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MORLEY CALLAGHAN'S CHRISTIANS: A STUDY
OF SOME CHARACTERS IN THE NOVELS OF CALLAGHAN

JOSEPH PATHYIL

A THESIS
IN
THE DEPARTMENT
OF
RELIGION

PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS AT
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA.

MARCH 1976

ABSTRACT

JOSEPH PATHYIL

MORLEY CALLAGHAN'S CHRISTIANS: A STUDY OF SOME CHARACTERS IN THE NOVELS OF CALLAGHAN.

Five characters in the following novels of Callaghan are examined in detail:

The Loved and The Lost

The Many Colored Coat

They Shall Inherit the Earth

It's Never Over

Such is My Beloved

The characters under examination seem to be eccentric and abnormal. They are naive and simple-minded. The first part of the thesis will demonstrate their simplicity and naiveté. The next part will examine some of the people in the novels with whom these eccentrics clash. The thesis will show that the society around these eccentrics is normal, moral, and worldly-wise. The conflict, then, is between the abnormal and the normal.

The thesis will place the eccentrics in a new light and will establish that they are people whose standards of reference are different from those of the people among whom they live. They are extraordinary people who have been transformed and they cannot any more be measured by the same rod that would measure ordinary people. These are intensely religious men and women. The thesis will show that they are the true Christians, since they are Christ-like and follow the example of Christ. In the process of trying to live a Christian life, they are misunderstood and ostracised by their society. Since these

men and women transcend the ordinary rules and morals of society,
since they have a great awareness of the eternal in the empirical,
this thesis calls them TRANSCENDENTALISTS.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about Morley Callaghan. Though belatedly, critics in Canada and abroad have recognized him as a serious writer. The praises showered on him have come not merely from the nationalists in Canada, but also from others like Edmund Wilson, who has compared Morley Callaghan to some of the greatest writers in any language. In 1960 Callaghan received the Lorne Pierce Medal for Literature. When the Royal Society of Canada met for this ceremony, the citation was read by Frank R. Scott. He said,

With the appearance of Morley Callaghan's first novel Strange Fugitive in 1928, Canadian fiction could no longer be regarded as a pale extension of the English tradition. For with this book - and the short stories and novels that followed in the thirties - Callaghan broke open for us the egg-shell of our cultural colonialism. He went to Paris (instead of London) consorted with the international literary set and came home by way of New York. However, he did come home, and his fiction, for all of its sophistication of vision and technique, is instinct with place - our place - and with time - our time...

Many books - novels, plays and short stories - had preceded this award; many have followed since then. Callaghan has gone on to greater fame and further awards and citations. Some of these books have been translated into several languages. Scores of articles have been written about him and several books have essayed to fathom the depth and themes of Callaghan. Several theses have been written about his works. Why should still another thesis be written about his writings?

Morley Callaghan was born in 1903, had studied law in Osgoode Hall Law School, Toronto. Instead of pursuing a

legal profession, he became a journalist in Toronto for a time, while writing short stories and preparing his novels. In 1928 Scribner's published his first novel Strange Fugitive. His latest book, A Fine and Private Place was published in Toronto by Macmillan in 1975. In fifty years of writing, Morley Callaghan has not produced as prolifically as many would have liked him to have done. But the books and short stories of Callaghan have come as a result of very profound personal convictions. His intentions were never to make "a fast buck". The two World Wars and the era of depression, as well as all the upheavals of society have affected his writings. But Callaghan has always been considered a religious writer rather than a social writer. His books are not thrillers. They have to be read and re-read to understand them better. Writing about Sinclair Lewis, Morley Callaghan said,

Yet it seemed to me that his grand success was based on one of his weaknesses as an artist: he gave the reader a chance at too quick a recognition. This kind of writing always puts the writer and the reader in a comfortable relationship, neither one being required to jar himself, or get out of this groove of recognition. A writer who has this gift is always meeting his readers and reviewers on their terms, and it should be always the other way around.²

It is this weakness in Sinclair Lewis that Callaghan has always tried to avoid in his writings. It is the quality of Callaghan's writings that makes the reader 'jar himself', which necessitates one to read his works over and over again. This effort is worthwhile, as, the more one understands Callaghan, the more one is impressed by his unique themes. It was also this elusive and elitist quality of Callaghan that has brought much criticism on

himself. In an interview published in Saturday Night, Morley Callaghan says about writers and books in general, "The great thing about excellence is that it is never immediately recognizable. It is unfamiliar, naturally."³ Callaghan's excellence requires further study. This thesis endeavours to dig a little deeper into some of the novels of Morley Callaghan in order to underline one theme that has not been commented upon adequately by his critics; the possibility of transcendentalism in some people. I shall explain this term later on in the thesis. Suffice it to say here that very few critics of Callaghan have even touched upon this theme. And yet, it seems to me that this is central to many of his works, and essential to some of his novels.

Many of the themes of Morley Callaghan are obvious. In his first novel Strange Fugitive, Callaghan portrayed the problem of the individual unable to adjust to society. The shorter stories that followed in A Native Argosy

present a cross-section of urban and rural life of ordinary North Americans during the twenties. The grim effect of social deterioration and emotional isolation are portrayed in the careers of Callaghan's bewildered characters: suicide, jail, insanity, unemployment and disruption of familial and religious relations. The style, moreover, is appropriate to the cultural and psychological outlook of these misfits. Yet the total effect of these stories is to encourage the reader to be more tolerant, to enlarge his understanding of, and sympathy for, mankind beyond the bounds of conventional and moral categories.⁴

These are, obviously, the first themes that come to one's mind while reading the stories of Callaghan. Again, Victor Hoar, discussing Strange Fugitive, It's Never Over and A Broken Journey, says that these novels develop "the theme of naturalism, a

condition of life in which movement, change and process are inhibited by circumstances and accident."⁵

The novels under discussion in this thesis are: The Loved and the Lost, It's Never Over, Such is my Beloved, They Shall Inherit the Earth and The Many Colored Coat. In these novels, there are certainly several themes worth exploring. Many of them have been explored by other critics. Unfortunately, in order to explore the theme of transcendentalism in depth, one has to pick and choose the episodes and quotations most apt for the purpose. That does not mean that one belittles the importance of the other parts of the stories or the other themes. There are many themes that one can only mention in passing in the introduction. For instance, the contrast of the two worlds of The Loved and The Lost, would make for a very interesting study. Crime and Punishment is a subject that Callaghan has dealt with effectively in many of his stories. More Joy in Heaven is a very good example of the concept of punishment, of apparent conversion, and reversion. Callaghan has looked at the question of crime and punishment from the criminal's point of view as in the book just mentioned; from the point of view of those whom the criminal leaves behind as in It's Never Over, and from the executioner's point of view as in the short story "The Two Fishermen." War and its consequences on people is another theme that is developed to some degree in several books including It's Never Over. The problem of social justice as contrasted with legal justice is brilliantly dealt with, in The Many Colored Coat; justice is one of the themes in They Shall Inherit the Earth. The

return of the prodigal has been developed in several books. Ambiguities of guilt and innocence can be seen in The Many Colored Coat. How can one man, like Harry Lane, live a life of his own, without that example affecting and corrupting others like Scotty Bowman, is another theme in The Many Colored Coat. But this thesis, having accepted the validity and importance of some of these themes, is going to go a step further in order to prove that transcendentalism is a theme that needs further exploration in the novels of Callaghan.

George Woodcock, in an article on Callaghan says, "All of them are novels of their time, in which the writer shows a deep consciousness of existing social ills; it is depression-conditions that originally drive Ronnie to prostitution in Such is My Beloved, and scar Michael Aikenhead's young manhood with unemployment in They Shall Inherit the Earth."⁶ Woodcock concedes however, that they are no more novels of social analysis than they are of political propoganda. He goes on to say that the theme of Morley Callaghan "is essentially moralistic, and every one of his works fails or succeeds according to the ability with which he manipulates the element of parable within it."⁷ Having used this yardstick to measure Callaghan, Woodcock finds that The Loved and the Lost is "a curious grafting together of the social novel and the romance."⁸ Thus, George Woodcock's summation is that the works of Callaghan are

essentially, as their biblical titles suggest, novels of moral predicament. Each asks its question. What are the bounds of Christian love? How far can a man be free when all his acts affect

the lives of others? Can the prodigal ever return to the world against which he has risen in rebellion? Can the individual assert and maintain his human dignity in an acquisitive society? Each novel asks its questions; none provides glib and easy answer.⁹

This thesis submits that George Woodcock's assessment of Morley Callaghan's writings, while correct, does not go far enough. These novels are not "essentially moralistic". They are not merely about "moral predicament." I would like to show that the morality preached in Callaghan's novels is not the conventional morality of the society or of the churches. Callaghan's heroes are religious, and not moral. They are Christians in the truest sense of being followers of Christ, whether consciously or not. They are not establishment men and women. Because of certain experiences, their values have been trans-evaluated. Callaghan himself says, "My own problem was to relate a Christian enlightenment to some timeless process of becoming."¹⁰ And he has succeeded in relating the temporal to the eternal. Looked at from this angle we will see that, far from condemning a book like The Loved and the Lost as a failure, as Woodcock has done, Hugo McPherson considers that The Loved and the Lost "sees Morley Callaghan's art reach a distinguished fulfilment. It is a parable as old as faith, as relevant as man's apparently undying need to realize his best self, and as durable as language."¹¹ When asked about his moral view, Callaghan said, "I suppose I do have this really peculiar moral view of the world, absolutely my own. In some way it is a quite anarchistic view of the world...Well, anarchistic in the sense that it is fiercely dependent on the individual view never yielding to another man's sense of recti-

tude."¹² If then, the works of Callaghan reveal a moral view, it is a peculiarly personal one, which may not be acceptable to many moralists.

I am more in agreement with Hugo McPherson who says that Morley Callaghan

faced the facts of his generation and probed through and beyond them to find a secure ground of action and belief. He became, in short, a religious writer - not one of the apologists who defends traditional religion by contriving convenient modern exempla, but an artist who looked searchingly at his experience (including the potent - isms and - ologies of the day) and concluded that the temporal world cannot be self-redeemed; that human frailty is bearable only in the light of divine perfection.¹³

It is this religiousness in the characters of Morley Callaghan that we shall examine at length in this thesis. I call them the transcendentalists for these are people "who 'feel' - people who are barren of 'ideas' in any sophisticated sense - he [Callaghan] has had to discover a means of revealing dramatically the nature of their quest for significance in the terrifying flux of the modern world."¹⁴

The exclusive preoccupation of this thesis with the 'eccentrics' of transcendentalists does not mean that they are necessarily the major characters in the novels under discussion. Nor does it mean, as explained earlier that this is the only theme of these books. Indeed in some of the novels this may only be a secondary theme, while in others there may be others which are equally important. In the criticisms and comments on Morley Callaghan enough attention has not been paid to this aspect of transcendentalists. This is one of the reasons why his excellence

is not fully perceived. The insight of Callaghan into the operation of these extraordinary characters, is itself extraordinary. But he has depicted them without exaggerating them, without making them too obvious, with the result that the search becomes arduous. In order to deal effectively with them, it is necessary to dissect the novels of Morley Callaghan. I am doing this with great reluctance and with reservations, because each novel should stand as a single unit. But in order to facilitate our research it is necessary to look at each of these characters, first as eccentrics; then we shall examine the people who find themselves in opposition to these eccentrics, and thirdly, re-examine these eccentrics to find their *raison d'être*. Finally, I would like to show that they are true Christians because they are Christ-like.

Hugo McPherson, discussing the novels of Callaghan said that Morley Callaghan

has wrought out a fictional form in which the surface events function simultaneously as realistic action and symbolic action, revealing both the empirical and the spiritual conflicts of his protagonists. This duality, moreover, is never merely a tricky fictional device calculated to entertain both the naive and the knowing; it is fundamental to Callaghan's perception of the interdependence of the spiritual and empirical realms. Man's career occurs in the imperfect world of time, but its meaning (man's dignity or 'place') depends finally on a larger reality out of time. To escape the first world is physical death; to ignore the second is to embrace the condition of the Wasteland - life-in-death. This tension, to which Callaghan's best fiction gives dramatic form, is the fundamental tension of life. By exploring the two worlds - empirical and spiritual - Callaghan has written the "little man's" Ash Wednesday and Burnt Norton.¹⁵

Notes

¹Frank R. Scott, "Lorne Pierce Medal: Morley Callaghan", Royal Society of Canada Transactions, 3rd series, LIV (Proceedings 1960), pp. 56-57.

²Morley Callaghan, That Summer in Paris, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1963), pp. 68-69.

³"Defending the Inner Light: An interview with Morley Callaghan." Saturday Night, (July 1972), p. 22.

⁴Brandon Conron, Morley Callaghan (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1966), p. 55.

⁵Victor Hoar, Morley Callaghan (Toronto: The Copp Clark Publishing Co., 1969), p. 70.

⁶George Woodcock, "Lost Eurydice." Canadian Literature. (Summer 1964), p. 28.

⁷Ibid., p. 29.

⁸Ibid., p. 32.

⁹Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁰That Summer in Paris, pp. 94-95.

¹¹Hugo McPherson, "The Two Worlds of Morley Callaghan - Man's Earthly Quest." Queen's Quarterly LXIV. No. III (Autumn 1957), p. 365.

¹²Saturday Night, (July 1972), p. 22.

¹³Queen's Quarterly, (Autumn 1957), pp. 351-352.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 352.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 352.

CHAPTER II

"THE ECCENTRICS"

Several novels of Morley Callaghan contain characters who are out of the ordinary, who cannot fit into the normal mold of society, and for the purposes of this study we shall call them "eccentrics". They are eccentric because all of them are off base, off the centre; they are men or women who cannot or do not want to be like the rest of society. They are in search of an identity which is very particular and personal. This quest leads them away from the world around them and that world terms them eccentrics. Let us look at some of these characters in this chapter, in order to seek their motives and find out why they are not the run-of-the-mill persons.

Nobody who knew Peggy Sanderson in The Loved and the Lost¹ had any doubts that she was an eccentric. She had to be peculiar to prefer the company of Negroes. Ever since anyone had known her, her preference had been for the Blacks. Anyone who would go out of his way to court a different race of people and feel at home with them had to be rather out of the ordinary. Most people would keep to their own kind. Perhaps, on occasions, curiosity might take one to visit the ghettos of St. Antoine and St. Henri. But if someone does this not once or twice, but pretty regularly, then, this would have to be suspect.

Foley who had first introduced Peggy Sanderson to Jim McAlpine, the professor of History in the University of Toronto, had liked her and thought of her as a pleasant person. But when Foley confirmed the rumor that she frequented the bars

on St. Antoine Street, he was upset. He thought she could not concentrate on her work because "she's all hopped up with the dinges making passes at her and probably laying her too."² His explanation of this peculiar preference on the part of Peggy was simple:

There's something about that girl that's a lie. Women like her love the lie that's in the first impression they make. It wins them tenderness and approval and sympathy and forgiveness. And they'll lie and cheat to preserve the initial advantage they win for themselves. They're capable of anything, and there'll always be someone around like you, Jim, to believe in them and plead that they are being misunderstood when they fly off at crazy and unpredictable angles-blue jays-³

Thus Foley and people like him found Peggy Sanderson to be crazy and unpredictable.

Jim McAlpine was one friend whom Peggy found and it was to him that she had talked about her early experiences with the Johnson family. Jock Johnson's was the first, beautiful, black, naked body that she had seen after she had attained puberty. Ever since then she had a predilection for Negroes. As McAlpine said to himself, "The little Negro section in Montreal had become for her the happy and fabulous Johnson family; and if the Johnsons, knowing her, could live and respect her, why shouldn't the Negroes down on St. Antoine's?"⁴ The naïveté of Peggy was surprising for a college-educated girl. It was not merely simple ignorance that was the cause of her adventures into Black neighbourhood. Therefore, people had to conclude that it must have been some peculiarity in her nature.

Peggy Sanderson had taken McAlpine to a department store on St. Catherine Street where there was a wood carving of a

leopard about three feet long in a glass case, crouching, ready to spring. She studied the leopard, and Jim watched her face and steady eyes and wondered why it had such importance for her. Immediately after this, she took him to visit a half Gothic and half Romanesque church. "The Church hung there in the snow; it could sail away lightly like a ship in the snow. Then he turned and looked at Peggy's face,"⁵ and wondered how she could have visited a leopard and a church on the same day. It was only much later that he thought he understood how the two could go together in Peggy's mind. Some of Peggy's friends, McAlpine found out later, were hoodlums who would use great violence. This had not destroyed their appeal for Peggy. Thus he had to conclude that she must have been held in a spell by these people; that she must have vicariously participated in their violence. "She had waited, rapt and still, for the beast to spring at her and devour her."⁶ Her innocence was attracted by the violence and, perhaps unconsciously, wished one to destroy the other, like a temperament seeking its opposite.

This peculiar attitude of Peggy's made even people who had any sympathy for her to conclude that she was an idealist, "who had a passionate longing for the impossible."⁷ But this was not the only explanation people could have given for her actions. If she had been an idealist she would have been interested in the problem of all minorities. But as Gagnon found out, she had no sympathy with the plight of the low-wage-earning French Canadian workers. She thought the French could look after themselves. Hence his conclusion was, "She likes dark meat."⁸ Or as Foley

theorized, she was one of those "inverted exhibitionists"⁹ who considered Henry Jackson a friend because he was lame and was always running away from some job or somebody.

It surprised McAlpine that an educated girl like Peggy could have such slovenly habits. She did not care about how she dressed, how and where she lived. She broke the pattern that any well-educated person should have: "Anything that breaks the pattern is bad. And Peggy breaks up the pattern."¹⁰ When Mr. Carver, the newspaper owner, heard about Peggy after her death, he was appalled "to think that a girl who had a university education could become so depraved in her tastes and habits."¹¹ When the news about her death was bruited, even people from St. Antoine were cautious, "For what was there to say about such a perverse white girl who was pretty and attractive?... The trouble was that too many of them liked her. When a young pretty girl was liked by so many it meant trouble."¹² It was difficult to find anyone who would defend Peggy even after her death. Even detective Bouchard who prided himself on his liberal education and intelligence, could not understand how a man like McAlpine could have fallen for Peggy. He had to ask, "Something about her piqued your curiosity, eh? Is it not so? Something elusive, strange, perhaps a discontent in your own life - boredom."¹³ As Bouchard said, when the Whites and Blacks got mixed, there was a field of many strange, perverted tastes for a white girl to develop. It was this apparent strangeness and perversion that made people misunderstand Peggy Sanderson and hate her to the extent of wanting to get rid of her.

Harry Lane in The Many Colored Coat¹⁴ is a different

kind of eccentric. Of course, eccentrics are not made the same, because if they were, they would not be eccentrics anymore; Harry was generous to a fault when he was prosperous and it was clear even to his best friends that he was being unwise in throwing away good money to impress people and that this would do him no good in the long run. Mr. Ouimet, the trial lawyer, considered the generous streak of Harry Lane to be an outgrowth of his egotism. As Ouimet told him, "I have known men with your temperament, Lane. An interesting temperament. An impulsive man full of generous gestures...But what went on in the back of your mind is something else. You had your own interest at heart, masking it from yourself, of course, to satisfy your egotism."¹⁵ When Harry Lane was the public relations director in Sweetman Distilleries, many people wondered why he was in the habit of picking up other people's tabs and paying for the drinks of everyone around him. Whenever anyone wanted anything, the most natural response was, "Tell you what to do. Go and see Harry Lane. He will not mind. He will look after you."¹⁶ This over-generous nature was abnormal and eccentric. Harry Lane did everything to excess.

Yet, he was supposed to have been a man of the world, a person whose job as a public relations officer should have made him cynical about human nature, and who should have taken advantage of the weaknesses of others rather than being exploited. Scotty Bowman, the bank manager was tried for misappropriation of money. Harry Lane was a key witness at this trial. The night before the trial Harry was busy trying to dissuade a neighbour from committing suicide, and having stayed with this

neighbour till four in the morning, was not alert during his testimony. This kind of natural urge to do good regardless of self was a weakness in Harry. When an old professor dies, almost all his classmates asked him to represent them at the funeral. And yet, when people in difficulties received his help, they did not even bother to telephone and thank him. This would hurt him, but he should have realised that such was human nature. He would not want anybody to be against him; as Mollie Morris told him, "Oh, you've got a way with people, Harry, even if they think they're all against you. You just won't take it."¹⁷ Or as Dan Gorman, one of his friends said to him, "You know, there's not a mean conniving bone in your body."¹⁸ But this, precisely, was his weakness. Harry was a person who thought nothing evil of others. Scotty Bowman read his character very well. Scotty told Annie Laurie that Harry had a bad flaw in his character, that "he's a kind of innocent guy".¹⁹ Indeed it was this innocent naiveté that was going to be his down fall. Anyone who observed Harry Lane could have warned him of this.

It was this naiveté that made him assume the role of a clown when he was convicted, not be the courts, but by his colleagues and friends and the public, as having been responsible for the incarceration and subsequent death of Scotty Bowman. When he felt that the silence of Scotty and the testimony of Mike Kon were responsible for this indictment of himself, he decided, by a naive, simple and ridiculous means, to get back to court to prove his innocence. He started wearing the many colored coat that Mike Kon had made for him. Harry Lane, the erstwhile public

relations officer, the play-boy par excellence of the town, became "a clown grateful for any attention,"²⁰ and Mike Kon complained how this was a psychological war that the crazy man was fighting in order to humiliate him. When Mike went to see lawyer Ouimet about charging Harry, Ouimet said, "What we've got here is simply the spectacle of a man deteriorating rapidly. Soon he'll start drinking heavily and insulting people and getting sick and dirty, making more of a fool of himself in public places."²¹ Even Mollie Morris had to concede that he was making a fool of himself, trying "in some crazy way"²² to be honest with himself.)

It was obvious to everybody that Harry Lane's plan of attack was to make a nuisance of himself, to make Mike's coat an object of derision so that he would be dragged to court. "What choice has he? Can he keep running from me? Of course he can't. What happens to his business? And there you are - we'll have our case, Mollie"²³ said Harry about his reasons for carrying the coat around. But the wanderings of Harry Lane in his checkered coat became an embarrassment to everybody who had known him in his heyday. As Hagerty, the sportswriter said, "I snicker at him, sure; just the same he embarrasses me. I think he embarrasses everybody."²⁴ When, in the end, Mike Kon nearly breaks Harry's neck, Hagerty said this again, "You can't try to embarrass the whole world and expect to get away with it."²⁵

Mollie Morris found that Harry was clinging to suffering and "when a man clings to his suffering, he violates all human sympathy and without that human sympathy what he does

has no meaning. All you're doing with your antics is cutting yourself off."²⁶ The public embarrassment that Harry Lane became was verbalised by lawyer Quimet at the final trial when he said:

Lane seems to have made it a point to try to disturb the conscience of anybody who had anything to do with that case. This is the way to drive men crazy. All Kon wanted to say to Lane was 'Get out of my conscience, don't try to twist it by damaging my business'. These men like Lane, who feel wronged, take it on themselves to go around tormenting people who do their duty, as I did my duty in that case, as Mike did his duty...

The natural consequence of such disturbance of conscience is for people to reject him, and perhaps, to get his neck broken, as happened to Harry Lane; as happened to Peggy Sanderson, and, as will happen to others who are like a cross on a hill, making men to look at it and feel ashamed. This could not be allowed in a decent society where people want to feel comfortable and where we would like to sweep our problems under the carpet.

One of the common characteristics of all these persons whom we are discussing in this chapter seems to be their naiveté... They seem to be simple, artless and unsophisticated. They do not seem to realise what effects their actions could have on others; they also do not seem to be able to anticipate the consequences of their actions on themselves. Fr. Dowling, in Such is My Beloved²⁸ is one of the most naive persons one could come across. His eccentricity is the result of his simple-mindedness. He is as simple as a dove, but the serpent has not even gone near him. His charity was so great that he would not allow himself even to think ill of others. After he had met Ronnie and Midge - the two prostitutes - he wanted to talk to

Fr. Anglin to find out what the parish priest thought of his visit.

It was only in the last minute that he decided not to do so.

"Father Anglin has a beautiful Christian character, no doubt,

but somehow I don't think he would like to hear me talking about

those girls."²⁹ he thought. Consider the opinion of Fr. Dowling

on Mr. Robison (whom we shall discuss at greater length in the

next chapter): "It seemed truly remarkable that a wealthy man

could be such a Christian."³⁰ When Midge talked to him she said,

"You're funny, Father. You think all people are nice, don't you?"³¹

Fr. Dowling was so naive that when he decided to take the two

girls to the Robisons' home, he was hoping "Mrs. Robison would

be there because she was such a splendid woman."³² When, as a

result of Mr. Robison reporting on the suspicious visits of Fr.

Dowling to the rooming house of the girls, the Bishop summoned

him, he was hoping "that his explanation would be understood"³³

by his superior. Thus there are scores of examples to show that

Fr. Dowling was naive and simpleminded. Peggy Sanderson did not

have the time to realize that her naive approach to racial problems

would not get her anywhere except into deep trouble; Harry Lane

did find out that unawareness is a great sin; but Fr. Dowling

lost his mind as a result of his confrontations with the practical

realities of life and love.

Fr. Dowling did not exercise caution in the conduct of his ministry. "He knew he ought to tell another priest or even

tell a policeman he was going to the girls' room, for fear of

scandal developing, but he was more afraid this might lead to

something that would cause the girls' arrest."³⁴ If he had been

cautious he could have avoided the problems he faced in the end. When Mr. Robison chided him asking, "You haven't let people see you going there, have you?"³⁵ Fr. Dowling got excited and angry and asked, "What would it matter if they noticed me? Tell me that. Are there some places where a priest must not go, some people that must not be touched?"³⁶ He was being imprudent and courting disaster.

Fr. Dowling had no experience with the handling of these girls. An ordinary, cautious person would have acted more wisely, and would have known the possible pitfalls of the mission. No, he would rush where angels fear to tread. He was like an awkward boy, as the girls said, touching them and hoping that he would be able to touch them, thus spiritually. They made use of his friendship and were happy to have him around sometimes. The girls who occasionally visited Midge and Ronnie took liberties with him, insulted him and taunted him. But he would not even allow himself to kiss the girls. His training in the seminary should have taught him to avoid the places of temptations. And he was tempted. "He wanted to take their soft bodies and hold them while his arms trembled. He wanted to put his head down on white softness."³⁷ But he thought that since he was no eunuch he should not be ashamed of his temptation. He thought, "that to stay away for such a reason would be an act of weakness and lack of faith."³⁸

Fr. Dowling, then, was a starry-eyed, young priest who thought well of everybody, including Lou, the pimp; he was sorry that Karl Marx was not a Christian; he was willing to deprive

his own mother of her monthly allowance to please the girls; he was a man who hoped to bring hope and happiness to all his parishioners. He knew the girls were deceiving him, but he was willing to overlook all that provided they would think of him sometimes. Such a man should be armed for the kind of problems he was going to get into. A more cautious man would have either kept away from them completely, or would have acted more prudently. It was this extraordinary simplicity that made Mr. Robison think of him as though he were a child, a man so cloistered from life that he could not be expected to understand an economic depression, or the suffering of a city or a whole people - a cloistered young man, respected only because he was a priest."³⁹ It was this lack of wisdom that made Fr. Jolly, his colleague tease him and make the simple-minded Fr. Dowling "defend a carnality in Tolstoy that didn't really exist."⁴⁰ No wonder when he was confronted with love, he could not cope with its consequences and ended up in a lunatic asylum, writing a commentary on THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

Eccentrics such as Fr. Dowling would end up that way. They are, by definition unable to accept the practical realities of existence. They will come into conflict with the more practical and shrewder people of the world, who, being unable to comprehend this eccentricity, would try to correct them or, failing that, get rid of them. Peggy Sanderson had to be killed. Harry Lane changed his life, and probably his very milieu. Fr. Dowling lost his mental balance, if he had any, to begin with.

Isabelle Thompson in It's Never Over is another

person whom the world had to conclude was eccentric. She was the sister of Fred who was hanged for killing a policeman. John Hughes was a close friend of Fred and had loved Isabelle; they were planning on getting married when the murder and the subsequent trial took place, which ended in the hanging of Fred.

John left Isabelle, or at least tried to leave her, and went out with Lillian who had earlier loved Fred. Three others in the story - Fr. Mason, Paul Ross and Gibbons - had also known Fred Thompson and were affected in various ways by his death. The actions and reactions of the people are seen through the eyes of John Hughes, and we are only given glimpses into the mind of Isabelle by subtle hints and broken conversations.

Isabelle seems to have understood the import of the hanging far better than anybody else. Of course, she was Fred's sister and had been very close to him. To John, with the burial of Fred, the episode should have ended.

John wanted the earth piled in and the sods pounded over, ending it so that he would have no more uneasy thoughts, and had a sudden feeling that if the earth would slide in rapidly at that moment he would never have to think of Fred Thompson again.⁴²

John Hughes tried to convince Isabelle that it was over. He said, "In your own thoughts you are keeping too much in the shadows. It's over now, I tell you..."⁴³ And Isabelle replied, it's never over. That was her belief and her feeling. She thought that the death of a man does not end the influence that the person had on others, and that the hanging of Fred would mark her apart from the rest of society for ever; that nobody would want her for a neighbour, and anyone associated with her.

would be ostracised too. That was why she decided that she could not marry John, however much she loved him. As she said:

...But you see what your feelings would have been if we had gone on! We would have had the same feeling and had had to stay on the outside of things.⁴⁴

She did not want him to stay on the outside. She said, "You should not bother with me if you want to get on in this city. People will hold it against you."⁴⁵ In spite of John's protestations, what she said was true and John knew it.

The attraction between John and Isabelle was very strong. However much they tried to keep out of each others' ways they could not succeed. John tried to shut Isabelle out of his mind. He warned Lillian not to speak about her; he refused to see her when she was seriously ill. But he was not able to resist her attractions. He heard also how others who had come into contact with her were fascinated by her. Paul Ross who took Isabelle out said:

She just burns you up, you or anybody else, a frenzy, a flood and a fire, and I don't feel bad about it...But there's something ecstatically religious about the release and satisfaction it has for her. I was left outside of it.⁴⁶

When John scolded Paul for such description of Isabelle, Paul merely said, "I am trying to explain the way I feel about an outstanding experience."⁴⁷

Isabelle could not leave anybody alone. She had to pester Lillian and get her to take an apartment for herself. She wanted to vicariously enjoy the relationship that Lillian and John would have. She was the femme fatale of the story, who would make and break the ties that occur in the novel. She would

say that she had to leave John alone, and yet, she would visit him. When she came to visit John in the house of the Erringtons, it was she who took the initiative to make love. It was as if John could not help it at the time. When she left, the landlords of John recognized her, and because she was the sister of Fred who was hanged, John had to leave the house and also lost his job in the Church choir. As if this was not enough, she told Lillian about this encounter and succeeded in breaking up the friendship between John and Lillian. She would talk to Fr. Mason in the confessional about her problems, so that he too would be involved in her sufferings. Like Harry Lane with the checkered coat, she was making a nuisance of herself, stirring the consciences of all who knew her and Fred Thompson. Isabelle had initially wanted to join the convent. But she had changed her mind about that and the world was faced with a person who burned everything that she touched.

No wonder, then, that John wanted to get rid of her, to kill her. He did not come to this conclusion lightly. As he told the priest in the Church, "She took possession of my whole life. She got hold of all my feelings, trying to own me, and then tried to take everything away from me. She would be better dead."⁴⁸ In everything that Isabelle said and did, her friends were unwittingly or otherwise, victimised. John told her as much when he confronted her with:

You are to blame for this, you morbid, silly creature. I hate to say anything to make you feel bad, but the trouble with you is you are egotistical. You can't think of anything but yourself. You've got to stop bothering us, or I'll wring your crow's neck. After tonight go

and pick the bones of someone else.⁴⁹

Isabelle answered, "I think you're a little unbalanced. You misinterpret everything."⁵¹ It is noteworthy that Isabelle thinks of John as unbalanced when the whole world could see that she was the one who was crazy. People around Isabelle called her 'strange', 'obsessed', 'stupid', 'a maniac' and scores of other names. The fact remained, however, that "we are all here watching her,"⁵² and being influenced by her and hating to be under her spell. As John said:

She's got hold of us. She's got hold of you and me and all of us, and we have to share it with her - I tell you she owns us. She's got possession of us. That's what she wanted. Slowly, in her own way she's taken possession of us.⁵²

It was therefore natural that John would try to get out of this iron vise-grip of Isabelle. When he went to strangle her, he found that she was dying. Thus it needed her death to release them from her stranglehold.

The strangeness of Isabelle is still different from those of Peggy Sanderson, Harry Lane and Fr. Dowling. She seemed to have a different kind of eccentricity. Indeed, as we shall see in the subsequent chapters, she is not to be treated in the same way as the others. However, she does seem strange to the people around her and her death was a relief to all.

Anna Prychoda in They Shall Inherit the Earth is as different from Isabelle as day and night. Her eccentricities should not be exaggerated, simply to prove a point. Anna is probably the most normal of the eccentrics under discussion; and

yet, she is unconventional. She has a way of acting which is different and therefore, she too is considered abnormal and amoral by people who only know her slightly. As we shall see in a later chapter, Anna's influence on her friends is simple but effective. She is creative and regenerative, where Isabelle is destructive and disruptive. Even so, Anna should be considered among the eccentrics in order to understand her better in later chapters. She is not the major character in the story. But in this thesis we are not dealing with major characters, nor with themes of Callaghan's novels. We are only examining some special characters. As we shall see in the course of the thesis, Anna's influence on Michael Aikenhead was considerable. She redeems everybody by her very presence. But in order to have that characteristic, which we will call transcendental (more about that in subsequent chapters), one had to be extraordinary. One had also to be considered eccentric by the people around them.

Anna was poor and out of a job, as was Michael. She had only one summer dress and a black silk one, trimmed with white. She had one pair of stockings with a run in them, and a pair of shoes turned at the heels. "When she had left the house that evening the electrical appliance salesman in the front apartment had said to his wife, 'There she goes in that dress and those shoes. It's getting funny watching her'."⁵⁴ and the elderly Miss Gray, who gave a course of lectures on world affairs to young ladies who would come to her apartment on Friday evenings, hugged her starving gentility to her withered breasts and whispered that Huck Farr who put a food basket at Anna's door occasionally

was out to get her and that if that were to happen the apartment block would become a bordello. Miss Gray was determined not to allow that to happen. As for Huck Farr, he considered any woman a fair game. As he said,

There's something about a girl like Anna that makes it pretty hard to keep your hands off her. I love them when they are soft like that. I mean bright-faced and firm and eager on the surface with a lot of spirit, but with something very soft underneath in them that makes you follow them along the street longing to push them over. By God, when they look like that they haven't a chance of getting away...⁵⁵

It needed the persistent and almost stupid intervention of Michael to save Anna from the plans of Huck Farr. Huck had thought of her as an easy push-over and had simply gone after her.

When Michael and Anna had started living together, Michael asked her if she would feel better being married to him. Any conventional girl would have in the first place not lived with him without being married, and would have pounced on the suggestion of Michael. But Anna's answer simply was, "Not unless it made you easier in your mind."⁵⁶ This unorthodox, unconventional life did not please their neighbours. Miss Gray wanted Michael and Anna to be sent out of the building, and she told the janitor that if he did not send them out, she would personally tell the owner of the building about the preposterous goings-on.

One may object saying that the opinions of Miss Gray, Huck Farr and the salesman were not to be taken seriously in an analysis of Anna's character as they are ordinary people. But that is precisely why Anna is to be considered so different. Even Sheila, the sister of Michael, had problems understanding

Anna. Sheila met Anna for the first time when Michael and Anna were invited to come to their town where Ross (the husband of Sheila) was working as a doctor. Sheila had felt that the small town where her husband happily practised medicine was too confining and his work too tedious and her life too monotonous. When she saw Anna, she thought of her as rather noisy and cheap. It was only after she got to know Anna better, that she realised how precious she was. Sheila found it difficult to understand "how any girl could possess such enthusiasm and such a desire to laugh suddenly, and who could let her face light up like a delighted child's over the most innocently simple matters that came up in a perfunctory conversation, when her own life was drab and full of an infinite number of unfulfilled and desperate hopes."⁵⁷

These, then, are the eccentrics. They are different; some of them are difficult. All of them are unique. They seem to be simple-minded, naive, crazy, immature and enthusiastic. Their exuberance seems to be ill-placed. All these characteristics bring them into direct conflict with ordinary, practical-minded, intelligent people of the world. These worldly-wise people are disturbed by the eccentrics and try to change them. In the case of those that refuse to change and become ordinary, there is nothing else that the world can do, except get rid of them.

Notes

¹Morley Callaghan, The Loved and The Lost. (Laurentian Library, IX; 1951. rpt. Toronto: Macmillan, 1973.)

²Ibid., p. 67.

³Ibid., p. 68.

⁴Ibid., p. 86.

⁵Ibid., p. 33.

⁶Ibid., p. 101.

⁷Ibid., p. 110.

⁸Ibid., p. 133.

⁹Ibid., p. 127.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 163.

¹¹Ibid., p. 213.

¹²Ibid., p. 212.

¹³Ibid., p. 225.

¹⁴Morley Callaghan, The Many Colored Coat (Laurentian Library, XII; 1960. rpt. Toronto: Macmillan, 1972.)

¹⁵Ibid., p. 111.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 128.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 28.

²⁰Ibid., p. 186.

²¹Ibid., p. 197.

²²Ibid., p. 201.

²³Ibid., p. 205.

²⁴Ibid., p. 214.

²⁵Ibid., p. 288.

²⁶Ibid., p. 332.

²⁷Ibid., p. 315.

²⁸Morley Callaghan, Such Is My Beloved (Intro. by Malcolm Ross. New Canadian Library, No. II, 1934. rpt. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1957.)

²⁹Ibid., p. 16.

³⁰Ibid., p. 39.

³¹Ibid., p. 46.

³²Ibid., p. 89.

³³Ibid., p. 128.

³⁴Ibid., p. 2.

³⁵Ibid., p. 83.

³⁶Ibid., p. 84.

³⁷Ibid., p. 49.

³⁸Ibid., p. 49.

³⁹Ibid., p. 41.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 57.

⁴¹Morley Callaghan, It's Never Over (Laurentian Library, XIII; 1930. rpt. Toronto: Macmillan, 1972.)

⁴²Ibid., p. 23.

⁴³Ibid., p. 31.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 30.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 30 - 31.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 69.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 69.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 140.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 118.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 118.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 65.

⁵²Ibid., p. 109.

⁵³ Morley Callaghan, They Shall Inherit the Earth. (Intro. by F.W. Watt. New Canadian Library, No. XXXIII; 1934. rpt. n. p. McClelland & Stewart, 1962.)

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 85 - 85.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 98.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 143.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 183.

CHAPTER III

"THE WORLDLY - WISE"

We saw in Chapter II that some of the characters in the novels of Morley Callaghan are peculiar and eccentric. Because they did not conform to the patterns of society, people opposed them. But the men and women who confronted them were not necessarily 'bad' or evilminded persons. They were not uncharitable, unthinking brutes. On the contrary, they were, on the whole, gentle, ordinary, clever people who had their places in society, who knew what society expected of them, and who did what they considered to be their duties. It was only when the eccentrics disturbed them, and threatened their security, that they reacted against them. It is true that sometimes they reacted strongly, perhaps, violently. But given the provocation, one can understand the violence that resulted in the bargain. We shall examine some of these "worldly-wise" characters in this chapter. For the sake of convenience, we shall study the major characters in each novel successively, and see how they reacted to the presence of the eccentrics that we have discussed in Chapter II.

The people who were around Peggy Sanderson in The Loved and the Lost were intelligent, practical, and shrewd. Let us begin by her father who was a minister of the church and well-respected by his flock. He brought up his only daughter, whose mother died when she was very young, as well, and as practically, as he could. When he found that she preferred the company of the Black Johnson family, he was angry and ashamed. "He grabbed me

by the shoulders and shook me and said loudly that all the factors had to be considered; his usefulness to his flock as a whole had to be considered. He tried to shake it into me. It didn't mean anything."¹ A few years later when Sophie Johnson tried to get into nursing school and wanted Rev. Sanderson to use his influence, he could not use it because she was black and this would have created problems in the school. "He said, 'If only Sophie were a light mulatto - if only she weren't coal black!' and then he talked about the little compromises that had to be made for the sake of harmony in the flock."² Peggy Sanderson did not appreciate the practical wisdom of compromising on principles, and therefore, she was upset and walked out, courting pneumonia. It should also be mentioned that her father later confessed that though he was a famous minister of the church, he had not believed in God for many years, and, therefore, was unable to pray. But we can already see how Peggy Sanderson was not able to see, as others could, that sometimes principles had to be compromised.

There were others who had difficulty understanding her ways. People like Malone had thought of her as easy prey. After all, if she was so easily available to the Blacks, it should be easier for him to have her. "They can touch you, but when I try and touch you - Am I such scum?"³, he asked in disgust. By her refusal he had been humiliated. Therefore, he had become violent with her. All his life he had thought of himself as superior; and when someone jolted this sense of superiority, he would go wild with hate. Then, there was Wolgast whose father,

before his death, had asked his son to "try and own a white horse of your own some day."⁴ Wolgast had worked very hard at this, in different ways and different places. At last he came to Montreal and started his 'Chalet' restaurant. He was legitimately proud of this achievement and of his town, as also the fine customers and connections he had built over the years. He wanted, above all things, to be left alone and to have things remain just the way they were. He did not ask for much. After all these years of toil and trouble he had a right for that much. Then came Peggy with her Negro friend to his Chalet, and threatened his status quo. "What bothers me is that this lack of prudence of hers always brings out the worst instincts in us, the stuff we try and hide, the stuff that's inhuman."⁵ These are very practical, wise words from a man who has great experience of the world. What Wolgast understood of Peggy was, "She wants to move out of St. Antoine with her jugs, and we both know why she picked on me. Well, I've got nothing against the jugs. So let's say she brings one, then another and another, counting on getting away with it with me. So what? So soon, I'm running a nigger joint and I lose my fine class of customers and I'm through. Am I right?"⁶ Of course, Wolgast was right. His conclusions were deliberate, and sober. He did not want this to happen to him. Wolgast wanted McAlpiné, as a mutual friend, to tell Peggy that her visits to the Chalet with Negro friends could result in drastic consequences.

Among the Negroes whom she counted as her friends, there were people with genuine problems because of her. Wagstaffe,

one of the members of the band in Café St. Antoine was one such. He was a Negro who had travelled far and wide, until he came to Montreal and found that to be the most peaceful city to settle down. Even he found that "she's lousing up my band. Sooner or later she'll make trouble."⁷ He was a friend of hers and had gone around with her thinking that her friendship was uniquely and exclusively for him. He found out, however, that she was offering herself not only for him, but also to other Negro members of the band, or anybody else. "A bum is a bum in my race as well as yours. A girl ought to have some discretion, not make it cheap, not for every bum; you can't just throw that stuff around. Sure, you ought to be able to. That easy affection with that wonderful respect reminding you - well, before we all got wised up, eh?"⁸ That was bad. He knew that it was not in the nature of human beings for everybody to respect her, because people do not trust each other that much, and therefore, the old devil inside of every person would get to work. People, then, would start watching each other in suspicion and jealousy. His conclusion was stunningly wise, and worldly: "She's, maybe, against everything in the rule book; she's throwing her stuff at the rule book, but maybe that's not so good. Everything busts wide open when there's no rule book."⁹ Therefore Wagstaffe also wanted McAlpine to warn Peggy Sanderson not to bother him or the other members of the band. The day she dies, Wagstaffe and the St. Antoine café manager had come to warn her to leave town in order that troubles such as had happened the previous night could be avoided in the future.

Wilson was a trumpet player in the band. His wife was, naturally, upset and angry that Peggy was attracting the attention of her husband. She also came to McAlpine one day and asked him to make Peggy leave her husband alone, because she thought "Only you could do it easy, Mister, and leave me something, leave me with something."¹⁰ These are pathetic words, wrung from the heart of a quiet woman who only wants to keep her husband and save her marriage.

It was therefore, not surprising that when the fight took place in Café St. Antoine, there was hardly anyone to defend Peggy. Mrs. Wilson called her 'no good trash', Wolgast called her a 'troublemaker', and Wagstaffe wanted to throw her out of the café. Mrs. Wilson, calling her a 'slut', snatched a catsup bottle and threw it at her. "The catsup sprayed from the bottle in a blood-red line toward her, and she screamed. Beer glassed thrown at her broke at her feet and scraps of sandwiches fell around her."¹¹ She was rejected by them all.

What of Jim McAlpine who knew her better than others, who loved and respected her? As we had seen in a previous chapter, he found that she broke the pattern, and to him, breaking the pattern was no good. He was curious about her visits to St. Antoine. His own first attempts to investigate her attractions to the Negro section was not easy. He was not used to that kind of neighbourhood. His first attempt to visit the café was difficult. He could not bring himself to go to the "tawdry café, looking for her among the noisy, half-drunken patrons, the blacks and the whites, the few loose-witted, cheap white girls, and then finding

her on the dance floor swaying in the arms of a whispering Negro who held her tight against him."¹² He found his own ambitions to be a renowned writer and scholar, and his feelings for Peggy to be at odds. When he tried to reason with her about the dangers of frequenting the Negro bars and hang-outs, she accused him of pulling at her coat-tails. He knew that his following her around would get him also into difficulties. He did not want his curiosity to get the better of common sense. He promised himself several times that he would avoid her since he had come to Montreal for a better reason.

In spite of these resolutions of McAlpine, he continued to see her. But he would not endanger his job, by mentioning her name to Catherine or Mr. Carver. At the party given by the Murdocks, he denied her by giving her a fictitious name. When he had ingratiated himself to her and her apartment, his effort was to make her go 'straight'. In order to do that he implanted in her mind doubts about her present ways. He told her how the feeling of security was necessary for everyone. "I mean it had just struck me that there's a white horse for everybody. Call it possessions-security-a dream...There's such a horse for your father - one for me - the guy, the girl next door."¹³ These were practical words coming from a man who considered himself a man of the world. As he said in the end to Catherine and detective Bouchard, "He had known that he was drawing her away from a life that did not become her, and he had waited patiently for her to realize she could love him."¹⁴

The night of the café riot, when she was willing

to give herself to him, he would not stay with her. McAlpine did not want to feel that he was taking advantage of a moment of weakness in her life. He did not want Peggy to accept him because she had just been rejected by everybody else. He tried to pry out of her if she had ever gone to bed with any of the others. When he could not get a satisfactory answer, he decided not to stay the night with her. Doubt had entered his mind and he wanted to clear his mind before accepting her.

Thus we see that everyone in The Loved and the Lost was decent. They were all honorable people, who wanted to do the right thing, who 'wanted things to be left just the way they were',¹⁵ and who found Peggy Sanderson's intrusion into their lives irritating. Not only was she 'perverse', she was also destroying the fabric around her. Nobody could tolerate this tearing of the security blanket. If peaceful means failed, as Mrs. Wilson warned McAlpine, "I'd do it the hard way; but, hard or easy, I'd make it stick."¹⁶ It did happen, because in the end Peggy was found to have been raped and strangled and everybody could get back on their white horses.

Morley Callaghan's depiction of characters in The Many Colored Coat is more subtle than that of The Loved and the Lost. Not only is Harry Lane different from Peggy Sanderson, the other characters in the novel have to be studied from more complex angles. The person whose life and death is central to the story is Scotty Bowman. After having spent many years as a bank manager, Scotty was known to have been a shrewd judge of character. He found that Harry was vulnerable as he was innocent and naive.

Therefore when Scotty manipulated the loan, he had ulterior motives, viz. to share in the potential wealth that the loan to Harry was expected to make. Therefore, when he was caught in the act, the only favour he asked of Harry, seemingly to protect the latter, was not to mention his own possible cut in the shares. Harry Lane innocently promised to keep the secret, because, as Scotty told him, "I'm not asking you not to tell the truth. Sometimes the truth gives a completely wrong impression,"¹⁷ which it did, in the final analysis. Scotty did not underestimate the innocence of Harry; but he had not expected that it would overwhelm him and that a "terrible disappointment in himself"¹⁸ would make him take his own life. It was only at the trial when Scotty Bowman did not say anything that Harry realised that he was being manipulated. Harry had thought of Scotty as a father-figure, who would go out of his way to help him, and for the sake of Scotty's honour, Harry had not told of the arrangement to give him a share. After the trial Harry wanted to write to Scotty asking why he did not confess to the full truth; but he could not bring himself to send the letter, fearing that it might hurt Scotty. It was only when Scotty committed suicide that Harry realised the full import of his position. Scotty, as Harry said, had cut his throat, and Harry Lane tried to get a retrial to clear his name.

Mr. Max Sweetman, the owner of the distillery by the same name, was not without sympathy. In fact, like Mr. Carver of The Loved and the Lost, he prided himself on his liberal education and breadth of mind. He was the one responsible for

the uplift and betterment of Harry. He was not unwilling to learn from Harry Lane and forgive him his foibles. But he felt "that pity is a luxury, and it's damn corrupting too."¹⁹ He found fault with Harry Lane for having withheld the truth about Scotty as "the truth about any man is pretty hard to tell, because someone else always has another angle on him."²⁰ Max tried to exonerate Harry because he knew that Harry had been betrayed by Scotty. However, Sweetman was a practical businessman who knew that his personal relations officer could not afford to be scandal-ridden. "L'homme de bonne volonté"²¹ would not sell his products, and he had to make practical, wise and objective decisions about his employees, because "if it's a business matter and it's your own grandmother you can't afford to be sentimental. Business policy is like destiny."²² Esther Sweetman told her husband in practical terms, "Never mind the sense of honor. Honor won't put money in the bank, sell whiskey or buy one of your twenty-five dollar shirts."²³ Therefore, Max Sweetman under extreme pressure from his wife, had to fire him, though reluctantly.

Lawyer Ouimet was a Catholic who was not self-indulgent and, so, suspected anyone like Harry Lane. Therefore, the cross-examination that he conducted was like the gold knife that he was carrying on a gold chain - smooth and sharp. As an experienced lawyer, he had no doubts about the character of persons like Harry. He could see how Harry would suppress information about Scotty. "It's beneath a man like you to feel like a conspirator, isn't it? So you make a gesture. In the name of compassion and charity. To the point of being harmful to yourself. A little reckless. Oh! but charitable. A touch of

compassion."²⁴ In the process such a person would also protect himself. Thus Ouimet wanted Harry to examine his conscience. For himself, he had no doubt that Harry wanted to go on bothering Bowman and the world by disturbing the consciences of people. He could not take that from anybody.

Harry Lane, in his time of troubles, went to talk to a priest, and the priest was almost like Ouimet. He told Harry that his hungering after justice was "a favourite trap of the devil. He likes to make us think that people aren't doing right by us"²⁵ and that Harry and his ilk would be wounded in their pride if people did not believe in them. The priest, in his conversations with Lane, had to ask him to look into his own heart, to find out what was involved in the case; and that Harry should not suppose that a man killed himself to spite him. "What awful egotism of you to think so."²⁶ He had prefaced his advice with the horror of fornication and how all of Harry's sins might be rooted in carnality. The priest tried to console Harry by saying that God, in his own good time, would reveal his truth and justice.

Judge Morris was of the opinion that Harry Lane was a natural born anarchist, who went against the traditions of society, and in the process becoming popular. "That's the whole corrupting sequence of this thing."²⁷ Therefore, he did not want his daughter to have anything to do with Harry. Mrs. Morris felt that Harry "makes me feel he sees things he shouldn't see. Well, it's like an invasion of one's privacy, isn't it? There are some things a well-bred man shouldn't see, or at least let on he sees,

and what I don't understand, I really don't, is it's all part of his attractiveness."²⁸ This attractiveness in the fiancé of Mollie Morris might have made her mother jealous of her daughter. But she felt sometimes that "some women are so glad of a chance to risk something"²⁹ for the sake of the man she loved..

Mollie Morris did not have all the puritan habits and attitudes of her parents. But she wanted to remain a virgin - a much nibbled-virgin - (as Harry Lane said) and wanted her future husband to take his rightful place in society. Mollie had complete faith that Harry would not behave badly³⁰ and that he was naturally attractive. In order to show her love and devotion for him, she was even willing to defy her parents, accompany him on his excursions to different bars where Mike would likely appear. But when she found that Harry was not the same as before and "more and more you hate everything I stand for"³¹ she tried to abandon him. When she went to warn him of Mike Kon's threats, only to find him in the company of Annie Laurrie, she thought, "Whatever he get's from Mike Kon,... it serves him right."³² Even so, at the final trial she volunteered to testify on behalf of Harry Lane. That Ouimet twisted this testimony to his own purposes was not the fault of Mollie Morris. In everything, she tried to show her love for him, and at the same time follow her values and good breeding.

Mike Kon, the tailor was a good friend and well-wisher of Scotty Bowman. Since the time Scotty had helped him set up shop, he had become a sincere friend of Scotty's family. When he found Scotty cultivating the friendship of Harry Lane,

Mike was dismayed because he considered Harry to be a phony and a smooth talker, nothing more. Mike had warned Scotty about the dangers of this friendship. When Scotty was accused of having manipulated the bank loan for Harry, Mike knew that it was because of the evil influence of Harry, because "never in his life did Scotty get out of line"³³ until Harry used his friendship. At the trial Mike's bearing was much more impressive than that of the naturally suave Lane, and when he had acquitted himself honorably as a witness in defense of his friend, he walked out of the witness stand with great courage. "His head held high, he passed by, his moral outrage, his conviction that Scotty Bowman shouldn't be there at all, so strong in his face that Harry lost his scornful smile."³⁴ When he heard of the death of Scotty, Mike had no hesitation in declaring that Harry Lane was the indirect cause of the end of Bowman.

It was, therefore, with great chagrin that he found himself hounded by Harry Lane's machination. Harry was using his coat to castigate him, to run him out of his beloved haunts and to estrange him from his friends. He tried unsuccessfully to make up to Harry, so that he could be reinstated in the business community. But he found it difficult to go to Harry to make restitution; finally, when he did go, Harry laughed at his understanding or misunderstanding of Harry's troubles. It was this ridicule from and because of Harry, that made him, albeit reluctantly, to confront him, to try to explain himself in front of witnesses, and when this failed, under extreme provocation, to assault him.

Mike Kon's is not a simple story. He can't be cast in the mold of a villain. On the contrary, considering the predicament he found himself in, one could say that he was more sinned against than sinning. He was a onetime boxer who was called 'Mike the Tiger' in his time, and Harry should have thought better than to taunt him. Even so, Mike tried through several means to bring about peace for himself - consulted Ouimet, advised his friends, told Annie Laurrie, requested Mollie Morris's intervention - and when all these failed he went personally to talk to Harry.

At the second trial, when Harry failed to appear to plead his case, and when the Judge dismissed the case, Mike Kon had second thoughts about Harry Lane. It was to his credit that he declared that he had no right to have accused Harry Lane:

I lost my head; you see, everybody was against Harry Lane and so was I, but I was carried away by my sympathy for my friend Scotty Bowman. Maybe I had no way of knowing the real facts. Maybe I had no right to judge Harry Lane. After all how do I know what went on between him and Scotty Bowman? Maybe I was blinded by my friendship for Scotty. That's all. Thank you."35

As the Judge told him then, he sounded more like a man. Annie Laurrie said that Mike was Harry Lane's best advocate.

In his own way, Mike too was looking for justice - justice for himself, for Scotty Bowman and for Harry Lane. When his paralysed father wrote on a piece of paper, with great difficulty, "Judge Not", he had been flustered. He did not like God's command not to judge, so one may not be judged. He could not see how a man could think unless he was able to pass judgements every day. "Supposing you see a guy's a crook or a phony or a murderer.

What are you supposed to do? Just let him get away with it?

I'm not God, Mrs. McManus. I have to do the best I can."³⁶

Mrs. McManus consoled him by saying that there is a lot of difference between what should be and what could be. Mike Kon was doing what could be done. What he thought about Harry Lane he said and did. As Annie said, "Maybe in his own way Mike is an honest man."³⁷

All of these characters in The Many Colored Coat are honest in their own ways. They had no axes to grind against Harry Lane. When they saw his eccentric behaviour, they were, doubtless, dismayed. Some of them were worried. People like Ouimet who were so sure of their consciences could not allow a man like Harry Lane to make them bestir themselves and ask second questions of themselves. Ouimet and other sedate people in the novel wanted Harry Lane to examine his conscience. Instead, he jolted them out of their security and sense of well-being. They would not tolerate such 'obscene' behaviour on the part of a person like Harry Lane. As long as Harry Lane remained a laughing stock, they did not mind; but when he made them the objects of ridicule, he had to be taught a lesson that he would not forget.

The character who triggers the story in It's Never Over is Fred Thompson, the brother of Isabelle, who was hanged at the very outset of the story. His death influences everyone associated with him. Isabelle, in a sadistic fashion, held on to this tragic death of Fred. She wanted not only to remember Fred for herself, but also wanted the rest of the world not to forget him. She, however, protested that that was not her intentions.

But Fred's death had created conflicting emotions in her mind. John Hughes, was a friend of both Fred and Isabelle. He was, above all a sensible man who felt that the only practical way to deal with Fred's death was to forget him altogether. Not only did he not want to talk about him, he did not want anybody around him to mention Fred's name. The evening after the funeral when Isabelle tried to talk about Fred, John was upset and angry. He said: "Look here, I was fond of Fred too. Stop talking about it. What is there to be gained by having all our old thoughts again? Why do you have to torture yourself and hurt me too? I won't have it, do you hear, Isabelle?"³⁸ He avoided seeing her as she reminded him of Fred. Later in the story, Gibbons mentioned hanging and said, "A hanging draws everybody into it. We are all held. It takes hold of some stronger than others. Some are sentimental and some are hard, but they are all crucified in their own way."³⁹ John Hughes was so incensed at this statement of Gibbons that he "reached over suddenly and slapped Gibbons across the face, then stared at him stupidly, surprised at what he had done."⁴⁰ He apologized to Gibbons and said, "Talking about him and thinking about the whole thing excited me and I wanted to stop talking. I hardly know what you are saying about him. Forgive me."⁴¹

Fred Thompson was the albatross around the neck of everyone. Especially in the case of Isabelle it was masochism. John Hughes found that association with Isabelle was driving everyone to abnormal thoughts and actions. Father Mason, Paul Ross and Lillian were all captivated by the eccentricity of

Isabelle. John resented this and tried to counteract her influence. He himself decided that he would have no truck with her. "Six months ago we forgot all about it, after Fred was arrested. She thought she ought to lose everything. It was kind of hard. It was better for both of us."⁴² The problem was that neither of them could keep away from each other. Their love, and their common experiences were too strong to break their relationship. John tried to divert her by introducing her to Paul Ross. However when he saw that they went off together and were enjoying their experience, he was upset. It had been to take Isabelle away from the seemingly uncouth Ed Henley that John had suggested this arrangement. John detested Henley so much that he told Isabelle, "...you oughtn't to marry him. Promise you won't marry him."⁴³ But when he found that Paul Ross and Isabelle were going out of town together, he was furious with himself. "I acted as the pimp for her, do you see? I fixed it all up. I told him she was ready for him, and then they went on the road together."⁴⁴

John Hughes would not accept that this was jealousy, and that his jealousy was due to the fact he loved her intensely. He was resentful of everything that Isabelle did. When he found out that it was Isabelle who had persuaded Lillian to rent an apartment where she could meet John, he was aghast. He could not fathom the degradation that Isabelle had reached. As he told Lillian, "She's got hold of you."⁴⁵ The fact of the matter was that they were all affected by Isabelle.

John was an educated person who did not want to do

anything rash or impetuous. But he knew that he had to purge himself and he would by getting rid of Isabelle. As he told the priest in the confessional, "...It's in my mind to kill somebody. It's been in my mind many hours now, I didn't want to move rashly or just be carried away by a violent passion."⁴⁶ Why did he want to kill Isabelle? "She took possession of my whole life. She got hold of all my feelings, trying to own me, and then tried to take everything away from me. She would be better dead."⁴⁷ It was his sense of fairness that brought him to the priest. Before that he had tested his landlady's reactions to murder. She said that if she saw the woman who took her husband away, after all these years, she would still strangle her. The priest's advice on the destruction of the ego struck a cord in John Hughes and he thought:

...that the priest had agreed with him that his own importance had been destroyed. His own soul had been denied to him, but he had a plan that would restore his own feeling of decency and dignity. He had not expected to get such an explanation of the strong feeling from the priest. He swung open the door, stepping out into the cold, exalted, excited, thinking of doing the act that would restore to him all dignity and decency of the spirit, he, a man of talent, anxious for all the good things, was entitled to.⁴⁸

John Hughes had made up his mind. After long, deliberate consideration, he decided to kill Isabelle. What else could he do?

We will not belabour the analysis of the worldly-wise in They Shall Inherit the Earth. Anna does not encounter the kind of opposition that Peggy Sanderson, Fr. Dowling and Harry Lane encounter. Nor are the attitudes of Anna similar to the one of Isabelle. Therefore, perhaps, she does not run into

that kind of opposition. As we shall see in the next chapter, Anna's a character which needs very special study. Hers is the only influence that does not bring about destruction and violence in others. However, we can still discern the wisdom or, perhaps, the smartness of a man like Huck Farr, who would take advantage of the weakness of a lonely girl out of work, and she seems to be willing to go along with him. The unfortunate part is that both of them had asked Michael Aikenhead about each other and it was he who had set them up. Therefore he would have been responsible for anything that might have happened as a result of Huck Farr's adventures with Anna. It was to Michael's credit that, though in a ridiculous manner, he got Anna out of the compromising situation. As for Miss Gray who thought that what was going on in the room with Michael and Anna is disgraceful - "everybody knows what goes on in your place with that girl not married"⁴⁹ -, what is one to say? Her frustration is the frustration of many like her, withered, longing and jealous of youth and beauty. We will not call either of these characters worldly-wise. They are typical of their kind.

People surrounding Fr. Dowling in Such is My Beloved are evocative of some of the characters we have examined in this chapter. Mr. Carver and Mr. Morris were both good men, liberal minded, educated, pillars of their society. Mr. Robison and the Bishop in Such is My Beloved are also practical people, well-educated and wise to the affairs of the world. Mr. Robison was an aristocratic person, who would be chauffeured to Church on Sundays, who knew some of the most important people in the city

and the country, because of his position as a corporation lawyer. Mr. Robison gave large amounts of charities where "he expected his name to be put at the head of the list in the newspapers."⁵⁰ He was always happy when the priests came to him for favours; he expected that he was the man to come to; as he said, "Men like myself must do all we can to keep the people contented and we're doing so."⁵¹ He admired the enthusiasm of Fr. Dowling and wanted him "to keep up the good work,"⁵² as long as he was not endangering the good name of the church of which the lawyer was very proud. He was willing to admit that "love and charity always will seem to me to be the divine themes, the most powerful themes affecting the human heart."⁵³ When he saw Fr. Dowling's enthusiasm for the prostitutes, he was curious to "understand this love, this eagerness which did not seem like any emotion he had ever felt."⁵⁴

Nonetheless, Mr. Robison knew that enthusiasm must have certain limits. He was willing to go along with Fr. Dowling to the hotel where the girls entertained. But he would not compromise himself by entering their residence; and he did not want the girls in his own home, and when Fr. Dowling suggested this, he was shocked. It needed the flattery of Fr. Dowling to coax him to do so. When, at the instigation of his wife, Mr. Robison decided to report Fr. Dowling to the Bishop, he did not do so lightly. Mrs. Robison's reasons for resenting the priest were many. She thought that the prostitutes were mentally weak; she was not happy at the sermons of the priest; and she was insulted by the girls. "The more she pondered, the more she felt with

deep sincerity that he was misguided, and the more she was determined to cling desperately to her faith in her own wisdom."⁵⁵ But Mr. Robison felt deep regret and sympathy for the priest as he went to the Bishop. He only did so out of a sense of duty. As he went to the Bishop's palace, "he suddenly felt that he liked the young priest and would not willingly hurt him. It was actually like a mild feeling of humility."⁵⁶ This feeling made him a little more cheerful in his duty. Even then he handled the situation very delicately, withheld the name of the priest till the end of the conversation, and promised to use his influence to throw the girls out of town so that the priest would not be able to visit them again. He felt "uneasy, flustered and irritable"⁵⁷ at the thought of the priest's enthusiasm and it was only when he stepped into his familiar club that he felt that he had done the right thing in reporting Fr. Dowling to the Bishop.

What of the Bishop himself? He was a well-read man who kept abreast of the writings and thinkings of his Church. "He had a fine mind for politics, an intuition that compelled him to do the expedient thing."⁵⁸ Expediency, after all, is one of the practical qualities of the worldly-wise people that we have seen in this chapter. He had the interest of his church at heart and would do everything for its prosperity. He feared the outcome of a scandal that could be caused by Fr. Dowling, and was worried about how that could affect his projected financial campaign. At the same time he understood the temptations that would beset his young, inexperienced priests. "They're human beings, young men

without much guile or experience, full-blooded and healthy."⁵⁹ He was of the opinion that one should forgive their enthusiasm, which sometimes drove them to excesses. He would prefer, though, sober and prudent direction of this enthusiasm. He very delicately suggested to Mr. Robison that he should use his influence to drive the girls out of the town.

The Bishop wanted his priests to be above reproach. His conscience bothered him ever so little; but "the other part of his mind was urging him to be rational, to be firm, to administer his office according to his highest conception of duty."⁶⁰ He admitted to himself that he was happier when he was as young as Fr. Dowling, "before he became more cautious and "formed estimates of the value of all human actions."⁶¹ It was not possible, according to the Bishop, that the priest would be a saint, because if he had been, the Bishop would have heard about it. Thus he came to the conclusion that he did not "suffer from the sin of hardness of heart."⁶² He decided that he had merely done his duty in transferring Fr. Dowling because "he was an honest man who committed himself to a piece of folly that can't be tolerated, that's all there's to it."⁶³ The practical wisdom, the rationality of expediency in the Bishop, smoothed any qualms he might have felt in regard to the treatment he meted out to Fr. Dowling.

Other characters in Such is My Beloved also require a passing thought. H.C. Baer, the owner of the hotel where the girls lived, was a cynic. He had seen the seamy side of things for so many years, that when he recognised the priest, he simply

pretended that he did not know him. He had a leering understanding of the weakness of human flesh. But in the end when he realised that the priest was the cause of his ruin, he asked him: "You get the hell out of here, you fornicati' friar, and never come back."⁶⁴

Lou, the pimp was another cynic. He tolerated Fr. Dowling. But he did not normally suffer fools like him. He was apprehensive that his business would suffer as a result of the interference of the priest. Fr. Anglin, the parish priest, did not like the disturbing sermons of the young priest. He felt that all art, "being sensual, tended to detract from man's one primal instinct, his need of the faith and his desire to worship God."⁶⁵ Therefore, he did not tolerate any arguments about art. When Fr. Dowling was punished in the end, Fr. Anglin was not sorry. "Like many another severe old priest, he felt a little like a pope and was ready to excommunicate in his own militant mind all who disagreed with him."⁶⁶

We see then, that all these people whom we have discussed in this chapter were men and women beyond reproach. They wanted to live their lives in an orderly fashion. When they were disturbed in their sense of order, when, the eccentrics would reveal the glimpses of chaos in the world, they would resent it. As long as the chaotic world was hidden by the umbrellas they all constantly carried, they were at peace. But the intrusion of the peculiar people like Fr. Dowling or Peggy Sanderson, was like a tear in the umbrella, through which they could get a glimpse of the chaos surrounding them. What they saw did not

satisfy them. Therefore they would dispose of the messenger
who brought the news of the reality of things.

Notes

- ¹The Loved and The Lost, p. 42.
- ²Ibid., p. 84.
- ³Ibid., p. 120.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 155.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 157.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 157.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 91.
- ⁸Ibid., pp. 93-94.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 94.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 177.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 193.
- ¹²Ibid., p. 52.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 170.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 227.
- ¹⁵Ibid., p. 149.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 177.
- ¹⁷The Many Colored Coat, p. 57.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 133.
- ¹⁹Ibid., p. 106.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 107.
- ²¹Ibid., p. 105.
- ²²Ibid., p. 124.
- ²³Ibid., p. 106.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 111.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 171.

- 26 Ibid., p. 172.
- 27 Ibid., p. 92.
- 28 Ibid., p. 93.
- 29 Ibid., p. 203.
- 30 Ibid., p. 53.
- 31 Ibid., p. 235.
- 32 Ibid., p. 265.
- 33 Ibid., p. 63.
- 34 Ibid., p. 83.
- 35 Ibid., p. 316.
- 36 Ibid., p. 269.
- 37 Ibid., p. 318.
- 38 It's Never Over, p. 29.
- 39 Ibid., p. 94.
- 40 Ibid., p. 95.
- 41 Ibid., p. 95.
- 42 Ibid., p. 7.
- 43 Ibid., p. 50.
- 44 Ibid., p. 70.
- 45 Ibid., p. 55.
- 46 Ibid., p. 139.
- 47 Ibid., p. 140.
- 48 Ibid., p. 142.
- 49 They Shall Inherit the Earth. p. 150.
- 50 Such is My Beloved. p. 28.
- 51 Ibid., p. 40.
- 52 Ibid., p. 41.

- 53 Ibid., p. 80.
- 54 Ibid., p. 84.
- 55 Ibid., p. 96.
- 56 Ibid., p. 98.
- 57 Ibid., p. 102.
- 58 Ibid., p. 98.
- 59 Ibid., p. 100.
- 60 Ibid., p. 131.
- 61 Ibid., p. 134.
- 62 Ibid., p. 135.
- 63 Ibid., p. 136.
- 64 Ibid., p. 117.
- 65 Ibid., p. 97.
- 66 Ibid., p. 137.

CHAPTER IV

THE TRANSCENDENTAL VERSUS THE GOOD

It would be wrong for us to describe the characters we have discussed in Chapter II as merely "eccentrics". They are people whose standards are different from the people around them. They have had some extraordinary religious experience which has left a lasting imprint on them. The experience is beyond the empirical. It goes beyond normal experiences. It goes beyond rational and ethical conceptions. 'Transcendence' is the word that I prefer to use in this context. Transcendentalism can be described, but it cannot be explained. The consequences of transcendentalism can be seen in those who experience it and those who come into contact with the transcendentalists. But it cannot be fully explained or logically analysed. The experience of the transcendent brings about a transformation in the structure of values. The new hierarchy of values of those who come into contact with the transcendent. In fact, as we shall see in this chapter, it is difficult to understand them and it is this difficulty that brings them into conflict with those around them.

Peggy Sanderson in The Loved and The Lost is an interesting example of one whose yardsticks are different from that of everybody else around her. She was not prudent and wise in the eyes of the people who wanted to be left alone. Nobody could accuse her of wrong-doing, but her very existence was

wrong, at least as far as they were concerned. Society demanded Peggy to conform to its mores which were accepted as sacrosanct. But, either she did not know them or she did not care for them. This is one of the attributes that we shall find common in those whom we call transcendentalists. Peggy was not so much interested in the practical and the polite, as in her own sense of good and evil. The struggle in the novel The Loved and The Lost is between right and wrong as society sees it and good and evil as seen from another, and a higher, plane.

As was suggested above, nobody could accuse Peggy of wrong-doing. Foley who introduced her to Jim McAlpine said of her, "When she's around we smile at each other,"¹ and they were happy to have her in the office. The strange truth, however, is that when she was found to have been friendly with Negroes, she was fired from her job, with trumped up charges.

We will have to study her anew to understand her better. In the chapter in which we saw her as eccentric, fighting the good people around her, we only had a superficial look at her, or at any of these other characters whom we called "eccentric." Peggy Sanderson is seen through the eyes of Jim McAlpine. In fact, Isabelle, Anna and Peggy are all seen through the eyes of others. Callaghan only gives us subtle hints at the depth of these characters, leaving us to come to our conclusions. In the cases of Fr. Dowling and Harry Lane, while the narrator follows the story through the eyes of the two characters, there is a deeper level to these men which the reader is left to fathom for himself. This is

where Callaghan's sense of irony is seen clearly. These books have a way of creeping up on the reader. As Edmund Wilson said about the writings of Callaghan in comparison with his friends, Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald:

The people in his stories do not burst upon us as they do in Scott Fitzgerald or incise themselves as they do in Hemingway; gently but very surely they lay hold on the reader's attention and gradually become more interesting, become something often startlingly different from what we had at first supposed, and the situations seem to unfold almost without the author's manipulation. Callaghan has nothing of the lyricism that intoxicated the readers of his two older colleagues, and the rhythms of his prose, though they carry one, do not generate the same kind of emotion, but his unobtrusive art is more subtle and his intelligence more mature than those of either of the others.²

McAlpine wondered what the nature of Peggy Sanderson's repose was and how she was able to communicate it to others. It was not her suggestion of innocence, but "something in her nature like an act of peace,"³ that fascinated him when he discussed Montreal with her and said that some people are never at home, she replied, "I am lucky knowing when I am."⁴ McAlpine, later in the story was trying to explain the impact of Peggy to Foley and others and he said, "It's more like the way you feel when you suddenly come on something that's just right."⁵ which Foley called "that oasis of happiness."⁶

Peggy Sanderson and other transcendentalists will not necessarily follow reason and logic. They go by some other compulsion, or impulse, or instinct which is hard to define. Peggy herself called it "her whirling away feeling"⁷, and which always led her in the direction that she had to go. The first time she

was sure of it was when she left home, and ever since then she had followed this feeling and let it direct her. It is interesting that when Henry Jackson mentioned the name Saint Joan, McAlpine thought, "that she, like Joan, lived and acted by her own secret intuition. Joan had shattered her world, and Peggy shattered people too. Not only Malone, but Mrs. Murdoch; even Foley. She would shatter all the people who lived on the mountain. Joan had to die, he thought with a sharp pang, simply because she was what she was."⁸

McAlpine, in his quest to understand Peggy better, went to many of her friends to ask them about her. When Wagstaffe wanted Jim to ask Peggy to keep away from the Negro section because she was creating confusion and jealousy among his people, McAlpine said, "Isn't it wonderful! A girl who can't help being the same with everybody... People who think one way have an itch to spoil her because she stands for something else. And what's really comical is that we aren't hating people around here for being as vicious as they are, we are resenting her for being what she is."⁹

McAlpine touched on the nub of the problem of Christianity when he said that. The hate and resentment against Peggy was not because she was vicious, but because she was what she was.

Jim McAlpine tried to reason with Peggy because others were threatening her. In reply, Peggy said, "They'll break their backs trying to bring you in line again, and if you won't see things the way everybody else does, you're crazy or perverse or pig-headed or stupid. Everybody's willing to give you a hand if you'll only string along and quit. And if you won't

quit."¹⁰ She left the sentence incomplete as it was obvious. She found that people would not let her be what she wanted to be. She had talked to all kinds of Negroes and found that justice was blind in this regard, and, so, many of them were on the run; they were running away from white justice. She asked, "Look, Jim, who's being inhuman? The supercilious people who have charge of this world or me? In one way or another there are a lot of people on the run from what's inhuman,"¹¹ and that some of them came knocking at her door and she only wanted to help them. Because of this sense of injustice, she had, sometimes, contempt, for her own race. This was her "noble adventure."¹²

While on this adventure, she was not blind to its possible consequences. It is interesting to note that people like Peggy are always aware of the dangers attendant on their endeavours. They realise that being against the engrained mores and taboos of society, they may end breaking their heads against the stone walls of societal resistance, or even worse. But this is a consequence they accept, even though, sometimes, reluctantly. The fascination of Peggy for the crouching leopard was very significant. There was in her "a mixture of peace and wildness."¹³ One had to be daring to embark on this noble adventure, whether one is directed by principles, impulses or instincts. Why, she asked for instance, did nobody think about what she thought. Why did McAlpine and others have to constantly talk about what others thought about her? As much as she was concerned for the welfare

of others, Peggy was a woman of strength. She was not afraid to go and tell Wolgast what she thought about him.

This utter disregard for prudence and good sense would land all these characters in great danger. Peggy was in constant trouble from all. After the riot in the café, she came home and McAlpine found her weeping and "he knew she wept out of shame and over the failure of her judgement of herself and others and her bitter humiliating disappointment."¹⁴ Such was the disappointment in herself and in the human race, she loathed herself and wondered how Jim could declare his love for her. She was so grateful for this love that she was willing to give everything of herself to Jim at that point. Jim delayed because he doubted and "in a moment of jealous doubt his faith in her had weakened, he had lost his view of her, and so she had vanished."¹⁵

The end of Peggy Sanderson is the end of most of the characters that we will discuss in this chapter: death. It was necessary for the sanity and normalcy of the world that people like Peggy Sanderson should die. It is better for one person to die than the rest of humanity to change their ways. As detective Bouchard said about the cause of Peggy's death, "What if we all did it? The human condition. That has truth, don't you think?"¹⁶ Yes, that has truth. What, then, of the people around Peggy? They could not accept her as she was. The world will never be ready to accept such people. The human condition is such that Christ will be crucified again, that Joan would be burned again. Jim McAlpine looked up at the mountain and had a swift fancy. He thought he heard horses' hoofs.

All the proud men on their white horses came storming down the slope of the mountain in a ruthless cavalry charge, the white horses whirling and snorting in the snow. She didn't own a white horse. She didn't want to. She didn't care. And he was beside her; but he drew back out of the way of the terrifying hoofs as they rode over her. 17

That, then, would be the fate of Peggy Sanderson or anyone else who would be like her.

Let me repeat here what has been mentioned before, viz. in isolating one character for the sake of this chapter, I do not intend to malign the other characters in the novels of Moxley Callaghan. These stories do not lend themselves to black and white differentiations. There are no heroes and no villains. It is the glory of his novels that Callaghan has not castigated any characters. Even the Judases are set in sympathetic light, to allow the reader to see every side of every character. The people mentioned and discussed in Chapter III are not bad characters. Some of them are not only wise, but also righteous persons. But there are others in these novels who stand out as extraordinary because of their values or their potentialities, because they have their goals set differently from that of others. It is these we call transcendentalists, because they transcend the ordinary values, they strive to reach the unreachable, or they have the possibilities of doing so.

Harry Lane in The Many Colored Coat is not of the same mold as Peggy Sanderson or Fr. Dowling. Lane is not other-worldly. When he was a successful public relations man, if he had been told what he was going to do after the death of Scotty Bowman, Harry would have been surprised at himself and would have

denied his potentialities to do what he did. Nor does it seem as if vagaries of fortune that he underwent was different from that of Mike Kon. And yet, there are differences in the way they viewed these ups and downs. Mike Kon was anxious to re-establish his place in society, and to reinstate himself as a successful businessman. He would only see the hand of Harry trying to pull him down from his position in society. This he resisted with all the force that he could command. His understanding of the episode of the many-colored coat was radically different from that of Harry Lane. While Harry used the coat to get back to court, Mike thought it was a deliberate attempt to belittle and ridicule him in the eyes of the public. But that was not the intention of Harry. At least he was only using the coat, and through the coat, Mike, so that he would be able to vindicate his innocence in court. Thus Mike was a means rather than an end in the plans of Harry. It is this end that Harry had in mind that makes him different from Mike Kon or anybody else in The Many Colored Coat. Harry was preoccupied by justice and innocence - in particular, his own justice and innocence. He was willing to go to any extent, to suffer, to endure, to become an object of ridicule and laughter, in order to achieve that end.

Haggerty and the rest of his former friends not only laughed at Harry, but came to have a contempt for him, and could not understand why he was embarrassing himself and others. But Ogilvie seems to have understood something when he said

".....for ten thousand years men have been willing to die for the sake of their self-esteem"¹⁸ and therefore he had doubts whether Harry was only being childish in his conduct. Of all the people in the story, one person who came close to understanding Harry, was Annie Laurrie. She thought that he had the courage of his convictions. Harry liked doing good to his people. But in the process of trying to establish his innocence he was wronging Mike Kon. As she said, otherwise Mike would not have punched Harry on the jaw and broke his neck, "The trouble was Harry never had a chance to punch Scotty Bowman on the jaws so nobody believes he was ever wronged. People are like that."¹⁹ This statement was simple enough to be profound as the magistrate stated.

The preoccupation with the innocence of Harry Lane makes him an extraordinary character. He, unlike Mike Kon, was not too worried about losing his job, nor even about losing his friends and his social position. Harry Lane realised that by the silence and subsequent death of Scotty Bowman, Scotty was depriving Harry of an opportunity to establish his innocence, Lane felt the injustice of it all. The fact of the matter was that while the court found Scotty guilty, the public condemned Harry as the guilty party and Scotty only a poor blighted friend who was led down the garden path by Harry. Harry felt that while everybody at the trial spoke the truth, enough truth was not told to establish his innocence. He could not accept Max's statement that truth about any man is pretty hard to tell, because there are

so many angles to it.

When Harry Lane met the priest in the confessional to discuss this matter of justice, he was warned of "The great wound to your pride if they don't believe you. These distinctions are very difficult. The more you suffer from an injustice, the deeper the wound to your pride, is it not so? And then to correct an injustice you become like a raging lion doing violence to your own spirit and to others for the sake of the truth."²⁰

This answer did not satisfy him and therefore he undertook the plan of wearing the many colored coat. The symbolism of the coat is worth exploring for a moment. It had a good exterior, but a defective interior, so was Scotty Bowman who was considered a prince among men, but was avaricious inside of himself. The coat was a disgrace to the one who wore it and to the one who made it. It had several colors to it just as justice, truth and innocence have different aspects and angles to them. They cannot be seen in one single pattern. Thus the coat becomes thematic and symbolic.

Harry was alienating himself from all human sympathies by wearing his sufferings on his sleeves. But through these sufferings Harry gets new insights: "For the first time in years I'm forced to open my eyes again and look around. Well, it's a pretty agonising experience. It's the damnedest thing, Mollie. The whole world in false face. No one is quite in the place he pretends to be. I don't mind at all. Everyone looks so amusingly phony. I feel a power in me, Mollie."²¹ This expedition in exploration of his innocence took him very far into

himself. When Harry was in the hospital recovering from the bout with Mike Kon, he thought about "the parade of his innocence."²² He thought it was like a woman shouting "I am a virgin, step up and see for yourself, inviting attack; it was a kind of prostitution. He wondered if the virtue of innocence could become a vice, and whether innocence can ever be acknowledged to oneself without becoming a vanity, a pride."²³ It was at the end of this that Annie Laurrie who came to visit him said, that she would not influence heaven, "I told you once before I wasn't much good to you as an advocate. I throw myself on the mercy of the court."²⁴ She had greater faith in mercy than justice and the proving of innocence.

The final trial having taken place as Harry had desired all along, he fails to turn up in court. This was surprising to most people. Harry Lane's absence from the trial seemed to be a sudden change of plan. However, his recent experiences were preparing him for this seemingly radical step. Harry Lane had put on the "Josephian" many-colored coat and this coat had become, as it had done to the brothers of Joseph in the Bible, a cause of irritation. The coat disturbed their consciences. Harry Lane had become a clown. A clown assumes a role, to become the laughing stock of the world. Through this self-exposure to ridicule, Harry was able to assess himself and others. His mask helped him see himself and others more clearly. He perceived not only that the world is not what it pretends to be, but that he himself was different. Perhaps, unconsciously, Harry Lane achieved enlightenment through his role as a clown.

But Harry, by then had realised that legal justice was not needed for him, that judges could make wrong judgment; that society could indict a person on external, superficial evidence and that no man should judge others. No man could "act as policeman over the soul of another,"²⁵ Harry realised that innocence could be evil and that he was using it as a murderous weapon to destroy people; and that he was one of those with "the disease of the Christian conscience"²⁶ walking the earth "in wounded righteousness demanding the vengeance of the Lord on those who had wounded them."²⁷ He realised that innocence was like a two-edged sword without a handle which if gripped would "cut you so painfully you had to lash out blindly, seeking vengeance on someone for the bleeding."²⁸

Harry Lane also realised that he was not aware of himself vis-a-vis Scotty Bowman. He found he was a naive man. "Unawareness, by this sin fell the proudly innocent, he thought sardonically. Fell into what? My God, it need not be into corruption - why not into some awareness that could give width and depth to man's whole life?"²⁹ It was to achieve this new dimension to his life that he decided not to appear in court. Along with the rejection of the court, he rejected others like Mollie because he did not want to look back upon her. No one could ever go back with someone to what they had had. He was going a different way now and had to part company with her. He hoped to change his own life so that everything would be in a different focus. He looked around him in the slum district of Montreal and

saw the faces of people. "Some were evil, some pious, some greedy, some just didn't care, and some no doubt avowed their sins, suffering whatever torments. Yet they looked as if they could handle their lives and be comfortable together. There would be some though, he was sure, who would really be alone, knowing the terror of their innocence."³⁰

Thus the final realization of the terror of his innocence was the end of his journey. In as much as Harry Lane was fighting a battle not so much with Scotty Bowman or Mike Kon or Ouimet as with himself, the story of his exploration lends a new dimension to The Many Colored Coat. The difference between Harry Lane and others, as was mentioned earlier, was that he had a different outlook on life; he was honest and was willing to honestly explore the new dimensions of his mind. He came to a calm settlement of his problems with the help of grace and Annie Laurrie. (Ann means grace). He had to find out for himself that there is no such thing as a public conscience, that even legal justice is not worth exploring. He did realize that innocence was a dangerous weapon and that awareness was more important than innocence. As for mercy and love, he was never without it. But in the end he realized that justice and innocence are all subordinate to charity and kindness. It was himself who was on trial, not merely in the two trials, but all through the novel. Harry Lane's potentiality to go on this exploration of himself successfully makes him a person different from the ordinary run of humanity. He has an insight that transcends the surface values

and standards of people and lives in a different sphere of understanding and awareness.

Like Harry Lane, Fr. Dowling was a naive person, who thought the best of everybody else. He would not bring himself to think badly about people. To him, even in a pimp like Lou, there were redeeming qualities. In any case he would try and save everybody. His story in Such is My Beloved is a voyage of discovery - a discovery about himself and others, about human and divine love. Harry Lane came to terms with the realization that unawareness was a sin. Fr. Dowling ended up in a mental hospital as a result of this awakening. His journey was more difficult because his seminary training, the world around him, and his church and its traditions had not prepared him for the kind of knowledge of love he was going to experience. Fr. Dowling had kept his perspective clear from the beginning. He went in quest of the souls of Catherine Bourassa and Veronica Olsen because they were individuals who had to be saved. The problem of prostitution was neither sociological as Mrs. Robison had suggested, nor economical as was affirmed by Charlie Stewart. To Fr. Dowling, Ronnie and Midge were persons to be loved. He knew that "his feeling for the girls was so intense it must surely partake of the nature of divine love."³¹ He felt that "the more he could understand, love and help these girls, the closer he would be to understanding and loving God."³² Was it not St. John who had asked how we could love God whom we can't see if we do not love our fellow-man whom we can see? Therefore

the two girls became more important to him as the lost sheep than the rest of his parish flock. The more he frequented their company, the more he realized that he understood them well, and because he understood something about love, the Song of Solomon became so much more meaningful to him - "this love song, sung so marvellously that it transcended human love and became divine."³³ Fr. Dowling felt that "the more I love and think of these girls the closer I am to these people."³⁴ When the Bishop accused him of having loved these street-walkers in a purely human fashion, loved them for themselves, he replied, "It seems to me it was loving them in the only way I knew how."³⁵ When he left the Bishop he thought of the problem of love:

'How could God have loved these girls if not for themselves? How otherwise then could I have loved them?' he asked himself. And if God was able to love all souls without distinction in His divine way in spite of their failures, their lusts and avarices and their miserable condition, wasn't he, a simple priest through his love of these two girls, loving the whole world, too?³⁶

This thought gave him sustenance. When Fr. Dowling found himself in a mental hospital he was able to make the supreme sacrifice of his own sanity for the sake of those whom he loved. "O my God, accept my sickness and insanity as a sacrifice and I will willingly endure it, and my God, for this sacrifice, I ask only that you spare the souls of those two poor girls. Preserve their souls and the souls of all the living who need your pity and justice. Deliver them from all evil."³⁷

We will not go into the symbolisms or themes in this novel or in the other novels under consideration. However

we can see how different Fr. Dowling's attitude to the girls was, as compared to that of the Robisons or the Bishop. The Robisons would not want the prostitutes to tarnish and contaminate their threshold by their presence. They felt it prudent to keep the priest away from the whores. The Bishop was not willing to jeopardise his charity-drive by allowing a priest to be over-enthusiastic. To Fr. Dowling, prostitution was only a sin like any other sin and he was not afraid to love the sinner, while condemning the sin. As he told the Bishop, while Midge and Ronnie prostituted their bodies, others were "prostituting their souls and their principles for money...I know people in this city who prostitute our faith for the sake of expediency...So if I can't have charity for those girls, certainly I can have no love for many others in higher places."³⁸ (It's interesting to note that the Bishop himself had sacrificed many enthusiastic ideas for the sake of expediency.)

Fr. Dowling understood the girls well. He was amazed at Midge's sensitivity and sympathetic attitude. He thought "that attitude in her is really Christian in the best sense of the word. That desire to make each moment precious, to make the immediate eternal, or rather to see the eternal in the immediate."³⁹ That was why he condoned the girls. He felt almost as if the girls were doing some good to his parish. "These girls were taking on themselves all these mean and secret passions...these girls never suspect the sacrifice of their souls that they offer everyday."⁴⁰ No wonder that Fr. Dowling, in a sacramental fashion broke bread with them and partook of wine with the two girls, as His Master

would have done. He felt that everyone was entitled to self-respect, warmth and good clothing and wondered "why God saw fit to permit so many people to have wealth and comfort and so many to remain poor and hungry."⁴¹ He knew that nobody could be a good Christian when he was poor and hungry, "for then you're hardly responsible for what you do."⁴²

These are not attitudes that would have found favour with the Bishop and the Robisons. They would have wanted him to be disgusted with the very notion of prostitution. Fr. Dowling was an obedient priest who saw God in his superior. But the attitude of the Robisons and such so irritated the priest that even the Church made him feel "no sudden affection, but just a cool disgust, as if the Church no longer belonged to him."⁴³ He must have been very disappointed in the hierarchical and institutional structures of his Church. Perhaps he was disappointed with himself for condemning these structures too. "All of us must be terribly disappointing to God. By any standard of justice God might have abandoned us all long ago and left us to shift for ourselves as those girls are shifting now..."⁴⁴

He had also problems about understanding his church's stand on birth control when people like the Canzanos were living in despair bringing forth more children, becoming more wretched and miserable. He could not understand how a convinced communist like Charlie Stewart would walk with him to the hotel in search of the girls while the Robisons and the Bishop would think of them as weak-minded occasions of sin who should be banished from the city. He

found that the living had greater need for peace than the dead.

What of the girls themselves? The Bishop expected and even Fr. Dowling himself thought disappointingly that he had no influence on Midge and Ronnie. But that was not true. They not only liked his company, they thought about him and this kept them away from further deterioration. This thought gave them dignity; they were able to pray. Even in jail the thought of Fr. Dowling consoled them. They wanted him to help them. "But no, he couldn't, it wouldn't do any good and I couldn't stand the way he'd feel and have that hurt look on his face. There was that look on his face the other night. I won't drag him into it,"⁴⁵ thought Midge. She began to remember the prayers she thought she had forgotten. She thought, "He knew there wasn't much wrong with me except this."⁴⁶ As did the prodigal son, this realization would ultimately make her get out of her despair, and send her back home. Catherine, the adviser of Popes and prelates, Veronica the one who wiped the face of Christ on his way to Calvary, were names that Callaghan gave with significance to his characters. The girls, then, kept a deep and abiding faith in the one good man whom they knew. With his prayer and sacrifice of his own sanity, who knows, what did happen to Ronnie and Midge?

Several stories of Morley Callaghan end in the sign of three. In The Many Colored Coat and It's Never Over, three is very frequently used. In Such is My Beloved, Fr. Dowling sitting on the lawn of the mental hospital saw the night sky. "High in the sky three stars were out. His love seemed suddenly to be as

steadfast as those stars, as wide as the water, and still flowing within him like the cold smooth waves still rolling on the shores."⁴⁷

In Morley Callaghan by Brandon Conron,⁴⁸ the following statement of the story of It's Never Over occurs:

Despite his early awareness of Isabelle's enveloping and malignant influence, John seems helpless to cope with her destructive power. Having persuaded Lillian to take an apartment in order to please John, Isabelle visits them and spoils their extra-marital happiness together. She generates in Lillian's mind the notion that Lillian has really been in love with Fred. Then switching from the simple but genuine Ed Henley, Isabelle gives herself with abandon to Fred's wartime companion, Paul Ross. She deliberately draws the family priest, Father Mason, into her moral protestation by singling him out for confession. Her clandestine visit to John's room and his surrender to her strangely burning excitement lead to the eviction from his respectable boardinghouse and the loss of his position as church soloist. The discovery that she admitted this indiscretion to Lillian and thus alienated her from him brings to a climax John's mounting resentment. His resolve to "rid himself of the source of all his unhappiness" is prevented only by Isabelle's impending death from pneumonia. Her funeral brings together the main characters and breaks permanently their relationship with each other.⁴⁹

Thus, Conron finds Isabelle the villain of the piece. She was responsible, according to him, for all the problems that John Hughes had to undergo. My contention is that such a reading of the story is not correct. At a first reading it might seem so. However, let us look at the facts from another angle. Isabelle deliberately let John go away from her. She did not want to tie him down to her after the hanging of Fred, knowing that he would not be able to bear it. Not only that, she also persuaded him to go

out with Lillian. As she said, "with you and Lillian, we'll make it easier for each other."⁵⁰ John too wanted to be free of her, expecting, in the process to be also free of the memory of Fred. When she wanted something beautiful to think of "I thought of the way it was with you and Lillian."⁵¹ This is the sacrifice of the highest order, for she was sacrificing for herself the most precious emotion of hers - her love. She had lost her brother, and, now she was ready to lose her friends, hoping that they would be happy together. But this was an artificial and incompatible arrangement which could not last.

Isabelle tried to keep this sacrifice permanent. She went out with Ed Henley whom John detested. After that she tried to be friendly with Paul Ross. That too did not meet with the approval of John, because he saw that it was working out too well. He thought he was being a pimp in introducing Paul Ross to Isabelle. John's efforts to shut his mind off of Isabelle failed. Whatever she did to help him worked against their separation. He could not help the fact that he enjoyed her company. "He enjoyed the rest of the evening, sitting in the front room talking with Isabelle, who played for him new records, negro spirituals, on the talking machine."⁵² But he would later feel, "silly that he had let thoughts of Isabelle obsess him."⁵³ He would accuse everybody, including Ed Henley for his misery; "John staring at Henley's knuckles and his sloppy lips, was working himself up, almost ready to stand up and shout that Henley was a great pig who loved everything in the world that he detested, and

was really the idiot who had taken hold first of Isabelle, and indirectly of him."⁵⁴

The influence of Isabelle was 'ecstatic and religious'⁵⁵ on Paul Ross. He felt that he was burning himself out and that in her ecstasy she was leaving others on the outside. It was true she felt a personal degradation after Fred's death. She felt that as far as everyone else was concerned, she was a scum. She did not want her friends to feel the same way towards her. John's own feelings were mixed. Hence, when she came to visit him, "he put his arms around her, kissing her, hardly breathing because it seemed all his feelings for Isabelle that had been mixed up were concentrated into a sudden intensity of emotion, finding a release in holding her."⁵⁶ Immediately after this, though, he hated her, or perhaps, more properly, he hated himself, for having allowed her to visit his house. It was at this point that he felt that she had possession of his soul and that she was ruining him. She had possession of him, but not with the intention of ruining him. People like Isabelle who have had transcendental experience, would act on people's minds differently from the normal course of things. Discretion, commonsense, and such attributes are not necessarily theirs. They are impelled by something beyond themselves and the commonly accepted standards of behaviour are broken or cast aside.

After Lillian broke up with John, she wrote to him that Isabelle was capable of quick, fine feelings and told how Isabelle had come to apologise to her. The fact of the matter was

that Isabelle was misunderstood and did not know what to do about it. That others did not understand her did bother her. That those whom she considered her very close friends should have misunderstood her, hurt her very much. Isabelle, as Paul Ross said, "wasn't interested in living, but she'd hate to die. She'll die hard, hanging on till there's nothing left to give up."⁵⁷ She knew that life was a battle where "there are no heroes; some get medals, some don't."⁵⁸ When John Hughes went to Isabelle's house with the intention of killing her, she said that while Fred didn't want to kill anybody, John wanted to. "So there's the bond between you, the living and the dead. You can't get away from it now."⁵⁹ It was this bond between the living and the dead that she was acutely aware of. It was this bond that John had refused to accept. He "was running away from the whole thing,"⁶⁰ as she told him. Before her death John accepted that he was selfish and that he should have gone on loving her. It needed her death for him to come to an understanding of her and himself. As he told Lillian after the funeral, "It sounds a bit funny, Lillian, but in a way I must have gone on loving her, only I was always trying to get away from the feeling."⁶¹

Isabelle's story is the story of a person who had an extraordinary experience because of which she was transformed. She had the potentiality to transcendence. She was a woman with a mystical hold on the people around her; the people who come into contact with her could not be indifferent towards her. They had to love her or hate her, or have a hate-love feeling towards her. However, her words and actions burned up herself and them.

She was the femme fatale, the woman carrying the death of Fred Thompson around her neck wherever she went, a woman who destroyed normal human relationship, a woman whom nobody understood, and who herself, perhaps, did not understand her impulses. Her life was in a world peculiarly her own. Her death was an expiation for all the destruction and unhappiness that she had created. It was a sacrifice for the sake of a better understanding and insight of the people whom she had left behind. She redeemed herself and others by her death.

Anna Prychoda in They Shall Inherit The Earth is the most beautiful and the simplest of the characters under discussion in this thesis. Hers is a peaceful and serene personality. Where Isabelle Thompson destroys, Anna creates; where Isabelle burns, Anna soothes and cools. Peggy Sanderson was in quest of the holy grail, but Anna had found it. Harry Lane had to struggle through his voyage of discovery, but Anna had no need to discover. Fr. Dowling cracked under the pressure of love, while Anna healed the secret wounds of the people whom she loved. All these characters are in quest of love and peace, but Anna has already possessed them.

Anna has so submerged herself for the sake of others, that she is a delight and a wonder. In the novel, the influence of Anna is responsible for the reestablishment of peace, love and happiness in the Aikenhead family. Michael Aikenhead said to her, "There's something soft about you, Anna. It's lovely, but it's soft, as if you always wanted to be giving something to people."⁶² He himself was in quest for justice,

so that the world would give him what was his right. As for Anna, she was full of disinterested goodness, and forgot herself in the service of others. "It doesn't matter how much anybody hurts you; as soon as you feel other people are hurt you want to give all of yourself to help them."⁶³ Her compassion and charity was instrumental in Michael loving her. It took him a long time to allow himself to lose his identity in her love. Often when Michael would stay up at night and watch the city below, "it was hard to believe he had found Anna and her goodness and her love in the meaningless strife in his life and in the death and corruption around him; he felt that their love was such a precarious thing that they must live very quietly and try to be alone."⁶⁴ She was able to give all of herself to each separate moment; for her there was something everlasting in each moment that took all of her life. While on the wolf hunt it was only the thought of Anna's love that could act as an antidote to the problems of animal justice. "If only the love between them could flow out from them and touch the world."⁶⁵ Thus from protecting this love for himself, he was now willing to share it with others. For the moment Mike thought it could not touch others. He was resolved to follow his love for her "from one step to another and it will be all right. Nothing can really happen to us because nothing can separate us."⁶⁶

The love that Anna had was an extension of the inner feelings she had. Others felt the happiness and wondered. Sheila could not fathom how she could be so much at peace with

herself when her existence was so precarious, when most people who were respectable would not even have her in their house.

"Yet, Anna wanted to become nothing but what she was; she wanted only to be allowed to possess her own repose."⁶⁷ This serenity touched Sheila. Her former despair about the world, her absolute refusal to bring children into the world, her cynicism - all these gave way in the melting sunshine of Anna's presence. Sheila "felt that she might find a new fulness in living. She felt she was free."⁶⁸ Thus, as Ross had hoped, Anna's presence did the good that he had hoped would be accomplished.

Anna lived on love. She disliked Benjamin Nathaniel because his "excitement's all in your head and not in your heart."⁶⁹ Michael, through the influence of Anna learned to distrust his head. In spite of the resolutions of Michael, it was a long time before he would abandon himself to love. At the birth of a child, he thought that Anna was going to die. He knew it would not be unjust if she did; but, by this time, Michael was not craving for justice. "My God, have pity on me. I don't want justice. I want mercy. Have pity on me,"⁷⁰ was his prayer. The prayer was answered and Anna was restored to him. This superabundance of grace (Anna's name) seems to overwhelm him. His feeling of guilt about hiding the cause of Dave's death was troubling him. He could not sleep. He would look at his wife and say to himself that she was everything he was not. She went on from day to day, living and loving and exploring the fulness and wholeness of himself to the life around her. He told her the

truth about Dave Chaote's death. Anna persuaded Mike to go to his father and tell him that he had wronged him. She was hurt by the thought of how he and his father had suffered silently for so long. She did not bother about her own hurt because of Michael hiding the secret from her. Michael wanted to go to the police. But Anna knew better. She wanted him to go to the father, whom he had wronged by his silence. "The only justice you owe is to your father... What has organized justice to do with your feelings in your heart? What have the police to do with justice, and you, and your father?"⁷¹ It was the loving face of Anna that made Andrew Aikenhead come down from his apartment, to dissuade his son from going to the police; it was she who suggested to him to go with them to their house. The son and father found each other, after a long search for justice. It was Anna who brought the prodigal home. It was she who made the father forgive and accept his son, and the realities of life's existence.

Michael Aikenhead's description of Anna is a fitting conclusion to the story of They Shall Inherit the Earth. "If to be poor in spirit meant to be without false pride, to be humble enough to forget oneself, then she was poor in spirit, for she gave herself to everything that touched her. She let herself be, she lost herself in the fulness of the world, and in her losing herself she found the world, and she possessed her own soul. People like her could have everything. They could inherit the earth."⁷² She was the salt of the earth.

Thus, the world around these characters is central

to the transcendentalists. Their transcendentalism is not other-worldly. It is imminent. Morley Callaghan did not want these characters to be isolated human beings, losing touch with the human condition. Callaghan, writing about Hemingway and Fitzgerald who had exiled themselves in Paris, and would not write about their own nativelands, thought of this action of theirs as a kind of otherworldliness. "And indeed it was my conviction now that for most men there had to be some kind of another more satisfactory world. (The primrose had to be anything but a primrose.) The saints, tormented by the anguish of the flesh, wanted to reject the human condition, the world they lived in. But whether saints or café friends in Paris, were they not all involved in a flight from the pain of life - a pain they would feel more acutely at home?"⁷³ Callaghan would not allow his characters to run away from the painful human condition. The transcendentalists whom we have discussed in this chapter are men and women who face up to the realities of the world made flesh. They would see things as they were. Morley Callaghan would not be tempted by "the terrible vanity of the artist who wanted the word without the flesh."⁷⁴ His characters are full-blooded human beings; they are not aliens in their universe. They are earthy, of the earth.

Notes

¹The Loved and The Lost, p. 18.

²Edmund Wilson's review of That Summer in Paris in the New Yorker, quoted by Brandon Conron in Morley Callaghan, New York: Twayne Publishers Inc. 1966. p. 170.

³The Loved and The Lost, p. 30.

⁴Ibid., p. 52.

⁵Ibid., p. 69.

⁶Ibid., p. 70.

⁷Ibid., p. 83.

⁸Ibid., p. 131.

⁹Ibid., p. 97.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 121.

¹¹Ibid., p. 123.

¹²Ibid., p. 135.

¹³Ibid., p. 138.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 233.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 230.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 233.

¹⁸The Many Colored Coat, p. 210.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 306.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 171 - 172.

²¹Ibid., p. 235.

²²Ibid., p. 296.

²³Ibid., p. 296.

²⁴Ibid., p. 298.

²⁵Ibid., p. 177.

²⁶Ibid., p. 177.

²⁷Ibid., p. 321.

²⁸Ibid., p. 321.

²⁹Ibid., p. 322.

³⁰Ibid., p. 326.

³¹Such is My Beloved, p. 16.

³²Ibid., p. 37.

³³Ibid., p. 78.

³⁴Ibid., p. 124.

³⁵Ibid., p. 132.

³⁶Ibid., p. 133.

³⁷Ibid., p. 143.

³⁸Ibid., p. 132.

³⁹Ibid., p. 46.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 127.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 41.

⁴²Ibid., p. 42.

⁴³Ibid., p. 94.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 130.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 112.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 112.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 144.

⁴⁸Conron, Brandon, Morley Callaghan. New York: Twayne Publishers Inc. 1966.

49 Ibid., p. 61.

50 It's Never Over, p. 19.

51 Ibid., p. 31.

52 Ibid., p. 65.

53 Ibid., p. 67.

54 Ibid., p. 67.

55 Ibid., p. 69.

56 Ibid., p. 76.

57 Ibid., p. 131.

58 Ibid., p. 133.

59 Ibid., p. 147.

60 Ibid., p. 148.

61 Ibid., p. 153.

62 They Shall Inherit the Earth, p. 109.

63 Ibid., p. 117.

64 Ibid., p. 149.

65 Ibid., p. 193.

66 Ibid., p. 206.

67 Ibid., p. 199.

68 Ibid., p. 208.

69 Ibid., p. 144.

70 Ibid., p. 235.

71 Ibid., p. 246.

72 Ibid., p. 242.

73 That Summer in Paris, p. 229.

74 Ibid., p. 149.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION.

A recent issue of Time, discussing modern-day saints had the following passage:

Saints normally are not normal. "A saint has to be a misfit," says University of Chicago Church Historian Martin Marty. "A person who embodies what his culture considers typical or normal cannot be exemplary." Father Carroll Stuhmuller of Chicago's Catholic Theological Union agrees. "Saints tend to be on the outer edge, where the maniacs, the idiots and the geniuses are. They break the mold."¹

It is these misfits that we have been discussing in this thesis. They are all on the outer-edge of society. I do not mean to say that all eccentrics are necessarily saints. Nor do I want to affirm that all the characters whom we have discussed have to be compared to Mother Theresa of India and other "modern-day saints" as discussed in the Time quoted above. But the eccentrics under discussion in this thesis are men and women who have to be considered as people seeking enlightenment, a realization of life itself. In order to realize reality and life, they are willing to make sacrifices. Their values become different. The uncanny perception of these extraordinary people about life and its meaning gives a dimension to them which is different from the other characters whom they encounter. Morley Callaghan's transcendentalists seem to be able to cut the Gordian knot and get to the heart of the meaning of life itself. Their naiveté

is not that of the simpleton; it is not foolish or ignorant. Their innocence is a second innocence; their simplicity is a result of their discarding of sophistication, which is another cover for human weaknesses. They have no use for such protection. They discard the non-essentials that encumber and degrade man. They discard them because their pursuit and knowledge of the eternal would otherwise be hampered by these burdens.

The transcendentalists are willing to sacrifice their friends and families for the ideals they set out to reach; they are willing to overcome the obstacles on their way to achieving self-realization. Perhaps they are trying to find a universal harmony which reconciles the most varied aspects in human beings, society and nature into a higher unity. In order to bring about this reconciliation, they become ridiculous, and foolish. People of the world laugh at them. They become clowns. Peggy Sanderson was an object of derision; Anna was sneered at by certain people; Isabelle was a scare crow; Father Dowling was the butt of jokes; and, Harry Lane assumed the role of the jester. This clowning has a religious significance. Kolakowski describes the jester's relationship to society this way:

Although a habitu  of a good society [he] does not belong to it and makes it the object of his inquisitive impertinence; he questions what appears to be self-evident. The jester could not do this if he himself were part of the good society, for then he would be, at the most, a drawing room wit. A jester must remain an outsider; he must observe "good society" from the sidelines, for only then can he detect the non-obvious behind the obvious and the non-final behind what appears to be final. At the same time he must frequent good society so

as to know what it deems holy, and to be able to indulge in his impertinence.²

Harry Lane frequented the best society of Montreal; Peggy Sanderson had access to good society. They did not belong to this good society. They lived among that society, but were able to observe it from the side-lines. They were able to see the non-final and the non-obvious in society. Thus while society laughed at them, they had the last laugh. Because they frequented good society, but kept their sights clear they were able to follow their own lights. There is something Christ-like in this aspect of the jester in these characters. Let me quote here a passage from The Feast of Fools by Harvey Cox:

....Even in the biblical portrait of Christ there are elements that can suggest clown symbols. Like the jester, Christ defies custom and scorns crowned heads. Like a wandering troubadour, he has no place to lay his head. Like the clown in the circus parade, he satirizes existing authority by riding into town replete with regal pageantry when he has no earthly power. Like a minstrel, he frequents dinners and parties. At the end he is costumed by his enemies in a mocking caricature of royal paraphernalia. He is crucified amidst snickers and taunts with a sign over his head that lampoons his laughable claims.³

A clown is a handy butt of our own fears and insecurities. We can enjoy his clumsy failures because they did not happen to us. "The clown is constantly defeated, tricked, humiliated, tramped upon. He is infinitely vulnerable, but never finally defeated."⁴

The world looks at the clown as an object of laughter. But if he becomes more than that he will be cast out. The clown is a figure that one does not easily understand; therefore, one laughs at him. Harry Lane was laughed at by all those who

knew him. But they did not like his clownings because they were feeling discomfited by his very existence as a clown. Hugo McPherson, discussing Father Dowling says, "...the hero who achieves his quest will be, in worldly terms, a baffling, implausible figure. To him the values and conventions of the 'world' are at best medial; he will be judged, therefore, as a simpleton, an unprincipled fraud or a saint. But the world rarely recognizes its saints."⁵ Father Dowling's own Bishop had trouble understanding him, or recognizing a saint.

The impact of the transcendentalists, in the long run, is often shocking. They shatter the fabric of society. This may not be done deliberately; but their very presence is a constant reminder of the phony and hypocritical world that they have observed and rejected. They reject conformity, bigotry, and vulgarity; they are on an intuitive avenue to truth. They refuse to clutter their lives with irrelevancies. They try to forge for themselves an art of living; they are in quest of simplicity and beauty. The society around these transcendentalists, being pragmatically and numerically stronger, will prevail, at least in the short run. That is why often these characters end in tragic circumstances. But the tragedy is also that of the society which rejects them. Society will not allow a man to live his life according to his lights and convictions, and apart from the group; it will not allow him to exist as a unit, as a person. It cannot permit a man to exist on the outside or on its periphery. Society cannot accept that it is possible for a

man to have values that are different, but nonetheless real and valuable. Society will not tolerate these 'eccentrics', and will reject them or submerge them. For anyone to live thus is to pass judgement on the world. The world knows it cannot leave these people alone. Their values are too destructive of the fabric of society. They are a living judgement on the world. Henry David Thoreau said, "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."⁵ But, in actuality, the world will not allow a man to step out of tune or out of line, to go away from the normal path that most others follow. He who deviates will have to be straightened. Such people would be considered perverts, abnormal and, hence, rejected.

Christ was a trouble-maker of this nature. He came into the world with a sense of freedom. But he knew that his freedom will divide people. "You will be delivered up even by parents and kinsmen and friends, and some of you they will put to death; you will be hated by all for my name's sake."⁶ He would choose fishermen as his friends instead of people in power and position. He would eat and drink with sinners and publicans. This association with the outcasts will be resented by the prudent and intelligent scribes and priests. They would ask, "Why does your master eat with tax collectors and sinners?"⁷ and his answer would be that "those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."⁸ This would only be adding insult to injury. He would cure the sick, give sight to the blind, heal

the leper. And his enemies would claim that his power was from Satan, and not from above. Christ would go his own way and of things differently. He would not hesitate to help people even on the Sabbath, because, according to him, Sabbath was made for man and not man for Sabbath. He was free. He went about doing good. He spoke in parables - parables which would praise the Samaritan who had looked after the abandoned person; and the publican whose prayer was more acceptable than the arrogant scribes and priests. Christ spoke and acted according to a value that was higher than that of his society. He did not need to denounce or condemn. He preached a law higher than the law of Moses: Love. The leaders of the people would not or did not understand him. He was dividing the society by his mere presence. He asked people to rethink their values; to love their enemies as well as their friends, to go a second mile with strangers, to turn the other cheek when slapped on one. The priests could not accept this man nor his words, because he was shaking the very foundations of the structure that they had built so painstakingly. They would not let him alone. His very freedom was a violation of their values. If laughing at him would not drive him out of town, they would hang him outside the city limits, and thus be rid of him.

The transcendentalists whom we have discussed in this chapter are Christians in the truest sense of the term. They are followers of Christ; they are Christ-like. It does not matter that Peggy Sanderson was the daughter of a minister of the Church,

that Father Dowling, a Catholic priest, that Harry Lane and Isabelle were Catholics. We are not discussing institutionalised Christian churches. We are referring to people who follow Christ. They are the real Christians. Whether consciously or otherwise, these men and women follow in the footsteps of Christ and meet the same end. The characters under discussion followed a morality higher than that found in their society; they were hated by society; they strove to follow their ideals; a transvaluation of their values took place; they transcended the mundane, pedestrian right-wrong, good-bad mores of their contemporaries. These and other Christly qualities make the transcendentalists unique Christians. The sermon on the mount was lived by these characters. To be meek as Anna; to hunger after justice as did Harry Lane, to seek the lost sheep as did Father Dowling, to love the oppressed as did Peggy Sanderson, to feel that death is not the end of things as did Isabelle, - and in the process to undergo a complete transformation - that is what makes them Christians.

The transcendentalists do everything out of love. They love the world that ill-treats them. It is this ability to love that makes them objects of controversy. Hugo McPherson says that their love is a recognition of divine love, "which lifts us above the particularity of the temporal order into the timeless permanence of the One."⁹ Discussing Such is My Beloved, Hugo

McPherson says,

Callaghan has created his first coherent parable of the nature of man's earthly quest. The symbolism is traditionally Christian, but it is never imposed

upon the materials. The novel is a "test" so to speak, of the conviction towards which Callaghan's heroes move, and though the temporal church does not come off unscathed, the test is nonetheless valid; for love - a transcendent love such as Father Dowling's - is the only response which gives meaning to the inescapable facts of human weakness and pain. 10

The seemingly inconsistent, unpredictable and often inexplicable impulses and emotions of the transcendentalists will land them in trouble. These impulses cannot be tolerated by the prudent, cautious, and normal society. When Wolgast and Wagstaffe are confronted by the values of Peggy Sanderson, she has no hope of survival; when Father Dowling describes his Christ-like, human love for the prostitutes to the Bishop, he has to be dismissed from his presence; when Isabelle speaks about the death of Fred Thompson as an ever-present reality, John Hughes has to get rid of her; when Anna, in order to bring peace to Michael Aikenhead gives herself to him, the jealous tenants are infuriated; and when Harry Lane sports the checkered coat, people like lawyer Ouimet find him to be a disturber of conscience. These eccentrics cannot be allowed to live their lives and pursue their goals and follow their lights as they think fit. It is necessary for the brothers of Joseph of the Old Testament to get rid of him as he was the favourite of their father. It was necessary that one man - Christ - should die, so that the nation might be saved. It was also necessary that Harry Lane, Peggy Sanderson and Father Dowling be silenced in order that the fabric of society could be protected from unnecessary strains and pulls. But none of these would die

in vain. It might look as if Christ's was a wasted life. It would look as if the characters in these novels were silenced for good. But that was not so. Their silences will speak louder than the voices that were strangled. There will always be, fortunately for us, Christians among us, who will transcend the ordinary morality of the prudent and the worldly-wise, who will challenge everything, and strive for enlightenment. These are the people whom Christ called the light of the world: "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your father in heaven."¹¹

Indeed, to be Christian is no easy task. Morley Callaghan said it very neatly and beautifully when he suggested: "It's extremely difficult to be a Christian, and if a fellow is really trying to be a Christian in his relationships with other people, this is a noble enterprise. It may end sadly or disappointingly, but spiritually speaking, in terms of history of the spirit, that would be a noble enterprise."¹²

Notes.

- p. 48.
- ¹ Time, Montreal: Time Canada Inc., (Dec. 29, 1975)
 - ² Leszek Kolakowski, "The Priest and the Jester", Dissent, IX No. III (Summer 1962), p. 233.
 - ³ Harvey Cox, The Feast of Fools, (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 169.
 - ⁴ Ibid., p. 170.
 - ⁵ Queen's Quarterly. LXIV, No. III (Autumn 1957), p. 360.
 - ⁶ Henry David Thoreau, Walden, (The Variorum Walden; 1854. rpt. New York: Washington Square Press Inc., 1962), p. 246.
 - ⁷ Luke XXI. 16, 17.
 - ⁸ Matthew VIII. 11.
 - ⁹ Queen's Quarterly. LXIV, No. III (Autumn 1957), p. 359.
 - ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 358.
 - ¹¹ Matthew V, 14 - 16.
 - ¹² Saturday Night. (July 1972), p. 18.

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