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UNIVERSITE NATIONALE DU RWANDA

FACULTÉ DES LETTRES

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**THE FORTUNATE FALL
IN NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S FICTION**

par

Juvénal RUBEGWA

Mémoire présenté en vue de l'obtention du
grade de Licencié en Lettres, Département
ANGLAIS.

Directeur : David FARNSWORTH

RUHENGRI, Juin 1984

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To those who wish me well and especially to 'Mwalimu,' who, with self-abnegation, contributed to my moral and intellectual faculties from the elementary school to the university.

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Juvénal RUBEGWA.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The nineteenth century is an important literary period in the United States of America because it shows American writers' eagerness to get free from English Literature by creating a literature peculiar to America, to its problems and situations. In this search of originality of American Literature, Ralph Waldo Emerson deserves mention because he is associated with Transcendentalism, a literary movement which transformed America during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. The term Transcendentalism as used in American Literature can be defined as a belief in the innate divinity of every man and faith in his capability to understand immortality, the soul and God through intuition rather than through pure reason. Emerson's greater faith in individual moral sentiment draws from his Unitarian tradition. The Unitarians, though they accepted the Bible as the revelation of God's intentions for mankind, denied the doctrine of Trinity and rejected the Calvinists' insistence upon man's depravity and God's "elect." A step beyond Unitarianism which views human nature as essentially decent is Transcendentalism which considers man's nature as divine. Emerson and his disciples believe that evil does not exist in man.

This transcendentalist view of evil is explicitly stated in the following extract from Emerson's "Spiritual Laws"(1841) :

'Our young people are diseased with the theological problems of original sin, origin of evil, predestination and

the like. These never presented a practical difficulty to any man, - never darkened across any man's road who did not go out of his way to seek them.¹

Emerson views sin as a matter of appearance, and, consequently, it is not a problem. By temporary lack of spiritual intuition, however, man can make some mistakes in his ways of thinking and acting.

Such denial of what Paul Elmer More, in "Emerson," calls "a firm grasp of the darker facts of human nature,"² that is, the vision of evil, constitutes Emerson's and his allies' main ground dissatisfaction with Hawthorne who, according to Lewis in The American Adam, "was certain that men were not in any respect like angels."³ Commenting on Hawthorne's awareness of the existence of the Fall, Edward Davidson says in "Dimmesdale's Fall" :

Hawthorne was well aware of this doctrine [of the fall] and made it one of his most mordant commentaries on humankind : the fall is the only explanation of that bond of ignominy by which all men share a common brotherhood.⁴

The fall is any sinful act such as the adultery committed by Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale in The Scarlet Letter. Metaphorically, however, the fall can mean any journey into experience. For instance, in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," Robin falls into experience. Being "the only explanation of that bond of ignominy by which all men share a common brotherhood," the fall is universal in space and in time, and, conse-

quently, it is inevitable. Like suffering, the fall is a component of the world. Young as well as old people are subject to it. The first chapter intends to show, through "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," "The Procession of Life," "Young Goodman Brown," "The Celestial Railroad" and The Blithedale Romance, that it is no use for human beings to try to avoid the fall because it is universal and thereby inevitable.

Hawthorne's interest in the darker side of human nature shows, to an extent, that he is pessimistic. His pessimism, perhaps, results from his relation to the puritan tradition and from his background. Looking back on his family history, Hawthorne is, perhaps, ashamed of his forebears' wickedness. John Gerber says that William Hathorne, a soldier, a magistrate and a judge sentenced a Quaker woman to be whipped at the tail of a cart through the streets of Salem, Boston and Dedham; his son condemned his fellow-townsmen to death in the Salem witchcraft trials of 1692.⁵ The mischievousness of Hawthorne's ancestors, perhaps, is suggested by the following excerpt from "Young Goodman Brown" where the old traveller with a staff addresses Brown :

"I helped your grandfather, the constable, when he lashed the Quaker woman so smartly through the streets of Salem; and it was I that brought your father a pitch-pine knot, kindled at my own hearth, to set fire to an Indian village, in King Philip's war."⁶

Even though a part of Hawthorne's works show the impossibility of man avoiding the fall, one cannot say that Hawthorne

is simply pessimistic because his works suggest that there is a way for the individual to cope with the fall and even be better off with it. There is, to quote Randall Stewart in "Puritan Humanism Versus Romantic Naturalism," "the ever-moving dawn that forever advances through Hawthorne's darkness and circumnavigates the world."⁷ This figurative statement implies that out of human darkness, that is, from man's mistakes and falls, can flash a light, a better understanding of his condition. Such a fall bringing the individual to understand his condition and that of others may be considered fortunate for him rather than detrimental. The purpose of this memoir is to fully analyse the myth of the "Fortunate Fall" in Hawthorne's works. I intend to show that the fall can be fortunate for the individual who accepts it as universal and inevitable, and who struggles to cope with it.

The theme of the "Fortunate Fall" or "Felix Culpa," according to which, Richard Harter Fogle says, "man's sin and expulsion from Eden is in reality a proof of God's mercy and concealed benevolence"⁸ delves into the Christian theology. The most enduring formulation of the "Fortunate Fall" came in the medieval hymn attributed to St. Isidore :

A quoi servirait-il de naître
sans le bonheur d'être sauvé ?
Merveilleuse condescendance de ta grâce!
Imprévisible choix de ton amour :
Pour racheter l'esclave, tu livres
le Fils!
Il fallait le péché d'Adam que la mort
du Christ abolit.

Heureuse était la faute qui nous valut
pareil Rédempteur.⁹

Being exultant, the above anthem is known as "the Exultet," and it shows that Adam's sin was fortunate for his descendants because, as a consequence of it, the world, to quote Lewis in The American Adam, "was enlarged and enlightened through the figure of the Redeemer and the joy of the Atonement."¹⁰

In the long run, however, the notion of the "Fortunate Fall" took a figurative meaning. Lewis says that

...as a metaphor in the area of human psychology, the notion of the fortunate fall has an immense potential. It points to the necessary transforming shocks and sufferings, the experiments and errors - in short, the experience - through which maturity and identity may be arrived at.¹¹

Relying on this extensive view of the fortunate fall, one can interpret some of Hawthorne's works, namely The Scarlet Letter, The Marble Faun, "The Minister's Black Veil" and "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" because they deal with experience, a spring-board for maturity and identity. In the latter short story, an innocent youth called Robin goes to town, hoping to be enriched by his uncle, Major Molineux, whom he thinks to be a powerful and respectable figure. After he experiences the wickedness of townspeople who not only scorn him, but also tar and feather his kinsman, the object of his search, Robin becomes mature in that he learns that evil is more dominant than goodness in the world and that he should, so as not to be disappointed, rise in the

world without anyone's help. Like Robin, Donatello, in The Marble Faun, has grown up in innocence in a kind of Arcadia and is introduced to evil by committing a murder. His experience of sin occasions him to move from an innocence that was only half human at best to a condition in which he shares mankind's nature and lot. In The Scarlet Letter, Arthur Dimmesdale's and Hester Prynne's involvement in adultery is fortunate for them because it allows them to have a good understanding of themselves and others. On the one hand, Hester's disgrace resulting from her sin develops her mind, and it enables her to have a respectability of conduct : she becomes morally superior to her fellow-townsmen in that she meets their rigorous cruelty with kindness, their arrogance with humility. On the other hand, Dimmesdale's fall is fortunate for him because his awareness of sin and its destructive consequences, such as remorse, make of him an efficient minister, capable of sympathizing and even empathizing with his parishioners. Unlike Dimmesdale, however, Reverend Hooper, a character in "The Minister's Black Veil," did not commit a sin. But even so, he can be likened to Dimmesdale because both achieve a better understanding of themselves and others owing to their consciousness of human imperfection and sinfulness.

All the characters I have just briefly described show that experience is a precondition to the fortunate fall. Accepting the fall, the individual is better off with it, and it develops in him moral and intellectual capabilities, and allows him to have a better understanding of his condition and that of others. According to the "scheme," until man makes mistakes and undergoes

falls, he is incomplete because he is unaware of the ups and especially the downs of life. As a soldier who often goes to the battlefield is likely to perform heroic feats, likewise a person who earnestly engages himself in a struggle with the sorrow and the toil of life - that man is likely to attain maturity and humanity. The experience undergone by Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, Reverend Hooper, Donatello and Robin indicates that the fall can be fortunate for the individual who accepts it and copes with it.

The acceptance of the fall implies that the individual is convinced that he has fallen, and, consequently, his conscience cannot go unscathed. As Lucifer's falling occasioned his separation and alienation from God and angels, so the individual's fall breeds his alienation either from God, from himself or from the world. Sin breeds isolation that Gerber defines as "a feeling of estrangement from those persons or elements whose code the individual feels that he has violated."¹² The isolation can be physical or psychical. In The Scarlet Letter, Hester is not only physically isolated owing to her social ostracism, but also spiritually isolated because of her guilt complex. Her conscience is pricked as she understands that her adultery with Dimmesdale has caused a disorder into an orderly society. While Hester faces a double isolation, Dimmesdale suffers from a single one. He is alienated not from his society which, ironically, regards him as a shining example for all christians, but from himself since he knows that he is not what they take him to be : he is a hypocrite; a wise man in masque-

rade.

Gerber goes on to say that isolation creates suffering which, in turn, brings the desire to "alleviate one's condition through reunion with the element from which one is isolated."¹³ Reunion brings relief only from spiritual suffering like remorse which Gerber defines as "a continual reenacting of the sin in fantasy and hence a continual renewal of the need for self-punishment."¹⁴ One can achieve reunion, indeed, and continue to suffer physically and even die : Donatello and Dimmesdale are spiritually relieved from their sinful act, but the former is still kept in prison, and the latter dies.

To achieve reunion, the individual must have a moral recognition of his sin. Matthiessen observes that the notion of moral recognition is developed to the full in Hawthorne's fiction. He points out that Hawthorne's "protagonists finally face their evil and know it deserving of the sternest justice, and thus participate in the purgatorial movement, the movement towards regeneration."¹⁵ Matthiessen adds that the act of regeneration "must involve the whole man, and in what manner his conception of the heart included also the will."¹⁶ As Hawthorne says in "Earth's Holocaust," regeneration requires that man purifies himself in

'that inward sphere, - the heart - and
the many shapes of evil that haunt
the outward, and which now seem al-
most our only realities, will turn
to shadowy phantoms and vanish of

their own accord...."17

To be really regenerated, the individual has to be true to himself. In case he has committed a sinful act, he must not only condemn it verbally by confession, but also condemn it morally by repentance. In "Frustration and Guilt," Frederick Crews says that actual repentance demands that "the soul abandons the sin and turns to holier thoughts."¹⁸ In case the individual, like Robin, falls into experience, he must draw a good lesson from it. It is only after he has witnessed the townspeople's mockery and his kinsman's humiliation that Robin may find it wise to rise in the world as a man, and not as a relative of an important figure. The older man tells Robin : "...perhaps as you are a shrewd youth, you may rise in the world without the help of your kinsman, Major Molineux"(p.1223).

Footnotes

¹F.O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (London, 1968), p.181.

²W. Peterfield Trent et al., The Cambridge History of American Literature (New York, 1972), p.361.

³R.W.B. Lewis, The American Adam : Innocence, Tragedy and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1955), p.119.

⁴John Gerber (ed.) Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Scarlet Letter (New Jersey, 1968), p.82.

⁵Gerber, p.1.

⁶Norman Holmes Pearson (ed.), The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, 1937). All parenthetic page numbers in this memoir refer to this book.

⁷Bradley Sculley et al., The Scarlet Letter : An Annotated Text Backgrounds and Sources; Essays in Criticism (New York, 1962), p.349.

⁸Richard Fogle, Hawthorne's Fiction : The Light & The Dark (Norman, 1964), p.191.

⁹My translation of the passage reads as follows :

What would be the use of being born
without the happiness to be saved ?
How marvellous the condescension of your grace is!
Unforeseeable choice of your love :
To ransom the slave, you deliver your Son!
Adam's sin that Christ's death abolished,
was necessary.
O happy sin! to deserve so great a Redeemer.

¹⁰Lewis, p.61.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Gerber, p.106.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Gerber, p.97.

¹⁵Matthiessen, p.350.

¹⁶Matthiessen, p.347.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Gerber, p.96.

CHAPTER ONE

The Fall

Hawthorne seems to be interested in the darker side of human nature as most of his works deal with man's fall, sinfulness. Sin proves to be timeless because young as well as old people succumb to it, inevitable because the more the individual tries to avoid it, the more he becomes involved in it. Sin, to use Davidson's words, is "the only explanation of that bond of ignominy by which all men share a common brotherhood."¹ Stated otherwise, sin is what all human beings have in common because all of them are subject to it. "The Celestial Railroad" and The Blithedale Romance suggest that human beings cannot avoid sin despite their good intentions and "The Procession of Life," "Young Goodman Brown" and "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" show that all human beings are subject to sin.

Usually, youth is considered as innocent and its mistakes and falls are said to result from inexperience. Looking back on their childhood, people regret having not behaved well, and they think that they would become good if they were given the opportunity to be young again. "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," however, impeaches this statement because, through four elderly corrupt people, it suggests that sin is timeless. Returned a few minutes to youth after having drunk of the water of the "Fountain of Youth," indeed, they commit the same mistakes over again.

The four people who pretend that they can stand aloof from sin if they become young again are Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, Mr. Gascoigne and the widow Wycherly. They are all melancholic old creatures, and have been unfortunate in life. Mr. Medbourne, once, "a prosperous merchant," has become "a mendicant" owing to his "frantic speculation"; Colonel Killigrew has wasted his best years "in the pursuit of sinful pleasures" which have occasioned him "a brood of pains ... and divers other torments of soul and body." Mr. Gascoigne is a ruined politician, and a man of evil fame which has made him obscure. As for the widow Wycherly, she is notorious on account of "certain scandalous stories which had prejudiced the gentry of the town against her." Another bit of information is that the three gentlemen "were early lovers of the widow Wycherly, and had once been on the point of cutting each other's throats for her sake" (p. 945). These people have the feeling of having wasted their best years in that they used them unwisely, and they wish they were young again so as to improve their previous, sinful and shameful conduct.

The idea of "the Fountain of Youth," perhaps, is meant by the author to see if really the old people will avoid sin after they are rejuvenated. Situated in the Southern Florida, the Fountain is said to contain water endowed with a rejuvenescent power. This power is proved by the fact that the flowers overshadowing the source of the fountain have been kept as fresh as violets by the virtues of this wonderful water, though

numberless centuries old. It allows Hawthorne to portray the innate sinfulness of mankind.

The 'magic' water will allow Dr. Heidegger to make his experiment. Finding out that the water causes to bloom again a faded rose, whose "green leaves and crimson petals had assumed one brownish hue" (p.946), the four old people, eager to become young again, ask earnestly to drink of the magic water. After they have taken four glasses of water, whether an illusion or not, they seem to be young again because "There was a healthful suffusion on their cheeks, instead of the ashen hue that had made them look so corpse-like" (p.948). The three gentlemen's eyes grow clear and bright, and the woman displays a buxom figure.

While, before they took the liquid, these people had promised to become "patterns of virtue and wisdom" to the young people of the age, after their rejuvenation, they prove that, as the following passage indicates, experience cannot prevent men from falling, from shunning evil:

They were a group of merry youngsters, almost maddened with the exuberant frolicsomeness of their years. The most singular effect of their gayety was an impulse to mock the infirmity and decrepitude of which they had so lately been the victims. They laughed loudly at their old-fashioned attire ... One limped across the floor like a gouty grandfather... Then all shouted mirthfully, and leaped about the room. The widow

Wycherly ... tripped up to the doctor's chair, with a mischievous merriment in her rosy face (p.950).

From this extract, it can be inferred that these people have failed to achieve wisdom inasmuch as they continue to behave like young people. After their rejuvenation, they are almost mad owing to their mockery, "mischievous merriment" and mirthful shouts. Cynically, they mock their former infirmity and decrepitude, imitating old people's gait as if they will no longer be old again and be in the same situation. These four people's minds have once again become youthful. Like young people, they are gay and merry, and they laugh at everything without accounting for what the future has in store for them. Like in their youth, they commit the same mistakes. The former politician starts again his speculation about "patriotism, national glory, and the people's right"; the ancient merchant is involved in a calculation of dollars and cents; the former reveller starts drinking and courting the lady. As they used to do in the past, the three gentlemen struggle for dancing with the charming woman, and the party ends with a fight. Resuming their former mistakes, they become sinful and even more sinful than before. "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," then, impeaches the statement that old people would stand aloof from evil were they given the opportunity to be young again. As the experiment indicates, they would live in exactly the same way and even worse than they had lived their lives.

This experiment, through which the author uses Dr. Heidegger

as an executioner, is well organised. In effect, characterization and symbolism are successful. Hawthorne chooses a ratio of three men and one attractive and seductive woman. That he does not make an equal number of female and male characters, so as to avoid rivalry suggests that he wants the experiment to turn against these people's claims, that is, to eschew sin after their rejuvenation. Different from all these people is Dr. Heidegger. The fact that the latter, though as old as them, refuses to grow young again is revealing. He knows that a person who does not attain wisdom in old age cannot be wise if he is restored to youth. Indeed, "Youth," sages say, "is a blunder" in that it is a period characterized by frailties, foolish and thoughtless decisions. In this stage, therefore, composure is generally difficult, if not impossible, to gain. Dr. Heidegger's awareness that evil is timeless in that it is peculiar to the young as well as to the old serves as a foil to the four old people's blindness.

Besides characterization, symbolism permits the author to convey this same view of man's innate corrupt condition. Accurate is the choice of the seductive and attractive woman to evaluate the three men's wisdom. From time immemorial, women have been associated by men with temptation and the fall of men. A classic example is Eve who, tempted by a serpent, in turn, enticed Adam, her husband, to eat of the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden. In Literature, also, is recurrent the theme of "La Femme Fatale" who, to refer to John Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," lulls kings and princes asleep, and have them "in thrall." A symbol of temptation, then, the widow Wycherly cannot help increasing the three eager men's evil resulting from their rivalry.

Resulting in a riot among the three rejuvenated men, the experiment implies that man's sinfulness is timeless. Hawthorne suggests, perhaps, that it is no use being young

again so as to change one's corrupt condition because evil is peculiar to the young as well as to the old. Consequently, the doctor asserts that he would not drink of the water from "the Fountain of Youth":

"If the fountain gushed at my very doorstep, I would not stoop to bathe my lips in it- no, though its delirium were for years instead of moments" (p. 95I).

Unlike the four subjects who are still naive in that they resolve forthwith to make a pilgrimage to Florida, and "quaff at morning, noon, and night, from the very Fountain of Youth" (p. 95I), the doctor refuses. His refusal suggests his knowledge that evil is timeless. The four old people, perhaps, are just a sample representing mankind as a whole. Their failure to lead an upright life, once restored to youth, is a proof that human beings sin not because of inexperience, but because sin is of all ages in that it is a reality in man's nature.

While "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" implies that evil is timeless, "The Celestial Railroad" and The Blithedale Romance prove that it is inevitable. In both works, characters have good intentions, but ironically they accomplish the reverse of their wishes. In "The Celestial Railroad," the inevitability of evil is suggested by the passengers who, thinking that they are on their way to the celestial city, follow the road leading to hell. The pilgrims' impossibility to reach the heavenly city is adumbrated by their interest in earthly pleasures and by their reliance on two devils, Apollyon and "Mr. Smooth-it-away," respectively the driver of their coach and their mentor.

From the beginning of the pilgrimage, the passengers fail to behave like people who want to be saved, to attain heaven. They choose to go in a coach, instead of undertaking the journey on foot, which, symbolically, may be a way of showing their good will to be saved after having put up with difficulties. The passengers's impossibility to be saved is emphasized by

the fact that they make sport of "two dusty foot travellers in the old pilgrim guise, with cockle shell and staff... and their intolerable burdens on their backs " (p. I073). Unlike the passengers, the two pilgrims are likely to reach the heavenly destination because they behave like the old pilgrim. The latter is Christian, a character in John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, who, through repentance and suffering symbolized by going on foot and transporting his burdens on his back, reached the heavenly kingdom and, consequently, attained heaven.

Surprisingly enough, the coach leading the passengers to the heavenly kingdom is driven by an engineer enveloped in traditional smoke and flame which appear to "gush from his own mouth and stomach as well as from the engine's brazen abdomen " (p. I073). Because traditionally, "smoke and flame" allude to hell and evil, the personage's description hints at Satan. The engineer, indeed, is a devil because he is called Apollyon. This name is used by John Bunyan, in Pilgrim's Progress, to describe Satan. The coach driven by Apollyon is likely to reach hell, Satan's realm. The argument that the passengers cannot achieve the celestial city is buttressed up by the fact that they have "Mr. Smooth-it-away" as a mentor. Acquainted "with the laws and customs of the celestial city as well as those of the city of Destruction" (I070), "Mr. Smooth-it-away" is an "impudent fiend." He alludes to Lucifer who, before he was expelled from the heavenly kingdom, was familiar with the ways of heaven, and now is acquainted with those of hell. "Mr. Smooth-it-away" ejects

a smoke-wreath issued from his mouth and nostrils, while a twinkle of lurid flame darted out of either eye, proving indubitably that his heart was all of a red blaze (p. I082).

Again, the words "smoke," "flame" and "red blaze" hint at hell, and prove that "Mr. Smooth-it-away" is akin to Apollyon because they are described in the same way. The passengers having as

a guide and a counselor the fiend disguised as a pilgrim can be compared to Young Goodman Brown, a character in "Young Goodman Brown," who, in his journey, was accompanied by a devil in the form of an old man lulling him to a witches' Sabbath. Being a devil, "Mr. Smooth-it-away" is likely to lead the pilgrims to the city of Destruction symbolized by the Vanity Fair, the capital of material comforts and pleasures.

The passengers' failure to reach the celestial city is predicted by their interest in material comforts and pleasures while they should rely on spiritual and religious values so as to attain heaven. En route to the "celestial city," they talk about politics, business, and matters of amusement while Religion, which should be the main thing at heart for true repenters, "is thrown tastefully into the background" (p. 1072). Showing no interest in religion, they miss the opportunity not only to muse over God, but also to think about their sins and repent them. Interested in material comforts, the passengers are well clothed as if the "pilgrimage were merely a summer tour." Women bring flowers of fashionable society to adorn the most elevated circles of the celestial city. Their pride results not from their reconciliation with God, but from their burdens "rich in many things esteemed precious throughout the world" and likely to be admired "even in the polite circles of the celestial city" (p. 1074).

Besides their longing for wealth, the passengers are lustful. Passing by "the Palace Beautiful," a place previously known for its charming young ladies, the male pilgrims refuse to pay a visit to the ladies after they are informed that they have become "old maids, every soul of them—grim, starved, dry and angular" (p. 1074). While, to pave his way for heaven, everybody must love all his brethren with no distinction and interest, these people refuse to visit the ladies because, being old, they are no longer beautiful and seducing. Their previous interest in the ladies was motivated not by love,

but by lust. Like adolescents, the passengers are at the mercy of their burning passions.

The passengers' desires are met by the Vanity Fair, a great capital of human business and pleasure. Exhibiting "an epitome of whatever is brilliant, gay and fascinating beneath the sun" (p. 1077), the Vanity Fair is the realm of materialistic souls. In this spot, materialism is viewed as God and pleasure as religion. Every street has its church and its priests are held in high respect because of their "maxims of wisdom and virtue." The labors of these eminent divines, helped by those of innumerable lecturers, enable any man to acquire a vast erudition "without the trouble of even learning to read" (p. 1078). Ironically, when the pilgrims arrive there, they thoroughly forget their intentions of going on to the celestial city. They take their pleasure, make business, and affirm the place to be "the true and only heaven," asserting that those who seek further are dreamers and fools. These pilgrims cannot afford time to take pains to climb the hill on which stands the celestial city, a spot where only "a thrumming of church music from morning till night" (p. 1076) is allowed. The phrase "a thrumming of church music" suggests that the heavenly kingdom is a place where one must daily pray and muse only over spiritual and religious matters. Shunning such a place indicates that the passengers cannot attain redemption because they have at heart not spiritual values, but earthly ones:

Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher,
vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What
profit hath a man of all his labour which
he taketh under the sun?²

This passage implies that earthly values are useless in that they cannot lead people to salvation. The vanity fair, then, is the city of Destruction because the values it imparts are likely to hustle people to hell.

The values imparted by the Vanity Fair are artificial just as the Fair itself is a sham heavenly kingdom. Its superficiality is inferred from a customer who, wishing to "renew

his stock of youth," is given "a set of false teeth and an auburg wig"; the other who demands "peace of mind" is recommended "opium or a brandy bottle" (p. 1079). The vanity fair provides its inhabitants with illusive and transient remedies for their problems. Putting false teeth in a toothless mouth or covering a bald head with a wig does not bring about rejuvenation as going in for alcohol or taking drugs does not result in actual peace of mind because the same problems recur as soon as the individual is no longer drunk.

As the vanity fair cannot provide people with eternal happiness, the one imparted by the celestial city, likewise its divine priests are unable to prepare the inhabitants for heavenly kingdom. Symbolic, the priests' names, that is, "Rev. Mr. Shallow-deep," "Stumble-at-truth," "This-today," "That-tomorrow," "Bewilderment," "Clog-the-spirit" and "Dr. Wind-of-doctrine," suggest that the fair is Satan's realm. "Dr. Wind-of-doctrine's knowledge is superficial, and, consequently, useless for one acquires it without the trouble of even learning to read while true erudition requires pain, patience and perseverance. Instead of making people ready for heaven, these priests corrode their spirit in such a way that the idea of the celestial city becomes obliterated from their minds. Stumbling at truth, the priests are hypocrites and liars. False, their teachings are confusing, and pave people's way for hell.

Contrasting those of the "divine priests," the names of the two pilgrims on foot, namely "Mr. Stick-to-the-truth" and "Mr. Foot-it-to-heaven," reveal that the latter are real repenters. The "dusty foot travellers" avoid the vanity fair because, being a "bubble" and "a miserable delusion," it cannot afford them everlasting happiness. They go heavenward on foot, their burdens on their backs to mean that they are ready to go through a lot of suffering so as to attain salvation.

Unlike the "divine priests"'s false teachings, the two pilgrims' teachings are truthful in that they inform one of the passengers that the vanity fair is "a bubble" and "a miserable delusion":

"I do assure you, and beseech you to receive the truth of my words, that that whole concern is a bubble. You may travel on it all your lifetime, were you to live thousands of years, and yet never get beyond the limits of the Vanity Fair. Yea, though you should deem yourself entering the gates of the blessed city, it will be nothing but a miserable delusion" (p. 1080).

Even though "Mr. Stick-to-the-truth"'s words are truthful in that they show the superficiality of the Vanity Fair, they are ignored by the passengers who continue to rely on the Fair and on its divine priests' false teachings. The fact that the passengers stick to values hustling to hell, and shun those leading to heaven is a proof that evil is inevitable. The passengers' fall was inevitable from start to finish because their behaviour were not in accordance with their heavenly destination, and because they were accompanied by Apollyon and "Mr. Smooth-it-away." Describing people who, thinking that they are going to heaven, are travelling with devils, Hawthorne suggests the impossibility of man avoiding evil because we are always identified with it.

As "The Celestial Railroad" shows the impossibility of avoiding evil even though man's intentions might be good, The Blithedale Romance also proves that man cannot stand aloof from evil. In this romance, the inevitability of evil is suggested by Hollingsworth and Zenobia who, planning to create a farm where prevail love, humility, sexual equality and mutual work with no competition, ironically turn out egoistical, proud and pitiless. Various symbols and situations emphasize the failure of the scheme, and its projectors' impossibility to avoid sinfulness.

According to John Gerber, Hawthorne uses as the setting

for The Blithedale Romance a farm where he and his wife lived, but that they left because it displayed the Utopian dreams of the Transcendentalists.³ Harold Clarke Goddard, in "Transcendentalism," talk about the idealistic aims of the Brook Farm Association. It was intended by its founders to be a place for a self-supporting group of men and women, where all should share in manual labor, the leisure, and the educational and cultural advantages; a place of plain living and high thinking where life might be lived in an atmosphere of fraternity, free from the strife and burdens of ordinary competitive society. The Brook Farm Association, Mr. Goddard goes on to say, came to stand for a perfect incarnation of the transcendental spirit. The Brook Farm Association was characteristic of Transcendentalism in its belief that material factors of life should be subservient to the spiritual and ideal and in its conviction that right thinking would lead to a perfect society.⁴

Showing the social utopianism of Transcendentalism, the Brook Farm Association can be likened to Blithedale itself which, being idealistic, is subject to failure. Its setting harmonizes with the projectors' idealistic aims. Situated at the country that poets idealize, the farm is expected to be an earthly paradise. The bright hopes of the enterprise are doomed to be blighted, however, as the names hammered out for the farm suggest. The names range from "Sunny-Glimpse," "The Oasis," "Sahara" to "Utopia." The latter al-

cludes to Thomas More's Utopia, the ideal Republic of nowhere. As this Republic can exist nowhere, likewise Blithedale's idealistic principles cannot be applied anywhere. "Sunny-Glimpse" suggests that the experiment will fade away in the twinkling of an eye. "The Oasis," a fertile spot in a desert, is subject to contamination from the desert surrounding. The fact that the projectors are unable to reach an agreement upon a name is another hint that their scheme to reform criminals and to promote brotherhood is just built on Saharan mirages.

Besides the symbolic names, the imagery of fire and veil contributes to the meaning in The Blithedale Romance. Standing for Hollingsworth's great enthusiasm for the scheme, the great blazing fire on the hearth that warms the projectors' hearts as well as their bodies burns out quickly as Miles Coverdale point out:

"The blaze of that brushwood will only last a minute or two longer," observed Silas Foster; but whether he meant to insinuate that our moral illumination would have as brief a term, I cannot say" (p. 453).

As the blaze of the brushwood does not last for long, likewise the projectors' "moral illumination," that is, their generous intentions to create a better world, fades quickly. The ephemeral blaze of the brushwood, then, hints at the transitoriness and even the illusion of the experiment.

The other imagery consists of veils and disguises which intimate that there can be no real and solid community if the members of Blithedale fail to live in accordance with their goals. To an extent, Zenobia and Hollingsworth wear a symbolic veil, a mask in that, instead of contributing to human brotherhood and equality, they show off egoism and pride.

Zenobia is proud and artificial. Her pride and artificiality are suggested by the flower with which she orna-tes her hair. The flower

was an exotic, of rare beauty, and as fresh as if the hot-house gardener had just clipped it from the stem... So brilliant, so rare, so costly, as it must have been, and yet enduring only for a day, it was more indicative of the pride and pomp which had a luxuriant growth in Zenobia's character than if a great diamond had sparkled among her hair (p. 447).

While she should be humble according to the principles of Blithedale, Zenobia is proud and pompous. In a scene purposefully arranged to show Zenobia's fondness for Priscilla, her half-sister, Zenobia rejects her, giving her a "haughty look, as from a mistress to a dependant" (p. 491). Like a queen, Zenobia regards her half-sister as a maid-servant. Fogle observes that Priscilla is deliberately sent to Zenobia to be cherished, though Zenobia is not aware that this is a part of her test as a member of Blithedale.⁵ Zenobia lacks

tenderness for Priscilla, jealous of the fact that Priscilla is always gay and that she is preferred to her by Hollingsworth. To show the intensity of Zenobia's jealousy and hatred, the author describes her looking at Priscilla: Zenobia's look resembles that of "a tragic actress," fumbling "in her bosom for the concealed dagger, or the exceedingly sharp bodkin," or mingling "the ratsbane in her lover's bowl of wine or the rival's cup of tea" (p. 485). Zenobia fails to show unselfishness and self-restraint. Such an attitude shows her moral failure which, in turn, leads to the failure of the experiment.

The significance of Zenobia's moral failure, according to Fogle, "is intensified when we remark that Priscilla is a symbol of the heart."⁶ Having not grown together with Zenobia, Priscilla's love for her "grew, and tended upward, and twined itself perseveringly around the unseen sister" (p. 548). Priscilla's visit to Zenobia, then, is, to an extent, "spiritual." Regarding her sister as "the sole bliss of her life," Priscilla comes to Blithedale, hoping to be safest, and to nestle in Zenobia's large heart. It is an irony of life that Zenobia requites hatred with the love of the girl who regards the world as a place where everybody is kind to her, and where she loves everybody, whose heart keeps dancing within her, and cannot let her be dismal. Priscilla is a foil of Zenobia's incapability to cope with the ideal of Blithedale. In "Nathaniel Hawthorne," Wyatt

Waggoner says that reform is superficial and impermanent unless it is accompanied by a change of heart, adding that the source of evil is not primarily in institution but in the heart of man.⁷ Zenobia cannot avoid sinfulness because, having no heart, she fails to be generous and tender towards Priscilla while generosity and brotherhood are the expected aims of the scheme. Her presence at Blithedale, therefore, causes this "heroic enterprise to show like an illusion, a masquerade, a pastoral, a counterfeit Arcadia" (p. 451). It is not without reason that Zenobia is compared with Pandora, the first woman ever to have been created, who was intended by Jupiter as a curse for mankind. Forbidden to open the box given by gods, Pandora lifted the cover, and all human sufferings escaped and spread all over the world. As Pandora is the cause of human beings' inevitable sufferings, likewise Zenobia is partly the cause of the downfall of the Blithedale experiment.

Another reason of the failure of the experiment is Hollingsworth who lives at variance with the principles of the project he has himself conceived. He is an egotist and an anti-feminist. He opposes women's emancipation while sexual equality is one of his doctrines. In his opinion, a woman's place is at man's side, and her "office" is that of a sympathizer. Ironically, he would use his "physical force, that unmistakable evidence of sovereignty to scourge them -women- back within their proper bounds" if they tried to raise themselves above men. He wants these "petticoated monstrosities" to know where their own sphere is, and never to seek to "stray beyond it" (p. 511). An anti-feminist, Hollingsworth fails to live in accordance with his goals because he lacks justice and love.

Even when Hollingsworth seems to show love, his love smacks of selfishness because he only loves those who minister to his terrible egotism, who accept to be the "bond slaves" of his "philanthropic theory":

"What I desire to know of you is, - and you can tell me in one word, - whether I am to look for your cooperation in this great scheme of good? Take it up with me. Be my brother in it" (p. 517).

This excerpt shows that Hollingsworth's scheme has become an obsession. He is interested in Coverdale not as a human being who deserves love and respect, but an executioner of his plan, only a brother in it. His scheme being his obsession, it causes him to regard people as his slaves, as a yoke of oxen that he can manipulate as he pleases. An attempt to disagree at Hollingsworth's principle to reform the world occasions hatred and separation. Thus, Coverdale is ruthlessly thrown away for no unworthiness, but merely because he stands upon his right as an individual being, and looks at matters through his own optics. Prompted by egotism, Hollingsworth is of "those men who have surrendered themselves to an overruling purpose" which causes them to

have no heart, no sympathy, no reason, no conscience. They will keep no friend, unless he makes himself the mirror of their purpose... They have an idol to which they consecrate themselves high-priest, and deem it holy work to offer sacrifices of whatever is most precious; and never once seem to suspect... That this false deity, in whose iron features... they see only benignity and love, is but a spectrum of the very priest himself, projected upon the surrounding darkness. And the higher and purer the original object... the slighter is the probability that they can be led to recognize the process by which godlike benevolence has been debased into all devouring egotism (p. 480).

The above passage is worth quoting because it summarizes Hollingsworth's

move from humanity to inhumanity owing to his overruling purpose. He is regarded by Zenobia not as a man, but a monster and a "cold, heartless, self-beginning and self-ending piece of mechanism" and "a better masquerader than witches and gypsies" (p. 568). Before he harboured his reformatory thoughts, he had a heart. He used to be a simple man, capable of tenderness and pity. It is significant that he was once a blacksmith who, to quote Fogle, "is generally a man of honest and simple strength, with the power of common humanity."⁸ After he decides to reform criminals and to make of Blithedale an exemplary and idealistic community, however, he becomes unhuman. Looking for an idealistic world, Hollingsworth denies the power and even the existence of evil. He is of those men who see in their principle only "benignity" and "love" and "godlike benevolence" while, ironically, it consists of "devouring egotism" itself. Pretending to be capable of reforming society, Hollingsworth sins from social pride. As a result, his reform falls through because he steps out of the order of nature; he wants to place himself outside of his true development. Interpreting Hawthorne's point of view about reform, John Erskine, in "Hawthorne," says that

True reform, the only kind that could enlist his sympathy, must work hand in hand with nature's slowly evolving but inevitable order, and so long as that order can be put partially or infrequently discerned, it is best to do nothing violent, nothing headlong. Even when we discern the order, from time to time, we should become humble, observing how little it resembles our own morality, our own dreams of perfection.⁹

Eschewing the inevitable, that is, human imperfection, to reach the unattainable, namely human perfection, Hollingsworth lacks humility, and, consequently, he sinks into evil. The more he struggles to avoid sinful-

ness, the more he becomes sinful because he is guided by egotism, a springboard for his inhumanity. Hollingsworth's fall, despite his generous intentions, is a proof that sin is inevitable. Coverdale whom Fogle thinks to be Hawthorne's mouthpiece on the grounds that "he is concerned with a number of problems with which Hawthorne was also preoccupied"¹⁰ says:

For, little as we know of our life to come, we may be very sure, for one thing, that the good we aim at will not be attained. People never do get just the good they seek. If it come at all, it is something else, which they never dreamed of, and did not particularly want (p. 483).

The above passage suggests Hawthorne's unbelief in reform, and it implies the inevitability of evil. Hollingsworth does not attain the good he aimed at in his scheme. The experiment fails, and ironically lapses into Fourierism while Hollingsworth previously had opposed Fourier's ideas:

"I never will forgive this fellow -- Fourier -- ! He has committed the unpardonable sin; for what monstrous iniquity could the Devil himself contrive than to choose the selfish principle, -- the principle of all human wrong, the very blackness of man's heart, the portion of ourselves which we shudder at, and which it is the whole aim of spiritual discipline to eradicate, -- to choose it as the master-workman of his system?" (p. 470)

Fourier's "principle of all human wrong" and "the very blackness of man's heart" alludes to the idea of man's innate and inevitable sinfulness as it is suggested in Hawthorne's works. That the scheme of Hollingsworth results in what he had previously fought against, that is, Fourierism, is a proof that evil is inescapable. Since the Blithedale utopian experiment was suggested by Hawthorne's own experience at Brook Farm, an incarnation of the transcendental spirit, the failure of Hollingsworth's scheme indi-

cates Hawthorne's revulsion against the naive and idealistic Transcendentalists who lack the vision of evil. Both The Blithedale Romance and "The Celestial Railroad" demonstrate that "from the very gate of heaven there is a by-way to the pit" (p. 583). Stated otherwise, the more the individual thinks to attain perfection, the more he sinks into imperfection. Evil is inevitable.

Being inevitable, evil unites mortal beings. Both "Young Goodman Brown" and "The Procession of Life" show that nothing else binds human beings more tightly than evil. In "The Procession of Life," the author encompasses the range of society by presenting procession of types, grouped together not by external accidents of their trades and professions, but their hidden desires or their deeper bond of suffering.

"Life," says the narrator, "figures itself to me like a festal or funereal procession. All of us have our places, and are to move onward under the direction of the chief Marshal" (p. 1082). Using the pronouns "me" and "us," the narrator participates in the story, and, perhaps, represents Hawthorne himself whose message to mankind is, according to Robert Spiller in The Cycle of American Literature, that "the bond of sin - committed or thought - binds man to earth and so to a common fate with his fellows."^{II}

It is supposed that human beings are to move onward under

the direction of the "deputy marshals" having to arrange them. The author opposes a classification relying on external circumstances such as richness and poverty. Ignoring the realities by which "nature, fortune, or Providence has constituted for everyman a brotherhood, wherein it is one great office of human wisdom to classify him" (p. 1083), a reliance on outside shows of similarity or difference is unwise and superficial. People should not even be marshalled on external principle such as physical diseases because "some maladies are rich and precious, and only to be acquired by the right of inheritance or purchased with gold." The gout, for instance, only serves as "a bond of brotherhood to the purple-visaged gentry" (p. 1083).

Accurate are instances where the bond of mutual disease embraces high and low, and "makes the king a brother of the clown" and the rich youthful maiden a sister of a poor old seamstress. True arrangement should depend on people's hidden desires or their deep bond of suffering. But even so, some of these inner instances are shallow and, as a result, they should not be accounted for in mortal beings' classification.

A classification of "those whom the gifts of intellect have united in a noble brotherhood" (p. 1084) is, vis-a-vis an arrangement founded on truth, trifling, impalpable and ridiculously visionary. High intellectual power, indeed, is but a higher development of innate gifts common to all. Moreover,

a person whose genius appears deepest and truest might excell his fellows in nothing save the knack of expression. He comes up with truths that everybody is profoundly, though unutterably, conscious of. (p.1085)

An arrangement based on the principle of love does not weigh either because the people expected to be united in love and mutual goodness are not. Even "the good Christian" will find it difficult to acknowledge "the good Pagan," and "the good Orthodox" will deem it impossible to embrace the Unitarian : they leave it to God to unite them. Here, perhaps, Hawthorne indirectly attacks Puritanism and other religious sects which mistrust and degrade each other while they intrinsically aim at the same thing. These people's attitude towards one another suggests Hawthorne's revulsion against religious intolerance, and especially puritanical intolerance. The puritans left their mother country for freedom of conscience, but when they arrived in New England they instituted the pillory and the stocks for those who have a religious outlook different from theirs.

Marshalling people on the basis of love is unconvincing because what is viewed as love may be suppositious. He has no devotion at all, that "good person" who devotes himself to a particular kind of beneficence in such a way that this selfsame good causes him to regard anything else in the universe as worthless. Regarding as worthwhile only his scheme, he becomes, like Hollingsworth, egoistical and his love becomes a masquerade. Those who apparently have a honest purpose for the universal cause of

good are in fact "helping to bind the selfsame sheaf" (p.1089) because their own view may be bounded by country, creed or profession. Such 'union in interest,' aiming at oppressing others, is not love, but disguised egoism.

A realistic and reliable arrangement should account for guilt which unites all human beings. If ever there is a hideous appeal, telling guilty people to rank themselves in accordance with "the brotherhood of crime, the dread alarum should make the earth quake to its centre" (p.1086) since even the purest mortal may be sensible of some faint responding echo in his breast. The partnerships in evil are great. This class of sinners comprises, among others, distinguished financiers who pretend to be honest while their operations are deprived of morality, and murderers, apparently pure and upright people, who have hidden their deadly crimes. Statesmen, rulers, generals and all men who commit wrong, pretending to safeguard the welfare of the population have a place in the procession of the sinners. Mortal beings are bond-servants of evil. Each member of this class is "entitled to grasp any other member's hand, by that vile degradation wherein guilty error has buried all alike" (p.1087). While human beings respond in bulk to the call of evil, no one answers that of the good because even the just, the pure and the true -- if ever there be one -- shrink sadly back inasmuch as they are aware of their errors and imperfection. That the call of the good is ignored bears out that evil is the common lot of Adam's children. Only evil unites them in a great bond of brotherhood.

Another story showing that sin binds mankind is "Young Good-

man Brown." In "Hawthorne and His Mosses," Melville says that the story under consideration is "a strong positive illustration of that blackness in Hawthorne."¹² The story deals with a young man who apparently is a good christian and good husband, but who eventually becomes a bad, sad and desperate man at the end of a nocturnal journey through which he discovers that the religious people he had regarded as godly are corrupt.

The character of Young Goodman Brown is allegorical. Brown is, according to Leavis in "Hawthorne as Poet," "Everyman in the seventeenth-century New England."¹³ It is also said, in A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature, that

Brown is not just one Salem citizen of the late seventeenth century, but rather seems to typify mankind, to be in a sense Everyman, in that what he does and the reason he does it appear very familiar to most people, based on their knowledge of others and on honest appraisal of their own behaviour.¹⁴

The experience that Brown undergoes during the journey, therefore, concerns mankind in general.

Young Goodman Brown

came forth at sunset into the street at Salem village; but put his head back, after crossing the threshold, to exchange a parting kiss with his young wife. And Faith, as the wife was aptly named, thrust her own pretty head into the street, letting the wind play

with the pink ribbon of her cap while she called to Goodman Brown (p.1033).

Many words, such as "Young Goodman Brown," "Faith," "sunset," "village," "forest," "crossing the threshold" and "pink ribbons," are suggestive and significant. The name "Young Goodman" alludes not only to an immature, inexperienced person who has an idealistic outlook on the world, but also to a good christian and a good husband since he is recently wedded to Faith. She is a wife, and she stands for the faith that is a guiding star for every good christian. In her hair, Faith has pink ribbons which are mentioned three times in the opening paragraphs. Characterizing Faith, these ribbons are, in Fogle's opinion, "an emblem of heavenly faith."¹⁵

Young Goodman Brown has to undertake a journey in the forest between sunset and sunrise, that is during night. The night is a time when a person has enough time to muse over himself and the world; the forest itself is a mysterious place, a spot of unknown things that one should discover. Brown, therefore, must not make his journey in Salem village, a place he knows well and which can teach him nothing new. The phrase "crossing the threshold" suggests that Brown decides to be an explorer. He goes on the journey to discover and understand all the mysteries about human nature. Even though the journey might be rather more psychological than physical, it will, still, alter his former naive and idealistic view of mankind.

Urged by his wife to put off his journey, Brown refuses be-

cause it "must needs be done 'twixt now and sunrise"(p.1033). He asks his sweet pretty wife why she **already** doubts him. This question foreshadows something fatal, that is, the gap between Brown and his faith. That Faith herself is afraid of being harmed in her husband's absence shows that her faith is weak. How can one lose confidence if he has strong faith? Faith's husband calls her "a blessed angel on earth," and he intends to cling "to her skirts and follow her to heaven"(p.1033) after his journey. Brown's bright hopes to go to heaven are likely to be blighted because he relies on appearance. A blessed angel on earth, that is, in the eyes of human beings, Faith may be a damned devil in front of God. Brown relies on superficial faith.

There is an irony in Brown's reasoning owing to the difference between what he says and what he does. After recording Brown's will to cling to Faith's skirts and follow her to heaven, the author adds that "with this excellent resolve for the future, Goodman Brown felt himself justified in making more haste on his present evil purpose"(p.1033). Brown contradicts himself in that he can never attain heaven while shunning faith and running away from it as if it were an anathema.

Deprived of faith, Brown can be likened to an unarmed soldier who goes to the battlefield. As such a soldier must succumb to the enemy, so Brown is likely to succumb to the devil. Travelling in the forest, Brown fancies that "there may be a devilish Indian behind every tree," and wonders if the devil himself is not at "my very elbow"(p.1034). Brown's thoughts

reflect his actual inward being even though he is not aware of this fact. His faith gone because left behind, it must be substituted by evil to fill the gap.

Having evil in himself, Brown is not "wholly unexpected by his encounter with someone standing for a devil. The fact that the devil asks Goodman Brown why he is late proves that the latter is already informed about the rendez-vous. The second traveller bears a considerable resemblance to Brown, and they may be taken for a father and a son. As this saying goes, "Such a father, such a son." Therefore, Brown is likely to have the same characteristics as the old man who is armed with a staff bearing "the likeness of a great black snake" and wriggling "itself like a living serpent"(p.1034). Incarnating the devil, the serpent recalls the snake of the garden of Eden which has persuaded Eve to commit sin by eating of the forbidden fruit. The old traveller himself is a serpent leading the "good man" to a witches' sabbath, standing for the Devil's kingdom.

Given the staff to help him continue his journey, Brown has scruples touching the matter belonging to the old man; and he even attempts to go back. Such a reaction proves that Brown shuns cooperation with the man. Still, Fogle observes that the simple good man is wholly at the mercy of Satan, who leads him step by step to the inevitable end.¹⁶ To achieve this, the old man skillfully and relentlessly attacks all the values which Goodman Brown has lived by. Brown believes that his forebears have never gone into the woods, that he cannot be the first to

take that path since his race is of "honest men and good christian since the days of the martyrs"(p.1034). Brown's reverence for his Puritan ancestors is turned against him as the devil claims them for dear companions. The good man is informed that the elder person would have many a pleasant walk in the path with his ancestors with whom he has participated in wickedness : he has helped them lash a Quaker woman through the streets of Salem, and set fire to an Indian village. This information, perhaps, refers to Hawthorne's ancestors whose religious intolerance caused their wickedness.

As events follow, the Devil's information becomes a reality for Brown. He sees in the forest Goody Cloyse, "a very pious and exemplary dame, who taught him catechism"(p.1035). She comes to the forest to take into communion "a young man." Being an old woman, she asks the elder person to lend her his arm so as to arrive to her destination quickly. Brown who is witnessing the scene finds out that this old woman is familiar with the Devil, which implies that she is also devilish. The wickedness of Goody Cloyse, Brown's "moral and spiritual adviser" causes his faith to waver because, like a child, he no longer has a mentor.

Even though Goody Cloyse's behaviour does not thoroughly destroys Brown's faith in that he struggles to go back and join his faith, many incidents bring him to impeach not only his goodness, but also that of others. He hears the minister and Deacon Gookin. The latter says that he would rather miss an

ordination dinner than the meeting in the forest. Such a choice makes it clear that they are also in league with the Devil.

Disappointed by the people he used to regard as holy, Brown is overburdened with the sickness of his heart. Yet, he perseveres in his goodness as he cries, "With heaven above and Faith below, I will stand firm against the devil"(p.1038). Gazing upward, and lifting his hands to pray, however, a cloud darkens the sky and hides the brightening stars. The term "cloud" alludes to darkness which, in turn, connotes evil while the phrase "brightening stars" hints at light, a symbol of goodness and holiness. The cloud obstructing the stars suggests that evil prevails over goodness.

So far, Brown has attempted to safeguard his faith in the goodness of human nature. Seeing the pink ribbon, however, he comes to know what he had suspected all along about the sinfulness of mankind :

"My faith is gone!" cried he, after one stupefied moment. "There is no good on earth; and sin is but a name. Come, devil; for to thee is this world given!"
(p.1038)

The pink ribbon's scene is a watershed for Brown. As Fogle points out, "This ribbon, apparently a solid object like the fatal handkerchief in Othello, seems out of keeping with the atmosphere of doubt which has enveloped the preceding incidents."¹⁷ As Othello accepts that Desdemona is unfaithful after Iago gives him the handkerchief, likewise, after he sees Faith's pink ribbon, Brown accepts not only that evil exists, but also

that it reigns over the world.

An accumulation of unconscious doubts about the "saints" precipitates Brown's conviction of universal sinfulness. The more he loses his belief in the reality of virtue in others, the more the scene grows increasingly sinister until the road "vanished at length, leaving him in the heart of the dark wilderness, still rushing onward with the instinct that guides mortal man to evil"(p.1038). Brown no longer shrinks from the various horrors of the forest. Instead, he is himself the chief horror of the scene. Perhaps, comparing him with Satan might not be exaggerating :

"Let us hear which will laugh loudest. Think not to frighten me with your deviltry. Come witch, come wizard, come Indian powpow, come devil himself, and here comes Goodman Brown. You may as well fear him as he fear you"(p.1039).

Leavis, in "Hawthorne as Poet," says that Hawthorne makes timely use of the traditional puritan association of trees, animals, witches, wizards and Indian powpows as the hostile powers, and, consequently, the allies of the fiend.¹⁸ The figure of Young Goodman Brown is more frightful than all these forces. He brandishes his staff with frenzied gestures, gives vent to an inspiration of horrid blasphemy and shouts "forth such laughter as set all the echoes of the forest laughing like demons around him"(p.1039).

Laughter results from joy and merriment, but sometimes it

stems from grief and disappointment. "Man," says William Hazlitt in On Wit and Humour, "is the only animal that laughs and weeps; for he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are and what they ought to be." Shocked to learn that there is evil among the people he had looked on as godly, Brown's standard crumbles. Being bitter, and cutting more than a machete, Brown's cynical laughter destroys in him the last ray of belief in human goodness. All the events that follow, therefore, will not come as a shock to him.

At the witches' Sabbath, Brown recognizes a score of Church members of Salem village famous for their special sanctity. There are elders of the church, chaste dames, dewy virgins and men of dissolute lives and women of spotted fame. All these people are given over to all mean and filthy vice, and suspected even of horrid crimes. "The good," the narrator observes, "does not shrink from the wicked, nor do the sinners from the saints"(p.1040). Sinfulness is the common lot of mortal beings. The only unmistakable reality is our brotherhood in sin as the hymn preceding the converts' baptism reflects : the anthem embodies words expressing "all that our nature can conceive of sin, and darkly hinted at more. Unfathomable to mere mortals is the lore of fiends"(p.1040).

Brown is seized and led to the rock by Salem elders and ministers assembled to worship at the devil's altar. The latter is a rock covered with "a mass of foliage" which is "on fire, blazing high into the night and fitfully illuminating

the whole field"(p.1039). Since "fire" and "blazing" allude to hell, Satan's realm, Brown and his faith are urged to be received into the communion of "the lost." The two are welcomed by a **dark** figure, the avatar of the devil, into the fraternity of evil. Persuading them that the people they thought to be holy owing to "their lives of righteousness and prayerful aspirations heavenward"(p.1041) are hypocrites, the "darker leader" baptizes the couple in evil :

"Depending upon one another's hearts, ye had still hoped that virtue were not at all a dream. Now are ye undeceived. Evil is the nature of mankind. Evil must be your only happiness"(p.1041).

The couple's baptismal bond is to be partakers of the mystery of sin, more conscious of the secret guilt of others not only in deed, but also in thought. The devil's message alludes to Ahab in Melville's Moby Dick. Addressing his sword to kill the white whale, Ahab says, "Ego non baptizo te in nomine patris, sed in nomine diaboli"¹⁹(p.448). This statement highlights Melville's and Hawthorne's agreement about evil as the common denominator between human beings. Dealing with human fall, sinfulness, "Young Goodman Brown" is viewed by Melville, in "Hawthorne and His Mosses," as deep as Dante in its penetration into the mystery of evil.²⁰

As "Young Goodman Brown," "The Procession of Life," "The Celestial Railroad," "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" and The Blithedale Romance suggest, evil is universal. It is typical of all people in space and in time, and, consequently, it is

inevitable because the more the individual tries to avoid it, the more surely he becomes involved in it. Since evil is inescapable, then, it is better to embrace it and be better off with it.

Footnotes

- ¹John Gerber (ed.), Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Scarlet Letter (New Jersey, 1968), p.82.
- ²Ecclesiastes 1 : 2-3, The New English Bible.
- ³Gerber, p.3.
- ⁴W.Peterfield Trent (ed.) et al., The Cambridge History of American Literature (New York, 1972), p.339-340.
- ⁵Richard Fogle, Hawthorne's Fiction : The Light & The Dark (Norman, 1964), p.174.
- ⁶Ibid.
- ⁷Richard Foster (ed.), Six American Novelists of The Nineteenth Century (Minneapolis, 1968), p.59.
- ⁸Fogle, p.178.
- ⁹Peterfield, p.22.
- ¹⁰Fogle, p.182.
- ¹¹Robert Spiller, The Cycle of American Literature (New York, 1955), p.71.
- ¹²Ronald Gottesman et al., The Norton Anthology of American Literature : Volume 1 (London, 1979), p.2068.
- ¹³Charles Feidelson and Brodtkorb (ed.), Interpretations of American Literature (New York, 1959), p.42.
- ¹⁴Wilfred L. Guerin et al., A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature. 2nd édition. (New York, 1979), p.65.
- ¹⁵Fogle, p.24.
- ¹⁶Fogle, p.28.
- ¹⁷Fogle, p.18.
- ¹⁸Feidelson and Brodtkorb, p.43.
- ¹⁹My translation of the passage reads as follows : "I do not baptize you in God's name, but in the Devil's name."
- ²⁰Gottesman, p.2068.

C H A P T E R T W O

The Fortunate Fall

Showing evil as universal and inevitable, the first chapter may bring some readers to take it for granted that Hawthorne is pessimistic and even nihilistic, and that he aims at discouraging people from trying to better their condition. This is not the case, though; **he** actually suggests that people first look realistically in their soul, then recognize their share in human sinfulness and finally cope with it. Even though the individual is sinful, once he is better off with his falls and mistakes, his fall is fortunate for him. This variation on the fall applies to Robin in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux", to Donatello in The Marble Faun, to Reverend Hooper in "The Minister's Black Veil" and to Arthur Dimmesdale and Hester Prynne in The Scarlet Letter.

In the latter work, the fortunate fall applies to both Dimmesdale and Hester even though their attitudes towards their fall, that is, their adultery, is different : Hester immediately accepts her sin while Dimmesdale recognizes it later. Still, the fall is fortunate for both sinners - though in different degrees - because it develops their moral and intellectual capabilities allowing them to understand people's inner sufferings and to sympathize and even empathize with them.

The setting of The Scarlet Letter is Salem, a village inhabited by a people among "whom religion and law were almost identical," and for whom "the mildest and the severest acts of

public discipline were alike made venerable and awful" (p.113). To safeguard public discipline, these people have taken drastic measures by creating laws governing adultery. In "Annals of Salem : Laws Governing Adultery," Joseph Felt relates that Salemites guilty of adultery

were to sit an hour on the gallows, with ropes about their necks, - be severely whipt not above 40 stripes; and forever after wear a capital A, two inches long, cut out of cloth coloured differently from their clothes, and sewed on the arms, or back parts of their garments so as always to be seen when they were about.¹

Anybody guilty of adultery, therefore, was expected to be punished in accordance with this law. Thus, the law is applied to Hester who is betrayed by the birth of Pearl, her illegitimate child.

Hester's adultery gives rise to much controversy. Interpreting transcendental idealists' view on man, Frederick Carpenter, in "Scarlet A Minus," argues "that Hester merely acted according to the deepest of human instincts" because she "remained true" to her own self.² Such argument certainly refers to the ideal of "self-reliance" that John Erskine, in "Hawthorne," defines as man's living "according to his own nature, his listening to the dictates of the over-soul as revealed in his impulses."³ Accounting for traditional morality, however, Carpenter holds that Hester is truly a sinful woman because not only she "sinned against the morality which her lover believed in," but also because "from her sin, death

and tragedy resulted."⁴ Even though transcendental idealists fail to see Hester's unfaithfulness as a sin, it is obvious that Hester has sinned because, from time immemorial, being unfaithful to one's husband or the other way around is bad. Hester herself believes that she is "a woman stained with sin" in that she has caused a social disorder in a well-organized society. As a result, she must be punished.

Refusing to put in force the extremity of the law governing adultery, the Puritans slightly commute Hester's sentence in that they neither beat nor tie her up. Mistress Prynne is simply condemned "to stand only a space of three hours on the platform of the pillory, and then and thereafter, for the remainder of her natural life, to wear a mark of shame upon her bosom"(p.121). To draw a satire against the "good" puritans, the author describes Hester standing on the scaffold in their scorning eyes. She is "preceded by the beadle, and attended by an irregular procession of stern-browed men and unkindly visaged women"(p.116). Hester is the laughing-stock of all Salemites. Instead of showing pity for her, the good puritans are unkind to the woman who is regarded as the only adulteress just because she is the only one who happens to give birth to the illegitimate child. The unkindly women forget that among them there may be unfaithful women who are lucky not to be betrayed by the birth of illegal children. Torturing the wearer of the scarlet letter, the good puritans fail to realize that they are committing what Matthiessen terms "the Unpardonable Sin" and which he defines as a sin consisting "in a want of love

and reverence for the Human Soul...."⁵ Ironically enough, the Salemites scorn only one sinner while they admire Dimmesdale, her fellow-sinner.

Salemities assert that Dimmesdale, being Hester's godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal has come upon his congregation. His health failing, it is accounted for by his earnest devotion to study, his scrupulous fulfilment of parochial duty in order to keep the grossness of this earthly state from clogging and obscuring his spiritual lamp. The public eye regards the

young divine...as little less than a heaven-ordained apostle, destined... to do as great deeds for the now feeble New England Church as the early Fathers had achieved for the infancy of the Christian faith (p.154).

A miracle of holiness, the minister is said to be the mouth-piece of Heaven's messages of wisdom. Despite his sin, then, Dimmesdale is held in esteem by his converts while Hester is punished as if she were the only sinner.

The punishment imposed on Hester causes her physical and psychical isolation. Her spiritual alienation derives from her sense of guilt, and from Salemities' comments about her. "Let her cover the mark as she will," says a woman, "The pang of it will be always in her heart." Another pitiless woman nurses a grudge against Hester, accusing her of "having brought shame upon" (p.114) all women of Salem. Entering

the church so as "to share the Sabbath smile of the Universal Father," Hester becomes the converts' laughing-stock on the grounds that she finds herself "the text of the discourse." The puritans' goodness is a counterfeit because, instead of regarding the church as a place of reconciliation between sinful human beings and God, they view it as an arena of dis- paragement and humiliation. The preacher who uses Hester as "the text of discourse," who uses her as a model of sinners in the eyes of other Salemites can be likened to the Pharisee who, entering a church, a spot where one is especially expect- ed to be humble, pretended that he was righteous, despising the Publican whom he labelled unjust and adulterous. These good puritans inculcate in their children "a vague idea of some- thing horrible in this dreary woman, gliding silently through the town, with never any companion but one only child"(p.134). Worst of all, they urge the children to fling mud at her daugh- ter and herself. As puritans are corrupt, likewise their educa- tion is corrupting.

Hester's isolation goes hand in hand with the negative interpretations of the letter on her bosom. As it is averred by many people, the symbol is not mere scarlet cloth, "tinged in an earthly dye-pot, but was red-hot with infernal fire," and it "could be seen glowing all alight, whenever Hester Prynne walked abroad in the night-time"(p.135-136). Pearl herself views the scarlet cloth as the "Blackman's mark" on her mother, glowing like a "red flame." The phrases "Black- man's mark" and "red flame" respectively allude to Satan and

his kingdom, hell. Frederick Carpenter, in "Scarlet A Minus," goes far, saying that "the scarlet letter has seemed the very symbol of all sin, translating into living terms the external problem of evil."⁶ Stated otherwise, the scarlet letter symbolizes not only Hester's sin, but also mankind sin in general. It is ironical, then, that Hester is the only victim of her sinful act while Hawthorne's works suggest that sin is what binds human beings together.

Regarded as the only sinner, Hester stands on the scaffold in the scorning eyes of everybody. Her mind and memory turn back to her past as she wants to lessen her intense mental suffering. She reviews happenings from her infancy, as well as from her schooldays. Like events in a play, recollection of things of more recent years fly through her mind. She visualizes her native village in old England and her parents' home. She thinks again of her father and mother, rearing him with much care and tenderness. Losing herself in memories of the past, Hester is able to endure the humiliation of the moment.

Finding it useless to continue to think about the past, Hester puts up with her sinful act and the punishment resulting from it. She clutches the child fiercely to her breast, turns her eyes downward at the scarlet letter, and even touches it with her finger, to be sure that the infant and the shame are real. This reaction is a sign of her moral recognition of sin. A convincing proof of Hester's acceptance of her sin is shown by her interest in Pearl. The latter reminds her of

the token she is doomed to wear upon her bosom. To put it another way, the infant is "the scarlet letter in another form; the scarlet letter endowed with life"(p.143). Hester prevents the magistrates from taking the child away because it daily teaches her. Not only is Pearl Hester's happiness in that she keeps her mother in life, but also the infant is her mother's torture. A punishment for Hester, Pearl is "the scarlet letter endowed with a million-fold the power of retribution for my sin"(p.150). The fact that Pearl refuses to traverse the brook and join Hester after the latter has just thrown away the scarlet cloth shows that Pearl wants her mother to accept the sin, bear it and expiate it so as to achieve reunion. Even Dimmesdale agrees that the child must remain with Hester because it will remind her of her fall and, consequently, educate her well. The child is meant for the mother's soul to be "alive, and to preserve her from blacker depths of sin into which Satan might else have sought to plunge her" (p.151). Dimmesdale's argument is convincing because it is buttressed up by Hester's refusal to go along with Mrs. Hibbins in the forest, averring that "Had they taken her -Pearl- from me, I would willingly have gone with thee -Mrs. Hibbins -, and signed my name in the Black Man's book..."(p.153).

Even though Matthiessen reminds us that the moral recognition of sin is a prerequisite of salvation⁷, such recognition is not an end in itself. Having accepted her sin, Hester has to atone for it in order for her to attain regeneration. To overcome or at least to reduce her physical isolation, Hester

has recourse to her art. She provides "gorgeously embroidered gloves" for babies and dignitaries on ceremonial days. Hester's art is also needed in the array of funerals for the apparel of the dead body. But she cannot "embroider the white veil which was to cover the pure blushes of a bride"(p.133), which indicates that society is not yet ready to forgive her for her adulterous and scandalous act. But even so, Hester's art is a means of coping with her sin. Only in her art does Hester begin to find grace and to grasp the truth; that is, only in her art does she come to know Pearl. Her needlework is an "act of penance," a product of delicate imaginative skill, and under other circumstances it might have been the "passion of her life." According to Roy Male, in "Transformations : Hester and Arthur," Hester's art becomes involved with "birth and death, adding the hidden sins and wounds of mankind to her own burden."⁸ The fact that Hester embroiders shrouds for dead people, and gloves for babies shows that she shares the same human condition with the dead as well as the living. Hester's art not only supplies food for her child and herself, but also allows the latter to help the poor. Except the expenditure of some money on food and on the decoration of the infant, Hester bestows all her superfluous means to charity, on wretches less miserable than herself, and she makes garments for them. Hester's help is backed with charity and humility. These qualities are deep because they derive from man's inward sphere, that is, the heart. And to attain actual salvation requires, first and foremost, the involvement of the heart. Being charitable and humble, then, Hester paves the way for her salvation.

Even though Hester's good deeds are requited with insults and scorn, her love for the poor never wavers. Being hated, she shows no "irritation and irksomeness." She never battles with the public, and she is quick to acknowledge her "sisterhood with the race of man" whenever benefits are to be conferred. No one is more ready than her to give of her little substance to the poor. None is more self-devoted than the wearer of the scarlet letter when pestilence stalks through the town. In all season of calamity, she comes not as a guest, but as "a rightful inmate," ready to console and advise her fellow-creatures. (p.179)

Backing her enemies' insult with tenderness, Hester is finally and unexpectedly accepted and revered by the society :

She was self-ordained a Sister of Mercy; or, we may rather say, the world's heavy hand had so ordained her, when neither the world nor she looked forward to this result (p.179).

Hester's integration and reverence results in the positive interpretation of the letter. Acquiring a positive meaning, the letter is no longer a badge of shame, but of fame. "A" becomes a token of Hester's good deeds. Introduced to strangers, the woman with the embroidered badge is referred to as "our Hester, - the town's own Hester, who is so kind to the poor, so helpful to the sick, so comfortable to the afflicted"(p.180). The scarlet letter ceases to be a "stigma which attracted the world's scorn and bitterness," and "became a type of something to be sorrowed over, and looked

upon with awe," but with reverence (p.240) Reminding her of her past suffering and penance, the letter cannot be taken off from Hester's bosom. To a magistrate who proposes to remove the letter, Hester says that it is not up to mortal beings to take off the badge, adding that it will fall away of its own nature. The letter has almost become a part of Hester's body, and it has provided her with moral and intellectual qualities.

The letter is endowed with some qualities peculiar to a heart. As the heart allows an individual to understand himself and others, so the letter gives Hester a new sense because, experiencing her own suffering, she understands Salem's sufferings and hypocrisy. Hester begins to believe that the scarlet letter has furnished her "with a new sense," that is, it gives her a "sympathetic knowledge of the hidden sin in other hearts." Her instincts tell her that "if truth were everywhere to be shown, a scarlet letter would blaze forth on many a bosom beside Hester Prynne's." Sometimes, she senses an "evil thing... at hand" when she passes a highly respected "minister or magistrate, the model of piety and justice." She feels a bond of "sisterhood" as she catches the "sanctified frown of some matron" of the highest reputation. At times, she is aware that a "compassion" in sin is near her; looking up, she notes the eyes of a young maiden quickly withdrawn from the scarlet token of adultery. (p.135) Such an understanding of man's condition and her empathy with it derives from despair, shame and solitude :

The tendency of her fate and fortunes had been to set her free. The scarlet letter was her passport into regions where other women dared not tread. Shame, Despair, Solitude! These had been her teachers - stern and wild ones - and they had made her strong, but taught her much amiss (p.202-203).

Knowing other people's sufferings through her own, Hester becomes morally superior to Salemites because she gives them advice, and consoles them. It is not exaggerating, perhaps, to view her as a godlike figure to whom

people brought all their sorrows and perplexities, and besought her counsel, as one who had herself gone through a mighty trouble. Women, more especially ... came to Hester's cottage, demanding why they were so wretched, and what the remedy! Hester comforted and counselled them as best she might (p.240).

Even though Hester has won her fellow-townsmen's respect by her good deeds and respectability of conduct, she has, first of all, to reconcile herself with Dimmesdale in order for her to attain complete regeneration. Despite her good actions, indeed, Hester "was fully sensible of the deep injury for which she was responsible to" Dimmesdale, in permitting him "to lie for so many years at the mercy of one whose purposes could not be other than malevolent" (p.198). Hester's concealment of her husband's identity can be looked on as her second sin. Since Dimmesdale was her fellow-sinner, Hester should have informed him about Chillingworth's identity. Such an action might have

allowed Dimmesdale to get rid of his "physician"'s tortures. Refusing to unmask her husband, Hester indirectly helps him torment the minister, and, consequently, she sins against the latter. In "Solitude, and Love, and Anguish : The Tragic Design of the Scarlet Letter," Seymour Gross says that, by hiding Chillingworth's identity, Hester "has sinned against Dimmesdale," adding that "it is a convenient coincidence that the "A" she wears is the initial of her lover's first name."⁹ During her confession, Hester admits her guilt :

"O, Arthur, forgive me! ... But a lie is never good, even though death threaten on the other side... That old man... he whom they call Roger Chillingworth! - he was my husband!" (p.199)

Because her absolution partly comes from Dimmesdale, Hester fits in what, in "The Scarlet Letter and Its Modern Critics," Charles Child Walcutt calls "a climax of catharsis and purification by which she is purged of stain"¹⁰ after she reveals Chillingworth's identity and after she is forgiven for her concealment.

Hester's moral and intellectual development, then, shows that her fall has been fortunate for her because it allows her to be wiser than the "pious" and "godly" puritans. Meeting Salemites' rigorous cruelty with kindness and tenderness, their arrogance with humility and charity, Hester proves to be morally superior to them. That a sinful person is wiser than the people who pretend to be sinless shows, perhaps, that piety and purity cannot be achieved unless one experiences evil.

Piety and purity lie not in regarding sin as an anathema as puritans do, but in accepting it as a reality and in struggling to be better off with it as Hester does.

Ignoring the reality of sin is displaying hypocrisy. Dimmesdale is hypocritical because he conceals his adulterous act with Hester. To justify his hypocrisy, the minister likens himself to those men who, guilty as they may be, retain "a zeal for God's glory and man's welfare"(p.162), and shrink from displaying themselves black and filthy in the view of the public eye because no good can be achieved by them. To put it another way, Dimmesdale refuses to confess so as to carry out his religious job. In his opinion, confession may deprive him of the influence on his parishioners and their adoration for him. He also argues that, suffering from the soul's disease, he has to commit himself not to mortal physicians like Roger Chillingworth, but to the "One Physician of the soul"(p.165), that is, God. Even though Dimmesdale's reasoning embodies some truth, it is not convincing. Actually, he avoids confession because of his cowardice. The philosophical and confusing allocution urging Hester to reveal her lover's identity suggests Dimmesdale's cowardice : with a frightened and desperate look, and a broken voice, the minister says to the wearer of the scarlet letter to see

"the accountability under which I labor.
If thou feelest it to be for my soul's
peace, and that thy earthly punishment
will thereby be made more effectual to
salvation, I charge thee to speak out

the name of thy fellow-sinner and fellow-sufferer"(p.124).

Apparently, Dimmesdale stirs Hester to confession, but actually, he debars her from doing so because he smartly imposes her a condition, that is, to denounce him only if such an act will alleviate her punishment. The minister presumes that Hester is not likely to denounce him because whether she reveals him or not, she must stand the punishment imposed on her. Finding out that Hester refuses to expose him, the minister considers the act as a "wondrous strength and generosity of a woman's heart" (p.124). Dimmesdale is glad that he is not unmasked. Afraid to confess lest he should sour his reputation, the minister lacks self-reliance and, consequently, his righteousness is superficial.

Even though he is afraid to show his real being to the world, Dimmesdale is true to himself. Convinced that refraining from confessing is, to quote Gerber, "to add sin against the community to sin against God,"¹¹ he feels remorseful. Addressing Hester, he says, "Happy are you, Hester, that wear the scarlet letter openly upon your bosom! Mine burns in secret!"(p.198) He preaches each Sunday from the pulpit while the secret consciousness of his sin eats into him. Being hypocritical, the minister has no faith in the good he appears to do because it is a delusion. He cannot wear one face to himself, and another to "the multitude," and go unharmed. His flock's reverence for him becomes scorn and hatred for, looking inward, he discerns the black reality of what they idolize : "I have laughed," he

holiness. They fancied him the mouth-
piece of Heaven's messages of wisdom,
and rebuke and love (p.168).

The above passage shows that Dimmesdale has achieved a brilliant popularity in his sacred office. More persuasive than before, he has developed his intellectual gifts, his moral perceptions and his power of experiencing and communicating emotion. Empathizing with his sinful parishioners, the young minister's fame overshadows the reputation of his eminent fellow-clergymen. He is so convincing that he is regarded as "a miracle of holiness." A "mouthpiece of Heaven's messages of wisdom," the minister alludes to Jesus Christ who was sent on earth to redeem the world. Knowing people's suffering through his own, Dimmesdale is ready to forgive. Aware that all mortal beings are subject to sin, he forgives Hester for having failed to reveal him her husband's identity :

"I do forgive you Hester," replied the minister, at length, with a deep utterance, out of an abyss of sadness, but no anger. "I freely forgive you now. May God forgive us both!(p.199-200)

Showing the will to forgive others, Dimmesdale is likely to be forgiven, too.

Dimmesdale's atonement for his sin is a good way of attaining regeneration, but it will be ineffective as long as it is not followed by confession, at least in Christian philosophy. To be completely regenerated, the minister must overcome his cowardice and publicly confess his adulterous act with

Hester. Standing on the pulpit, the minister clears his throat, and draws in a long, deep, and tremulous breath which, sent forth again, comes "burdened with the black secret of his soul." He tells his hearers that he is "altogether vile, a viler companion of the vilest, the worst of sinners, an abomination, a thing of unimaginable iniquity..."(p.169). Dimmesdale's "euphetic half-truths" make his confession vague. Transforming the truth into the veriest falsehood by the generality of his avowal, he ironically emphasizes his parishioners' admiration. Every attempt to confess deepens his plight as long as he does not make the effort of complete self-revelation.

Dimmesdale dresses in ministerial robes and leaves his room at midnight, hoping to find relief in a private mimicry of public confession on the scaffold where Hester stood during the public shame. On the scaffold, Dimmesdale is overcome with a great horror of mind as if the universe were gazing at "a scarlet token on his naked breast, right over his heart" (p.171). Owing to his disordered mental state, he sees a meteor gleaming through a cloud, and forming an immense and a scarlet A marked out in lines of dull red light. The appearance of the letter in the heavens suggests that, even though human beings do not know Dimmesdale's sin, God is aware of it. It is better for Dimmesdale, then, to confess because he cannot hide his sin from God who is omniscient.

If it were not during night, Dimmesdale's confession would be real. Calling Hester and Pearl to join him on the scaffold

so as to stand there all the three together, the minister recognizes his sin. Hester's and Pearl's joining Dimmesdale almost makes him a new man. Taking the child's hand, that is, accepting her as a daughter and, consequently, accepting the adulterous act involving Hester and him, he feels

a tumultuous rush of new life, other life than his own pouring like a torrent into his heart, and hurrying through all his veins, as if the mother and the child were communicating their vital warmth to his half-torpid system(p.174).

But since nobody has witnessed the "magnificent" midnight scaffold scene, Dimmesdale's regeneration is a counterfeit, and the confession still remains a mockery.

A symbol and a link between Hester and Dimmesdale, Pearl contributes to the latter's real confession as she helped her mother put up with her punishment. While the three stand on the scaffold, the girl asks the minister if he will "stand here with mother and me, tomorrow noontide." After he refuses, the infant tells her mother that he is a hypocrite, a strange and sad man who "calls us to him" in the dark night-time, and who "holds up thy hand and mine... But here, in the sunny day, and among all the people, he knows us not..."(p.200). In the forest, also, Pearl asks if the minister will go back with them in town, hand in hand. Ignoring the child's proposals, Dimmesdale stands in a position of hostility. Hoping that a "kiss might prove a talisman to admit him into the child's kindlier regards," Dimmesdale kisses on her brow, but Pearl

runs to the brook, and bathes her forehead until "the unwelcome kiss was quite washed off, and diffused through a long lapse of the gliding water"(p.210). Pearl's reaction to the kiss suggests that she does not recognize Dimmesdale as a father as long as the latter fails to recognize her as a daughter by confessing in the eyes of his parishioners.

Pearl's cold attitude towards the minister and his presence in the forest contribute to his maturity. Regarded by Lewis as "a pivot in Hawthorne's grand recurring pattern of escape and return,"¹³ the forest is usually a place where individuals acquire an understanding, and an acceptance of themselves. Such a state is what, in The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, Carl Jung calls "individuation," that is, a

process of discovering those aspects of oneself that make an individual different from other members of his species. It is essentially a process of recognition - that is - as he matures, the individual must consciously recognize the various aspects, unfavorable as well as favorable, of his total self.¹⁴

Having psychologically matured, Dimmesdale refuses Hester's idea of going in exile and leaving Salem, the place of their suffering :

"I am powerless to go! Wretched and sinful as I am, I have had no other thought than to drag on my earthly existence in the sphere where providence hath placed me. Lost as my own soul is, I would still do what I may

for other human souls! I dare not quit my post, though an unfaithful sentinel whose sure reward is death and dishonor, when his dreary watch shall come to an end" (p.201).

Dimmesdale's refusal to escape is a proof that he accepts his sin in himself. Having committed adultery, he compares himself with an "unfaithful sentinel." As the unfaithful sentry who fails to warn his army about the coming of the enemy, likewise Dimmesdale betrayed God because he sinned against him while he was expected to be a shining example for his parish. But even so, as the soldier may be more unfaithful by quitting his post, so Dimmesdale feels that quitting his post, that is, stopping being a preacher, is shirking his responsibility, which is adding sin to his former sin. Like the unfaithful guard who is ready to be judged by his superiors, the minister waits God's judgement. After all, escape can bring him nowhere because, being a christian, Dimmesdale believes that God is ubiquitous.

Ready to continue his religious mission and to publicly confess his sin, Dimmesdale comes back from the forest to join his parishioners. His sojourn in the forest has made him an energetic and a new man. He is transformed because he sees things and people with new eyes. Walking home, he becomes for that short while a comic figure bursting with thoughts of impossible, irreverent revelations alluding to those which afflicted Goodman Brown. Meeting the "excellent and hoary-bearded deacon," Dimmesdale is tempted to utter certain blasphemous suggestions that rise into his mind, with respect to the communion supper; to an

this woman, whose arm, more than the little strength wherewith I have crept hitherward, sustains me, at this dreadful moment, from grovelling down upon my face! Lo, the scarlet letter which Hester wears! Ye have all shuddered at it!... it hath cast a lurid gleam of awe and horrible repugnance round her. But there stood one in the mist of you, at whose brand of sin and infamy ye have not shuddered!"(p.235)

Even though Dimmesdale's penances, and sympathy with mankind were, to an extent, a means of atoning for his sin and paving his way for regeneration, this regeneration could not be complete before he publicly acknowledges his sin. It is only after the confession that he feels released and relieved from his sin. As a result, he stands on the scaffold "with a flush of triumph in his face, as one who, in the crisis of acutest pain, had won a victory..."(p.235). His public confession, indeed, is a proof of courage. It requires bravery and abnegation, for the minister regarded as "a saint on earth," to sour his reputation by unmasking himself. Dimmesdale dies, but his confession brings about what, in "Puritan Humanism Versus Romantic Naturalism," Randall Stewart calls "a reconciliation with God and man."¹⁶ Christian philosophy has it that people must confess their faults in order that they may be healed. Dimmesdale could have no actual salvation without that. The minister's confession occasions his reconciliation with little Pearl from whom there had been a complete estrangement : "... now that the burden was removed, it seemed almost as if he would be sportive with the

child... Pearl kissed his lips. A spell was broken"(p.236). Pearl's kiss intimates that now she recognizes the minister as her father.

In "The Scarlet Letter," Wyatt Waggoner says that Dimmesdale "emerges at last, that is, into the light of day, if only dubiously into that shining from the celestial city."¹⁷ The phrase "if only dubiously" implies that the critic does not thoroughly believe in Dimesdale's reconciliation with God. At any rate, Hester and her lover think that they are saved. The latter's penances and confession are the source of his regeneration :

"God knows; and He is merciful! He hath proved his mercy, most of all, in my afflictions. By giving me this burning torture to bear upon my breast! By sending yonder dark and terrible old man, to keep the torture always at red-heart! By bringing me hither, to die this death of triumphant ignominy before the people! Had either of these agonies been wanting, I had been lost for ever!" (p.236)

The minister's sin has made him undergo three agonies. First, he has been being tortured by Chillingworth who "has violated in cold blood the sanctity of a human heart"(p.199). Then, he has undergone various penances, such as fasting until his knees tremble beneath him, keeping vigils and being plagued by remorse, which have caused him to understand people's sufferings and to empathize with them. He has forgiven Hester for having failed to reveal on time her husband's identity. Finally, Dimmesdale's

greater and final suffering is his public humiliation on the scaffold before the people who held him in high esteem. Dimmesdale is not "lost for ever" because his agonies have been purgatorial. Hester herself believes that her lover and her are reconciled with God : "Shall we not spend our immortal life together ? Surely, surely, we have ransomed one another, with all this woe"(p.236). Hester and Dimmesdale will spend their eternal life together in heaven.

Hester's and Dimmesdale's fall, then, has been fortunate for them because the sufferings resulting from their adulterous act have developed their moral and intellectual capabilities. Of course, the fall benefits Hester more than it benefits Dimmesdale. Through her deeds and her contact with various people, Hester proves to be a more human example of character than the minister. Besides, she survived the sinful act. But even so, Dimmesdale also profits by the fall : it results in his sufferings which, in turn, allow him to empathize with other people's sufferings. Understanding their sufferings well, the minister helps them pave their way for heaven by stirring them to confession. Dimmesdale's concealment of sin teaches him that hypocrisy is destructive, and his death after the confession, perhaps, may cause some Puritans to change their attitudes towards sin and towards sinners. If the man regarded as "the godly pastor" and "the young divine" is sinful, how sinful other puritans might be! The minister's fall, then, may also be fortunate for other puritans. The fact that the fall is more fortunate for Hester than it is for Dimmesdale does not matter. According

beings' faces : "For the Earth, too, had on her Black Veil" (p.876). The fact that the veil is black is revealing. On the archetypal level, "black" may suggest evil and imperfection in human nature. Hence, in this story, the veil is frequently identified as an emblem of mortality and human imperfection. To an extent, the veil has the same meaning as the scarlet letter on Hester's bosom, which has been regarded by various critics as the symbol of man's sinfulness.

As Hester's refusal to remove the letter from her bosom connotes the recognition of sinfulness in *herself* and in others, likewise Reverend Hooper's refusal to take off the veil despite his wife's desire to have it removed shows his acceptance of human sinfulness. The minister's decision to continue to wear the veil occasions him psychical and physical isolation. With regard to his physical alienation, he is deserted by his parishioners and even by his beloved Elizabeth. Using her seduction as a persuasive device, she fails to get him take off the black cloth, and, consequently, she leaves him. Separated from his wife, Mr. Hooper is also secluded from other people who regard him as "a bugbear." Gentle and timid people avoid him, and children flee from his approach, breaking up their merriest sports. Hooper is labelled "awful" and "mad," and he is even said to communicate with ghosts and fiends. Thus, the black veil has separated "him from cheerful brotherhood and woman's love..."(p.880).

Not only does the black veil bring about Hooper's physical

isolation, but also breeds his psychical alienation. He suffers from the veil which keeps him in "that saddest of all prisons, his own heart"(p.880). His own antipathy to the veil is known to be so great that he never willingly passes before a mirror, nor stoop "to drink at a still fountain, lest, in its peaceful bosom, he should be affrighted by himself"(p.879).

Mr. Hooper's vision of evil has isolated and cast a chill over him, but it becomes fortunate for him in that it eventually provides him with an earthly ultimate wisdom. Like Hester in The Scarlet Letter, Father Hooper is the moral superior of his people because he requites their scorn with love and help :

...kind and loving, though unloved, and dimly feared; a man apart from men, shunned in their health and joy, but ever summoned to their aid in mortal anguish (880).

The minister's discovery of human sinfulness does not cause him to shrink from human beings' company even though they are not very responsive.

Father Hooper's awareness of the existence of evil develops his moral and intellectual capabilities because he becomes an efficient preacher. Fogle remarks that, "In one respect, however, the veil makes Mr. Hooper a more efficient clergyman, for it allows him to sympathize with all dark affections."²⁰ Before he put on the veil, Mr. Hooper was not convincing because he would strive "to win his people heavenward" by mild persuasion, instead of driving them there by "thunders of the

word"(p.874). From the moment of his consciousness of human sinfulness, however, that is, the moment he starts putting on the veil to show his imperfection, he becomes an energetic and a more convincing preacher. He is so convincing that

- Each member of the congregation, the most innocent girl, and the man of hardened
- breast, felt as if the preacher had crept upon them, behind his awful veil, and discovered their hoarded iniquity of deed or thought (p.874).

While he is preaching, a subtle power is breathed into his words, and each tremor of his voice causes "the hearers quake and spread their clasped hands on their bosoms"(p.875). The minister's sermons not only cause people to accept their sins, but also to cease their misbehaviour. In a sense, Father Hooper brings about his converts' redemption. It is not surprising, therefore, that, after having attended his election Sermon, the chief magistrate, the council and the representatives who were previously corrupt eventually become upright during the whole year : their legislative measures were characterized by piety. To an extent, Mr. Hooper becomes his converts' godlike figure. Because he was the very voice of God, they would cry for him and would not "yield their breath till he appeared" (p.880) so as to whisper consolation.

Revered by human beings, Mr. Hooper is likely to achieve regeneration. Even though he is doomed to wear the veil in light and darkness, in solitude and in public, the minister is convinced that "...hereafter there shall be no veil over my

face, no darkness between our souls! It is but a mortal veil - it is not for eternity" (p.878). Here on earth, the veil causes Reverend Hooper to suffer. But the wisdom resulting from his sufferings, preventing him from succumbing to despair, develops a hopeful patience in him. That the mortal veil is not for eternity implies that there will be a time when the minister will no longer suffer. The author, perhaps, refers to the Christian after life. According to Christian philosophy, indeed, there will be an eternal happiness for those who will have lived in accordance with God's will.

Hooper's awareness of sin as a reality of human nature, then, helps him better himself. He is morally superior to his people because, like Hester, he requites their scorn with love. Also, he carries out his religious job more efficiently than before in that he gets many converts to shrink from their sins even after his death.

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In The Marble Faun, the myth of the fortunate fall applies to Kenyon, Miriam and especially to Donatello who, a naive youth before his contact with evil, becomes, after he commits a crime, complex and questioning as remorse develops into his soul moral and intellectual faculties. A variation on the theme of the fortunate fall, however, is Hilda who refuses to accept that there is evil in the world.

Being an artist, Hawthorne seems to synchronize his aesthetic problem with his thematic one. In his afterword to The Marble

Faun, Murray Krieger says that Hawthorne creates much of his thematic structure in the novel from painting and sculpture.²¹ Consisting of the imagery of the Golden age, Arcadian myths, painting and sculpture, Hawthorne's aesthetics is used to reinforce and make clearer the reader's picture of his characters' personality. Thus, the three stages of Donatello's development from innocence to conscience, as it is suggested by Charles Leavitt in Nathaniel Hawthorne's House of the Seven Gables and The Marble Faun, are illustrated by works of marble : first, the Faun of Praxiteles, representing the simple, thoughtless youth; second, the bust Kenyon makes of Donatello, with the face revealing remorse and torture after he commits a murder; and third, the unfinished bust that Kenyon makes, suggesting Donatello's spiritual and intellectual growth through sin and suffering.²²

To begin with, Donatello's friends, to show that he is not human in that he has not been in contact with evil, compare him to a famous statue, the "Faun of Praxiteles." In Roman mythology, the faun is a woodland deity typically represented as a man having the ears, horns, tail and hind legs of a goat. The figure of the statue "conveys the idea of an amiable and a sensual creature, easy, mirthful, apt for jollity, yet not incapable of being touched by pathos"; it suggests "no principle of virtue," and lacks "moral severity "and" any high and heroic ingredient"; on the other hand, the marble figure seems to have a "capacity for strong and warm attachment, and might act devotedly through its impulses and even die for it at need." The

Faun "might be educated through the medium of his emotion, so that the coarser animal portion of his nature might eventually be thrown into the background"(p.595).

These same characteristics of the "Faun of Praxiteles" are typical of the personality of Donatello who resembles the statue of the Faun : "... Donatello might have figured perfectly as the marble faun, miraculously softened into flesh and blood" (p.595). Innocent, Donatello is not human because he is more animallike than humanlike. So full of animal life, so joyous in his deportment, so handsome and genial, so physically well developed, Donatello gives no impression of incompleteness of "maimed or stunted nature"(p.598). Animallike, Donatello is close to nature. He clasps the trunk of a tree in his arms as one embraces a woman. The tree is looked on by the youth as "a creature worthy of affection and tender response"(p.632). Donatello's proximity to nature is especially shown by his familiarity with all the animals whose language he knows while he does not speak human language. Talking about him, Miriam says that he seldom expresses himself copiously in words, adding that his usual modes of demonstration "were by the natural language of gesture, the instinctive movement of his agile frame, and the unconscious play of his features..."(p.633). While he finds it difficult to address human beings, the Faun is in harmony with lizards, birds and wild pets which surround him and with which he shares language. Miriam is surprised by Donatello's closeness to nature when a bird responds to his peculiar call, fluttering about his head. Donatello's life is happy, genial and satisfactory. He

enjoys "the warm, sensuous, earthly side of nature, revelling the merriment of wood and stream"(p.598).

Such a world where Donatello lives in harmony with nature is not typical of actual human beings. This world is the realm of people who, like the Faun, are above evil or unaware of its existence. Donatello, perhaps, can be likened to Adam before the fall, before he was expelled from Eden. Lewis says that

In Adam, then, formed from the dust and placed in Eden, we find man's natural evolution distinctly symbolized - his purely instinctual and passional condition - as winning and innocent as infancy no doubt, but also, happily, quite as evanescent.²³

As, before he sinned by eating of the forbidden fruit, Adam was as innocent and happy as infancy, likewise Donatello, before his contact with evil, is a wild, gentle and genial creature. He is a child. Such a person with a happy nature, with an "unsophisticated" heart is unhuman because he is unaware of the toil and sorrow of life, of the existence of evil. Thus, the Italian nobleman has "an infinite repugnance to groves and skulls, and to all that ghastliness which the gothic mind loves to associate with the idea of death"(p.604). That the Faun dreads evil and death while these are the common lot of human beings reveal his immaturity. Having experienced evil, and knowing that everybody is subject to it, Miriam laughs at Donatello who is afraid of the inevitable.

Knowing nothing about evil, Donatello is comparable to Hilda, a symbol of purity or heaven. She lives among white doves in a tower in which is located "a shrine of the Virgins." Charles Leavitt says that Hilda is a modern version of the Roman Vestal Virgins.²⁴ These were women of pure character in Roman mythology who guarded the welfare of the fires of home. Hilda cares for the oil in the lamp of the shrine. She is seen most typically robed in white, the white of purity and innocence. Her proper atmosphere is her tower room above the streets of ancient, sinful Rome. Hilda does not live in the "mortal atmosphere" of human beings. Miriam tells her :

"You breathe sweet air, above the evil scents of Rome; and in your maiden elevation, you dwell above our vanities and passions, our moral dust and mud, with the doves and angels for your nearest neighbours" (p.620).

That Hilda dwells in a tower, a place above where people normally live, and that her neighbours are angels rather than men suggest that she is a saint, the one above evil. As Donatello dreads evil and things alluding to it, likewise Hilda regards evil as an anathema. Her belief that goodness should be the only reality is reflected by her admiration of Guido's picture of the shining Michael overcoming ugly evil. Commenting on the character of Hilda, Krieger, in the afterword to The Marble Faun, observes that "Hilda must rather be seen as a person who is in one sense admirable, if not saintly, but in another sense seriously incomplete."²⁵ She is incomplete, immature because she keeps her distance from human beings, from

their problems and realities. Like Donatello, she is incomplete because she is not human.

To be human, both Hilda and Donatello must be in contact with evil and experience the joys and sorrows of life. Kenyon and Miriam who are human owing to their experience can initiate them into humanity. The latter's comments on the two innocent people show that they are mature. Thus, Miriam advises Hilda to experience sin so as to attain maturity and humanity :

"You have no sin, nor any conception of what it is; and therefore you are so terribly severe! As an angel, you are not amiss; but, as a human creature, and a woman among earthly men and women, you need a sin to soften you"
(p.710).

Donatello himself cannot reach manhood unless he experiences evil. Kenyon points out that

"human beings of Donatello's character, compounded especially for happiness, have no longer any business on earth, or elsewhere. Life has grown so sadly serious, that such men must change their nature, or else perish, like the antediluvian creatures, that required, as the condition of their existence, a more summer-like atmosphere than ours"
(p.854).

Having grown up in a kind of Arcadia, Donatello is unaware of the realities of the world because he only knows happiness. As long as he has no contact with evil, however, his happiness

is unsteady and thereby artificial and superficial. As the Vanity Fair was a sham heavenly kingdom for the pilgrims in "The Celestial Railroad," so the garden of Monte Beni is a superficial Arcadia for the Faun. This superficiality is suggested by the fact that the Eden consists of a tenderly magnificent scene with

a lavish outpouring of gold, but rather such gold as we see on the leaf of a bright flower than the burnished glow of metal from the mine. Or, if metallic, it looked airy and unsubstantial, like the glorified dreams of an alchemist (p.743).

As the gold is "airy and unsubstantial," Donatello's "golden life" is illusive. Unless he experiences both the joys and sorrows of human life, he, according to Miriam, "can but half enjoy." Kenyon goes too far, saying that either Donatello must perish or change his nature by leading a human existence.

Donatello crosses the threshold of humanity after he leaves his home, Monte Beni, to settle in Rome. The contrast between Monte Beni and Rome is suggested by opposite settings. Unlike the country of Monte Beni where the Faun used to breathe easily and to live in harmony with nature, Rome is likened to Eden, but, according to Krieger, it is like Eden in its fatality represented by malaria.²⁶ That the air in Rome is full of malaria suggests that the city is likely to make Donatello ill at ease. A thoughtless and helpless youth, Donatello is dehumanized by the human and the complex Rome. He is compared by his butler to the wine of Monte Beni, called "Sunshine,"

which is only at its best where it is made. The wine which is so fond of its native home that a transportation of a few miles turns it quite sour symbolizes the Italian nobleman whose very first contact with Rome changes and spoils him. Such dehumanization, however, is necessary to attain humanity. Addressing him, Miriam says that he is getting "spoilt in this dreary Rome," and that he "will be as wise and as wretched as the rest of mankind..."(p.672).

Corrupting but educating Donatello, Rome makes him "wretched" in that it deprives him of his "simple and blameless delights"(p.675) while it renders him human in that it makes him aware of the complexity of life. It is at Rome where the Faun finds frustrated love for Miriam, an unhappy opportunity to murder for the sake of his love, and an uneasy conscience. Miriam introduces Donatello to humanity because she causes him to experience evil which, like suffering, is a component of the world. Perhaps, the evil might be represented by the "spectre of the catacombs," also referred to as "the model" and "the phantom," which haunts Miriam. Unlike the young Italian who likes "the blessed daylight," who is afraid of gloomy houses and dark places, the "model" is described as "a creature to whom midnight would be more pleasant" than noonday. Since darkness is sometimes associated with evil, the "phantom" which frequents obscure spots may stand for evil itself.

Haunting Miriam, who has become Donatello's girl-friend, the "spectre" sours the Faun's happy life. To save Miriam from

this ghost, he kills it. Later on, it is found out that the model is Brother Antonio. Donatello, then, has committed a human crime which will allow him to experience evil and sadness. After the crime, he becomes so remorseful that he loses his resemblance to the Faun of Praxiteles : bewildered by the novelty of sin and grief, Donatello has "little left of that singular resemblance of the Faun" (p.705). A sorrowful look has altered his youthful face as if it has seen many years of troubles. As the Faun's mental development is transformed, so the bust that Kenyon makes of him is altered. Kenyon's "accidental handling of the clay" allows the face to assume a "distorted and violent look, combining animal fierceness with intelligent hatred"(p.747), the same expression seen on Donatello's face when he held the model over the edge of a cliff, ready to kill it. Kenyon says that "Cain never wore an uglier face," which suggests the gravity of Donatello's sad look. The latter tells the sculptor to let the bust remain as it is :

"... let it remain!" answered the Count, who had grown pale as ashes at the aspect of his crime, thus strangely presented to him in another of the many guises under which guilt stares the criminal in the face. "Do not alter it! Chisel it, rather, in eternal marble! I will set it up in my oratory and keep it continually before my eyes. Sadder and more horrible is a face like this, alive with my own crime, than the dead skull which my forefathers handed down to me!"(p.747)

Now, Donatello has become aware that sin exists, but also that he has sunken into it. His self-consciousness of sin causes his simplest character to "go astray," and brings about his contempt for his forebears who "dwelt in Arcadia," and "enriched the world with dreams and fables... of a Golden Age"(p.723). Having become mature, Donatello finds it impossible and even foolish to live like his forefathers. He can no longer lead a "healthy life of animal spirits," in his sympathy with nature, because he has experienced evil through the crime.

Being remorseful owing to the crime, Donatello flees Rome to his country estate at Monte Beni, to brood on the meaning of his act. As he muses over his crime, Donatello realizes that "I am not a boy now. Time flies over us, but leaves its shadow behind"(p.715). Commenting on the Faun's remark, Kenyon says that it is thought out from the young Italian's "own experience, and perhaps considered himself as communicating a new truth to mankind"(p.715). Experiencing evil, Donatello is integrated in mankind with whom he now shares joys and sorrows.

Evil having made the Count human, it results in his loss of proximity to nature :

"They shun me! All nature shrinks from me and shudders at me! I live in the mist of a curse that hems me round with a circle of fire! No innocent thing can come near me"(p.733).

While travelling at a fountain-side in the Garden of Monte Beni, Donatello realizes that he is estranged from nature

while he used to be in harmony with it during his innocence. In the old days, he used to produce a kind of chant by which he would call all "the woodland inhabitants" after which they would come near him as children surround their parents; now, he cannot produce the chant. Even when he tries, only a brown lizard responds to his calling. Being of "the tarantula species," the lizard is "a venomous reptile" which alludes to a snake which, in turn, refers to Satan, the symbol of evil or sin. His loss of innocence is stressed by a cloud which is on the spot where he stands while the sunshine is on the place where Kenyon stands. The cloud refers to darkness connoting evil while the sunshine relates to light symbolizing purity. Avoided by sunshine, Donatello can be likened to Hester, in The Scarlet Letter, on whom the sun would not shine owing to her adulterous act while it shines on the innocent Pearl, suggesting his being out of touch with the natural world. Also, the owls, birds that like dark places, which would not dare come near Donatello when he was "a wild playful boy"(p.736) now do not desert him : they have become his friends. Symbolically, Donatello has become acceptable to the creatures of the night, traditionally the time for evil deeds.

The evil deed renders Donatello more complex and understanding. Kindling him into a man, the guilt has developed within him "an intelligence which was no native characteristic of the Donatello whom we have heretofore known"(p.689). A soul has been inspired in his simplicity as he starts showing a far deeper sense, and an intelligence that begins to deal with

"high subjects." He evinces a more definite and nobler individuality, but developed out of grief and pain. Realizing that he is sinful, Donatello avoids holy pictures as they have nothing to do with human motives. Urged by Kenyon to admire some of "Fra Angelo's pictures," Donatello refuses, putting forward that he cannot find "great delight and profit in looking at such holy pictures"(p.769). He adds that these pictures are for "innocent persons," and not for the man who no longer lives in a heavenly state.

To retrieve his salvation, Donatello must repent. He makes up his mind to give himself to God by becoming a monk. Kenyon, however, dissuades him from the decision, putting forward that becoming a religious man is not being penitent. Since to attain regeneration requires that the individual atones for his sin, a penitent man cannot find salvation in running away to a monastery, which is a way of refusing to cope with his sin. Donatello is told by Kenyon that the best way to sacrifice "every earthly hope as peace-offering towards heaven" is to make "the wide world" his cell, and "good deeds to mankind" (p.744) his prayer. Good penitence demands that he "crowds evil out with good," that is, to propitiate his sin by helping people. Charity is a prerequisite of regeneration. It is only after the idea of life-long and unselfish effort and "energetic benevolence" comes in his mind that the Faun feels that he is paving his way for salvation.

True confession will be effective if, instead of being a

sheer ceremony, it comes from the heart. Only after he has unselfishly helped poor people, Donatello undertakes a penitential pilgrimage. While going to Perugia, he kneels not only at the crosses he passes, but also at the shrines where the Blessed Virgin benignly looks at him. He prays the more earnestly and the more hopefully at these shrines because he expects the "Madonna" to intercede as a tender mother between him and "the awfulness of judgement." As a tender mother would get her husband to temper a guilty son's punishment, likewise the Virgin Mary will be Donatello's interpreter in front of the Most High.

The penitential pilgrimage makes of Donatello a glad and hopeful young man. Inspecting the statue of Pope Julius the Third, he remarks "the statue is bestowing a benediction, and there is a feeling in my heart that I may be permitted to share it" (p.772). The figure of the statue has its right hand "raised and spread abroad," as if in the act of shedding forth a benediction. The Pope's benediction seems to have caused Donatello's face to take on a brighter look. His prayers result in his redemption as he feels "the blessing" upon his spirit. Because the Pope is a "viceroy" of God on earth, at least in Christian philosophy, his benediction might stand for God's benediction and forgiveness.

Since Donatello has just been forgiven, he cannot fail to have mercy for others. His sufferings having developed his affection for his fellow-sinners, Donatello reconciles himself with Miriam who has stirred him to the crime. Both guilty people

have been feeling deserted and unwanted by the world. They find that they can stand under the statue, and accept Pope Julius' blessing along with the rest of mankind. United by "a bond of guilt," Donatello's and Miriam's intimate union is not for "earthly bliss," but for mutual elevation and support. Even though man may condemn them, they are still God's children. Because there is "no such thing as earthly justice"(p.839), that is, the justice rendered by men who, in their judgement, might be prejudicious, or dependent on mere external events without knowing the culprit's inner sufferings, their hope lies not in an earthly judgement, but in a heavenly one. God himself, who knows how much their conscience has been pricked and how seriously they have repented, will wholeheartedly receive them in heaven.

After Donatello's reconciliation with God and Miriam, Donatello attains "a higher innocence than that from which he fell" (p.753), and regains his resemblance to the Faun of Praxiteles. Kenyon makes from his "reminiscence" Donatello's bust suggesting the latter's spiritual growth through sin and suffering. Some of the "sweet and delightful characteristics of the Antique Faun" return to him. The "slight, careless graces, pleasant and simple peculiarities that had been obliterated"(p.839) by remorse have come back on the face. As Miriam points out, Donatello "has travelled in a circle, as all things heavenly and earthly do, and now comes back to his original self, with an inestimable treasure of improvement won from an experience of pain"(p.840). Emerson's the doctrine of Circles which has

it that, to quote John Erskine, "what seems hopelessly bad will in the end be found to contain the good principle"²⁷ applies to Donatello. The individual who steps out of what seems the moral order may really have chanced upon a sounder morality. Through what people look on as sin or fall, therefore, may sometimes come the regeneration of a soul.

The murder regenerates Donatello's soul in that it brings in him an innocence which is different from that "adamic innocence," that innocence of an "animal child" that he had before he perpetrated the crime. Gained after many shocks and sufferings, this acquired innocence is closer to perfection itself, and it is sempiternal because it results from experience. A means of Donatello's education and elevation, then, his fall has been fortunate for him in that it has ennobled him.

Even though the doctrine of the fortunate fall directly and especially applies to Donatello, Miriam and Kenyon are also subject to this scheme. Their reaction to Donatello's journey from innocence to conscience suggests that the Italian nobleman's experience gives them much food for thought. Their rhetorical questions about the advantages of sin show that they have been developed by Donatello's experience. As Kenyon's and Miriam's following statements indicate, Donatello has been ennobled by his human crime. Miriam's remark implies that Donatello's story is that of the fortunate fall :

"The story of the fall of man! Is it not repeated in our romance of Monte

Beni ? And may we follow the analogy yet further ? Was that very sin, - into which Adam precipitated himself and all his race, - was it the destined means by which, over a long pathway of toil and sorrow, we are to attain a higher, brighter, and profounder happiness, than our lost birthright gave ? Will not this idea account for the permitted existence of sin, as no other theory can ?"(p.840)

Advancing the same idea of Donatello's fortunate fall, Kenyon says that sin has educated Donatello, and elevated him :

"Is sin, then, - which we deem such a dreadful blackness in the universe, - is it, like sorrow, merely an element of human education, through which we struggle to a higher and purer state than we could otherwise have attained ? Did Adam fall, that we might ultimately rise to a far loftier paradise than his ?"
(p.854)

As Adam fell so that human beings might ultimately rise to a loftier paradise than his, so Donatello fell from "adamic innocence," the one relying on naivete and inexperience, to attain a higher innocence, the one deriving from moral and intellectual capabilities. Donatello's fall has become fortunate for him because it brought him from a simple and imperfect child to a man capable of feeling and intelligence, to an experienced man.

Donatello's crime is fortunate for Miriam and Kenyon because it emphasizes their belief in sin as a springboard for

humanity, and especially for Donatello since it develops and elevates him. The crime is not fortunate for Hilda, however, because it does not contribute to her moral and intellectual capabilities.

Unlike other characters who recognize sin as a reality, Hilda regards it as "a dreadful blackness" while the recognition of sin is a precondition of the fortunate fall. She is shocked by Kenyon's remark that there may be a mixture of good in evil things. It is not surprising that Hilda is regarded as "the daughter of the puritans." A puritan, she has a black and white view of life. In her opinion, either things are good or bad, and she just cannot understand how "two mortal foes, as Right and Wrong surely are, can work together in the same deed" (p.811).

Hilda is blinded by her holiness and purity which prevent her from accepting evil as a reality in human beings' nature. Such sanctity is superficial, however, because, instead of allowing her to help sinful people, it brings her to shun them. Eager to remain holy, Hilda ironically breaks off with her friend, Miriam, who comes for consolation :

"But I am a poor, lonely girl, whom God has set here in an evil world, and given her only a white robe, and bid her wear it back to Him, as white as when she put it on. Your powerful magnetism would be too much for me. The pure, white atmosphere, in which I try to discern what

things are good and pure, would be discolored"(p.709).

Because Hilda's "innocence is like a sharp steel sword"(p.627), because her sanctity makes her severe, she cannot forgive. She has no mercy for sinners since, being sinless, she does not need mercy herself. Surprisingly enough, Hilda fails to realize that she is committing a great sin by rejecting her passionate friend who, having deeply sinned, needs the succor of the good person. Failing to comfort Miriam, Hilda requites her friendship with ingratitude. Hilda only remembers the sin that Miriam has committed while she forgets her good deeds. Leavitt says that as Hilda's technique in copying a picture is to select and reproduce some high, noble and delicate portion of it, representing the spirit of the work, likewise she judges people by parts of their character, because she assumes that the quality of the part is typical of the whole.²⁸ In Hilda's opinion, Miriam's participation in the crime obstructs all her good deeds and qualities. "The daughter of the puritans" failure to succour her friend, perhaps, is a proof that puritans' claims to be good are a counterfeit.

Unlike Donatello whose sufferings have made him intelligent and compassionate, Hilda remains naive despite her deep distress resulting from Donatello's crime that she has seen. Feeling a sense of guilt by association, Hilda becomes a tableau of sorrow. She becomes sad, melancholic, and she loses interest in what she used to admire. She ignores all paintings except Guido's picture of the shining Michael slaying the dra-

gon. That only holy pictures hold her admiration shows that Hilda continues to believe that only goodness exists. The holy picture might represent the triumph of goodness over the evil principle.

To regain her peace of mind, Hilda goes to confess to a priest, that is to reveal the crime she has seen. After the confession, a torture passes away from her soul, and she becomes "as pure as she was in her childhood..."(p.804). Her resumption of innocence is symbolized by the fact that the doves which had run away from her come back, floating about her head. Hilda's happiness, however, is transient and thereby superficial. Hilda's happiness is soured by a bracelet that Miriam gave her as "a bridal gift." Being composed of seven "ancient Etruscan gems," the bracelet brings the tears into her eyes, "as being, in its entire circle, the symbol of as sad a mystery as any that Miriam had attached to the separate gems"(p.855-856). That Hilda's confession does not put an end to her sadness proves that the confession, which does not derive from a good understanding of one's actual human state and fate, is illusive and useless. Refusing to accept the evil principle as a reality in human nature, Hilda fails to understand her human state. The fact that she is unable to reach humanity and maturity suggests that her moral puritan severity is inappropriate for human beings. To quote Krieger, in his afterword to The Marble Faun, "Puritan insufficiency, as represented by Hilda's refusal to compromise with the human state, is indeed proved to be insufficient."²⁹

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In "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," the fortunate fall applies to Robin. His fall results from his choosing to go out into the world under his powerful kinsman's protective conditions. The fall becomes fortunate for Robin, however, because it allows him to be a mature person, the one who is realistic and who is likely "to rise in the world," relying not on others, but on himself. Robin's growth and experience consist of three stages, that is, illusion, disappointment and awareness.

Almost universally, innocence is associated with childhood as experience is associated with adulthood. Childhood is a time of simplicities and certainties that must give way to the complexities and uncertainties of adult life. Thus, a close analysis of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" shows Robin's initiation into the rude and complex world where he must find his own way, unprotected by a sheltering family. Robin has a limited experience in the world and his view of the world from the outset is simplistic and optimistic. In the long run, the reality of the world will shatter both his optimism and his confidence.

Innocence is associated with self-confidence, violence and childhood. As children are helpless, likewise Robin relies on his parents and his kinsman. Seeing that Major Molineux has manifested much interest in him, Robin believes that he can be enriched by him. To pay a visit to his kinsman, Robin needs his

mother and sister to put him "in handsome trim," and his father to give him "half the remnant of his last year's salary"(p.1219). Describing Robin as a sheer child who is unable to shift for himself, the narrator implies that, like a baby, the country lad knows nothing about the reality of the world. He is immature.

To show Robin's innocence and his unawareness of the reality of the world, the author ironically describes him as "a shrewd youth." Robin is not shrewd at all because he reacts either aggressively or stupidly against the situations he encounters. Thus, he takes it for granted that if he had inquired his way of the ferryman, he doubtlessly "would have gone with me, and earned a shilling from the Major for his pains"(p.1210). Being a "shrewd" youth, Robin thinks that the old man who refuses to show him the way is "some country representative" who has never seen the inside of his kinsman's door, and who lacks the breeding to answer a stranger civilly. About Robin's shrewdness, Daniel Hoffman, in Form and Fable in American Fiction, remarks that "There are buffetings of passion, there are possibilities of evil and guilt, which Robin's callow rationalism cannot fathom."³⁰ Robin is so self-confident that he cannot figure out that people may simply nurse hatred against him. Like Young Goodman Brown before his journey, Robin only believes in the goodness of men.

Another characteristic of innocence is violence. Robin's aggressiveness is as evident as his "shrewdness." Indeed, he

carries a heavy cudgel formed of an oak sapling which he is ready to use. Balancing the cudgel, he forces people to show him the way to Major Molineux's dwelling. His request frustrated, Robin raises the idea of fighting, exclaiming that if "I had one of those grinning rascals in the woods, where I and my oak sapling grew up together, I could teach him that my arm is heavy though my purse is light"(p.1213). Young people tend to use force as argumentation instead of using argumentation as force. Relying on their combativeness, they use it unwisely and, consequently, they fail in their enterprise. Commenting on Robin's behaviour, Mr. Hoffman says that "this shrewd, courageous, attractive youth is quite inadequate to the situation he encounters, and that his shrewdness and courage and self-assurance turn against him."³¹ The experienced people make sport of the violent and naive youth who does not know the ways of the corrupt world, and how to accurately react to it.

Because innocence is inadequate in the wicked world, Robin must undergo a journey in which he will be initiated into human corrupt and complex nature. Like "Young Goodman Brown," "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" commences, to use Fogle's words, "poised between day and night, and the hero passes into troubles of the night"³² :

It was near nine o'clock of a moonlight evening, when a boat crossed the ferry with a single passenger, who had obtained his conveyance at that unusual hour by the promise of an extra hour (p.1209).

The single passenger crossing alone the nighted ferry is Robin.

Fogle observes that the young man "enters Boston as if it were over the River Styx"³³ which, in Greek mythology, is the river which encircles Hades, and where the spirit of the dead exists. As "to cross the styx" means to die, likewise Robin's innocence will fade away after he will be in contact with Boston. The "moonlight evening" showing him the way is symbolically the light which will guide him to a realistic understanding of himself and the world. Before he goes to Boston, the youth still lives in darkness which is sometimes associated with innocence and ignorance.

Throughout the story, Hawthorne's manipulation of light and darkness is important. As Robin walks about the town searching for his relative, he encounters various types of people. When Robin arrives at night in the town, the ferryman lifts a lantern "by the aid of which, and the newly risen moon, he took a very accurate survey of the stranger's figure"(p.1209). The first person, an old man "with a periwig of gray hair," is stopped by Robin "just when the light from the open door and windows of a barber's shop fell upon both their figures"(p.1210). The second person is the innkeeper in a lighted inn. The third person to accost is the harlot who is discerned by Robin as "a strip of scarlet petticoat, and the occasional sparkle of an eye, as if the moonbeams were trembling on some bright thing" (p.1214). The fourth encounter is with the watchman who carries "a lantern, needlessly aiding his sister luminary in heavens" (p.1215). The fifth encounter is with the demoniac man who "stepped back in the moonlight, unmuffled his face, and stared

full into that of Robin"(p.1216).

Since this illumination is surrounded with threats, temptation and the final promise that his kinsman will pass by, Robin remains in dark. He does not understand why his question raises such fierce threats from the elder gentleman, the innkeeper, the watchman and the demoniac man. He sees the pretty harlot in her parlor and doubts, quite rightly, her words; and frightened by the watchman, he resists her seduction. The last encounter differs from the others. A kindly gentleman dimly sees Robin in the darkness and joins him there. This darkness is both literal and symbolic. On the one hand, Robin is in the church and the gentleman makes an effort to see him. On the other hand, it stands for Robin's illusions, inexperience and state of mind. Moreover, this metaphorical darkness represents the evil and corrupt world Robin is about to discover.

When the climactical moment occurs and the boisterous procession arrives, it is composed of "a dense multitude of torches" that "shone along the street, concealing, by their glare, whatever object they illuminated"(p.1221). Strangely enough, when at last there is sufficient lights for Robin's awareness, the glare conceals what he must find out. Yet again, when the leader - the two-faced man - fixes his eyes on Robin, "the unsteady brightness of the latter" torches "formed a veil which he could not penetrate"(p.1221). At last when the cart stops before Robin, "there the torches blazed the brightest, there the moon shone out like day, and there

in tar-and-featherly dignity, sat his kinsman, Major Molineux" (p.1221).

Hence, the orchestration of light and darkness may symbolize Robin's condition. Throughout this night, Robin is blind and inexperienced. Robin's reiterated request about his kinsman's dwelling is repeatedly greeted by rebuffs and laughter. Every time, being as he says, "a shrewd youth"(p.1211), Robin rationalizes his situation in order to preserve his self-esteem. For instance, he says that the elder gentleman who ignores his request is a "country representative" who does not know about Major Molineux. As I said it previously, Robin's rationalization as "a shrewd youth" is always wrong. He always misinterprets the situations he encounters because he is optimistic and self-confident. In spite of all the lighted places in the darkness which hides his relative, Robin is still blind and optimistic. When the torches blaze the brightest, and the moon shines out like day, however, Robin fully sees. Presumably, he understands all about the threatening night.

Because of this nightly experience, Robin understands everything from the outset. In fact, because of his powerful relative and being a good-looking "shrewd lad," he expects people to treat him with kindness and civility. As the story goes on, Robin stubbornly refuses to recognize that sinister and evil action in preparation. He does not accept the existence of evil and thinks that everything can be explained in a rational way. With the temptation by the pretty harlot, he finds out the sin-

fulness in himself that he might indignantly deny by resisting her seduction. Indeed, he resists her attraction. However, this weakness may be considered as the first step toward his awareness of human condition as not simple but complex.

The notion of human complexity is conveyed through Robin's innocent conversation with the experienced stranger in the crypt. Robin is astonished by the fact that a thousand voices can become one shout. Thus, the stranger informs him : "May not a man have several voices,...as well as two complexions ?" (p.1220) This notion of human complexity has never occurred to Robin who has dealt with the demoniac man's strange complexion with rationalization. Hence, Robin does not learn from different persons. Thundered by the stranger's information, Robin foolishly states : "Perhaps a man may, but Heaven forbid that a woman should!"(p.1220) Robin wishes, without doubt, to believe that the lovely harlot has not many voices, that she is really his relative's housekeeper, and that she is not the incarnation of a temptress attempting to corrupt him.

On the whole, Robin's view from the outset is simplistic. This view encourages his optimism and his confidence. But the stranger teaches him that many aspects comprise the human condition. Thus, Robin's innocence based on an unreal conception of the world, of man and of himself is altered by a new understanding of the complexity and the universality of that evil aspect of humanity, symbolized by the behaviour of the mob and the laughter that affects Robin. This laughter is the outward

aspect of Robin's understanding. He sends forth the loudest shout of laughter because he has discovered new and real truths on which he is going to rely so as to live like a man, and not like a child. He finds out that innocence, self-confidence and violence, which have turned against him, are inadequate in a complex world. From the rioters torturing Major Molineux, the object of his assurance to rise in the world, he learns not only that evil is great in the world, but also that self-reliance is necessary for anybody who does not want to be disappointed. Thus, the reader feels that Robin is likely to live in accordance to the kindly gentleman's advice, that is, to rely on himself : "...perhaps, as you are a shrewd youth, you may rise in the world without the help of your kinsman, Major Molineux"(p.1223).

Like Donatello who becomes mature after his contact with Rome, then, Robin is matured by his experience in the corrupt Boston, brought from an innocence to a condition in which he learns that evil exists in the world and that the best way to survive is to cope with this wicked world, relying not on others, but on himself. Thus, fully knowing and aware of the world's imperfection, Robin is the most informed to succeed in the world. Robin's falls and mistakes resulting from his inexperience are fortunate for him because they allow him to move from dependence to independence, from innocence to conscience.

The fall is fortunate for the characters who accept their mistakes and falls and who cope with them. In The Scarlet

Letter, Hester's and Dimmesdale's fall, that is, their adultery, is fortunate for them because it allows them to have a better understanding of their condition and that of others. Comparable to Dimmesdale is, in "The Minister's Black Veil," Reverend Hooper who, recognizing that sinfulness is typical of human beings, acquires higher moral and intellectual capabilities which make of him an efficient instrument of God. In The Marble Faun, the fortunate fall applies to Donatello whose murder brings him from a simple and imperfect child to an experienced man, capable of feeling and intelligence. In "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," Robin experiences evil in Boston standing for the corrupt and complex world. This experience makes him mature because it moves him from an idealistic to a realistic outlook on the world.

Footnotes

¹Bradley Sculley et al., The Scarlet Letter : An Annotated Text Backgrounds and Sources; Essays in Criticism (New York, 1962), p.196.

²Sculley, p.285.

³W. Peterfield Trent et al., The Cambridge History of American Literature (New York, 1972), p.24.

⁴Sculley, p.285.

⁵F.O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (London, 1968), p.244.

⁶Sculley, p.284.

⁷Matthiessen, p.350.

⁸Sculley, p.333.

⁹Sculley, p.361.

¹⁰John Gerber (ed.), Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Scarlet Letter (New Jersey, 1968), p.78-79.

¹¹Gerber, p.110.

¹²Sculley, p.373.

¹³R.W.B. Lewis, The American Adam : Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1955), p.114.

¹⁴Wilfred L. Guerin et al., A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature. 2nd Edition (New York, 1979), p.179.

¹⁵Sculley, p.370.

¹⁶Sculley, p.349.

¹⁷Charles Feidelson and Brodtkorb (ed.), Interpretations of American Literature (New York, 1959), p.23.

¹⁸Sculley, p.345-346.

¹⁹Richard H. Fogle, Hawthorne's Fiction : The Light & The Dark (Norman, 1964), p.40.

²⁰Fogle, p.38.

²¹Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Marble Faun or The Romance of Monte Beni (New York, 1961), p.339.

²²Charles Leavitt, Nathaniel Hawthorne's House of The Seven Gables and The Marble Faun (New York, 1965), p.89.

²³Lewis, p.59.

²⁴Leavitt, p.75.

²⁵Hawthorne, p.342.

²⁶Hawthorne, p.343.

²⁷Peterfield, p.25.

²⁸Leavitt, p.75.

²⁹Hawthorne, p.344-345.

³⁰Fogle, p.108.

³¹Fogle, p.109.

³²Fogle, p.105.

³³Fogle, p.103.

C O N C L U S I O N

Hawthorne, unlike his contemporary transcendentalists who lack the vision of evil in man, is aware that the latter cannot escape evil. The fall, like suffering, is a component of the world, and, consequently, it is inevitable. The first chapter shows how the fall is universal and inevitable. The fall is universal not only because it is the common denominator between human beings as "The Procession of Life" and "Young Goodman Brown" suggest, but also because it is typical of both young and old people as "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" implies. The fall is inevitable even for people who have good intentions such as the pilgrims, in "The Celestial Railroad," who, thinking that they are going to the celestial city, ironically achieve the city of destruction; or Zenobia and Hollingsworth, in The Blithedale Romance, who, planning to reform criminals and to create an earthly paradise, eventually fall into pride and egotism.

Presenting evil as universal and inevitable, the first chapter may bring the reader to look on Hawthorne as a pessimistic writer whose purpose is to dissuade people from bettering their condition. This statement loses weight, however, when one considers the second chapter which, dealing with the fortunate fall, indicates that there is a way of coping with the fall even though it is inevitable. Once the individual is better off with his falls and mistakes, the fall is fortunate for him. The Scarlet Letter, "The Minister's Black Veil," "My Kinsman,

Major Molineux" and The Marble Faun show that the individual's fall may be a springboard for a better understanding of his human condition and that of others. Thus, the fall is fortunate for Hester and Dimmesdale in The Scarlet Letter, for Reverend Hooper in "The Minister's Black Veil," for Robin in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" and for Donatello in The Marble Faun because it develops their moral and intellectual capabilities.

It may come as a shock to the reader, perhaps, to say that the fall is fortunate for characters like Dimmesdale who dies after the confession, or Donatello who is kept in prison after the murder. In such a study of the fortunate fall, one is not concerned with earthly or worldly criteria, but with spiritual ones. Dimmesdale's adulterous act causes him to grow psychologically by accepting sin as a reality, by confessing it and by empathizing with other sinners. By the same token, the human crime perpetrated by Donatello moves him from a simple and imperfect child to a man capable of feeling and intelligence. As Randall Stewart says in "Puritan Humanism Versus Romantic Naturalism" grace can be said to have been fortunate if there is spiritual growth.¹

Dealing with the fortunate fall, the second chapter shows that Hawthorne is not but a pessimistic writer as the reader may infer from the first chapter and as many people tend to view him. That Hawthorne pictures human beings as corrupt, hypocritical and evil is unmistakable. But even so, his aim seems not to discourage people from bettering their condition,

but to make them first look realistically into their soul then recognize their share in human imperfection and finally try to cope with it. Hawthorne's view of the world as well as his outlook on life, perhaps, can be deduced from the following quotation from Hyatt Waggoner's "Nathaniel Hawthorne" :

Confronted with the problem of evil in the form of diseased and suffering English children, he - Hawthorne - concluded in a Notebook entry with "Ah, what a mystery!" But he trusted there was a higher purpose, a final meaning in a dark and bewildering world, even if we could not clearly know it.²

Footnotes

¹Bradley Sculley et al., The Scarlet Letter : An Annotated Text Backgrounds and Sources; Essays in Criticism (New York, 1962), p.346.

²Richard Foster (ed.), Six American Novelists of the Nineteenth Century (Minneapolis, 1968), p.53.

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