

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Report

of

Committee on Examination

This is to certify that we the undersigned, as a committee of the Graduate School, have given Dorothy Rose Hudson final oral examination for the degree of Master of Arts . We recommend that the degree of Master of Arts be conferred upon the candidate.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 10, 1920 191

C. A. Moore

Chairman

Joseph Beach

Francis B. Baston

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Report  
of  
Committee on Thesis

The undersigned, acting as a Committee of the Graduate School, have read the accompanying thesis submitted by Dorothy Rose Hudson for the degree of Master of Arts.

They approve it as a thesis meeting the requirements of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

*C. A. Moore*

Chairman

*Joseph Beach*

*Francis B. Barton*

June 10, 1920 ~~1528~~

THE INFLUENCE OF GODWIN ON

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE

FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA.

BY

DOROTHY ROSE HUDSON

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS.

J U N E

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It was Dr. Percy Boynton of Chicago who asked abruptly:  
"Who was the first person to call attention to the influence of  
Godwin on Brown?"

I do not know. Yet the question thrills me. It was prob-  
ably Brown himself and if not Brown then his intimate friend Dunlap.  
The material in which the answer to such a question would be found,  
could any answer be found, seems to be pretty safely immured in  
eastern libraries many of which are not open even to distinguished  
scholars.

That there is, however, a vast amount of material in the  
country which would stimulate and satisfy a deeper research than I  
have been able to make has been a cause of despair. Looking forward  
to the construction of a definitive biography of Brown, I have found  
myself drawn into fields of research too broad and lines of enquiry  
too strenuous to be incorporated in a master's thesis. I have dis-  
carded, therefore, for purposes of this paper such material as I  
have been able to collect suggesting

- (1) the manner in which the influence of Godwin came to  
Brown,
- (2) the manner in which that influence has been reported  
by critics of the last century,
- (3) all material for a comparison of literary style and  
structure in the two writers, and
- (4) all the materials for the analysis of the sentimental,  
romantic, Gothic and Quaker elements which should be  
made in a well-rounded study of these two men,

The closest and to me most exciting adventure which these  
fields have afforded has been the study of William Dunlap whose  
dramatic, artistic, and patriotic interests seem to me to have most

Oct 6 1889

powerfully affected Brown who is known to have turned his hand to the writing of a prologue or the composition of a sedate poem with an interest which was probably only less than Godwin's because of the inferior stage in America. Godwin's passion for the stage we know to have been fostered not only by the opportunities in the England of his day to see many plays but by the personal acquaintance and close friendship of such actors as Holcroft, Cooke, Cooper, Mrs. Inchbald and Mrs. Siddons.

The little reading that I have been able to do on Dunlap should be merely the model for similar investigation of Edwards whose theory of the suppression of human affections has been compared to Godwin's doctrines on the same subject; to Priestly, whose interest in the physical sciences, especially chemistry, and in the supernatural may very probably have led Brown to explore his fields long enough to apprehend the story possibilities in strange natural phenomena; to Franklin who, with Priestly, lived in the same city with Brown; to Paine who had known Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft in England and whose stories of French life must have come back to Philadelphia illuminated by all the journalistic energy and vivacity which was so little characteristic of Brown that a story like that of Martinette in Ormond stands out as conspicuous for a kind of all pervading excitement of authorship very different from the sickly artificiality of his attempts to be dramatically climatic elsewhere. Godwin's pupil, Tom Cooper, the actor, spent a year in New York with Dunlap and the club group of which Brown and Dunlap were leading spirits: his biography should be unearthed. Talleyrand spent a year in America - not far from Brown either: we would know what he had to say to Philadelphians and New Yorkers on the subject of Mary Wollstonecraft.

Sure I am that Mary Wollstonecraft in the beginning had more to do with the formation of Brown's thought than Godwin. Possibly her influence was deeper and on the whole more lasting than Godwin's. All this would come out in a study of Alcuin which I have here refrained from reporting on because I have seen only the first two parts, (all that the Congressional library boasts), and I know that the other two sections (now available I am told at Columbia) contains material without which it is unfair to judge the first two.

I have refrained from reporting on Carsol and the other literary fragments of Brown partly because I have never had them in my hands long enough at a time to read them together and partly because I have never been able to make head nor tail of them nor see any sense in the reputed plans for an ideal commonwealth of which various criticisms of Brown are full. To me the History of Carsol is merely a boyish attempt at imitation, an attempt to write something which should read like history and yet be purely imaginary. Such an undertaking would seem to be in character with other undertakings of Brown's youth.

All the foregoing being a type of exploration necessary to one not previously familiar with the field, I have wandered far and, like the symbolic fawn of Ruskinian fame, have partaken of bad weeds and good, "some bitter and prickly ones good for" not me but for the thesis, which I should not have had "the slightest thought would have been so."

In consequence of all this, it has seemed best to narrow the subject from the Influence of Godwin on Charles Brockden Brown to Evidences in the Novels of Brown of the Influence of Godwin and from that to Evidences of Godwinian Influence, (not in all the

novels, but) In Wieland, Arthur Mervyn, Ormond, and Edgar Huntley. So far from attempting to complete the proof of such influence or from attempting to cover all phases of the subject, the writer has confined herself to

- (1) calling attention to the materials on which a complete treatment of proof would be based and,
- (2) suggesting, with respect to some of this material, its possible or probable value with reference to the undertaking of complete proof.

Miss Loshe and other critics have already indicated certain points in which Brown is indebted to Godwin: (1) the following study differs from these,

- (1) in presenting some of the materials used as a basis for their improved assertions and
- (2) in showing the indebtedness of Brown not merely to the novel of the English writer but to a body of Philosophic doctrine of which the influence upon a work of art must be considerably different from the influence of form, style, and story-ingredients to which criticism of Brown is usually limited. That the field has not been preempted I have taken on faith, on the assurance of Mr. Moore, and on the word of Mr. Tom Peete Cross who has been at some pains to look the matter up for me.

1. DEFINITION OF TERM: "GODWINIAN INFLUENCE."

In as much as we are in great doubt, because of the difficulty of getting at proper source material, as to whether Brown was more influenced by direct contact with the works of William Godwin or indirectly through intercourse with friends and disciples of the English philosopher, the term "influence" in this paper will be considered as meaning indication of any reflection of Godwinian doctrine whether directly or indirectly derived from the man himself. When there is doubt as to whether a given line of thought in Brown's work can be laid to Godwin's influence, when there is any question as to whether it may not be the child of Brown's own genius or the reflection of some other source independent of Godwin, indication of that fact will be made.

2. DATES OF MEN.

While the whole of the following list will be found convenient for occasional reference, attention is particularly called to the first group.

Godwin	1756-1836
Brown	1771-1810
Mary Wollstonecraft	1759-1797
Dunlap	1766-1805
Priestly	1733-1805
Cooper	
Paine	1737-1809
Talleyrand	1754-1838
Rochefoucauld	1747-1827
Jonathan Edwards	1703-1758

Barlow	1754-1812
Holcroft	1745-1809
Wordsworth	1770-1850

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF WORKS.

<u>GODWIN.</u> <sup>1</sup>		<u>BROWN</u> <sup>2</sup>
Political Justice	1793	
Caleb Williams	1794	
		1797 Alcuin
Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft	1798	1798 Wieland
St. Leon	1799	1799 Arthur Mervyn <sup>3</sup>
		1799 Edgar Huntley
		1799 Ormond. <sup>4</sup>
Life of Chaucer	1801	1801 Clara Howard
		1801 Jane Talbot
Fleetwood	1805	
Mandeville	1817	
Treatise on Population	1820	
History of England	1824-5	
Cloudesley	1830	
Thoughts on Man	1833	
Deloraine		
Lives of the Necromancers		

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- (1). Of three novels or romances written by Godwin during the year 1783-4. Damon and Delia, The Italian Letters, and Imogen, a Pastoral Romance, no account need be taken. They have passed out of existence and apparently had no influence on anybody or anything.
  - (2). A Fairly complete bibliography of Brown's separate works, periodicals edited, contributions to periodicals, etc., is given in the Cambridge History of American Literature, Vol. I, pp. 527-28.
  - (3). Nine chapters appeared in the Philadelphia Weekly Magazine in 1798.
  - (4). Written December 1798.

3. DATES OF BOOKS.

A comparison of the dates of works by Godwin and Brown here inserted will show that of all Godwin's work only his Political Justice, his Caleb Williams, his St. Leon, and the Memoirs of his wife could possibly affect the work of Brown. Now Ormond was written in December 1798 so that St. Leon could not have affected the composition of that nor of the nine chapters of Arthur Mervyn which were published in 1798. This would leave, then, only the Political Justice and Caleb Williams and the Memoirs as possible written sources of the influence of his work upon the American author. Chronology would indicate a possible influence of St. Leon and the Memoirs upon Clara Howard and Jane Talbot. As a matter of fact, we shall find that there is no evidence in the works themselves that Brown was still interested in Godwin. St. Leon is nevertheless interesting for its showing forth of a maturer and more human interpretation of Godwin's philosophy as softened and corrected by marriage and by the death of Mary Wollstonecraft, and it will on that account be frequently used as confirmation of tendencies originating earlier but tenacious of Godwin's mind as it developed during the next five years.

4. GODWIN'S PHILOSOPHY: SALIENT POINTS TO BE LOOKED FOR.

Before giving any other explanation or condensation<sup>5</sup> of Godwin's philosophy, it may be as well to give Godwin's own "summary of principles,"<sup>6</sup> upon which his work in Political Justice is based.

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(5). See Harper: William Wordsworth, Ch. XI; Paul: William Godwin Vol. I, Ch. 5.

(6). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. I, pp. XXIII - XXXVII.

"The reader, he says, "who will form a just estimate of the reasonings of these volumes, cannot perhaps proceed more judiciously than by examining for himself the truth of these principles, and the support they afford to the various inferences interspersed through the work."

I.

"The true object of moral and political disquisition is pleasure and happiness.

The primary, or earliest, class of human pleasures, is the pleasures of the external senses.

In addition to these, man is susceptible of certain secondary pleasures, as the pleasures of intellectual feeling, the pleasures of sympathy, and the pleasures of self-approbation.

The secondary pleasures are probably more exquisite than the primary; or, at least,

The more desirable state of man, is that, in which he has access to all these sources of pleasure, and is in possession of a happiness the most varied and uninterrupted.

This state is a state of high civilization.

II.

"The most desirable condition of the human species, is a state of society.

The injustice and violence of men in a state of society, produced the demand for government.

Government, as it was forced upon mankind by their vices, so has it commonly been the creative of their ignorance and mistake.

Government was intended to suppress injustice, but it offers new occasions and temptations for the commission of it.

By concentrating the force of the community, it gives occasion to wild projects of calamity, to oppression, despotism, war and conquest.

By perpetuating and aggravating the inequality of property, it fosters injurious passions, and excites men to the practice of robbery and fraud.

Government was intended to suppress injustice, but its effect has been to embody and perpetuate it.

III.

"The immediate object of government,  
is security.

The means employed by government,  
is restriction, an abridgment  
of individual independence.

The pleasures of self-approbation  
together with the right culti-  
vation of all our pleasures,  
require individual independence.

Without independence men cannot  
become either wise, or useful,  
or happy.

Consequently, the most desirable state  
of mankind, is that which  
maintains general security  
with the smallest incroachment  
upon individual independence.

IV.

"The true standard of the conduct  
of one man towards another  
is justice.

Justice is a principle which proposes  
to itself the production of the  
greatest sum of pleasure or  
happiness.

Justice requires that I should put  
myself in the place of an  
impartial spectator of human

concerns, and devist myself  
of retrospect to my own  
predilections.

Justice is a rule of the utmost  
universality, and prescribes  
a specific mode of proceeding  
in all affairs by which  
the happiness of a human  
being may be affected.

V.

"Duty is that mode of action  
which constitutes the  
best application of the  
capacity of the individual,  
to the general advantage.

Right is the claim of the individual,  
to his share of the benefit  
arising from his neighbor's  
discharge of their several  
duties.

The claim of the individual, is  
either to the exertion or  
the forbearance of his  
neighbors.

The exertions of men in society  
should ordinarily be trusted  
to their discretion; their  
forbearance, in certain cases,  
is a point of more pressing

necessity, and is the direct province of political superintendence, or government.

VI.

"The voluntary actions of men are under the direction of their feelings.

Reason is not an independent principle, and has no tendency to excite us to action; in a practical view it is merely a comparison and balancing of different feelings.

Reason, though it cannot excite us to action, is calculated to regulate our conduct, according to the comparative worth it ascribes to different excitements.

It is to the improvement of reason therefore, that we are to look for the improvement of our social condition.

VII.

"Reason depends for its clearness and strength upon the cultivation of knowledge

The extent of our progress in the  
cultivation of knowledge,  
is unlimited.

Hence it follows:

1. That human inventions, and  
the modes of social  
existence, are susceptible  
of perpetual improvement.
2. That institutions calculated  
to give perpetuity to any  
particular mode of think-  
ing, or condition of existence,  
are pernicious.

#### VIII.

"The pleasures of intellectual feeling,  
and the pleasures of  
self-approbation, together  
with the right cultivation  
of all our pleasures,  
are connected with soundness  
of understanding.

Soundness of understanding is  
inconsistent with prejudice:  
consequently, as few  
falsehoods as possible, either  
speculative or practical, should  
be fostered among mankind.

Soundness of understanding is

connected with freedom of enquiry: consequently opinion should, as far as public security will admit, be exempted from restraint.

Soundness of understanding is connected with simplicity of manners, and leisure for intellectual cultivation: consequently, a distribution of property extremely unequal, is adverse to the most desirable state of man."

The insertion of Godwin's own summary is made with two views: (1) that the reader may have authoritative information as to what Godwin considered basal in his philosophy, and (2) that he may observe at first hand the characteristic solemnity of Godwin's temper with regard to abstractions, his serene unconsciousness of non sequitur and false assumptions, and his child-like trust in the integrity of the individual generalization considered apart from its context.

All this may prepare us somewhat for the following general ideas of which the finding a reflection of any one in Brown should make us alert to the problem of source. The notions cited do not compose an epitome of Godwin's system: they are, rather, only those doctrines which will be of convenience in treating Brown.

1. To political institutions may be traced three great evils:

- (a). War - "the most terrible plague of mankind."<sup>7</sup>
- (b). Unjust penal codes.<sup>8</sup>
- (c). Despotism.<sup>9</sup>

2. Robbery and fraud originate in

- (a). Extreme poverty.
- (b). Ostentation of the rich.
- (c). In law as rendering permanent the tyranny of the rich.<sup>10</sup>

3. The characters of men originate in their external circumstances.<sup>11</sup>

- (a). There are no innate principles, no instincts,<sup>12</sup> for virtue. Accident.<sup>13</sup>
- (b). Education, and government are factors in these "external circumstances."<sup>14</sup>

4. Men are liable to self-deception in regard to honorable motive and to misjudgment on the part of their fellows.<sup>15</sup>

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- (7). Political Justice, Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 7-8/ London, 1798
  - (8). Ibid, Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 12
  - (9). Ibid, Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 13.
  - (10). Ibid, Vol. I, Ch. III,
  - (11). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. I, Bk. I, Ch. IV.
  - (12). Ibid, pp. 30-31.
  - (13). Ibid, pp. 30-31.
  - (14). Ibid, pp. 46-49.
  - (15). Ibid, Ch. V, p. 63; also Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 154.

5. The vices and moral weakness of man are not invincible.<sup>16</sup>
6. Man is perfectible.<sup>17</sup> i.e., capable of improvement.<sup>18</sup>
7. Men act always upon preference and never choose evil except through ignorance.<sup>19</sup>
8. Morality is that system of conduct which is determined by a consideration of the greatest general good: he is entitled to the highest moral approbation whose conduct is, in the greatest number of instances, or in the most momentous instances, governed by views of benevolence, and made subservient to public utility.<sup>20</sup>
9. Justice between individuals, as between nations, is determined by the comparative value of the lives of the individuals concerned.<sup>21</sup>  
(N.B.). The illustrations Godwin gives have become famous. Were you Fenelon's valet it would be your duty to die, since your reason would tell you that his life was preferable to yours, or, were the case that of a choice between the life of your wife and

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(16). Political Justice, London 1798, Bk. I, Ch. V, p. 92.

(17). Ibid, pp. 86-92.

(18). Ibid, p. 93.

(19). Ibid, Ch. VII, p. 108.

(20). Political Justice; London 1798, Vol. I. Bk. II, Ch. 1, p. 121.

(21). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. I Bk. II, Ch. I, pp. 122

that that of another woman, were the other woman's life, viewed from the rationalistic point of view, of more moment to the world than your wife's, you would save her and let your wife die. The case of your benefactor and one not your benefactor would be parallel.<sup>22</sup>

10. Justice requires that I meet the need of my neighbor out of any wealth I may have over and above my own needs; his need constitutes a claim upon me but my giving him is not a favor.

"It is impossible for me to confer upon any man a favor; I can only do him a right."<sup>23</sup>

11. Virtue is "any action or actions of an intelligent being, proceeding from kind and benevolent intention, and having a tendency to contribute to general happiness."<sup>24</sup>

"Intention," however, "is of no further value than as it leads to utility: it is the means, not the end."<sup>25</sup>

12. Duty is the application of capacity in an intelligent being to the real, not imaginary benefit of mankind, whatever the motive may be. One cannot do his duty while laboring under prejudice, nor can it ever be one's duty to do wrong.<sup>26</sup>

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(22). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. I, pp. 127-129.

(23). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. II, p. 135.

(24). Ibid, Ch. IV, p. 149.

(25). Ibid, p. 156.

(26). Ibid, Ch. IV, p. 157.

13. We have no right to "do what we will with our own" but in doing with it for others we are to use our discretions.<sup>27</sup>
14. In matters of conduct a man's individual understanding constitutes his right of private judgment.<sup>28</sup>
15. Promises are justifiable only as a means toward justice and absolute promises are evil.<sup>28½</sup>
16. Virtue is the offspring of understanding.<sup>29</sup>
17. Sincerity and truth-telling are related to virtue as
  - (1) making for freedom of mind,
  - (2) for intellectual improvement, and
  - (3) for benevolence.<sup>30</sup>
18. Necessity, not free will, is the principle of intellectual tranquility,<sup>31</sup> and modifies our ideas of punishment and repentance.<sup>32</sup>
19. The doctrine of self-love is absurd: benevolence does indeed rest upon love of pleasure and involves the personal, but the disinterested and direct motive seems to maintain its integrity in the human mind.<sup>33</sup>
20. Pleasure is the only absolute good; the means of pleasure are relative goods.  
  
Pain is the only absolute evil, the means of pain are relative evils.<sup>34</sup>

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(27). Ibid, Ch. V,  
(28). Ibid, Ch. VI, p. 181.  
(29). Ibid, Ch. V. Book. IV.  
(30). Ibid, Ch. VI.  
(31). Ibid, Ch. VIII.  
(32). Ibid, Ch. VIII.  
(33). Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Bk. IV. Ch. XI, p.  
(34). Ibid, p. 440.  
(28½) Ibid, Bk. III, Ch. III.

The benevolent person and the person of taste enjoy most. Therefore it is the duty of reformers to help raise the general level of enjoyment of humanity by developing the capacity of individuals in classes, not by destroying classes and ranks.<sup>35</sup>

The foregoing are notions taken from volume one which deal largely with abstract principles which are more definitely applied in volume two to existing human institutions. Brown seems not to have had the political chip on his shoulder as did Godwin - therefore can pass over much of the discussion of legislative and executive power with its analyses of monarchy and the causes of war, of the effect of opinion in its relation to political institution, of crimes and punishments, till we come to the chapter on law.

Godwin's chief objections to law seem to be

(1) that law attempts to classify cases which, according to his previous theory, would make law an instrument of rankest injustice in dealing with the individual.<sup>36-37</sup>

(2) that laws tend to prolong civil confusion regarding property.<sup>38</sup>

Godwin's high feeling against the contemporary distribution of property has already been intimated. It remains for us here to point out that he hoped, by a redistribution of property on the principles that one should own only such property as he could make the best use of for the general good,<sup>39</sup>

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(35). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. I, Bk. IV. Ch. XI.

(36). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. II, Bk. VII, Ch. VIII.

(37). He takes a dig at the dishonesty of lawyers on page 404.

(38). Same as (1).

(39). Political Justice, London 1798, V. II, Bk. VIII, Ch. II, p. 432

- (1) to equalize the distribution of manual labor,<sup>40</sup>
- (2) to increase leisure for all.<sup>41</sup>
- (3) to do away with unprofitable luxury.<sup>42</sup>

Much of this sounds familiar to our ears but one is tempted to throw over all Godwin's teaching when he shows himself as lacking in perception of human needs as he does in Book. VIII where he objects to the present institution of marriage on the basis of its treatment of woman as property, as with other kinds of property. He deplores the element of permanence in the marriage tie,<sup>43</sup> forgetting here as he does in similar criticism of government and of religions, that of all salutary, prophylactic, and educational elements in human experience, permanence is one of the most disciplinary and soothing balms of the soul. With the intense egotism of the self-styled rationalist, he finds deception to be the chief evil of inconstancy and presumes it possible that, in a state of society where everything is left to individual judgment there can ever occur so anomalous a phenomenon as that of two persons being absolutely just to each other in a decision to quit their attachment.<sup>44</sup>

In spite of the rationalism which Godwin insists is the basis of benevolence and hence should control all motive, he fails utterly - throughout his philosophy - to see the selfishness of the individualism implied in the right of private judgment as he interprets that right. We see his world break up into a million shattered bits of star dust, sterile and useless fragments of a beautiful

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(40). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. II, Bk. VIII, Ch. VI.

(41). Ibid.

(42). Ibid.

(43). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. II, Bk. VIII, Ch. VIII.

(44). Political Justice, London 1798, Vol. II, Bk. VIII, Ch. VIII.

ideal world which he hoped to build by sheer force of logic and scientific choice. As is common with scientific monomaniacs. Godwin through intolerable self sufficiency leaves out the one element that might have made his philosophy complete and true- i.e., really scientific-: he fails to recognize the constructive rationality of self-sacrifice ,of sacrifice even of private judgment, of sacrifice of private judgment for purposes of self-education, self-realization in the common lot, the education that experience in a world of a million private judgments give us. Admitting that the evolution of a society which shall exist on a purely rational basis will be slow,<sup>45</sup> he does not even make that society worth evolving for he takes absolutely no account of that rough and tumble struggle of existence which makes rationality really rational in the supplementary relations of the individual and society. In other words, in spite of all his emphasis upon benevolence, Godwin in Political Justice fails utterly to understand the rationality of team work in government, in society, in marriage.

If conversation be one of the happy privileges of marriage,<sup>46</sup> we regard it as only one. Of the necessity of a great outside objective in married life, a mutual interest which shall be as a third person- a child of conjugal love<sup>47</sup> - Godwin has no conception. For the present, real objectives, when these real objectives are real children, may become wards of the state. Education will become a public matter.<sup>48</sup> Parentage, by implication, being rooted in the physical- which Godwin's rationality is too

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(45). Pol. Justice, London 1798, Vol. 11 Bk. Ch.

(46). "We may all enjoy her conversation." P.J.Lond.1798,p.511.

(47). Compare Richard C. Cabot: Friends and Foes of Love, Atlantic Monthly. January 1914.

(48). Not necessarily State education: See P.J. Lond.1798,p.512.

irrational to esteem as having any function in the development of a soul, parentage becomes utterly subordinate to reason, and mind, in the ideal world, will become so dominant over matter that the evolution of man by generation will no longer be necessary and the last brood of humans will be all mature men, complete in themselves, immortal by virtue of intellect!<sup>49</sup>

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(49). Pol. Justice, Bk. VIII, Ch. IX, on "The Prolongation of Human Life."

Miss Loshe in her Early American Novelists gives the following digest of Caleb Williams.

"The story of Caleb Williams may be summarized briefly. Caleb, a lad of unusual ability, the son of a small farmer has become the secretary of Falkland, his landlord. In his anxiety to discover the cause of fits of melancholy and insane wanderings which at times affect the benevolent and accomplished Falkland, Williams is led to believe that his patron is really guilty of a murder for which he has been once tried and acquitted. Henceforth his passionate curiosity, to whose satisfaction, he says, he would have sacrificed liberty and life, leads him to attempt every means to discover the truth. Falkland comes upon Williams in the act of lifting the cover of a mysterious chest, and in a passion of impatience tells all the story of his guilt, and his determination to hide it at any cost. Williams still loves and admires his master, whom he considers criminal only through the force of circumstances acting on his really noble qualities. But Falkland distrusts his devotion, maddens him by a petty tyranny of suspicion, and drives him to an attempted flight. Caleb is captured, and imprisoned on a charge of theft arranged by Falkland.

Williams escapes from prison, but is prevented by Falkland's emissaries from leaving the country. In London he lives the life of a hunted creature, constantly recognized by Falkland's spies and driven to new disguises, until he is seized and taken before a magistrate. Maddened by the long-drawn terror of his hiding, he denounces Falkland, only to be reproached with adding lying to theft. Falkland appears and tells Williams that the apparent persecution was only a test of the lad's fidelity to his oath, a test in which he has failed. Henceforth, wherever he goes, he will

always be in his patron's power, and always be pursued by his revenge. To Falkland reputation is the dearest thing on earth therefore his revenge will be to take reputation from Williams.

Therefore Williams is followed from place to place by emissaries from Falkland, who, by spreading the story of his theft and ingratitude, make him an outcast from each community that has sheltered him. Deprived of his livelihood, his friends, his betrothed, he forgets the reverence for Falkland which has persisted through all his sufferings, returns to his native place, and brings a solemn accusation against his former master. Confronted with the feeble, almost dying, Falkland, Williams is overcome with grief for what he has done. Falkland, convinced too late of Caleb's sincerity praises his heroic patience, acknowledges the crime, and dies. Godwin leaves his hero a prey to eternal remorse, dramatically inquiring, "of what use are talents and sentiments in the corrupt wilderness of human society."

5. The Relation Between Godwin's Theories as set forth in Political Justice and His Novels, makes a study corresponding somewhat to a study of one phase at least of the relation between Godwin and Brown. Attention is called to a University of Chicago Master's Thesis<sup>1</sup> by Williams Fenn De Moss which establishes the close relationship of Godwin's theory and fiction and proves the function of St. Leon as an intentional corrective of certain principles in Political Justice - notably the theory of marriage treated therein.

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(1). De Moss, William Fenn: The Relation Between Godwin's Political Justice and His Novels. University of Chicago Master's Thesis, 1912.

Lillie Deming Loshe gives the following summary of the story of Wieland in her "Early American Novel."<sup>1</sup>

"The narrator is Clara Wieland, a young woman of the educated and independent type just then appearing in fiction. Like Caleb Williams, and like most of Brown's other personages, she begins by lamenting the singularity of her fate - "the experience of no human being can furnish a parallel; that I beyond the rest of mankind should be reserved for a destiny without alleviation and without example." She then describes the Wieland family, peaceful, cultured, rather pedantic, dwelling tranquilly on the banks of the Schuylkill. Their favorite gathering place is "what to the common eye would seem a summer-house," but is in reality a temple built by the older Wieland, a religious monomaniac, who in that very temple died a mysterious death, apparently by spontaneous combustion. In spite of the associations of the place the family meet there daily, and pass happy hours discussing the latest German poetry, comparing texts of Cicero, "turning over the Della Crusca dictionary," and "bandying quotations and syllogisms."

This learned peace is soon disturbed by the arrival of a mysterious stranger, Carwin, a travelling acquaintance of Wieland's brother-in-law, Plyell; Carwin's strange personality and expressive voice have a fascination for Clara, which she for a time mistakes for the "first inroads of a passion

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(1). Loshe, Lillie Deming: The Early American Novel; p. 37  
Columbia University Press, 1907.

incident to every female heart." Mysterious voices are heard around the temple; Wieland, on his way thither, hears his wife warning him away, - yet on returning to the house finds that she has not left her chair. A voice in the dark warns Clara of a power that would injure her, and promises protection. Strange voices are heard quarreling at night in the house in which Clara lives alone with her maid, and when she, fleeing, falls senseless on her brother's threshold, a voice of more than mortal power calls the household to her aid. Not content with establishing a supernatural reign of terror, the mysterious power convinces Clara's lover, Phyll, of her faithlessness, by causing him to hear her voice making the most disgraceful avowals to another.

In disgust, Phyll hastily decides to return to Germany, and Clara vainly pursues to dissuade him. On her return she finds that her brother has succumbed to the family tendency to insanity, and, at the instigation of the mysterious voices, has killed his wife and all his children as a divinely demanded sacrifice. After a long illness in another city Clara returns to her house on a farewell visit. There she is confronted with Carwin, who acknowledges that, by what he calls biloquialism or ventriloquism, he has himself been the author of the mysterious voices. Wieland, who has escaped from prison, now appears and prepares to finish his task by the sacrifice of Clara. In order to dissuade him from the deed Carwin again assumes the mysterious voice. At its rebuke Wieland suddenly recovers from his insanity, realizes what he has done, and stabs himself. Carwin escapes. The story does not follow his adventures further, but devotes

a few pages to the fate of Clara, who finally becomes the wife of Plyell. In the last paragraph a moral is drawn, somewhat - abruptly, from the events of the tale."

Let us now consider the evidences here of Godwinian influence.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STORY.

Did Brown have any such purpose in view as did Godwin when he constructed in Caleb Williams a plot which should carry out in action and character an illustration of the thesis in Political Justice? We must look to Brown's own statement first. In his "Advertisement"<sup>1</sup> he says of the author; "His purpose is neither selfish nor temporary, but aims at the illustration of some important branches of the moral constitution of man." What these "important branches" are he does not say.

Nor does he elsewhere at least not more specifically than in (1) the opening paragraph of the book - in which Clara Wieland excuses the publication to her friend of sorrows and distresses which we of the twentieth century know to have been capable of suppression by heroines of the eighteenth. She says: "If it be communicated to the world, it will inculcate the duty of avoiding deceit. It will exemplify the force of early impressions, and show the immeasurable evils that flow from an erroneous or imperfect discipline."

Just what or just how much Brown means by "imperfect discipline" is uncertain. Nowhere else in the book does he use the term. The general tenor of the tale and the frequent reference to education might lead one to suppose that he referred to formal moral training.

On the other hand personal responsibility seems not to be dependent upon or conditioned by early training: this seems to be implied, at least, in (2) the last paragraph of the book in what

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(1). Wieland: Phil. 1887 p. 23.

Miss Loshe calls the "tacked on" moral. "I leave you to moralize on this tale. That virtue should become the victim of treachery is, no doubt, a mournful consideration; but it will not escape your notice, that the evils of which Carwin and Maxwell were the authors owed their existence to the errors of the sufferers.....

If Wieland has framed juster notions of moral duty and of the divine attributes, or if I (Clara Wieland) had been gifted with ordinary equanimity or foresight, the double-tongued deceiver would have been baffled and repelled."<sup>2</sup> The clause "If I had been gifted with ordinary foresight" rather spoils the theory that responsibility is dependent upon education in morals.

To tell the truth Brown's philosophy is not very clearly thought out. One is reminded by him of Pope who because of physical infirmity could not grasp and assimilate a whole philosophy at once, but must needs give out small bits of truth rather than a well developed system. Like Pope, Brown, a man of uncertain health (he was of a consumptive diathesis), begins and ends with a definite philosophic idea, but he forgets about it in the excitement of composition and, whether from fatigue of mind or not, fails to make connections in the middle. For instance, granted that we know what he is talking about when he refers to "erroneous or imperfect discipline" - we find no direct reference to that self discipline which depends upon early moral training except in the case of Clara who has considerable debate with herself and much burning of heart because, conforming to the delicacies and prejudices of conventional female training, she had

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(2). Wieland: Phil. 1887, p. 263.

failed to give to an undeclared lover any intimation that she loved him!<sup>3</sup> In her misery she comes to the conclusion "that those sentiments which we ought not to disclose it is criminal to harbour."<sup>4</sup> This, you see, comes back to the "duty of avoiding deceit" mentioned in the introduction as one of the principles which it was the purpose of the novel to illustrate. With regard to this principle at least one direct accusation is actually made and that in the middle of the book: such "preposterous and criminal" scruples of reserve in affairs of love are, she affirms, "bred in all hearts by a perverse and vicious education."<sup>5</sup>

Compare the actual development in the middle of the book of a principle announced in the introduction with the implication of application of the principle in the following. For this same "duty of avoiding deceit" is implied but only implied, in the case of Carwin, throughout chapters twenty-two, twenty-three, and twenty-four, the chapters in which he explains to Clara that he had himself produced the voice from Heaven which had influenced Wieland to commit his crimes and that his gift of mimicry had been the means of persuading Plyell of the falseness of his lady. "I have deceived you," he announces; "I have sported with your terrors; I have plotted to destroy your reputation." That reference to expressed principle is here extremely tenuous is obvious.

But, be it noticed, throughout these chapters the evil of deceit is presented almost exclusively as (1) an evil which is evil, not because of the implied condition of mind, but because of its inconvenient consequences, and (2) as an accident of character

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- (3). Wieland. Phil. 1887. Ch. IX.  
(4). Wieland. Phil. 1887. Ch. IX, p. 99.  
(5). Wieland. Phil. 1887. Ch. IX, p. 98.

entirely subordinate to motive.

Of deceit as an evil because of consequences, Carwin ruefully explains his spur-of-the-moment lie about his intention of violating Clara's honor; "I did not consider that the truth would be less injurious than any lie which I could hastily frame."<sup>6</sup> Of deceit as an evil subordinate to motive, the whole question is always wrapped up with that of guilt or innocence. "I am innocent. I intended no ill; but my folly" (deceitful use of his power of ventriloquism), "indirectly and remotely, may have caused it."<sup>7</sup> This from Carwin - the arch villain of the book. See how Clara regards the use of such deceit. She has just upbraided him thus: "What!" "Was not thine the voice that commanded my brother to imbrue his hands in the blood of his children? - to strangle that angel of sweetness, his wife? Has he not vowed my death, and the death of Flyell, at thy bidding? Hast thou not made him the butcher of his family? - changed him who was the glory of his species into worse than brute?"<sup>8</sup> Then, (note the sudden transition), "Carwin's eyes glared and his limbs were petrified at this intelligence. No words were requisite to prove him guiltless of these enormities."<sup>9</sup> (The italics are mine). This from Clara!<sup>10</sup>

Preoccupation with motive and its relations to virtue and vice is characteristic of the book as a whole. In the case of each character - some virtue or some vice, or the two acting as foils to each other, determine the plot down-fall of that character. In

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- (6). Wieland. Phil. 1887, Ch. XXIII, p. 227.  
(7). Wieland. Phil. 1887. Ch. XXII, p. 215.  
(8). Wieland. Phil. 1887. Ch. XXII, p. 216.  
(9). Wieland, Phil. 1887. Ch. XXII, p. 216.  
(10). Three other passages may be cited: Wieland's own judgment of his own innocence because of pure motive, p. 243, his daughter's faith in the sanctity of her father's motive, p. 200, and her taking it for granted that the reader would exempt Carwin. p. 252.

each case, it is his motive which saves him from condemnation.

Let it be noted that condemnation or the lack of condemnation never in the case of motive passes over into plot action. That is, Brown in this book never lets his characters suffer from good or evil motive. Condemnation does pass over into action, in the case of irrationality, of deceit, of short sightedness, of curiosity, of mistaken education, but never in the case of motive.

As we have seen, Clara attributes her own (plot) downfall to mistaken modesty; she attributes Plyell's downfall to failure to weigh evidence and to over great trust in his senses; and she reports Wieland's as follows: "Fallen from his lofty and heroic station; now finally restored to the perception of truth; weighed to earth by the recollection of his own deeds; consoled no longer by a consciousness of rectitude for the loss of offspring and wife,- a loss for which he was indebted to his own misguided hand,-Wieland was transformed at once into the man of sorrows!" <sup>11</sup>

All this has to do with story material. - introductory state of mind, deeds, fits of insanity, disillusionment-the material of a psychology plot. In the paragraph immediately following, we have Brown's criticism of Wieland's character, in Clara's words to be sure, but nevertheless Brown's criticism: "He reflected not that credit should be as reasonably denied to the last as to any former intimation; that one might as justly be ascribed to erring or diseased senses as the other. He saw not that this discovery in no degree affected the integrity of his conduct; that his motives had lost none of their claims to the homage of mankind; that the preference of supreme good, and boundless energy of duty, were undimi-

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(11). Wieland. Phil. 1887. Ch. XXVL, p. 249.

nished in his bosom."<sup>12</sup>

Now this contrast of plot downfall - (illustration of philosophy applied to life) and Brown's criticism of the character sustaining that plot constitutes the climax of the story. That it was meant by Brown to be so is proved by its position near the end of the book and at the most dramatic point in the story, by the fact of its centering around the chief actor of the tale, and by the fact that the first revelation of the reason for the title of the book is here given:- "Wieland was transformed at once into the man of sorrows."<sup>13</sup>

The climax of a psychological story, especially of a tragedy, implies the contrast of what was with what might have been, of what is, with what might be. The crisp French plot leaves the might-have-been for the reader to construct for himself. Brown's criticism of Wieland takes the place of the might-have-been. If inartistic and un-French, it at least gives us the key to the philosophy of the particular tragedy Brown is here presenting and, qua key, (since analysis of the cause of a tragedy always reveals the author's purpose in constructing a literary form for it at all, the key to Brown's philosophic purpose in writing Wieland.

We are here using the term philosophical in its literary rather than its scientific sense. As we have earlier indicated, the word philosophy in its technical sense is almost too dignified a word to apply to Brown's moral themes. Yet, even used in this way, can we speak of Brown's philosophic purpose in Wieland as being <sup>4</sup>Godwinian in type? I believe that we can.

In the first place motive itself is, as we have seen, one of the basal topics of Godwinian doctrine.<sup>14</sup> It is not, to be

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(12) Wieland: Phil. 1887, Ch. XXVI, p. 249.

(13). Wieland: Phil. 1887, Ch. XXVI, p. 249.

(14). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798: Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. IV.

sure, the theme of Caleb Williams whose avowed purpose in writing his memoirs is that posterity, "seeing in my example what sort of evils are entailed upon mankind by society as it is at present constituted, might be inclined to turn their attention upon the fountain from which such bitter waters have been accustomed to flow."<sup>15</sup> Of direct inveighing against society there is little evidence in Wieland.

But we do find here the Godwinian formula for the theme of a thesis novel - which expressed mathematically would read - 'Let a straight line be drawn between some Godwinian thesis (a) and its plot illustration - and a straight line between another Godwinian thesis (b) and the author's criticism of the first line. Then, though they would normally intersect in real life (and in the stories of any but sentimentalists) let them remain parallel through the last chapter and meet, if they meet at all, in the only place where parallel lines are reputed to meet - in eternity. Such fanciful diagramming of a situation which is only partly logical can be little more than suggestive. And yet how otherwise can one indicate the plan of procedure of the sentimental rationalist when he undertakes to write a story? That Godwin's avowed ethical purpose in writing Caleb Williams seems to be more fully accomplished than Brown's moral one (as he states it) is due to the advantage of Godwin's point of view. He regards a moral theme as something to be proved; He keeps his eye on his theory; whereas Brown regards the same theory as just so much dramatic material - just so fine a starting point for a plot. A moral theory is to him a psychological situation and a psychological situation is valuable not so much for the

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(15). Caleb Williams: N. Y. 1904: p. 367.

philosophy involved as for the story that can be evolved from it.

But, it may be objected, Brown is known to have pretty closely followed suggestions from real life in developing the plot of Wieland.<sup>16</sup> Might he not have worked backward from that objective material to the thesis end? Yes, he might so have done, but he did not have his plot - his real story - until he had brought together the uninterpreted chain of events developing from the insanity of a New York farmer, and the psychological explanation of those events; and contrasted them with his theory or criticism of these events. It is the moral situation in which Wieland (and for that matter the narrator and other characters) finds himself that constitutes the climax of the story. And, as we have insisted before, it is in the climax of the tragedy that we find the key to the purpose of a story. And it is of purpose that we are here treating.

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(16). Wieland: Introduction. See also Van Doren, C.: Early American Realism, in *The Nation*: Vol. 99: November 12, 1914.

CORRESPONDENCE OF BROWN'S TREATMENT OF MOTIVE -  
VIRTUE THEME WITH GODWIN'S THEORY.

If any one doubts the probable literary suggestiveness to Brown of the moral abstractions in Political Justice, let him reread the Chapter on Personal Virtue and Duty,<sup>17</sup> and compare the ideas there set forth with Brown's story material. Brown's tragic situation analyses itself into the following component parts: A good motive balanced by a vice of some sort - deceit, murder, or what not and the condemnation of that vice by recognizing error. The condemnation of vice brings out the contrast of what-might-have-been, recognition of which is essential to a tragic situation. Then Brown, recognizing that tragic situation but disregarding it, says: Yes, here is a tragic situation but it is only a situation. You are not to identify yourself with a situation. Condemnation of vice belongs to the situation: vice implies infraction of duty. But you go scott free: - you, as separate from your action but identified with your motive, escape from the tragedy of situation. The award of innocence to you on account of benevolent motive releases you from the condemnation of tragedy. In other words, there is no necessary tragedy for man, but only for his deeds. In still other words, a man may absolutely fail in his duty through error and his guilty deed be established and yet he himself may be held innocent.

Does Godwinian doctrine justify all this? Does Godwin find any excuse in abstracting motive from the rest of the situation?

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(17). Political Justice: Lond. 1798. Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. IV.

Brown accuses Wieland of (1) misdeed, (2) unjust notions of moral duty and unjust notions of divine attributes - that is, he accuses him of error.<sup>18</sup> Godwin says of the first,

(1). Murder is a crime.<sup>19</sup>

(2). Crime is error, but error is dependent upon outside circumstances<sup>20</sup> - in this case malevolent influence. Men do not choose evil when they know better.<sup>21</sup> Choice is determined by education or circumstance. Education and circumstance in Wieland's case would be early training and finally persuasion through Carwin's duplicity. In spite of all this,

(3). Murder is infringement of duty. Duty, he says, is application of capacity to the real, not imaginary benefit of mankind. The benefit Wieland imagined by his series of murders was an imagined, not a real, benefit to humanity.<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, it can never be one's duty to do wrong.<sup>23</sup>

If it be argued that Wieland was here dealing with God's demands rather than with those of humanity, Godwin would answer - "God himself has no right to be a tyrant,"<sup>23<sup>1</sup></sup> and obedience to a tyrant is not a duty. Furthermore, since his crime affected humanity, Wieland was still guilty of infringement of duty toward humanity if not toward God.

But if the motive of an erring person be good? Godwin admits in his paragraph on benevolent error<sup>24</sup> the difficulty of correctly estimating the virtue of the individual, since virtue is

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(18). Wieland: Phil. 1887. p. 249.

(19). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798. Bk. II. Ch. IV.

(20). Ibid. Bk. I, Ch. VIII, p. 108.

(21). Ibid.

(22). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, Bk. II, Ch. IV. p. 157.

(23). Ibid.

(23<sup>1</sup>). Sermon I in Godwin, Wm.: Sketches of History quoted in Paul C. Kegan: William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries: Lond. 1876, p.

(24). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, Vol. I, Bk. II. Ch. IV, p. 152.

partly subjective whereas duty is largely objective.<sup>25</sup> Virtue involves motive and the tendency of the deed to benefit mankind.<sup>26</sup> "Is it the motive alone that we are entitled to take into consideration, when we decide upon the merits of the individual, or are we obliged, as in the case of virtue absolutely taken, to consider both the motives and the tendency of his conduct?"<sup>27</sup> He recognizes the fact that "actions in the highest degree injurious to the public, have proceeded from motives uncommonly conscientious"<sup>28</sup>, and, among other illustrations, cites several religious enthusiasts no one of whom is an example of the personal egoistic type of monomania exhibited by Wieland. Godwin's conclusion on the subject is that "the turning point is utility. Intention is of no further value than as it leads to utility: it is the means not the end. We shall over-turn therefore every principle of just reasoning, if we bestow our applause upon the most mischievous of mankind merely because the mischief they produce arises from mistake; or if we regard them in any other light, than as we would an engine of destruction and misery."<sup>29</sup>

All this would utterly condemn Wieland, as well as his deeds. From this point on, Godwin turns to a consideration of duty in which he turns right around and gives Wieland another chance by remarking that "though a man should in some circumstances neglect the best application of his capacity," (i.e. the best judgment of which circumstances have made him capable) "he may yet be entitled to the appellation of virtuous."<sup>30</sup> But he takes the chance away again by

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(25). Ibid.

(26). Political Justice: Lond. 1798, Bk. I, Ch. IV, p. 152.

(27). Ibid.

(28). Ibid, p. 153.

(29). Ibid, p. 156.

(30). Ibid, p. 156.

adding, "but duty is uniform, and requires of us the best application to every situation that presents itself."<sup>31</sup> Error, prejudice, necessity - no excuse avails in the face of duty.<sup>32</sup> Wieland is condemned, not just his acts, but Wieland himself. Political Justice does for him.

Political Justice does for him, yet in Caleb Williams we find a treatment of Falkland nearly parallel to Brown's treatment of Wieland. The sentimental evaluation by Caleb of a man who is a murderer, who has hounded him without mercy for years, who has lost him his reputation, who is utterly and entirely selfish, as "a man worthy of affection and kindness,"<sup>33</sup> of whom it could be affirmed that "a nobler spirit lived not among the sons of men"<sup>34</sup> - certainly resembles much in Wieland. To be sure, Godwin has his special nut to crack: he attributes Falkland's downfall to environment. "Of what use," he asks, "are talents and sentiments in the corrupt wilderness of human society? It is a rank and rotten soil from which every fine shrub draws poison as it grows. All that in a happier field and a purer air, would expand into virtue and germinate into usefulness is thus converted into henbane and deadly nightshade."<sup>35</sup> He does not intimate where else than in human society human beings can cultivate their talents and he totally forgets that in Political Justice he had said of man that "it would be absurd to say that it was his duty to labor under prejudice."<sup>36</sup> Yet it seems to us that Falkland's was a sufficiently serious case of prejudice - even discounting it

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(31). Ibid.

(32). Ibid, p. 157.

(33). Caleb Williams: New York 1904, p. 391.

(34). Ibid, p. 394.

(35). Caleb Williams: New York 1904, p. 394

(36). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 157.

as a matter of fiction. That sentimentalism in Godwin of which Mr. Allen gives so excellent an account,<sup>37</sup> is certainly different from Brown's in no particular except that as an idea it has no plot value in Caleb Williams as in Wieland. Caleb's heroics in exposing the noble criminal are part of the style of the period and are no integral part of the tragic point of the story.

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(37). A. Sprague Allen: Godwin as a Sentimentalist. Pub. of the M.L.A. of A. Vol. XXXIII, 1., 1918.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE ATTITUDE OF MIND OF BROWN'S CHARACTERS

with respect (1) to intellectual and aesthetic pleasure (2) the life rational constitutes another body of proof.

Of the eight most memorable personages all are characterized by interest in intellectual and literary pursuits, one, Plyell, is especially gifted in music and poetry; one, the younger Wieland, is interested in science; two, Clara and Plyell, are obviously meant to be exponents of rationalism; one, the elder Wieland, is a natural philosopher.

All are more or less Godwinian in type- that is, they do characteristically cogitate upon topics which occupied the mind of the English philosopher. The elder Wieland, for example, is reported to have speculated much on the grounds of belief, the relations of motives to actions, the criterion of merit, and the kinds and purposes of evidence (all, as the reader will observe, ingredients of the novel itself).<sup>44</sup> Wieland the younger expatiates upon the perils of wealth and power, and upon the happiness of mediocrity but, also( and this inconsistently for a Godwinian character) upon the sacredness of conjugal and parental duties.<sup>45</sup> That he is not meant to be an out-an-out Godwinian is apparent by more tags than that of Calvinistic inspiration which offsets moral necessity which was the other of the two "props on which he reposed."<sup>46</sup> Plyell, on the other hand, is described as "the champion of intellectual liberty" who "rejected all guidance but that of reason."<sup>47</sup> Clara, too, is averse to the irrationality of accounting for the miraculous death

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- (44). Wieland: Phil. 1887. p. 43.  
(45). Wieland: Phil. 1887. p. 63.  
(46). Wieland: Phil. 1887. p. 63.  
(47). Ibid, p. 45.

of her father<sup>48</sup> and for her unbelief made tales of apparitions and enchantments "not even interesting."<sup>49</sup> She and Plyell, with their interminable analysis of the rational grounds for judgment and, conduct and action, are evidently meant to view life from the high altitudes of Political Justice. Yet neither even begins to approximate the rational man of Godwin's program, not even the approximation which we find in the character of Constantia Dudley- of which later.

CERTAIN STORY DEVICES AND INGREDIENTS CHARACTERISTIC OF GODWIN appear again in Wieland, such being

(1). The curiosity motif<sup>50</sup> which appears in Carwin's role as a much less convincing and very much more subordinate circumstance than in Caleb Williams.

(2). The chastity motif<sup>51</sup> which is decidedly weak in Brown and which resembles Godwin's use of it in that in Wieland it is a scare only and differs from Godwin's in that while Godwin is trying to strengthen a thesis by his use of it, in Brown's hands it becomes merely a cheap and flabby literary device.

(3). The first person narrator.

(4). The relation of hunted and pursued between Wieland and Clara as parallel to that of Falkland and Caleb with the difference of benevolent as compared to malevolent motive.

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(48). Wieland: Phil. 1887, p. 54.

(49). Ibid, p. 65

(50). Wieland: Phil. 1887, p. 224 compare Caleb Williams.

(51). Wieland: Phil. 1887, p. 180 compare Caleb Williams.

THE STORY OF ARTHUR MERVYN.

Arthur Mervyn, a young country fellow, who has only once in his life been to the city which is less than fifty miles distant, repairs thither upon the marriage of his father with a farm wench whose inferior character quickly upsets the economy of the household and makes home intolerable for the sensitive, mildly Rousseauistic son. The lad arrives in the city friendless and penniless and there becomes the subject of a practicable joke which, on pretence of providing him with a lodging for the night, locks him in the third story bedroom of a house whose occupants are entirely unknown to him. His presence there being unexplainable to himself or to any one else, he conceals himself in a closet where he overhears conversation which puts him in possession of family and business secrets of which he makes good use later. One of these secrets refers to unethical business imposition upon a certain "nabob" into whose service Arthur, affecting a midnight escape, enters the next morning without knowing that his employer and the "nabob" are one and the same person.

Mr. Welbeck engages the youth as secretary but as his duties are postponed for a week anything can and everything does happen effectually to prevent his ever doing any writing for Welbeck. The first great experience is the transformation, by virtue of a gay wardrobe, of the country lad into a most gallant-appearing foreign gentlemen. There follow in rapid succession his observance of the anomalous position in the house of a beautiful Italian girl, his meeting the aunt of a young stranger, Clavering, who had died in the Mervyn household some time

previously without giving any clue as to his family connections, the killing by Welbeck of one Watson and the confession of Welbeck of a long life of crime which included an unfortunate early marriage with an infamous woman who had upset his life values, his subsequent seduction of a young married woman in Charleston whose suicide and wrong her brother Watson had come up to right in a duel with Welbeck, and the misappropriation of the fortune of the young Italian, Clemenza Lodi, in setting up a magnificent house for himself where he had seduced her and the maintenance of which had so eaten into her funds that, in alarm, he had devoted the entire remaining amount to speculation in a disastrous maritime business venture. The ship, whose loss under any ordinary circumstances would have been amply covered by insurance, had been taken as contraband by a warring nation so that no remedy for his insolvency was in sight. After this confession Welbeck, who upon the original engagement of Arthur as his secretary had imposed upon him a promise of secrecy as to all his employer's doings, Welbeck commands Arthur's assistance in burying the body of Watson in a rather Gothic-like section of the cellar of his own house. Mervyn is then made to row Welbeck across the river but in midstream Welbeck disappears from the boat and Arthur supposes him drowned. He himself seeks the other shore, mails letters to Watson's family which he had discovered in a purse Welbeck had taken from the body, and returns to the house of Welbeck to get the old check and fustian clothes in which he had originally entered the city. While there he secures a manuscript history of the Lodi family which Welbeck had originally intended to have him write out in English and, with this one memento of his few days in Welbeck's menage, sets out to find work in the

country. He is employed by a Mr. Hadwin, a decent Quaker, whose elder daughter, Susan, is engaged to a youth in the city but whose younger daughter Eliza speedily becomes so much the center of Arthur's thoughts that, to divert his mind from a love which because of her youth, her sect, and his impecunity, seems hopeless, he concentrates his entire mental energies upon the translation of the Lodi manuscript, without grammar, without previous knowledge of the Italian language, and with no help but the strength of his own mental powers. This prodigious effort at self discipline is eventually rewarded by the discovery of a fortune in bank-notes between the pasted leaves of the manuscript. It is the half of Clemenzia's fortune which Welbeck had not used.

The yellow fever plague is now raging. Mervyn skips off to the city without permission to seek young Wallace whose danger in the plague-stricken city is making Susan Hadwin ill. This young Wallace turns out to be the person who had played the practical joke on him when he first came to town but he nurses him in his convalescence from the fever and starts him home to Susan. Meanwhile Mervyn succumbs to the fever himself and in order to avoid the hospital takes refuge in Welbeck's deserted house. Here, Welbeck, the supposed dead, turns up and relates his previous inability to take his life by drowning and his present inability to find certain papers - the Lodi manuscript. Mervyn, in a fit of unnecessary integrity, explains that he himself has the bills upon his person but that he will not under any circumstances give them to Welbeck, since Welbeck, he is sure, will not give them to Clemenza, the rightful owner. Welbeck changes his tactics and begs for their return on the ground that Clemenza's possess-

ion of them would endanger her life, because, he confesses, that they are forged! A disturbance at the door distracts Welbeck and Mervyn takes advantage of his back being turned to burn the notes. Welbeck perceives his action too late and is driven to frenzy because the tale of forgery had been merely a device to get the money out of Mervyn's hands. Welbeck disappears and Mervyn wanders in the streets until he is picked up by Dr. Stephens, part-time narrator of the tale, whose wife nurses him back to life. Mervyn's first duty is to the Hadwins, whose family has been disrupted by the death of Mr. Hadwin and the failure of Wallace to appear. Mervyn is able to inform the daughters of Wallace's death of which he himself had accidentally learned on his way thither. Susan promptly dies forthwith of a broken heart and Mervyn has great difficulty in preventing a like catastrophe in an attempt to settle Eliza in some shelter not his own.

Eliza, finally perceiving that Arthur will not marry her, tries to live up to her love for him by making the best of the hospitality of a farmer's family with whom Mervyn wishes to deposit her. On the way back to the city, Mervyn stops at a house of ill fame in which Welbeck had immured Clemenza. There he meets a woman, visiting the house by accident, who later becomes his wife and there he witnesses Clemenza's agonies upon the occasion of the death of her child.

The rest of the tale is a picking up of various threads, with a casual mixing up of various odds and ends of fuzz and lint, characteristic of all Brown's plots. In seeking for a home for Clemenza, Mervyn is compelled to drop the character of promise-keeper which he had assumed to all except the Stephens and in the

relation of his horrible experiences and benevolent actions makes friends of all who previously had considered him a questionable if not a dangerous character. His own contemplated start in life as a physician under Dr. Stephen is made felicitous by the award of a thousand dollars which were due for the return to a southern family of a huge fortune which Watson has been intrusted to bring from Jamaica. His disappearance has meant the disappearance of the fortune. Welbeck, hearing of it, has disinterred the body of Watson and found the money on his person, but, being cast into prison before he has had a chance to spend it, he transfers it all to Arthur and conveniently dies.

Mervyn is very fond of Eliza but can't see his way to marry her for at least "five or eight years"-his inability being not a matter of fondness, for he thinks he loves her dearly, but her own undeveloped mental condition. In a talk with Achsa Fielding upon the subject he describes his ideal of the woman whom he could marry as being one exactly like her. It takes Dr. Stephens to label his passion for Achsa as love and to push the young hero over the precipice of proposal into eternal felicity with her whom he called, because of the discrepancy of six years between their ages, his darling "mama".

An Analysis of the Elements Emphasized in Arthur Mervyn  
discovers three principal ingredients.

1. The Promise<sup>1</sup> to Welbeck which serves as the story - "knot" or initial dilemma and which reappears again and again to tie the hands of the hero until the turning point is reached when the hero, by doing away with the principal of reserve imposed upon him by the villain, begins to unravel the various complications which adherence to his promise have created. This promise and the ill consequences of it are definitely referred to a dozen times in such a way as to render it very conspicuous indeed.<sup>2</sup> It is this promise which tics Mervyn's tongue when, on his very first errand for Welbeck it interferes with his own natural truth-telling propensities and makes ambiguous his relationship to Welbeck and Clavering in the interview with Clavering's aunt.<sup>3</sup> It is the promise which prevents Mervyn from reporting the shooting of Watson to the authorities, and from immediately comforting the wife of Watson by removing the uncertainty of his fate; it is the promise which nearly deprives him of the friendship of Dr. and Mrs. Stephens, and it is the ill consequences of that promise which gave Welbeck such an advantage over him that constitutes that body of experience which Mervyn piously embraces in the following words: "Unfortunate! Dear Madam! How unfortunate! It has done away a part of my ignorance of the world in which I live. It has led me to the situation in which I am now placed. It has introduced me to the knowledge of many good people. It has made me the witness and the subject of many acts of

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(1). Political Justice: Lond. 1798, Vol. I, Bk. III, Ch. III.  
(2). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887: p. 71, 86, 108, 115, 193, 200, 201, etc.  
(3). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887: Vol. II, p. 64.

beneficence and generosity. My knowledge of Welbeck has been useful to me. It has enabled me to be useful to others. I look back upon that allotment of my destiny which first led me to this door, with gratitude and pleasure."<sup>4</sup>

2. While there is no definitely worded moral as in Wieland, there are constant though not markedly energetic references to the evil of trusting to appearances - whether these appearances be logical or sensual. It is the constant reversal of what seems to be to show what is that makes for at least a third of the dramatic tension in the plot - a dramatic tension which could not be treated just as dramatic tension but must, perforce, be veiled with its blur of moralization. Mervyn thinks Clemenzia Welbeck's daughter and she isn't; then he is ready to fall in love with her and discovers her to be an improper subject of love; then he thinks her infamous and later finds that she isn't. He believes Welbeck dead because he disappears in the river and is much disconcerted when, later, he comes to life. Without making sure of the facts, he believes what he hears of Wallace's death and sends home word of the circumstances; when Wallace appears in his own apartments Mervyn thinks for a minute that he is seeing a ghost,<sup>5</sup> but the fact of it's proving a real man does not cure him of gullibility; he starts Wallace home to the Hadwin's and assumes that he reaches the end of his journey; Welbeck had said that the notes are forged, they prove to be real;<sup>6</sup> and so on to the end of the story when the supposed impossibility of marrying Schsa turns out to be, more literally even than usual, a dream come true.

Sometimes, however, the lesson is a very, very personal one.

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(4). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 140

(5). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. I, p. 166.

(6). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. I, p. 211.

After the detection of a certain artifice for doing up Welbeck who was not alive to profit by the discovery, Arthur says: "My knowledge will be useless to the world; for by what motives can I be influenced to publish the truth? or by whom will my single testimony be believed, in opposition to that plausible exterior, and perhaps, to that general integrity which Thatford (the merchant who loaned Welbeck money for a maritime business venture) has maintained? To myself it will not be unprofitable.<sup>7</sup> It is a lesson on the principles of human nature; on the delusiveness of appearances; on the perviousness of fraud; and on the power with which nature has invested human beings over the thoughts and actions of each other."<sup>8</sup>

3. The simple benevolent character winning out by sheer integrity of motive over his own simplicity and the wiles of a self-styled benevolent villain. As compared to the novels which come before and after Arthur Mervyn the conspicuousness of character-interest per se is probably greater than in Wieland and certainly less than in Ormond where character analysis is much more extensive and deliberate. There are, to be sure, fairly long passages detailing Mervyn's temper and habits but probably no more lines in the aggregate than those devoted to Constantia. Welbeck is manifested largely through his action: in his case there is no such deliberate and expository treatment as is awarded Ormond and therefore no such appearance of conscious philosophical criticism through character.

4. Brown's own emphasis on the yellow fever as indicated by the sub-title, "or Memoirs of the Year 1793," and as pointed out in the preface to the story<sup>9</sup> seems to me out of proportion. He

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(7). Italics are mine.

(8). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. I, p. 138.

(9). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. I, pp. 3,4.

expatiates upon the historical importance of a record of that year and upon the opportunity for inciting benevolence which opens up to the recorder of such an era. It is true that the yellow fever scenes are, like those in Ormond, unforgettable and lively pictures which are worth all that Brown ever wrote, but they do not constitute a necessary part of the plot background nor do they in any necessary way tend to a clearer or more vivid conception of the benevolent character. If Brown meant, as he may very well have done, to make these plague scenes the basis of his book, he succeeded admirably in keeping the book alive by means of them but he failed utterly in making the plot grow out of the fever material.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK.

Roughly speaking, volume one deals with the multiplication of complicated situations and volume two with the solution of plot. This is only roughly speaking however. Roughly speaking, also, volume one bears many resemblances to Caleb Williams and volume two very few. This also is meant to be suggestive only of the differences between the two volumes. Miss Loshe says of the story that it is "practically two independent works, - for Brown apparently forgot how he was going to continue and pieced out his story with a new set of personages."<sup>1</sup> The case seems to me to be not so bad as all that: Brown may not have known in the beginning how he was going to end but, everything considered, he does certainly make a valiant effort to finish everything he had begun and the new characters introduced are few;- the Carlton brother and sister, and Achsa Fielding being the only conspicuous ones. Achsa had to be introduced because, ardent rationalist that he was, Brown could not let his hero condescend to marriage with a country Quaker girl no matter how charming nor how full of latent intellectual abilities.

Miss Loshe's statement about the two independent works is true in that the first part is restrospective, giving the adventures of Mervyn up to the point of the resolution to break his promise to Welbeck by telling anything at all. This restrospective part is introduced and concluded by personal explanations of Dr. Stephens as to how he happened to know Mervyn at all. The second part is, like the first, in Arthur's own words - and gives the story from the decision to break his promise until the day before his marriage with Achsa.

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(1). Loshe: The Early American Novel. N.Y. 1907, p. 44.

STORY ELEMENTS PARALLEL TO ELEMENTS IN CALEB WILLIAMS.

1. The relationship between the would-be benefactor villain and the innocent dependent - including
  - (a). The worldliness of the one and the simplicity of the other.
  - (b). The past crimes of the one and the innocence of the other.
  - (c). The fear of detection of the one and the fear of being inhuman or disloyal to the patron on the part of the other.
  - (d). The relation of employer and secretary.
2. The inquisitive character of the secretary.
3. The change for the secretary from farm life to that of a comparatively grand menage.
4. The forbidden room - in this case the library which Mervyn was forbidden to enter except in company with Welbeck; in Caleb Williams, the private den.
5. The something that must not be opened, in this case the Lodi manuscript, in Caleb Williams the chest belonging to Falkland.
6. The killing somebody by the villain.
7. The confession by the patron to the secretary.
8. The sentimental evaluation of reputation by the patrons.
9. The distrust of the secretary for his patron .
10. The responsibility of the patron for putting the dependent in an ambiguous position in the eyes of the world.
11. The death-bed remorse of the villain.
12. The overtaking of the criminal by law (compare Welbeck's

prison couch with Falkland's trial in open court).

13. The excessive temper of the patron - due largely to nervousness and consequently the
14. The wearing out of the criminal by the strain of his evil life.

There are of course many shades of difference between the two treatments but that there is as much resemblance as there is is significant.

CHARACTER AS REFLECTING GODWINIAN THEORY.

The only clearly developed characters are those of Mervyn, Welbeck, Eliza Hadwin and Achsa Fielding. These last are comparable to the contrasted characters of Constantia and Helena in Ormond, but are not so fully nor so logically contrasted. The chief point of difference as in the later book is in comparative intellectual development but Eliza is unlike Helena in that she truly yearns for development, for intellectual exercise, whereas Helena had no abiding ambition and could not, even with Ormond's assistance, "take an education." Eliza, under Achsa Fielding's supervision, in a very short time leaves behind her all traces of the country girl except her simplicity of heart and sweetness of manner.<sup>2</sup>

Welbeck, being a plot-borrowed rather than a theory-borrowed personage, need not be considered.

Mervyn is a strange compound of Rousseauistic youth,<sup>3</sup> possibly reminiscent of Brown's own boyhood, and Godwinian point of view.

1. Benevolence, benefactor is his tag.<sup>4</sup> He represents no complication of the idea of benevolence; he is simply a straightforward rather unsuspecting person who wishes everyone well. The mixture of other Godwinian elements does not vitiate this one outstanding feature. If he gets into difficulties, practical difficulties such as we could not excuse on Godwinian ground because "motive is not sufficient to save a man from condemnation,"<sup>5</sup> the characteristic selflessness of the boy shines through, clear as in the old fashioned Sunday school books.

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(2). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 193-4.

(3). Ibid, p, 112.

(4). Ibid, p. 114.

(5). Pol. Justice, Lond. 1798. V. I, Pt. II, Ch. IV, p. 156

2. Indulgence in private judgment<sup>6</sup> is a fault which Mervyn recognizes in himself when he rebukes himself for jumping at conclusions. If he recognizes something extreme in this detail of temperament, the general characteristic, related as it is to independence of thought, an ability to stand up for one's own point of view, and individuality of manner,- the general characteristic still holds true.

3. Informality. A certain doing away with formal manners advocated by Godwin is characteristic<sup>7</sup> of the young country lad. Sometimes this is the result of thoughtlessness and he apologizes for his rudeness as when, in a fit of abstraction he forgot to ring Mrs. Wentworth's bell,<sup>8</sup> and walked into her parlor unannounced.<sup>9</sup> Again it may result from what he considers necessity as in the circumstances of his penetrating into the bed chambers of Mrs. Villar's house in search of Clemenza Lodi.<sup>10</sup> But over and above all this there is a country something about him which corresponds to Godwin's idea of the desirability of the discarding of the superfluous in manners.<sup>11</sup> He does not indeed drop the title as does Ormond, but he is singularly like him in the abruptness of his entrances and exits and in his satisfaction in the atmosphere of informal society such as Mrs. Fielding's house afforded him.<sup>12</sup> Related to all this is

4. His lack of reserve upon all occasions and with all people - conditions of promised secrecy being of course an exception to his nature. "The internal and undiscovered character of another

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(6). Ibid, Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. VI.

(7). Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Vol. Bk. Ch. p.

(8). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 137.

(9). Ibid, Vol. II, p.138. See also Vol. I, p. 128.

(10). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 97.

(11). With this might be mentioned so characteristic a deed as his doing away with regular burial customs upon the occasion of Susan's death. Ibid, p. 63.

(12). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 212

weighed nothing with me in the question whether they should be treated with frankness or reserve. I felt no scruple on any occasion to disclose every feeling and every great event. Any one who could listen found me willing to talk,"<sup>13</sup> again: "before the end of my second interview both these women were mistresses of every momentous incident of my life, and of the whole chain of my feelings and opinions, in relation to every subject, and particularly in relation to themselves."<sup>14</sup> This matter of frankness - lack of reserve - is interestingly treated by Godwin in his chapter "Of Sincerity:" "It is not by the solitary anchorite who neither speaks, nor hears, nor reads the genuine sentiments of man, that the stock of human good is eminently increased. The period of bold and unrestricted communication, is the period in which the materials of happiness ferment and germinate,"<sup>15</sup> and "The link which binds together the inward and outward man, is indissoluble; and he that is not bold in speech will never be ardent and unprejudiced in enquiry,"<sup>16</sup> or "Reserve, deceitfulness, and an artful exhibition of ourselves, take from the human form its soul and leave us the unanimated semblance of what man might have been; of what he would have been, were not every impulse of the mind thus stunted and destroyed."<sup>17</sup>

5. The sentimental belief in character as the result of environment is in one place reflected by Mervyn in speaking of the provocations to crime which Welbeck had had.<sup>18</sup>

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- (13). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 179.  
(14). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 173. See also Vol. I p. 214, for hatred and equivocation and mystery.  
(15). Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Vol. I, Bk. IV, Ch. VI, p.332.  
(16). Ibid, p. 333.  
(17). Ibid, p. 335.  
(18). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. p.

6. Belief in the perfectibility of man is reflected in Mervyn's assurance to Welbeck upon meeting him for the first time after his supposed death. "I believed you to be dead. I rejoice to find myself mistaken. While you live, there is room to hope that your errors will be cured;"<sup>19</sup> and again in the case of Eliza whose mind might, he thinks, be made suitable for marriage in "five or eight years more"<sup>20</sup> reading and training.

7. The doctrine that superfluities of property are not to be considered our own - comes out clearly; "our own wants are the wants of others, and that which remains, after our own necessities are obviated, it is always easy and just to employ in relieving the necessities of others."<sup>21</sup> This belief seems to be in the back of his mind when Mervyn begs Mrs. Fielding to assume responsibility for the maintenance of Clemenza Lodi. "A small portion of your superfluity would obviate the wants of a being not less worthy than yourself."<sup>22</sup> Compare Godwin.<sup>23</sup>

8. The question of private judgment as to the comparative value of two lives occurs to Mervyn when, worn out and weary, he is discouraged by a tale in the plague-stricken city that Wallace whose life he sought to save was a worthless and dissolute person. "The preservation of this man was my sole motive for entering the infected city, and subjecting my own life to the hazards from which my escape may almost be esteemed miraculous. Was not the end disproportioned to the means? Was there arrogance in be-

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(19). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. I, p. 193.

(20). Ibid: Vol. II, p. 188.

(21). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, pp. 50-51.

(22). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 152.

(23). Political Justice: Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. II, and elsewhere.

lieving my life a price to be given for his?"<sup>24</sup> This is but a passing thought but it occurs. The significance is of course slight - especially as the moral which follows in the context is drawn about motive and not judgment of value of life. One other passage<sup>25</sup> suggesting this problem occurs but it not in any way significant.

9. Thought as the control of life is one of the theories which Godwin draws to a picturesque conclusion in his chapter "On Health and the Prolongation of Human Life." The value of cheerfulness in healing the body, of sturdy mental control of mood suggested in this chapter may have been the antecedent of Mervyn's determination to fight off the prognostications of disease which so depressed those coming down with yellow fever. "I reflected that the source of all energy, and even of life, is seated in thought; and that nothing is arduous to human efforts; that the external frame will seldom languish, while actuated by an unconquerable soul.

I fought against my dreary feelings, which pulled me to the earth. I quickened my pace, raised my drooping eyelids, and hummed a cheerful and favourite air. For all that I accomplished during this day, I believe myself indebted to the strenuousness and ardour of my resolutions."<sup>26</sup> We remember, too, Mervyn's struggle with the Lodi manuscript to accomplish similar ends for mental disturbance.<sup>27</sup>

10. Marriage as looked upon by Mervyn coincides with Godwin's conception only in certain respects. There is no hint of approval of marriage without wedlock, indeed that is severely rebuked, but there is insistence by Mervyn of (a) intellectual

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(24). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 54.

(25). Ibid, Vol. I, p. 135.

(26). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. I, p. 169.

(27). Ibid, Vol. I, pp. 126-7.

equality, and (b) rational consideration and discussion of the situation before entering into an immutable contract, and (c) suitable age. These are catalogued once in consideration of Eliza Hadwin<sup>28</sup> and again in consideration of the same girl with the illuminating help of Achsa Fielding.<sup>29</sup> The first passage is significantly referred to as "our dialogue." The use of the word is casual but it suggests what the reader is reminded of beforehand - certain passage in Alcuin.

11. Leisure and ease for the sake of consequent culture, the opportunity of books and the like, is made much of by Mervyn in a style with which we are familiar in Political Justice. Achsa Fielding's superiority because of these blessings is made much of by Mervyn<sup>30</sup> and Eliza's inability, because of the deadening effects of physical toil which might "create indifference or aversion to the only instruments of rational improvement, the pen and the book," is equally lamented.<sup>31</sup> Mervyn's accounts of his own youth<sup>32</sup> and his representations to Welbeck of his own fondness for books which a return to the plow would fail to gratify - all this emphasizes the general feeling of the estimation of leisure which pervades the novel.

Godwinian Sympathies other Than Those Expressed by Mervyn are discovered in

(1) Several thrusts at the Law notably (2) the veiled criticism of it by two southern business men who are considering Mervyn's chances of receiving equity by means of it<sup>33</sup> and (b)

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(28). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, pp. 76-83.

(29). Compare Ibid, Vol. II, pp. 186-188.

(30). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 212.

(31). Ibid: Vol. II, p. 95.

(32). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, pp. 125.

(33). Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, p. 170.

Mervyn's own masterly "What the law gave, the law has taken away. Blessed be the dispensers of the law! Excellent cider! Open another bottle, will you -"<sup>34</sup> than which no better word can be found.

(2) Prison conditions are pictured and the Debtor's Laws discussed, the most memorable passage being that in volume two, page 118, where Brown indulges his gift for description in a manner that places this prison scene upon a plane with Thomson's and other eighteenth century humanitarians'.<sup>35</sup> The whole reason for the introduction of the Carltons during the second volume is evidently Brown's desire to call attention to the lively need of greater common sense in the matter of handling debtors.<sup>36</sup> It must be said that there is no definite stand here for any definite Godwinian theory. The sympathy for the cause of prison reform is not peculiar to Godwin but Brown is like him in that he shares that sympathy!

These are the principal resemblances to Godwin. Sympathetic variants are to be found in the study of (a) occupations, a topic peculiar to Alcuin, and discussed among other places in a sprightly dialogue on the knitting of stockings<sup>37</sup> ~~but~~ men and (b) on marriage as seen by that protagonist of feminine intellectuality, Mary Wollstonecraft. There is here nothing startling enough to warrant special treatment at present.

[34]. Ibid: p. 91. Vol. II.

[35]. Ibid, Vol. II, p. 118.

[36]. Ibid: Vol. II, p. 204.

[37]. Arthur Mervyn: Phil. 1887, Vol. II, pp. 18, 19-20/

ORMOND.

The story runs somewhat as follows:

Stephen Dudley, a painter by choice and education, succeeds to his father's drug business in New York in which Thomas Craig, Stephen's apparently trustworthy apprentice, finally becomes the working partner. Craig absconds with the fortune the accumulation of which had enabled Mr. Dudley to retire to a life of leisure for books and painting. Mrs. Dudley dies conveniently in a single sentence but Mr. Dudley lives on in page after page of bitter complaint. His excesses result in blindness, which does partially but not entirely reduce his spirit to meekness and humiliation. His pride had forbidden any announcement to friends of the sudden change in the family circumstances so when he and his daughter Constantia move to Philadelphia and there assume a different name, they drop abruptly from a life of ease and elegance to one of involuntary poverty but of characteristically voluntary seclusion. A dependent of the family, a young girl named Lucy, assists with the heavier housework to which Constantia, bred as she has been, is not accustomed. Constantia ekes out the family means by sewing but not even such assistance can prevent great straitening of their circumstances. When the exactions of their landlord have reduced them to their last five dollars, Mr. Dudley, like a veritable Solomon John, recalls the case of a Benedictine monk who lived through a plague in Messina by fostering "a tranquil, fearless, and benevolent spirit" and by reducing "his diet to water and pollenta." Constantia, like a veritable Lady from Philadelphia, reckons that, with corn meal at ninety cents a bushel, the family can be maintained on the American equivalent of pollenta for the ludicrously small sum of three dollars. This they proceed to do with phenomenal cheerfulness and philosophical appreciation of the respite from labor which a more varied diet

would demand. Mr. Dudley, though he does not bear himself with quite the placidity of the Messinian monk, does nevertheless escape the fever; but Constantia, whose contact with it has been much closer, does contract the disease after tending her neighbor, Mary Whiston, upon her death bed. Constantia recovers in time to console her former charwoman, Mrs. Baxter, the death of whose husband "may be quoted," said Brown "as an example of the force of imagination." Mr. Baxter's theories of life have been entirely upset and his poise shattered by accidentally witnessing the burial, by a woman, of his neighbor, Mr. Rosselli, in that neighbor's own backyard at midnight. Baxter has had a notion that Frenchmen are exempt from the disease. Mr. Rosselli had been Frenchman. What could kill a Frenchman could kill him. Consequently we hear no more of Mr. Baxter. Of Mr. Rosselli's undertaker we do hear more, but very much later.

Constantia's life is now for sometime a period of ungentle ups and downs. She is reduced to selling her father's lute which falls into the hands of a foreign woman whose appearance much interests her; she undergoes insults on the street which lead to a proposal of marriage by her rescuer, a Mr. Balfour, whom she rejects because of the inequality of their minds and absence of love on her part; she discovers Craig in town and begs assistance from him in behalf of her father; the check for fifty dollars which he gives her proves to be forged and her landlord, McCrae, causes an officer to serve papers on her father for passing such a note; the magistrate before whom Constantia appears in place of her father turns out to be a Mr. Melbourne who had known Mr. Dudley in his more prosperous days in New York. He assists the family with money and introduces Constantia to his wife who gives her the little social opportunity she will accept.

Meanwhile Ormond, the villain of the tale, who has become interested in Constantia through the little glimpse he had had of her on her departure from his own house whither she had followed Craig, - gets out of Craig a story which he suspects to be false and which he determines to verify for himself. This he does by disguising himself as a chimney sweep and entering Constantia's house in a professional capacity. He is so much interested in her that he sends her money as from the master of the sweep and prevails upon his paramour, Helena Cleves, whom he has persuaded to forego marriage as a contract incompatible with rational principle, to employ Constantia as a seamstress. Helena and Constantia have known each other in New York but each has been entirely unaware of the other's change of condition. Constantia hears much of Ormond whom she has not met and consents to attempt a kindness to Helena by pleading her case for her in a personal interview with that gentleman. Instead of moving Ormond to consent to marriage with Helena, she, quite innocently and unintentionally, attracts him to herself on account of her superior mentality. Constantia is shocked indeed when, after months of intercourse with him as mutual friends of Helena, Ormond makes clear to her the fact that he no longer loves Helena, that he has announced to that lady his intention never to marry her because of his interest elsewhere, and, that that interest centers in Constantia herself. Constantia is not particularly surprised but Ormond is actually shocked when he discovers next morning that Helena has ended her life. Yet he considers: "She is gone. Well, then, she is gone. If she were fool enough to die, I am not fool enough to follow her. I am determined to live and be happy notwithstanding. Why not?"

Ormond's intention to pretend conversion to Constantia's

principles regarding marriage in order to gain possession of her person is apparently about to be frustrated through Constantia's acquaintance with Martinette de Beauvais, a young widow, whose camp life with her husband in France and during the American Revolution and whose subsequent career in the theatre of the French Revolution materially widen Constantia's horizons. Martinette turns out to be the ward of the Frenchman Rossetti and the undertaker whose offices had so affected Baxter. The acquaintance with Constantia is made through the circumstance of Constantia's sending back to her father's flute which Martinette had bought and which Constantia had prevailed upon the old music dealer to recover for her.

There is no further connection of Martinette's wild and wooly but rather sprightly biography with Constantia's life except that at the very time when her stories of adventure are making Constantia wistful to see foreign land and taste the spice of variety, Mr. Dudley, who has all along felt intense reluctance to see his daughter associated with Ormond, proposes a trip to Europe. Constantia's all-night ecstasies are rudely shattered by the discovery next morning of the mysterious murder of her father in his bed. Ormond had earlier, in the days of their greater poverty, been the means of securing surgical assistance for Mr. Dudley which had restored his sight to him so Ormond's connection with the murder is not suspected. Constantia does think of Craig, but her fears cannot be proved to have ground.

The final chapter in her life has to do with a search for a portrait of a friend which she had pawned so long before that the broker had resold it. In following up a clue to its present ownership, she stumbles upon the residence of a girlhood friend, Sophia Westyn Courtland, of whom she has lost all track and with whom she

has tried to maintain a correspondence. Sophia has been endeavoring for years to get into communication with Constantia and has embarked for America the day after her marriage in Europe in order to find Constantia and bring her back to Europe. In as much as it is her "inflexible purpose to live and die with" Constantia, the new husband is to stand around and await such announcement as his wife shall choose to make for him as to which continent they shall live upon!

Ormond meanwhile returns and warns Constantia of a dreadful mysterious fate which is to be hers because she will not accept him. During a visit to her father's old home before she sails for Europe with her new found friend, Ormond appears in the darkened house at twilight. Intending to avoid him, she opens the door of the room in which she has been sitting and stumbles over a dead body lying across the doorway. Later, when she has discovered that she is locked in the house alone with Ormond, he brings down Craig's dead body and explains to her that at his instigation Craig has killed her father whose plans for taking his daughter to Europe to avoid Ormond have been overheard by that man through a canvas door which he himself had caused to be inserted in the wall of the adjoining house. It has been through this door that he has received intelligence of all that has passed between Constantia and her friends - intelligence which has enabled him to plan the fate for her of which he has previously spoken in such veiled terms as to make it quite unintelligible to Constantia. At the point when this fate becomes perceptibly the robbing her of what he calls her "imaginary honor," Sophia, who has been troubled by Constantia's long absence from the city and has arrived in time to receive through the keyhole of the big hall door a sense of impending danger,-

Sophia arrives with a cohort of men who force open the door and discover upon the floor three apparently lifeless bodies. Constantia revives and appears broken-hearted because in spite of the urgency of his provocation - she has been forced in self-defense to take a human life!

ORMOND

1. As Compared to Wieland for instance there is, at first glance, no such clear-cut story, no obvious "tacked-on" moral; the characters, at first glance, appear more definitely Godwinian, the plot weaker and less straight-forward. The tale is apparently marred by the insertion of one and a half life histories not obviously necessary to the main story thread. And yet, on further consideration, there does not appear a definite plan and purpose for the book which prove it to be in some respects similar in theme-model to Wieland and in other respects totally dissimilar.

2. What the Book Essentially Is.

As Wieland was essentially a philosophical idea come to life and vivified by a criticism of that idea - the result being a thesis plot in which character is made totally subordinate to horror and philosophy, so we find in Ormond another thesis plot with character subordinated to thesis by virtue of its being manipulated for purposes of thesis. Yet in Ormond the total effect and purpose is decidedly different from that of Wieland because (1) character delineation is projected into the lime light - contrast of character is obviously expected to be the main interest of the story (as was not the case in Wieland) and (2) the point of the story, so far from being a moral as in Wieland, constitutes a criticism of one particular Godwinian theory - the anti-marriage theory as set forth in Political Justice. There are four main characters, no one of whom is a pure Godwinian type in the sense of being completely and consistently a personification of Godwinian principle. Of these four, three are women - whose constricted

personalities constitute a study in feminism recalling in many ways theories dwelt upon more conspicuously in Alcuin than in Political Justice and therefore lineally descended from Mary Wollstonecraft rather than from Godwin. Constantia, more Godwinian than either of the others, is a rationalist - holding no extreme opinions such as we find in Political Justice and yet dealing with the practicalities of female existence with the laborious common sense exalted in Alcuin. Helena is the old-fashioned woman (old-fashioned even for Brown's day), far from stylish even in literature and yet omnipresent in all times and periods. She is not at all to be confused with "the eternal feminine;" she represents merely the self-giving genius of woman failing to fulfill its function because of weak intellectual dignity and control. Martinette represents the logical extreme of Alcuinian doctrine and therefore a wee bit of Godwin's. The first two, openly and in so many words, and the third by implication of contrast, though without actual connection of plot, oppose the extreme Godwinian license, with respect to nuptial ties, of Ormond, the hero and the only male character of importance in the book. This apposition of the semi-Godwinian and more thoroughly Alcuinian characters to those opinions of Ormond which reflect Godwin in certain passages of Political Justice constitute a kind of dialogue on matrimonial theory very much as the clash of opinion in Alcuin constitutes a dialogue on women's rights.

Now when a thesis plot is developed by the dialogue method i.e., the opposition of diverse temperaments to create discussion and argument about a given point of view, the question always arises: which side of the argument is the author on?

3. Is Brown a Godwinian in Ormond?

Yes and no. There is reflection of much Godwinian doc-

trine in Ormond, material which will be subsequently considered, but with regard to the main thesis of the book Brown is anti-Godwinian. There is

(1) No condonement of the evil doer, no apostrophe to Ormond as to Wieland, forgiving the man or exalting his creed.

(2) The plot overthrows Ormond and overthrows him by the hand of one who rejects his principles.

(3) Constantia, Brown's pet character, and Sophia Westyn, who during the last chapters of the book takes the pen from Brown, oppose Ormond's creed to his face.

(4) An evident attempt to appeal to the reader's sense of the injustice resident in Godwin's nuptial theories is made in the relation of Helena's miseries.

All this, too, in spite of the technical objection which could be made that, as a matter of fact, when Ormond has become such a man as to forfeit all possible right to condonement, when he is killed by Constantia, when she bitterly opposes his principles, he is no longer a Godwinian pure and simple; the cold, high edifice of intellectual abstractions which he has built for himself has been undermined by "the inroads of a passion incident" not only to "the female" but also to the masculine "heart."<sup>1</sup> Brown's intention is still clear. It is still obvious that that very "inroad of passion" is meant by him to prove the danger of the doctrine.

That this point is not clearer than it is seems to me to be due to the fact that Brown's plot purposes are diverted by his story teller's interest in the picturesque elements of the yellow fever material, the catching of his fancy by the conception of the illuminati, and by his passionate patriotism, possibly caught from

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(1). Wieland: Phil. 1887. p.

and certainly fostered by William Dunlap, which evinced itself in many bits of local color and geographical descriptions which were an innovation in Brown's day.

4. Analysis of Characters to show Character and Scope of Godwinian Influence Therein.

Just as the thesis plot effect of the story is dissipated by extraneous interests, so the thesis consistency of the various characters in this book is diminished by the variety of elements of which they are composed.

ORMOND

(a). Ormond is apparently of the Illuminati, an order of which Miss Loshe gives a sufficient account<sup>w</sup> her "Early American Novel." Brown does not identify Ormond with any definite organization yet he asserts that that gentleman had spent half his life among the Cossacks and along the Danube in wild enterprises of vast political and social import,<sup>2</sup> that he had committed atrocious crimes during a war with the Turks,<sup>3</sup> that he looked for nothing but evil,<sup>4</sup> that he was working in collusion with persons who aimed at "the subversion of all that has hitherto been conceived elementary and fundamental in the constitution of man and government,"<sup>5</sup> that he had everywhere agents and dependants<sup>6</sup> (such as the surgeon who operated upon Dudley's eyes,<sup>7</sup>) with whom he carried on epistolary correspondence<sup>8</sup> apparently about some great new poli-

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(2). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 205.

(3). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 166.

(4). Ibid: p. 166

(5). Ibid: p. 246.

(6). Ibid: p. 171.

(7). Ibid: p. 109, 173.

(8). Ibid: p. 109.

cal venture to be carried on in a corner of the world not hitherto explored. These activities Brown rather inconsistently reports as "schemes of an arduous and elevated nature!"<sup>9</sup>

Upon such a questionable character, ready to assume disguises at any time for the sake of gaining illicit information, a veritable gentleman to all superficial observers, a madman in battle, a crank with regard to parlor manners, and the smoothest of smooth agitators,- upon such a personage is grafted,

(B) Beliefs and Traits Reflecting the Following Godwinian Theories.

(1) Belief in the corrupting influence of society upon the individual man -:"a mortal poison pervaded the whole system by means of which everything received was converted into bane and purulence."<sup>10</sup> Compare this with Godwin's "of what use are talents and sentiments in the corrupt wilderness of human society? It is a rank and rotten soil from which every finer shrub draws poison as it grows."<sup>11</sup> Ormond goes on; "the principles of the social machine must be rectified, before men can be beneficially active."<sup>12</sup>

In all this, both writers are of course referring to the present state of human society. It will be remembered that in the summary prefaced to Political Justice Godwin announced that "the most desirable condition of the human species is a state of society." It was not that he desired to do away with society altogether.

(2). Law of necessity as applied to man. "Man could not be otherwise than a cause of perpetual operation and efficacy. He was part of a machine, and as such had not power to withhold his agency. Contiguousness to other parts - that is,

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(9). Ibid, p. 173.

(10). Ibid, p. 110.

(11). Caleb Williams: N.Y.p. 394. (12). Ibid, p. 110.

to other men - was all that was necessary to render him a powerful concurrent."<sup>13</sup> Wherefrom it followed that the individual could not hope to reform society. Compare with Godwin's doctrine of necessity in Political Justice, Vol. I Bk. IV, Ch. VII. Note a more general statement by Brown on this same topic: "The universe was to him (Ormond) a series of events connected by an undesigning and inscrutable necessity, and an assemblage of forms to which no beginning or end can be conceived."<sup>14</sup>

Although developing the implications of Godwin's doctrine of necessity with regard to the hopelessness of society as now organized, Ormond of course deviates from orthodox Godwinian doctrine when in the context he deduces from that doctrine the propriety of falling back upon self-gratification as the only logical form of conduct. Godwin, we know, sees in necessity a reason for confidence in the utility of persuasion and therefore of the improvement of society. See his chapter on the "Implications of the Doctrine of Necessity." Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Vol. I, Bk. IV, Ch. VIII.

(3) Benevolent desire is a constituent of human happiness.<sup>15</sup> Compare Godwin, in Political Justice, Vol. I Bk. IV, Ch. XI, "no man reaps so copious a harvest of pleasure, as he who thinks only of the pleasures of other men."

(4) Total disregard of what he consideres servile etiquette: (refuses to use titles, Sir, Madam, Master, etc)<sup>16</sup>

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- (13). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 110.  
(14). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 176.  
(15). Ibid, p. 111.  
(16). Ibid,

making for class distinctions. Compare Godwin Political Justice, Lond. 1798. Vol.11, Bk.V, Ch.X11. on "Titles" which begins thus: "The case of mere titles, is so absurd, that it would deserve to be treated only with ridicule, were it not for the serious mischief they impose upon mankind." See also implication of the summary on simplicity of manner.

(5) Boasted sincerity and plain dealing with a sublime indifference to the possible uses of tactful insincerity for keeping the wheels of society oiled. "In the declaration of his opinions he was never withheld by scruples of decorum or a selfish regard to his own interest."<sup>17</sup> Compare Godwin's solemn discussion of the same virtue in a chapter by that name.<sup>18</sup>

(6) Aversion to the recognized forms of duplicity i.e., lying.<sup>19</sup> Compare Godwin- Political Justice, Vol.1 Bk.1V, Ch.V1.. and note

(7) Physical gratifications placed at the bottom of the scale of enjoyments.<sup>20</sup>

Compare Godwin's treatment of the subject in his chapter on "The voluntary actions of men originate in their opinions." Political Justice, Vol.1, Bk. 1, Ch.V.

(8) Unconscious egotistic exaltation of private judgment- as, for example, (2) Ormond's apology for the murder of Constantia's father: "For killing him, therefore, I may claim your gratitude .....My deed was not injurious to him. At his age, death whose coming at some period is inevitable, could not be distant."<sup>21</sup> or (b) "My deed conferred a benefit.

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(17). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 117.

(18). Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Vol.1, Bk.11, Ch. VI.

(19). Ormond, Phil. 1887, pp. 112-113.

(20). Ibid, pp. 115, 155.

(21). Ormond: Phil, 1887, p. 276.

I gave him sight and took away his life, from motives equally wise."<sup>22</sup>

All of which is, if not modified by any naturally associated doctrines, is a fairly logical deduction from an isolated Godwinian principle. Godwin, of course, did not intend such a doctrine to be isolated.<sup>23</sup> The whole subject of the validity of private judgment is treated by Godwin in *Political Justice*, Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. VI., but the unconscious egotism of Godwin's use of it can be observed in such discussions as that on the exercise of rational comparison of the values of two human lives. See *Political Justice*, Lond. 1798, Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. I. pp. 127-129.

(9). Suicide a matter of guilt.<sup>24</sup>

While Ormond's attitude toward the achieved suicide of Helena and the contemplated suicide of Constantia is apparently more a matter of scorn than of downright ethical conviction, still it does coincide with Godwin's attitude which is one of wavering doubt as to its validity or invalidity in many cases. See *Political Justice*, Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. II. Appendix No. I.

(10) "Unchangeable and strenuous" disbelief."<sup>25</sup>

Compare with the general effect of Political Justice as a whole.

(11) Principles to be enforced by persuasion and discussion.<sup>26</sup>

Ex: Ormond hopes to change Constantia's prejudices against illegal marriage by "argument", "subtlety and perseverance," and he frustrates the plans for a trip to Europe because it

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(22). Ormond: *Phil.* 1887, p. 271. (25). Ormond: *Phil.* 1886, p. 176

(23). See *Pol. Justice*: Lond. 1798. (26). *Ibid*, p. 174.

(24). Ormond: *Phil.* 1887, p. 276.

would snatch Constantia "from the influence of his argument."<sup>27</sup>

Ormond repudiates this in the end.

(12). Anti-Nuptial Creed.

(a) "Marriage is absurd."<sup>28</sup> Ormond goes on to base this assertion upon the fact of "the general and incurable imperfection of the female character." (This is, of course, an annunciation made before he meets Constantia). Godwin does not say in so many words that marriage is absurd but he evidently means to imply just that when he calls it "an evil" and claims that it is based upon a system of fraud which prevents either young person from finding out the other's character until too late.<sup>29</sup>

(b) Objection to Binding Character of Contract.

"He, Ormond, could not think with patience of a promise which no time could annul, which pretended to ascertain contingencies and regulate the future."<sup>30</sup> Godwin objects to "that species of marriage in which there is no room for repentance, and to which liberty and hope are equally strangers."<sup>31</sup>

(c) Belief in the justice of quitting an attachment.

Witness conversation with Helena, (Ormond p. 158,159) in which he tells her that, for love of Constantia, he will have no further intercourse with her. Then read Godwin's sanction of such action: "Certainly no ties ought to be

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(27). Ibid: p. 272.

(28). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 118.

(29). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, Vol. II, Bk. VII, Ch. VIII, p. 507.

(30). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 124.

(31). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, Vol. II, Bk. VIII, Ch. VIII. p. 510.

imposed upon either party, preventing them from quitting the attachment. Whenever their judgment directs them to quit it."<sup>32</sup>

(d) Expects personal fidelity to supplement intercourse.<sup>33</sup>

Godwin suggests this as a probability only. Under his scheme of future society<sup>34</sup> he considers it but does not consider it essential.<sup>35</sup>

(e) The great thing is intellectual equality.

This is insisted upon in too many passages to quote. There is here, however, an inconsistency which is confusing. Though unwilling to marry Helena because of her intellectual deficiencies, when he finds the woman who does meet his requirements in this his most important respect he still desires to avoid marriage though the main objection to marriage is gone. Yet, on the whole, he will, like Godwin, "assiduously cultivate the intercourse of that woman whose moral and intellectual accomplishments strike "him" in the most powerful manner."<sup>36</sup>

(f) Chafing under necessity arising from present marriage customs of putting up with the situation after disillusionment. Ormond could not bear to "avow, and persist in his adherence to, a falsehood,

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- (32). Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Vol.11, Bk.V11, Ch. V111.  
p. 510.  
(33). Ormond: Phil. 1887.p.119.  
(34). Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Vol.11, Bk.V11, Ch. V111.  
p.509.  
(35). Ibid, pp.509, 511.  
(36). Political Justice: Vol.11, Bk.V111, Ch.V111, p. 511.

palpable and loathsome to his understanding; to affirm that he was blind, when in full possession of his senses; to shut his eyes and grope in the dark, and call upon the compassion of mankind on his infirmity, when his organs were in no degree impaired."<sup>37</sup> Godwin remarks: "In almost every instance they find themselves deceived. They are reduced to make the best of an irretrievable mistake. They are led to conceive it their wisest policy, to shut their eyes upon realities, happy if by any perversion of intellect they can persuade themselves that they were right in their first crude opinion of each other."<sup>38</sup>

(g). "Dissimulation and artifice were totally foreign to it, but Ormond did not recognize the fact until later. The point is probably made as a dim reflection of Godwin's inveighing against hypocrisy in marriage "than which there is scarcely anything that more eminently depraves and degrades the human mind."<sup>40</sup>

(C). Ormond is an Inconsistent Godwinian in these points: in that he is

(a). Willing to accept marriage if necessary at one point in his career;- <sup>41</sup> that he

(b) Admits - the validity of passion as to him a greater good than intellectual enjoyment of Constantia; that he

(c) Resorts to force rather than persisting in Godwinian methods of persuasion for attaining his ends. That

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(37). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 124

(38). Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Vol. II, Bk. VIII, Ch. VIII. p. 507.

(39). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 119.

(40). Political Justice, Lond. 1798, Vol. II, Bk. VIII, Ch. VIII<sup>3</sup> p. 510.

(41). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 174.

(d) He is not open and above board with Constantia.

That he

(e) Condone's Helen's suicide while he disapproves it.

That he

(f) Takes life and directs murder. That he

(g) Goes to war. That he

(h) Makes considerations of justice and pity subservient to Godwinian "mistakes" as for instance in his insistence on the justice of leaving Helena and his still stronger plea that intercourse with Constantia was to be for her good - a good which amply justified the destruction of her father. That he, as we have seen,

(i) Twists the deductions to be made from Godwin's assertion of the hopelessness of the present state of society into an excuse for placing the dictates of self-will before the benefit of society.

D. Ormond as Reflecting a Character in Caleb Williams.

We may assert three points of resemblance to Godwin's Falkland.

(1). He is essentially - in spite of all his pretense at persuasion - a tyrant with respect to Helena and Constantia and to all others, and,

(2). His control and pursuit of prey is secret. For one and two witness: "Ormond aspired to nothing more ardently than to hold the reins of opinion, - to exercise absolute power over the conduct of others, not by constraining their limbs or by extracting obedience to his authority, but in a way of which his subjects should be scarcely conscious. He desired that his guidance

should control their steps, but that his agency, when most effectual, should be least suspected."<sup>42</sup>

(3) His employment of subordinates is parallel to that of Falkland. Craig corresponds to Grimes in usableness and depth of iniquity.

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(42). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 173.

CONSTANTIA:

A. Godwinian Elements in Portrayal of Constantia.

(1). Utter frankness, no resorting to "white lies:" "visitants were hated by the father because his dignity was hurt by communication with the vulgar. The daughter.. had no pride to subdue, and therefore never escaped from well-meant importunity at the expense of politeness and good-humour."<sup>1</sup> Godwin has much to say of the good humour which will naturally follow the adoption of sincerity and frankness by society.<sup>2</sup> Certainly Constantia is represented a dozen times as being entirely straightforward without loss of tact.

(2). Faith in the possibilities of development of human nature as, for example, in that of Craig whom she refrains from upbraiding, for embezzling her father's fortune, on the ground that "He may now be honest or tending to honesty, and my interference may cast him backward, or impede his progress."<sup>3</sup> All of which is comparable to Godwin's doctrine of perfectibility.

(3). Scrupulous regard for debts and promises,<sup>4</sup> even in times of plague when the demands of a hard-hearted landlord seems most unjust, win for her Ormond's exasperated, "I know she'll do what she promises. That was always her grand failing."<sup>5</sup>

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- (1). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 31.  
(2). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, Vol. Bk. Ch. p.  
(3). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 93.  
(4). Ormond: Phil. 1887, pp. 37, 38, 93.  
(5). Ibid: p. 93.

(4). Persuasion is her characteristic method of defense and accomplishment. Examples are numberless but one will suffice. Hearing that Ormond has rudely turned Helena away, "Constantia exhorted him, in the most earnest and pathetic manner, to return and recant, or extenuate, his former declaration."<sup>6</sup> The point is, in connection with so natural methods, that they pass in the book as unusually effective. Helena, it will be remembered, is not capable of the offices of advocate for herself and so sends Constantia as intercessor on account of her superior abilities.

(5). Conversation is her chief employment<sup>7</sup> - an outstanding characteristic of the man Godwin and an occupation of the mind of which he has much to say in all his novels as well as in Political Justice where he asserts that it is one of "the most fertile sources of improvement."<sup>8</sup>

(6). The so-called "higher pleasures" of Godwinian fame are notably Constantia's. Poetry, accounts of travel, homely benevolence (not even caricatured by the modern title of social service), study (Veroni's Italian grammar here takes the place of the Della Crusca Dictionary of which the constant reference in Wieland appeals to Miss Loshe's humor),<sup>9</sup> Ormond's vast horizons,- all these constitute, with the conversation they entail, her "higher life." And at the summit of this bliss "Pleasure in the genius and eloquence of her father, nourished by perpetual exercises and undiverted from its purpose by the intrusion of visible objects rightly afforded her a de-

(6). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 27.

(8). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, V.2, Bk. VIII, Ch. VIII, p. 505

(7). Ibid: p. 164

(9). See also Ormond: Phil. 1887

light in comparison with which all other pleasures were mean."<sup>10</sup>

(7). Estimation of the comparative values of different person's lives appears for an instant when Mr. Dudley and Constantia question the safety of attending their neighbor, Mary Whiston, during the yellow fever plague but Godwin's better doctrine of the pleasure derived from a benevolent action quite naturally settles the question for her (aided, of course, by the rational consideration that, during such a time, the period of their own lives was uncertain anyway).<sup>11</sup>

(8). Rational control of her conduct rather than giving way to mood or feeling is emphasized in the portrayal of Constantia's character. During the days of her father's affluence, when she had refused a lover because of her youth, "The prescriptions of duty" had been "too clear to allow her to hesitate and waver," although "the consciousness of rectitude could not secure her from temporary vexations."<sup>12</sup> Later, in Ormond's day, "she might love without the sanction of her judgment; but, while destitute of that sanction, she would never suffer it to sway her conduct."<sup>13</sup>

(9). Marriage views coinciding with Godwin's and Constantia's.

(a) Justification of marriage only by "community of affections and opinions."<sup>14</sup>

(b) "Matrimonial as well as every other human duty was disconnected with any awful or divine sanction."<sup>15</sup>

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(10). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 28.

(11). Ibid: p. 44.

(12). Ibid: p. 21.

(13). Ibid: p. 177

(14) Ibid, p. 177. Compare p. 82.

(15). Ibid: p. 175

which is, by inference, characteristic of Godwin's theory.

(c). Recognition of marriage as a monopoly - the wife a piece of "property."<sup>16</sup> Compare Godwin's "marriage, as now understood, is a monopoly, and the worst of monopolies."<sup>17</sup>

(d). Implication in marriage of the forfeiting of the right of private judgment by the woman is a supposed evil not definitely mentioned by Godwin but certainly classifiable under the general head of matters treated in his chapter on "Private Judgment". Constantia, during that early love-affair of which we have spoken before, decided that "Homely liberty was better than splendid servitude."<sup>18</sup>

B. Inconsistency in Acting upon Godwinian Ideas which she usually holds is shown in the fact that she does finally kill Ormond and yet never quite forgives herself for taking a human life although "the equity of this species of defense was not, in the present confusion of her mind, a subject of momentary doubt."<sup>19</sup>

C. A Positive Anti Godwinian Element is her rejection of the anti nuptial creed of Ormond.<sup>20</sup>

D. Elements Derived from Alzoina and Mary Wollstonecraft.

(1). Stress is laid by Brown on her capacity for education, and the attainments of intellect which Ormond (representing common opinion) had, until he met Constantia, consider-

(16). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 82.

(17). Political Justice: Lond. 1793, Vol. II, Bk. VIII, Ch. VIII, p. 508.

(18). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 82.

(19). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 375.

(20). Ibid, pp. 163, 164, 167.

ed impossible to woman.<sup>21</sup> "To make her wise it would be requisite to change her sex. He had forgotten that his pupil was a female, and her capacity therefore limited by nature..... Her attainments ..... must not be condemned because they are outshone by qualities that are necessarily male births."<sup>22</sup>

(2). Constantia's rejection of marriage on the "property" basis. Compare an antecedent discussion of a different phase of the same topic.

(3). Her independence, self-maintenance, and attempt at preparation for more than one profession.<sup>23</sup>

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(21). He had thought of the possibility of moulding Helena to his idea but had

(22). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 126.

(23). Ormond: Phil. 1887, pp. 24,32.

(E). Possibility of Influence of the Memoirs on Ormond.

The Memoirs were written in the early part of the year 1798 and published that same year in London. If it can be proved that they came out early enough to have reached America before December, the month in which Brown composed Ormond, we may be justified in calling attention to a resemblance between Ormond and Godwin himself - a resemblance which may, indeed, have been brought to Brown's mind by oral communication of the facts in Godwin's life which were paving the way for St. Leon. Different as the conclusion of their lives may be, the change of attitude toward woman after meeting "the right one" makes an interesting bit of coincidence.

5. Godwinian Theories with which Brown's views seem to Coincide.

1. Law is an evil. The following quotations show

(a) Brown's attitude towards lawyers. "It was his (Mr. Dudley's) lot to fall into the grasp of men who squared their actions by no other standard than law, and who esteemed every claim to be incontestably just that could plead that sanction. They did not throw him into prison. When they had despoiled him of every remnant of his property, they deemed themselves entitled to his gratitude for leaving his person unmolested."<sup>43</sup> (b) Elsewhere Brown refers to "the rubbish of law," its "endless tautologies, its impertinent circuities, its lying assertions and hateful artifices."<sup>44</sup> Again (c) he refers to the inadequacy of law which must be bought,<sup>45</sup> (d) its delay.<sup>46</sup> Compare all this with Godwin's general attitude, not enlarged upon as specifically as some of his doctrines, to be sure, but wrapt up with his conception of government as executive in function rather than legislative.<sup>47</sup>

2. Opulence is, in general, to be desired and poverty deprecated not for intrinsic qualities in the two states, but because the one may lead and the other will probably not lead to that leisure which makes possible the cultivation of taste and culture.<sup>48</sup>

3. The deleterious effect of society upon the individual is mentioned specifically in only one place: Sophia Westyn calls upon a distant relative of Constantia's and finds her

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- (43). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 16.  
(44). Ormond: Phil. 1887, pp. 18-19.  
(45). Ibid, pp. 89,90.  
(46). Ibid, pp. 89,90.  
(47). Pol. Justice: London. 1798, Vol. I, Bk. III.  
(48). Ormond: Phil, 1887, pp. 10,17,19,20,81,85,86,170,171,223,etc.  
and Political Justice: Lond. 1798, Vol. I, Bk. IV. Ch. XI.

"an artless and attractive female, unpolished and undepraved by much intercourse with mankind."<sup>49</sup>

4. "Justice and compassion are the fruit of knowledge," says Brown, "The misery that overspreads so large a part of mankind exists chiefly because those who are able to relieve it do not know that it exists. Forcibly to paint the evil, seldom fails to excite the virtue of the spectator and seduce him into wishes, at least, if not into exertions, of beneficence."<sup>50</sup> This doubling the significance of justice or of compassion by identifying it with knowledge we have already found discussed in Political Justice, in the chapters on Motive, on Good and Evil, on Benevolence, and so forth.

6. Anti-Godwinian Elements in Brown's Point of View.

1. Lack of religious training as a defect in Constantia's education is treated in pages 175-78. Godwin had been bitter against the churches and priests because of what he considered an injustice to the adolescent mind in giving it a bias which no outside influence ought to give. Regarding the permanent in human institutions as abhorrent, he apparently feared that the application of so-called eternal principles, such as permanent institutions like the church and family stand for, to the malleable human mind would cut mind off from vision and research which it might, if unmolested, pursue. Brown's point is that, aside from the comfort of it, religion is an antidote for schemes like Ormond's. Constantia "was unguarded," he says, "in a point where, if not her whole yet doubtless her principle security and strongest bulwark would have existed."<sup>51</sup> She was unacquainted with religion. She was

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(49). Ormond: Phil. 1887. p. 230.

(50). Ormond: Phil. 1887. p. 238.

(51). The Italics are mine.

unhabituated to conform herself to any standard but that connected with her present life. Matrimonial as well as every other human duty was disconnected in her mind with any awful or divine sanction. She formed her estimate of good and evil on nothing but terrestrial and visible consequences."

"This defect in her character she owed to her father's system of education."<sup>52</sup> That her habits rather than her opinions were undevout, Brown continues, may account for her indifference. "Her good sense forbade her to decide before inquiry, but her modes of study and reflection were foreign to, and unfitted her for, this species of discussion. Her mind was seldom called to meditate on this subject, and, when it occurred, her perceptions were vague and obscure. No objects in the sphere which she occupied were calculated to suggest to her the importance of investigation and certainty."<sup>53</sup> Again, "It becomes me to confess, however reluctantly, thus much concerning my friend. However abundantly endowed in other respects, she was a stranger to the felicity and excellence flowing from religion."<sup>54</sup>

Later, when Sophia Westyn turns narrator, she indulges in a regular orgy of piety which appears to be a sop to popular demand as it seems out of key with Brown's style elsewhere. At any rate she gets bravely over it, as Brown gets over different but comparable impulses in the all-absorbing interest in telling a story. The passage in which she indulges the religious vein is, however, interesting in that, unconsciously and without any intended criticism of Ormond, it is one type of reply to Godwin's

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(52). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 175.

(53). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 175-176.

(54). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 176.

doctrines of necessity, benevolence, and affection. "I am not unaware," she says, "of the divine superintendence,- of the claims upon my gratitude and service which pertain to my God. I know that all physical and moral agents are merely instrumental to the purpose that he wills; but, though the great Author of being and felicity must not be forgotten, it is neither possible nor just to overlook the claims upon our love with which our fellow-beings are invested.

The supreme love does not absorb, but chastens and enforces, all subordinate affections. In proportion to the rectitude of my perceptions and the ardour of my piety, must I clearly discern and fervently love the excellence discovered in my fellow-beings, and industriously promote their improvement and felicity."<sup>55</sup>

2. Implied criticism of the doctrine of private judgment when carried to its logical extreme, as in the case of Ormond who considers that the wrong he is about to do Constantia is for her own good<sup>56</sup> although he admits that as a result she "will grow enamoured of death."<sup>57</sup> It may be said of this particular example, as of most of the other plot examples of the same thing, that Brown's criticisms (using the words in this special sense) is of the doctrine of private judgment taken without the modification which Godwin makes in a (to say the least) decidedly inconspicuous way when he says, later in Political Justice, that private judgment must test itself by comparison with the judgment of the many.

3. Marriage is a point on which Brown and Godwin differ, not with respect to the desirability of mutual attraction and suitability, intelligence, and real knowledge, each party of the

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(55). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 217.

(56). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 272.

(57). Ibid, p. 252.

other, but with respect to the duty of bondage in a case like that of Ormond's relation to Helena and in a more normal case such as that of Constantia. Godwin's ambiguity and apparent self-contradiction in the passage on marriage make it a little hard to judge what he would have done for Helena had there been a case in real life. But Constantia is manifestly Brown's mouth piece on the topic of marriage so that when she says over and over again, "Your scheme is headlong and barbarous-" "I cannot love but when my understanding points out to me the propriety of love,"<sup>58</sup> and when she reflects that he "had embraced a multitude of opinions which appeared to her erroneous" so that "Till these were rectified, and their conclusions were made to correspond, wedlock was improper,"<sup>59</sup> we can presume these erroneous opinions to cover the irregularity of Ormond's ideas and suppose Brown to be in sympathy with Constantia's repudiation of them.

On the other hand, recognizing a certain fallacy in our argument here, we may refer again to Brown's manipulation of the plot so as to make Constantia's killing Ormond a criticism of his marriage tenets; or, considering that we may not be strictly logical even here in that Ormond was by now thoroughly incompatible and so to be discarded by good Godwinian right on that ground alone, we can cite as irrefutable evidence all Brown's religious references or implications of his disapproval of marriage without wedlock, and we can turn to his even less direct but still perfectly intelligible implications in the passage immediately following one expositing Ormond's contempt of love as "a disease"..... which is "a case of more entire subversion and confusion of mind than any other."<sup>60</sup>

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(58). Ormond: Phil. 1867, p. 163.  
 (59). Ormond: Phil. 1867, p. 177.  
 (60). Ormond: Phil. 1867, p. 156.

In this passage Brown comments on Ormond's metaphor thus: "Ormond was partly right. Madness like death can be averted by no foresight or previous contrivance. This probably is one of its characteristics. He that witnesses its influence on another with most horror, and most fervently deprecates its ravages, is not therefore more safe. This circumstance was realized in the history of Ormond."<sup>61-62</sup>

In other words, Brown seems to be trying to show in the story of this book that the mere presence of passion in the world, human nature being what it is, makes Godwin's anti-marriage thesis dangerous and absurd. He subscribes to the concomitant theories but not to that which constitutes Godwin's main issue with the existing institution.

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(61). Ormond: Phil. 1887, p. 156.  
(62). The Italics are mine.

EDGAR HUNTLEY

The story:

Huntley writes the story for the benefit of the sister of his friend Waldegrave who has recently been murdered by an unknown. Huntley's suspicions presently fall upon a man whom he discovers half-naked in the moonlight, digging and weeping under an old elm near the habitation of his neighbor Inglefield who lives some miles from Huntley's uncle. Huntley discovers that the man is a sleep walker and is amazed at the length of his long march into the wilderness beyond Norwalk and up to the very mouth of a cave into which the man disappears and does not return although Huntley waits for him till dawn. Sometime after, Huntley identifies the man as one Clithero, a farm hand on Inglefield's place, and accuses him of the murder Waldegrave. Clithero's break-down and story constitute the first half of the book.

Clithero perceives that his own guilty conscience is making him act like the murderer he believes himself to be but not the murder Huntley believes him to be. To be forced in self-defense to tell his story seems to him the very refinement of torture for in Europe he had in self-defense killed the twin brother of his patroness, one Mrs. Lorimer, and the father of Clarice to whom, through Mrs. Lorimer's good will and actual arrangement, he had become engaged in spite of their very great difference in rank.

Though justifiable in itself as a matter of self-defense, the killing assumes enormous proportions when, on the way home to Mrs. Lorimer's house, Clithero reflects that Mrs. Lorimer has always begged that whatever happened they should not harm her brother;—this for two reasons:

- (1) a sentimental adoration of him whom she knew to be a rogue and worse and
- (2) her belief that because of the mingling of their fates by birth, he could not die without her spirits being in some mystic way apprized of it and dying too.

In a sudden access of energy, Clithero hastens home, penetrates into Mrs. Lorimer's apartments, and parts the curtains of her bed to see whether her prognostications have been fulfilled. The woman behind the curtains breathes regularly; she is alive! Then it occurs to him that her agony will be intense when she awakens and hears that Clarice's beloved has killed her own adored brother; he reflects that such news will kill her, and- the impulse comes to save her from mental torture by death. He picks up a convenient dagger(a dagger as naively convenient as the pen-knife in Wieland and a like instrument in Ormond) and lifts his arm. The blow is averted by a command as effective as Carwin's "Hold," but this time it comes from a woman- Mrs. Lorimer herself- who has been sleeping in another room. Clarice wakes up in the bed before which he stands,Clarice whom he had supposed miles away on a visit to a friend. Explanations are demanded but Clithero , without prefacing his announcement by an account of the circumstances, merely tells Mrs. Lorimer that he has killed her brother. She sinks to the floor and Clitherto flees believing that for so killing her brother and by telling her of it he is as guilty of her murder as if he had actually thrust the dagger into her person. Clithero had come to America and had, in his sleep, buried and reburied a manuscript book- his only memento of his adored Mrs. Lorimer, which she had once written in defense of her conduct toward the earlier crimes of her brother, all of which however has nothing to do with Brown's

story.

After reciting all this to Huntley, Clithero disappears leaving Huntley no wiser than before as to the identity of Waldegrave's murderer. Pitying Clithero's sorrows and determined to play the benefactor of the evilly-pursued rather than the part of the avenger, Huntley hunts Clithero out in the wilderness, brings him food, leaves him his precious manuscript (which he has dug up by way of verifying Clithero's tale), and has one of the greatest adventures in local color which Brown's imagination ever produced - the experience during a howling storm of looking into the eyes of a panther crawling toward him along a tree trunk which is Huntley's only avenue of escape across the tremendous chasm which separates him from home. "The evils of my present circumstances," Huntley remarked in telling the tale, "consisted chiefly in suspense." It is the only bit of humor in the book and it is absolutely unconscious.

The mystery of the disappearance from a secret drawer in Huntley's cabinet of a packet of letters written by the murdered Waldegrave and the mystery of footsteps heard in the attic of the house when no one is known to have entered it is not cleared up when the scene shifts and Huntley is consciousness of being bruised and lacerated and of lying on some strange stony bed in utter darkness. The place turns out to be the bottom of a cavern in which he wanders, it seems to him for days, and in which he would have died had he not killed a panther and drunk his blood in the dark. Accidentally he comes upon an opening to the cavern but the way is impeded by four sleeping Indians, armed and lying between the door and a bound and tethered white girl whose groans are piteous to hear. The watchful guard goes out for a minute, Huntley picks up his hatchet, follows him to the cavern and slays him without waking the

others. After some deliberation he returns to the cavern, rescues the girl without waking her Indian guard, and carries her to a distant hut. The Indians pursue him. He kills three but the girl has been seriously injured and when a rescue party appear she is removed and he wakes up from a fainting fit to find himself once more alone and weak from hunger and wounds. In spite of all that he has endured, he survives the killing of another Indian, a walk of many miles through a massacre-scarred country and survives a wild leap from a mountain-side into a river and a long swim in the icy water to avoid the shower of bullets which a pursuing band pour into the stream.

Afraid to go home through dread of finding true a rumor that his uncle and sisters have been killed by the Indians, he explores an empty house in the woods and discovers upon an apparently recently deserted desk the bundle of letters whose disappearance had previous to his recent adventures caused him so much dismay. Their presence here is now explained by Sarsefield, Huntley's boyhood tutor, who had previously been recognized by Huntley in Clithero's tale as the lover of Mrs. Lorimer. His explanations serve to unite the two stories - Clithero's and Huntley's - for he proves to Huntley that Mrs. Lorimer has not died but has become his own wife, and is, with Clarice, now in America; that he, Sarsefield, had come to see Huntley at his uncle's house, that the bundle of letters had been found in the attic of his house, but Huntley was judged to have walked in his sleep and to have put them there himself, and that when Huntley did not appear at home in the morning, and news of an Indian uprising had come, a search party had been organized to subdue the Indians and to look for Huntley; that the uncle had been killed in an encounter with the savages and that

Huntley, when found, had been given up for dead. When a party had returned for his corpse and no corpse had been found, consternation had reigned.

The story ends with the happy news that the sisters are safe and with the unhappy endeavors of Huntley to reconcile Sarsefield to the idea that Clithero is not really an object of pity. Huntley's belief in the integrity of Clithero is strengthened by the confession of the queen of the Indians that she had killed Waldegrave, but Clithero's own mad threats to go to New York and kill Mrs. Lorimer end in Huntley's apprising Sarsefield of danger and in Clithero's final escape from the prospect of detention in a mad house by suicide in the ocean.

A minor incident not easily connected with the main story thread is the arrival of one Weymouth who successfully claims seventy-five hundred dollars which he says Waldegrave had been holding in trust for him. The money had been turned over to Waldegrave's sister after his death and was to be the foundation of an earlier marriage with Huntley than would have been possible otherwise.

The Make-Up of the Story.

We have seen enough by now to understand why, though he wrote nothing in the manner of the modern mystery-story, Brown has been called the father of the American detective story.<sup>1</sup> Edgar Huntly, like Wieland and Arthur Mervyn, has its wonder ball; sleep-walking is substituted for ventriloquism: it cannot take its place however and there is a curious calm in the manner in which the characters themselves regard what Brown evidently considers a thrilling novelty among the explanatory phenomenon of literature. Causation being sufficiently varied, we might expect an exciting chain of incidents and we find the plot circle nearly whole: Clithero conscious of pursuit by Huntly, unconsciously pursuing Sarsefield; Sarsefield unconscious of pursuit of Clithero, consciously pursuing Huntly: Huntly consciously pursuing Clithero, unconsciously pursued by Sarsefield. Queen Mab of Indian persuasion is at once the stick that rolls the hoop and the spoke in the wheel. Her act of murder causes the beginning of the story and her confession all but stops it. Clithero's violent intentions toward Mrs. Lorimer keeps the story revolving in much the crazy way a spinning wheel wobbles before it finally falls to the ground. Yet there is no special interest in either the chase or the finale. Use is made of various unexpected parallels, -the discovery of two sleep walkers instead of one, two murders where one might have been looked for, two hidden treasures (though neither the "monument" of Mrs. Lorimer's genius nor the packet of letters have any value for the plot), two marvelously constructed hiding places - a secret drawer and a cabinet without apparent opening; even two drop-curtains - Europe for Clithero's drama, the wilds of Pennsylvanian America for Huntly's farce - and

still the story is unsatisfactory.

NO MORAL:

It is marred by no forced eighteenth century moral. In his introduction Brown does indeed refer to himself as a "moral painter" : yet no definite moral is pointed as in Wieland. The outstanding moral problem of the book is the one made familiar to us in the first novel: Is or is not the perpetrator of a criminal act to be condemned if his motive is pure? In the earlier novel some definite stand was taken with regard to the question and the author's criticism was incorporated in the conception of tragedy treated by the plot. In Edgar Huntly no definite plot use is made of the problem. Huntly harks back to it again and again in an agonized sort of way but Brown himself seems not to have made up his mind as to what the rights of the case might be. Had he been sure of his ground, or had he cared enough to answer the question, he could have handed out plot comfort and solace - plot compensation - to the benevolent criminal or he could have punished him appropriately and let the question go at that. Instead he merely announces at the close of the book that Clithero was "perverted" - insane - which means simply this, that Brown is deliberately avoiding the issue. Had he wished to satirize Godwin's theory he had here a perfectly good chance to show up the inherent sentimentality of Godwin's attitude toward crime and criminals by showing how his characteristic state of mind with regard to them may lead, as in Clithero's case, to actual insanity or, as in Huntly's, to making the life of the would-be benefactor of criminals one long fools-errand. That is what the book actually does for Godwin's cause but there are no grounds for believing that Brown was conscious of the slant he suggests.

PURPOSE OF THE BOOK.

His avowed intention is as follows: "America has opened new views to the naturalist and politician, but has seldom furnished themes to the moral painter. That new springs of action and new motives to curioisity should operate,- that the field of investigation, opened to us by our own country, should differ essentially from those which exist in Europe,- may be readily conceived. The sources of amusement to the fancy and instruction to the heart, that are peculiar to ourselves, are equally numerous and inexhaustible. It is the purpose of this work to profit by some of these sources; to exhibit a series of adventures, growing out of the condition of our country, and connected with one of the most common and most wonderful diseases or affections of the human form." <sup>1</sup>

Farther on, calling attention to new means of interesting the reader, he says: "Puerile superstition and exploded manners, Gothic castles and chimeras, are the materials usually employed for this end. The incidents of Indian hostility, and the perils of the Western wilderness, are far more suitable; and for a native of America to overlook these would admit of no apology. These, therefore, are, in part, the ingredients of this tale, and these he has been ambitious of depicting in vivid and faithful colours". <sup>2</sup>

The purpose being avowedly patriotic and the Goldwinian moral not being exploited,

WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE GOLDWINIAN MATERIAL IN THE BOOK?

1. This material does not much affect the plot. The Goldwinian benevolence of Huntly does indeed account for his search after the fleeing Clithero and so gives Brown opportunity to work in his beloved cavern and Indian scenes, but vengeance would have served

1. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1837. p. 3.  
 2. EDGAR Huntly : Phil. 1837. p. 4.

the purpose as well. Clithero's Godwinian horror of murder accounts for his presence in America and for the grief which causes Huntly to suppose him Waldegrave's slayer, but persecution would have accomplished the same thing. Huntly's Godwinian debate on the propriety of killing the Indians in the cave might have resulted in tragedy: the Indians might without any debate at all have killed him. But Huntly's cogitations make no difference in what happens. Not any of this material makes any vital difference in what happens.

2. Its use is merely like that of a color scheme in a picture. The key may be high or low. It matters little. It is as though Brown had merely had the habit of painting characters of a Godwinian shade and had here kept on doing so - irrespective of necessity. This use of philosophical creed as the ingredient of character without letting that creed pass over into action is as ghastly a weakness in the book as is divorce of belief and deed in real life; it is a fault more glaring than one would expect in the author of three as strong books as were Wieland, Ormond, and Arthur Mervyn.

3. Occasional use of Godwinian ideas for didactic purposes is discovered, notably the passages on war,<sup>3</sup> and the right to property,<sup>4</sup> and contemporary theories of the derivation of instinct.<sup>5</sup>

GODWINIAN POSES AS PERCEIVED IN THE CHARACTERS OF THE BOOK.

The only persons requiring analysis are four: Weymouth, the only character not correlated with the plot, Mrs. Larimer who does not herself appear in the action, what we know of her being second-

3. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887. p. 193.

4. Ibid. p. 150.

5. Ibid. p. 43.

hand material; and Clithero and Huntly who are simply varying types of the would-be benefactor. Huntly is of course given fuller development, but the monotonous similarity of their ideas, except on the grand theme of condemnation of the criminal, is marked.

Weymouth: Godwinian Tendencies Reflected In

1. Appreciation of "spontaneous justice"<sup>6</sup> as contrasted to the "coercion of law" in Huntly's and Miss Waldegrave's probable dealings with him.

2. Consideration of his own money as property to which he who needs it most has the right. "I will candidly acknowledge that, as yet, it is uncertain whether I ought to give or ought to receive, even should Miss Waldegrave be willing to give it. I know my own necessities and schemes, and in what degree this money would be subservient to these; but I know not the views and wants of others, and cannot estimate the usefulness of this money to them."<sup>7</sup> Compare this with Godwin's : "This property I have no right to dispose of at my caprice: every shilling of it is appropriated by the laws of morality."<sup>8</sup> or "It follows upon the principals of equal and impartial justice, that the good things of the world are a common stock, upon which one man has as valid a title as another to draw for what he wants. It appears in this respect, as formerly it appeared in the case of our claim to the forbearance of each other, that each man has a sphere, the limit and termination of which is marked out, by the equal sphere of his neighbor."<sup>9</sup> and "We have in reality nothing that is strictly speaking our own."<sup>10</sup>

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6. Edgar Huntly : Phil 1887. p. 145.

8. Political Justice : Lond. 1798. Vol I, Bk. II, Ch. V p. 169.

7. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887. p. 145.

9. Ibid. Vol. II Bk. VIII, Ch. I. p. 423.

10. Ibid. Vol. I Bk. II, Ch. V. p. 162.

10. See also Vol. I Bk II, Ch. II p. 135. previously cited.

7. A thoughtful manager of time. "Her hours were distributed with the utmost regularity, and appropriated to the best uses."<sup>21</sup> Compare Godwin's "In the same manner as my property, I hold my person as a trust in behalf of mankind. I am bound to employ my talents, my understanding, my strength and my time, for the production of the greatest quantity of general good."<sup>22</sup>

8. Persuasion and reasonableness are apparently outstanding characteristics.<sup>23</sup>

To these might be added the womanly graces of gentle manners and elocution of which Godwin makes so much in all his later novels. So many, many references are made to the charm of Marguerite's speaking voice that one wonders - even with so slight provocation as this single descriptive phrase in Edgar Huntley, whether Brown could have been reading St. Leon.

Clithero:

Necessity is the force which impells Clithero to make his confession, "irresistible necessity;"<sup>24</sup> and necessity as here used would seem to be something comparable to the "necessity" defined in Political Justice, only dressed up and partly personified as "destiny." Elsewhere the same thing is termed "fate"<sup>25</sup> and again reference is made to a more definite element in fate, an impulse so hurtful as to challenge belief in its being the offspring of a malignant spirit as individualized as any human spirit. "The demon that controlled me at first is still in the fruition of power," he says.<sup>26</sup> Was it I that hurried to the deed? No, it was the demon

(21). Edgar Huntley: Phil. 1887 p. 41.

(22). Political Justice: Lond. 1798. Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. II, p. 135.

(23). Edgar Huntley: Phil. 1887, p. 41.

(24). Ibid: p. 34.

(25). Ibid: p. 35.

(26). Ibid:

that possessed me."<sup>27</sup>; "once more frustrated the instigations of that demon, of whose malice a mysterious destiny had consigned me to be the sport and prey."<sup>28</sup>; these are references of the kind I mean. Once indeed this spirit is responsible for "diabolical instigations"<sup>29</sup> which is possibly more forceful than the "assured machination"<sup>30</sup> of an earlier sentence. All this of course is utterly beyond the cognizance of Godwinian rationality yet curiously enough it is the kind of thing upon which Godwin seized for telling effects in St. Leon and it is still a matter of absorbing interest to him in later life when in the Lives of the Necromancers he pleads, "To observe the actual results of these imaginary phenomena and the crimes and cruelties they have caused us to commit, is one of the most instructive studies in which we can possibly be engaged."<sup>31</sup>

Just how much Brown meant to imply in his use of the word "necessity" in this book we cannot judge but the fact that insanity is finally made to appear the cause of Clithero's peculiarities would seem to indicate that at the last moment, if not earlier, Brown decided to interpret Clithero's demon necessity in an extra-Godwinian sense.

There remain the following:

TRUE GODWINIAN POINTS OF VIEW.

1. Belief in the Perfectibility of at least one man whose death (by Clithero's own hand) he laments thus: "He was her brother still. As a human being, his depravity was never beyond the health-restoring power of repentance. His heart, so long as it beat, was accessible to remorse."<sup>32</sup>

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(27). Edgar Huntley: Phil. 1887, p. 79.

(28) Ibid:

(29) Ibid: p. 65

(30) Ibid: p. 64. See also p. 276.

(31). Godwin: Lives of the Necromancers, Lond. 1870. p. VI.

(32). Edgar Huntley: Phil. 1887 p. 71.

2. The control of life by the mind. At that point in the story where, after the death of Waitte, it occurs to Clither that Mrs. Lorimer may even now be dead, he reasons that, suppose the connection of her fate with her brother's were all a matter of imagination, "Who knows not the cogency of faith? That the pulses of life are at the command of the will? The bearer of these tidings will be the messenger of her death."<sup>33</sup> This is but Godwin's suggestion of the influence of mind on matter- a conception which, it will be remembered, Godwin was very anxious to have the reader understand to be merely a "conjecture" and not an integral part of his leading argument.<sup>34</sup> Clithero's use of the word "will" may be taken to mean "mind" in general. Godwin, as is well known, did not consider will as a separate faculty.<sup>35</sup> In how far Godwin anticipates Ribot and his school I am not sure, but Brown seems not to take the distinction seriously.

3. Belief that the Characters of men are to be traced to their environment. The vices of Mrs. Lorimer's son Clithero attributes, in his capacity as tutor, to "his condition".<sup>36</sup> After giving him credit for "the large share of excellence which he really possessed", he asserts: "that his character was not unblemished proved only that no exertions could preserve him from the vices that are inherent in wealth and rank, and which flow from the spectacle of universal depravity."<sup>37</sup> This is only another way of stating his belief that

4. Luxury is depraving. Godwin is careful to distinguish between different definitions of the term. Clithero uses the term in the sense generally accepted in Political Justice as something

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(33). Edgar Huntly: Phil. 1887.p. 73.

(34). Political Justice; Lond.1798.Vol.11,Bk.VIII,Ch.lX Appendix

(35). Ibid. Vol.1,Bk.lV,Ch.VII, p.251.

p.529.

(36). Edgar Huntly: Phil. 1887. p.37. (37). Ibid.

accessible only to the few and not contributing to the greatest good.<sup>38</sup>

5. Leisure and independence. Are thoroughly appreciated as by all Brown's other semi-Godwinians.<sup>39</sup>

6. "Freedom of choice and exercise of understanding" might not be infringed upon in the matter of marriage.<sup>40</sup> This is of course implied in Godwin's whole treatment of the subject.

N.B. Godwin's theory of the duty of estimating the comparative value of life is recalled an absurdly sentimental interpretation of that theory when Clithero considers that, since Wiatte was more precious than he to Mrs. Larimer, he had "failed in the moment of trial" and "from a contemptible and dastardly regard to" his own safety had killed Wiatte in unthinking selfprotection."<sup>41</sup>

### Huntly

1. Necessity is, as compared to Clithero's use of the word, comparatively Godwinian in concept. "I once imagined", says Huntly, "that he who killed Waldegrave inflicted the greatest possible injury on me. That was an error, which, reflection has cured, were furtively laid open to my view, and events, with their consequences, unfolded, I might see reason to embrace the assassin as my best friend. Be comforted."<sup>42</sup> This, however else it may look, is really falling back upon a philosophy of predetermined inter-relation of events. The conception comes out more clearly in the following reflection: "Every man, not himself the victim of irretrievable

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38. Political Justice : Lond. 1798. Vol II Bk VIII Ch VII p. 492.  
Also Ibid p. 57, 491.

39. Example Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887 p. 39.

40. Ibid.p. 44.

41. Ibid. p 72.

42. Ibid. p. 32.

disasters, perceives the folly of ruminating on the past, and of fostering a grief which cannot reverse or recall the decrees of an immutable necessity; but every man who suffers is unavoidably shackled by the errors which he censures in his neighbor, and his efforts to relieve himself are as fruitless as those with which he attempted the relief of others."<sup>43</sup> Or again: "But what power was it that called me from the sleep of death just in time to escape the merciless knife of this enemy? Had my swoon continued till he had reached the spot, he would have effectuated my death by new wounds and torn away the skin from my brows. Such are the subtle threads on which hang the fate of man and of the Universe!"<sup>44</sup> This last is, of course, a bit more like the usual metaphorical substitute for the philosophic "necessity".

2. Dislike of indirection and lying are characteristically Godwinian. "Why", he asked when he realized how much he wanted to know whether Clithero had murdered Waldegrave, "Why should I proceed like a plotter? Do I intend the injury of this person? A generous purpose will surely excuse me from descending to artifices. There are two modes of drawing forth the secrets of another,- by open and direct means and by circuitous and indirect. Why scruple to adopt the former mode? Why not demand a conference, and state my doubts, and demand a solution of them, in a manner worthy of a beneficent purpose?"<sup>45</sup> To abruptly ask a man whether he had murdered such and such a one is not the usual procedure when one is trying to track down a murder mystery, but the method is entirely satisfactory to Huntly who approaches Clithero in a perfectly gentlemanlike manner: "My suspicions are vehement. How can they be otherwise? I call

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43. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887. p. 106.

44. Ibid. p. 193.

45. Ibid. p. 17.

upon you to say whether they be just."<sup>46</sup>

3. Leisure and opulence could not fail to be estimated at their proper value by any of Brown's heroes. Huntly expresses his estimation: "Honesty will not take away its keenness from the winter blast, its ignominy and unwholesomeness from servile labour, or strip of its charms the life of elegance and leisure."<sup>47</sup>

4. Reason as an antidote to error is also applied to insanity which, in Clithero's case, Huntly hopes to cure by persuasion.<sup>48</sup>

5. The duty of persuasion in in cases of error is recognized by Huntly again and again. I use the term persuasion to cover admonition which is what Godwin is talking about when he says: of my neighbor, "He is guilty of an omission in this point, if ne fail to employ every means in his power for the amendment of our errors."<sup>49</sup>

Persuasion is regarded by Huntly as a part of his duty in warning Clithero from,

6. The unsocial and savage state into which his moping had drawn him. This state says Huntly, was "deeply to be deplored."<sup>50</sup> Godwin's "The most desirable condition of the human species is a state of society" we have already considered in his summary of principles given in the first part of this paper.

7. The punishment of a criminal is felt by Huntly to be a futile and embarrassing thing - "For what purpose shall I prosecute this search? What benefit am I to reap from this discovery? How shall I demean myself when the criminal is detected?"<sup>51</sup> Compare this with Godwin's discussion of punishment for restraint in Political Justice, Vol. II, Bk. VII, Ch. III, p. 339 and as the subject

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(46). Edgar Huntly: Phil. 1887, p. 30 See also p. 144.

(47). Ibid, p. 147, See also p. 148.

(48). Ibid: p. 91.

(49). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. V, p. 162.

(50). Edgar Huntly: Phil. 1887 p. 273.

reappears throughout the other chapters of the same book.

8. A pleasure-knowledge axiom is laid down early in the book - such an one as reminds us of Godwin's chapter on "The voluntary actions of men originate in their opinions"- or "Good and Evil." "Knowledge", says Huntly, "is of value for its own sake, and pleasure is annexed to the acquisition, without regard to anything beyond. It is precious even when disconnected with moral inducements and heartfelt sympathies."<sup>52</sup>

9. Property as belonging to him who most needs it is a topic we have already discussed in the case of Weymouth. Huntly is firm about the seventy-five hundred dollars. Its "transfer to Weymouth will not be productive of less benefit to him and to his family than we should derive from the use of it."<sup>53</sup>

10. Property to go to whom most useful: The idea coincides exactly with that of Clithero and of Godwin previously discussed. Of the seventy-five hundred dollars claimed by Weymouth he says, that it "will be productive of no less benefit to him and to his family than we should derive from the use of it."<sup>54</sup>

11. Curiosity: Huntly's curiosity appears to be more or less an afterthought on the part of Brown to show the difficulty of changing his hero from a would-be avenger of murder to the would-be benefactor of a maniac must have been apparent. The curiosity motif is inconspicuous; it is not nearly so memorable as in Caleb Williams and largely for the reason that there is in Edgar Huntly no symbol by which the idea of curiosity is caught and visualized as the chest in Falkland's library caught and symbolized Caleb's curiosity.

51. Edgar Huntly \* Phil. 1887 p. 15.

52. Ibid. p. 16.

53. Ibid. p. 150.

54. Ibid. p. 150.

A curious box belonging to Clithero does indeed titillate Huntly's curiosity in chapters XI and XII and, Pandora-like, he does insist that he intended no theft, that he only intended to benefit himself without inflicting injury on others,<sup>55</sup> but for all that no use is made of the box as a literary device to emphasize the benevolence of the man-hunt which is the main passion of the tale. It could have been a most effective device for this purpose but, whereas Godwin permitted Caleb to find documents in Falkland's chest which started the whole train of iniquitous persecution, Brown permits his hero (and his reader) to become all worked up over - nothing! The box contains, like Falkland's, a precious document but that document does not do one single thing by way of forwarding the plot and is not in itself interesting. Like nearly every other motive in Edgar Huntly it is analyzed and apologized for until any natural respect for it is lost. "Is it wise to undertake experiments (the tracking Clithero down) by which nothing can be gained and much may be lost? Curiosity is vicious, if undisciplined by reason, and inconclusive to benefit. I was not, however, to be diverted from my purpose - Curiosity like virtue, is its own reward." And then he goes on to make the observations we have considered previously: "Knowledge is of value for its own sake, and pleasure is annexed to the acquisition without regard to any thing beyond."<sup>56</sup> Klaeshere, in speaking of his motive for calling upon Clithero for an avowal of his guilt in murdering Waldegrave, Huntly informs us that he was "principally stimulated by an ungovernable curiosity," and follows up the information with the usual excuse, - "yet, if I intended not the conferring of a benefit, I did not, at least, purpose the infliction of evil."<sup>57</sup> Here Brown is using curiosity

in the sense first mentioned - as a patch for the plot predicament

55. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887 p. 111.

56. Ibid. p. 16.

57. Ibid. p.29.

of the author who changes the plot-controlling passion of his hero after the story has well begun and from purely sentimental reasons.

12. Benevolence is the prime mover of the action. As it becomes the prime mover of the plot in making Huntly's main purpose the relief of Clithero's mind from insupportable error, so it also controls the details of incident and character. It accounts for instances; for Huntly's taking food to Clithero when he was immured in the wilderness, for his hastening, Ossler-wise, the death of an Indian dying in agony, for turning aside to hunt out a woman who appeared to be the victim of massacre.

That benevolence as the prime plot-mover, which attempted the removal of error in Clithero's brain, was a misguided benevolence and the cause of error is confessed in a letter to Sarsefield at the end of the book: "I have erred, not through sinister or malignant intentions, but from the impulse of misguided, indeed, but powerful benevolence."<sup>58</sup>

Huntly's own estimation of his error of benevolence in the words "I shall not escape your censure, but I shall, likewise, gain your compassion." remind us of the great moral problem in Wieland:-

Is the benevolent erring person to be condemned if his motives are pure? The question is clearer when Huntly, making it objective instead of subjective, applies it to Clithero. "Is it possible," he asks, "to regard this person with disdain or animosity?"<sup>59</sup> In analysing the case he insists first upon the necessity of reserving judgment until Clithero's motives are understood.<sup>60</sup> Then he proceeds

58. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887. p. 277.

59. Ibid. p. 88.

60. Ibid. p. 31.

61. Ibid. p. 88.

to build up a defense for Clithero around two fundamental ideas: (1) that "the crime originated in those limitations which nature has imposed upon human faculties"<sup>61</sup> and (2) that "proofs of a just intention are all that are requisite to exempt us from blame."<sup>62</sup> These, he says, are "the conclusions to be drawn by dispassionate observers"<sup>63</sup> and the last is meant to be contrasted with Clithero's own view that though his intents were noble and compassionate, this was of "no avail to free him from the imputation of guilt."<sup>64</sup> Now we found in our discussion of this same question in Wieland that Godwin does not permit mere benevolence of intention to blind him to the wickedness of a wicked deed: "Intentions", he says, "will not do alone. In deciding the merits of others, we are bound, for the most part, to proceed in the same manner as in deciding the merits of inanimate substances. Their turning point is utility."<sup>65</sup> and again, "We shall overthrow every principle of just-reasoning if we bestow our applause upon the most mischievous of mankind, merely because the mischief they produce arises from mistake."<sup>66</sup> But, asks Brown, "shall we deem ourselves criminal because we do not enjoy the attributes of Deity? Because our power and our knowledge are confined by impassable boundaries?" Godwin answers: "It was his duty to entertain a sincere and ardent desire for the improvement and happiness of others. With this duty he probably complied. But it was not his duty to apply that desire to a purpose, dreadful, and pregnant with inexhaustible mischief. With the prejudices he

61. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887 p. 88.

62. Ibid. p. 88.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. Political Justice : Lond. 1798. Vol I Bk II Ch IV p. 156.

66. Ibid.

67. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887. p. 87.

entertained perhaps it was impossible for him to do otherwise. But it would be absurd to say that it was his duty to labour under prejudice."<sup>68</sup> or "Is it my duty to comply with the dictates of an erroneous conscience? --- Certainly not."<sup>69</sup>

No matter from what angle we view Huntly's plea for Clithero we come upon a certain sentimentality in dealing with that unhappy mortal which precludes Godwin's sympathy for him. If Huntly is recalcitrant to the extent of finally denying any intention at all on Clithero's part so that he pleads: "It must at least be said that his will was not concerned in this transaction. He acted in obedience to an impulse which he could not control nor resist. Shall we impute guilt where there is no design? Shall a man extract reproach from an action to which it is not enough to say that he was actuated by no culpable intention, but that he was swayed by no intention whatever?"<sup>70</sup> - Godwin only replies: "It is never one's duty to do wrong."<sup>71</sup> Huntly's treatment of the benevolent erring person, then, is not truly Godwinian. As we have already pointed out, making Clithero out at the last minute to be insane is not actually coming over to Godwin's side; it is only evading the issue.

15. The Rational Comparison of the Value of Two Lives is frankly made in three instances and indirectly in Huntly's many apologies for the taking of life. In the first case he reflects that "the death of Wiatte could not be censured. The life of Clithero was unspeakably more valuable than that of his antagonist."<sup>72</sup> In the second instance, in one of his abominably calculating moments, Huntly decides that rescuing the bound and tethered girl in the

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(68). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798; Vol. I, Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 187.

(69). Ibid.

(70). Edgar Huntly: Phil. 1887, p. 87

(71). Pol. Justice: Lond. 1798, Vol. I, p. XXXV.

(72). Edgar Huntly: Phil. 1887, p. 87.

cevern from her Indian guard is worth the risk of his own life. " "Might I not relieve her from her bonds and make her the companion of my flight? The exploit was perilous but not impracticable. There was something dastardly and ignominious in withdrawing from the danger and leaving a helpless being exposed to it. A single minute might suffice to snatch her from death or captivity. The parents might deserve that I should hazard or even sacrifice my life in the cause of their child."<sup>73</sup> To our minds of course there is something very unpleasant in this truly Godwinian tendency to weigh the consequences or calculate the probable benefits in saving a life. It is not that we do not approve of rationality in such circumstances, but that we expect the rational process during such circumstances to be so instantaneous as to be almost unconscious and Brown's drawing out that process to the length in which we find it in Edgar Huntly is to us intolerable. The third instance of Huntly's characteristic habit of mind with regard to this subject is the long debate he holds with himself on the occasion of his killing his last Indian. He has to reason it all out before he can fire upon him. The processes of his apology for killing him run like this:

- A. The Indians had killed his father, mother and younger brothers and sisters during Huntly's infancy and this one has now come hither to murder my friend; "nay, has he not borne his part in the destruction of my uncle and sisters?"<sup>74</sup>
- b. He will live to continue his sanguinary trade.<sup>75</sup>
- c. If saved I may meet him again when the advantage may be his.<sup>76</sup>
- d. "Should he spy me where I lay, my fluctuations must end."

73. Edgar Huntly; Phil. 1887. p. 173.

74. Ibid. p. 191.

75. Ibid.

76. Ibid. and p. 192.

i.e. I should have to kill him in self-defense."<sup>77</sup>

This insufferable argument is ended by the alarm which the clicking of Huntly's gun gives to the Indian. Huntly's heart sinks while he complies "with what may surely be deemed an indispensable necessity."<sup>78</sup> Godwin, as we know, does not regard self-protection as an inconsistency in his general scheme of the immorality of shedding blood, but he does lay great stress everywhere upon the value of life which is to be regarded in the same light as property. The taking of life would then be subject to the same general principles as is all other property: life cannot be said to belong to its possessor but is at all times and in all cases to be subordinated to the greatest good of the greatest number. The generalizations here made are not to be found in many specific references in Political Justice but are my own interpretation of the meaning of the philosophy of Political Justice taken as a whole and reconstructed from the many passages significant for such interpretation. The one specific reference to the taking of life occurs in the chapter "Of the conduct of War"; "we should refrain from the unnecessary destruction of a single life."<sup>79</sup> This may without serious objection be inferred to be applicable to circumstances other than war although such inference is not technically permissible.

This same passage affords another clause which is transferrable: "We should refrain from the unnecessary destruction of a single life;" and we should "afford every humane accommodation to the unfortunate," who are "entitled to our kindness as men."<sup>80</sup> This is perhaps partly responsible for Huntly's feeling it his duty to

77. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887 p. 192.

78. Ibid.

79. Political Justice: Lond. 1798. Vol II Bk V Ch XVIII p. 163.

80. Ibid. p. 163.

complete the destruction of an Indian suffering the agonies of the  
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half-dead.

14. War is directly and unequivocally rebuked for the first time in any of Brown's novels in Edgar Huntly. Huntly, after dispatching the last Indian, throws his weapon and himself on the ground, "overpowered by the horrors of this scene." "Such", he exclaims, "are the deeds which perverse nature compels thousands of rational beings to perform and to witness! Such is the spectacle, endlessly prolonged and diversified, which is exhibited in every field of battle; of which habit and example, the temptations of gain, and the illusions of honour, will make us, not reluctant or indifferent but zealous and delighted actors and beholders!"<sup>82</sup> This may reflect Brown's Quaker training but it coincides with the passionate protest against war which Godwin makes in Political Justice, Volume II, Book V, Chapter XVI, XVII, XVIII, and XIX.

81. Edgar Huntly : Phil. 1887 p. 193.

82. Ibid.

SUMMARY OF GODWINIAN FINDINGS IN BROWN:

The foregoing study should have established Brown's indebtedness to Godwin in the three points mentioned by Miss Loche:

(1) "The relation of patron and dependent.

(2) The character of the gifted, self-taught country lad, and above all,

(3) The hero of more than mortal force and fascination."<sup>1</sup>

With respect to the rational hero and heroine; Brown has borrowed or taken suggestions from Godwin in the following points. Thus

1. Seclusion from society is characteristic. If not for exactly the same reasons, at least with much the same effect, Brown's characters are all essentially cut off from the world, all have few or no friends, all are satisfied or deliberately seek solitude and the society of immediate friends or relatives (if indeed there be any immediate friends and relatives which is not usually the case.) In St. Leon we have a picture of family life but St. Leon comes too late for Brown who does not once portray wedded or family life. Mrs. Stephens exists but takes no part in the story of Arthur Mervyn: all the men are either widowed or unwedded, all the women widows, like Achsa Fielding, or unwedded. Godwin makes much of children in St. Leon, but none appear in Caleb Williams: neither do children appear in any of Brown's stories.

2. They all cultivate their understanding through books and to this end they all crave

3. Leisure and affluence and complain about poverty and

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(1). Loche: The Early American Novel: p. 50.

the dulling effect of over severe labour.

4. Rational enjoyment is their great delight and their pride: lower pleasures are renounced, usually, for the higher intellectual pleasures.

5. Conversation and persuasion are their characteristic weapons and means of controlling their environment.

6. Frankness is a matter with them all of almost sinful pride, though not all are able to live up to their standards of sincerity.

7. Benevolence is of the essence of their virtue and, as Miss Loshe points out, "Godwin's noble man, criminal through circumstances, has become criminal, also, by a deliberate theory of good."<sup>2</sup>

We find in Brown animadversions against

- (1) Law and lawyers.
- (2) War.
- (3) The then present system of Education.

We discover him to be a sentimentalist of the Godwinian stripe<sup>3</sup> in that he,

- (1) Believes man to be the product of his environment and therefore
- (2) Tolerates error and
- (3) Makes society responsible for the social outcast.
- (4) He idealizes the social outcast.
- (5) Applauds an excessive delicacy of feeling in his characters.

(6) Makes them exceedingly responsive to literature, music, and art, and

2. Loshe: The Early American Novel. N.Y.1907. p.51.

3. Compare with Allen; B. Sprague: William Godwin as a Sentimentalist. M.L.A. Vol XXXIII, 1. New series, Vol XXVI.1, 1918.

(7) He idealizes the simple life though possibly in not so obvious and pointed a way, perhaps, as does Godwin. Quaker life cornmeal mush, rustic arbors, the "inexpensive" pleasure of conversation, preference of quiet evenings rather than formal balls and parties - all these are a part of Brown's sentimental programs.

As an apostle of Godwin, the rationalist, we find Brown to be not quite so logical as his master, more carried away by the excitement of imaginative authorship and susceptible of nearly the same temptations as Godwin to stray from the prescriptions of a philosophic system when the requisites of the story demand it. It is at once apparent that the inherent inconsistency and lack of system in the Godwinian philosophy accounts for garbled and twisted interpretation of Godwinian rationality in the novels of Brown.

That the philosophy of Godwin is the necessary basis of some of Brown's work and that Godwin's strange rationality and sentimentality destroy the effectiveness of much of Brown's work might be reported in much the same way as Cooke reported Godwin's effect upon the world. Cooper, the actor, it must be explained, was smoking, Marshall was drinking wine and Cooke was rambling on till he suddenly realized that Godwin to whom he was talking, was fast asleep! "Asleep! - fast asleep! How perfectly quiet he rests and yet he is a democrat! There is a smile upon his countenance that looks 'peace and good will to men' and yet he has thrown the torch of discord abroad, and set half mankind in flame. What a beautiful head - how much the expression as if he had been nourished alone by the milk of human kindness; what a head - as the fox said in the sculptor's shop, yet I can't say that this head wants for brains. What a noble head - and yet pregnant with such monstrous errors! Errors, that if received would destroy the bonds

between subject and sovereign, between parent and child, husband and wife, give a loose and free sway to selfishness and sensuality, involve the world in anarchy and steep it in blood - such philosophers - O how I detest them! I could wish such government to exert its force for their extermination, by death, by torture -" then looking at Godwin's face, "but not him - not this - O, no, no! - his conscience is good or he could not sleep thus nor look thus!"<sup>4</sup>

So Brown's sentimentality would throw discord into the kingdom of literature, did not his own obvious inability to handle such great philosophic problems plead our forgiveness and foster our forgetfulness, and were we not grateful to him for standing out against at least one of Godwin's egregious errors - his doctrine on marriage.

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(4). Dunlap, Wm: Life of George Frederick Cooke. Lond. 1815.

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N.B. The following is a partial list of books consulted in preparing this paper. Books on Tom Paine and similar veins of inquiry, which have been tapped but not followed up, are not included; nor are contemporary novels read for purposes of comparison.

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