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Religious Attitudes in the World of Humphry Clinker

BYRON GASSMAN*

If the social or political historian were to step across the corridor and ask his friend in the English Department what early novel might be especially rich in data for his study of eighteenth-century English life, his colleague might well end up naming Tobias Smollett’s Expedition of Humphry Clinker (1771). Untroubled by plot (practically speaking, the novel has none), unconcerned with sentiment, and seemingly unaware of the art of fiction, Smollett cast his last novel into a series of letters reporting the adventures and observations of a Welsh family travelling through England and Scotland. Often the novel assumes the guise more of perceptive journalistic dispatches than of a piece of imaginative fiction. Smollett’s five letter writers react vividly to the many elements of English and Scottish society to which they are exposed. Through their reactions, Smollett comments pungently on many of the salient characteristics of his own society, a society which he had carefully scrutinized during a long writing career.

Many of Smollett’s comments about England of the 1760’s are concerned with the changes being wrought in English society by the rapidly increasing standard of living, the rise in social status of the mercantile nouveaux riches, and the urbanization of English life. Smollett observes too the increasing political power of the English populace and the lessening of aristocratic controls and perquisites. His reaction to these changes and their symptoms is quite clear: he is dismayed at the tenor and tempo of English life. Like Swift and Pope of an earlier generation and like Johnson of his own, he is alarmed at the threat to established modes and institutions posed by Whiggish innovations, middle-class tampering with tradition, and bourgeois violation of established decorum. He foresees social chaos and political anarchy if England continues its reckless course.

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It is to social and political activities that Smollett gives most attention in his masterpiece. But there are occasional passages reflecting on religious matters that should be significant to anyone trying to recreate the quality of eighteenth-century English religious life and institutions. Although these passages are not central to the tone and outlook of the novel, they are certainly congruent with them and contribute meaningfully to the novel’s total effect. The following discussion of these passages is not intended to be the whole truth about the religious world of England in the 1760’s. Indeed more objective and distant viewers may easily prove Smollett to be in error in certain respects. But the discussion is intended to indicate what many of Smollett’s contemporaries were willing to accept as valid commentary in those years. That which men of talent and perception believed to be true may be as important for understanding their world as that which later historians may tell us actually was true.

Of the established Anglican church Smollett says little in his novel, but what little he does say about its clergy is not very flattering. The glimpses the reader gets suggest the idea of a clerical system in which most of the grass-roots work was done by underpaid drudges while well-endowed sinecures allowed those in superior ranks to indulge in all the luxury of a secular aristocracy. When reflecting the system, Smollett’s imagination was most stimulated by the clergy’s preoccupation with worldly comforts and its adeptness at seeking temporal advantages through profitable spiritual offices. Smollett’s most pointed observation describes the clerics who visited Bath, the famous health and pleasure resort of eighteenth-century England:

There is always a great shew of the clergy at Bath: none of your thin, puny, yellow, hectic figures, exhausted with abstinence and hard study, labouring under the Morbi eruditorum; but great over-grown dignitaries and rectoris, with rubicund noses and gouty ankles, or broad bloated faces, dragging along great swag bellies, the emblems of sloth and indigestion (JM—May 17).1

This caricature of ambitious, luxury-loving, and worldly clerics is given added garnish in the immediately succeeding account of the threatened duel by means of which Tom Eastgate, an

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1Passages in Humphry Clinker are referred to by initials of the fictional letter writer (MB = Matthew Bramble, JM = Jeremy Melford, LM = Lydia Melford) and by date of the letter in which the passage appears.
unlikely candidate for spiritual honors but obviously a person of worldly discretion, extorts a well-paying clerical living from his erstwhile patron, George Prankley.

Later in the novel Jery Melford and his uncle, Matthew Bramble, note the absence of the clergy when they attend a levee of the Duke of Newcastle after the Duke’s loss of influence in the government. The Duke had been a master of the art of dispensing governmental patronage. In fact, many of those high in the church’s hierarchy owed their office to his good graces. Thus their absence at his levee is indeed worthy of note, and the reader is once again reminded that currying the favor of those in influential positions was the prime requisite for clerical advancement and that adeptness in switching allegiances at the right time was a highly necessary ability. Jery conjectures that “the gratitude of the clergy is like their charity, which shuns the light” (JM—June 5), a delightfully ironic comment on the loss of the chief Christian virtue in the Christian minister’s preoccupation with his material comforts and the worldly prestige of his office.

To the most important crosscurrent of England’s religious life in the eighteenth century, the Methodist movement, Humphry Clinker gives a much more direct—and more condemnatory—look. A few years before he began writing Humphry Clinker Smollett had expressed his unqualified disapproval of the movement which the Wesleys and Whitefield had begun in the late 1730’s. Smollett’s earlier statement serves as effective introductory comment to the treatment of the Methodists in Humphry Clinker:

The progress of reason, and free cultivation of the human mind, had not however entirely banished those ridiculous sects and schisms of which the kingdom had been formerly so productive. Imposture and fanaticism still hung upon the skirts of religion. Weak minds were seduced by the delusions of a superstition stiled Methodism, raised upon the affectation of superior sanctity, and maintained by pretensions to divine illumination. Many thousands in the lower ranks of life were infected with this species of enthusiasm, by the unwearied endeavours of a few obscure preachers.\(^2\)

Two frequently made charges against the Methodists are suggested in this passage, the charge of what the eighteenth

century called "enthusiasm" and the charge of hypocrisy. One might almost say that the handling of Methodism in *Humphry Clinker* is designed to illustrate these charges. When the Bramble travelling party sojourns in London, Humphry Clinker, the illiterate servant they have picked up along their way, is converted to Methodism. He is discovered preaching by his employer, who proceeds to berate him for his presumption and fanaticism. Matthew Bramble's admonition to Humphry is easily seen as a recasting of the sentiments and prejudices expressed by Smollett in the passage above. "What you imagine to be the new light of grace," says Bramble, "I take to be a deceitful vapour, glimmering through a crack in your upper story—In a word, Mr. Clinker, I will have no light in my family, but what pays the king's taxes, unless it be the light of reason, which you don't pretend to follow." Bramble then asserts what was frequently maintained by the deriders of Methodism, that its disciples were either hypocrites or fanatics headed for the madhouse:

Heark-ye, Clinker, you are either an hypocritical knave, or a wrong-headed enthusiast; and, in either case, unfit for my service—If you are a quack in sanctity and devotion, you will find it an easy matter to impose upon silly women, and others of crazed understanding, who will contribute lavishly for your support—if you are really seduced by the reveries of a disturbed imagination, the sooner you lose your senses entirely, the better for yourself and the community (JM—June 10).

Somewhat later in the novel Tabitha Bramble, the stereotyped old-maid sister of Matthew Bramble, becomes involved with the Methodists also. Her niece, Lydia Melford, usually very mild and sweet-natured in her judgments, brings up the charges of near-madness and hypocrisy again as she reports on her aunt's religious behavior:

She has been praying, preaching, and catechising among the methodists, . . . and pretends to have such manifestations and revelations, as even Clinker himself can hardly believe, though the poor fellow is half crazy with enthusiasm. . . . God forgive me if I think uncharitably, but all this seems to me to be downright hypocrisy and deceit (LM—Sept. 7).

Methodism's reputation for driving men mad was based on its evangelistic emphasis on a vital spiritual conversion to re-

\[\text{3The OED defines this usage thus: "Ill-regulated or misdirected religious emotion, extravagance of religious speculation."}\]
place the dead ritual of the established church and to reach the lower classes, whose lives were often virtually untouched by any religious influence. Although the Wesleys and other leaders of the revival tried to check excesses and themselves saw the danger of delusion, there were those among the unlettered converts who, in their fervor, gave way to emotional extravagances, while others, with no qualification for the work but their zeal, abandoned themselves to itinerant preaching of the rudest form. Apparently Smollett wants his reader to accept the excesses as the norm in such passages as the grotesque description of Humphry mounting the rostrum, encouraged by the example of a weaver, and finding himself “under such strong impulsions, as made him believe he was certainly moved by the spirit” (JM—June 10).

It is clear that Smollett denounces Methodism because he considers it an offense against both order and reason, two of the principles of human life most cherished by him and by many of his contemporaries. To Smollett Methodism was a further pernicious force in the threatened breakdown of a rational, ordered society. Like the levelling of social classes and the extension of political liberties, it could only result in a loosening of the restraints necessary for a smooth-running, rationally controlled society. The Methodist’s emphasis upon supernatural enlightenment was inimical to the orthodox faith in rational religion. (It is worth remembering that by the mid-1700’s the deists were no longer the controversial group they had been earlier, largely because the orthodox had assimilated many of their tenets.) And the pretensions of the lower classes to religious authority or religious enlightenment were considered a threat to the established order. The self-appointed minister was a menace to ecclesiastical decorum just as the nouveau riche was to social decorum and the member of the mob was to political decorum. Matthew Bramble is constantly outraged at the impertinence of the mob in imitating their betters; it is not surprising that he becomes indignant at the thought of his untutored servant presuming to step out of his appointed office to become a spiritual adviser to others.

From the charge of irrationality it was easy for the opponents of Methodism to make the jump to the charge of hypocrisy. Because the appeal of the new religion was allegedly to the irrational, it was natural to suppose that the Methodists found it easy, in Bramble’s words quoted above, to “impose
upon silly women and others of crazed understanding." Since
it was a common opinion that the Methodists were most suc-
cessful in imposing on silly women and ignorant men, the
reader of 1771 would have immediately picked out Tabitha
Bramble and Humphry Clinker as the characters in the novel
most apt to succumb to the histrionics of the Methodists.
Neither would it have been surprising to contemporary readers
of the book to find that Lady Griskin, with all her social
foibles, was their escort to the first meeting, since ladies of
fashion were frequently pictured toying with Methodism as
with a new hobby or fad and using their new religious profes-
sions as a cloak for less spiritual activities. This type of hypoc-
risy is especially well demonstrated by Tabitha Bramble, who
affects Methodism to give her a sanctified gloss, but to whom
it is most useful as a possible man-trap. One suspects that the
eighteenth-century reader was inclined to a risqué snicker when
he read, "[Tabitha] has had the good fortune to come ac-
quainted with a pious Christian, called Mr. Moffat, who is
very powerful in prayer, and often assists her in private exer-
cises of devotion" (JM—Aug. 8).

In his *Travels Through France and Italy* Smollett intro-
duces a passage on fanaticism that is valuable for the light it
throws on the antipathy in *Humphry Clinker* to any religious
profession tinged with enthusiasm and on the relation that
Smollett believed to exist between fanaticism and hypocrisy:

For my part, I never knew a fanatic that was not an hypo-
crite at bottom. Their pretensions to superior sanctity, and an
absolute conquest over all the passions, which human reason
was never yet able to subdue, introduce a habit of dissimula-
tion, which, like all other habits, is confirmed by use, till at
length they become adepts in the art and science of hypocrisy.
Enthusiasm and hypocrisy are by no means incompatible. The
wildest fanatics I ever knew, were real sensualists in their
way of living, and cunning cheats in their dealings with man-
kind.4

Smollett’s strong predilection for the rational and orderly,
which gives bite to his treatment of the Methodists and his
hatred of fanaticism, is given further expression in an exposé
of Scottish folk superstitions during the Bramble party’s travels
through Scotland. Bramble writes that while around the supper
table at the Duke of Queensberry’s castle, "The conversation
turned upon the vulgar notions of spirits and omens, that

4 *Travels Through France and Italy* (London, 1766), I, 75 (Letter V).
prevail among the commonalty of North-Britain” (MB—Sept. 15). Most of the conversation is taken up with a report by one of the diners of an incident involving the second sight, a supposed supernatural gift for seeing forthcoming events in visions. The guest tells of having arrived unannounced with four companions at the home of a friend. He claims that he found his friend already prepared to entertain him and his four companions, who were strangers to the host. Bramble skeptically proposes that the supposed seer, being of a visionary turn, probably claimed numerous visions which never materialized and that the fulfillment of one out of many might be ascribed to coincidence. Thus Bramble characteristically provides a rational, natural explanation for this amazing event.

The “debunking” attitude expressed in this natural explanation of a supposedly supernatural event is continued in the next sequence of events in the novel. During the conversation at the supper table another gentleman tells of an apparently supernatural event that recently occurred in the neighborhood. The ghost of a gentleman fifteen years dead is reported to have visited his grandson and chastised him with a horse whip and later to have been seen hovering over his own tomb in the churchyard. The next day the travellers re-encounter Lismahago, a Scottish soldier who had travelled with them earlier. He tells them of a recent visit to the home of his late father. Finding to his chagrin that his nephew had turned the home into a weaving manufactory, he encountered the nephew, whipped him, paid his respects to his father’s tomb, and departed. Thus Lismahago provides again a natural explanation for supposedly supernatural occurrences.

As can be readily seen, the treatment of religion in Humphry Clinker is basically satiric; that is, it is an attack upon defects and abuses, follies and fallacies which the author believes to be dangerous and destructive to individual and social well-being. The emphasis is upon the negative; the positive must be elicited by implication. About the nearest Smollett comes in Humphry Clinker to any statement of positive religious values is a statement of Lydia in reflecting upon her aunt’s Methodist leanings:

If I could put faith in all these supernatural visitations, I should think myself abandoned of grace; for I have neither seen, heard, nor felt anything of this nature, although I endeavour to discharge the duties of religion, with all the
sincerity, zeal, and devotion that is in [my] power (LM—Sept. 7).

Matthew Bramble, despite his crotchety temperament, wins the affection of the reader because of his disposition to such charitable actions as his relief of a poor ensign's widow in an early episode and his generous concern for his tenants and servants throughout the novel. These instances of practical religion are markedly contrasted with the covetousness of Tabitha, who endeavors to thwart her brother's charitable endeavors and who undergoes no diminution of selfishness and self-righteousness when she turns Methodist. In the world of *Humphry Clinker*, doctrine may yield to the irrational and discipline may decay, but charity never faileth.

A statement Smollett made when surveying the recent history of England in the *Continuation* of his history provides an apt summary of the conservative, rational core of thought which lies at the center of the novel's picture of the religious elements of English society and relates these elements to the total picture of a society in danger of deterioration and tottering on the brink of chaos and anarchy:

> From the frivolous pursuits of the people, their rage for novelty, their admiration of shew and pageantry, their ridiculous extravagance, their licentious conduct, their savage appetite for war and carnage which they had for some time avowed, and the spirit of superstition with which they began to be possessed, one would be apt to believe that the human mind had begun to degenerate, and that mankind was relapsing into their original ignorance and barbarity.  

The harshness of this pronouncement is tempered by the humor of *Humphry Clinker*, but the basic point of view remains. Condemnation, expressed or implicit, is dealt to everything tainted with enthusiasm, superstition, greed, or irrationality. Perhaps had there existed in the eighteenth century a religious group with the traditional dignity of the Anglican church without its secular preoccupations and with the practical charity of the Methodists without their enthusiasm, Smollett would have found the state of organized religion more satisfactory and would have given a more affirmative view of the religious currents of his day. Be that as it may, *Humphry Clinker* clearly reflects an important segment of the religious thought of its day and stands up well as a pungent and significant comment on the English religious milieu of the 1760's.

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*Continuation, V. 19.*
The Impact of Inflation on the Developing Economy: The Brazilian Case*

RICHARD B. WIRTHLIN**

No generation in history has encompassed such rapid, marked and widespread change in man's environment as that of our own. To a large degree many of these changes have been induced by remarkable advances made in the physical sciences—the incredible truncation of distances occasioned by the advent of jet transportation; the awesome power placed in the hands of man by the discovery of nuclear fission; the arrival of the age when man's material goods can be created without the hand of man by applying computer-controlled automated systems to the tasks of production; man's first feeble venturing into the unbounded limits of space enabled by the coming of age of missile technology. These advances, the fruits of the physical sciences, impinge directly upon man's social, political, and economic environment. Thus man is faced with problems and challenges that a few short decades ago were undreamed.

In some respects these revolutionary changes in man's environment and man's knowledge of his environment have drawn our world together and united it as never before. Contrarily, these same forces have also divided it.

Just as neighbors or families when denied the comfortable buffer of space sometimes generate hostility and frustration, so it seems that in our day the juxtaposition of nations made possible by modern transportation and communication has heightened tension. Invidious comparison of social and political systems, as well as the stark contrast between the "have's" and the "have-not's," are much facilitated by man's new technology. But the overriding factor which casts a pall of suspic-

*This article was presented in a slightly expanded form in the Faculty Forum of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Brigham Young University, November 1964.
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ion and fear of one nation for another resides in our now extant technology of destruction. Because of progress made in the delivery capacity of missiles and nuclear physics, one-half of the world may destroy the other half in a matter of minutes through a thermonuclear holocaust that portends to be as universal as the flood.

Despite the efforts of the poor nations of the world, and the capital and skill given by advanced countries, the gap between the rich nations and the poor is widening; the frustrations of the inhabitants of the poor countries mount as they realize as never before the baseness of their poverty.

I have chosen to discuss a single dimension of the poor nation in the context of one country for this College of Humanities and Social Sciences faculty lecture. Perhaps there are reasons why this topic may have interest beyond what might be thought of as the narrow limits of economics: First, the poor but developing nation now constitutes the battleground of clashing idealogies. Second, the poor but developing nation sets forth with a broad brush the elements of man’s struggle with his total environment. Third, while the problem of insatiable wants clashing with limited means dominates the broad landscape of a poor country and is the economic problem, nevertheless the dimensions of the problem extend far beyond the bounds of economics; for they involve man’s interaction with his political, social, and geographical environment.

The primary dimension of analysis will remain economic; the country: Brazil; the problem: inflation.

Economics is chosen as the dimension of analysis simply because of the limits of my own competence. Economics does, however, have some historical claim to offer insight into the process of material ascendency. Over the long sweep of history the central economic problem of mankind has been survival. Modern economics was not born until a few select nations, specifically, those in which the market system became dominant, felt the first stirrings of material expansion. Early economists such as Robert Malthus and David Ricardo clearly recognized the potential of something better than subsistence for the masses. But quite mistakenly they concluded that the process of economic development was inherently a self-defeating one, that all nations would eventually return to the poverty trap because of the crushing pressure of explosive population growth. This pessimistic conclusion gave rise to the label,
"economics—the dismal science." The label stuck. Even in modern times economics is still referred to as the dismal science, perhaps because people consider the interest of the economist in the economic ills that afflict society, such as unemployment and inflation, as morbid. This interest is, however, no more morbid or dismal than that of a physician whose interests are the ills and symptoms of patients. In both cases interest is evoked because cures are sought.

Economics is also a relevant frame of analysis for the multidimensional problem of the rise to material affluence even though that rise involves a multitude of noneconomic factors, because man’s nature, in turn, is molded by his economic welfare. As an early philosopher put it, "A man can be neither a saint, nor a lover, nor a poet, unless he has comparatively recently had something to eat."

There are several reasons why Brazil was selected as the patient; the problems of Brazil represent a sampling of the problems of those nations that quantitatively represent the most important group in the world—the poor nations. The way political winds blow in Brazil directly affects hemispheric unity. Lastly, Brazil is undergoing an economic experience, which frightening in its dimensions, is nonetheless fascinating. That experience—inflation.

In order to come to grips with the impact of inflation on Brazil’s growth we will first discuss Brazil’s general endowments and, second, review the course of Brazil’s inflation during the postwar period. We will then turn to an analysis of the consequences and causes of Brazil’s inflation. And lastly, not wanting to leave the patient completely in the throes of her affliction, we will offer a possible cure for her disease and in turn attempt to determine whether or not the experience of Brazil offers any meaningful lessons to other poor but developing economies.

In setting a very broad stage for the discussion of inflation, let us consider briefly Brazil’s political, geographic, demographic, and economic characteristics.

Brazil’s initial exposure to inter-country relationships was one consequence of Vasco da Gama’s Indian voyage. It is generally accepted that Brazil was discovered on April 22, 1500, by Pedro Alvares Cabral, a Portuguese admiral. Like the United States, Brazil was, when discovered, a large and virtually empty country inhabited sparsely by aborigines. Unlike the U.S.,
however, the open frontier and a consequent labor shortage that developed in both countries did not tend to loosen the political and economic bonds of the colony, Brazil, from her mother-country, Portugal. Two factors of Brazil’s emergence as an integrated socio-political entity tied her closely to Portugal: the early establishment of an aristocratic socio-political system, which was later reinforced by the second factor, the ensconcing of the royal Portuguese family and its court in Brazil. A third factor which marked Brazil’s early development, the remnants of which still affect Brazilian society, is the economically dominant role assumed in the initial period of colonization by Negro slavery.

Brazil’s political emancipation from the royal family of Portugal was gradual. The year 1889 marks Brazil’s most important single break with her original colonial status; in that year the Proclamation of the Republic was issued. The remarkable continuity of Brazil’s early political life was, however, also lost in 1889. Nonetheless, it is doubtful that the forces now transforming the Brazilian economic structure could have been exerted in the environment of stability imposed by the Portuguese monarchy. Brazil has had five constitutions. Since World War II her government has changed hands by “irregular methods” four times. The most recent revolution occurred April 1, 1964. Despite these political changes, the economic power structure has altered little in past decades, although with the rise of industrialization, shifts in Brazil’s economic power base are becoming evident.

Brazil’s immensity dominates all her other geographic characteristics. She encompasses over three million square miles, occupies 1.7 percent of the area of the globe, 5.7 percent of the dry land, and nearly half of the southern continent. Despite the impressions given the casual viewer of the Amazon and the coast, Brazil is not a country of only lush rain forests and mountains. Fifty-seven percent of Brazil’s land area is made up of highlands varying from 650 to 3,000 feet in altitude in which irregular mountain ranges form high plateaus. A great expanse of grass and scrub lands dominates the central and western portions and covers an area larger than the Amazon plains. Much of this land could be used to increase agricultural production.

Total population of Brazil is approximately 75 million. It is expected that this population will double long before the
end of this century. Unlike many other underdeveloped countries, Brazil is rather highly urbanized. In 1960, 39 percent of the population lived in the urban areas. On the other hand, the typical educational characteristics of the underdeveloped country are clearly to be seen in Brazil. Over one-half of Brazil’s total population cannot read or write. There are only 107 copies of daily newspapers for every 1,000 people in Brazil. Only one out of every three children between the ages of five and fourteen is enrolled in primary schools.

For every one child that dies in the U.S. before reaching the age of a year, six children die in Brazil before they reach the same age. These high mortality rates, especially among the young, the high illiteracy rates, and widespread malnutrition are all part and parcel of economic backwardness.

In terms of U. S. dollars Brazil’s per capita income approximates $250. This compares with the U. S. per capita income of over $2,100. In Brazil there are five doctors for every 10,000 people; in the U. S. there are 18 doctors for every 10,000 people.

While Brazil is beginning to industrialize, she still ranks far behind developed countries in her consumption of energy and steel; her levels of petroleum refining and commercial fertilizer use are very low. Brazil’s drive toward industrialization is newly-born. Nevertheless, Brazil is more fortunate than most, for since the end of the second World War her gross national product increased at over 6 percent annually and her per capita income rose by 3.5 percent, one of the highest rates in the world.

Not only, however, has Brazil’s capacity to produce goods and services expanded rapidly, but it has also been accompanied by a pervasive and rapid increase in the general level of Brazilian prices. The extent of that increase may be dramatized by the following example: Imagine that you were shopping for Christmas toys back in 1940 in Brazil, and suppose you found a toy that cost one dollar. Today, if the increase in the price of the toy approximates the increase in the general cost of living that took place in Brazil, then instead of costing one dollar in 1964, it would cost $119.30. In other words, the Brazilian cost of living has increased by 11,930 percent since 1940. We now turn to an examination of this inflation by reviewing its course, by identifying its possible consequences and causes, and by suggesting some possible cures.
Prices have increased every year in Brazil since 1940. The increases during the war were relatively moderate; they never exceeded an annual increase of 17 percent. During the immediate post-World War II period prices remained remarkably stable with the exception of the year 1947 when they increased by 22 percent. The outbreak of the Korean War, however, was accompanied by further increases in Brazil's price level. During this conflict, prices increased at annual rates varying between 23 and 26 percent. At the cessation of hostilities some pressures on prices were relaxed. But beginning again in 1960 prices increased. In 1960 prices rose by 71 percent, in the following year by 38 percent, and in 1962 by 31 percent. In 1963 Brazilian prices increased by 85 percent and during the first quarter of 1964 at an annually adjusted rate of 169 percent.

In sum, Brazil's moderately high increases in prices were kept under a modicum of control until 1960. While a degree of stabilization followed 1960, the pressure on prices grew to pathologic dimensions in 1963 and 1964.

Before 1960 Brazil was often cited as the prime example of a developing economy that could have its inflation but grow, too. Some economists were of the opinion that moderate inflation, if kept in bounds, might provide a buoyancy to the growing economy. Two arguments are proposed to support this position. First, inflation can be used as a means of taxing where other taxes cannot be collected, and second, inflation may act in some respects like an economic pep pill. Economic development requires first and foremost, capital. As the economist uses the term somewhat differently than layman, let me explain it. If you compared physiologically the brain tissue and muscle tissue of an average American with an average Brazilian you would find little organic difference. But the American produces approximately eight times the goods and services produced by an average Brazilian.

Some of the difference in productivity can be explained by the fact that on the average the American is more educated and skilled in performing productive tasks. But this can only explain part of the difference. More importantly, at the disposal of every American worker is a huge stockpile of tools, machines, factories, and efficient transportation and communication systems. All directly assist him in production. In addition to these items, the average American worker has a huge
amount of nonhuman, nonanimal power: electricity, steam, and now even nuclear power. The Brazilian worker, on the other hand, still must depend primarily on human power and animal power to create the goods and the services desired by his society. Tools and machines and even the power that creates goods do not, however, satisfy directly the wants of society; rather they greatly assist in the production of those goods and services that do. Such items are called capital.

Perhaps a more descriptive term for capital would be productive muscle. If the ability of a society to provide a high standard of life is simply dependent on productive muscle, you may ask, why then do not the underdeveloped economies make an all-out effort to obtain the necessary tools, machines, road, transportation systems, and so on? The answer is that such procurements involve a sacrifice, and the sacrifice of creating productive muscle is foregoing present consumption, or saving. People must be willing to forego one loaf today in order that they may have two loaves next year. But when one is living on the razor edge of subsistence, to save and to forego present consumption imposes tremendous hardships. Under a stable price level, foregoing present consumption or savings is either voluntary or taxed. In a mixed economy the government can, by exacting financial resources from the people, use them to build productive muscle or capital. When people are not willing to save voluntarily, or when the government has neither the organization nor the will to tax at a sufficiently high rate to finance development, inflation, it is argued, can play a positive role. The central bank simply lends credit to the government or the government prints new money, which it then spends on capital goods. With the newly created purchasing power, the government is able to bid men and machines producing consumption goods away from that sector and put them to work in creating capital goods or productive muscle. Consumption is thus destined to fall in the creation of capital through inflation. But the cost of this type of creation is an increase in prices.

Inflation is also used as a conscious development policy, as an economic pep pill. It is argued that increases in price permit a more complete utilization of the production potential of an economy. There is generally some slack, some men who are unemployed and some equipment unused in a market society. Inflationary pressure, it is argued, can be effectively
used to push a society to maximum effort in producing material things.

Even if inflation exerted these two salutary effects on Brazil's saving and growth, a hypothesis which cannot be supported, few indeed would argue that the impact of inflation on the Brazilian economy in the last three years has been beneficial.

The consequences of a hyperinflation or a run-away inflation are for the economy at large always and inevitably detrimental. Detrimental consequences are also generated in a more moderate inflationary environment such as the one that existed in Brazil prior to 1960, but are not as prominent as they become in a hyperinflationary state. Brazil thus offers a unique opportunity to clearly identify these evils. However, to assess properly the deleterious impact of inflation, we must understand the workings of a market economy.

It is no coincidence that the industrial revolution, which gave birth to material progress undreamed of previously, paralleled the extension and refinement of the market as a mechanism of economic control. The market performs three important economic functions. The competitive market tends to assure that the goods and services that society desires will be produced. It also lends to the most efficient ways of producing those goods and services. Furthermore, in an unencumbered market the entrepreneurs, the economic catalysts in an open economy, are given widest latitude. The market employs a single device to perform the three foregoing functions. That device is price.

If price fails to reward sufficiently those who produce goods and services that society needs because of inflation, if prices of the present and the immediate past portend violent price changes in the future, and if the value of money is debauched because of rising prices, then the strengths of the market system become its weaknesses. A market dominated by violent price increases drives savings that could be used in the creation of new productive muscle into areas where it is most safe from the vicissitudes of inflation. Buildings and unused land, as well as improved real estate, become the "rational" channels into which savings flow. This holds despite the fact that land and real estate are relatively sterile in terms of the contribution they make to the productivity of a society. But in a hyperinflation, savings seek shelter, not productivity. Savings
also, regardless of restrictions imposed by the authorities, take flight from the country of the debauched currency. And so an underdeveloped country which loses savings in this fashion foregoes the opportunity to use indigenous savings to build and strengthen its own economy. Foreign savers who might otherwise place sums of purchasing power in a backward country hesitate to commit their wealth to the wildly gyrating economic chaos that hyperinflation creates. The energies of the entrepreneurs are drawn not to potentially productive projects; rather they attempt to outguess the whims of those in charge of the monetary printing presses. Furthermore, hyperinflation can discredit the market system to the point that individuals and companies resort to the ancient and inefficient practice of barter rather than run the risks of cash transactions. Profits which normally should serve as recompense for the exercise of judicious and wise decisions become dependent on luck and administrative decision. All of these distorting forces can be identified in the Bazilian case.

In regard to the destruction of the market mechanism, John Maynard Keynes once described what might lie at the end of the road for countries experiencing inflation similar in magnitude to that of Brazil. Lord Keynes, whose defense of deficit spending is sometimes and quite erroneously confused with an advocacy of inflation, put it this way:

Lenin is said to have declared that, "The best way to destroy the capitalist system was to debauch the currency. By a continuing process of inflation, governments can confiscate, secretly and unobserved, an important part of the wealth of their citizens. By this method they not only confiscate, but they confiscate arbitrarily; and while the process impoverishes many; it actually enriches some...."

Lenin was certainly right. There is no subtler, no surer means of overturning the existing basis of society than to debauch the currency. The process engages all the hidden forces of law on the side of destruction, and does it in a manner which not one man in a million is able to diagnose.

As Keynes indicates, the effects of inflation are not only inefficient but also inequitable. Inflation is a gentle but cruel thief when the price level rises slowly, for it steals purchasing power from the pockets of those who can least afford to lose it—from the widows, the aged, and the orphaned child whose livelihoods are closely tied to a fixed income. In times of hyper-
inflation the rapidly raising price level violently and capriciously snatches wealth from some and bestows it in equally arbitrary fashion on others quite brazenly and without any recourse to a court of law. For example, suppose that 25 years ago you wanted to give someone today purchasing power of $100,000. Suppose that you had set aside that $100,000 in Brazilian cruzeiros. Simply and only because of inflation, that purchasing power of $100,000 would shrink and shrink until today, even though you had the same number of cruzeiros, your purchasing power would amount not to the $100,000 that it did, but to a paltry $838.17.

Other inequities are generated. For instance, the wage of the worker is almost completely dependent upon his political bargaining power rather than on his ability to produce goods and services during periods of hyperinflation. In May of 1963 the following wage increases were recorded in Brazil. Rio’s white collar workers received a 65 percent increase above their 1962 salaries. Those who worked for civil service received increases from 40 to 56 percent and the Congress was considering an increase in military pay that ranged from 25 percent to 55 percent. The inequities of determining wage rates on this basis are perhaps illustrated by the case of Brazil’s merchant seamen. They were among the highest paid workers in the country. A shipboard cook earned in May of last year as much as a full commander in the Brazilian Navy.

A further consequence of inflation, but one that may eventually stop inflation, is political instability. At the end of 1963 Brazil appeared to be dangerously close to complete economic collapse. Inflation not only sapped the country’s productive strength, but because of the consequences described above, the living standards of most Brazilians declined. In northeast Brazil illiterate peasants were being organized by the Red Chinese and armed by the Cubans. But the Army, aided and abetted by business executives and professional men, initiated a revolt in the early hours of March 31, 1964. It lasted only two days. Just as the inflation-induced chaos was the prime mover of the revolt, so the new administration’s most immediate economic task became the control of spiralling inflation. Whether or not the new regime will be able to reverse the upward climb of prices is yet to be seen. We may gauge its probability of success more accurately, however, if we examine now some of the causes of Brazil’s inflation.
There is no single cause of inflation. An economy suffering from inflation is not too unlike a patient suffering from high blood pressure. Usually a complex of causes works simultaneously, and the forces may differ from one economy to the next. Making rather broad and sweeping simplifications, some economists have attempted to isolate and classify some general pressures on prices.

On the one hand, a demand-pull inflation is identified as one in which desires, backed up by available money (or demand), are sufficiently greater than available goods and services to force prices upward.

The other general class of inflation is called cost-push. In this case the pricing of the ingredients that go into production, such as labor and capital, are the center of the analysis rather than the demand factors. It is argued that these prices can be increased solely because of bargaining power irrespective of whether or not such increases are justified by increases in productivity. If they are not, then the cost of producing goods and services must increase and this, in turn, induces increases in prices. Thus generated, the inflationary spiral begins to lead a life of its own.

A third general class of inflation, also evident in Brazil, is structural inflation. One of the hallmarks of a developing but poor society is found in the transfer of agricultural workers to the cities that occurs as the society gradually but pervasively shifts from an economic base resting on agriculture to one founded on industry. Clearly, in order to provide the rising class of industrial workers with food and raiment, agricultural output must increase. On the other hand, the agricultural sector in most underdeveloped societies, including Brazil, is the most traditional and most unbending when it comes to discarding established techniques of production and adopting new ones that may prove to be more productive. These two forces, namely a rise in the demand for agricultural products produced for the market and the sluggishness of the agricultural sector to adjust its productive techniques to meet this increasing demand, result in increasing food prices.

Let us now examine each of these general classes of inflationary sources more specifically in terms of the Brazilian case.

The pull forces of demand inflation originate in Brazil in both the private and the government sectors. The government became heavily involved not only in large social overhead
capital projects, with the erection of Brazilia being the most prominent, but also attempted to underwrite expensive social welfare projects. Concurrently, the economic expansion that took place in the private sector was spearheaded by a rather remarkable drive for industrialization of the medium and light industries. The creation of several almost self-contained automotive production facilities in Brazil is typical of this development. To the extent that such investment demand reduced the availability of goods and services it contributed to inflation.

Of these two sources of demand for products, the increase in government demand was quantitatively greater and more inflationary. Even on a cruzeiro-for-cruzeiro basis, government demand is generally more highly inflationary than private demand. This follows, because many of the projects initiated by the Brazilian government during the latter fifties and early sixties did not contribute directly to the productive capacity of the economy. This, of course, was not the case in the private sector, to the extent that individuals sought to gain maximum return by enhancing productive capacity, even if that return was somewhat distorted by inflationary pressures. The magnitude of new demand created by the Brazilian government can be gauged by the extent of its debt underwritten by the Bank of Brazil.

In 1961 the Bank of Brazil extended credit to the Brazilian government in the amount of 64.4 billion cruzeiros; in 1962, 114.8 billion cruzeiros; and in 1963, 223.7 billion cruzeiros. Without question, this increase in government credit had considerable influence on the expansion of the money supply which almost doubled between 1960 and 1963. The printing press was also employed to cover government deficits. Between 1960 and 1963 currency in circulation increased over threefold.

The simple increase in the quantity of money does not give a sufficiently accurate index of the influence of government spending on prices for two reasons. First, as money held quickly loses its value as prices increase, people become unwilling to hold cash balances. Therefore, during inflation the number of times one cruzeiro goes from individual to individual in say one month, doubles and triples and even quadruples. This means that the money supply serves two, three, or four times the transactions as earlier. Before long, as the purchasing power of money depreciates, individuals must carry it around in suitcases to transact their business. In 1962 the largest note in
circulation in Brazil was one thousand cruzeiros. It was worth less than $1.35 at that time.

Second, inflationary pressure, induced from the side of government spending, tends, when prices begin to increase rapidly, to become self-reinforcing. This is especially true in a country such as Brazil where the tax structure is relatively inflexible and not highly geared to taking a larger bite when income and prices increase. Under such circumstances a well-conceived budget designed to reduce the deficit may, in fact, end up increasing it, unless the administrators accurately predict price increases of the coming year. Such a prediction for a regime committed to "solving the inflation problem" is almost politically impossible. Then the deficit may be incurred simply because the cost of government expenditures doubles or triples due to price increases while government revenues remain stable. Thus, the government ends up with a large deficit instead of a surplus. This deficit must be financed. In order to finance the deficit the government must borrow from the central bank. This pumps more money into the society which in turn adds to the inflationary pressure.

This is apparently what has happened in Brazil. Budgets proposed in recent years might have resulted in surpluses if the costs of government had not increased so rapidly. In October of 1961 Finance Minister Calmon submitted to the Council of Ministers a plan that called for reducing national budgetary deficits by cutting government spending during the remainder of 1962 and raising federal revenue by increasing taxes in 1963. In 1962 and 1963 the Brazilian government ran the largest deficits in the history of the nation: over a 240-billion-cruzeiro deficit in 1962 and approximately a 400-billion-cruzeiro deficit in 1963. Some observers claim that had Goulart remained in power, the deficit would have topped 1.5 trillion cruzeiros in 1964.

Just as pressure on prices can be generated on the demand side, so also they can be pushed upward by increases in cost. It is from this source of inflation that individuals derive benefit or harm from price increases in direct proportion to their bargaining positions vis-à-vis their employers. The distortions that result from this pressure on wages sometimes are ludicrous, as in the case cited above where a shipboard cook in Brazil's Navy enjoyed a salary equivalent to that of a full
commander in the Brazilian Navy. Cooks must have been in a better bargaining position than full commanders.

But when everyone is trying to keep up with the Joneses through wage increases, this simply leads to an increase in prices, which leads in turn to further increases in wages. Even the government may be unable to cope with these pressures.

For example, in April of 1963 all state-owned industries, which includes the largest steel plant in Brazil, the Volta Redonda, were informed that no price increases would be granted. Simultaneously, bills were introduced into Congress suggesting wage increases from 40 to 56 percent of civilian and military government employees. Some civil service groups were pressing for wage increases of 75 percent. Scarcely 30 days later when the Congress legislated wage increases for its employees, the Volta Redonda steel plant in quite predictable fashion increased its prices 40 percent. The automotive companies then in turn sent a commission to the Ministry of Industry in Congress pleading for permission to increase prices of automobiles to correspond somewhat with the legislated increases in steel prices and salaries. But the cycle does not stop there. Once prices generally rise, even those who have gained increases in wages often find that despite such increases they are able to purchase no more than they did before they received their wage increase.

It is relatively easy to identify the forces that work in creating cost-push inflationary pressures. It is quite another thing to bring them to a stop. In some respects it is like playing musical chairs. There must always be some groups, or some individuals in society, who will lose regardless of when or how the inflationary music stops.

The last general complex of forces we wish to discuss in conjunction with Brazil’s recent experience emanate from the inherent characteristics of a backward country undergoing the transformation of economic growth. One of the lessons that can be clearly drawn from Brazil’s inflationary experience is that it is extremely difficult for a country to industrialize unless the agricultural sector is sufficiently productive to provide an adequate surplus to feed those being drawn into the industrial labor force from the rural areas. There is considerable evidence that one of the primary and general pressures on Brazilian prices arose from an insufficient supply of foodstuffs and clothing for the urban masses.
Between January 1962 and January 1964 the price of foodstuffs increased by 280 percent and the price of clothing by 260 percent. The hardship imposed on the laboring classes by such increases was reflected in mass demonstrations that took place near Rio in July of 1962. In that year a Brazilian family dependent upon a minimum salary would spend a total of 128 percent of its income just to eat adequately. Milk prices increased 120 percent in a five-month period in 1962; the current Branco regime still faces this same problem. After the revolution the price of milk increased 86 percent in two months, and the price of lard increased 233 percent in the same period. Shortages of foodstuffs initially created because of the structural changes occurring within a developed society are further exacerbated when the populace and retailers begin to hoard such basic items in expectation of further price increases.

The second hallmark of the backward society that creates a favorable milieu for inflation is found in the political structure of such societies. Underdeveloped societies are weak economically and politically. One Latin American economist argues that the postwar Brazilian inflation experience had its origin in the political revolution of the last twenty or thirty years when the old oligarchic type of government was replaced by governments truly elected by the people. He argues that in the old type of government the president had considerable power both because he was generally chosen by agreement between the powerful oligarchic groups and also because he was almost entirely free of pressure from demagogues and labor unions. This kind of political structure gradually gave way in Brazil to ones more truly democratic.

In order for a candidate to ascend in peaceful fashion to the presidency, it is almost necessary for him to enter into quid pro quo arrangements with other parties and to make many promises to influential members of his own party. Thus he is greatly hamstrung in making the hard political choices so necessary if the cost-push sources of inflation are to be rooted out. Furthermore, his success is often measured by his capacity to accomplish—that is, by his ability to complete or at least to start the building of roads and stadiums and new cities and so on, no matter what the price of increased indebtedness. It is estimated that over half of Brazil’s government debt was used to cover imports of capital equipment to provide for the construction of such social overhead. If such spending is profligate,
the country's economy is further distorted and disorganized; hence, seriously unbalanced budgets may be both the natural consequence as well as the mainspring of inflation.

A second political wave sweeping through the South American countries explains another element of inflation. This is the wave of nationalism.

Foreign capital has in the past represented an almost free gift of productive muscle to the underdeveloped country; it permits the expansion of productive facilities and lets off some of the pressure on price. Through nationalistic eyes it is viewed, however, with great suspicion by those in the underdeveloped countries. Brazil has passed many laws, including a profits-remittance law, which have discouraged foreign capital from going into Brazil. The profit-remittance law was passed in Brazil in 1961 to regulate the outflow of foreign capital and to place restrictions on the use of foreign capital once it reached the country. Foreign investments in Brazil declined from 112 million dollars in 1961 to 71 million dollars in 1962, 31 million dollars in 1963, and nothing in the first half of 1964.

In the Brazilian case it would appear that such laws are unfriendly to both foreign and domestic investors. During a period of governmental control of foreign investment between 1946 and 1953, the average annual capital inflow had been 15 million dollars as against an outflow of Brazilian funds of 47 million dollars. During a period of freedom from governmental control that was instituted from 1954 to 1961, investment entries increased and outflows decreased as the average annual inflow reached 90 million dollars against an outflow of only 35 million dollars.

Foreign capital stanches inflation two ways. First, it creates greater productive capacity, and secondly, it provides that productive capacity without imposing any demands on scarce domestic saving.

While we have identified and discussed three general sources of inflation that have seemed to play prominent roles in Brazil's economic difficulties, it should be kept in mind that demand-pull, cost-push, and structural inflation are not only internally self-reinforcing, but each in turn also reinforces the inflationary pressures built up from the other sources. It is for this reason that the task of bringing a halt to inflation is an extremely difficult one. But it is to this task that the Branco
regime must dedicate itself if only the first fruits of the April
first revolution are to be realized.

There are some encouraging signs that the inflationary
process in Brazil will be reversed.

Attempts are being made to reduce the government’s six-
trillion-cruzeiro debt. A bill which would provide for a three
percent tax on all registered capital of commercial and indus-
trial firms operating in the country has been submitted to the
Chamber of Deputies. There is evidence that the Brazilian busi-
nessmen and landowners will support this voluntary special
tax to help cover the federal budget deficit. Such a tax would
have provided the treasury with 500 billion cruzeiros in 1964
alone. The government is also attempting to keep the lid on
further wage increases. Without question, the success or failure
of the Brazilian economy to eliminate the inflation that has
been plaguing it for the past several years will depend upon
the success of the government in meeting these two objectives.
Both require hard political decisions.

On the other hand, further steam has been taken out of
the Brazilian inflation by the reaction of both foreign investors
and governments to the dismissal of the Goulart regime. The
United States under the Alliance for Progress program recently
granted Brazil a loan of approximately 80 million dollars. This
act helped to demonstrate to Brazil’s foreign creditors that the
United States had faith in the new Branco regime’s capacity to
successfully combat soaring inflation. The United States also
pledged to send Brazil 90 million dollars’ worth of food.
Relieving pressure in this most sensitive area will lessen the
probability of further inflationary price changes. Other coun-
tries followed the lead of the United States: West Germany
agreed to loan Brazil 200 million marks; Great Britain is con-
sidering a grant to Brazil of four million pounds.

The climate for private investment in Brazil has also im-
proved considerably. The profits-remittance law, which was so
objectionable to foreign investors, as been rewritten to exclude
its most onerous portions. Investors abroad have responded to
this change in climate. Willys-Overland announced plans in
July for a 32-million-dollar expansion program that will take
place in the next twenty-eight months. During May of 1964
business executives of thirty-five major U. S. corporations visited
Sao Paulo to investigate the investment atmosphere under the
new Branco government.
While the initial foreign reaction, both private and public, to the new regime's development program, lessens the danger of economic disaster, nevertheless the question of whether or not Brazil will be able to conquer the economic disease which has been eating away at her innards depends, in the final analysis, on the internal adjustments that are made in Brazil. The new government must actively encourage the further rapid economic growth in the country, but at the same time put brakes on the inflationary spiral. Because these two objectives, as indicated earlier, are not completely self-consistent, it is still an open question whether Brazil has as yet conquered her inflation. Prices could certainly be stabilized if the rate of economic growth were diminished and if the economy would countenance some unemployment. On the other hand, Brazil could certainly continue her economic growth, but this would be difficult to accomplish with absolutely stable prices.

At present the Branco government is criticized both for its inability to keep inflation in line and for the slight rise in unemployment its anti-inflationary policies are creating. One critic of the present government indicted it on both counts. He claimed that the failure to curb the soaring cost of living had tarnished very seriously the prestige of the revolutionary regime, and added that the public could not understand how the government which had the power to depose first governors, then political rights, and to abrogate legislation was still unable to stabilize prices and control inflation. On the other hand, he attacked the administration's stupid reforms, charged that unemployment was causing more harm in Brazil than stealing, and concluded by predicting that the people sooner or later would return the power to the thieves who had at least given them employment.

While inflation has a multitude of causes and consequences and thus defies easy generalizations, I believe that the lesson of Brazil's inflation for the poor but developing economy is clear. Inflation is a thief that robs the members of an economy who can least afford it, and may steal the opportunity of that economy to break out of the poverty trap without recourse to the totalitarian controls which debase the free agency of man.

Those of us who are fortunate enough to live in affluent societies can, I believe, face optimistically the exciting challenges posed by the application of nuclear power to peaceful ends, the further extension of automation, and the conquering
of space. One wonders what excitement these challenges hold for that preponderant portion of humanity which still grapples with the brutal problem of day-to-day physical survival. Is not the bridging of the gap between rich nation and poor nation every bit as exciting a challenge as those posed by nuclear fission, automation, and space? If so, we cannot stay our hand from aiding those societies in desperate need of help. While our aid will not guarantee the conquering of poverty in these countries, yet as in the case of Brazil's inflation, it may give these economies time to catch their breath; such pause may tell the difference between success and failure in reaching the high road of material progress. Not only would such success relax tensions now existing between nations by allowing the poor countries to afford the economic luxuries of political enlightenment, social compassion, and cultural achievement, but aid from the rich to the poor, when judiciously given, cannot help but strengthen and tighten the bonds of brotherhood. For me, this is man's greatest challenge.
Winter Feast at San Ildefonso

Karl Young*

The thermometer stood at a chill fourteen degrees when I looked out of the bathroom window into the piñon forest at seven o’clock. But the sky was bright and bare, promising a sunny day, such as one grows to expect in Santa Fe. By the time we arrived at the pueblo, however, at about nine-thirty, the sun had paled in the face of a bitter wind that swirled dust around the plaza and kept people indoors near their piñon fires. So utterly deserted did the village seem that my heart fell down, as Adam Martínez, might say, for I thought we had missed the date, January twenty-third, the winter feast at San Ildefonso.

Not a sign of life appeared on the plaza, not a child, not a dog, not even a chicken. One ancient automobile was parked near Santana’s house, like a derelict skiff stranded by the sea wall when the tide went out. But as we climbed stiffly out of the car, I heard a gunshot just beyond the first bank of houses. At once a flash of memory brought back the first ceremonial dance which we had seen at Cochiti. On arriving at the plaza we had been astonished to encounter two Indian men at the door of the little adobe church periodically firing old muskets while the mass was being sung by a German priest inside. We were told that these were guards who were frightening away evil spirits. Was the same device being employed here? I thought of this, encouraged, as we knocked at Santana’s door.

Later, after we had visited with Santana and Maria, sitting in comfort before the fragrant piñon fire and laughing about the time when Maria had traded one of her lovely black pots to us for twenty-five varieties of iris way back in 1932—a pot which today would sell for more than a hundred dollars—we walked over to the scruffy little chapel in time to meet two priests leading a meager congregation on a brief procession around the plaza. They were giving Christian sanction to the pagan ceremony which had probably begun several days earlier in the kiva and was just this morning appearing in public. In the wake of the procession walked two youths with old army

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rifles, Mausers, I believe. Every so often they pointed these ancient guns at the heavens and banged away. They joked and laughed quietly at each other, evidently not taking the duty too seriously, though I presume that they would defend the practice solemnly were an outsider to hint that it was amusing.

As the procession came back, I saw that the makeshift church stood beside the ruins of a once-splendid adobe structure with massive walls and huge buttresses of native mud. The superb old church, I learned later, had been struck by a bolt of lightning, which so completely shattered one corner of the building that all of the walls were cracked and refused to support the huge old vigas, and the whole thing had been torn down. I could not help pondering what the Indians thought of their new Christian god when the old masculine god of lightning asserted his power this way.

Services were short in the chapel now, and the people soon filed out for what was to be a much more dramatic show. Almost at once the big tombés began to boom at the far end of the plaza, and we saw emerging from a building six handsome fellows, bare-headed and smooth-combed, each with a deep-voiced drum made from a cottonwood tree trunk. With slow dignity they walked across the plaza abreast, pounding on the great drums, and stood in a line singing in unison with their own deep voices a song which soon called forth from a nearby house a procession of great game animals. The procession was led by the buffaloes, two buffalo men and a buffalo maiden. The men carried gourd rattles in their right hands and a bow and three or four arrows in the left. Their heads were covered with huge, shaggy buffalo capes, which were crowned with thick, curving horns and dabbed with bits of white eagle down and a few fluttering eagle tail feathers, which gleamed white against the dark mass of the capes hanging down their backs.

The buffalo men moved with arched chests and raised forearms. They were erect and powerful, the monarchs of the prairie. Their gait was ponderous but impressive, a slow, rhythmic, bent-kneed trot. They dipped one horn occasionally, a gesture that probably symbolized the honing of the soft earth to make a buffalo wallow. It might also have represented an obeisance to one of the cardinal directions. The buffalo maiden moved sedately, modestly, between the bulls, keeping their rhythms and shadowing their movements. In each upraised hand she carried a pair of black-tipped eagle feathers, for the
eagle is a medicine bird of great powers and his plumes are important in the weaving of ceremonies.

Behind the massive, lumbering buffaloes a broken column of deer came stealing into the fearful openness of the plaza. Each dancer's head was crowned with stately antlers, tasseled with white eagle fluffs. The heads were upright, alert, constantly on the watch for danger, but the bodies were all bent forward, poised on a slender stick held in each hand, the strong, slim, front legs of swift runners, ready for flight. The deer stole along, froze, then stole forward again, keeping time with the drums, but at half tempo, gliding like spirits over the frozen ground.

And spirits they were. It was not until now that one noticed how all of the dancers' faces were painted black. Now one saw that the illusion of god-like animals in those splendid buffalo bulls was partly owing to the fact that the human faces were, in their blackness, almost indistinguishable beneath the heavy shadows of the overhanging capes. Even the breasts were black. And the hunter, who had actually led the procession, and who until now had not caught our attention, perhaps because he wore only a single feather in his hair and had no impressive crown of horns like the animals around and behind him, was a spirit hunter too. His painted face was a round black mask, incongruous, startling, above the traditional costume of fringed and beaded buckskin that one associates with the hunter of the prairie.

Behind them came a bouncing flock of mountain sheep, black-faced too, and thus allied to the spirit-buffalo and the spirit-deer, from whom they differed so markedly in their rollicking movements and temperament. And behind the sheep drifted a pair of antelope, yellow-backed and white-rumped, a slight little pair of wraiths compared to the burly buffalo that led the way. The size of these frail creatures carried one's imagination back to the kiva where the costumes had been donned. Here, surely, a couple of boys not yet at the age of puberty had wriggled into suits of long-handled winter underwear and, with the aid of paint, horned headdresses, and black-tipped, little white-haired tails, had been transformed miraculously into fleet and timid pronghorns.

The herd made its way in a weaving pattern across the plaza, bringing sustenance, the end of famine, all good things to all of the people in the village. Then gradually they assumed
a formation with long lines of dancers facing the drums and chorus. The rhythm changed, and while the deer, and sheep, and pronghorns, poised on the slim stick legs, beat with their feet a strong insistent appeal to the powers that send food, and health, and well-being, the buffalo performed their ritual dance.

With dignity and slow grace the huge bulls ambled over the prairie. With deep solemnity they bowed in the six cardinal directions, including earth and sky. With courage and pride the bulls threatened each other and fought over the favors of the buffalo maiden. With fright they wheeled and galloped away from the prancing hunter.

The song was finished. The rhythm of the drums shifted back again to the one we had known, and once more the herd moved, in its meandering pattern, with a winding, twisting indirectness, as though on the game trails which the animals themselves had made in the hills, back to the seclusion of the low adobe building from which they had emerged. The drums stopped throbbing, and the singers retired to a separate building, where they could warm their chilled limbs and wait for the ceremony on the other side of the pueblo to be presented in the south plaza.

Maria had told us, with a light in those artist's eyes of hers—eyes constantly on the watch for beauty—how the day had begun. The singers had walked abreast across the plaza, thumping their big drums and gazing off into the hills. They had stood in a line on the eastern edge of the village, singing their songs to call the deer and buffalo down out of the junipers into the pueblo, where women stood next to them in a half circle, waiting with little buckskin pouches of pollen or corn meal to sprinkle on the bare breasts of the dancers as they passed. Blessings were implicit as the sacred meal trickled from brown fingers. Blessings were given and received in that simple gesture. The heavens were clear, no wind blew, the air was almost warm—for a dawn in late January. But as the morning advanced, the brightness waned in the air. And the wind sprang up, blowing out of nowhere, round and round the plaza, sapping the strength of the winter sun.

In this raw north wind the dancers from the other side of the village had slipped out to form lines in the open fields opposite the hills from which the animals had come, stealing through the smoke of predawn fires to answer the call of the
voices and the drums. The dancers in these new lines looked even less like pueblo Indians than had the deer and buffalo, for the buffalo men wore painted yellow skirts on which undulating horned serpents created the bold design. And the deer dancers' slim waists were bound with girdles of white rain cloth, the long cords hanging directly down behind to swish and bob with every step of the dance, like slanting rain and glancing hail. Such features of costume are traditional in the pueblo country.

But the men in these new dance lines, which were now being formed on the edge of the village, wore Plains Indian headdresses, war bonnets of eagle tail feathers with dyed horse-hair tips. They had beaded arm bands, beaded belts, and beaded moccasins. And each of them carried a headless lance, a coup stick, from which hung a strip of bright flannel aflutter with hawk and eagle feathers. The men's bodies were bare, except for G-strings and, occasionally, a fringed and beaded vest. These were the Commanche dancers, commemorating in attire and movement, and with sharp, barking cries, the war parties from the Plains who used to come swooping down on the pueblos to raid, and plunder, and carry off the pueblo women.

It seemed ironic that the enemies of the people should be represented with such handsome costumes and so much animation in the dance. And it was, to us at least, a further irony that little pueblo maidens, in wide white pueblo boots, full skirts, blouses, and scarves, danced behind these naked braves, not, to be sure, as captives, but with the joy of participation in a favorite pueblo ceremony. How short is memory! How fleeting, pain!

From out on the edge of the fields the drums began to boom and the chanting of deep male voices rose above the wind. The Commanches—probably a generic term for any or all of those raiders from the Great Plains—were coming in across the flat lands, as they had no doubt done for ages. In two columns they came, the lines crossing each other, back and forth, in a highly formalized representation of individual combat with spear and shield. The warriors faced each other, sifted through, turned about, and faced each other again. No quick and ugly gestures, no thrusting and jerking of weapons. Smoothly, softly, the lines flowed through each other.

The naked bodies glided in a slow-measured running walk, keeping time with the pulsing tombés. Only the barks and
cries, thin and dry, like weird bird calls, broke erratically through the rhythm of the chorus and the dance. Those cries clashed against the cadence of the singing but could not break it. They woke the atavisms which were slumbering beneath the smooth patterns of the dance. They stirred a chill in the breast, but could not evoke a shudder.

The throbbing columns reached the south plaza, rounded the big centrally placed kiva, and took positions before the houses on the north. There the rhythms changed, and with them the steps of the dance. Now it was a controlled war dance, with the quick step of the stylized buffalo-pawing, but not like the war dance really, for everything was in unison. The dancers all turned right, turned left, advanced, and retreated in unison. And now a new pattern developed, with the lead men weaving their way down through the columns in a sort of double grand-right-and-left until they had worked through the whole length of the lines.

The wind blew harder, and relentlessly harder, until some of the big eagle plume war bonnets turned inside out and stayed anchored only by the thongs under the dancers’ chins. One tall warrior had painted the whole left side of his body a bright blue and the right side bright yellow. His legs were bare from G-string to moccasins, and his trunk from belt to braids. The blue side of his body could not get any bluer, but we half expected the yellow side to turn green. Spectators in alpaca-lined coats returned to their cars and heaters to get warm, but the naked dancers danced on. It was almost a relief to see them turn their lines at last and slowly weave the threads of the dance up to the door of a long, low house and go inside.

By turns the dance groups appeared and repeated their dance in their separate plazas. We could not stay for the finish. We went back to our friends’ house and ate from loaded tables: piping hot stew with home-grown chilis, pasole with high-flavored sauce, crunchy white bread baked in the outside clay ovens, pudding, sweet with raisins and peaches, and the inevitable great pots of coffee. The table was always full, though I would wager that the hosts could not always name the guests who sat there. I do not know how much food was prepared, but I remembered when old Mr. Lucero at the Jemez Feast Day on one November twelfth butchered twelve sheep in order to feed the hungry Navajos who flocked in for the occasion. How often this was repeated in the pueblo is anybody’s guess, as
every house was open to any visitor who would enter and eat. It is the Indian way.

As we drove home the sun grew warm and the wind died. Perhaps it had blown itself out in a vain effort to blast the Feast Day at San Ildefonso.
Tag, I.D.

Bright oval on a light chain,
Last name first, then Christian name
And middle initial,
A number assigned by his master,
A letter for his blood,
Another for his God.
Tooth-notched,
Stainless-steel coin for the boatman.

—John S. Harris
His Wonders to Perform

DOUGLAS H. THAYER*

The day everything really got started with Mr. Newton, at least for me, was the first Monday after school quit for the summer. I remember I was laying on the grass in the shade of our big lilac bush watching the afternoon clouds and waiting for my mother to call me and thinking about God. I had just finished gathering the eggs. My father had said just like he always does: "Hely, don't you think you'd better check for eggs outside the coop?" He never tells me to do things, just asks me. I know what he means though, so I always say yes. I like hunting nests in the weeds anyway because I get the old eggs for fights down at the pond when we go swimming. My father thinks I throw them in the trash.

My mother was baking a pie she wanted me to take over to Mr. Newton, who bought the Johnson place and had moved in just the two weeks before school let out. He's from Minnesota, but he isn't married, which my father keeps saying shows he's got good sense, and he isn't in the Church either. My mother was sending him the pie because he wasn't married. She said that morning at breakfast that even a man who didn't have enough gumption to get married before he was forty, which was how old she said Mr. Newton looked at least, still should have a decent bite to eat occasionally.

Because of school I hadn't been over to Mr. Newton's yet, and I'd kind of been looking forward to it. Of course I'd seen him. My mother had him out to church the Sunday after he moved in and then to our place for dinner. What I wanted to see was his turkeys, which my father told me were the biggest he'd ever seen. Mr. Newton is a dairy farmer just like us, but he keeps these turkeys as a hobby and shows them at fairs. My father told me and Moroni, that's my little brother, that Mr. Newton had won a lot of prizes in Minnesota.

After Mr. Newton went home that first Sunday, my father said it was pretty plain my mother was more interested in con-

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converting Mr. Newton to the Church than she was in just seeing he got fed a decent meal. I remember she introduced him as Brother Newton to everybody at Sunday school, when he wasn’t even a member. She said we were all brothers and sisters, in the gospel or out, which sounded a little funny to me. Anyway I just started calling him mister.

Then, too, right after Mr. Newton moved in, my mother sent to my brother Nephi, who’s on a mission down in Texas converting people, to get some tracts and pamphlets to use on Mr. Newton. My father says that ever since Nephi left that my mother has had the converting bug, but that she didn’t have any gentiles to work on until Mr. Newton came into the valley. A gentile is what you are if you’re not a Mormon. I know when I go to town with my father he always visits his friend Mr. Wolfstein, who owns the drug store. He says, “Well, how is my gentile friend today?” and then they both laugh, but they won’t tell me why. Nobody ever tries to convert Mr. Wolfstein, though.

It was true about my mother trying to convert Mr. Newton. She was awfully nice to him. He got both drumsticks that first Sunday and all the pie he wanted. Moroni and me always get a drumstick each. That was the very first Sunday we didn’t, and it was a big chicken too. When Mr. Newton took one leg my mother put the other one right on his plate. He said it was too much, but he sure ate both of them. Me and Moroni each got a wing and some of the white meat.

The very next Tuesday my mother sent my father over to Mr. Newton’s with a cake, and my father said then that he knew the best way to a man’s heart was through his stomach but he didn’t know it was the best way to his soul too, and that it wasn’t fair for her to mix food and religion. She put one of Nephi’s tracts on top of the cake when she wrapped it up. She said then that the Lord moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform, which is something she always says, and Mr. Newton might just read the tract while he was sitting down to have a piece of cake and be converted. And besides she said it wasn’t any sense keeping Nephi on a mission if we let opportunities right under our noses go to waste. My father said he didn’t think Mr. Newton was going to waste, but then she said the field was white and ready for harvest and all you needed to do was thrust in your sickle, which is something else she is always saying.
My mother told my father it wouldn't hurt him to be a little more concerned about Mr. Newton's spiritual welfare and that he should spend less time talking to him about sports and farming and more time talking about the gospel. He said my mother did enough gospeling for the whole family. I was home from school sick that Tuesday, so I heard what they said.

Of course I believe in God and everything, but still I wanted to see what happened to Mr. Newton and how the mysterious ways of the Lord worked, and so that was why I was paying such close attention to everything that went on about Mr. Newton. Our Sunday school teacher told us that the Apostle Paul in the New Testament got knocked out on the way to Damascus and that was what converted him. I thought something interesting like that might happen to Mr. Newton. Then, too, I figured if Mr. Newton got converted that I would feel a little better about those mansions in heaven my mother is always telling Moroni and me we will get if we are good boys and live the gospel. It isn't so hard trying to be good if you know things are going to turn out all right in the end.

Well, that morning my mother finally called me and I stopped watching the clouds and got up from the grass. "Helaman! Helaman!" she called. My father always calls me Hely, but not my mother. Helaman was a great general in the Book of Mormon and she says it wouldn't be showing respect. Nephi and Moroni both get their names from the Book of Mormon too. My mother says it's to remind us of the great men of the past. My five sisters, though, they're all married; their names come out of the Bible. My mother says if she'd started out having boys instead of girls she would have named them all after the twelve sons of Jacob who led the twelve tribes of Israel in the Bible. My father just shakes his head when she says that.

My mother was at the sink peeling some carrots for supper when I got in the kitchen. I took a peeled one. She turned around. "You're not going over to Brother Newton's looking like a wild Indian," she said. She is always telling me and Moroni we have to be examples and that a candle shouldn't be hid under a bushel basket. I don't know what I have to be an example for. When I got back down from washing and with a clean shirt on, the pie was in a box on the table.

First, though, my mother got the brush out of the bathroom and straightened my hair. "Now you be sure and tell Brother
Newton we'll be by tomorrow morning at ten o'clock to take him to the funeral," she said. Old Brother Swenson had died the Friday school let out and we were all going to the funeral. She wanted Mr. Newton to go because old Brother Swenson was almost a hundred and came to Utah with President Brigham Young or somebody in a wagon train, and so some of the apostles from Salt Lake were coming to speak. Mr. Newton was going to hear all about the pioneers, which my mother had said at breakfast would be a grand thing for him. My father didn't say anything.

I remember the box was warm on the bottom. "Now be careful," she said. Moroni came in and wanted to go, but he couldn't.

It was kind of hard riding my bike with one hand and holding the pie so it wouldn't break with the other. My mother is great on funerals and goes to all she can. She says there's nothing like a good funeral to keep you humble and help you keep in mind what things are going to be like when you get on the other side. She talks a lot about crossing over and going beyond the veil and stuff like that. The way she talks about Uncle Ephraim, that's her brother who got killed in the war, and dead Grandpaw Jones and others, wondering how they're getting on and everything, you'd think they were still alive or something.

I know when Brother Callahan died she said she didn't know how the Lord could even let him in the lowest degree of glory because he'd been such a terrible rascal all his life, rascal being about the worst word to describe anybody she ever uses. She said it was going to be terrible for him when he had a bright recollection of all his sins, which is what happens to you in heaven unless you repent, which seems to be a pretty good idea of that's really what happens.

Robinson's dog barked at me when I went by but didn't come close enough to kick, which would have been kind of hard anyway, what with the pie. Then I got to Mr. Newton's. It's a big two-storied brick place painted white with a white picket fence around and big cottonwood trees with a swing in one. The Johnson's had nine kids, but they moved to California because Sister Johnson got sick and couldn't stand to live high up in the valley. After they left, my mother said it was a crying shame a big house like that didn't have a woman and children in it, because that was what it was built for.
Mr. Newton wasn't in the house, so I had to trail up through the yard past the barn and the corral. He was just going in the chicken coop with a bucket of water when I saw him. Then he saw me. "Why hullo there, Hely," he said.

"Hullo, sir," I said, which is what my mother always tells me to say. Then he asked me how I was, and I told him fine and that my mother was fine too and she sent the pie. He said that was nice and my mother was very kind.

"Come on in and see my turkeys," he said finally, pushing open the door.

It smelled like chickens but there was only turkeys, thirteen of them, which I remember seemed like kind of a funny number for anybody to have anything of. They sure were big and black and strutting around as if that was all they had to do. One was bigger than all the rest.

"That's Tom," Mr. Newton said, pointing to it. "Tom, Tom, Tom, Tom, Tom," he said, holding out his hand. You'd have thought he was calling a dog or something. But Tom didn't come. "Usually he comes," he said. Mr. Newton sure was proud of those turkeys, and of course that was what caused all the trouble later.

On the way back to the house we met Jed Black, who helps Mr. Newton. He said for Jed to start throwing down some feed to the cows, and he would be back out. Jed told my father that Mr. Newton was a good man to work for, though he sure didn't overpay, except he had a terrible temper sometimes. My father said he knew Mr. Newton pinched a dollar pretty hard before he let it go. Temper, he always says, shows character in a man. I don't think my mother knew about Mr. Newton's temper at the time. One thing for sure, I knew then I didn't want him mad at me. My mother says a big man like that can do a lot of work and doesn't get sick much.

When we got in the kitchen Mr. Newton took one of my mother's cake plates from the cupboard and put it in a sack. He said the pie sure looked good and he would have a piece before he went back outside. When he opened the cupboard I saw lots of canned stuff. I reminded him about the funeral just before I left.

"I'll be ready," he said, but he didn't sound too happy. I guess he figured if he kept the pie he would have to go.

That night at supper my father asked my mother to say the evening prayer. She asked that the Lord bless everybody of
course and give those strength who had cause to mourn or were called to bear life's inevitable tragedies, as she always calls them, and then she prayed special for Mr. Newton like she usually did, asking that his understanding might be quickened so he would see the light, join the Church and be exalted. She also prayed for Nephi to be directed to the honest in heart and bring many souls into the kingdom.

Just then my father coughed twice, which meant he was ready to eat and the prayer was long enough. I guess my mother heard it too. She stopped about then. My knees were kind of hurting from kneeling on the linoleum, so I was glad she finished. It isn't so bad when we pray in the front room; there's carpet in there. When I opened my eyes Moroni was already in his chair. He likes to eat. It seemed to me at the time that if the Lord did everything my mother asked Him to about Mr. Newton, he was going to be a member in a hurry.

The next day we all went to the funeral, along with about everybody else in the valley, and it was really swell after the preaching was over and we took Brother Swenson out to the cemetery and left him and went back to the church to eat. Each of the sisters had brought food and it was all lined up on the tables out on the church back lawn in the shade of the big willow trees with the white tablecloths kind of flapping a little in the breeze that was starting up. You just took what you wanted.

The Relief Society was in charge, so of course my mother had to kind of direct things. She's president. She told us where to sit and said she would be there in a little while. She said for my father to fill her plate because he knew what she wanted anyway.

Five minutes after we got sat down Sister Clark came by with Ralph and his two little brothers. My father has always liked Sister Clark, and even more since she got her divorce. They excommunicated Brother Clark, which my father said at the time was a good thing because he was worse than any barnyard tomcat and didn't deserve a good woman like Sister Clark. After the divorce my father would go over to Sister Clark's once in a while to help her on her farm, or sometimes he sent our hired man, John, over. He says Sister Clark is one of the few women he ever met who had a head on her shoulders and that she deserved any help he gave her.
So my father invited them to sit with us. He got right up and helped Sister Clark with her plate and saw she got seated. Then he introduced Mr. Newton to them. They started talking and seemed to forget all about us kids. My mother came a little later. "Well, I see you got acquainted," she said, smiling at Sister Clark and Mr. Newton both at the same time. My father kind of gave her the eye. After that we boys got permission to sit on the grass and eat with some of the other guys. We didn’t want to listen to the gab at the table; besides a lot of people were coming by to visit.

That afternoon after we dropped Mr. Newton off and were driving home, my mother said she thought it was a fine afternoon. "Brother Newton really seemed to enjoy himself," she said. "I watched him during the sermons. He liked Sister Clark, too; anybody could see that."

"I guess you didn’t have anything to do with Doris Clark sitting by us either did you, Mother?" my father asked as we pulled into the lot.

"Well, I certainly didn’t invite her to sit at our table," my mother said, smiling. "You did that."

"No, but you saw to it that she came in our general direction didn’t you?" he said. "What was I supposed to do, let her go sit off somewhere alone with those three boys?"

"All the same you invited her to sit down," she said. "It wasn’t me."

My father said something under his breath about people sticking their noses into other people’s affairs. Then my mother said he was going against nature and the Lord wanting to keep Sister Clark and Mr. Newton apart when it was obvious they were meant for each other and it would help save Mr. Newton’s soul because you have to be married to get into the highest degree of glory in the next world.

Also she said my father was stiff-necked, which is a word they use in the Book of Mormon a lot, and that he just wanted to keep them separated because he liked a bachelor friend to hob-nob with and wanted to be the only one to help Sister Clark. She said he shouldn’t oppose the Lord’s will. My father said it was bad enough her trying to save Mr. Newton’s soul, but trying to get him married to boot was too much and that my mother had a peculiar idea of what the Lord’s will was as far as he was concerned.
That night my father said the prayer, but he didn’t say anything about Mr. Newton, except he did say for the Lord to protect the innocent. I don’t think my mother liked that because she looked up then, only for minute, though. She told me to close my eyes.

Well, after the funeral my mother really shifted into high gear as far as Mr. Newton’s joining the Church was concerned. She had him over to eat at least twice a week and invited him to all the meetings and church socials. It seemed to me I spent half my time taking food over to him. There was two weeks though she was gone to help my sisters who were having babies, one in June and one in July. She always goes for a week to help out. It seems to me they have a lot of babies, because she’s gone quite often.

My mother has pictures of all the family on top of the piano. Every time there is a new baby she adds another picture. My father says if the kids don’t stop having babies she will have to sell our little piano and buy a grand to put the pictures on. She says my sisters are just following the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth and give the spirits bodies that are waiting around in heaven. My father says that is a mighty easy commandment to follow. My mother says if anybody should know about that he should.

The second time my mother went to help with a baby, my father asked her if she wasn’t afraid of losing ground with Mr. Newton. She said no, that going without her cooking would help him realize what he was missing not being married. My father said she was bigger schemer than he thought, that he knew she was using her cooking to help convert Mr. Newton but he hadn’t figured on her trying to marry him off by using the same weapon. My mother said she wasn’t a schemer and he just didn’t understand the mysterious ways of the Lord.

By August it looked to me like Mr. Newton was about ready for baptism. He was going to church real often and even helping build the new addition on the chapel. Also he was playing in the ward horseshoe tournament, which my father accused my mother of getting the bishop to start just so Mr. Newton would play. He liked horseshoes. My mother didn’t say anything. She was already talking about a party for Mr. Newton when he got baptized. My father told her not to count her members before they were dunked, by which he meant baptized, and my mother told him to be more respectful.
Also Mr. Newton seemed to be kind of interested in Sister Clark. He hadn’t dated her, at least that’s what Ralph told me, but he danced with her at the church socials and sat by her in meetings, and sometimes went by her place to help her with little things. My father accused my mother of arranging that and said she would get those two talked about if she wasn’t careful with her arranging. She said nonsense, that there wasn’t anything wrong with Mr. Newton going over to Clark’s in broad daylight to help put up a clothesline. She said he was just upset because Mr. Newton was doing the little things for Mrs. Clark he used to do.

Of course my mother wanted to get Mr. Newton baptized first because then him and Sister Clark could get married in the temple in Salt Lake for time and all eternity, which is how long they marry you for there, and you have your family and everything in the life to come. My father says if he were married to some women he knew, this life would be plenty long enough and he wouldn’t want to be stuck for eternity too. My mother says he shouldn’t talk that way around us boys.

Every time I went over to Mr. Newton’s he showed me his turkeys. He was proud of those birds and he was getting them all ready to show at the state fair in October. They were fat as they could be, with their feathers all silky and pretty. Of course my mother admired the turkeys when Mr. Newton talked about them, but she said later after he would leave that if he had a wife and family to concern himself with he wouldn’t have time for turkeys. The best place for a turkey was on a platter, she said. My father asked he why she didn’t tell Mr. Newton that.

Well, my mother nearly had me convinced all about God because it looked like Mr. Newton was, just like she said, going to enter the fold. But then we had all the trouble about Tom, that biggest turkey of Mr. Newton’s, and everything seemed to change.

It was the last Saturday before Labor Day and me and the other guys went down to the pond way below Mr. Newton’s to swim and play Indian in the big grove of cottonwood trees down there. We had on our breechcloths, which were really dish towels we’d hooked from our mothers, and our war paint like usual and had been swimming, when we decided to build a fire and roast the potatoes we’d brought along. Ralph Clark
and Sam Simmons went into the trees to get some wood while the rest of us got the potatoes ready.

They'd only been gone a few minutes, not nearly long enough to get the wood, when all of a sudden they came tearing back through the willows with Ralph leading, shouting "A turkey! A turkey! There's a wild turkey in the big tree!" Of course if we'd stopped to think about it we would have known it couldn't have been a wild turkey because we don't have any around our part of Utah. But we didn't stop to think. I guess we wanted it to be a wild turkey so much we didn't think about anything else.

It was a big tom just sitting on a low limb giving us the eye and kind of talking to himself. You'd suppose I would have recognized that Tom as many times as I'd seen him, but I didn't. We started shooting at him with our bows, but it was quite a while before somebody finally bounced an arrow off him. But he sure came roaring out then. We ran out of arrows and started throwing rocks, yelling and hollering all the time, the old turkey a gobbling like crazy, half running and half flying all through the trees, and us right behind him. We couldn't hit him, though. But about that time Ralph took his flipper from around his neck and loaded up, which was kind of cheating because whoever heard of an Indian using a flipper? Anyway that old tom perched on a limb just once too often and Ralph got off a shot. He plunked him square in the head right in the middle of a gobble, which he didn't get to finish. Down he came just like a sack of wheat.

We had a big war dance of course and then got a pole and tied him to it by his feet and carried him back to where we were going to build our fire, thinking all the time we were Indians taking a turkey to the Pilgrims. We decided to cook him, which was a dumb thing to do because he was so big it would have taken a week. Anyway me and Dave Nelson started to pick him while the rest went to gather wood. We knew we would need lots of wood.

I was sitting on a rock holding the turkey and had a big handful of feathers I'd just pulled off the breast when it happened. Mr. Newton came crashing through the willows like a mad bull right at me. I don't remember exactly what took place except that Dave, who was holding one of the legs at the time, made a flying leap for the bushes, knocking me off my rock with the turkey right on top of me. I was sort of
dazed for a minute I guess, but I could sure hear Mr. Newton.

He was hollering, "Tom! Tom!" over and over and almost doing a dance. I figured maybe he thought Dave was Tom somebody, but then I saw he meant the turkey. He sure was upset. He picked up the turkey and stood there kind of hugging it and holding its head and looking at it. I thought he was going to give it some artificial respiration or something to bring it back to life, like they taught us in the Scouts. I could have told him it wasn't any use. I guess he figured that out by himself though because pretty soon he laid the turkey down, gentle like it was a baby, and turned on me. I was still kind of sitting there by the rock just beginning to figure out whose turkey we'd annihilated.

Well, after considerable shouting, swearing and stomping around, during which time he called me a murdering little savage, a heathen, and a few other things, Mr. Newton grabbed me by the wrist and yanked me up. "We'll see what your mother has to say about this," he said, then gave me a jerk and we were off to a running start, one hand on me, the other cradling the turkey.

I hollered what about my clothes, but I guess Mr. Newton didn't hear me. I sure didn't want my mother to see me dressed like an Indian. She didn't know anything about us playing Indian. But I was having too much trouble just keeping the breechcloth on, what with the weeds and bushes pulling at it, to worry too much about my other clothes. I was glad I had on my tennis shoes, though.

I turned around once and saw the guys following back a ways. They were all dressed and Ralph was carrying my clothes. I thought maybe they would ambush Mr. Newton and set me free, but they were too chicken. I would have, though, if Mr. Newton had caught one of them. He didn't even turn around. I guess he thought I murdered his turkey all by myself.

When we came up past our barn I could see the truck was gone, which meant my father was gone too. I was glad for that. Mr. Newton didn't even knock but went storming right in the back door, dragging me along and still holding the turkey. My mother was in the kitchen ironing. I guess we were quite a sight coming in on her like that without knocking or anything. Her mouth kind of dropped open, and she just held the iron on my father's white shirt she was doing till it started scorching and she smelled it.
Mr. Newton started right in, not giving my mother a chance to say anything. First he told about what wonderful turkeys he had, which was something she already knew and didn’t need telling, and how his prize tom got out through a hole high up on the south wall of the coop and how he went looking for it down in the trees because that was the place a loose turkey would naturally go, and heard all the screaming and yelling and followed the noise and found his prize turkey dead and me picking him. Then he pulled me farther out in front of him like he thought my mother couldn’t see me plain, and giving me a shake when he said that last about me picking that darn turkey.

Then Mr. Newton stopped. I guess he expected my mother to say something. She did too.

She looked at him in a kind, faint-smiling, comforting sort of a way and said, “Well, that certainly is too bad about your poor turkey, Brother Newton.”

I guess maybe he expected her to say more than that. I guess what he really expected was she would break right down and cry over that turkey and say it was a terrible tragedy and I would be whipped within an inch of my life and all, but she didn’t. My mother always says after raising and marrying off five daughters and part raising three boys, and coming from a big family herself with all the trials and tribulations involved, that there isn’t much can upset her. But I guess Mr. Newton didn’t know that.

Anyway he started right up again. But he didn’t swear this time either, which I thought kind of made him a hypocrite because he sure swore before, but anyway I was going to tell my mother all about his swearing. I figured she wouldn’t be so anxious to have him in the Church when she knew that.

He called me a murdering little savage again like down at the pond and other things, and wanted to know if I was the kind of boy the Church developed, and if so it had a lot of improving to do, which I thought wasn’t a very fair question. Finally he wound up, though, because after all there’s only so much a man can say, and I guess he had about said it. He ended up saying he had said all he was going to and now it was up to my mother.

She stood there smiling at him still, like she expected to soften him up just by doing that. “Why, I’d be glad to roast that turkey for you, Brother Newton, so it won’t go to waste,”
she said. Which was kind of a dumb thing even for her to say because she knew as well as I did how Mr. Newton felt about people who ate turkeys. Then she stepped over to the table where he'd put the turkey without even asking if she could and felt the bare spot where the feathers were gone. "He's awfully big for cooking, but maybe he won't be too tough," she said. "Maybe he will grind up for patties."

That was sure the wrong thing to say. Mr. Newton just stood there hardly breathing, he eyes wide open. "Sweet suffering Jesus!" he said finally real loud, and then went thundering out the back door and down the steps, stomping hard enough to put his foot right through the porch and almost tearing the screen off the hinges. My mother went after him to say he'd forgot his turkey, but he didn't come back.

When she came back in she wasn't very happy. She wanted to know what I had to say for myself. I was going to tell her, but she didn't give me a chance. "Disgraceful," she said, "running around naked as a savage." Then she picked up a serving spoon laying on the sideboard and cracked me twice on the head with it, like she does sometimes when she's mad.

I had to take two baths because the water got all red from my war paint.

My mother was still mad when I got back in the kitchen. "Fancy you upsetting Brother Newton like that," she said. "Why what will he think, just what will think? I just hope you haven't upset him too much, what with him about to be baptized and everything. I'll have to send him over a nice pie tonight."

I wanted to tell her I didn't think a pie would help much, but I didn't. She wouldn't let me explain about anything, and I had to pick the turkey. "Your father will deal with you later," she said. Which was what I was afraid of. The guys were waiting for me outside. They helped me pick the turkey. The chickens.

When my father got home at supper time and my mother told him, he laughed. "You better find yourself another convert, Mother," he said after he got over laughing. "Strass Newton won't want to be joining any church whose members murder his prize turkey."

"But they didn't mean any harm," she said. "They're just boys. Surely Brother Newton wouldn't let a little thing like a turkey keep him out of the Kingdom."
“Just resurrect the turkey and everything will be fine,” my father said, still laughing. My mother told him not to say such things.

Seeing my father felt so good I thought he would forget about me. But he didn’t. It wasn’t too bad, though. He bawled me out and told me I should have had more sense. When I told him it wasn’t all my fault, he said not to make excuses, that a man always paid for his mistakes in this life sooner or later and the faster I learned that the better off I would be. He tried to act mad, but I could see he wasn’t too upset about Mr. Newton. He said I couldn’t ride my bike for a week.

A little later Jed came over with some plates and said Mr. Newton wouldn’t be going to Sunday school in the morning so not to pick him up.

“What did I tell you,” my father said, looking up from his paper when Jed left.

My mother didn’t say anything for a minute. “The Lord’s ways are mysterious to man,” she said finally kind of solemn, like she was repeating scripture.

“They’re going to have to be mighty mysterious if you ever get Newton under the water,” he said. He said, too, she better forget about Mr. Newton courting Sister Clark, because if Ralph was with us Mr. Newton probably saw him and wouldn’t feel any more kindly toward the Clarks than he did toward us. My father seemed pleased about that.

“All over a silly turkey,” my mother said. Then she told my father to take the turkey over to Mr. Newton. He said that would be just like waving the red flag at the bull and did she expect Mr. Newton to eat his prize bird, because it would be just like him eating a member of his own family if she did. Finally she decided to pay for the turkey out of her egg money and freeze it until the church supper in October.

Later, when I figured she was cooled down enough, I told my mother how Mr. Newton swore and carried on at the pond. She said none of us was perfect and I shouldn’t talk about people’s faults. “Brother Newton was provoked,” she said. When Moroni and me went to bed she told us to pray for Mr. Newton so he would see the light. She prayed at supper and had a lot of good things to say about him.

I said a word or two, but not any more than I figured I had to. I don’t know what Moroni said. Anyway it looked to
me like Mr. Newton wasn’t about to get converted no matter what happened. I was starting to wonder a little bit about God.

The next morning things were kind of quiet around our place. I guess my mother was thinking about Mr. Newton’s soul and all that. She wasn’t sad though, because, like she always says, you have to have faith. Well, I got ready for Sunday School and was sitting on the front porch waiting for my mother to finish getting Moroni ready when all of a sudden Doctor Blanchard went tearing down the road in his old Ford raising a cloud of dust. My mother saw it too through the kitchen window. The way he was traveling meant somebody was either sick or hurt.

Right away she started phoning down the line to find out where he had stopped. It was at Mr. Newton’s. Jed answered. He said Mr. Newton fell off a ladder while he was up fixing the hole in the coop where the turkey got out and broke his leg and hurt his back. My father came in from checking the cows just as she was hanging up the phone. He saw Doctor Blanchard’s car too.

“Somebody sick?” he said.

“Brother Newton fell and broke his leg,” she said, already taking off her apron.

“My hell,” he said, “and the last of the crops to finish up too.”

My mother didn’t even pay any attention to my father swearing. They hurried and got in the truck and went zooming over to Mr. Newton’s. She told me to read to Moroni out of the Book of Mormon and we probably wouldn’t make it to Sunday school.

They were gone two or three hours. I heard all about what happened at lunch. It was like Jed said: Mr. Newton fell while he was fixing the hole in the coop. My mother said it was providence because now Mr. Newton would see how the Church helped people in distress and that would maybe bring him into the fold. My father said he hoped he wouldn’t be bothered by any of that kind of providence.

There must have been a big discussion at Mr. Newton’s from what I heard. Doctor Blanchard said Mr. Newton would have to go to the hospital. He didn’t want to, though, even if he did need nursing. My mother said at the table most men are boobs and afraid of hospitals, but my father said it was just because Mr. Newton was tight and didn’t want to spend all
that money. There wasn’t any need of sending him to the hospital, though; my mother arranged for the Relief Society sisters to take care of him. Mr. Newton said no at first but finally said yes. It was because of the twenty dollars a day it would have cost him, my father said, and because he would have been away from his turkeys.

My father told Mr. Newton he wouldn’t have to worry about his farm, that the neighbors would help Jed and see his hay got put up and everything. My mother told him he should have said brethren rather than neighbors.

My mother was busy two days organizing pairs of Relief Society sisters to go in and take care of Mr. Newton. During the next weeks my father said it seemed to him Sister Clark was assigned more than her share of the time at Mr. Newton’s and my mother would get those two talked about yet. She said nonsense and for him not to worry about such things. Two sisters always went together, so she said everything was all right anyway. He said it looked like a plot to him.

My mother also saw that Mr. Newton got plenty of Church reading material because now he had plenty of time, but she didn’t go around his place too much. She knew he was still thinking about his turkey and she wanted things to run smooth as possible.

When the fair came, me and my father and Ralph took Mr. Newton’s turkeys to show for him. They all won prizes, which made Mr. Newton very happy. He had the ribbons tacked on his bedroom wall so he could look at them all the time when he wasn’t reading or watching television or eating. My father said the sisters would have Mr. Newton so fat feeding him like they did that his legs wouldn’t be able to support the weight when he did finally get out of bed.

I helped when we all got together to put up Mr. Newton’s hay; then I helped a lot too when Jed had more than he could handle. I didn’t get paid, though. My mother said it was one way to pay back for the turkey and that part of repenting was restoring what you had taken. You have to repent if you go to heaven.

Well, after Mr. Newton was laid up two months I don’t know what happened, because he was almost better and he decided to join the Church. My mother says it was because he saw what real Christian brotherhood was like while he was laid
up. But my father says it was just that the Relief Society wore him down and he didn’t have a chance once he broke his leg.

Mr. Newton and Sister Clark decided to get married, too. My mother tells everybody it’s a real romance and he had a chance to see what a fine woman she was while he was recovering. Not my father, though; he says it was because Mr. Newton just got used to having women around the house during those weeks and he can’t get used to the peace and quiet now he’s almost better. He says, too, Mr. Newton needs some more pasture and Sister Clark’s farm has the best pasture in the valley. Also he says Ralph and his two brothers will be a great help on the farm and Mr. Newton can see that. My mother says nonsense and that my father hasn’t got a romantic bone in his body and he’s just upset the way things turned out.

They announced the engagement at the ward dinner last week. My mother sure had to do some scurrying around when we got there, though. They had Mr. Newton’s prize turkey we killed all roasted and right in the center of the middle table. She had the sisters cut it all up and spread the platters out so Mr. Newton wouldn’t notice when he came in on his crutches with Sister Clark. My father said she was shifty and he had half a mind to tell Mr. Newton. She said he shouldn’t oppose the Lord’s will.

I think Mr. Newton is going to be all right, though. He told Ralph and his brothers he would take them to Yellowstone Park next summer if they got good grades and helped their mother this winter, and he said I could go if I wanted. Which sounds like a good deal because I always wanted to see a grizzly bear like the Indians used to kill just with a knife to prove they were brave.

Of course Mr. Newton’s temper worries me a little still. I sure wouldn’t want to do anything wrong on that trip. I wonder sometimes, too, what might happen if he ever found out it was Ralph who blasted his turkey out of the tree. My mother says not to worry about Mr. Newton’s temper. She says being married would help him a lot and being in the Church would help too because that’s what the Church is for is to perfect people and we would see a big change in Mr. Newton by next summer.

My father says not to depend on it.

I don’t know, though. I’ve been thinking about everything that’s happened this summer and I’ve nearly decided my mother
is right about God, his moving in a mysterious way and all. Now I’m waiting for next summer. Mr. Newton’s family wrote from Minnesota that they were real pleased he was getting married and settling down finally because it was about time, and his younger brother, who is past thirty-five, will be coming out in June to see if he can’t find a farm. This was all in a letter Sister Clark read to my mother.

Of course my mother is real happy. She wrote to Nephi that the fields here in this part of the Lord’s vineyard are truly ripe for harvest, and she’s already making plans for next summer. I’m waiting to see what God will have to do to Mr. Newton’s brother to get him to join the Church.