cor lacrarere."14

John Churton Collins, in a somewhat more sympathetic treatment of the Dean of St. Patrick, says:

"Much has been said about Swift's object in writing Gulliver. That object he has himself ex-
plained. It was to vex the world. It was to em-
body in allegory the hatred and disdain with which he personally regarded all nations, all professions, all communities, and especially man, as man in essence is. The key to it is found in the sentiments with which his correspondence abounds -- in such a sentence as this in a letter to Pope: 'I have ever hated all nations, all professions, and com-
munities: all my love is toward individuals.' But he was resolved, he said, to laugh and cry

14 Life and Friendships of Dean Swift, p. 191.
'Vive la bagatelle' as long as he lived, and the laugh and cry are embodied in Gulliver. Take the Yahoos. Nothing can be plainer than that these odious and repulsive creatures were designed to be types, not of man, as man when brutalized and degenerate may become, but of man as man is naturally constituted. Take the Struldbrugs. What end could possibly be obtained by so shocking an exposure of human infirmities? Joneval has, it is true, left us a similar delineation; but Joneval's object was, by teaching men to distinguish between what is desirable and what is not desirable, to guide them to a cheerful and elevated philosophy. Swift's design began and ended in cynical mockery. . . . It is a satire that the philosophy and morality of which will not for a moment bear serious examination. 15

As is evident, all these estimates of Gulliver's Travels see it only as a cynical criticism of mankind. The question which I raise is: Is Gulliver's Travels merely cynical or is it rather a satire with an underlying constructive purpose?

There is a difference between a cynic and a satirist. A cynic is one who never sees a good quality in a man and always sees a bad one, 16 but a satirist is one who through a species of compositions, either poetry or prose, holds up vice, folly, incapacity, or corruptness to ridicule. 17

Frances Theresa Russell says in regard to this subject:

"Satire is humorous criticism of human foibles


16 H. W. Beecher, Drysdale's Proverbs from the Plymouth Pulpit, p. 49.

17 Webster's International Dictionary."
and faults, or of life itself, directed especially against deception, and expressed with sufficient art to be accounted as literature. The relation between humor, satire, and criticism is that two circles, not coincident but overlapping."18

Meredith declares that the satirist is "a moral agent, often a social scavenger, working on a storage of bile."19 Dawson, with a similar viewpoint, says:

"It is quite beside the mark to say that we do not like satire. The thing to be remembered is that the satirist of manners has been of the utmost service to society in exposing its foibles and lashing its vices. It is the work of a great satirist to apply the caustic to the ulcers of society; and if we are to let our dislike of satire overrule our judgment, we shall not only record our votes against a Jumeval and a Swift, but equally against the whole line of Hebrew prophets."20

Swift himself has given us some causes for calling him a cynic, for he wrote to Pope:

"I have ever hated all nations, professions and communities, and all my love is toward individuals; for I hate the tribe of lawyers, but I love counsellor such-a-one and judge such-a-one .... Principally I hate that animal man, although I heartily love John, Peter, and Thomas and so forth."21

These words first sound like cynicism, but have we understood their real meaning?

18 Satire in the Victorian Novel, p. 5.
19 Essay on Comedy, p. 86.
20 Makers of English Fiction, p. 86.
21 Correspondence of Swift, III, 277.
"Between the friend of man and the friend of men," writes a commentator on Swift, "there is a wide difference; one proclaims his love of humanity in the abstract and mistreats his neighbor, or he murders his thousands, as did Robespierre, for the sake of humanity. But the friend of men loves men in the concrete, he loves his friends with lasting loyalty. . . . Which, indeed, is better, to love John, Peter, and Thomas with a constant heart, or feigning a bland and generous love of abstract humanity, to wreak a wild vengeance upon individuals?"22

Swift's repeated ideal of service also stands against the accusation of misanthropy. In a letter to his friend, Chatwood, he wrote:

"I hear that they think me a smart Dean, and that I am for doing good. My notion is that if a man cannot mend the public he should mend old shoes if he can do no better, and therefore, I endeavor in the little sphere I am placed to do all the good it is capable of."23

In his sermon On the Poor Man's Contentment occurs this sentence: "I know not one real advantage that the rich have over the poor except the power of doing good to others."24 In another sermon he says: "What is there that can give a generous spirit more pleasure and complacency of mind, than to consider that he is an instrument of doing much good."25 And in the same sermon there is this passage:

"But besides this love we owe to every man

---

22 Charles Whibley, Jonathan Swift, p. 10.
23 Correspondence, II, 265.
24 Swift, Prose Works, ed. by Temple Scott, IV, 206.
25 Ibid., IV, 183.
in his particular capacity under the title of our
neighbor, there is yet a duty of more large exten-
sive nature incumbent on us, which is our love to
our neighbor in his public capacity, as he is a
member of that great body, the commonwealth, under
the same government as ourselves."26

Satire in the eighteenth century was generally thought
of as a means to correct the faults and weaknesses of man-
kind. Addison and Steele and Pope and Arbuthnot along with
Swift—all used it avowedly with that purpose. Swift's
repeated mentions of it as a method of exposing and curing
vice carry a certain definiteness of earnest purpose. Writ-
ing to John Gay he said: "To expose vice and to make people
laugh with innocence does more public service than all the
ministers of state from Adam to Walpole."27 He wrote also
to Wogan:

"As I am conjectured to have generally dealt in
raillery and satire, both in prose and verse, of
that conjecture be right, although such an opinion
has been an absolute bar to my rising in the world,
yet that very world must suppose that I followed
what to be my talent, and charitable people will
suppose that I had a design to laugh the follies
of mankind out of countenance, and as often lash
the vices out of practice."28

Again in the "Apology" prefixed to A Tale of a Tub he
says:

"Why should any clergyman of our church be

26 Ibid.
27 Correspondence, IV, 23.
28 Correspondence, IV, 329-330.
angry to see the follies of fanaticism and superstition exposed, though in the most ridiculous manner, since that is perhaps the most probable way to cure them, or at least hinder them from further spreading."

It is my purpose to show that Swift was not a cynic or a misanthrope, but the imaginative journeys under the title of *Gulliver's Travels*, while severely critical of mankind, are yet permeated with constructive ideas many years in advance of his time.

---

29 *Prose Works*, I, 15.
CHAPTER II
SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF MARRIAGE, EUGENICS, AND BIRTH CONTROL

"The grandeur of the racial ideal has been extolled by poets and philosophers of all times. From Theogones, Plutarch, and Plato down to Goethe, Jordan, and Whitman, they all dreamed the dreams of a better race of mankind. Man has ever realized the importance of the body and recognizes it now with even greater intensity. The eugenic instinct appears now after its reincarnation to be more than a mere instinct; reason has permeated it, and the racial instinct is bound to become a science and a religion, or if the latter term is to be avoided, an art."1

Perhaps Jonathan Swift realized this fact more than the people of his time did when he allowed the subject of eugenics to play such an important part in the societies of his people in his Travels. In describing the Houyhnhnms, he said:

"In their marriages they are exactly careful to choose such colors as will not make any disagreeable mixture in the breed. Strength is chiefly valued in the male, and comeliness in the female; not upon the account of love, but to preserve the race from degenerating."2

The last sentence is particularly meaningful when we remember that the age of Swift was especially a licentious one. The mawkish sentimentality of love was at its height.


2Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 319. (The W. A. Eddy edition, which will all further citations to Swift's Gulliver's Travels will be taken from).
Can one imagine a Lydia Languish raising any questions about her husband's health? Marriage was contracted with little thought of the physical welfare of the future generations. The female body was glorified, and romantic young men sighed over a garter, a girdle that had encircled "her" waist, or a lock of hair from her head. Swift's view is that of the biological aspect of marriage -- a theme anti-romanticists like George Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells have been advocating for years. A typical example of the present day attitude which Swift would have agreed with heartily is the statement of Havelock Ellis:

"We have come to the point today when we realize that marriage must be regarded not as a state of ideal bliss, but rather a hard and fast business arrangement and partnership for the furtherance and welfare of the young."

Closely tied up with this idea of eugenics is another social question which is being championed vigorously in this generation. It is the question of birth control -- one that Swift advocates with his accustomed reasonableness and forethought. Despite the fact that for many centuries man has deliberately limited his offspring by one method or another, the mention of such a subject was taboo for a long time. Swift, however, in the final voyage of Gulliver, voiced his sentiments on the matter when he said:

3The Problem of Race Regeneration, p. 54.
"When the matron Houynhnhms have produced one of each sex, they no longer accompany with their consorts, except they lose one of their issue by some casualty, which very seldom happens; but in such a case they meet again; or when the like accident befalls a person whose wife is past bearing, some other couple bestow on him one of their own colts, and then go together again until the mother is pregnant. This caution is necessary to prevent the country from being overburdened with numbers. But the race of inferior Houynhnhms bred up to be servants is not so strictly limited on this article; these are allowed to produce three of each sex, to be domestics in the noble families."

Compare the ideas of Swift to those of a present-day writer who says:

"Moreover, if we consider each family separately, we shall see that it is often highly desirable that it should not be too large. In the first place, the probable effect on the mother's health must be held in consideration... Lastly, all parents ought not to bring more children into the world than they can reasonably hope to bring up in accordance with a certain standard as regards all higher things, which should not in any case be below that which they themselves should be accustomed to. The misery, pauperism, and even crime, resulting from over-crowded houses could certainly be lessened or obviated by forethought as to the size of the family. In fact, others beside those of bad stock ought often to refrain from parenthood."

Some methods of preventing a too rapid increase of population must have been in operation in all ages. Animals in a state of nature always produce so many offspring

---

4Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 319.

that, if all their young ones were to survive, the members of their kind would increase with enormous rapidity. The same would be said of man if he were to take nature as his guide in these matters. The checks which have been most commonly operative in the past have been war, famine, disease, especially among the young, and the practice of abortion.7

We all condemn war, at all events with our mouths. Happily, it is no longer necessary to argue against the murder of infants, or against paying attention to their health. The cure of disease among persons of all ages, and its prevention by means of precautions taken in advance, must meet with universal approval. Thus we see that we are now striving and are bound to strive against many of those methods of keeping down numbers which have been most effective in the past.8

Looking to the future the increase of supplies of all kinds could not keep pace with such an increase in numbers as would take place in the absence of these checks. If overpopulation is permitted in the future, it will inevitably result in much employment, then in increasing poverty and disease, and finally in actual starvation. If this is not sooner or later to be our fate, some means of checking the growth of population

---

7Darwin, op. cit., p. 34.
8Darwin, op. cit., p. 35.
must always be kept actively at work."

"Be fruitful and multiply is a precept which nature
preaches and practices in all her aspects of life." In
the case of man; however, most of the natural checks and
enemies have been overcome by science, so that his in-
creasing numbers create some stern social and economic
problems.

"The American Conference on Birth Control and National
Recovery, which was held in Washington on January 15, 16,
and 17, 1934, was marked throughout by an earnest and scien-
tific spirit and a total absence of jingoism." Six hun-
dred delegates, including distinguished specialists in the
fields of medicine, sociology, biology, and social work,
scrutinized the subject from every angle. They discussed
the relation of birth control to national and international
problems, to federal relief, public health, and maternal
mortality; they appraised contraceptive methods, not hesi-
titating to point out flaws, viewed some present clinical
facilities, and laid plans in orderly, concrete, and effi-
cient manner for speeding up the work on the birth control
subject and furthering scientific research.

---

9 Ibid.
10 Lydia Allen De Vilbliss, Birth Control, p. 18.
11 Stella Hanan, "The Birth Control Conference," The
Nation, CXXXVIII (1933), 189.
12 Ibid., p. 130.
One of its objects was to legalize the dissemination by physicians of contraceptive information and advice. A bill to that end was sponsored by Representative Walter Pierce, former Governor of Oregon. Its advocates were confident that it would prevent unwarranted large burdens on the family, mitigate the greatest relief load in history, improve the human breed, and relieve the population pressure. 13

Emphasizing that control of population growth is closely related to a high per capita income and full employment of the factors of production, Professor Joseph J. Spingler, of the University of Arizona, said:

"In the absence of control, the stork, like a jackal in the night, will steal the fruits of invention. What we seek is the protection of the race from the suicidal effects of the present conditions." 14

Swift, of course, had no idea of any such scientific or artificial means of birth control. His only remedy was an exercise of restraint. By advocacy of artificial means of birth control, our present society admits that mankind is so weak that he does not have a sufficient amount of will power to control its desires. Swift, at least, puts birth control on a higher plane. We are attempting to

13Ibid.

reach the same end that Swift advocated but by less admirable means. For Swift's Houyhnhnms, it was a simple matter approached with sanity to control the birth rate of their land, for:

"Every fourth month at the vernal equinox, there is a representative council of the whole nation, which meets in a plain about twenty miles from our house. Here, . . . the regulation of children is settled; as for instance, if a houyhnhnm hath two males, he changeth one of them with another that hath two females; and when a child hath been lost by some casualty, where the mother is past breeding, it is determined what family in the district shall breed another to supply the loss."15

Cold blooded! one might say. But the principle behind it is theoretically sound and reasonable. Overpopulation is a menace that cannot be ignored. (1937?)

It may be impossible to place all human family relationships on such a cold intellectual basis. Something—a great deal in fact—could be said about the happiness which is derived from sentiments of love and affection in the family. Equally as much, or perhaps more, could be said about the evil consequences of excessive sentimentality in marriage and the mushy affection in the relationship of parent and child. Against this soft sentimentality, modern life under the influence of science, has rebelled. Educational trends in child welfare point, not to such

---

matter-of-fact relationships as Swift hints at, but, at least, to mixing common sense and reason in the relationship of parents to children.

The Soviet regime in Russia approaches Swift’s idea. A bill was introduced in Russia on December 8, 1917, which introduced far-reaching changes in the domain of legislation with regard to marriage and the family.16

"First of all, it deprived religious marriage of all legal significance and established civil marriage... This marriage represented a union where there are two working in which there is no possibility of dividing that which in this union is common property, or of determining by whom it was earned and appropriated for the common use. In determining the judicial relations between parents, the bill maintains and emphasized in full measure in the significance of actual facts in determining the rights of the child, which must be the first consideration, always coming before the interests of the parents."17

Hear what Swift says in describing the duties of the Lilliputian parents:

"Their notions relating to the duties of parents and children differ extremely from ours. For since the conjunction of male and female is founded upon the great law of nature, in order to propagate and continue the species, the Lilliputians will needs have it, that men and women are joined together like other animals, by the motives of concupiscence; and that their tenderness toward their young proceeds from the like natural principle: for which reason they will never allow, that a child is under any obliga-


17 Kursky, op. cit., p. 657.
tion to his father for begetting him, or his mother for bringing him into the world; which was neither a benefit in itself, nor intended so by his parents."18

D. Kursky goes on to say that the work of organization for the care and guardianship of the children shows that every means which contributes to the welfare of the children should be made use of, including that of placing them in families.19

This action is not unlike one of the functions of the Council in the government of the Houyhnhnms which provided for the placing of the colts in the families that had a delinquency in them.20 Recently, a large number of people in Russia have quite conscientiously declared that they wish to take children into their families, a desire which there is no reason to oppose.21

Among the individual clauses of the last part of the bill are the new regulations for the procedure of registering marriages.

"The bill deprives the contract of marriage of all ceremony, but nevertheless, establishes a definite and necessary procedure as a minimum; registration cannot be undertaken by any chance technical worker but must be performed by a responsible functionary; the deed of registration

18 Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 67.
19 D. Kursky, op. cit., p. 656.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
must be read to those present, and witnesses provided by the contracting parties may be admitted."

A parallelism in thought may be found when Swift describes the marriages of the Houyhnhnms. He says:

"Courtship, love, presents, jointures, settlements, have no place in their thoughts, or terms whereby to express them in their language. The young couple meet and are joined, merely because it is the determination of their parents and friends: it is what they see done every day, and they look upon it as one of the necessary actions of a rational being."

Swift outdated? No, not in his ideas concerning the welfare of posterity, a subject which science only in recent years has become interested in.

\[22\text{Kursky, op. cit., p. 657.}\]
\[23\text{Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 320.}\]
CHAPTER III
WAR

We are gradually coming to agree with Swift's idea that nations, professions, and communities are universally grasping and self-centered, and that generosity exists only in individuals. From our history we may conclude that lust and avarice and malice have predominated in the people who have built our nations.

An element that has played an important role in the formation of these nations is war, a subject that Swift holds up to scorching ridicule. War has always been one of the worst problems that faces the world. By pointing out its unreasonableness and the foolish causes of it, Swift wrote in the vain hope that the evils of war might be lessened or that it might eventually be stamped out entirely.

Present day writers rationalize concerning its causes, its outcomes, and vainly try to justify its existence. But while men probably lived on earth for millennia without war, this evil has become so entwined with human life on this planet that "it is almost impossible to take out of the tapestry the threads which only war has woven into the warp and woof of it".¹ Men have always tried to im-

¹Norman Thomas, No Glory, No Profit, No Need, p. 11.
prove their condition. They have pursued agriculture in order not to suffer hunger; they have built houses to protect them against cold. Briefly, they have constantly tried to adapt their environment to their needs or themselves to their environment.

"When certain individuals have been freed from the concern of their daily bread, they have turned to the arts, or literature, or science, or philosophy and thus to civilization," says J. Novicow. "If man had been perpetually despoiled by his neighbor, however, wealth could not have accumulated, and intellectual needs could not have arisen. To sum up, war is a selection for the worst, which destroys the more cultivated and leaves the more barbarous; it has always held back mental progress, and at this day it increases mental stagnation." 2

Another present day writer who also recognizes the sham of war declares:

"The notion that war is a necessary and even glorious part of the evolutionary program of progress, bound up with the struggle of the fittest to survive, is today one of the most completely exploded myths which has masqueraded for a while under the name of science." 3

In modern times men no longer arm themselves with whatever comes to hand and fight like a swarm of angry bees. War becomes an evermore specialized activity, not to be performed without thoughtful preparation and a substantial backing of wealth.

2 Thomas, op. cit., p. 85, quotation by author.
3 Ibid., p. 90.
"Just as most civilized countries have, in the past, seen fit to put aside a certain definite amount of their resources for the service of their acknowledged gods, so all communities have contributed their quota of wealth and manhood to the service of Mars, whether they acknowledge him or not," says Norman Thomas. "It is a part of the tragedy of man that he has turned his high virtue of loyalty and his marvelous capacity for cooperation so often to war against his neighbors rather than to the complete and final victory over poverty." 4

In order to reveal the modernity in Swift's writings, a glance at what modern critics have to say on the causes and the needlessness of war will convince us that the passing of years has not outdated Swift's constructive notions.

If man were by nature wholly incapable of physical combat as the Houyhnhnmaian master intimated, when he remarked that "your mouths lying flat on your faces, you can hardly bite each other to any purpose," then, of course, there would be no wars. Man, however, like other members of the animal kingdom, is capable under certain circumstances of offensive or defensive physical combat against enemies. 5 Preachers tell us that wars are out of selfishness. This is true to a large extent, but the selfishness usually lies on leaders or instigators, and recently some

4 Thomas, op. cit., p. 90.

5 Etienne Wingfield-Stratton, They That Take the Sword, p. 257.
blame for the last war was placed on munitions manufac-
turers. 6

Another popular notion as to the causes of war is that
men fight because they want power, victory, glory, and do-
munion or rule over their fellows. It is probably more
ture to say that men fight wars because they are afraid.
Concerning this, Eteinne Wingfield-Stratton says:

"When nations are somewhat near an equality
of strength, it is in fear of the actual or po-
tential enemy which leads them not to arm, but
in certain emergencies, to try to 'get the jump'
on the enemy by attacking first. Victory in
war usually goes to the largest battalions and
not to the best cause. The main root of war is
be found in the struggle for gain, if not for
the individual soldier, then for the group to
which he belongs."7

"Why, then, do men continue to prepare for war,"
Gulliver's Master might ask today, "If the World War so
completely bore out Norman Angell's argument 8 that profit
in modern war is the great illusion?"

If the Brobdingnagian King was amazed to hear of the
great expense of wars in the eighteenth century, it is
interesting to wonder what he would say in regard to the
expense of the last one. Gulliver relates that "he won-
dered to hear me talk of such chargeable and extensive

6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 The Great Illusion, p. 88.
wars; that certainly we must be a quarrelsome people, or live among very bad neighbors, and that our generals must needs be richer than our kings.\(^9\)

The last war not only cost the world a great deal of wealth, but the flower of its manhood as well. The following items\(^10\) compiled by Norman Thomas gives an idea of this deplorable problem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10,000,000 known dead soldiers</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,000,000 presumed dead soldiers</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000,000 wounded</td>
<td>20,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000,000 dead civilians</td>
<td>15,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,000,000 prisoners</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000,000 war orphans</td>
<td>9,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000,000 war widows</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000,000 refugees</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following is a direct cost of the war:\(^11\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$22,625,252,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>$55,534,011,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of British Empire</td>
<td>$4,193,814,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>$24,265,582,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>$22,593,950,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>$12,413,996,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Entente Allies</td>
<td>$3,963,867,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$125,580,476,497</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>$37,775,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>$20,622,960,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey and Bulgaria</td>
<td>$2,963,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$60,643,160,600</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total** : **$186,333,637,007**


\(^10\)Angell, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

\(^11\)Ibid.
The following items are a view of the indirect costs of the World War:\(^{12}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capitalised value of lives lost</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soldiers</td>
<td>$33,551,276,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilians</td>
<td>33,551,276,280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property losses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping and cargo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss to neutrals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total indirect costs: $151,612,542,560
Total direct costs (net): 186,335,637,007
Grand total costs of war: $537,964,179,657

On the subject of the cost of war, Senator Nye, Chairman of the Senate Investigating Committee, in some of his speeches has been quoting a statement which he attributed to Nicholas Murray Butler. He says:

"The cost to the world of the four years of the World War would provide a $2,500 home with $1,000 worth of furniture and five acres of land for every family in Russia, most of the European nations, Canada, the United States, and Australia; then would give every city over 20,000 population a $2,000,000 college, and would buy every piece of property in Germany and Belgium."\(^{13}\)

"The cheerful optimists who pretend a faith in progress and perfectability, were and are ashamed of the mere thought of the Yahoos," comments Charles Whibley in upholding Swift. "But there are far more and fiercer Yahoos in this present world than ever were dreamed of by Swift."\(^{14}\)

---

\(^{12}\) Angell, op. cit., p. 91.

\(^{13}\) Thomas, op. cit., p. 226.

\(^{14}\) "Gulliver's Travels," Blackwoods, CCXX (1930), 558.
The commentator just quoted, seeing what vast numbers of Swift's readers have not seen, asserts that the Dean had a passion for reform and that he was not inspired to this unpleasant task of satirizing man's civilization by malice. He wrote from other motives than a mere love of bestiality, and depicted horrors, not to identify himself with them, but in the vain hope that they might be abolished.15

It was in such a spirit that he was writing when he recorded the conversation between the Master of the Houyhnhnms and Gulliver, who related to him the causes of war.

"He asked me what were the usual causes or motives that made one country go to war with another. I answered they were innumerable, but I should mention only a few of the chief. Sometimes the ambition of princes who never think they have enough land or people to govern; sometimes the corruption of ministers, who engage their master in a war in order to stifle or divert the clamour of the subjects against their evil administration."16

Gulliver also tells him that difference of opinion has cost many millions of lives, and then he relates some instances that are filled with satire.

"... for instance, whether flesh be bread, or bread be flesh; whether the juice of a certain berry be blood or wine; whether whistling be a vice or a virtue; whether it be better to kiss a post, or throw it into the fire; what is the best colour for a coat, whether black, white, red, or gray; and whether it should be long or short, narrow or wide, dirty or clean; with many more."

15 Ibid., p. 559.

16 Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 292.
Neither are any wars so fierce and bloody, nor of so long continuance, as those occasioned by difference of opinion, especially if it be in things indifferent."

Gulliver continues the discourse, giving the causes of war, stating them positively, but underneath, one may detect the ridicule that was intended.

"Sometimes the quarrel between two princes is to decided which of them shall possess a third of his dominions, where neither of them pretend to any right. Sometimes one prince quarrelleth with another for fear the other should quarrel with him. Sometimes a war is entered upon, because the enemy is too strong, and sometimes because he is too weak. Sometimes our neighbors want the things which we have, or have the things which we want; and we both fight, till they take ours or give us theirs.

"It is a very justifiable cause of a war," continues Gulliver, "to invade a country after the people have been wasted by famine, destroyed by pestilence, or embroiled by factions among themselves. It is justifiable to enter into war against our nearest ally, when one of his towns lies convenient for us, or a territory of land that would render our dominions round and complete. If a prince sends forces into a nation where the people are poor and ignorant, he may lawfully put half of them to death, and make slaves of the rest, in order to civilize and reduce them from their barbarous way of living. It is a very kingly, honorable and frequent practice, when one prince desires the assistance of another to secure him against an invasion, that the assistant, when he hath driven out the invader, should seize on the dominions himself, and kill, imprison or banish the prince he came to relieve. Alliance by blood or marriage is a frequent cause of war between princes; and the nearer the kindred is, the greater is their disposition to quarrel; poor nations are hungry, and rich nations are proud; and pride

---

17 Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 292.
and hunger will ever be at variance. For these reasons, the trade of a soldier is held the most honorable of all others; because a soldier is a Yahoo hired to kill in cold blood as many of his own species, who have never offended him, as possibly he can."

Referring to an incident that has happened several times in English history, Gulliver reveals also that:

"There is likewise a kind of beggarly princes in Europe, not able to make war by themselves, who hire out their troops to richer nations, for so much a day to each man; of which they keep three fourths to themselves, and it is the best part of their maintenance; such are those in Germany and other northern parts of Europe. "What you have told me, (said my master) upon the subject of war, does indeed discover most admirably the effects of that reason you pretend to."19

The Master would not believe that our race was capable of such monstrosities, but Gulliver said he could not forbear shaking his head and "smiling a little at his ignorance".20 Gulliver, being no stranger to the art of war, then proceeds to give the Master a vivid picture of warfare with:

"... cannons, culverins, muskets, carbines, pistols, bullets, powder, swords, bayonets, battles, sieges, retreats, attacks, undermines, countermines, bombardments, sea fights; ships sunk with a thousand men, twenty thousand killed on each side; dying groans, limbs flying in the air, smoke, noise, confusion, trampling to death under

---

18 Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 292.
19 Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 294.
20 Ibid., p. 295.
horses' feet; flight, pursuit, victory; fields strewed with carcasses left for food to dogs, and wolves and birds of prey; plundering, stripping, ravishing, burning and destroying."21

In order to reveal the bravery of his countrymen, Gulliver, satirically, of course, assures him that he had seen them blow up a hundred enemies at once in a battle and that he had "beheld the dead bodies come down in pieces from the clouds, to the great diversion of the spectators".22 He was going on to relate more similar incidents when the Master commanded him to stop with the statement that "whoever understood the nature of Yahoos might easily believe it possible for so vile an animal to be capable of every action I had named, if their strength and cunning equaled their malice".23

It is small wonder that the Brobdignagian king also was "struck with horror at the description" which Gulliver gave him concerning war. He told him of an invention discovered to make a certain powder "into a heap of which the smallest spark of fire falling, would kindle the whole in a moment," and that it would make it "all fly up in the air together, with a noise and agitation greater than thunder."24

21 Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 294.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
Gulliver understood the ingredients of this powder well and offered to direct the workmen in his Majesty's kingdom how to make great engines of destruction which would "batter down the walls of the strongest town... or destroy the whole metropolis, if ever it should pretend to dispute his absolute commands."  

On hearing this suggestion, however, the King was struck with horror at the proposal Gulliver had made.

"He was amazed how so impotent and grovelling an insect as I (these were his expressions) could entertain such inhuman ideas, and in so familiar manner as to appear wholly unmoved at all the scenes of blood and desolation, which I had painted as the common effects of those destructive machines, whereof he said evil genius, enemy to mankind, must have been the first contriver. As for himself, he protested that although few things delighted him so much as new discoveries in art or in nature, yet he would rather lose half his kingdom than to be privy to such a secret, which he commanded me, as I valued my life never to mention again."  

Thus in the Brobdingnagian king's last statement may be found some of Swift's profound distaste of war, as unreasonable, brought on by the most trivial causes, and utterly inhuman. Its horrors are pictured against the background of a sane, well-balanced civilization which the Houyhnhnms symbolize with the scorching satire of one who earnestly wished to abolish this evil from the world.

---


26 Ibid.
Are the Travels merely cynical? No, not so long as nations keep arming and preparing for wars. That, to the Brobdingnagian king would appear incredible, but to us appear as a matter of course. In reading Swift's description of war and its causes, the average reader is left with a feeling of abhorrence toward that subject, which is the effect he hoped to leave.
CHAPTER IV

SOME MODERN VIEWS OF EDUCATION

In reading the *Travels* to find constructive ideas, one may detect in this great work several principles of education. One should not expect to discover them positively; they are subtly suggested in the ironical method characteristic of Swift. The idea of a practical education for all classes, the advocacy of the education of women as well as men, the necessity for the establishment of public nurseries for all children, and the recognition of a need for utilitarian or technical education for the working classes are some of the ideas negatively incorporated in his positive satire.

These ideas were advocated when England had no conception of them. It has taken two hundred years for England to catch up with Swift's ideals. All of them are now recognized as sound. In looking at the educational problems of England during Swift's time, one finds that the conception of national education had not been grasped at all. A. S. Turberville gives an apt description:

"Except for the well-to-do there was no education obtainable save in charity schools and Sunday schools. Conditions in the great public schools in this period were very rough. Discipline was harsh, yet the boys were apt to be turbulent; the course of study consisted of little but the classics. The staffing was inadequate,
and there were no organized games.\textsuperscript{1}

William Conner Sydney, as a result of a comprehensive study of that century, declared that there can be little doubt that the inveteracy and extent of the frivolity, depravity, ignorance, and low state of mental culture with which all classes of English society were imbued in that century, may be attributed in great measure to the very insufficient character of the instruction with which it was then considered necessary to impart during the season of childhood.\textsuperscript{2} The parents still venerated the schoolmaster's rod, and regarded the teaching of a language or two to be its whole business.\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{4}When the preparatory schoolmaster had taught his pupils all he knew (which at best was little), or when he had exhausted his patience with his dulness and stupidity, he was usually dispatched to one of the great public schools . . . and under a rigorous course of the same discipline . . . attained or did not attain a trifling quantity of classic lore at a most formidable expense to his parents or guardian.\textsuperscript{4}

It was rare that the schoolmaster took pains to stimulate the spirit of emulation among his scholars, or to foster a desire for the acquisition of knowledge.\textsuperscript{5}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{1}English Men and Manners in the Eighteenth Century, p. 160.
\textsuperscript{2}William Conner Sydney, England and the English During the Eighteenth Century, (2nd. edition), II, 86.
\textsuperscript{3}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{4}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{5}Etienne Wingfield-Stratton, They That Take the Sword, p. 257.
\end{flushleft}
the time a youth arrived at the age of eighteen or nine-
teen, he was ready to set out on a grand tour of Europe
where he wandered for three or four years to return fin-
ally home more conceited, more dissipated than before. 6

"Nothing," wrote Addison during the early
part of the century, "is more frequent than to
take a lad from grammar and law, and under the
tuition of some poor scholar who is willing to
be banished for thrity pounds a year and a lit-
tle victuals, send him crying and snivelling
into foreign countries. Thus he spends his mind
as children do at puppet shows, and with very
much the same advantage, in staring and gaping
at an amazing variety of strange things; strange
indeed, to one who is not prepared to comprehend
the reasons and meanings of them, whilst he should
be laying the solid foundations of knowledge in
his mind, and furnishing it with rule to direct
his future progress in life under some skillful
master in the art of instruction." 7

If the education of the boys and young men was defec-
tive, the quality and extent of that which was usually
 imparted to girls were, if anything, worse. 8 The course
of feminine education began about the age of eight and
ended soon after fifteen. 9 For the most part it com-
prised the acquisition of divers branches of education
which now form a part of the ordinary curriculum, but which
were then commonly comprised under the category of "accom-

6 Ibid.
7 The Spectator, No. 364.
8 Sydney, op. cit., p. 80.
9 Ibid.
plishments". The girl was given some slight proficiency in "the poetry of motion," and a little vocal and instrumental music, perhaps a smattering of a language other than her own, of which her ignorance was profound, and as much knowledge of "accounts" as would enable her to compute with accuracy the several amounts of her gains and losses at the hazard and faro tables. Any lady who could read tolerably well, and who could legibly write her own name, was set down by all whose opinion was worth having as a learned woman.

Swift himself could not keep from writing about the conditions of education at that time, and in his "Essay on Modern Education," he declared:

"... more than one or two persons of high rank declare they could learn nothing more at Oxford and Cambridge than to drink ale and smoke tobacco; wherein he firmly believed them, and could have added some hundred examples of his own observation in one of those Universities; but they were all of young heirs, sent thither only for form, either from schools where they were not suffered by their careful parents to stay above three months in the year, or from under the management of French family tutors, who yet often attended them to their college to prevent all possibility of their improvement."[12]

With considerable foresight, Swift, by comparing the

[10] Ibid., p. 81.
educational ideals of the Lilliputians and Houyhnhnms with
the English system, shows the deficiency of English educa-
tion and indirectly advocates certain programs which since
have been carried out successfully. For example, in the
Travels we find Gulliver reporting a conversation with the
Houyhnhnman Master, saying:

"In the education of the youth of both sexes,
their method is admirable, and highly deserves
our imitation. . . . Temperance, industry, exer-
cise, and cleanliness are the lessons equally
enjoined to the young ones of both sexes; and
my master thought it monstrous in us to give the
females a different kind of education from the
males, except in some articles of domestic man-
agement; whereby, as he observed, one half of
our natives were good for nothing but bringing
children into the world; and to trust the care
of our children to such useless animals, he
said, was yet a greater instance of brutality."\textsuperscript{13}

Here, Swift clearly recognises the importance of the
education of women, something that was being only slightly
agitated at that date. A contemporary, De Foe, in a chap-
ter in his "Essay on Projects", also thinks along the
same lines:

"I have often thought of it as one of the
most barbarous customs in the world, consider-
ing us a civilised and a Christian country, that
we deny the advantages of learning to our women.
We reproach the sex every day with folly and
impertinence, while I am confident, had they the
advantage of education equal to ours, they would
be guilty of less than ourselves. . . . Why . . .
should women be denied the benefit of instruc-
tion? If knowledge and understanding had been

\textsuperscript{13}Gulliver's Travels, p. 320.
useless additions to the sex, God Almighty would never have given them capacities; for he made nothing useless. Besides, I would ask any such, what they can see in ignorance that they should think it a necessary ornament to a woman? . . . that women might have at least a needful opportunity of education in all sorts of useful learning, I propose the draught of an academy for that purpose. . . . in short, I would have men take women for companions, and educate them to be fit for it. . . . This chapter is but an essay at the thing; (the education of women) and I refer the practice to those happy days, if ever they shall be, when men shall be wise enough to mend it.14

The twentieth century has recognized the importance of this subject and for the same reason that Swift and De Foe did, namely: that it is detrimental to the race to have ignorant and illiterate mothers.

"Neither," Swift continues, "did I perceive any difference in their education, made by their differences in sex, only that the exercises of the females were not altogether so robust; and some rules were given them relating to domestic life . . . for their maxim is, that among people of quality, a wife should be always a reasonable and agreeable companion, because she cannot always be young."15

Such is the goal of our own educational system at the present time. A well-known college president says:

"Our liberal colleges are attempting to supply certain tools, such as language or mathematics, to cultivate certain capacities such as accurate reasoning, appreciation and practice of literature, art, or music, and to impart certain kinds of knowledge, such as the mass of information in history or science. For women no less than

14 William Chadwick, Life and Times of Daniel De Foe, p. 67, quoted from "Essay on Projects".
15 Gulliver's Travels, p. 67.
men, it is desirable to sharpen their sensibilities, to develop their faculties, to broaden their outlook, to provide themselves with self-expression, to store up those resources which make life rich and full. Colleges of all types are choosing the sociological view as their goal. They are trying to equip all students of both sexes for more effective participation in the fundamental activities of life.\textsuperscript{16}

The mid-Victorian feminist failed to see the good in any thing modern. Today our world is different. In outside life, as a result of the broadening of her educational horizon, the woman is found in civil service, in responsible offices, in political, economic, and social positions. Equal education of men and women "brings good scholarship, sound friendships, and successful marriages."\textsuperscript{17} This idea coincides with the impression which Swift conveys to us in his Houyhnhnmian country, for he said that "the married pair pass their lives with the same friendship and mutual benevolence that they bear to all others who come their way; without jealousy, quarreling. . ."\textsuperscript{18}

More modern and constructive ideas on educating the young may be found revealed in the description of the Lilliputian nurseries, for Swift writes:

". . . their opinion is, that parents are

\textsuperscript{16} William Allen Neilson, "Should Women Be Educated Like Men?", \textit{Forum}, XXCI (1929), 162.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 103.

\textsuperscript{18} Gulliver's Travels, p. 321.
the last of all others to be trusted with the education of their own children; and therefore they have in every town public nurseries, where all parents, except cottagers and laborers, are obliged to send their infants of both sexes to be reared and educated when they come to the age of twenty moons, at which time they are supposed to have some rudiments of docility. These schools are of several kinds, suited to different qualities . . . and . . . inclinations.19

Our present day nursery schools and kindergartens under experts in child care and child psychology, are a wise provision to give children training which they do not get at home, the necessity for which Swift dimly visioned.

The kindergarten, a school for children, was first suggested by Friedrich Froebel in 1840. His idea was to utilize the natural activity of the child, organizing it so as to employ it to assist in the physical, mental, and moral development. The pioneer movement for establishment of kindergartens in the United States was led by Miss Elizabeth Peabody of Boston in 1867. The first successful attempt to make the kindergarten a part of the public school system was made in St. Louis in 1873. Recently, nursery schools have been established for children from eighteen months to four years old. The National Kindergarten Association of the United States, established in 1909, has the object of helping to secure the advantages of kindergarten education for all the children of the United States.20

19 Ibid., p. 68.
Swift, of course, did not visualize our highly developed kindergartens and public schools with specially trained teachers of today, but he did recognize the fact that hundreds of mothers are unprepared to take intelligent care of their children, and that the state has to assume some responsibility concerning the welfare of its future citizens.

Now, England compels parents to send children between five and fourteen years to school. Scotland, likewise, compels attendance between five and sixteen years, and Ireland, from six to fourteen years. The widespread interest in child welfare, including nursery schools, kindergartens, and other agencies, is an effort to supply a service to children of ignorant parents, or to supplement parental care of more intelligent parents. It was a national need that Swift foresaw two hundred years before it became a reality.

Some admirable suggestions for the moral education of the youngsters may also be found in the same narrative. The Lilliputian children are bred up in the principles of "honor, justice, courage, modesty, clemency, religion, and love of their country." This passage is an excellent example of Swift's double-barreled method. It contains by contrast a suggestion of a criticism that English children are not brought up on these moral standards. It carries

\[\textit{Gulliver's Travels, p. 67.}\]
also, by suggestion the thought that they ought to be, and recognizes moral character, as the essential basis for education, more important than the mere acquisition of knowledge and skills. We find that these principles do not differ greatly from those listed by Charters in a study he made recently. He mentions the ideals of education as reverence, economy, chastity, sincerity, high-mindedness, dependability, service, honesty, scholarliness, and health.

John Dewey also declares that "conscious instruction in morals is likely to be efficacious only in the degree in which it falls in with the general walk and conversation of those who constitute the child's environment." 23

Morality is greatly determined by environment and personality. 24 Recognizing this now important principle, Swift provided for it, for he wrote:

"They are never allowed to converse with the servants, but go together in small or greater numbers to their diversions, and always in the presence of a professor, or one of his deputies; whereby they avoid those early impressions of folly and vice to which our children are subject. Their parents are suffered to see them only twice a year; the visit is to last but an hour. They are allowed to kiss the children at meeting and part-


23 John Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 3.

24 A. S. Beskham, "Mental Hygiene and Character Education," Mental Hygiene, XVI (1930), 259.
ing; but a professor, who always stands by on those occasions, will not suffer them to whisper, or use any fondling expressions, or bring any presents of toys, sweetmeats, and the like."

Swift recognized, perhaps, also, the need of distributing certain knowledge concerning the facts of life and other such subjects that were then taboo in education. He saw to it in his educational setup that important information was not handled promiscuously. In speaking of the girls and their schools, Gulliver says:

"... and if it be found that these nurses ever presume to entertain the girls with frightful or foolish stories, or the common follies practiced by chambermaids among us, they are publicly whipped thrice about the city, imprisoned a year, and banished for life to the most desolate part of the country. Thus these young ladies are as much ashamed of being cowards and fools as men, and despise all personal ornaments beyond decency and cleanliness."

Thus care was exercised to prevent facts from coming to the children in an underhanded or a distorted manner.

To say that Swift believed in a purely utilitarian education might not be exactly true; however, he believed in giving the young, both male and female, an education best suited to their capacities or stations in life, for in Lilliput:

"... schools are of different kinds, suited to different qualities, and to both sexes. They

25 Gulliver's Travels, p. 68.

26 Ibid.
have certain professors well skilled in preparing children for such a condition of life as befits the rank of their parents, and their own capacities as well as inclinations."

One may be justified, then, in saying that Swift provided somewhat for the individual differences in the boys and girls in his visionary schools, visionary then but a realization now. He also realized that all individuals are not fitted for the highest places. This idea is not in discord with our present system of vocational education provided by technical schools, which play a large part in the education of the working classes. Swift, was, of course, no democrat as we understand the term. At least he did not advocate the same education for every child. He frankly recognized the cast system which functioned then in England and to a large extent still does.

"The nurseries for children of ordinary gentlemen, merchants, traders, and handicrafts," he writes, "are managed proportionably after the same manner; (i.e., the nurseries for the males of noble birth) only those designed for trades, are put out as apprentices at eleven years old, whereas those of persons of quality continue in their exercises till fifteen, which answers to one and twenty with us; but the confinement is gradually lessened for the last three years."

"In the nurseries of females of the meaner sort, the children are instructed in all kinds of works proper for their sex... and... their

27 *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 68.

28 Ibid., p. 69.
several degrees."

This idea of specialization in education was not entirely original with Swift, but he was able to see in it some means of improvement which the present century subscribes to.

Physical education was also considered by Swift in the rearing of children, for the Houyhnhnms must "train up their youth to strength and speed and hardiness." He further carried out this idea when, in the land of the Houyhnhnms, "four times a year, the youth of a certain district meet to show their proficiency in feats of strength and agility." "Temperance, industry, exercise and cleanliness, are the lessons equally enjoined to the young ones of both sexes" in this land. More and more each day, our modern world has come to place emphasis upon the ideas in the above quotation. America is said to worship efficiency, but this worship has not here-to-fore included the human being, that self-developed machine whose duty is a thousand times more valuable than that of a man-made machine.

---

29 *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 68.
We can speak even more strongly in favor of Swift's viewpoint at this distance of two hundred years. There are two recognized ways of improving the quality of human beings: one, by giving them a better heredity—starting them in life with a stronger heart, better digestion, steadier nerves; the other, by so combining the factors of daily life that even a weak heart may grow strong, a poor digestion may grow good, and frayed nerves may gain steadiness.34

Like Swift, the heads of our modern elementary and secondary schools consider physical education an important part of the curriculum.35 A small percentage of the schools are devoting some time to corrective gymnastics and in a few high schools, the mastery of swimming has been included in the graduation requirements.36

Physical education, properly conceived and administered, should build vigorous, active, attractive persons inspired by enthusiasm for those things that may be classed as truly "sporting" in all relationships of life. On this general premise, physical education, in its broadest terms, may be simply defined as an educational process not only

34 Richards, op. cit., p. 10.


36 Ibid., p. 726.
developing potentialities, but influencing the entire individual through employment of the physical mechanism, education not only of, but through the physical being.\textsuperscript{37}

Thus may be seen the realization and spread of an ideal that Swift placed emphasis upon in his educational system.

Another part of Swift's narrative which is both critical and constructive is his ridicule of the inhabitants that he found on his third voyage. Here, satire on the misuse of the intellect, satire on the desire for long life, and satirical allusions to the Anglo-Irish situation form the bases for this part of \textit{Gulliver's Travels}.\textsuperscript{38} In Laputa the ridicule is directed at mathematics and music in Balnibarbi at all kinds of projects; in the city of Legado—the seat of the Grand Academy—at scientific experimentation and 'projectors in experimental learning'; in Glubbdubdrib at textual critics and historians.\textsuperscript{39} The satire has a general drift which gives it central meaning. The projectors are deficient in common sense, the mathematicians and scientists are lost in impractical speculations, the critics are pedants without taste, the modern historians are ignorant rogues—each of these classes exemplifies either corrupt taste or over-refined specula-

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{37} Frank Kleegerger, "Physical Education of University Men," \textit{School and Society}, XXXIII (1883), 653.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{38} Quintana, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 316.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., p. 317.}
For instance, Gulliver describes one group of the inhabitants, the Laputians, as being followed about by servants with bladders because:

"... it seems that the minds of these people are so taken up with intense speculations, that they neither can speak, nor attend to the discourses of others, without being roused by some external taction upon the organs of speech and hearing; for which reason those persons who are able to afford it always keep a flapper in their family... and the business of this officer is, when two or more persons are in company, gently to strike with his bladder the mouth of him who is about to speak, and the right ear of him or them to whom the speaker addresseth himself." 41

Concerning the application of this satire to modern condition, Bernbaum declares:

"Nor can I think that the intellectual world of today is guiltless of applying its talents to such petty themes as Swift derides, when I observe in the announcement of a dignified publishing house that two learned authors have employed their powers of mind upon a large and expensive work, A Dissertation upon Pines and Pincushions. Is this not just the danger that Swift warns against—the solemn pompous occupation with trivialities?" 42

The answer is obvious. It is also obvious after comparing our present education system with that which Swift depicted, that instead of "hootings" him, as Thackeray wanted to do, we should applaud him and give him due credit for

40 Quintana, op. cit., p. 317.
41 Gulliver's Travels, p. 187.
42 Ernest Bernbaum's ed. of Gulliver's Travels, p. ix.
ideas which have proved to be so sound.
CHAPTER V
POLITICAL IDEAS

Swift has not been accredited with higher motives in public life than mere self-aggrandizement, yet throughout his writings are found expressions of an ideal of service which are quite contrary to the traditional notion of his self-seeking. In one of his sermons occur these words:

"Therefore, I shall think my time not ill-spent, if I can persuade most or all of you who hear me to show the love you have for your country by endeavoring in your several stations to do all the public good you are able. For I am persuaded that all your misfortunes arise from no other original cause than the general disregard among us of the public welfare." 1

This ideal of public service actuated Swift's life. The political corruption of his times was largely responsible for the remorse and bitterness that marked his final days. 2

From 1710-1713 Swift was in London. He went there on a mission for the Irish church, having been sent by the bishops to plead the remission of the "First Fruits." While engaged in carrying out the business of his special mission, he was brought in contact with the Tory ministry, who immediately recognized in him a writer of force whom they needed as an ally. The remission of the "First Fruits"

---

1 Prose Works, IV, 206.
2 Stephens, op. cit., p. 181.

-50-
was granted. Then the ministers persuaded him to take over The Examiner, the organ of the Tory party.

That a clergyman could actively engage in national politics for a number of years, leaving to someone else the duties of his parish, may seem stranger to the twentieth century than it did to Eighteenth-century England. Then, however, one could not be a clergyman without being deeply interested in politics, because Church and politics were intimately linked. Politics had entered the Church, or the Church had entered politics, because the important national policies were concerned with matters related to the Church.

Briefly, the situation was as follows: The Established Church was, for one thing, divided against itself. Consequently, it did not present an unbroken front to its common enemies, the dissenters and the Roman Catholics. The Low Church party, although firm in its adherence to Episcopacy and the Establishment, yet had decided sympathy with the non-conformists. At the beginning of Anne's reign the Low Churchmen were in the ascendency. The Whigs, who had been the authors and supporters of the Revolution of 1688 that placed William and Mary on the throne, were disposed to sustain the principles of the Toleration Act which William had put through. But the Low Churchmen had not been able to legalize the policy of comprehension. Against the latter were the High Churchmen, a party which,
in turn, consisted of two branches, one being composed of the non-jurors and their followers who had been deprived of the benefices by James for refusal to take the oaths of allegiance to James' successors; the other branch being composed of those who sympathized with the former, but who reluctantly had taken their oaths. Both of these branches held in high esteem the Anglo-Catholic theology, and disliked the non-conformists cordially, looking down upon them as schismatics. Queen Anne's preferences were decidedly on the side of the High Churchmen and Tories, and standing with her, were the Universities and the great body of the clergy. The Bishops, however, who were all appointees of King William were of the opposite party.

By the time Anne had come to the throne a strong reaction against dissent had set in throughout the nation, as is shown by several acts passed against the non-conformists. By the Test Act of 1673 all persons who were admitted to civil or military office had been required to receive the sacrament according to the forms of the Church of England. Many non-conformists when elected to office did so merely to keep within the law. To cut off this class from public employment, the Occasional Conformity Bill was passed in 1711, by which severe penalties were inflicted on those who should thus receive the sacrament, but afterwards during the term of office should attend conventicles. Two years later the Schism Bill was passed which
forbade the exercise of the function of schoolmaster or private teacher without a declaration of conformity to the Established Church and a license from a bishop. The feeling and the sincere belief on the part of the people that the Church of England was in danger from both the dissenters and the Roman Catholics prevented the repeal of these oppressive enactments until the following reign. 3

The nation at large was High Church and Tory as was impressively evidenced in the reaction in the Sacheverell case. Sacheverell had preached sermons in St. Paul's Cathedral denouncing toleration and maintaining the policy of passive obedience, and incidentally casting slurs on Anne's minister, Godolphin. For the latter perhaps more than for the former, he was brought to trial. A historian of the period gives the following account of it:

"The ablest Tory counsel undertook the defense of Sacheverell. Atterbury, the most brilliant of the High Church controversialists, took a leading part in composing the speech which he delivered. The Vice-Chancellor of Oxford was one of Sacheverell's bail. Sacheverell appeared in court ostentatiously surrounded by several chaplains of the Queen. Prayers were offered in all the leading churches, and even in the Royal Chapel for 'Dr. Sacheverell under persecution'; and the pulpits all over England were enlisted in his cause. When the Queen went to listen to the proceedings, her sedan chair was surrounded by crowds crying: 'God bless your Majesty! We hope your Majesty is for High Church and Sacheverell!' When Sacheverell himself drove to

Westminster Hall, the people thronged in multitudes to kiss his hand, and every head was uncovered as he passed. The meeting-houses of the dissenters were everywhere wrecked, and that of Burgess, one of their most conspicuous preachers in London, was burnt. The houses of the Lord Chancellor, of Warton, of Burnet, Hoadley, and Dolben were threatened. All who were believed to be hostile to Sacheverell, all who refused to join the cry of 'High Church and Sacheverell' were insulted in the streets, and the conditions of London became so serious that large bodies of troops were called out. The excitement propagated itself to every part of the country and to every class of society, and the church agitations under Anne are among the first political movements in England in which women are recorded to have taken a very active part.  

It was clear from these events where the sympathies of the nation lay. Political parties were grouped by ecclesiastical consideration; and after the impeachment of Sacheverell, the Tory party had become before all things the party of the Church. In view of this situation, then, the clergy were naturally interested in the political situation, and aligned themselves either on the side of the Whigs who had come to represent the Low Church and Toleration, or on the side of the Tories who stood for High Church and intolerance of non-conformity, according to their convictions. As a result, there grew up a strong partisanship, and this gave rise to controversies which were not characterized by gentleness.

This background it is important to hold in mind before

---

we consider Swift's constructive and critical ideas about government. His entry into the political arena was not a deliberate act for personal ends. That he did his work, however, and accomplished what he went to do with ability, sincerity and conscientiousness, and with a subordinate attention to his own fortune, there can be little doubt. The fact that he went to London a Whig, and when the Whig ministry crumbled, became a Tory, gave rise to the unwarranted accusations of his enemies, and later of certain of his biographers and commentators, namely, Macauley, Jeffrey, and Thackeray, that he was an apostate in politics. And this has become like other traditional notions, a part of the Swift legend. But as Lecky, the historian, observes:

"It was almost inevitable that a young man brought up as secretary to Sir William Temple should encounter public life with Whig prepossession. It was almost equally inevitable that a High Church divine should in the party conflicts under Queen Anne, ultimately gravitate to the Tories."5

Swift has given his position in his own words, the sincerity of which there is no reason to doubt.

"I began," he writes, "to trouble myself with the difference between the principles of Whig and Tory, having formerly employed myself in other and, I think, better speculation. I talked to Lord Sommers, and told him that having been long conversant with Greek and Latin authors, and therefore a lover of literature, I found myself inclined to be what they called a

5Lecky, op. cit., p. 171.
Whig in politics; but as to religion, I confessed myself to be a High Churchman, and I could not conceive how anyone who wore the habit of a clergyman would be otherwise.  

Swift's change of politics was neither sudden nor selfish. As a matter of fact, Swift was too much of a genius to belong wholly to any party. None of his Whig or Tory contemporaries could interpret accurately his political attitude. He stood before them a political enigma. He hated the stupid, distinctive names of Whig and Tory. With him it was measures, not party. The Sentiments of a Church of England Man was written with the purpose of showing the danger of extremes on the parts of both the Whigs and Tories, and he declared in that pamphlet that he was no bigot in religion, and was sure he was not in politics.  

When he undertook the work of The Examiner in 1710, the condition of things was very unstable and involved. It required the most delicate handling and much boldness. Harley and Bolingbroke were well established by a large majority indeed, but majorities are not always stable supports. Sometimes they inspire overconfidence and evoke the danger of over-enthusiasm following. There was further danger that the temper of the people at large might

6Prose Works, IX, introduction, p. vii.

7Prose Works, III, 52.
be wrongly measured. The will of the people concerning peace was not easy to gauge. Marlborough was a popular hero, and his victories fed the pride of the English people, but there was a rapidly spreading opinion that his victories had been won at too great a price to England. The landed classes were becoming poorer as England's victories made her renowned, and the Whig stock-jobbers with whom there was every advantage in a war period were growing wealthy. Tory agricultural classes cried for peace and for the interests of the Church, and Whig merchants replied that peace meant the repudiation of the national debt, and the return of the Pretender. The ministers were in a delicate position where peace—at any price or war at any price—must be decided upon. 8

Swift appealed first of all to the people of England for confidence in the ministers. To gain that confidence was what Harley and Bolingbroke engaged him to do, chiefly. But when he had done that, he made an appeal for a nobler policy, he tried to lift the nation to a higher vision of a new nationalism not confined within party alignments. 9 Read what he has to say against the blind adherence to a party as against a genuine care for the nation's welfare. The art of government he says is not "the transportation

8Prose Works, IX, intro., p. vii.
9Prose Works, IX, intro., p. vii.
of nutmegs and curing of herring," but the political embodiment of the will of a "parliament freely chosen, without threatening and corruption" and "composed of landed men" whose interests being in the soil would be at one with the interests of those who lived on the soil. Whigs and Tories may dispute as they will among themselves as to the best side from which to defend the country, but the men of the true party are they "whose principles in Church and State are what I have above related, whose actions are derived from thence, and who have no attachment to any set of ministers than as they are friends to the Constitution in all its parts; but will do their utmost to save their Prince and Country whoever be at the helm."¹⁰ Here was a broad patriotism and a noble spirit, and it made its appeal to the nation, tending to calm party strife, but it was an attitude that neither Harley nor Bolingbroke could reach up to. There is here an unusual grasp of the meaning of national greatness.¹¹ And all this is quite different from the empty, empty because insincere, verbiage a man might write were he merely the paid advocate of a cause, writing for the sake of personal advancement.

For a period of six years, from 1714 to 1720, after

¹⁰Prose Works, IX, Examiner Paper No. 44, 290.
¹¹Prose Works, IX, intro., p. viii.
his return to Ireland, Swift was silent. This silence has been traditionally attributed to gloomy brooding over his disappointment. Some commentators would have us picture him as not much more than a child pouting. But the real reason for his silence is given by Swift himself. Writing to Pope in 1721:

"In a few weeks after the loss of that excellent Princess (Queen Anne) I came to my station here, where I have continued ever since in the greatest privacy and ignorance of those events which are most commonly talked of in the world. I neither know the names nor the number of the Royal family which now reigns, further than the Prayer Book informs me. I cannot tell who is Chancellor, who are the Secretaries, nor with what nations we are in peace or war. And this manner of life was not taken up out of any sort of affectation, but merely to avoid giving offense, and for fear of provoking party zeal." 12

In the meantime, however, he was mastering the facts and phases of Ireland's gigantic wrongs. He was convinced that the internal evils of the nation must be rectified by the Irish themselves, and that the external wrongs must be rectified by the English government. He soon turned his attention to fighting the injustices against Ireland. His first move was the proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures. This was directed against the English government which had forbidden the Irish woolen manufacturers the liberty of importation. The pamphlet proposed a reprisal on England by a refusal to use anything coming

12Swift's Correspondence, Ed. by Ball, III, 14.
from that country.

The famous Drapier Letters come next. Complaints had come to England from Ireland that there was a shortage of copper coins. Usually the coinage had been done in Ireland, but Walpole, now in the seat of government in England, wished to leave no profit to Ireland which could be secured to Englishmen. A patent, therefore, for coining 108,000 pounds of halfpence and fartherings was granted to one William Wood, an ironmonger, the reason being that he had paid the Duchess of Kendal, the German mistress of George I, ten thousand pounds for her influence. Great indignation was felt in Ireland, and Whig and Tory united in both houses of Parliament in a strong protest to the English government. Swift saw the rank injustice of the measure and came to the defense of the nation in a series of letters presumably written by a Dublin draper. He aroused the Irish people to a realization of their wrongs and breathed into them the spirit of defiance and liberty.13

"A people long used to hardships," he wrote, "lose by degree the very notions of liberty; they look upon themselves as creatures at mercy, and that all impositions laid upon them by a stronger hand are... legal and obligatory. Hence proceed that poverty and lowness of spirit, to which a kingdom may be subject, as well as a particular person. And when Esau came fainting from the field at the point to die, it is no wonder that he sold his birthright for a mess of potage."14

13Prose Works, IX, intro., p. vii.
14Ibid., intro., p. viii.
If the English government attempt, as Walpole was reported to have said, "to ram their half-pence down the throats of the Irish," then Swift writes:

"The remedy is wholly in your own hands; and therefore I have digressed a little in order to refresh that spirit so seasonably raised among you; and to let you see that by the laws of God, of Nature, of Nation, and of your Country, you are, and ought to be as free a people as your brethren in England."

Swift himself, always self-reliant, was often impatient with the Irish but with no hope of reward; rather with what seems only a burning indignation against injustice he threw himself heartily into the fight in their defense, and sought to teach them independence and initiative. The results were that he united them, and breathed into them something of his own spirit of defiance. His writings were an invaluable tonic to the Irish people.

Surveying his whole public service both in England and in Ireland one sees Swift as a zealous contender for certain principles which he considered best for both England or Ireland, and for the Church of which he was such a vigorous champion.

Generally speaking, Swift's Gulliver's Travels shows a keen insight into contemporary twentieth century failings despite the fact that the author was living and writ-

---

Ibid.
ing in the early part of the eighteenth century. In Gulliver, Swift's presentation of the political order of the day is positively satirical, but negatively, it is the shadow of a prophecy for a better political organization. His principles may seem somewhat Utopian, but if such is the case, they are at least based on reason, and to such a scientific age as the twentieth century, the reforms that he has a vision of should certainly be acceptable. In fact, there may be found numerous contemporary ideas, although they may still be in their infancy, and we may see that Swift possessed an insight that penetrated the future. What is more, he was bold enough to relate his visions to his open-mouthed and critical readers, and these same visions are for us today, realities.

One of the problems that vexed Swift most was that of the corrupt condition of the state. He was, as is revealed in the voyage of Gulliver, able to look down on governments and see the defects that they contained. Through the medium of conversation and through the descriptions of his mythical voyages, he was able to point out the flaws and suggest possible remedies. These remedies may be found in existence today to a large extent, although it will probably take many more years before the common sense government that Swift advocated may exist.

In general, our political reasoning today has certain roots that connect it peculiarly with some eighteenth cen-
tury ideas that prevailed during Swift's period of activity. In the first place, a "scientific" attitude toward social institutions took somewhat definite form at that time.16 Under the influence of the great progress in the natural sciences, philosophers maintained that natural laws of human society could be discovered by intelligent men; not mainly by an introspective analysis of the human mind, "but by systematic observation of the ways in which men live and act in actual societies."17 Mr. Coker continues by saying that in the second place, the wide extension of man's control over physical nature, made possible by the mechanical inventions of that era, gave impetus to the idea that man could in a large measure control also the forms and activities of his institutional life by intelligently applying the permanent social laws to immediate social problems.18 "Thirdly, the mechanical inventions brought on changes in the economic structure of society which have influenced all later political theorizing."19

Another one of the eighteenth century fundamental movements was the "Utopian socialist". This group challenged the psychological and ethical assumptions upon which the current defenses of private property rested, and showed

16 F. W. Coker, Recent Political Thought, p. 3.
18 Coker, op. cit., p. 9.
19 Ibid., p. 11.
the inhumane and natural consequences of unrestrained competition. They looked for relief, however, not as the Marxists do, to the revolutionary or other aggressive action of oppressed groups organized to avail themselves of the benefits of a natural evolution of society, but to the deliberate and pacific efforts of men inspired by feelings of benevolence and justice. They sought to set up select communities in which principles of justice, benevolence, and intelligence would rule, and from the example of which, the whole of society would be gradually converted to their ideals.

It may be noted in Gulliver's Travels that Swift very definitely offers some adverse criticism regarding the political system of his day. Such things as corruption in high offices, political party quarrels, fraudulent elections, expensive court delays, legal decisions by precedents, and expenditures by the nation beyond its income meet with his disapproval. There may be found, however, some sound criticisms and suggestions that present-day politics might well afford to embrace.

In questioning the preparation for Parliament and the efficiency of the Lords in Parliament, for instance, the Lilliputian king "proposed many doubts and inquiries" con-

---

21 Ibid., p. 22.
cerning their fitness. "He asked what methods were used to cultivate the minds and bodies of our young nobility, and in what kind of business they commonly spent the first and teachable part of their lives." 22 The King then wanted to know whether "the humor of a prince, a sum of money to a court lady, or a prime minister, or a design of strengthening a party opposite to the public interests," would ever have anything to do with the securing of these positions. 23 He also desired to know if "they were always so free from avarice, partialities, or want, that a bribe, or some other sinister view, could have no place among them." 24

"He then desired to know what arts were practiced in electing those whom I called commoners: whether a stranger with a strong purse might not influence the vulgar voters to choose him before their own landlord, or the most considerable gentleman in the neighborhood. 25

How subtly does Swift strike at the very core of the corruption in the eighteenth century and in present-day politics! More adverse criticism follows when the King desired to know why people were so bent upon getting into Parliament since there was no salary or pension--

"... because this appeared such an exalted

---

22 *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 151.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
strain of virtue and public service that his Majesty seemed to doubt it might possibly be sincere; and he desired to know whether such zealous gentlemen could have any views for refunding themselves for the charges and troubles they were at, by sacrificing the public good to the designs of a weak and vicious prince in conjunction with a corrupt ministry. 26

As for securing offices by political tricks, Swift treats this allegorically when he says:

"For as to that infamous practice of acquiring great employments by dancing over ropes, or badges of distinction by leaping over sticks or creeping under them, the reader is to observe that they were first introduced by the grandfather of the Emperor now reigning, and grew to the present height by the gradual increase of party and faction." 27

In speaking of the methods of securing political power by the prime minister, Swift enumerates them as:

"... the first is by knowing how with prudence to dispose of a wife, a daughter, or a sister; and the second, by betraying a furious zeal in public assemblies against corruptions in the court. But a wise prince would rather choose to employ those who practice the last of these methods; because such zealots prove always the most obsequious and subservient to the will and passion of their master." 28

Gulliver notes that although reward and punishment are the two hinges upon which we like for our government to turn, the only place he has found this idea put to

27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
practice is in Lilliput for "these people thought it a prodigious defect of policy among us, when I told them our laws were enforced only by penalties, without any mention of regard". For this reason, also the Lilliputian image of Justice is formed with six eyes, two before, as many behind, and on each side one, to signify circumspection. She has a bag of gold open in her right hand and a sword sheathed in her left which intimates she is more disposed to regard than she is to punish. It is revealed that any person who can prove that he has observed the laws of his country for a certain length of time has a claim to certain privileges and a sum of money.

That Swift definitely frowned upon quarrelling and wrangling between parties can be seen from the satirical picture of the High-Heel party and the Low-Heel party found in the land of the Lilliputians. Also, the dispute between the two factions concerning the breaking of an egg upon the correct end shows his attitude toward the trivialities that may arise in disputes over religion.

In describing to the Houyhnhmian Master the procedure of the courts of his land, there is a veiled but cut-

---

ting satire against lawyers, their language, and the courts. He reveals to the Master that the laws of the land are written in such a jargon and manner that no mortal can understand them, and that it would take thirty years to decide whether "the field left me by my ancestors for six generations belongs to me, or to a stranger three hundred miles off". The Master was amazed and thought that "nature and reason were sufficient guides", and he could not comprehend Gulliver's account of the actions of the lawyers who proved that "white is black, and black is white, according as they are paid", or that they "must always be careful not to offend the judges".

Gulliver revealed to him also that the judges were "picked from the most dexterous lawyers, who were grown old or lazy, and have been biased all their lives against truth and equity . . .". In the trials of persons accused of crime, the judge first sends to "sound the disposition of those in power" before he gives his decision. Here, the Master stopped Gulliver by saying that it was a pity that men "endowed with such prodigious abilities" could not be made to be instructors of others in wisdom and knowledge.

---

33 Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 296.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
Swift, through the medium of the questions that the Brobdingnagian King asked Gulliver concerning the management of the treasury, reveals another criticism of governmental inefficiency. The King "next fell upon the management of our treasury" in the following passage:

"He thought my memory failed me because I computed our taxes at about five or six millions a year, and when I came to mention the issues, he found they sometimes amounted to more than double; . . . But if what I told him were true, he was still at a loss to know how a kingdom could run out of its estate like a private person. He asked me, who were our creditors; and where we should find money to pay them."37

This could have been written by a present day critic of American finance. When we come to a comparison of our national wealth with our national indebtedness, the results are disturbing and the government "appears to have run out of its estate". The Bureau of Census estimated the national wealth in 1929 at about $145,000,000,000 as against the national indebtedness of about $150,000,000,000. The dangers of this situation are manifest.

Concerning this, Mr. Anderson says:

"I place little faith in the ability of those in charge to reduce the tax burden materially under the existing conditions. As a matter of fact, the efforts to provide for unemployment tend to bring about a reckless use of public credit. . . . This means only additional debt and thus accentuates the evil."38

37 *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 152.

Our social and economic systems have been founded
upon a negative and anti-social concept of individual
rights, as distinguished from the affirmitive and coopera-
tive concept of social duties. Our political structure is
built upon the eighteenth century theory that the function
of government is limited to the duty of maintaining order
and protecting life and property, leaving the members of
the social organization free to exploit each other and take
what they can within the law, and sometimes without regard
to the law. 39

Our modern corruption problem is not so much "what's
wrong with the law," as "who's wrong and why". 40 Organ-
ized crime, organized labor, organized business, organized
politics, organized exploitations, parallel and lock.
When trouble breaks, the "big shot" escapes abroad, or gets
off with a Senate investigation, or a light sentence for
income tax invasion. 41

Indifference, greed, stupidity, shoddy education, and
the example of corruption and lawlessness in high places
are the culprits. Among the first among the "who's wrong
and why" comes the prosecutor who usually begins his career
as assistant district attorney, or as state attorney with

40 Mitchell Dawson, "What's Wrong With the Law?",
Atlantic Monthly, CLII (1934), 651.
41 Ibid., p. 652.
little experience in trial work. He learns his courtroom procedures from "conflict with seasoned criminal lawyers who delight in springing on him all the tricks of their trade". Furthermore, he is "incited to lawlessness by the clamour of the editors, ministers, crime commissioners, and business men for more and stiffer sentences".

"The necessity for satisfying these good people and assuaging the public appetite for melodrama drives him and his assistants to seek convictions by fair means or foul. Politics is the keynote to all his activities."

No one can improve this situation as long as the office of prosecutor remains a political prize.

The "pleading orators" or lawyers follow the prosecutor in high positions where corruption reigns. They are heroes in the public eye; almost but not quite "pariahs among good people". Most criminal lawyers are champions hired to get results. Their philosophy is short and simple: "Give the customers what they pay for". The lower grade criminal lawyer has his hookups with gangs, and keeps his petitions for habeas corpus written up in blank form ready to fill in with the necessary data, so there will be no delay in immediately effecting the release of the appro-

42 Dawson, op. cit., p. 652.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
handed criminal.\footnote{46} Their only concern is to give the criminals what they pay for, or to receive the "pecuniary reward" that the Brobdingnagian King mentioned.

Judge Thomas Taylor, Jr., upon retiring at the age of seventy-two from the bench of Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, after nearly fifty years of the finest type of judicial service, said:

"We have many able men at the bar. It is a pity that they will not be able to get on the bench. . . . Our people will not select men who are the best for them. They are plastic in the hands of the politicians. . . . Judges come up from the political route. . . . Their successes at one time is dependent upon their ability as judges."\footnote{47}

Judge Taylor states facts that are beyond dispute. There has been evidence revealed in our great cities that some of the judges of the lower courts have tolerated or participated in the organized exploitation of accused persons; that some judges have belonged to political organizations that were closely tied up with gangsters and racketeering; and that others have paid political debts through the appointment of receivers and their attorneys.\footnote{48} The judge may separate his political activities from his function as a judge, but the chances are

\footnote{46}{Dawson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 652.}
\footnote{47}{\textit{Ibid.}}
\footnote{48}{\textit{Ibid.}}
that his conduct will soon be affected and he will soon tolerate such practices as discouraging witnesses for the state, the perversion of the ancient remedy of habeas corpus, the approval of insufficient and badly secured bail bonds, laxity in granting probation and other distortions of many legal processes which in themselves would be adequate if properly administered. 49

In most states governors have very little direct authority in municipal affairs except in some commonwealths where some of the local authorities, particularly the judges, are appointed by the government. In many states and cities, police judges and the lower state judges are elected by popular vote. For the numerous cities governed by boss rule, this means that the judges of courts of first instance and sometimes higher, spring from the same soil as city councilors, and are subject to the same degrading political control of the boss and the assistant bosses. 50 Few magistrates whose election has depended upon the goodwill of a man in power can resist suggestions to be easy on a particular criminal, if there is no reason to believe "that the man higher up does not desire the prosecution to be pressed". 51

49 Dawson, op. cit., p. 653.
51 Ibid., p. 82.
In describing the ministers of his land, Gulliver said that they preserve themselves in power by bribing the majority of a senate or great council; "and at last secure themselves for after reckonings, and retire from the public, laden with the spoils of the nation". 52

This situation is almost identical with many that are being brought to light recently. Evidences that we are endeavoring to strengthen our present laws may be seen on every hand. Editorial typewriters click out that we need new laws, strong laws, hard laws, laws to end crime. Editors, preachers, judges, crime commissioners point the finger of scorn at our present laws. The courts are tied up by antiquated, weak, dilatory, and technical rules so that they cannot cope with the master minds of gunmen, kidnappers, bank robbers, ravishers, and street-corner bums. 53

The law and its institutions are the fruits of centuries of collective living. Kings, princes, prelates, parliaments, presidents, governors, legislatures, and judges have all had a hand in its making, but behind them stand the people. 54 Gulliver said, in referring to the laws that ruled the little people, that he wished the laws in his country were "as well executed". 55 Our people, however,

52 Gulliver's Travels, p. 302.
53 Dawson, op. cit., p. 652.
54 Ibid.
55 Gulliver's Travels, p. 62.
are ready to stand up and behead, hang, burn, destroy in
the passion of what they believe to be justice. Deep in
their heart lies a distrust of rulers and judges bred by
centuries of injustice and oppression. Out of this grew
the grand jury, the petit jury, the rules against self-
incrimination, habeas corpus, the right to change of venue,
and other safeguards thrown about the accused. Much of
this legal machinery has, without question, "become obso-
lete and inadequate for the handling of our increasingly
complex social problems."56

"Ideally, we should scrap the entire present
system from police administration to the punish-
ment or attempted reform of law violators, and
build in its place a new structure in the light
of more modern ideas as to ways and means of fore-
stalling and controlling anti-social conduct."57

This situation with us today would lead us to join
with the King of Brobdingnag in saying:

"My little friend, Gildrig, you have made a
most admirable panegyric upon your country; you
have clearly proved that ignorance, idleness,
and vice, may be sometimes the only ingredients
for qualifying a legislator; that laws are best
explained, interpreted and applied by those
whose interest and abilities lie in perverting,
confounding and eluding them. I observed among
you some lines of an institution, which in its
original might have been tolerable, but these
half erased, and the rest wholly blurred and
blotted by corruption. It doth not appear from
what you have said, how any one virtue is re-

56 Dawson, op. cit., p. 651.
57 Ibid.
quired towards the procurement of any one station; much less that men are emblazoned on account of their virtue, that priests are advanced for their piety or learning, soldiers for their conduct or valor, judges for the love of their country, or counselors for their wisdom."\textsuperscript{58}

In addition to the adverse criticism of politics already noted in \textit{Gulliver's Travels}, there may be found several instances in which Swift very definitely sets up some sound and clear-cut principles. As example of these principle may be found in some of the ideas of the King of Brobdingnag who "professed both to abominate and despise all mystery, refinement, and intrigue, either in a prince or a minister."\textsuperscript{59} He confined the knowledge of governing within very narrow bounds; "to common sense and reason, to justice and lenity, to the speedy determination of civil and criminal causes; . . ."\textsuperscript{60} He gave it as his opinion also,

". . . that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind and do more essential good to his country than the whole race of politicians put together."\textsuperscript{61}

Another ideal most important in a democracy, that of integrity of character in its leaders, may be found in the

\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Gulliver's Travels}, p. 154.
\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Ibid.}
Lilliputian democracy, for:

"... they suppose truth, justice, temperance and the like to be in every man’s power, the practice of which virtues assisted by experience and a good intention, would qualify any man for the service of his country. ..."

Continuing this idea:

"They (the Lilliputians) thought the want of moral virtues was so far supplied by superior endowments of the mind that employments could never be put into such dangerous hands as those of persons so qualified; and at least, that mistakes committed by ignorance in a virtuous disposition, would never be of such fatal consequence to the public weal, as the practices of a man whose inclinations led him to be corrupt, and had great abilities to manage, and multiply, and defend his corruptions."

Another of the beliefs of the Lilliputians is that "since government is necessary to mankind, they believe that the common size of human understandings is fitted to some station or other", and that Providence never intended to make the management of public affairs a mystery which was to be comprehended only by a few persons of sublime genius.

A further constructive idea dealing with the moral element in politics is the Lilliputian’s outlook upon fraud and theft, the former they believe to be a greater crime

---

62 Gulliver’s Travels, p. 67.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
than the latter and is punishable by death.\footnote{66}

"... for they allege that care and vigilance, with a very good common understanding, may preserve a man's goods from thieves, but honesty has no fence against superior cunning; and since it is necessary that there should be a perpetual intercourse of buying and selling, and dealing upon credit, where fraud is permitted and connived at, or hath no law to prevent it, the honest dealer is always undone, and the knave gets the advantage."\footnote{67}

Another striking incident to be found in \textit{Gulliver's Travels} that resembles a great deal some present proposals is that of the so-called "share-the-wealth" movement, an idea now associated with communism. In conversing with the Master of the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver revealed that the majority of his people were forced to work for small wages and live miserably in order for a few to live comfortably.\footnote{68}

In continuing the conversation, Gulliver said:

"I enlarged myself on these and many other particulars to the same purpose; but his honor was still to seek; for he went upon a supposition that all animals had a right to share in the production of the earth."\footnote{69}

This is a significant remark to be made in the eighteenth century, and it is even more significant when it is found to resemble in many respects the plan of the late

\footnote{66} \textit{Gulliver's Travels}, p. 65.  
\footnote{67} \textit{Ibid.}  
\footnote{68} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 299.  
\footnote{69} \textit{Ibid.}
Senator Huey Long, who proposed a remedy for this very situation. The principles of the movement are found in his article, "Share Our Wealth". He said, in part:

"I propose that the surplus of all big fortunes above a few millions to any one person, at the most, go into United States ownership. We would send every one a questionnaire. On that questionnaire the man to whom it was sent would list the properties he owned, lands, houses, stocks and bonds, factories and patents; every man would place an appraisal on his property which the government would review and maybe change. On that appraisal the big fortune holder would say out of what property he would retain the few millions allowed to him, the balance to go to the United States.

"And so in this way the government would come into possession of about two-fifths of the wealth. Then we would turn to the inventories of all the families of America and those showing properties and moneys clear of debt that were above $5,000 and up to the limit of a few millions. We wouldn't draw down a fortune that wasn't bigger than a few millions, and if a man had over $5,000, then he would have his guaranteed minimum. But those showing less than $5,000 for the family, free of debt, would be added to, so that every family would start life again with homestead possession of at least a home, including such things as a radio and an automobile."91

Gulliver says of the Houyhnhnmsian Council:

"Here they inquire into the state and condition of the several districts: whether they abound or be deficient in hay or oats, or cows or Yahooes. And wherever there is any want (which is but seldom) it is immediately supplied by unanimous consent and contribution."72

One may readily see, therefore, that one of the funda-

---

70 *New Republic*, XCI (1935), 56.
72 *Gulliver's Travels*, p. 321.
mentals of Swift's Utopia was the socialistic ideal of an equal sharing of wealth. Senator Long's plans were called those of a na"ive dreamer, and were therefore dismissed. Swift, who down through the years has been called the sneering cynic, turns out to be also an idealist and dreamer.

In Houyhnhnmland, the land of self-governing horses, may be found a self-sustaining nation. The same Master of the Houyhnhnms ruled his subjects with wisdom and forethought. In fact, every phase of the life and government of these individuals is controlled by reason alone. In describing this virtue, Gulliver says:

"... and these noble Houyhnhnms are endowed by nature with a general disposition to all virtues, and have no conceptions or ideas of what is evil in a rational creature, so their grand maxim is, to cultivate reason, and to be wholly governed by it."73

Friendship and benevolence are the two outstanding virtues among the Houyhnhnms. These are not confined to particular individuals or objects, but "are universal to the whole race."74 Also, they "preserve decency and civility in the highest degrees, but are altogether ignorant of ceremony."75

Gulliver remembers, ironically enough, that he had

73Gulliver's Travels, p. 299.
74Ibid.
75Ibid.
extreme difficulty in bringing his Master to understand the word opinion, or how a point could be disputable. "because reason taught us," the Master Horse said, "to affirm or deny only where we are certain, and beyond our knowledge we cannot do either". Since this was true, "controversies, wranglings, disputes, and postiveness in false or dubious propositions" were entirely unknown to the inhabitants.76

The nobility of this land is further illustrated when the subject matter of their poetry is examined, for their verses contain only ideas relating to friendship and benevolence or a praise of heroes, written in simple verse form.77

Simplicity is the characteristic of all their architecture which Gulliver describes as follows: "Their buildings, although very rude and simple, are not inconvenient, but well contrived to defend them from all injuries of cold and heat".78 Because the subjects of this land live a simple life according to nature, death comes only as a result of old age, for there was no repletion on the part of the inhabitants. The Master could not conceive of the word disease for he believed that "nature, who works all things to perfection," would not

76 Ibid., p. 300.
77 Ibid., p. 305.
78 Ibid.
"suffer any pains to breed in our bodies. . . ."79

A worthwhile, yet amusing idea, is the fact that they had no word for lie.80 For power, government, war, law, punishment, they had no words in their language. Thus, it was many times that the Master would "lift his eyes in amazement and indignation" on hearing some account by Gulliver.

The fourth book of Gulliver's Travels then is not the savage sneer at mankind that tradition has it to be. There is criticism and severe criticism, but there is also a holding up of an ideal for man to follow. It is Swift's Utopia, a land ruled by sanity, common sense, and reason.

79 Ibid., p. 301.

80 Ibid., p. 285. 314
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

It is evident that commentators on Swift have seen in *Gulliver's Travels* only the severe arraignment of mankind, and have interpreted the book as a bitter and cynical outburst of one who was disappointed in his ambitions to be an English bishop, and exiled to a country he did not like to live in. Literary tradition has dubbed him cynical, and while recognizing his genius as a writer, has scorned his content as uninspiring and dispicable. Swift's own words, however, give evidence to the fact that he wrote for the purpose of "lashing evil". This is not the misanthrope's attitude, but the attitude of the reformer who criticises in order to bring about a change for the better. Instead of cynical, then, we should call Swift a satirist, the difference between the two is very clear; one is destructive, the other, constructive.

*Gulliver's Travels* is, of course, a severe arraignment of mankind. Its criticism is sharp and cutting, but it is the criticism of one who feels that the one who is being criticised is capable of something better if he could be made to realise his own foolishness and deficiencies. Parallel with the criticism, therefore, there are subtly suggested definite constructive ideas.

The character of these ideas show Swift to have been a
socially conscious person with a broad outlook which was surprisingly in advance of his age. He not only saw defects in man's civilization, he saw also some remedies for these defects. He realized the dangers of over-population and its relation to food supply. No doubt this was impressed upon him because he was living in Ireland where poverty and large families seem to go hand in hand. In his Utopia, families were limited to two children, a male and a female. He was also aware of the biological degeneration of man, consequently, he advocated, by the example of the horses, the necessity of mating healthy individuals for the betterment of the race, foreseeing the present eugenic ideals. Believing most diseases come from repletion, his ideal land was one of temperance where there was no sickness, but death was only from old age or accident.

He was aware of the insufficiency of knowledge in man's civilization and made training in moral character the basis of his educational system. On this foundation he built a system of utilitarian education, ridiculing, in the inhabitants of Laputa, the abstruse speculations which ignored the demands of everyday life and dwelt in the atmosphere of impractical abstract activities. He recognized the importance of child welfare and the dangers coming from illiterate parents, foreseeing the motives which have led to the establishment of nursery schools, kindergartens, and our public school systems.
In Swift's time there was no complex system of government. Problems of government were chiefly ethical. He believed that men who govern should be men of personal integrity rather than geniuses in administration. In the distribution of wealth, he suggested socialistic remedies. He condemned war, and showed the trivial causes for it, as well as its horrors and cruelty.

As he saw it, all the defects and miseries of man's civilization could be remedied by a life in which reason dominated. All evils come from passion; all good comes from reason. His Utopia was without sentiment, without inspiration or enthusiasm. His condemnation of man was for allowing passions to control his reason. His constructive ideas were founded on a purely rational basis.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

TEXT


SWIFT'S BIOGRAPHY


Swift, Jonathan, Correspondence of Swift, London, G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1910.


**MAGAZINE ARTICLES ON SWIFT**


Frantz, R. W., "*Swift's Yahoos and the Voyagers*," *Modern Philology*, XXIX (1931), 49.

Vanhoevigh, Esther, Vanessa and Her Correspondence with Jonathan Swift, London, Selwin and Blount, Ltd., 1921.

Van Doran, Carl, Swift, New York, The Viking Press, 1930.


OTHER BOOKS ON SWIFT AND LITERARY BACKGROUND


Cambridge History of English Literature, IX.


Meredith, George, An Essay on Comedy, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918.


Secord, A. W., "Gulliver and Dampier: Reply to G. S. McCue," Modern Language Notes, LI (1936), 159.

Van Lennep, W., "Three Unnoticed Writings of Swift," MLA, LI (1936), 793-802.


Webster, C. M., "Two Swift Imitations," Modern Language Notes, LI (1936), 441.


BOOKS ON SOCIOLOGY AND GOVERNMENT


Thomas, Norman, No Glory, No Profit, No Need, New York, Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1935.


Wingfield-Stratton, Esme Cecil, They That Take the Sword, New York, Harcourt, Brace, and Company.

MAGAZINE ARTICLES ON SOCIOLOGY AND GOVERNMENT


Dawson, Mitchell, "What's Wrong With the Law?", Atlantic Monthly, CLII (1934), 651-660.


Editorial, "When the Moon Comes Over the Campus," Literary Digest, CXIV (1933), 17-23.


