



1971

## Andrew Carnegie: The Educational and Social Theories of a Self-Made Man

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ANDREW CARNEGIE: THE EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL  
THEORIES OF A SELF-MADE MAN

By

Roger Lee Vernon

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Department  
of Education, Loyola University of Chicago, in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy.

June, 1971

## ABSTRACT

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PH.D. DISSERTATION IN  
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

### ANDREW CARNEGIE: THE EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL THEORIES OF A SELF-MADE MAN

The Preface deals with the literature on Carnegie, both the magnate's own extensive writings and the nature of the historical arguments concerning the steel king. All of the chapters that follow are a series of essays, complete in themselves, examining aspects of the life and times of Carnegie.

Part I: The Life and Rise of Andrew Carnegie, consists of three chapters. Chapter One: The Life and Times of Andrew Carnegie: The Immigrant as Capitalist, describes the enormous transition to industrialism in America and suggests that the industrial revolution has always been difficult for the people in developing countries regardless of economic or political system. Individual "take off" versus national "take off" is discussed. The background of the Carnegie family as weavers, defeated by industrialism in Scotland and coming to America typifies the immigrant problem. The success of Carnegie, in the open American society is anything but typical and suggests the promise of America. The historical debate, Robber Baron versus Captain of Industry, is seen from the focus of Carnegie's rise. The tremendous impact of the magnate's philanthropy, the probability that the Carnegie gifts actually altered national directions at the time, is best seen by comparing the steel king's benefactions with the comparatively low gross national product at the time. Finally, Carnegie's own motivations in his rise of power are considered.

Chapter Two: Andrew Carnegie: Radicalism and Upward Mobility, sees the Carnegie family tradition in Scotland as radical and considers how the magnate dealt with the tradition as he rose to wealth and power. Carnegie is seen as compromising, remaining a radical in Britain, to the extent that he disliked the old establishment of the royal family, aristocracy, and established church, but believing the industrial democracy in America that allowed him to rise, the best of all possible worlds. The steel king is seen as the supreme example of the Horatio Alger hero. His jobs, his noble deeds, his finding of patrons, and his own writing on success indicate that he personified the Alger hero.

Chapter Three: Andrew Carnegie: The Success Myth and the Myth of Success examines the contrasting views on Carnegie in his own time and today. The magnate, in an era before public relations men, was his own myth maker. Carnegie had a sense of history and a feeling for his own importance, plus a belief in stories to instruct rather than to conform with the facts.

Part II: Andrew Carnegie on the American Cultural and Educational Scene, contains four chapters. Chapter Four: Andrew Carnegie's Own Education: Education Continues Throughout Life, sees the origin of education in the home and the family. The influence of Carnegie's native town, Dunfermline, and his family's culture pattern upon the magnate's later development is analyzed. His three years of formal schooling, his early fascination with a "public" library, and his on-the-job education in America are all treated in depth.

Chapter Five: The Views and Interests of Carnegie as seen in his Writings is a potpourri of the magnate's concerns, for an English Speaking Union, opposition to colonialism, for international peace, against an income tax, for a protective tariff, and ambivalent on the subject of labor, rather typical for his times on the Negro question, a romantic toward women, and future oriented enough to make predictions about almost anything. Short essays deal with each topic.

Chapter Six: The Carnegie Value System: What is a Good Man? continues the essays on subjects that more nearly approach the inner motivation of the steel king. The questions of heroism, of drinking, smoking, gambling, and religious values are all examined. Thrift as a value that can determine the best men in any group is suggested for testing purposes.

Chapter Seven: The Doctrine of the Stewardship of Wealth: The Philanthropies of Carnegie, examines the magnate's famous article, "The Gospel of Wealth," reactions to this article, the basis for the idea of philanthropy, and Carnegie's efforts to assist schools and colleges. Philanthropy as immortality is considered. Carnegie's influence upon the public library is examined.

Part III: Andrew Carnegie on the Schools consists of three chapters. Chapter Eight: Carnegie's View of the Common School considers the magnate's conception of the history of American education. An extrapolation and interpretation leads to the construction of a Carnegie model elementary school.

Chapter Nine: Carnegie on the Curriculum, scrutinizes the magnate's impression of teaching methods, and the value of reading, literature, spelling, arithmetic, science, technical subjects, the social studies, music, art, and physical education. Grammar is seen as a valueless, empty subject.

Chapter Ten: Carnegie on Secondary and Higher Education, consists of essays on the Education of Women, the Carnegie Unit, the Development of Secondary Education, the Value of a College Education, and the Carnegie view on the Classics versus technical subjects.

Chapter Eleven is a brief conclusion.

The Bibliography lists by far more works by and on Carnegie ever gathered together before.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First, I would like to express my sincere thanks and deep appreciation to Dr. Gerald L. Gutek, under whose direction this dissertation has developed from a seminar paper into its present form. His guidance, suggestions, and constant encouragement were nothing short of an inspiration to continue. The other members of the committee of the Department of Educational Foundations, Dr. John Wozniak and Miss Rosemary Donatelli, were also warm, sympathetic, and most important, available for advice and suggestions.

The librarians in the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library were helpful, but special mention might be made of Mrs. Barbara Fellows, the assistant librarian and Mrs. Julia M. Cunningham, the head librarian in the Pennsylvania Room of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh for their willingness to help and make suggestions.

Finally, I need to thank my wife, Delores, for doing so much of the typing. There is, beyond that, a general debt which one owes all those who wrote and thought upon this subject, and Andrew Carnegie himself, who left such an impressively clear record.

Roger L. Vernon  
Roger L. Vernon

ANDREW CARNEGIE: THE EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL  
THEORIES OF A SELF-MADE MAN

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## Preface

### Andrew Carnegie and the Historians

No major American industrialist has written more than Andrew Carnegie and probably none has been the subject of as many words. The steel industrialist has often been spoken of as the most articulate of nineteenth century entrepreneurs; however, such a label is to denigrate with faint praise, for Carnegie was literally prolific. He may be credited with eight books and more than 150 published articles. His first book, privately published in 1879, was Notes of a Trip Around the World.<sup>1</sup> In 1884 a slightly altered version was printed commercially, entitled simply, Round the World.<sup>2</sup> Carnegie's second book, Our Coaching Trip: Brighton to Inverness, was again privately published for friends in 1882,<sup>3</sup> and then republished for the public with some alterations as An American Four-in-Hand in Britain in 1883.<sup>4</sup> Carnegie's enthusiasms, his prejudices, and his emotional reactions to all aspects of life

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Carnegie, Notes of a Trip Around the World (New York: Privately Printed, 1879).

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Carnegie, Round the World (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1884).

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip: Brighton to Inverness (New York: Privately Printed, 1882).

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Carnegie, An American Four-in-Hand in Britain (London: S. Low, Marston, and Remington, 1883).

make his travel books lively and personal. Carnegie's third volume was his magnum opus, Triumphant Democracy, published in 1886.<sup>5</sup> If he had written nothing else, this panoramic view would have established Carnegie as the most important social commentator among American industrialists. Two volumes of collected essays followed, The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays in 1900<sup>6</sup> and The Empire of Business, in 1902.<sup>7</sup> In 1905 Carnegie published a biography, James Watt, dealing with a fellow Scotchman whom Carnegie saw as the father of the industrial revolution.<sup>8</sup> The biography of Watt is a well written, sympathetic treatment, though Carnegie employs too many quotations, and as in all his writing is totally unable to refrain from meandering asides that are interesting to the historian but have little to do with the subject. Another book of essays, Problems of To-Day: Wealth -- Labor -- Socialism<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Andrew Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy: or, Fifty Years' March of the Republic (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886).

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Carnegie, The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays (New York: The Century Company, 1900). While this is the original edition, this work will use the 1962 edition edited by Edward C. Kirkland, and published by the Harvard University Press.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Carnegie, The Empire of Business (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1902).

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Carnegie, James Watt (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1905).

<sup>9</sup> Andrew Carnegie, Problems of To-Day: Wealth -- Labor -- Socialism (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1908).

found a market in 1908 and his final work, The Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie was published a year after his death in 1920.<sup>10</sup> Carnegie's eight books, then, included two travel books, three volumes of collected essays, a major evaluation of American society, a biography, and an autobiography.

Carnegie's three volumes of collected essays, Empire of Business, Problems of To-Day, and Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays contain 39 essays, 25 essays published in the lifetime of the steel king and 14 that were never published until the books were printed. Problems of To-Day, with the exception of one essay previously published, is really all new material. Burton Hendrick in 1933 published 32 more Carnegie essays in his two volume Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie<sup>11</sup> none of which had been published in Carnegie books.

Burton Hendrick, in his major work, The Life of Andrew Carnegie<sup>12</sup> which for a generation has been the standard biography of the steel king, lists in chronological order in his bibliography 81 total essays, introductions to books, speeches, articles, and addresses by Carnegie. Joseph Frazier Wall in his even more

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<sup>10</sup> Andrew Carnegie, The Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1920).

<sup>11</sup> Andrew Carnegie, Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton J. Hendrick (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday & Company, 1933). The more recent edition, (2 vols.; New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1968) will be used here.

<sup>12</sup> Burton J. Hendrick, The Life of Andrew Carnegie (2 vols.; Garden City, New York, Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1932).

massive recent treatment, Andrew Carnegie,<sup>13</sup> offers 68 pages of more than 2,000 footnotes, in which almost 50 articles by Carnegie are cited, but Wall attempts no bibliography. All the sources above put together list under 100 published articles by Andrew Carnegie. Actually Carnegie has had at least 158 separate articles and addresses published to date. These are indicated in the bibliography of the present work. In addition, Carnegie made at least two dozen other speeches which were never published but still exist in manuscript form. The matter is not easy to resolve for Carnegie occasionally used one title which he particularly liked, such as "Thrift," for several separate articles. Furthermore, he often used sections of one or more articles or addresses he had published in later essays or speeches without crediting the earlier works. A matter of judgment then enters in determining what shall be listed as one essay and what shall be determined as two. In each case the attempt has been made to err on the side of a shorter list, rather than produce an elongated series. Quite frequently, also, the same article has been published more than once with varying titles and in such cases a real effort has been made to include all titles under the simplest designation. Occupying an intermediate position that makes bibliographic classification difficult

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<sup>13</sup> Joseph Frazier Wall, Andrew Carnegie, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

are what might be termed the "Busy Books,"<sup>14</sup> edited descriptions of Carnegie's triumphal tours of benevolence through Britain, with segments of welcoming addresses, Carnegie speeches, and built in crowd sounds of (cheers), (laughter), and (applause). Almost invariably there will be some error in this effort but a start at a full bibliography on Carnegie seems in order.

Andrew Carnegie was viewed quite variously even in his own lifetime and the disagreement has grown and broadened since. In 1900 William T. Stead wrote a short volume of 162 pages that was a mixture of biography, interviews, and thoughtful guessing as to how Carnegie might distribute his wealth.<sup>15</sup> In a burst of joyful hyperbole, Stead described Carnegie as: "smart, bright, wiry, active and intelligent."<sup>16</sup> This is nearly as redundant as

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<sup>14</sup> Andrew S. Cunningham, compiler, A Busy Week: Mr. Andrew Carnegie at Dunfermline, Kirkealdy, Dunfries, Portnahomack (Dunfermline, 1899).

Andrew S. Cunningham, compiler and editor, Three Busy Weeks: Dr. Andrew Carnegie at Perth, Edinburgh, Greenock, Falkirk, Stirling, Hawarden, Liverpool, St. Andrews, Dundee (Dunfermline: W. Clark & Sons, 1902).

James Moore Swank, compiler, More Busy Days. Dr. Andrew Carnegie at Dingwall, Tain, Kilmarnock, Govan, Waterford, Limerick, Cork, Barrow, in 1903 (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane & Scott, 1903).

<sup>15</sup> William T. Stead, Mr. Carnegie's Conundrum: £40,000,000 -- What Shall I Do With It? (London: Review of Reviews, 1900).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

a friend can get. Stead, the editor of the English Review of Reviews who often printed Carnegie articles, was a close friend of the steel king and wrote a favorable treatment, but simply did not have the material for a full scale bibliography. Lack of subject matter never prevented the erratic Stead from bursting into print, especially when he sensed an opportunity to be first on the scene with a book posing a question of the day just as the steel king sold his vast holdings. Unfortunately for Stead, who later lost his life on the maiden voyage on the Titanic, this literary voyage was too early a departure also. The sale by Carnegie was not consummated, and Stead's book was selling and asking its famous question after the financial arrangements had collapsed, while an embarrassed Carnegie pretended he never intended to sell at all.

In the next three years, two more books on Carnegie appeared. Barnard Alderson's Andrew Carnegie: The Man and His Work published in 1902, was even more favorable than Stead.<sup>17</sup> So much of what Alderson wrote came directly from interviews with Carnegie, that Alderson reads like Carnegie. Alderson finds Carnegie to be a man of "high aims and strenuous endeavor . . .

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<sup>17</sup> Barnard Alderson, Andrew Carnegie: The Man and His Work (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1902).

a master mind," who was diligent, daring, courageous, resolute, a genius, one of the "giants of humanity," shrewd, forceful, thorough, a hard worker, and optimistic.<sup>18</sup> The volumes of Stead and Alderson together are about the same size as James Howard Bridge's massive muckraking account, The Inside History of the Carnegie Steel Company published in 1903.<sup>19</sup> Alderson is viewed by Bridge as writing an "authorized biography" published under Carnegie's own supervision.<sup>20</sup> Bridge commends his book to the men who made the Carnegie Steel Company a success and he omits the name of Andrew Carnegie.

The dedication of Bridge's book reads: "To recall their forgotten services: This history of a great business is dedicated to the memory of the men who founded it, saved it from early disaster, and won its first success . . ." Eight men are listed, including Thomas Morrison Carnegie, Andrew's brother, but not Andrew Carnegie. This is pure spite, under the guise of redressing wrongs. Yet though the Bridge account is meandering and lopsided, he is the first writer to really investigate

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. vii, 21, 41, 39, 35, 4, 41, 93, 198, 199, 206.

<sup>19</sup> James Howard Bridge, The Inside History of the Carnegie Steel Company (New York: Aldine Book Company, 1903).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

Carnegie. Bridge is really a classic case, for he was Carnegie's literary assistant, helping the steel king in gathering data and in writing Triumphant Democracy. Carnegie, however, wrote his own books, and in Triumphant Democracy the magnate openly acknowledged with warm praise the sections that Bridge wrote.<sup>21</sup> After he left Carnegie's employ, Bridge wrote free lance articles on the steel magnate and finally, after considerable research launched his total attack in the Inside History. Bridge's major thesis is that almost everyone concerned with the development of the Carnegie Steel Company contributed more than Andrew Carnegie, and he bitterly denounced his former employer as one of those who "filched their laurel wreaths from the tombs of the dead."<sup>22</sup> Bridge attempts to prove that Carnegie really did not have the high ideals concerning labor and desired compromise less than Henry Clay Frick, that Carnegie did not originate iron railroad bridges in America as the magnate claimed, that Carnegie was not the first to use the Bessemer process in America, that Carnegie used improper business methods, and finally that Carnegie actually prevented his more foresighted associates from

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<sup>21</sup>Says Carnegie in Triumphant Democracy, p. vii, "I acknowledge with great pleasure the almost indispensable aid received in the preparation of this work from my clever secretary, Mr. Bridge."

<sup>22</sup>Bridge, Inside History, p. v.



making more money for the company, and removed one rival after another who threatened his absolute dominance.<sup>23</sup> While there is some truth to all the charges, the Inside History is not a balanced account and falsifies history outrageously by refusing to give Carnegie much credit at all. The Stead, Alderson, and Bridge accounts are all the product of 1900-1903 and largely must ignore the most important period in the life of Carnegie when the steel king became a philanthropist.

In 1920 Carnegie's posthumous autobiography was published, followed by Frederick Lynch's Personal Recollections of Andrew Carnegie, published shortly after the magnate's death.<sup>24</sup> The Lynch Recollections consist largely of stories that make the volume a creditable source rather than a biography, but the Reverend Lynch is least accurate when he ascribes strong religious sentiments to the steel king.

John K. Winkler's Incredible Carnegie,<sup>25</sup> published in 1931, does little to inspire credulity; the complete lack of footnotes and bibliography, the extravagant statements, and

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 203-206, 40-42, 42-43, 49-50, 265-268, 317.

<sup>24</sup> Frederick Lynch, Personal Recollections of Andrew Carnegie (New York, Chicago, London, and Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1920).

<sup>25</sup> John K. Winkler, Incredible Carnegie: The Life of Andrew Carnegie, 1835-1919 (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1931).

the incredible errors in Incredible Carnegie might cause it to be ignored. However, Winkler has readable style and more importantly, following in the muckraking footsteps of Bridge, he offers an interesting opposing view to the largely approving estimate of Carnegie's great biographer of the 1930's, Burton J. Hendrick.<sup>26</sup>

The Winkler and Hendrick biographies, published at almost the same time, offer an intriguing contrast. Hendrick in his solid, scholarly, inclusive, balanced, and careful study, sees Carnegie as heroic, a genius, kind, sentimental, mercurial, vital, impish, quick tempered, and a bit vain.<sup>27</sup> Winkler in his shorter and less reliable volume views Carnegie as greedy, crass, merciless, grasping, predatory, gluttonous, ravenous, crafty, avaricious, turbulent, and employing "ruthless, dog-eat-dog methods."<sup>28</sup> It is quite possible that both biographers are merely looking at opposite sides of the large steel coin that was Andrew Carnegie.

The polarization of views represented by Winkler and Hendrick has led other writers to take up the debate. Robert

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<sup>26</sup> Burton J. Hendrick, The Life of Andrew Carnegie (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1932).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 203, 204, 340, 407; II, pp. 161, 162.

<sup>28</sup> Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, pp. 3, 4, 68, 85, 88, 105, 143, 152, 265.

Green McCloskey, whose general conception of nineteenth century industrialists is that of "Robber Barons," still takes a middle position on the question of the true character of Andrew Carnegie.<sup>29</sup> Says McCloskey in his American Conservatism:

Carnegie was not, whatever else might be said about him, a "typical" capitalist. He was far more absorbed than most of his peers in the moral problems posed by a burgeoning industrial civilization, or at any rate he was more articulate about them. Nor was he simply buying posterity when he gave away his millions or courting public regard when he wrote his benign essays on behalf of the rights of working men and the glories of democracy. The real Carnegie is neither the "Saint Andrew" of Hendrick's biography nor the poseur and self-seeker of Winkler. . . . Thus his conservatism . . . more accurately reflects the true conservative temper of the age.<sup>30</sup>

Curiously, Alderson, at times an almost sycophantic biographer, who seems content to act as a mirror, refers to the steel king as a "typical employer," for the same reason that McCloskey suggests Carnegie was not.<sup>31</sup> While Alderson sees Carnegie concerned with problems of society, he sees the magnate as

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<sup>29</sup> For a discussion of the question of "Robber Baron" vs. "Captain of Industry", see Chapter One.

<sup>30</sup> Robert Green McCloskey, American Conservatism in the Age of Enterprise (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 135.

<sup>31</sup> Alderson, Carnegie, p. 70.

unable to improve industrial conditions, such as the twelve hour day, unless other businessmen did the same. Thus Carnegie remains a typical employer for Alderson.

Winkler, the muckraking biographer of Carnegie, concludes that, having acquired his fortune, there was a change in the nature of the steel master:

As greedily as he had gathered in the gold he began to distribute the great pile. Did he wish to benefit humanity? To make his name immortal? To wipe out the stains of the past with the pure brush of sincere philanthropy? Who can tell?<sup>32</sup>

Winkler thus sees a change, a "metamorphosis of a man," while Hendrick sees the same man throughout, hard working, kindly, energetic. McCloskey suggests, probably correctly, that Carnegie was "far more complex than either of these descriptions" indicate. Says McCloskey:

It is speciously easy to regard Andrew Carnegie as the model capitalist, employing for the welfare of man the power which wealth had given him, acknowledging and accepting the moral obligations imposed by his position of industrial leadership, or, on the other hand, as a pious hypocrite who talked the language of Christian brotherhood while playing the contemporary game of dog-eat-dog.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 276.

<sup>33</sup>McCloskey, American Conservatism, pp. 134-135.

To attempt to see two Carnegies or six is a futile effort. One cannot demand consistency in the philosophy of a small pre-school reciter of Burns in Scotland; a young immigrant boy working in a telegraph office and writing brave letters home; a railroad superintendent of twenty years, with many friends busily trying to make money in every possible way in a rough world; a sophisticated, wealthy, world traveling steel magnate of forty; and a multi-millionaire philanthropist, retired manufacturer, still writing and traveling in his seventies. For how many men can these vast changes in life pattern be expected to leave all beliefs unchanged? Does it show more good sense to alter your thinking or hold firm under such circumstances? Is one allowed to make flippant, irrelevant remarks in speaking and writing at times that one does not really believe, or must a person always be on guard never to be quoted conversely from stated immutable beliefs? Considering all this, Carnegie holds up pretty well.

Louis M. Hacker's recent book, The World of Andrew Carnegie: 1865-1901 uses Carnegie as a symbol for his age with considerable justification.<sup>34</sup> Hacker writes of America in the age of Carnegie, with only a few chapters devoted specifically to the "entrepreneurship" of Carnegie. While Hacker attacks

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<sup>34</sup> Louis M. Hacker, The World of Andrew Carnegie: 1865-1901 (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1968).

McCloskey's general interpretation that nineteenth century industrialists were "Robber Barons," he still occupies a middle position on Carnegie.<sup>35</sup> There is little doubt that Carnegie was a symbol of his age, a man in many ways typifying the capitalist at his most successful, yet the magnate always looked beyond to the future of American and world society.

Joseph Frazier Wall's Andrew Carnegie, published in 1970 just over a half century after Carnegie's death, is the latest and most complete Carnegie biography. Wall concludes the steel magnate was struggling with a dichotomy that he could not resolve. Says Wall:

But that old devil cost remained, and so Carnegie was torn between two desires: to reduce labor costs to a level competitive with rival steel manufacturers and, at the same time, to appear before the world as America's most enlightened and progressive employer of a mass labor force. Because there was no easy way to reconcile these two contradictory policies, critics have often raised the cry of hypocrisy against Carnegie, charging him with preaching one doctrine while practicing another.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. xxii, xxiii.

<sup>36</sup> Wall, Carnegie, p. 521.

As a result, Wall finds that Carnegie is not a typical employer, but rather a man who is not at home in his own age. Wall suggests:

If Carnegie could have subscribed wholeheartedly to Frick's position of paying labor the least possible without any pretense and breaking all labor unions he would have saved himself a great deal of anguish and would have avoided the epithet of hypocrite that was to be hurled at him by both contemporary critics and later historians. To call Carnegie a hypocrite in his labor policy . . . is too easy. For such a charge leaves unanswered the question of why Carnegie felt it necessary to propound doctrines that he did in the age in which he lived. No one expected the late-nineteenth-century industrialist to provide labor with a Bill of Rights. Frick, not Carnegie, was the norm, and to deviate from that norm was to ask for trouble. Then what compelled Carnegie to write his two remarkable essays for *Forum* magazine in 1886? . . . In part, the answer lies in Carnegie's vanity, in his desire to be loved and admired by all Americans.<sup>37</sup>

But Wall has some internal problems to resolve on the question of being in tune with the times, for on other occasions Wall sees Carnegie as a man changing to meet the needs of his times,<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 522. The two essays were: Andrew Carnegie, "An Employer's View of the Labor Question," *Forum*, I (April, 1886), 114-125, and Andrew Carnegie, "Results of the Labor Struggle," *Forum*, I (August, 1886), 538-551.

<sup>38</sup> Wall, *Carnegie*, pp. 294-295.

and "in rapport with his age,"<sup>39</sup> and "simply a product of his society."<sup>40</sup>

Finally, while the first half of Wall's volume might be read as seeing only one Carnegie, by the end of the book, Wall is also seeing two Carnegies:

So radically abrupt did Carnegie's metamorphosis from Conservative chrysalis to Progressive butterfly seem that many of his new friends were totally at a loss to explain the presence of this gorgeous winged creature who fluttered among them. Carnegie's old companions, like Zimmerman, had no difficulty, to be sure, in offering an explanation. It was simply a metamorphic change from aggressive industrialist to indolent philanthropist . . . .<sup>41</sup>

Wall is careful, finally to hedge even on this reversal of his view, in that he adds disclaimers that Carnegie may also be seen as changing with the times. What the metamorphosis metaphor leaves unmentioned, is that the chrysalis and the butterfly may appear to be outward changes but in reality are all one. The radical seeds of progressivism lay within Carnegie from the beginning. His desire to write about new trends, his hope to lead and remain at the forefront in American life,

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 1044.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 966.



caused him to take positions as the Progressive movement developed. Carnegie was all one, not two people. Wall is so careful in his analysis at times that he does not take a position at all.

The Wall textbook on Carnegie is well written, all-encompassing, and draws upon many new sources. He is especially to be congratulated for his thorough, comprehensive, and scholarly coverage. It is a really refreshing antidote to the hoard of minor detractors who have nibbled away at Carnegie while writing on general nineteenth century themes. The detractors, muckrakers, and downgraders really had the victory in spite of the Hendricks biography; more and more Carnegie was being lumped with the usual run of nineteenth century industrialists by generalists who only examined the surface with their predetermined bias showing. Carnegie's philanthropies were discounted and his writings were unread and forgotten. He deserves better. Wall sees Carnegie as "a scientific humanist," a businessman who was "sensitive, almost intuitive" as to economic conditions, a man of patience, yet an opportunist "tormented by ambition," proud, zealous, voluble, and impulsive.<sup>42</sup> Certainly Wall's judgment is well balanced and accurate.

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., pp. 367, 290, 282, 291, 195, 573, 311, 386, 238.

As to changing to meet the needs of the times, Carnegie was almost amoeba-like in the way he moved adroitly to fill in any vacuums.<sup>43</sup> Says Wall:

To most of his associates, including his own brother, Carnegie seemed audacious to the point of foolhardiness. To others, such as Scott . . . he seemed incredibly lucky. But to Carnegie, himself, it was simply a question of good, if uncommon sense. There was a time to move boldly, a point to stop, and, on occasion, a time to retreat.<sup>44</sup>

Carnegie merely saw the situation more clearly than others.

Regarding Wall's biography, which is a magnificent summation, there is still a feeling that Stanley Elkins might be echoed when the latter declares in his book, Slavery, that Kenneth Stamp may have won the argument on the question of slavery, but there is still much more to say.<sup>45</sup> Wall's Carnegie could well be the outstanding biography of the steel king for the next generation or the next century, but there is a great deal more that remains to be said. That fact is very fortunate for this writer.

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<sup>43</sup>Hendrick describes Carnegie as adaptable, Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 88.

<sup>44</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 290.

<sup>45</sup>Stanley M. Elkins, Slavery (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1959).

Kenneth M. Stamp, The Peculiar Institution (New York: Random House, 1956).

PART I

THE LIFE AND RISE OF ANDREW CARNEGIE

CHAPTERS 1, 2, 3

## CHAPTER ONE

The Life and Times of Andrew Carnegie: The Immigrant as Capitalist

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of Industry.

## Chapter One

### The Life and Times of Andrew Carnegie: The Immigrant as Capitalist

#### 1. The Enormous Transition

Andrew Carnegie's life (1835-1919) spans the period of the enormous transition in America, the metamorphosis of a society from rural to urban, from agricultural to industrial, from provincial to cosmopolitan. While economic historians differ, mankind may be seen as passing through three major phases of development: first, a pre-historic, primitive, nomadic stage; hunting, fishing, gathering, tending flocks, wandering; a second stage of settled agriculture and trading towns, historic, with the village communities occasionally developing into great cities which fought for empire over wide lands; and finally, an industrial stage, beginning gradually enough, but soon developing materials and techniques which transformed the world. The writers of the American Constitution could discuss the Greek democracy, and while politically the men of 1787 were building a nation, not a city-state, and other differences were obviously apparent, societal as well as economic, the men of Philadelphia were closer to the men of Athens than 1787 is to today. The Industrial Revolution has changed the world. Britain was the parent of the Industrial Revolution as she was of America, and while the well-

mapped and well-explored world of the nineteenth century with its highly structured transportation and communications systems tended to spread the British and Western European industrial concepts to the world, a number of factors, including similar traditions and cultural ties with Britain, led the United States, during the age of Carnegie, to develop from a backward, underdeveloped, minor power, to become the leading industrial nation in the world.

Robert Heilbroner uses the apt phrase The Great Ascent<sup>1</sup> as a title for a book which discusses the efforts of underdeveloped countries to achieve what Walt W. Rostow, in a still more striking expression, refers to as "take off."<sup>2</sup> Take off is the concept of capital accretion in sufficient quantities to sustain a continually growing economy. But, as has been suggested by various other economists, accumulated wealth may be utilized to build pyramids, Great Walls in China, Hanging Gardens in Babylon, statues in Greece, and roads in Rome. Surplus energy may be poured into producing armies and weapons, cathedrals and monasteries, or used to

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<sup>1</sup>Robert L. Heilbroner, The Great Ascent; The Struggle for Economic Development in our Time (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1963).

<sup>2</sup>Walt W. Rostow's phrase has been utilized widely by economists and historians alike. See especially his: The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto (Cambridge: University Press, 1967). See also C. E. Black's The Dynamics of Modernization (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1967), for an excellent short volume on industrialism as modernization.

support artists and scholars (including historians). In order for the Industrial Revolution to take place it was necessary for techniques of mechanization to be discovered, but more, it required that capital be siphoned into industries rather than into religion or culture. Willingness to accept change, a belief in progress, an optimistic faith that the struggle is worth the cost, doctrines of hard work, and a great deal of suffering by the people involved are all demanded if the industrial take-off is to be achieved.

A souring economy that has made the industrial ascent can accede to the classic demands of labor unions for higher pay, shorter hours, and better working conditions. Until the economy achieves take off, the workers can organize and demand, but wages will not rise appreciably. Factory burning and industrial sabotage<sup>3</sup> to force increased wages, must in the long run produce just the contrary effect. Karl Marx's famous surplus value<sup>4</sup> is merely the profit of the capitalist which ought to be reinvested in better machines and greater factories. When Andrew Carnegie sold his entire steel holdings to J. P. Morgan for over \$300,000,000 in 1900, the banker referred to the transaction

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<sup>3</sup>The word sabotage comes from sabot, the French wooden shoe that was placed in the gears and spokes of the early factories by synicalists whose hopes ranged from a little leisure while repairs were effected to complete control of the factories by trade unions.

<sup>4</sup>Karl Marx, Capital (New York: The Modern Library Edition, 1906), pp. 197-254.

as one which "'made Carnegie the richest man in the world.'"<sup>5</sup> Yet, if this money had been divided among the 76,000,000 Americans counted in the census of that year, each would have received about four dollars.<sup>6</sup> If we similarly divided the incomes of the ten richest Americans at the time, or the hundred, the result would not be greatly altered. There would certainly be a temporary alleviation of the worst conditions among the extremely poor, but industrial growth would also have tended to decline. The foregoing, of course, is an old argument, long used to defend the profits of the business class. But we should also remember that the year we are discussing here is 1900, when the take-off was completed, when the first broad gains from the triumph of industrialism were possible.

We may enunciate a general rule that the metamorphosis of the Industrial Revolution is always difficult for the people involved in the enormous transition. Karl Marx lived in England and used that country, the first to move into the industrial age, as his example. Certainly one of the mistakes Marx made was the

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<sup>5</sup>Matthew Josephson, The Robber Barons: The Great American Capitalists, 1861-1901 (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934), p. 426.

<sup>6</sup>Inflation since 1900, probably justifies multiplying any figures used for that year by four or five. Carnegie had already begun to give away his money, so that in his own lifetime he actually gave away over \$300,000,000. Some of the implications of this "beneficence" will be discussed further in later chapters.



belief that a Communist Industrial Revolution would be easy because the "system" would belong to the "people." But economic development was certainly as difficult when it came to America, to Western Europe, and to Russia. The Chinese even now are experiencing the frustrations of setting aside surplus capital to produce growth. Equally divided incomes do not produce steel mills, railroads, or electrification. The hard decisions must be made by someone, to let the multitude continue on the edge of subsistence, or below, so that machines may be purchased and plants built. The decisions of state, for a nation such as China today, become even more difficult when there is a three way choice, with more food, more industrial plants, and expensive rocket gadgetry to satisfy national ambitions by placing satellites in orbit, all claiming priority. The only way to achieve take-off for any nation, large or small, unless great aid at low interest from the outside is received, is to put as much of the population, men, women, and children, to work as many hours as possible at wages as low as possible, and to use the surplus value created to develop new plants and purchase better machinery.

History does not lend itself to measurement by the scientific method; human communities do not offer themselves as laboratory samples with equivalent control groups available, so that we may view the nineteenth century with an Andrew Carnegie and then the same epoch and nation again without him, to see if one man makes any difference. But parallels may be drawn. It is obvious

to the world today that two huge continental powers are in a race -- the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. -- and if Russia does overtake the United States in industrial production, then inferences as to the relative value of societal systems will be made. That these inferences may be fallacious, is hardly beside the point; the inferences will be made in any case. As with the United States, historians and economists on both sides of the Atlantic argue as to just when Russia began its Industrial Revolution. Many of the official Communist economists, themselves, see the event taking place in the 1860's after the freeing of the serfs.<sup>7</sup> Russia moved more slowly than the United States for a number of reasons, but in the 1890's and early 1900's more progress was made. After the Russian Revolution, the U.S.S.R. attempted in the 1920's and 1930's to force economic growth at a faster pace in order to overtake America. Recently the demands by consumers in Russia for more of the surplus value to be distributed back among the whole of the people, would seem to indicate that a new generation will not continue the industrial growth at the same accelerated rate. The fact remains that the enormous transition demands its

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<sup>7</sup>Peter I. Lyashchenko, History of the National Economy of Russia (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), p. 403. Says Lyashchenko: "The official downfall of the system of serfdom in 1861 may be considered as merely a conventional line of demarcation separating two eras of economic development: the era of serfdom and the era of bourgeois industrial capitalism." Lyashchenko then genuflects to Lenin in a typical quotation and continues throughout a long chapter to bettress his argument, discussing "Primary accumulation of capital and its peculiarities in Russia." Lyashchenko's view, for a long period, was regarded as the official party view in Russia.

price in every country; the Russian "forced efforts" of the 1920's and 1930's were attended by even harsher measures than the American lockouts, company towns, strike-breakers, and long hours for men, women, and children.

It is justifiable to contend that too much of the surplus profit of the Western nations that should be channeled back into expansion is wasted on extravagant living by the capitalists;<sup>8</sup> it is equally justifiable to suggest that the Communist states have developed their own new classes of Commissars who live comparatively well.<sup>9</sup> Communist and Capitalist alike may be indicted here, and perhaps what we have is a human problem, one not simply resolved. Waste, human greed, and inefficiency are not monopolies of either East or West.

While economists and historians disagree as to just when the enormous transition, which was the Industrial Revolution, began in the United States, most do accept that there was some early business activity developing during and immediately after the War of 1812. Whether this activity should be characterized as the true beginning of the industrial transition or not is quite another matter. There is some consensus that this early

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<sup>8</sup>Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of Business Enterprise (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904); Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899).

<sup>9</sup>Milovan Dilas, The New Class; An Analysis of the Communist System (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957).

development was at an incipient, almost inconsequential stage.<sup>10</sup> From this timid start, using water power along the streams of New England and the eastern seaboard, the growth began. Capital accumulated in the decades of the twenties, thirties, and forties, and coincident with this accumulation, a home market developed, transportation routes grew, and invention flourished. The fifties may be seen as a time of testing, as the swelling wave of the Industrial Revolution mounted. Indeed, the 1850's were a time of testing for both the Industrial Revolution and Andrew Carnegie. Josephson in the Robber Barons sees the Northern purpose in the Civil War as one of humbling the South so that the Industrial Revolution could begin.<sup>11</sup> Cochran and Miller see the Civil War hurting business and the business class in general hoping to avoid war.<sup>12</sup> Whether the take-off speed for the economy was achieved in the fifties and even the Civil War could not have prevented the culmination of the enormous transition, or whether it was the post war period of the late 1860's that was the true beginning of the great ascent is of little consequence -- America was on its way.

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<sup>10</sup>Thomas Childs Cochran and William Miller, The Age of Enterprise: A Social History of Industrial America (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1961), pp. 5, 10, 11, 14.

<sup>11</sup>Josephson, Robber Barons, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Cochran and Miller, Age of Enterprise, pp. 98, 111.

The openness of American society, its limitless, infinite quality, encouraged the enormous transition in the second half of the nineteenth century. The boundless optimism, the unlimited land stretching westward, the special regard with which Europeans held the American dream, encouraged the flow of capital and immigrants alike from abroad. Even the end of the frontier in the 1890's, which brought the new frontier into the cities and tended toward laws restricting immigration, did not change the upward trends, the belief in growth, the feeling that bigger meant better. The American society of the nineteenth century was one of anomalies, however, for rural enclaves remained untouched while the march of civilization went on, and urban slums began and festered even within a nation where the boundaries were wide open, and while some new immigrants broke loose in the Land of Opportunity, and rose spectacularly, most were "locked in" by the times, trapped in positions where talent went unrecognized. Yet there was a boundless feeling about American society, a unity within diversity, an open pluralism within a consensus, that made good the boast of the Land of Opportunity for some.<sup>13</sup> One such person who rose as an immigrant to the heights in America was Andrew Carnegie.

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<sup>13</sup>Wall sees an open American society influencing businessmen more than Social Darwinism. Wall, Carnegie, p. 380.

## 2. Andrew Carnegie: The Immigrant as Capitalist

When Andrew Carnegie was born on November 25, 1835, in the village of Dunfermline in Scotland, America was rural and living out the last days of that well-known Era of the Common Man; when he died, August 11, 1919, at Shadowbrook in Massachusetts, four wars had been fought and the Industrial Revolution had brought American goods around the globe and American power to the bargaining tables of the world. Carnegie's life coincided with the period of the enormous transition, during which time a rural, agrarian young nation was transformed into the leading urban, industrial power on earth. When Carnegie was born, there were not quite fifteen million Americans; when he died there were over one hundred million. When the Carnegie family migrated to America in 1848, they joined the first swelling tide of migration that was to fill the land, to crowd the cities, to supply the urban proletariat for the factories, and produce that great market for goods that constantly stimulated industry in the decades to come. In the 1840's, 1,713,251 immigrants arrived in America and in the 1850's, 2,598,214 more came to the new world shores.<sup>14</sup> This was a great influx, certainly totalling more than had migrated to the United States in all previous time before. The immigrants of the

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<sup>14</sup> Statistical Abstract of the United States, 85th Edition (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 93.

forties and fifties amounted, in each decade, to almost ten per cent of the population already in the nation. The Carnegies arrived in that first great impulse of immigration in the nineteenth century, which "began in the 1830's and continued until 1860, reaching its crest in the years 1847-1854. To this exodus the adjective 'Celtic' may properly be applied. The emigrants came from Ireland, the Highlands of Scotland and the mountains of Wales . . . though many came also from the upper Rhine Valley of Germany."<sup>15</sup> The Carnegies came to America in the center of this great immigration impulse just as the enormous industrial transformation was under way.

In 1848, when Andrew Carnegie arrived in America, the Mexican War ended and the whole southwest was added to a hegemony which now was rounded out to include the center slice of the North American Continent. Between 1845-1848 the American territory, and with it the potential industrial market, increased in the southwest and northwest by the addition of land equal to two-thirds of all the territory previously acquired. Almost coincidentally with Andrew Carnegie's beginning work as a bobbin boy in a cotton factory in 1848, was the discovery of gold in California. Without opting for a particular year for the true beginning of the enormous transition in the United States, the suggestion may be made that the immediate post-war expansion in

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<sup>15</sup>Marcus Lee Hansen, The Atlantic Migration; 1607-1860 (New York: Harper and Brothers, Harper Torchbook, 1940), p. 9.

the 1850's, after the conflict with Mexico, when the returning soldiers, the success in battle, the expanded territory, and the gold rush, coincided to give additional confidence to an already optimistic people was the true beginning of industrialism in America. This wide open period was the very time Andrew Carnegie was serving his apprenticeship.

One of the real anomalies in America is the success in every generation of some of the new immigrants in achieving their personal economic take off starting from ground zero. For, just as nations entering the period of the enormous transition require a surplus of profit over expenditures placed annually into plant and equipment, so an individual fortune requires savings of an amount that make it possible to live and expand holdings from the interest alone. The history of the modern great fortunes is also the history of individual take offs. True, the American boast has always been equality of opportunity; we were a nation where every boy should be educated, for he might become president. Certainly the second half of the nineteenth century offered possibilities for upward mobility. The very openness of society that allowed industrial expansion also offered chances for newcomers to rise. In the West, this was the era of the cattlemen, a most individualistic period; while in the East, the anarchic, wide open quality of American individualism was equally obvious. But if the myth is stripped away the odds are not so promising. How really, when so many of the natives were failing to make a



breakthrough, when thousands of indigenous rural youths were flocking to the city to seek fame and fortune, could an outsider, an immigrant, an alien, a foreigner, a person without money, contacts, connections, education, and economic backing from his family, win the game and come out of the industrial jungle at the very top? Andrew Carnegie was the teen-age immigrant in the strange land who makes good; or as Cawelti refers to the species, he was the self-made man on the make.<sup>16</sup> Yet this is also the story of America. Indeed, although some desire to forget it, all Americans are the descendants of immigrants or Indians. The immigrants have usually not found the adaptation easy, however, and the leap from immigrant to capitalist is an especially difficult maneuver. The mythology of a superior American race, long the nineteenth century patriotic orator's standby, was based on the belief that the best Europeans came to America, or in the words of Carnegie: "defective persons remain at home in Europe, and only the sound and vigorous emigrate."<sup>17</sup> Still most of the sound and vigorous immigrants as well as the natives, did not rise as far as Andrew Carnegie. It is annoying to the losers of the money game, in all ages, including our own, to be reminded that these successes can occur; indeed, in our own cynical times the annoyance is far greater. But the success story of the

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<sup>16</sup>John G. Cawelti, Apostles of the Self-Made Man (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 63.

<sup>17</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 170.

immigrant is there; it does happen; and one such man was Andrew Carnegie.

Andrew Carnegie came to America at the right time and possessed a few advantages that helped him to succeed. If he had arrived earlier or his family had settled elsewhere he might have been set to work on the canals, the turnpikes, or the railroads. He did have the usual problem of immigrants, the rupture of attachments to the native village and the typical arrival of the family with little money in a hostile environment.<sup>18</sup> As is usual for immigrants, friends already in America dictated the place where the Carnegies were to try anew, but the American friends were not able to provide financial help. The Carnegies needed to find their own jobs and make their own adjustments. As Oscar Handlin points out, the immigrants transformed America but America also transformed the immigrants.<sup>19</sup> More than the frontier, the Industrial Revolution changed America. Cochran and Miller go further:

America has been settled mainly by enterprising immigrants seeking economic opportunities and economic freedom. That this quest has been most powerful in determining the nature of our culture, historians acknowledge when they write economic interpretations of our politics, our literature, our philosophy, our religion. They fail to do it justice when they make these and not business itself the kernel of their discussions. We have not been a people

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<sup>18</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 26.

<sup>19</sup>Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1951), p. 4.

essentially political, literary, metaphysical, or religious . . . . We have been primarily a business people.<sup>20</sup>

American business affected the immigrant and the immigrant affected American business. The time and terminus of the migration of the immigrants dictated the available jobs. While the factories of the 1820's and 1830's employed artisans and natives, by the 1840's and 1850's the simplification of industrial tasks made it possible for factories to utilize the tide of unskilled peasant labor.<sup>21</sup> Plants were now built for the repeated performance of minute specialized jobs thus meeting the increased needs of a rapidly expanding economy. The collapse of the old ways of village life in Europe due to overpopulation led many to America, but the Carnegies were the new immigrants, themselves displaced by the machine, destroyed by technological unemployment, set adrift by the changes in the world produced by the take-off of industry.

The Carnegies had been weavers in the area of Western Fife in Scotland for three generations. James Carnegie, his son Andrew Carnegie, and his grandson William Carnegie all were weavers and there was every expectation that great-grandson Andrew Carnegie would continue in the trade. Ebenezer Henderson in his Annals of Dunfermline indicates in a chart the rise of hand operated weaver's looms in the parish of Dunfermline:<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Cochran and Miller, Age of Enterprise, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, pp. 71-72.

<sup>22</sup>Ebenezer Henderson, Annals of Dunfermline (Glasgow: J. Tweed, 1879), p. 640.

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Number of Looms</u> |
|-------------|------------------------|
| 1749        | About 400              |
| 1792        | 800                    |
| 1813        | 930                    |
| 1818        | 1500                   |
| 1831        | 2670                   |
| 1836        | 2794                   |
| 1837        | 2983                   |

The statistics indicate the expansion of a prosperous trade. But by the 1840's the trade of weaving was in trouble. Factories were replacing the old hand looms. In 1831, the fourth government census of Dunfermline and suburbs indicated a population of 10,625.<sup>23</sup> In 1841, the fifth government census showed a healthy growth to 13,323.<sup>24</sup> But the sixth government census in 1851 depicted a lagging growth to only 13,861 people.<sup>25</sup> With a population that small and that many looms, it is obvious that most of the people depended upon weaving.<sup>26</sup> In 1854, Henderson notes, there were 800 looms idle and 500 men unemployed.<sup>27</sup> By then the Carnegies had already left Scotland. Today, Dunfermline is still a center for linen weaving in Scotland, but it is the machine that has won.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 630.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 647.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 665.

<sup>26</sup>See also Peter Chalmers, Historical and Statistical Account of Dunfermline (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood & Sons, 1844).

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 670.

<sup>28</sup>J.W.Ormiston, Andrew Carnegie. (Exeter: W. Wheaton & Company, Paternoster Press, 1936). Ormiston was the secretary of the Carnegie Dunfermline Hero Trust Fund.

Carnegie tells this story of his family's migration to America himself, and the tale is well worth noting in full:

When I was born my father was a well-to-do master weaver in Dunfermline, Scotland. He owned no less than four damask-loom and employed apprentices. This was before the days of steam factories for the manufacture of linen. A few large merchants took orders, and employed master weavers, such as my father, to weave the cloth, the merchants supplying the materials.

As the factory system developed, hand-loom weaving naturally declined, and my father was one of the sufferers by the change. The first serious lesson of my life came to me one day when he had taken in the last of his work to the merchant, and returned to our little home greatly distressed because there was no more work for him to do. I was then just about ten years of age, but the lesson burned into my heart, and I resolved then that the wolf of poverty should be driven from our door some day, if I could do it.

The question of selling the old looms and starting for the United States came up in the family council, and I heard it discussed from day to day. It was finally resolved to take the plunge and join relatives already in Pittsburg. I well remember that neither father nor mother thought the change would be otherwise than a great sacrifice for them, but that "it would be better for the two boys."

On arriving in Allegheny City (there were four of us: father, mother, my younger brother, and myself), my father entered a cotton factory. I soon followed, and served as a "bobbin boy," and this is how I began my apprenticeship as a business man. I received one dollar and twenty cents a week, and was then just about twelve years old.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, pp. 3-4.

William Carnegie, father of Andrew, was himself a manufacturer, and an employer of men, but his work was with hand-loom which were replaced by the rising factories. Actually there is some question as to just how many looms Carnegie's father owned, how many men were employed, and for how long.<sup>30</sup> Certainly his father did not own the looms or employ additional help at the time Andrew was born, as the steel king states. It was 1836 when the Carnegies moved from the confining quarters where Andrew had been born on Moodie Street to the commodious house on Edgar Street. Additional looms were now purchased, but just how many looms were bought, and just which men worked for William Carnegie or for how long we have no definite proof. Andrew Carnegie never mentions the names of apprentices working for his father in any of his many writings. We do know that the steel king was not above stretching his stories. By 1843, after some seven years on Edgar Street, the days of business expansion for William Carnegie were over. He sold some looms and moved back to Moodie Street into smaller quarters once more. But even this curtailing of expenses was not

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<sup>30</sup>Carnegie's father as an employer of men has been pretty well accepted. The question is, how many looms did he actually own and how many men did he employ and for how long? Carnegie usually mentions names, but there are no names for these employees of his father. See Alderson, Carnegie, p. 8; Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 32; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 15, and Wall, Carnegie, p. 36. Hendrick's interview with Mrs. Alexander, a first cousin of Andrew Carnegie, in which she denied there were any employees of William Carnegie at all, is especially interesting. The notes of this interview are in Andrew Carnegie: A Register of his Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Vol. 257.

enough. The Carnegies were living through the demise of a craft. What had been a satisfactory trade for three generations, now seemed to offer no prospects for the Carnegie sons. Andrew's mother opened a little shop to sell candies and vegetables and in the evening began to mend shoes for her brother's business.<sup>31</sup> In the next five years, as the weaving trade continued to decline, the Carnegies talked more and more about immigration.

William Carnegie never accommodated himself to the new environment after immigrating to America. The real reason for what the Scotch picturesquely referred to as the "flitting" to America was to give the Carnegie boys a better opportunity. In Dunfermline, with the weaving craft declining, only factory jobs or jobs in the mines were open. William Morrison, Margaret Carnegie's brother, had migrated to an Ohio farm. Margaret Carnegie's younger sisters had married and also immigrated some years before.<sup>32</sup> The letters of the sisters to Margaret Carnegie gradually became more encouraging as the Scotch families learned the ways of the new land.<sup>33</sup> For Will Carnegie, coming to America was a surrender to his wife.<sup>34</sup> He was a fanciful man, given to dreaming and his son pictures him singing at the loom:

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<sup>31</sup>Hendricks, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 38, 39.

<sup>32</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 50, says eleven years before; Wall, Carnegie, p. 66, says eight years before. Neither documents the statement. Both are usually extremely dependable.

<sup>33</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 1, contain some examples. See also Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 39-41.

<sup>34</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 12.

To the West, to the West, to the land of the free,  
 Where the mighty Missouri rolls down to the sea;  
 Where a man is a man even though he must toil  
 And the poorest may gather the fruits of the soil.<sup>35</sup>

Will Carnegie may have believed in this song more than anything else.<sup>36</sup> The looms he owned brought so little money that the family had to borrow from a friend in order to make the trip even after selling most of their other possessions.<sup>37</sup> In America, after weeks of traveling, the Carnegies found their way to Allegheny, Pennsylvania, the suburb of Pittsburgh, where Margaret's twin sisters Annie Aitkin, recently widowed, and Kitty Hogan and her husband, Thomas, lived. The Hogans lived in the larger front house on Rebecca Street, but Annie owned and occupied the smaller house at the back of the lot. Two rooms on the second floor of this back house were not used, and Annie allowed the Carnegies to live there.<sup>38</sup> And so the Carnegies took refuge in two rooms on the second floor of the little house at 336½

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>36</sup>Samuel Gompers, in Seventy Years of Life and Labor (2 Vols.; New York: E.P.Dutton, 1925), Vol.I; p. 19, relates that Carnegie told him that his father came to America because of the message in this song.

<sup>37</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol.I, 42-43.

<sup>38</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 29; Wall, Carnegie, p. 79; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol.I, p. 50; Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, pp. 31, 41. A brother of Margaret's, William Morrison, had also migrated to America.



Rebecca Street, in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, known to the residents as Slabtown.<sup>39</sup> For William Carnegie the dream of American ended there, in accepting factory jobs he had refused in Dunfermline, in trying his hand at weaving with poorer looms than he had ever operated, with tormented efforts at selling his product himself from "door to door."<sup>40</sup>

Matters might, of course, have been far worse and rendered success for the Scotch immigrant boy impossible. Margaret Carnegie saw to it that she had a small family. Andrew, the dutiful son of a broken father, who died seven years after coming to America, when only fifty-one years old, and a strong, determined mother, never complicated his life by an early marriage and numerous children of his own. Still the transition to a new environment was a harsh one and there were many Americans, natives as well as immigrants, who came from small families with strong mother figures and married late, and still did not become multi-millionaires.

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<sup>39</sup>The Pittsburg Press, Sunday, December 9, 1962, p. 6, ran an interesting story of what became of this house later.

<sup>40</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 30.

### 3. Andrew Carnegie: Robber Baron or Captain of Industry

The expressions "Robber Baron" as a pejorative applied to industrialists and "Captain of Industry" as a commendatory concept are nineteenth century terms. Andrew Carnegie in his writings and interviews often used the figure of speech "Captain of Industry" as a phrase of praise.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, Carnegie, playing the historian in his book James Watt, traces the origin of the term "Captain of Industry" back to a fellow Scotchman, Thomas Carlyle.<sup>42</sup> In one of his numerous articles Carnegie mockingly mentioned that he had been described as Robber Baron,<sup>43</sup> and in one of his many newspaper interviews, Carnegie took special exception to the term "Robber Barons," because he was transporting iron, coal, limestone, and manganese vast distances and still producing steel to sell at one penny a pound.<sup>44</sup> Yet of course Carnegie obviously made a large profit on selling his steel at a penny a pound. The matter of profit is central to the issue of Captain of

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<sup>41</sup>"The Laird of Briarcliff Manor," Outlook (May 16, 1908), p. 107; Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 108, are two examples.

<sup>42</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 93.

<sup>43</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "My Experience with, and Views Upon, the Tariff," Century Magazine, December, 1908, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton J. Hendrick, Vol. II, p. 47.

<sup>44</sup>New York Herald, May 30, 1893; Carnegie discusses steel at a penny a pound in his Autobiography, p. 18.

Industry vs. Robber Baron. The great capitalists were referred to as "Robber Barons" long before Matthew Josephson used the term as the title of his impressive classic in 1934.

Louis M. Hacker in The World of Andrew Carnegie: 1865-1901 suggests that the term "Robber Baron" is a mere "legend," even a "dirty word" used by muckrakers to smear capitalists.<sup>45</sup>

Says Hacker:

The "Robber Barons" were not the despoilers we have been led to believe. The United States of the post-Civil War period, a developing country, was transformed in not more than a single generation into the greatest industrial nation of the world. At the same time, balanced growth took place -- thanks to a free market private accumulation and investment, and the unhampered activities and leadership of a sizeable company of entrepreneurs, or innovators. A complete transportation net, the beginnings of the generation of electrical power and its transmission, the creation of new industries, the modernization of farm plant: all these were accomplished in this brief time.<sup>46</sup>

It is difficult to accept Hacker in toto, for giving carte blanche to all the acts of the entire capitalist class tilts the pendulum a bit too far to the right. There were some capitalists America might have been better off without. Still if a choice must be made, an impartial reading of the life of Andrew Carnegie leads

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<sup>45</sup>Louis M. Hacker, The World of Andrew Carnegie: 1865-1901 (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1968), p.xvii. Hacker uses Carnegie as a symbol for the age, with considerable justification. Hacker writes of America in the age of Carnegie with only a few chapters dealing specifically with the "entrepreneurship" of Carnegie.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. xxv.

one to opt for the term "Captain of Industry" rather than "Robber Baron" in his case.

Carnegie himself declared that as great industrial establishments developed vast wealth was bound to fall into a few hands.<sup>47</sup> Large scale industry simply meant that those who controlled manufacturing plants tended to become increasingly more wealthy and powerful.<sup>48</sup> The enormous transition to an industrial society required a group of men with the accumulated capital to establish great enterprises. As industry expanded certain men were bound to become wealthy. In America, one may inveigh against the Industrial Revolution itself or the men it propelled into power; one may question the qualities of aggressive assertiveness that led to control by certain men, but the nature of the game created winners.

We need to look beyond the terms "Robber Baron" and "Captain of Industry" as not mutually exclusive but equally misleading and judge the nineteenth century industrialists, not as a group, but as individuals. Actually the use of both terms are cases of catachresis; one reason the discussion has continued is that neither phrase exactly corresponds to all the leading members

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<sup>47</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 140-141.

<sup>48</sup>For a generalized discussion of just what a "Robber Baron" is and how a "Captain of Industry" can prevent depersonalization of a mass society from turning employees into mere numbers, see Edward C. Kirkland, "Divide and Ruin," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXXIII (June, 1956) pp. 3-17.

of the business class from 1870-1900 in the United States. The phrases are simply not descriptive of the facts; the concepts they apply, to a small class of leading entrepreneurs, are not really fitting, appropriate, or in harmony with actuality. We might use Josephson's list of young men, born in poverty, who were in their twenties when the Civil War began -- Carnegie, Rockefeller, Gould, Fisk, Armour, and Hill -- who eventually became some of the great capitalists of the nineteenth century.<sup>49</sup> If by chance they had all died at birth, can we really believe the nineteenth century would have been much different? There would, of course, be another series of names we would learn as the "Captains of Industry" or the "Robber Barons."<sup>50</sup> Of this list of men, suggested by Josephson, are there any America would have been better off without? Are there any America was lucky to have? Remembering always that we are operating within the context of the nineteenth century, if you could replace certain men with others, which ones would you replace with whom? Joseph Frazer Wall suggests, correctly, that there was an illogic to the view of the revisionist historians who saw nineteenth century entrepreneurs as "industrial Statesmen," designing America's blueprint for victory in the Second World War and through their sound

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<sup>49</sup>Josephson, Robber Barons, p. 32.

<sup>50</sup>Henry Clay Frick said as much himself: "Even without us the steel industry of the country would have been as great as it is, though men would have used other names in speaking of its leaders." Bridge, Inside History, p. viii.

development of great railroads and steel plants making possible the postwar ascendancy of the United States. Wall declares that this revisionist argument trembles at the rim of the "logical fallacy of post hoc, ergo propter hoc."<sup>51</sup> Carnegie was one of the most future-minded of American industrialists, but he was not thinking ahead to the needs of the country in the mid-twentieth century as he produced his steel nor was he interested in keeping the cost of steel down and selling steel for a penny a pound for any other reason than building up a profit that eventually would result in more accumulated wealth and power for himself. We need to accept the enormous transition for what it was and the United States in the nineteenth century for what it was, and not ask that men rise above their times anymore, for example, than we find late twentieth century man solving a riddle such as what to do about impending atomic disaster.

Perhaps we need to leap between the horns of the dilemma of Captain vs. Robber and consider quite narrowly, in a new industrial history that someone may undertake some day, just what were the requirements necessary for the enormous transition and how did the individual industrialists, capitalists, financiers of the nineteenth century serve their times and inadvertently our times today as well. The men with the lowest marks in this new evaluation would be the railroad builders who constructed

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<sup>51</sup>Wall, Carnegie, pp. 637-638.

unnecessarily, knowing beforehand they were engaged in needless construction simply to sell their watered stock in a company or secure government land to despoil. The wasters of accumulated capital, turning out a worthless product on a grand scale, would receive a minus score. The stock manipulators, the paper profit takers, are true parasites, but are not to be taken as seriously harmful. They deserve a zero rather than a minus. The inventors, the adaptors, and the organizers would receive a plus grade.

Andrew Carnegie was not an inventor, but he is deserving of mention in aiding the enormous transition in America. He was an organizer on a wide scale. He brought men together. Something in his personality made it possible for fairly unlike men to work in unison, each contributing to a common cause. He traveled the world over gathering data from all quarters for his business in America. The companies he founded and managed generally grew and produced a profit. Carnegie looked beyond the present and did not distribute the profits; profits were to be expended upon continuous expansion of the business and constantly replacing equipment with the most modern available. From the point of view of building a huge, centrally directed, vertically organized steel industry in America, Carnegie served the enormous transition well.

Eventually, when Morgan and his associates had the money to purchase Carnegie's steel interests and develop a still stronger combine, Carnegie reluctantly sold out. Carnegie later gave ninety per cent of his money away, leaving only an inverse

tithe for his family. He gave his money away in his own lifetime, to causes largely designed to benefit the future of America and England. By the time of his death, Carnegie had given away some \$350,000,000.<sup>52</sup> The effect of Carnegie's philanthropy was enormous, for in 1900 the total national income of the United States was so low that the impact of Carnegie's wealth could actually change national directions. From the viewpoint of the needs of his times and the matter of altering institutions in a positive direction, it would be difficult to replace Carnegie with a better man.

Carnegie can certainly be reproached on many levels; as an absentee owner who dictated policies from abroad,<sup>53</sup> as an exploiter of men who paid workers and management alike too little, and as the man who instructed Henry Clay Frick to hold firm during the Homestead Strike.<sup>54</sup> The Homestead Strike was the most difficult event for the steel king to square with the radical

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<sup>52</sup>See, "Andrew Carnegie: Pioneer in Two Fields," Literary Digest (August 30, 1919), pp. 42, 45, 46. Wall, Carnegie, p. 1042, appears to accept the Literary Digest figures; Hacker, World of Carnegie, p. 364, agrees. Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 383, used the Literary Digest article in his bibliography but declared that Carnegie's philanthropy amounted to \$324,000,000. Edward C. Kirkland, the editor of the Harvard University Press edition of Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth, p. XIX, says that Carnegie gave away a mere \$311,000,000.

<sup>53</sup>Some excellent examples of Carnegie's running the business from afar are found in the Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vols. 30, 32.

<sup>54</sup>See especially, Wall, Carnegie, p. 541.



traditions of his ancestry in Scotland.<sup>55</sup> Matthew Josephson attacks Carnegie severely for his constant urging men on to greater and greater effort. He sees Carnegie as using men at low wages, prodding his managers on, verbally lashing them on, promising more money.<sup>56</sup>

"We broke all records for making steel last week," his managers would telegraph him. And he would answer at once: "Congratulations! Why not do it every week?" . . . Or they signaled to him: "Lucy Furnace No. 8 broke all records today," giving him the figures. And Carnegie returned: "What were the other ten furnaces doing?"<sup>57</sup>

James Howard Bridge in his super critical Inside History saw little value to the company in Carnegie placing himself above the battle and calling the tactics from afar.<sup>58</sup> Carnegie called his executive management "geniuses." He gave them shares in the company and urging them on to greater effort was part of the job. Wall no doubt correctly sees only Schwab and Frick as partners who really deserve the Carnegie encomium of genius.<sup>59</sup> A balanced view is needed. Certainly men do need urging on. On the other hand, workers' wages were too low; the slums of the city were horrendous. Yet all nations that have made the great transition to industrialism have had problems. Russia used Communist competitive methods, positive methods such as hero medals, and negative

<sup>55</sup>For Carnegie's radical tradition, see Chapter Two.

<sup>56</sup>Wall, Carnegie, pp. 660-661, 665 agrees.

<sup>57</sup>Josephson, Robber Barons, p. 256.

<sup>58</sup>Bridge, Inside History, p. 113.

<sup>59</sup>Wall, Carnegie, pp. 668-669.

approaches of concentration camps and executions. None of the most exploitive of the American capitalists can be compared to Joseph Stalin.

Carnegie had a unique method of binding the interests of top management to his company and its needs. He offered the prize of partnerships to young men on the rise. But these partners ended up working for a generation with comparatively low incomes. The book value of the company was kept low and none of the partners dared cash in their shares until Carnegie decreed the golden harvest might be gathered.<sup>60</sup> The profits after 1880 were enormous and tended upward. The average for the early 1880's was \$1,250,000 a year, but in 1886 it reached almost \$3,000,000. By the early 1890's, annual profits were climbing toward \$5,000,000 and by 1898 this figure had doubled to \$10,000,000. In 1899 profits reached \$21,000,000.<sup>61</sup> So under a variety of names the Carnegie Steel Companies grew, consolidated, and became one of the world's giants. Since the companies were capitalized at only \$25,000,000, while Carnegie estimated they were worth ten times that amount, and eventually he sold out for even more, those with shares felt they must hold on and had to keep working

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<sup>60</sup>This view is one of the major themes of Wall's Carnegie. See pp. 473, 506, 634, 635, 636, 718.

<sup>61</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vols. 61, 73.

or they would be forced out receiving cash for only the face value of their interest in the company.<sup>62</sup>

One problem with the notion of "Robber Baron" or "Captain of Industry" as generalized designations is that men, their actions, and their motives are too complicated to be summed up with such a simplistic nomenclature. Carnegie gave his own definition of what a "Captain of Industry" was. A true businessman was not just a salesman or a person working for a firm, but "must be at least part owner of the enterprise."<sup>63</sup> Young men who hoped to be "Captains of Industry" should seek out small or medium-sized businesses where ability might be more quickly recognized.

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<sup>62</sup>Historians too have been misled, since even the sworn assets of the company were much lower than the real value, so that anyone selling out would receive less than the true value. Vernon W. Roelofs, in an article, "Justice William R. Day and the Federal Regulations," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXVII (June, 1950), p. 46, makes much of the great differential between the sworn assets and the final price paid and suggests that "it is obvious that the huge price paid Carnegie was largely for the specific purpose of eliminating a troublesome competitor." No doubt there was the desire to eliminate a troublesome competitor, but Morgan never overpaid by six to seven times as Roelofs suggests earlier in this article. Morgan not only received value for his money, but there are some who believe Carnegie might have been paid more if he had demanded it. Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 142, relates as true the famous possible conversation aboard ship several years later between Carnegie and Morgan, in which Carnegie declared he should have asked a hundred million more and Morgan replied he would have paid it. Even if this story is true, it was probably "one-upmanship" on Morgan's part. Both men knew pretty narrowly the value of the property and what they might expect to buy or sell it for.

<sup>63</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 189.

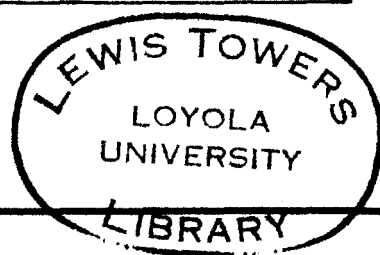
Vast corporations acquire so much capital as to obviate the possibility of a talented but poor man rising to a position of control; even the presidents of such businesses remain salaried, and this to Carnegie was the crux of the matter.<sup>64</sup> "It is to be noted that salaried officials are not in a strict sense in business -- a captain of industry is one who makes his all in his business and depends upon success for compensation."<sup>65</sup>

Actually the enthusiasts for the "Robber Baron" concept seem always to suggest a plot, to portray men lying in wait for their prey, organizing pillaging forays against peaceful innocents. The appellation employed really indicates how one views the Industrial Revolution. Those who see the rise of Communism as a holy cause accept the sophistry that the inevitable Commissar managing a business as a part of the Soviet bureaucracy is a more satisfactory arrangement since this industrialist "represents the people." But even historians who might subscribe to the "Robber Baron" thesis will frequently absolve Carnegie. Cawalti, for instance, says:

The ideal of service was instrumental in defining two worldly heroes: the great manufacturer and the technological innovator or discoverer. Andrew Carnegie and Thomas A. Edison were the darlings of the success cult; financiers like J. P. Morgan were viewed with considerably less enthusiasm, and speculators like

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 110.



Jay Gould were frequently condemned outright. From the point of view of success, the virtues of Carnegie and Edison were spectacular. Both were self-made men, and Carnegie, in particular, was a frequent writer on success.<sup>66</sup>

Andrew Carnegie did not create the American world of the 1850's into which fortune and circumstances thrust him. The game and its rules were not of Carnegie's devising; he merely played the game better than almost anyone else.

It is the view of this study that a middle position is possible on Carnegie. The steel king was a self-made man, was competitive, was a man looking for ways to rise in the world. He was imbued with the ideals of the success myth. But he was not a "Robber Baron." He recognized he was playing a "money game" with profits, wages, costs, and markets to consider. While the designation "Captain of Industry" is fitting in a generalized way, this description belongs more nearly to a Henry Ford than an Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie's intention, at least the aim of his middle age, was to rise clear above the battle, to be not so much a Captain of Industry as a General of Finance who manipulated from abroad or directed from New York and never needed to participate at the front any longer.

When Carnegie saw his father defeated, first in Europe and then in America, he determined to play the game and to try to win. His early aims were modest in the extreme: he hoped only to aid

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<sup>66</sup>Cawalti, Apostles of the Self-Made Man, pp. 187-188.

his family enough so that their total income would reach the three hundred dollars a year that then seemed necessary to survive in the new land.<sup>67</sup> Carnegie was eager to learn, willing to work, determined to make good, and learned to please people. Above all he had some lucky experiences which he was wise enough to turn to his advantage. The result was key friendships made, shrewd investments, and a chance for bold ventures.

By 1868 Andrew Carnegie was financially independent for life and his tastes in literature, music, and the arts were expanding. He moved to New York City and joined the social set. In the same year he wrote his famous memo, not for publication, but to himself. This is the most famous document that Carnegie wrote, reprinted frequently to illustrate how complex he was:

Dec '68  
St Nicholas Hotel  
N York

Thirty-three and an income of 50,000\$ per annum.

By this time two years I can so arrange all my business as to secure at least 50,000 per annum. Beyond this never earn -- make no effort to increase fortune, but spend the surplus each year for beneficent /sic/ purposes. Cast aside business forever except for others.

Settle in Oxford & get a thorough education making the acquaintance of literary men -- this will take three years active work -- pay especial attention to speaking in public.

Settle then in London & purchase a controlling interest in some newspaper or live review & give the general management of it attention, taking a part in public matters especially those connected with education & improvement of the poorer classes.

<sup>67</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 31.

Man must have an idol -- The amassing of wealth is one of the worst species of idolitry [sic]. No idol more debasing than the worship of money. Whatever I engage in I must push inordinately<sup>68</sup> therefor should I be careful to choose that life which will be the most elevating in its character. To continue much longer overwhelmed by business cares and with most of my thoughts wholly upon the way to make more money in the shortest time, must degrade me beyond hope of permanent recovery.

I will resign business at Thirty five, but during the ensuing two years, I wish to spend the afternoons in securing instruction, and in reading systematically.<sup>69</sup>

The competitive nature of America is illustrated by the very beginning of this memo: "Thirty-three and an income of 50,000\$ per annum!" As observers of the American cultural scene have remarked for some time, Americans frequently act as if they were competing in a gigantic race with every other American of their age.<sup>70</sup> There is a race against time to "get somewhere."

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<sup>68</sup>This phrase may be from a statement by Ulysses Grant. At least Carnegie ascribes the phrase to Grant, Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, p. 83.

<sup>69</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 3, Photostatic copy. The original of this document is retained by the Carnegie family. This rendering of the Carnegie memorandum follows Wall, Carnegie, pp. 224-225 with minor changes. Actually the hastily scribbled holograph memorandum was such a personal note to himself and so badly written that it almost seems unfair to note the errors in spelling. However, Carnegie never did learn to spell very well even though curiously he later attempted to persuade the country that simplified spelling was best. (See Chapter Nine). Hendrick's Carnegie reproduces the original memorandum, Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 146. See also Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 58.

<sup>70</sup>British anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer, The American People: A Study in National Character (New York: W.W.Norton, 1948), discusses this American competition, and Leslie James, Americans in Glasshouses (New York: Henry Schuman, 1950), in an amusing spoof agrees. The bibliography for this statement could be enormous.

Carnegie's achievement was not only success, but success measured in relation to time.<sup>71</sup> Horatio Alger's heroes are young successes, sometimes almost grotesque parodies of the possible. Ida, the heroine of the most famous Alger novel, Ragged Dick, at the age of nine, sounds like a sophisticated girl of fourteen, while Dick, himself, at fourteen, is ready for a business career.<sup>72</sup> Carnegie at fourteen, if his Autobiography is to be believed, was just such a maturely motivated boy. In many ways Carnegie failed in his primary purpose after he reached the age of thirty-three. He had enough money to live in style and write and devote himself to politics, travel, and society. But he also was pursuing fame and he saw that continuing to pile up dollars might be his best opportunity for fame. He saw the trap and walked right into it. Carnegie later declared: "It is now thirteen years since I ceased to accumulate wealth and began to distribute it. I could never have succeeded in either had I stopped with having enough to retire to."<sup>73</sup> As a result, Carnegie, widely respected at the time as a philanthropist, a writer, and a public speaker, has in the past half century been downgraded as a mere accumulator of

<sup>71</sup>For a curious note on how Carnegie tried to make himself two years younger, see Chapter Three.

<sup>72</sup>Horatio Alger, Ragged Dick, or, Street Life in New York, in Struggling Upward and Other Works, ed. by Russel Crouse (New York: Crown Publishers, 1945), pp. 230-231. For more on Carnegie as a Horatio Alger Type, see Chapter Two.

<sup>73</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 279.



money. There have been so many overlapping major events of the twentieth century that even the Carnegie Corporation with its hundreds of millions of dollars is nearly forgotten in this area of constant change. Carnegie's writings are unread<sup>74</sup> and he is remembered today as a nineteenth century industrialist who gave away a great deal of money!

Unlike most other industrialists, the magnate realized there were other worlds with other values than the world of business success. He continued to have self doubts, however. At the very beginning of his Gospel of Wealth he inquires: "Why did I become a businessman? I am sure that I should never have selected a business career if I had been permitted to choose."<sup>75</sup> Here is precisely the point. He had not begun life as a wealthy young man with any career he desired open to him. He had not been raised in a middle class family, even, that might have found a way to send a clever son through college. Instead he had been forced, before he had even reached teen-age, to work, and to reflect upon how he could make his way upward in the world. Twenty years later, when he wrote his memo to himself at the St. Nicholas Hotel, it was too late. The habits of a lifetime, the call of the great game of finance, were too strong to be resisted.

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<sup>74</sup>Curiously some of Carnegie's books were unread at the time also. The copies of his Round the World and James Watt in the Loyola Library had many of their pages uncut.

<sup>75</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 3.

The world of business had become a game by then, a contest. True, Carnegie enjoyed the life of society and developed a love for travel. Again and again he visited Europe, eventually spending six months of almost every year in Britain and six months in America. But a secure income of \$50,000 a year would have taken care of all his personal needs except for his castle in Scotland. A million dollars, invested in an age when income taxes did not exist, could bring in a perpetual income of over \$50,000 a year. Why then would one go on earning money, after reaching the heights of ten million? What would propel a man onward to twenty million, thirty million, forty million, fifty million? When is enough, really enough? Is one hundred million sufficient? It must be recalled that Carnegie always had a small family. From the age of twenty, when his father died, until he was fifty, there was only his mother and younger brother.<sup>76</sup> When these two died, almost simultaneously, Andrew married and eventually produced one daughter. Perhaps he hoped for a larger family. The point is worth stressing: what makes a man with a net worth of two hundred million continue? Of course, by then, Carnegie was managing from

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<sup>76</sup>Thomas Morrison Carnegie, Andrew's younger brother, born October 2, 1843, was named after the maternal grandfather. He married and had a large family, but by the time of his early death of pneumonia at the age of 42, Tom Carnegie had acquired enough to leave his children well off. Andrew Carnegie never felt there was any reason to take his nephews into his business. There were those such as Winkler, (Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 15) and Bridge, (see Bridge, Inside History, passim) who felt that Thomas Carnegie would have overshadowed Andrew if the younger brother had lived. It is difficult to accept this belief on any level.

afar, and certainly enjoying the power over men and affairs which his wealth gave to him. But the world of business had also become a habit and a great game.<sup>77</sup>

How did Carnegie view himself in later life? His self-image as an industrialist is well expressed in Empire of Business, a title, by the way, that is clearly indicative of Carnegie's will to power. Business was his empire. Said Carnegie: "There is the great use which a man can perform in developing the resources of his country; in furnishing employment to thousands; in developing inventions which prove of great benefit to the race, and help it forward."<sup>78</sup> Carnegie saw an altruism in businessmen that is simply not believable. In his own simplistic fashion Carnegie returned to this employment theme again and yet again. In the Gospel of Wealth he said: "I always liked the idea of being my own master, of manufacturing something and giving employment to many men."<sup>79</sup> Truly this was what capitalism was all about.

The questions that really may be properly asked are: Would the world have been better or worse off if Carnegie had quit the game at the age of thirty-five? Would raising wages out of Carnegie's own pocket have been a better means of disposing of

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<sup>77</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 279.

<sup>78</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 220. See also Alderson, Carnegie, p. 34.

<sup>79</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, pp.12-13. See also Wall, Carnegie, p. 670.

his money than his philanthropies? Was the enormous transition in America best served by organizing tightly as Carnegie did? If Carnegie had quit the game, would it have meant any differences in the system, that is, would he not have been just replaced by another man bent on making millions?

Samuel P. Hays in writing of America in this same period suggests that "the desire to create wealth possessed all Americans." This statement may be a little too sweeping a generalization; it might be more correct to at once broaden and narrow the statement by saying: "The desire to create wealth possessed most people in the developing nations of the nineteenth century." Hays continues:

The farmer who purchased one hundred and sixty acres from a railroad or obtained it free from the government under the Homestead Act (1862) hoped as eagerly for an increase in values as did the land agent who acquired fifty thousand acres of fine timber. Far more important than differences in size of their holdings was the common desire of all to profit from the rising price of land . . . The man of small means . . . exploited natural resources as eagerly as did the corporate owners; neither looked upon soil, forests, or minerals as limited, and neither wished to pay the increasing costs of more prudent resource management.<sup>80</sup>

While the larger exploiter and destroyer of resources is a greater danger than the small operator, America has long been a nation that allowed all of its land to be "mined" without concern for posterity.

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<sup>80</sup>Samuel P. Hays, The Response to Industrialism: 1885-1914 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1957).

Andrew Carnegie, then, was not a "Robber Baron," at worst he was an exploiter of men, playing the great game of high finance which he had learned and which required the exploitation of men. But beyond the exploitation of men, the steel king had a view of the future. He saw opportunities before others did. He was not always first, though he tried to prove his primacy in his writings, but he was the most successful. Carnegie was a Captain of Industry, if by that term we mean a man who directed others in vast industrial projects, saw more clearly than others the shape of the future, and played the great game of high finance to win.

## CHAPTER TWO

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## Chapter Two

### Andrew Carnegie: Radicalism and Upward Mobility

#### 1. Carnegie's Radical Tradition

Biographies frequently make the lives of the ancestors of important personages appear to be a mere preface to the tale of the protagonist. One problem of history is that in retrospect almost everything appears differently than it actually was. There is no other course for us than to dismiss with a scant nod a crew of real people, not one of which felt their raison d'etre was encompassed only in Andrew Carnegie. The traditions of radicalism, of irreligion, and the interest in reading, were all a part of the Carnegie heritage.

Fortunately for the equanimity of the future steel king, his Scotch ancestors were pre-industrial radicals, raging over questions of lack of land, lack of political power, noble privilege, and the established church. Family records for the future American millionaire go back no further than the 1740's on both sides of his family. It was then that a great-grandfather, James Carnegie, was born. James Carnegie settled in the little village of Pattiemuir in the 1760's working as a weaver and in the next decade he began the radical tradition of the Carnegie family by involving himself in the meal riots and going to prison for a short time. His oldest son, the first Andrew Carnegie of this

family whom we know, continued in the weaving trade and began the educational pattern of the Carnegies. This Andrew Carnegie, the grandfather of the steel king, was a man of great energy, but he used it enjoying life rather than making money. Indeed, in his old age, some found his enthusiasm a little too much and referred to him as "Daft Andra."<sup>1</sup> Daft Andra was the founder and one of the many "professors" of the "College of Pattiemuir." "The College" was a cottage meeting place and the "professors" mere townsmen who enjoyed good talk, disputation, and discussion. The topics, often stimulated by oral reading of books and newspapers, ranged from religion and politics to just plain gossip.<sup>2</sup> Grandfather Andrew married Elizabeth Thom, the daughter of a successful ship owner, in spite of her family's disapproval, and he made no effort later to secure her family's blessing so that Elizabeth's three sisters all inherited ships while she received nothing. Daft Andra did not care. He supported his family of eight children and the rest of life was to be enjoyed. While grandfather Andrew Carnegie, who lived in an age of great revolutions, occasionally engaged in radical talk, his son William, who moved

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<sup>1</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 4.



to the nearby town of Dunfermline to be closer to the center of the weaving trade, married into a family more radical even than the Carnegies<sup>3</sup>

As with the Carnegie family, the earliest Morrison directly linked to the future American steel magnate can be traced back no earlier than the 1740's. Both families were skilled craftsmen; the Morrisons were shoemakers as the Carnegies were weavers. John Morrison, the maternal great-grandfather, was successful in his business in the Scottish capital of Edinburgh. John's son, Thomas Morrison, was well educated for his time and circumstances and later boasted of himself as a "thinking cobbler." However, the thinking cobbler managed to lose his own inheritance and his wife's as well in some ill-advised speculations and by the time Thomas Morrison moved to Dunfermline to take up shoemaking there, the family had come down considerably in the world. The Thomas Morrison who came to Dunfermline was a radical who organized the skilled workmen into a "Political Union" and was always ready to write a speech or travel to harangue a crowd. Thomas Morrison was a thundering orator who attacked the Established Church, the rotten boroughs, the rights of the aristocracy, and the driving of men from the land. He was a Chartist

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<sup>3</sup>J. B. Mackie, Andrew Carnegie: His Dunfermline Ties and Benefactions (Dunfermline: Dunfermline Journal Printing Works, 1916), pp. 5, 7, 11, 12, 23. See also: Joseph Frazier Wall, "Andrew Carnegie: Child of Chartism," History (New York: Meridian Books, 1963).

who wrote at times for Cobbett's Political Register, a radical weekly, argued strongly for the great Reform Act of 1832<sup>4</sup> and the following year, two years before the birth of the future steel king, he launched his own newspaper, suggestively titled The Precursor. Although The Precursor only ran three issues and never developed a following, it was an extremely radical publication for its day, calling for agitation, political reform, and changes in national institutions.<sup>5</sup> Old Thomas Morrison scoffed at religion in an age of belief and scandalized some, while he was a political leader for many. In December, 1834, William Carnegie married Margaret Morrison, the daughter of Thomas Morrison, and in November, 1835, their first child, Andrew Carnegie, was born.

While Andrew Carnegie often looked back expressing gratitude that his relatives were radicals, it was an uncle who was the most radical of all. Old Thomas Morrison died in 1837, but his son, Andrew Carnegie's uncle, also named Tom Morrison, continued the Morrison family traditions as a shoemaker and radical orator. While both Morrisons opposed violence, young Tom Morrison eventually evolved a plan to secure the demands for political power for the people by a "Peaceful Cessation from Labor," or what might be called a general strike.<sup>6</sup> At the Abbey Pends, August 23,

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<sup>4</sup> Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>5</sup> A copy of the second issue of The Precursor for February 1, 1833, is in the Dunfermline Carnegie Library.

<sup>6</sup> Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 36.

1842, Morrison spoke before a large crowd including constables and troops who hoped for a violation of the law so that the Chartist agitator might be arrested. The crowd agreed to give Morrison's plan a try. On August 27, 1842, at Torryburn, Morrison just barely escaped arrest by departing with the crowd he was addressing across the county line from Fife to Perth. The inevitable arrest came shortly thereafter. When news of Tom Morrison's arrest was known, a crowd gathered to rescue him. Morrison showed himself at the window and according to Carnegie, said: "If there be a friend of the good cause here tonight, let him fold his arms!" They did so. And then, after a pause, he said, "Now depart in peace!" Carnegie added: "My uncle, like all our family, was a moral-force man and strong for obedience to law, but radical to the core."<sup>7</sup> The crowd departed and Tom Morrison was soon released. But Carnegie's radical uncle was ever afterwards held in such regard in Dunfermline that he was elected Town Councilman or "Baillie" and became known thereafter as "The Baillie" to relatives and friends. Carnegie was to later proudly proclaim: "The Baillie, Dunfermline's leading radical, was my uncle."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 9. While Carnegie certainly heard this story often, the words used can be no more than guesswork. Yet Burton Hendrick, curiously, uses quite different words in telling the same story and in one of his few footnotes, he cites the Carnegie Autobiography. See Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 37. See also Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, pp. 23, 30.

<sup>8</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 300.

Certainly there was a great deal of discussion in the Carnegie-Morrison families concerning this arrest and one version -- his famous "seven sticks statement" -- which Andrew Carnegie related many years later is illustrative of the depths of his feelings:

What we learn at seven sticks. /years./ When I was that age, I awoke one night to hear that my uncle had been put in jail, and that my father might be. I knew there was hidden in the attic a rebellious republican flag, for all our family were Chartists, and to this day whenever I speak of a king or hereditary privilege, my blood tingles and mounts to my face. Sometimes -- and not so many years ago -- I have felt for a passing moment that to shoot all hereditary kings one after the other would not be uncongenial work, for I hate hereditary privileges with a hate nothing else inspires.<sup>9</sup>

The intriguing near redundancy of Carnegie's hate for "hereditary kings" is all the more interesting, when one considers what a non-hereditary king might be. Such a self-made king, might be a king of finance, an emperor of business, a czar of steel, a prince of industry. Such men should obviously not inspire hate! The early biographers of Carnegie used this quotation to show the

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<sup>9</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Do Americans Hate England?" North American Review, June, 1890, p. 758. The italics of the word "hate" are in the original. See also the article: Andrew Carnegie, "What We Learn at Seven Sticks," North American Review, in Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Box 245, Folder 6. No date available. This article contains the same story.

depth of Carnegie's feelings.<sup>10</sup> In his Autobiography the magnate asserts: "As a child I could have slain king, duke, or lord, and considered their deaths a service to the state and hence an heroic act."<sup>11</sup>

The strongest obeisance Carnegie made to his youthful radicalism was found in his hatred of royalty. Carnegie wrote in his Triumphant Democracy:

Were I in public life in Britain I should be ashamed to waste my energies against the House of Lords, Church and State, primogeniture and entail, and all the other branches of the monstrous system; I should strike boldly at the royal family, the root of the upas tree from which spring all wrongs.<sup>12</sup>

This statement caused a considerable stir in Britain. It was felt in many quarters that Carnegie had gone too far. The quotation was repeated by the press and came back frequently to haunt Carnegie. The issue itself was not manufactured. Carnegie felt a deep and genuine anger for all royalty. In the same book Carnegie hoped aloud: "Royal families . . . extinct as doddos. God speed the day! A royal family is an insult to every other family in the land."<sup>13</sup> Knowing the reverence Carnegie felt for family life, this was as strong a statement as he was capable of making. He did not realize the real pain he inflicted upon

<sup>10</sup> Steed, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 10; Alderson, Carnegie, p. 5. Carnegie wrote to Steed: "My childhood desire was, to get to be a man and kill a king." Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 31.

<sup>11</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 9-10

<sup>12</sup> Triumphant Democracy, p. 382.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

innocent people who saw the royal family as symbolic of the nation as a whole. Only toward the end of his life, in mellow old age, did he echo the statement that "the Briton dearly loves a lord."<sup>14</sup> The flag of a country can be seen as a mere piece of cloth, unworthy of respect, but people who attack our symbols merely to destroy idols are seldom aware just how much hatred they, in turn, can inspire. Carnegie suggested to Alderson that he would attack the royal family, the church, the House of Lords, and all other privilege if given an opportunity.<sup>15</sup> Yet Carnegie's hatred of royalty was strangely mixed with awe and respect.

How much Carnegie's mixed emotions as to royalty were mingled with confused feelings as to the true nature of radicalism is aptly illustrated when he discussed the matter of kissing the royal hand in Triumphant Democracy:

Of course men can kiss the hand of the Queen, as one is proud to kiss the hand of any good woman, but how will it be when the Prince of Wales holds out his hand, and Messrs. Chamberlain and Morley, Collings and Illingworth, Trevelyan and Fowler, and others are required to kiss that! I am not sure but that even these Radicals may find it no stain upon their manhood to incur this degradation, but the first man who feels as he ought to feel, will either smile when the hand is extended at the suggestion that he could so demean himself, and give it a good hearty shake, or knock his Royal Highness down, . . . It is not the man we declaim against but

<sup>14</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 304.

<sup>15</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, pp. 96-97.

the effect of customs, fit only for serfs, by which monarchy is surrounded, and which tend to keep men -- even radicals -- subservient.<sup>16</sup>

Carnegie might well be accused of being upset by the form of things and one can wonder over his fear of emasculating men.

Still Carnegie followed the family tradition of moral force rather than revolution and he sincerely liked Victoria as a queen. He would have refused to kiss the hand of the Prince of Wales, but he would have shaken hands, not hit him. He believed the British policy of taking power from royal authority gradually by law better than the French Revolutionary policy of a "frontal attack upon the citadel."<sup>17</sup> It was obvious that "the difference between the French and British methods is that between revolution and evolution."<sup>18</sup> Victoria, herself, was seen as transforming "an arbitrary monarchy into a genuine republic."<sup>19</sup> In an article on Queen Victoria, written after watching the great procession of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Carnegie was simply gushing with emotional praise, heaping tribute on tribute to the crown.

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<sup>16</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 500.

<sup>17</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 208.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>19</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Queen Victoria," Review of the Republic, February, 1901, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton J. Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 187.

The principal figure of the Jubilee, Queen Victoria herself, and the position she has gained and will hold to the end of her days is worthy of study. It is not possible for any American, however well informed of British affairs, to quite understand the feelings with which this human being is now regarded. If he can imagine Old Glory and Old Ironsides, Washington and Lincoln, Bunker Hill and "My Country 'Tis of Thee," rolled into one force, and personified in a woman, he may form some conception of the feelings of the average Briton for "the Queen," for she . . . means everything that touches and thrills the patriotic chord. That both as a woman and a sovereign she has deserved the unique tribute paid her goes without saying; the wildest radical, or even republican, will concur in this.<sup>20</sup>

Here Carnegie, at last, realized that to the multitude of good, simple people, as well as the high and mighty, the Queen was a mere symbol of the nation. Though he did not make the comparison, Victoria was no more expensive to have around than an American multi-millionaire. But the thing Carnegie most liked about Victoria was that she represented "sixty years of unremitting work -- she still signs every state paper herself."<sup>21</sup> It was the parasites he loathed, those who ate of the honey without adding to the stock, a favorite Carnegie analogy.<sup>22</sup> There was hope for England in the gradual diminution of the powers of royalty and

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<sup>20</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Some Important Results of the Jubilee," North American Review, October, 1897, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton J. Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 76.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 138-139.



aristocracy and in the character and life-style of the great Queen Victoria who represented womanhood at its best.

What Carnegie really disliked about aristocracy and monarchy, however, was the inherited nature of the institution; these were not self-made men who had risen from the bottom by their own efforts, but parasites who had no nobility about them. In 1883, Carnegie delivered a really savage slashing attack upon aristocracy when he was on the program with a socialist speaker and felt the need to indicate his own radicalism.

The idea that kings and queens, princes and princesses, dukes and lords excel in manners is derived from story-books for the young, written by poor men and women who have never, perhaps, even spoken to one of high rank, certainly never spent a night at the house of one as guests. Viewed at this distance these personages seem truly grand, but it is distance which lends enchantment to the view. This idea is exactly on a par with another delusion derived from the same sources, viz., that the aristocracy of Britain, as a body, is finer looking than any other class. This is simply not the case. Let any visitor see the House of Lords when it is filled, which will only be for one of two reasons, either when the lords can, in the character of national legislators, legislate for themselves, or when they can reject a measure beneficial to the masses. Upon such an occasion one would really think, as he watches the peers pass, or rather hobble in, that every reformatory, asylum, or home for incurables, in Britain, had been asked to send up to Westminster fair specimens of its inmates. The peers are not a fine-looking body of men. They form a striking

contrast to the House of Commons in dress, manners and appearance -- in all that goes to make up what we style the gentleman.<sup>23</sup>

Carnegie believed that from the "royal circle down through the various grades of the aristocracy," none used his wealth beneficially. The born aristocrat was the most self-centered of men. This class hoarded its money for itself and left the least to truly noble causes.<sup>24</sup> For this reason Carnegie hated entail and primogeniture, even though he was the oldest son in his family.<sup>25</sup> He had inherited nothing and arisen by his own abilities to the top, therefore he felt that he was more entitled to the plaudits of the populace than someone born to the noble class. He found British aristocrats "with few exceptions, snobs."<sup>26</sup> Even a man who accepted nobility upon rising demeaned himself, and Carnegie could never consider a title from King Edward.<sup>27</sup> "The highest title that a man can write upon the page of history is his own name," the magnate declared in one of

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<sup>23</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "The Aristocracy of the Dollar," Address to the Nineteenth Century Club (n.p., 1883), p. 4. (This is a 13 page published pamphlet, a copy of which is in the Pennsylvania Room of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh).

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>25</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 222; Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 59.

<sup>26</sup>Carnegie, Aristocracy of the Dollar, p. 10.

<sup>27</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol.II, p. 174.

his typical striking phrases.<sup>28</sup> Carnegie delighted in quoting others on the evils of aristocracy.<sup>29</sup> He advised Lord Rosebery that since he was so obviously handicapped by being born a peer, the thing to do was strike out at the institution, renounce his title, and run for Parliament as a common citizen. Rosebery apparently did not follow the magnate's reasoning.<sup>30</sup> Carnegie saw hereditary titles as wasteful and preventive of progress. The magnate declared:

It would be safe to wager that a thousand Americans in a new land would organize themselves, establish schools, churches, newspapers, and brass bands -- in short, provide themselves with all the appliances of civilization -- and go ahead developing their country before an equal number of British would have discovered who among them was the highest in hereditary rank and had the best claims to leadership owing to his grandfather.<sup>31</sup>

In a letter Carnegie declared:

I would destroy, if I had the power, every vestige of privilege in England; . . . but at the same time, I would not shed a drop of blood, nor violate a law, nor use violence in any form, to bring about what I so much desire.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 96; Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 316; Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 61. It is an oft repeated typical striking phrase.

<sup>29</sup>For instance he quotes Matthew Arnold in his Autobiography, p. 293.

<sup>30</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 299.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>32</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 8, October, 1884.

So while Carnegie hated aristocracy and royalty as such, he cultivated the British nobility, eschewed violence in any form, was always a great name dropper himself,<sup>33</sup> and especially enjoyed official functions.

While Carnegie accounted himself a radical and enjoyed attacking hereditary privilege wherever he found it, he was also in love with the trappings of medievalism.<sup>34</sup> He enjoyed the pageantry and pomp of the traditional past; the music, the flags, the garb, the ceremony, were thrilling to him; banquets and state occasions where he sat at the table of honor were really relished. He collected the Freedom of British towns with a competitive zeal that was second only to his intense interest in gathering money. Carnegie would give a library and in the British Isles he would be invited to more than a dinner, speech,

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<sup>33</sup>John Hargreaves Harley Williams in his book, Men of Stress; Three Dynamic Interpretations. Woodrow Wilson, Andrew Carnegie, William Hesketh Lever (London: J.Cape, 1948), manages to include a president, a steel king, and a soap magnate under one roof, and sees Carnegie as a man in pursuit of culture, who is also hunting headlines and a name dropping celebrity hound. See p. 225. One has only to peruse the pages of Carnegie's Autobiography to come to the name dropping conclusion, for instance pp. 105, 147, 164, 283, 290, 295, 297, 306, 313, 321, 329, 334, 339, 340, 346, but the magnate did at least know all the men mentioned even if a few of the stories may be doubtful.

<sup>34</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 304. If nothing else was available to do in America, Carnegie's idea of a good time was to go to a library dedication and deliver a speech. Many of these speeches are still in the Library of Congress Manuscript Collection.

and ground breaking ceremony. There was the key to the city, a scroll honoring him with the city's freedom usually in a small silver casket.<sup>35</sup> Freedom collecting was not a sport for the common man, and perhaps Carnegie enjoyed it all the more because he was entered here in an unusual race. Success was measured in numbers here too and Carnegie came to hold the world's record. It made him very proud when he obtained six Freedoms in six days of traveling from city to city. He processed this Freedom Collecting as one might train and plan for any unusual competitive sport. Carnegie reports in his Autobiography:

Once started upon a Freedom-getting career, there seemed no end to these honors. With headquarters in London in 1906, I received six Freedoms in six consecutive days, and two the following, going out by morning train and returning in the evening. It might be thought that the ceremony would become monotonous, but this was not so, the conditions being different in each case.<sup>36</sup>

The magnate indicated at times that he was really acting a part to inspire others to give libraries and follow his Gospel of Wealth, but he enjoyed the proceedings far too greatly for any of his friends to quite believe it was all a tedious duty.<sup>37</sup> Eventually Carnegie collected fifty-seven Freedoms of Cities,

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<sup>35</sup>Many of these caskets, scrolls, and pictures of the honors offered are still in the attic of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

<sup>36</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 302.

<sup>37</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 207.

easily surpassing Gladstone's old record and he remained ahead of even Winston Churchill who took up Freedom Collecting after World War Two.<sup>38</sup> Carnegie felt it necessary to hate aristocracy as an institution, but he enjoyed visiting with titled gentlemen and competing in their games.

The Carnegie family fled to America before the Revolution of 1848 played itself out on the continent, still believing with the radicals of Dunfermline that aristocratic privilege and the entrenched powers of the church were the great evils that prevented the common man from rising. These were the old abuses, historic, well understood. The defeat of the weavers by the machine, although it took a few years to accomplish, was still too sudden, and the nature of the defeat was nameless, faceless, and beyond analysis.<sup>39</sup> There seemed to be no way to strike at the evil. Emigrating to America, instead of producing a solution, appeared to compound the defeat for the future steel king's father. William Carnegie left the town and country he knew far behind, sold his possessions for a pittance to pay for the trip

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<sup>38</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 822 indicates Gladstone's record was fourteen; Carnegie said Gladstone had seventeen, see Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol.II, p. 164. John C. Van Dyke who edited Carnegie's Autobiography takes the magnate's word for it at seventeen, p. 302. In any case Carnegie clearly won, which was his aim. Again he went well beyond to set a record in this improbable sport that no one could easily surpass, just as he did in the matter of amassing dollars.

<sup>39</sup>No doubt there was discussion in the Carnegie household of the "encroaching machinery" but this remained a new evil without a solution. See Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 16.

and landed in Pittsburgh hardly knowing what to expect. The weaving, which he knew, paid as little in America as in Scotland, and he was destined to play out the same hopeless game under slightly altered circumstances. For Andrew Carnegie, however, a line had been drawn. He was out of the narrow confines of the small Scotch town of Dunfermline with only the declining craft of weaving, factory jobs, or worse employment in the mines as possibilities, and thrust into a macrocosm of activity with infinite opportunities. In later life Carnegie was a radical in the British Isles and an individualist in America. In Britain he hated privilege, the royal prerogatives, the noble titles, the established church, but in America he accepted life on the bottom, and saw in the equality of all a chance to rise. Carnegie adjudged himself to be a radical all his life, for even as he rose step by step in the American world of business, he continued to oppose the establishment in Britain. In this way he maintained the umbilical cord connection with his radical ancestors, so important to his peace of mind. One reason this simplistic dichotomy could be easily continued was that Carnegie saw American enterprise overtaking and passing British industries<sup>40</sup> and

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<sup>40</sup>The basis for Carnegie's Triumphant Democracy, (see p.4) was that America was a child bypassing her mother due to superior institutions. Not only was America passing England, but America was passing Germany also. (Carnegie's Empire of Business, p. 303). Andrew Carnegie in his "British Pessimism," Nineteenth Century and After, June, 1901, pp. 901-912, finds the British disheartened by the ascendancy of America and Germany. Andrew Carnegie's "Britain's Appeal to the Gods," Nineteenth Century and After, April, 1904, pp. 538-542, has the same message. America had surpassed the old world and was continuing to widen her lead, Carnegie wrote in 1908 in "My Views Upon the Tariff," pp. 36-43.

rationalized that American success was not due so much to the greater size and resources of the United States, but to the dead weight of the British traditional privileged class.<sup>41</sup> It was British aristocratic and religious privilege which was evil and Carnegie accounted himself a radical in opposing. There was nothing amiss with the acquisition of wealth, but hereditary wealth, as with hereditary privilege, was evil. It was this clinging to his childhood philosophy that led Carnegie eventually to give away most of his money.

Great wealth affects men variously; many inarticulate American millionaires apparently accepted money as their due without any question; for Carnegie it was always a marvel and a concern. The wealthier he became, the greater the potential problem grew. When he was sixteen he wrote that wealth was always conservative.<sup>42</sup> As he grew wealthier he worried about his own conservatism, but happily found the solution to the problem by continuing to attack privilege in Britain. He saw himself a

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<sup>41</sup>When Carnegie compared Britain to America, as he often did in Triumphant Democracy, Britain almost always fell short, and the reason ascribed was simply the old aristocracy and monarchy affecting the fiber of the nation internally and externally in every instance. See, for example, Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 263-264.

<sup>42</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 79.



radical to the end but differentiated in his own mind between kinds of radicals. London's Bughouse Square in Hyde Park did not disturb Carnegie. He said once, "I honor these cranks very much--all real reformers are cranks in their day."<sup>43</sup> Again, speaking of English education he applauded "the first generation who have benefited" by compulsory education for all at the elementary level. He saw this generation "now appearing upon the stage of action with the inevitable result: they are radical. Education is everywhere a sure destroyer of privilege."<sup>44</sup> This of course was in England, where radicalism meant an attack upon privilege in the form of noble titles, a hereditary ruler, and an established church. Carnegie did not see that education in America might attack privilege in the form of great wealth. Great wealth was not evil unless it was inherited for several generations. When Carnegie saw a socialist parade in Chicago, he described it as really "a parcel of foreign cranks whose Communistic ideas are the natural growth of the unjust laws of their native land, which deny these men the privilege of equal citizenship, and hold them down as inferiors."<sup>45</sup> Socialists and Communists in America

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<sup>43</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 347.

<sup>44</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Democracy in England," North American Review, January, 1886, reprinted in Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland, p. 168.

<sup>45</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 348.

Carnegie regarded as mostly foreign born and not true Americans.<sup>46</sup> Carnegie, of course, continued to regard himself as a true American, but also, paradoxically, as a true Scotchman, just as he continued to regard himself as a radical even after he became a multi-millionaire whose cardinal principle of big business was to keep costs down by means of low wages.<sup>47</sup>

It is obvious that Carnegie was in a class by himself and did what few strongly opinionated men ever do, he read numerous books and articles written by those of opposing viewpoints.<sup>48</sup> When Carnegie followed his grandfather, Tom Morrison, in publishing some newspapers of his own in Britain, he recognized all too clearly the problem of reaching those of opposing viewpoints. The steel magnate declared: "The converted read it but the sinners don't; besides, everyone knows that what it says is the word of an advocate, and not of a judge."<sup>49</sup> American socialist revolutionaries who tried force and violence would be met with just

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Wall, Carnegie, pp. 337, 343-345, 521-523, 624-631 indicates Carnegie's interest in keeping wages down was almost fanatical. Prices might vary, but if costs remained low, profits would ultimately result. Carnegie regarded low costs as the key to business success.

<sup>48</sup>One cannot read Carnegie's Problems of To-Day, without being impressed by the scope of the steel king's reading of books by a variety of socialists. It is not surprising they did not change his views; his mind was made up. Still, actually reading the opposition's viewpoints by either radical or reactionary is startling enough to be worthy of comment.

<sup>49</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 270.

death from the American establishment. "Bomb throwing means swift death to the thrower. Rioters assembling in numbers and marching to pillage will be remorselessly shot down."<sup>50</sup> Carnegie declared that all the benefits offered by American socialists were quite possible under capitalism and he believed the nation was inevitably moving toward providing just such benefits.<sup>51</sup> Carnegie attacked socialism as a leveling process to the common worse, rather than an elevating process to reach the possible best. Public dining rooms, common gathering places, collective rooms would result at last in destroying "the home as we know it, and tend to substitute the ideal of the Socialist, all people being brethren and members of one family and one home . . . one great Socialistic household," for the true simple home of honest, hard-working American labor.<sup>52</sup> The most serious charge to be leveled against any program by Carnegie was that it might reduce the good influences of home and the mother. While Carnegie read books by the socialists and communists, he read them only to attack them.

Communism Carnegie attacked as too big a step. Men were not yet ready to give up self-interest. Said the steel baron:

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., Vol. I., p. 369.

<sup>51</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, pp. 121-139.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 167.

Whether the Communists' ideal is to be finally reached upon earth, after man is so changed that self-interest, which is now the mainspring of human action, will give place to heavenly neighbor-interest cannot be known. The future has not been revealed. . . . Endowed as man is with the instinct for improvement, fortunately no limit to his march toward perfection can be set, but what perfection is to be we know not. The writer, however, believes . . . that the next step toward improved labor conditions is through the stage of shareholding in the industrial world, the workman becoming joint owner in the profits of his labor.<sup>53</sup>

This, to Carnegie, was obviously the American way. In America, Carnegie was a gradualist.

After 1900, with Carnegie safely retired from business, and holding his hundreds of millions in secure bonds, the steel magnate began to dispense his wealth and wrote his articles with greater freedom. He was above the battle now, with time for contemplation, and was genuinely affected by the early twentieth century Progressives, such as Theodore Roosevelt. Carnegie gradually concluded that even America was not quite perfect.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>54</sup>Carnegie, "My Views Upon the Tariff," in 1908, found that the tariff might be safely lowered on many items, and his attack upon banking in America that same year, Andrew Carnegie, "The Worst Banking System in the World," Outlook, February 29, 1908, pp. 487-489, which declared that the American banking system was inferior to that of every other western nation, were indicative of how Carnegie could alter his views.

He came out for protecting natural resources, a favorite topic of Theodore Roosevelt, at the White House Conference in 1908.<sup>55</sup>

Wall sees Carnegie bothered by attempts to "reconcile the Radical egalitarianism of his Dunfermline childhood with the capitalistic success he enjoyed in manhood. For his own peace of mind he had to believe that he had not betrayed the faith of his fathers when he became a multi-millionaire."<sup>56</sup> Actually Carnegie never had much trouble resolving this problem. His father had worked and employed men; his mother saw the saving of money as a positive good; success itself was measured by financial accumulation. It was the coupon clipper, the parasite, the man living on inherited wealth in America and contributing nothing, the nobleman in England leaving vast estates to an indolent son, that were evils. The expressions of radical feeling on Carnegie's part after 1900 were in part due to the Progressive Era, in part due to Carnegie's consolidated and secure position as a retired multi-millionaire, but largely a continuation of ground-breaking articles that frightened conservatives on both continents.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Carnegie, "The Conservation of Ores and Related Minerals," presented to the Conference of Conservation of National Resources, "The White House, Washington, D. C., May 13-15, 1908, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. II, pp. 61-78.

<sup>56</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 523.

<sup>57</sup>Carnegie's articles on the duty of millionaires to give away most of their wealth in their own lifetime, on the rights of labor never to have their job denied by strike-breakers, are cases in point.

Carnegie's disbelief in inherited privilege, which included inherited wealth, caused him to sound quite socialistic even when writing about conditions in America. What more socialistic statement could be found than the following lead paragraph from Carnegie's article interestingly entitled: "How Men Get Rich, and the Right View of Wealth."

After making full allowance for differences in men, it still remains true that contrasts in their wealth are infinitely greater than those existing between them in their different qualities, abilities, education, and, except the supreme few, their contributions to the world's work. It should be remembered that wealth is not chiefly the product of the individual under present conditions, but largely the joint product of the community.<sup>58</sup>

Carnegie then continued his argument by examples designed to show that most accumulation of wealth is accidental and, therefore, the wealth of a millionaire should revert to the community upon his death. The first example Carnegie uses is that of a New York farmer who leaves two farms, one to each of his sons. The sons draw lots to determine by chance which farm each should receive. The younger son receives the farm on Manhattan Island, the older

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<sup>58</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich, and the Right View of Wealth," World's Work, December, 1908, p. 11047. This article is an example of how Carnegie reused articles without mentioning the fact, for this article is repeated in the center of the Chapter entitled "Wealth," in Problems of To-Day, pp. 17-29.

one the farm in Harlem. Both sons work diligently all their lives, but the growth of New York City makes the younger son a millionaire and his children multi-millionaires. Now, Carnegie inquires, should the grandchildren continue on as multi-millionaires, collecting vast rents for huge buildings built on their lands in the city, when they have done nothing? The steel magnate answers in the negative. The community created this wealth, expanding population caused the increase in values, and the men involved did nothing. So the community is entitled to large death duties as the present generation passes away. Here of course, Carnegie was speaking of land, and vast wealth invested in inherited land he felt was an evil in America as it was in England.

However, the steel king used other forms of business endeavor as examples also. A man who entered the railroad business and made money might have to exert himself to gain wealth, Carnegie declared, but the growth of the country played a part as well.<sup>59</sup> He saw, as in his own case, a man living in Pittsburg, naturally turning to steel to get rich.<sup>60</sup> In Chicago a man might go into meat packing and in Montana copper, but in each case the prosperity of the country, the natural population increases, the development of inventions, along with the energy of the person involved, made the success possible. The community

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<sup>59</sup>Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich," p. 11048.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 11049.

was a partner and the wealth gained was a joint achievement and needed to be returned to the community. "In the work and its profits the nation was an essential partner, and is equally entitled with the individual to share in the dividends."<sup>61</sup> Actually the millionaire is a "busy bee,"<sup>62</sup> who has no time for foolishness, so he really costs the community little. But his coupon-clipping heirs are very costly to the community. "Generally speaking, the money-making man, in contrast to his heirs, who generally become members of the smart or fast set [the jet set today] is abstemious, retiring, and little of a spendthrift."<sup>63</sup> But there was "one class of millionaires whose wealth in very much greater degree than others may be credited to themselves: inventors -- Graham Bell of the telephone, Edison of numerous inventions, Westinghouse, of the airbrake,"<sup>64</sup>

The problem of the super rich remains two generations later and has never been resolved. It is still possible to make millions in business, starting from ground zero, though Carnegie in 1890 believed it was more difficult then, than it had been a generation before.<sup>65</sup> Feeble government anti-trust efforts are

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>A favorite Carnegie simile.

<sup>63</sup>Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich," p. 11050.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 114.



not very effective. The Communist belief, proposed in solid dogma a century ago now, that soon a few capitalists would own nearly everything and we would then know our enemy, this is not likely to happen either. But the problem of inherited wealth, the few owning too much passed on to them which they never earned, and the many having so little in total value they can call their own, remains a basic one if democracy is to survive. Nicholas von Hoffman, a commentator for the Washington Post, December 20, 1970, asked the question concerning Howard Hughes: Should he have all that?<sup>66</sup> Should one man have two billion dollars at his disposal? Should he own so much of the State of Nevada, that the governor himself gets involved when the billionaire secretly leaves the State? Should the Mellons, the Rockefellers, the Duponts, have even more than Hughes? Andrew Carnegie would have said: No! This was enough for the super rich to declare him a radical.

Carnegie did suggest that equal distribution of wealth would be both difficult and lead to many evils. Suppose a multi-millionaire gave every New Yorker twenty-five dollars, Carnegie mused, there would be more evil than good come from it.<sup>67</sup> Many

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<sup>66</sup>Reprinted in The Chicago Sun-Times, December 20, 1970.

<sup>67</sup>Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich," p. 11052.

would get drunk and degrade themselves. It was obviously far better not to give the easily misled masses too much money, in the form of wages for instance, but rather to have a Carnegie spend it intelligently for them!<sup>68</sup>

In a very real sense, however, Carnegie was able to write his critique, Problems of To-Day: Wealth -- Labor, Socialism, with quite a straight face, for he felt that capitalism was a much better answer to the problems of the masses than socialism. In many ways the great capitalists who organized particular industries were analogous to the Communist commissars who successfully filled their quotas by increasing production in an industry. Wall is amusing and quite accurate when he calls Morgan and Rockefeller's activities not unlike that of a socialist. Says Wall:

Morgan, like Rockefeller, was an orderly, systematic man. He felt that the American economy should ideally be like a company organizational chart, with each part in its proper place, and the lines of authority clearly designated. He did not really believe in the free enterprise system, and, like the most ardent socialist, he hated the waste, duplication, and clutter of unrestricted competition. Basically, the only difference between men like Rockefeller and Morgan on the one side and the socialists on the other was over the not insignificant issue of who was to control this coordinated economic system, the state or an oligopoly.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup>Carnegie eventually granted a pension fund to his workers with some of the money he received upon selling his company, but the pensions were "given" from above, not "earned" from below. Hendricks, Carnegie, Vol.II, p. 359.

<sup>69</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 780.

Wall does not mention Carnegie in this context, indeed Wall views Carnegie as the supreme individualist, joining pools when it was to his interest, but as often cutting prices, and driving the opposition into surrender.<sup>70</sup> However, if Morgan and Rockefeller be socialists, then to that extent Carnegie was too. For the steel king, above all, was a total organizer, a builder of vertical and horizontal business combinations, a man whose ultimate aim was monopoly in the whole field of steel. The aim of both capitalist and socialist is the organization of huge industries, tightly controlled, vastly productive, and increasingly efficient.<sup>71</sup>

Wall is not quite on such firm ground as he imagines when he argues on the same side as William Jewett Tucker, a theologian, who attacked Carnegie's article, "The Gospel of Wealth."<sup>72</sup> Tucker declared that the Carnegie "Gospel" was ill-conceived at its inception, because the premise demanded an "inevitability" of wealth and thus the need to decide what should be done with

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<sup>70</sup>Carnegie's organization of his fellow telegraph messenger boys was merely a case in point on a smaller scale. Instead of unseemly competition for the ten cent prize money offered for messages delivered at a greater distance, the money was placed into a treasury, under Carnegie's control naturally, and later was divided equally. Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 42.

<sup>71</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 781.

<sup>72</sup>William Jewett Tucker, "The Gospel of Wealth," Andover Review, June, 1891, pp. 634-635, 645.

wealth. Wall agrees and suggests quite correctly that Carnegie felt an overpowering need to justify his life to himself, that Carnegie continually sat in judgment over his own life and needed to be able to see himself as conforming to a code.<sup>73</sup> However, Wall adds:

But here was this Andover theologian, who with cold logic pointed out the deep cracks in the very foundations of Carnegie's refuge. If democracy meant anything, it meant freedom of choice. How could Carnegie, who denied the doctrine of inevitability for the individual, think that his gospel, which had as its cornerstone the inevitability of the concentration of wealth, was reconcilable with democracy? What if the people, out of their collective, divine reason in which Carnegie loudly professed his faith, should pass an income tax so highly progressive in form as to preclude the accumulation of wealth? Would Carnegie in the name of individualism and the inevitability of accumulation, deny the democratic process? Or would he be forced to admit that nothing in a truly free society is inevitable and predetermined.<sup>74</sup>

Of course it is impossible to say what Carnegie might have replied to Tucker, but several comments are in order. First, there is some doubt that "if democracy meant anything, it meant freedom of choice." People who like democracy are always equating democracy with the special, fine values close to their hearts. Obviously,

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<sup>73</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 813.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 814.

if democracy means freedom of choice, and people use their freedom of choice to vote against freedom of choice, then democracy will no longer mean freedom of choice. Actually, democracy means voting, either in the New England Town Meeting sense of voting in a pure democracy, or in the representative democracy sense of selecting people whom you hope will do your bidding at a meeting. A democracy can in theory do anything, including abolish itself. Every decision of the majority limits the freedom of the choice of the minority to some extent. If the people, by majority vote, had passed and somehow obtained a strong, effective income tax that completely decimated the wealthy, the enormous transition to industrialization in the nineteenth century United States would have been greatly delayed and perhaps prevented.

Next, there is the matter of money as power. Curiously, Wall agrees that Carnegie, after the Scotchman reached a certain plateau of wealth, was no longer really interested in money for the sake of money, but rather in power. Money and power became equivalents. The real failure of Communism is all that power in the hands of the Soviet Commisar, the new Russian elite, just as in America the industrial monopolist has too much power. The enormous transition is not inevitable in any nation, but wherever it does occur, it places great power in the hands of a few men. Carnegie realized this and suggested some guidelines to help prevent powerful citizens from subverting democracy entirely. Finally, Carnegie saw no inevitability that declared which individuals

would become powerful, but rather an economic system that created winners inevitably. Most of these winners he saw losing their money again in three generations. One of Carnegie's favorite themes was that Americans went from "shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves" in three generations.<sup>75</sup> There was a need for those who temporarily held wealth to see it as a sacred trust and spend it wisely. Carnegie held to no particular religion and he was enough of a Darwinist to see no individual inevitability, but he saw group patterns which he felt were carrying men to higher and higher planes. Another favorite Carnegie theme was that all things were growing better.

Wall is correct when he says that Carnegie was a true conservative,<sup>76</sup> but even this statement requires qualification.<sup>77</sup> To be purposely simple, a conservative is one who wishes to conserve, to keep things as they are now. Carnegie felt that nineteenth century America was near perfect. In this respect

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<sup>75</sup>This is one of the oft-repeated phrases of Carnegie. See Andrew Carnegie, "William Chambers," An Address Delivered at the Celebration of the Jubilee of The Chambers Institution, Peebles, October 19, 1909, p. 15; Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 366; Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich and the Right View of Wealth," p. 11052; Carnegie, "The Aristocracy of the dollar," p. 9. Some of these phrases and beliefs that Carnegie cherished were so much at the forefront of his mind that he kept repeating them even writing on other matters.

<sup>76</sup>Carnegie, speaking of Blaine very approvingly, says: "He would have made an excellent and yet safe President. I found him truly conservative, and strong for peace." Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 345.

<sup>77</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 714.

he was a conservative. After all, he had come to America in absolute poverty and worked his way up to what he called "million-  
airedom" in a short period.<sup>78</sup> Britain was not perfect. His parents had been forced to flee from Britain; his relatives had long protested against major British institutions. Carnegie was a conservative in that he believed in laissez faire economics. With a few important qualifications, he was an individualist; he saw capitalism as a positive good; to him businessmen were a high order of beings. To his contemporaries in the American business class, however, Carnegie often appeared to be a maverick, a man who would join a pool one day and cut prices secretly the next,<sup>79</sup> a man who would talk about the glories of free labor while reducing wages, and a man who squeezed every dollar he could into his own purse from the company he controlled only to give most of the money away. There were some businessmen who might have accepted Carnegie's description of himself, as a radical, at face value. Yet Carnegie was a conservative in America, at least until the Spanish American War. He had little desire to change American basic institutions and political philosophies, as he saw them, and no desire to change the economic conditions of business and labor. However, Carnegie was never a reticent, phlegmatic, methodical stacker of dollar bills. He enjoyed making speeches and writing

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., pp. 280, 129.

<sup>79</sup> Josephson, Robber Barons, p. 259.

articles; he had wild as well as perceptive thoughts, and he was never able to contain himself, to filter his public utterances, to curb his vagrant conceptions. In 1897, for instance, he suggested matter of factly that the federal government might aid the country to recover from the current recession by doubling the rivers and harbors appropriations. The Herald of Rochester, New York criticized him roundly for this policy, but of course he was right and forty years ahead of his time.<sup>80</sup> Newspapers like the Herald still criticized this policy more than a generation later when it was used on an even wider scale to alleviate the great depression. Carnegie believed in federal projects to employ people and develop the country, nor was he at all adverse to a liberal interpretation of the American Constitution in order to accomplish this.<sup>81</sup> Carnegie was a conservative, but many of his own business class would have been hard put to recognize him as one.

When it came down to making a decision concerning his own money, Carnegie always opted for broken unions, reduced wages, long hours, and constant pressure on everyone to produce or get out, but in peripheral matters many businessmen of the time considered Carnegie a traitor to his class. Many fellow businessmen thought narrowly on matters of profit and loss; Carnegie's

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<sup>80</sup>Herald, Rochester, New York, July 23, 1897, p. 9.

<sup>81</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 330.



world was not merely business centered. Many might feel that a true conservative should not be talking on all manner of topics that had no relation to business. Carnegie was for peace, even when he was making millions selling the government steel for battleships. He was for peace to the extent of advising Wilson to allow Mexico to settle her own affairs,<sup>82</sup> yet he was for the Wilson reforms.<sup>83</sup> He was opposed to curtailing immigration.<sup>84</sup> In religion he was a radical for his age, refusing to identify with any church, quoting Confucius, rather than Christ.<sup>85</sup> Sometimes the very range of one's interests and concerns may cause those who think narrowly or refuse to think at all, to apply the label of radical.

Often Carnegie felt that quite ordinary beliefs, which he held, were radical, simply because he held them. We are all liable to the misconception that our own beliefs are unique. For instance, democracy to Carnegie meant the end of privilege, but this was the privilege of rank, not of wealth.<sup>86</sup> The ruling

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<sup>82</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 218.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., Vol. 208.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., Vol. 228.

<sup>85</sup>See Chapter Six on Carnegie's Religion. For examples of Carnegie's quoting Confucius rather than Christ, see Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 19; Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 328. When he does quote Christ it is to suggest that "The Kingdom of Heaven is Within You," which means to him that you should enjoy life upon earth and not seek an afterlife, Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 199.

<sup>86</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Home Rule in America," (Glasgow: Glasgow Junior Liberal Association, 1887), reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland, p. 187.

class of Britain, in the generation Carnegie was born, viewed the Chartist beliefs as radical, revolutionary, and disastrous. Conservative writers forecast the end of civilized society if the Chartist program was adopted, but four generations later the Chartist demands appear to be a natural wave of the future, already indicated by the tide in American affairs.<sup>87</sup> So Carnegie, at heart a political conservative in America who wished to think of himself as a radical in Britain, sounded often quite confused, as for instance when he suggested that "the profoundly conservative and yet radically republican American Constitution,"<sup>88</sup> should be adopted by Great Britain and serve eventually as a "model to all new nations."<sup>89</sup> However, these apparently contradictory statements had a special meaning for him. While the Britain he had left as a child was struggling for its Charter, America had adopted its great Constitution and Charter two generations before. So was the new land ahead of the old. Said Carnegie, in an 1853 letter back to Scotland, to his boyhood friend George Lauder, Jr.: "We now possess what the working classes of Your Country look forward to as constituting their political millenium. We have the Charter which you have been fighting for for years as the Panacea for all British woes."<sup>90</sup> Thus America was an

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<sup>87</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol.I, p. 32.

<sup>88</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 397.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 506.

<sup>90</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 74.

already radical nation and in Carnegie's view could now conservatively hold tight to the Charter.

The American Charter, the Constitution, obtained in the 1780's, placed America ahead of Britain even a century later, in the 1880's, for hereditary privilege remained in Britain. Robert Green McCloskey sees Carnegie as attacking the evils of Britain's aristocracy to take the attention of Americans from the evils of capitalism at home.<sup>91</sup> Actually Carnegie was in earnest in his belief that inherited wealth was the only evil wealth.<sup>92</sup> Inherited wealth destroyed the moral fiber of the recipient and turned him into a parasite, but wealth accumulated by oneself was indicative of hard work and steady determination. Carnegie's strongest radical feelings never crossed the Atlantic Ocean; he remained true to his radical forebears by favoring change in England, which he called extreme radicalism,<sup>93</sup> and holding to conservative principles in America where he felt near perfection had already been achieved.

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<sup>91</sup>McCloskey, American Conservatism, p. 136.

<sup>92</sup>Fulfilling a lady's request for a motto for her album, Carnegie once wrote: "I would as soon leave my son a curse as the almighty dollar," Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, pp.56,21. Of course he never had a son.

<sup>93</sup>In Britain, Carnegie found nearly all his friends to be extreme radicals, which was quite a compliment. He saw radicals everywhere among the highest of classes. Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 314, 318.

## 2. Andrew Carnegie: The Myth of Horatio Alger

Andrew Carnegie's own story, told and retold in books and articles, is a simplistic tale of rags to riches in the best tradition of Horatio Alger. Horatio Alger (1832-1899) wrote over a hundred novels that sold over a hundred million copies in the Gilded Age between the Civil War and the First World War. The themes of youth and success have always been popular, but, in addition, Alger wrote at a time when the great internal migration from the farm to the city was at its height. His books suggested the ethos of an age, for they were guides to urban life, full of precise information on what to expect in the city, replete with suggestions as to the proper etiquette for the metropolis. Alger's winners were honest, hard working youths, rural or urban, who won fame and fortune. He used stereotyped characterizations and his theme was an oft repeated formula with infinite variations. Over half of Alger's titles are personalized to the extent that they carry the hero's name. The Alger hero was usually not an immigrant, an Andrew Carnegie, but other elements of the classic national myth that Alger promoted are found in the life of the bobbin boy who became steel king.

The technological unemployment of Carnegie's father due to the encroachment of factory-manufactured cloth, might well have been a theme from Horatio Alger. In general, the Algerian heroes are boys put to work early due to the death, physical

incapacity, or business ruin of their honest but usually ineffective fathers. The boys then leave the small town or farm, come to the big city, knowing that they must succeed, for the whole family depends upon them. The father is generally a worthy man, whom death, affliction, or the evil of others has destroyed. Andrew's father, William Carnegie, had been moderately successful in Scotland, but when the old way of life was disrupted through no fault of his, William Carnegie was not able to make the transition to the new world.

A persistent theme of the Alger novels is the strong mother figure, unable to obtain meaningful employment due to the mores of the period, but offering advice and council for the good, pure son. One promise Carnegie's mother extracted from him, a compact which he followed to the end, was not to marry while she lived.<sup>94</sup> He certainly had a mother problem and never cut the umbilical cord, but, what in other men might have produced a prolonged infancy, in Carnegie resulted in a desire to show off and succeed for his mother's sake.<sup>95</sup> This is not to suggest that the normal desires were not there, suppressed. Carnegie always loved the ladies and he married within months of his mother's death, but this was not until he was fifty-one years old. Perhaps due to his late marriage, Carnegie had only one child, a daughter.

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<sup>94</sup>Winkler, Carnegie, pp. 21-22.

<sup>95</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol.I, pp. 254-255.

He fervently hoped for a son, but was never so blessed. Carnegie followed his mother's wishes in certain matters as we would expect of a good Alger hero.

Carnegie carefully described his mother's strength, courage, and determination. Almost immediately after coming to Allegheny, she returned to binding shoes for a shoemaker neighbor, as she had done in Scotland.<sup>96</sup> It was agreed that Andrew's days of schooling were over and he should obtain a job to help the family, but there was a question as to what work he might do. Carnegie tells the story very well himself:

The brother of my Uncle Hogan would often ask what my parents meant to do with me, and one day there occurred the most tragic of all scenes I have ever witnessed. . . . He said, with the kindest intentions in the world, to my mother, that I was a likely boy and apt to learn; and he believed that if a basket were fitted out for me with knick-knacks to sell, I could peddle them around the wharves and make quite a considerable sum. I never knew what an enraged woman meant till then. My mother was sitting sewing at the moment, but she sprang to her feet with outstretched hands and shook them in his face.

"What! my son a peddler and go among rough men upon the wharves! I would rather throw him into the Allegheny River. Leave me!" she cried, pointing to the door, and Mr. Hogan went.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 29.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-32.

Carnegie felt his "mother would have taken her two boys, one under each arm, and perished with them rather than they should mingle with low company in their extreme youth."<sup>98</sup>

It was shortly after this that his father made the first of several attempts at working in a factory. The first job Andrew Carnegie obtained, at the age of twelve, was that of bobbin boy in this same cotton factory where his father might keep a watchful eye upon him. Here at a pay scale of one dollar and twenty cents a week, the future steel king had his first taste of earning money and he found the sensation pleasant in the extreme.<sup>99</sup> Carnegie declared exuberantly: "It gave me the feeling that I was doing something for my world -- our family. I have made millions since but none of those millions gave me such happiness as my first week's earnings."<sup>100</sup> This first job required that he and his father rise early on the winter mornings to reach the factory before daylight and, with only forty minutes off for lunch, to return home again after dark. Still he had "blessed Sundays" off, and it was only a matter of months before something better was offered.<sup>101</sup> All of this, it might be remarked, was better than he served his own men in the steel

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<sup>98</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>99</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 357, lists Carnegie's salary as \$1.25 a week, an easy error.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., p. 33; see also Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth,

<sup>101</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 5.

industry a half century later. They were forced to work twelve hours a day, seven days a week. The first two jobs Carnegie obtained offered little opportunity and certainly did not conform to the stereotype of the Horatio Alger hero who did not usually work in factories.

Carnegie's second job proved to offer difficulties but also some opportunities. Carnegie tells the story in this fashion:

Soon after this Mr. John Hay, a fellow-Scotch manufacturer of bobbins in Allegheny City, needed a boy, and asked whether I would not go into his service. I went, and received two dollars per week; but at first the work was even more irksome than the factory. I had to run a small steam-engine and to fire the boiler in the cellar of the bobbin factory. It was too much for me. I found myself night after night, sitting up in bed trying the steam gauges, fearing . . . the boiler might burst.<sup>102</sup>

Carnegie naturally did not complain and kept up his hopes. His family must never know that he "was having a hard tussle. No, no! everything must be bright to them."<sup>103</sup> Carnegie had the confidence of youth in his own future.

One day the chance came. Mr. Hay had to make out some bills. He had no clerk, and was himself a poor penman. He asked me what kind of hand I could write and gave me some writing to do. The result pleased him, and he found it convenient thereafter to let me make out his bills. I was also good at figures; and he soon found it to be to his inter-

<sup>102</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 34.

<sup>103</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 5.



est . . . to put me at other things.<sup>104</sup>

Here the value of an education became easily apparent. Without the ability to write well and to do accounts, Carnegie could have been relegated to the factory. He was ordered to oil machinery, part time, when his other work was completed, and this made him physically ill.<sup>105</sup> Very short of stature and not physically strong, Carnegie was fortunate not to have to remain in the factories. Certainly he would never have been able to hold up under the strain of working in his own steel mills. But here, already, Carnegie had eased his way into the office, to a position of general bookkeeper and handyman.

Carnegie now began to show the typical traits of the Horatio Alger hero: he was persistent and he could make his own opportunities. John Hay kept his books in single entry, but Carnegie had heard that all the large firms were using the double entry method. He decided to go to night school to learn this method and convinced three of his young friends in the shop that they should accompany him.<sup>106</sup> Here are exhibited some of the desirable virtues in a fashion that might have come right from the pages of Horatio Alger himself. No one suggested that Carnegie improve his bookkeeping or go to night school. Not only

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<sup>104</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 34.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., pp. 34-35.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

did he choose to learn, but he exerted a good influence on his fellows by persuading them to do likewise. It was not long before opportunity beckoned again and Andrew Carnegie was offered a job as messenger boy, an almost symbolic position for Algerian heroes.

Carnegie tells the story of his entry into the world of telegraph messenger boy in this fashion:

One evening, early in 1850, when I returned home from work, I was told that Mr. David Brooks, manager of the telegraph office, had asked my Uncle Hogan if he knew where a good boy could be found to act as messenger. Mr. Brooks and my uncle were enthusiastic draught players, and it was over a game of draughts that this important inquiry was made. Upon such trifles do the most momentous consequences hang. A word, a look, an accent, may affect the destiny not only of individuals, but of nations. He is a bold man who calls anything a trifle. Who was it who, being advised to disregard trifles, said he always would if anyone could tell him what a trifle was? The young should remember that upon trifles the best gifts of the gods often hang.<sup>107</sup>

Here, in prose that again might have come from Alger himself, genuinely touching and sentimental, the steel king writes of this opportunity. Horatio Alger, in his novel Struggling Upward: or, Luke Larkin's Luck, speaks of a certain chance meeting in the following terms:

If Luke could have forseen the immediate consequences of this apparently simple act, and the position in which it would soon place him, he would certainly have refused to take charge of the box. And yet in so doing it might have

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., p. 35; for more on trifles see Carnegie's Autobiography, p. 118, and Carnegie, James Watt, p. 133.

happened that he had made a mistake. The consequences of even our simple acts are often far-reaching and beyond the power of human wisdom to foreknow.<sup>108</sup>

The similarity between the prose of Carnegie and Alger are here so striking as to suggest that both men read from the same gospel of success. Carnegie speaks of this job offer as telegraph messenger boy as his third opportunity, and adds: "The third time is the chance, you know."<sup>109</sup>

Curiously enough, in the inevitable family council that resulted due to this news of a job opening from Uncle Hogan, Carnegie's mother wished him to take the job as messenger and his father felt he was not old or large enough and might be subject to dangers on the street. One could probe for psychological motivations here, for the \$2.50 a week offered was another raise and the boy was now earning almost as much as the man. At last his father acquiesced, again an event worth noting, but determined to accompany his son to the job interview. On the way, Andrew convinced his father that the elder Carnegie should remain on the corner and let his son go in alone. This, of course, is wise in an interview, for it is not the parent who is being hired. But Carnegie also felt that he had learned to temper some of his

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<sup>108</sup>Horatio Alger, Struggling Upward: or Luke Larkin's Luke, in Struggling Upward and Other Works, ed. by Russel Crouse (New York: Crown Publishers, 1945), p. 16.

<sup>109</sup>Carnegie, The Gospel of Wealth, p. 7.

Scotch accent, and his father might smile at the affected Yankee talk.<sup>110</sup>

Again the touch of Horatio Alger is present as Carnegie recounts what occurred after he entered the office:

The interview was successful. I took care to explain that I did not know Pittsburg, that perhaps I would not do, would not be strong enough; but all I wanted was a trial. He asked me how soon I could come, and I said that I could stay now if wanted. . . . I think that answer might well be pondered by young men. It is a great mistake not to seize the opportunity. The position was offered to me; something might occur, some other boy might be sent for. Having got myself in I proposed to stay there if I could. Mr. Brooks very kindly called the other boy . . . and asked him to show me about, and let me go with him and learn the business. I soon found opportunity to run down to the corner of the street and tell my father that it was all right, and to go home and tell mother that I had got the situation.<sup>111</sup>

Here we see the honesty of the Alger boy, confessing he may not know the city well enough but will learn if given a chance, the boldness in seizing the "opportunity," a word used twice in this paragraph, and the boy instructing the man to go home and tell "mother" it is "all right."

As Alger asserts in Ragged Dick; or, Street Life in New York, "in the boot-blackening business, as well as in higher avocations, the same rule prevails, that energy and industry are re-

<sup>110</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 36.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

warded and indolence suffers."<sup>112</sup> So in 1850, at the age of fourteen, the precise age of Ragged Dick at the time of his adventures, Carnegie had a job that allowed him to travel the city, to learn of its streets, and to meet the businessmen who received telegraph messages. In the evening he began memorizing streets and firm names and during the day he learned who the great men of the city were. He found a lending library where he could borrow books to read. Within a year he was the messenger boy left to watch the office when the manager was away, and had received a raise in pay to \$13.50 a month, a higher rate than was paid the other messenger boys.<sup>113</sup>

At home the family councils were frequently on the subject of money. Says the steel king:

My parents were wise and nothing was withheld from me. I knew every week the receipts of each of the three who were working -- my father, my mother, and myself. I also knew all the expenditures. We consulted upon the additions that could be made to our scanty stock of furniture and clothing and every new small article obtained was a source of joy. There never was a family more united.<sup>114</sup>

One is tempted to add that the family, singularly irreligious in other respects, were most united in their worship of money.

Carnegie disclosed the news of his pay raise to \$13.50 a month to his family on Sunday morning, a significant time for religious

<sup>112</sup>Alger, Ragged Dick, ed. by Russel Crouse, p. 156.

<sup>113</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 52-53.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

events:

The surprise was great and it took some moments for them to grasp the situation. . . . Then father's glance of loving pride and mother's blazing eye soon wet with tears, showed their feeling. It was their boy's first triumph and proof positive that he was worthy of promotion. No subsequent success, or recognition of any kind, ever thrilled me as this did. . . . Here was heaven upon earth.<sup>115</sup>

The family had goals, first to pay off their debts to Mrs. Henderson who had kindly lent Mrs. Carnegie the twenty pounds needed to complete the purchase of the ship tickets and come to America. Then to buy the house in which they lived. What greater success for the Alger hero than to be able to add to the family income!

Carnegie now performed the usual Horatio Alger trick of arriving at the telegraph office early to sweep out the room.<sup>116</sup> Soon he was learning to use the telegraph keys, quite on his own and naturally this eventually led him to be promoted to telegraph operator at a salary of twenty-five dollars a month.<sup>117</sup> He next learned to take messages by ear, quite a feat in those days, and became the best known telegraph operator in Pittsburg.<sup>118</sup> In this way, a year later, he came to the attention of Thomas Scott,

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., pp. 54-55.

<sup>116</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 63.

<sup>117</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 56-57.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid., pp. 58-59.

an Assistant Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad, in charge of the Western Division. Scott, an aggressive, rising young railroad man, only twelve years older than Carnegie, soon grew tired of the numerous visits he made to the telegraph office and asked the railroad for his own telegraph line and clerk telegrapher.<sup>119</sup> Carnegie recounts how he obtained this job, his next major step up the ladder:

One day I was surprised by one of his assistants, with whom I was acquainted, telling me that Mr. Scott had asked him whether he thought that I could be obtained as his clerk and telegraph operator, to which this young man told me he had replied:

"That is impossible. He is now an operator."

But when I heard this, I said at once: "Not so fast. He can have me. I want to get out of a mere office life. Please go and tell him so."

The result was I was engaged February 1, 1853, at a salary of thirty-five dollars a month as Mr. Scott's clerk and operator.<sup>120</sup>

Carnegie at the age of seventeen had found his opportunity. His analysis of the position with Scott as in the long run offering wider vistas, since the most he could hope for in the old job was to eventually end up managing a telegraph office, is a masterful summation.<sup>121</sup> Carnegie was now on his way. He made more friends,

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<sup>119</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 82.

<sup>120</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 61.

<sup>121</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 82.

was advised of investments, and discovered the stock market, where capital produced income without toil!

There are some suggestive similarities and divergences in the life of Andrew Carnegie, vis-a-vis a typical hero of a Horatio Alger novel. Carnegie obviously began low enough; his initial salary was minute enough; his family was poor enough; he certainly rose fast enough. The hero of Alger novels was usually a model citizen, clean, courteous, spoke perfect English, was interested in bettering himself educationally, stood up to bullies and was clever enough when migrating to urban centers to hold his own against the city slickers.<sup>122</sup>

The matter of standing up to bullies is in some dispute, in the case of Carnegie. Gustavus Myers, in his History of the Great American Fortunes,<sup>123</sup> suggests that Carnegie and other captains of industry lacked physical courage. The accusation is repeated by Mathew Josephson and later muckrakers.<sup>124</sup> The charge by Myers is really based on the fact that the capitalist class

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<sup>122</sup>Ragged Dick was the startling exception here. While Ragged Dick is usually favored by critics as the best of the Alger novels, it is a novel in which the hero displayed some faults. Ragged Dick smoked, gambled, and spent his money wildly, until his basic good nature and honesty brought him to the attention of various patrons whose advice he took so that the course of his life was altered. Alger, Ragged Dick, ed. by Russel Crouse, pp. 154-155.

<sup>123</sup>Gustavus Myers, History of the Great American Fortunes (New York: Random House, 1936), pp. 293, 294, 406, 548.

<sup>124</sup>Josephson, Robber Barons, p. 420, 297.



did not join the ranks of soldiers to fight in the Civil War. They had no time; there were financial wars to win instead. Carnegie believed in the cause of the North and in the freedom of the Negro, but he shunned much active participation in the Civil War though he was twenty-five years old in 1861 when Lincoln issued his first call for troops. The steel magnate was small in stature and never physically strong. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch called him a "coward" after Homestead for not coming back to America to face the situation,<sup>125</sup> and Carnegie's editor replied to the charge in the magnate's Autobiography.<sup>126</sup>

According to George B. Harvey's biography of Frick, when Carnegie forced Henry Clay Frick to sell his holdings, Frick arose from his chair with clenched fists and the king of steel fled the room at a run.<sup>127</sup> Since the meeting was a private one between Carnegie and Frick and the source for this story is Frick himself, who told it to Harvey in a personal interview, there may be some question as to Carnegie's ground speed as he left Frick's presence, but it is likely the tale is essentially true. Still, Carnegie possessed most of the traits of Horatio Alger heroes.

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<sup>125</sup>Bridge, Inside History, pp. 233-234.

<sup>126</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 219.

<sup>127</sup>George B. Harvey, Henry Clay Frick, the Man (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 230. See also John K. Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, pp. 251-252; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 104.

In one of the most consequential particularities, Carnegie followed true as a Horatio Alger hero; he performed a noble deed and found a sponsor. The most essential characteristic of the Alger novels is the noble deeds the hero performs, acts that bring the protagonist to the attention of his future patrons. For curiously, though he is generally supremely good in mind and spirit and practicing every day in every way for the moment when he will be tested, the Alger hero seldom rises on his own. He needs a sponsor. Since this is the oft-repeated theme of the Alger novels, the readers of Alger books waited while the hero in his lowly occupation prepared himself for the opportunity or the noble deed. The opportunity or the noble deed was the turning point of the story. Sometimes the opportunities and noble deeds are multiple. Carnegie was obviously watching for the main chance and now in the person of Thomas Scott, the Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad, he had found his sponsor. The future steel magnate indulged in a kind of hero worship of his superior in those early years.<sup>128</sup> The opportunity to perform a noble deed came when, in the absence of Scott, Carnegie took charge of the entire Pennsylvania line at a time of crisis, when a train was wrecked and the tracks and trains were all snarled. He sent telegrams in Scott's name, rerouting trains over vast distances and brought everyone in safely. If Carnegie had not

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<sup>128</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 67.

been successful here, it might have been the end of his career. As it was, his confidence, resourcefulness, and ability were forcibly demonstrated, in action, in a fashion his superior could not help but notice.<sup>129</sup> Scott aided Carnegie thereafter with investments and promotions within the railroad company eventually followed.

Not quite so Algerian was Carnegie's attitude later during the turbulent period of the 1870's, when Thomas Scott was driven to the wall and called for help. Carnegie did not respond.<sup>130</sup> It is quite permissible in the Carnegie philosophy for a young man to use and then cast aside other people.<sup>131</sup> The steel king was to say later: "The man who has money during a panic is the wise and valuable citizen."<sup>132</sup> Such a citizen, of

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<sup>129</sup>Ibid., pp. 71-73.

<sup>130</sup>Carnegie rationalizes his refusal to help Scott in his Autobiography, pp. 158-160; 166-168. The best discussion is in Wall, Carnegie, pp. 297-306.

<sup>131</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 87.

<sup>132</sup>The quotation is from: U.S. Congress. House. Tariff Hearings: Before the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives. 60th Congress, December 21, 1908, pp. 5775-5875, 5797. Josephson in the Robber Barons, p. 173, uses this quote but does not footnote it. Josephson discusses this issue, p. 177. Carnegie in his James Watt, p. 131, goes yet a step further by declaring: "Every single dollar weighs a hundredfold when credit trembles in the balance."

course, used his money to expand his holdings while prices were low, a favorite Carnegie theme.<sup>133</sup> Alger, however, did not usually detail the middle age of his heroes, but merely suggested in a few maudlin pages that everyone lived happily ever after.

It was Scott who helped Carnegie with his first stock purchase. Carnegie had now found his way into the world of big business. When he needed to borrow money, his credit was good, the banker knew him as a "comer."<sup>134</sup> The concluding passage of Luke Larkin's Luck puts it this way:

So closes an eventful passage in the life of Luke Larkin. He has struggled upward from a boyhood of privation and self-denial into a youth and manhood of prosperity and honor. There has been some luck about it, I admit, but after all he is indebted for most of his good fortune to his own good qualities.<sup>135</sup>

Andrew Carnegie, who often wrote like Horatio Alger himself, and continually elaborated on the success theme, declared that the fortunate man was the one born in poverty. Such a man learns that he "does not need to be coddled, he will swim; he was not

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<sup>133</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 21, p. 4040 letter to Frick, August 1, 1893, is a case in point. Carnegie wanted full steam ahead during depressed times so that his company would be ready for prosperity which he was sure would follow.

<sup>134</sup>Carnegie, The Gospel of Wealth, p. 11.

<sup>135</sup>Alger, Luke Larkin's Luck, ed. by Crouse, p. 280.

born to be drowned, you will see him at the head of a great business." Carnegie continued:

It does not matter much how he starts, for the qualities in him are such as to produce certain effects in any fields he enters. He goes forward upon a very small salary, performing certain small uses, indeed, much smaller than he thinks himself capable of performing, but these he performs thoroughly.

Some day in some way something happens that brings him to the notice of his immediate superior. He objects to some plan proposed, and thinks it can be bettered in some way, or he volunteers to assist in a department other than his own; or, he stays, one day, later at his work than usual, or goes some morning sooner, because there was some part of the business that had not been entirely settled the night before, or there was something to start the next morning that he was afraid might not be ready or just right, and he "just goes down early to be sure." His employer has been somewhat anxious upon the same point, and he, too, goes down early that morning and finds his salaried young man, showing that he does not work for salary alone; he is working for the success of the business. Or it may be that some day his employer proposes a certain mode of action in regard to a customer's account; perhaps the young man has started in the office, and has been asked to look after the credits, a most important part. His employers wish to close this credit, which, perhaps would embarrass the customer. This young man, known to the customer, has had to visit his place occasionally in the course of business, collecting his accounts, or trying to collect them, and the young man modestly says he is a splendid fellow, bound to succeed, does his business upon fair and wise methods, and only needs a little temporary indulgence to come out all right.

The employer has faith in the young man's judgment . . . . The young man takes the matter in hand, and results prove he was quite right.<sup>136</sup>

Carnegie in excruciating detail created other examples: of a young man saving his employer money on insurance, of a young man who knows something of engineering and discovers a faulty boiler.<sup>137</sup>

In Empire of Business, Carnegie used captions such as: Choice of a Career, The Start in Life, Openings to Success, The Second Step Upward, and Where to Look for Opportunities.<sup>138</sup>

Finally the young man finds his sponsor, and in true Horatio Alger fashion he marries the boss' daughter. Examine this conclusion from the pages of Carnegie:

A young man in the service of a corporation had attracted his a rich businessman's attention. The young man had to call upon this gentleman frequently. . . . The young man was supporting a widowed mother and a sister; he had as friends excellent young men, . . . he was a student; he was a reader; had high tastes . . . was . . . the soul of honour, incapable of anything low or vulgar; in short, a model young man, and of course, poor -- that goes without saying.

<sup>136</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 194-196.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid., pp. 197-198.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid., pp. 190-202. This was originally a lecture entitled "Business," delivered at Cornell University, January 11, 1896.

The young man was sent for, and the millionaire told him that he should like very much to try him in his service, and asked the young man if he would make the trial.<sup>139</sup>

The young man was to work for two years at low salary and prove himself. He agreed. At the end of the two years, the businessman was satisfied. He called in the young man, but to his surprise the young man refused to continue on the job. The following conversation ensued:

"What is the matter? You suit me: do I not suit you?"

"Excuse me, sir, but for reasons which I cannot explain, I am to leave your service."

"Where are you going?"

"I am going abroad."

"Have you made any engagement?"

"No, sir."

"Nor what you are to do?"

"No, sir."

"Sir, I have treated you well, and I do think I am entitled to know the real reason. I think it is your duty to tell me."<sup>140</sup>

The businessman "discovered" what all of you have suspected," the young man had "fallen in love with his daughter." The conversation concluded:

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<sup>139</sup>Ibid., p. 211.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., pp. 212-213.

"Have you spoken to my daughter?" was the question. The young man scarcely deigned to reply to that.

"Of course not."

"Never said a word, or led her to suspect in any way?"

"Of course not."

"Well," he said, "I do not see why you should not; you are the very kind of son-in-law I want if you can win my daughter."<sup>141</sup>

And they all lived happily ever after. Here we have Carnegie, in an almost fanciful mood, telling a variety of stories not unlike Horatio Alger. Carnegie was perhaps the greatest Horatio Alger type hero of all times, so much the success that he not only lived success stories, but wrote success stories of his own and established his own Hero Fund<sup>142</sup> for unrewarded men. Carnegie utilized philanthropy to build libraries so that he could be a sponsor for millions. Burton Hendrick even sees Carnegie being a bond salesman on a "heroic scale,"<sup>143</sup> and selling his company's products "on a heroic scale,"<sup>144</sup> and when the magnate sells out it is as "an act of self-abnegation on a heroic scale."<sup>145</sup> Carnegie was a bigger than life Horatio Alger hero, and as a myth-maker, he strove to produce an image of an unbelievably honest, upright citizen, who had risen in the world through thrift and hard work.

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<sup>141</sup>Ibid., pp. 212-213.

<sup>142</sup>See Chapter Six.

<sup>143</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 149.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., Vol. I, p. 203.

<sup>145</sup>Ibid., Vol. II, p. 146.



## CHAPTER THREE

Andrew Carnegie: The Success Myth and the Myth of Success

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## Chapter Three

### The Success Myth and the Myth of Success

#### 1. The Mythology of Andrew Carnegie

Carl Becker has written that every man should be his own historian, but most of the great industrialists of the nineteenth century had no sense of history. They cared little about history even after they achieved success. While "the public be damned," statements by such men as Vanderbilt,<sup>1</sup> were uncommon, there were no public relations men working for the great corporations in the nineteenth century. The wealthy scarcely thought of contemporary impressions they might create, and certainly not how they themselves might be recorded by future historians. The nineteenth century industrialists were unconcerned with history even after they achieved success. Some actually wished to remain anonymous and keep the size of their fortunes a secret; others were ostentatious and lavish in their display, but they were concerned with present impressions, not future evaluation. Andrew Carnegie wished to be known, to be a public figure in every respect possible, and he ran after the bubble reputation. All

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<sup>1</sup>Josephson, Robber Barons, p. 187.

forms of success and recognition, except of course the cannon's mouth, were worth a try for Carnegie. When he received his honorary LL.D. degree, he added it to his name in books which he wrote, though he was never entitled to any earned diploma, even that of an elementary school.<sup>2</sup> As with other success, Carnegie had made the speech, received the honorary degree, and proceeded to utilize it. He did not perceive that this use of the degree was ludicrous and only called forcible attention to his lack of academic achievement. Carnegie, almost alone among nineteenth century industrialists, perceived that he had a place in history and was determined himself to help write the entry.

Men who have a possible place in history may or may not be aware of the fact and may or may not care about their evaluation by future historians. Some of our American presidents have had a sense of the past and the future, a real feel for the fittingness of their position and actions. Others, apparently, have been singularly unconcerned. The image making, the press agents, the public relations, the creation of personalities has

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<sup>2</sup>When Carnegie was elected to the post of Lord Rector of St. Andrews University in Scotland in 1902, he felt himself "admitted . . . to the University world, to which I had been a stranger." Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 260. Again Carnegie was being rather naive. He was allowed to "give" speeches and of course to "give" money, and the University reciprocated by entertaining him at various functions, but he was never "admitted" in any real sense to the University world, which is a world of teachers and students and not visiting steelmakers. See the end of Chapter Four for more on Carnegie as Rector of St. Andrews.

become a behind the scenes science today. Often the public relations man has created a movie star or a television personality from nothing more than a good story. At times the whole creature is phony: the birthday, the birth place, the name, the childhood, the loves, the beliefs, the actions, the adventures, and the rise to success are all created. Press interviews are managed around certain designated questions with memorized responses. Carnegie lived in an age before all this occurred, never using ghost writers, developing his own image by himself. In some ways Carnegie was truly a self-made man, including the public image.

In writing his biography, James Watt, Carnegie makes some rather significant statements for the historian. The magnate discusses the famous story of Watt watching the steam rising from the kettle and seeing in those curling streams of moist air the possibility for the steam engine.<sup>3</sup> The steel king speculates on the truth of the story and concludes:

Enough that the story has a solid foundation upon which we can build. This more than justifies us in classing it with "Newton and the Apple," "Bruce and the Spider," "Tell and the Apple," Galvani and the Frog," "Volta and the Damp Cloth," "Washington and his Little Hatchet," a string of gems, amongst the most precious of our legendary possessions. Let no rude iconoclast attempt to undermine one of them. Even if they never occurred, it matters

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<sup>3</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 12.

little. They should have occurred, for they are too good to lose. We could part with many of the actual characters of the actual flesh in history without much loss; banish the imaginary host of the spirit and we were poor indeed. So with these inspiring legends, let us accept them and add others gladly as they arise, inquiring not too curiously into their origin.<sup>4</sup>

Here we find history as a value carrier, but also as a source of stories and legends to be enjoyed and to inspire. The reality of history is considered of little moment next to its ability to instruct and entertain. But we also see here the right to create history, in the fashion of Plato, for educational purposes, to entertain, and to persuade.<sup>5</sup> A good story or a good purpose justifies the remaking of history.

Andrew Carnegie was a believer in the power of words. One of the real keys to the rise of Carnegie was that he discovered the mighty effect of flattery, a few carefully chosen words and men were ready to bestow their favors upon him. Carnegie had a sense of history but little feeling for the truth.

Bridge, in his Inside History, accused Stead and

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>5</sup>In the Republic, Plato saw a need to refashion history, to alter the myths of the gods, to change his guided society. He wanted frightening tales abolished, difficult situations eliminated, and a whole mythology invented to satisfy the less than average man with his childless lot for eugenic purposes.

Alderson, the other early biographers of Carnegie, of falsifying history,<sup>6</sup> and he declared that the steel magnate with his excellent memory and sense of time did not mistake the year he was born, but lied.<sup>7</sup> This is rather unkind of Bridge, for the "mistake" was probably nothing more than Carnegie's continuing fear of death, coupled with a desire to be thought of as young enough, even though in his sixties, to continue to control a vast corporation. Obviously in the delicate maneuvers required to sell his vast holdings at a good price, it was of benefit to Carnegie to appear a little younger and not quite so ready for retirement. Certainly, in writing his biography of James Watt, Carnegie was able to correctly give the date of the inventor's birth and many other facts. Carnegie's "mistake" left his two early friendly biographers, Stead and Alderson, looking like poor researchers indeed, and the error continued for some time, showing up in library catalog cards occasionally to this day. Both Stead and Alderson declared that Carnegie was born in 1837, and commented on the year 1837 as an auspicious one for it marked the beginning of the reign of Queen Victoria also. James Burnley in his Millionaires and Kings of Enterprise<sup>8</sup> repeats the 1837 birth-date and a book of Carnegie's own collected essays, Andrew

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<sup>6</sup>Bridge, Inside History, p. 240.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. vi.

<sup>8</sup>James Burnley, Millionaires and Kings of Enterprise (London: Hamsworths, 1901) p. 2.

Carnegie's College Lectures, lists his birthdate as 1837.<sup>9</sup> Even after 1903, when Bridge published the facts, there were occasional slips. Amusingly, in 1931, when John Winkler's Incredible Carnegie was published, it contained the correct dates on the title page: (1835-1919) but incongruously on the facing page under a picture of Carnegie was the old error: "Andrew Carnegie (1837-1919)." Carnegie was certainly not the only human to alter his birth year, and if his falsifying history had ceased there, nothing might be mentioned, but the magnate's rise to riches is obscured by myth making.

Carnegie tells the story in his Autobiography of the period just before his own economic take off in these terms:

The family fortunes had been steadily improving. My thirty-five dollars a month had grown to forty, an unsolicited advance having been made by Mr. Scott. . . . It was decided in family council that we could venture to buy the lot and the two small frame houses upon it, in one of which we lived, and the other, a four-roomed house, which till then had been occupied by my Uncle and Aunt Hogan. . . . The Hogans had moved to Ohio and sold out. One hundred dollars cash was paid upon purchase, and the total price, as I remember, was seven hundred dollars. The struggle then was to make up the semi-annual payments of interest and as great an amount of the

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<sup>9</sup> Andrew Carnegie's College Lectures, "Wealth and its Uses," in the (Butterfield) Practical Course (Union College, Schenectady, New York: F. Tennyson Nelly, 1896), p. 5, gives the birthdate of Carnegie as 1837. The book is in the Library of Congress, Rare Book Room.

principal as we could save. It was not long before the debt was cleared off and we were property holders, but before that was accomplished, the first sad break occurred in our family, in my father's death, October 2, 1855.<sup>10</sup>

In a letter to George Lauder, Senior, March 14, 1853, Carnegie declares in a postscript:

P.S. Mother thinks I never told you we had bought Uncle Hogan's house and lot but I'm pretty sure I did. Mother says that rents are so very high -- tradesmen pay about 6 or 8 dols. per Mo. for houses with four rooms -- se we concluded to risk a little and bought it for \$550. The property is worth about \$700. But Andrew Hogan wanted to sell it and could get no better bargain, as it was not long after the flood and some money had to be spent for repairs. We have two years to pay it in.<sup>11</sup>

It is not much of an error to turn a \$550 house into a \$700 house if you had it fixed in your mind that it was really worth the latter figure, however, this is only a sample of the steel magnate's reckoning. Further, if in March, 1853, the Carnegies had only two years to pay for the house and in October, 1855, at the death of William Carnegie, they had not finished the payments, they were in trouble. Since the Carnegies did not get into that kind of trouble, it must be assumed the house was paid for in two

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<sup>10</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 73, 74.

<sup>11</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 1.



years. Indeed this was a period of extreme thrift and careful planning for the Carnegies. With the father's health declining, he was producing less each month, Margaret Carnegie worked at her shoe cobbling and clerked on Saturdays saving every penny possible.

Hendrick in his otherwise noteworthy volumes on Carnegie's life, declares that Carnegie as a young secretary for Thomas Scott prepared the way for his future wealth and that the steps by which Carnegie acquired wealth can be detailed easily and logically. Hendrick then proceeds to tell the standard story told so often by the magnate himself, first the Adams Express Company Stock purchase and then the T. T. Woodruff Sleeping Car tale.<sup>12</sup> Both stories have a base of truth, for Carnegie obtained stock in both concerns, but those are about the only solid facts in the picture. Why didn't Carnegie tell the whole story in the first case and the true story in the second? Possibly it was his early newspaper training, for Carnegie had in his days as a telegraph operator taken duplicate news messages to the newspapers and received a dollar a day compensation. Make the story simple. Make it a good story. Make it live. Skip the unimportant details. Perhaps he learned from the newsmen. At any rate Hendricks inadvertently helped to perpetuate the Carnegie myth of easy, simple, rapid strides toward success.

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<sup>12</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 92-94

It was the following year, 1856, after the house was paid for and his father had died, that Carnegie first ventured into the Adams Express Company Stock purchase. The magnate tells the story in this way:

Just at this time Fortunatus knocked at our door. Mr. Scott asked me if I had five hundred dollars. If so, he said he wished to make an investment for me. Five hundred cents was much nearer my capital. I certainly had not fifty dollars saved for investment, but I was not going to miss the chance of becoming financially connected with my leader and great man. So I said boldly I thought I could manager that sum. He then told me that there were ten shares of Adams Express stock that he could buy, which had belonged to a station agent, Mr. Reynolds, of Wilkinsburg. Of course this was reported to the head of the family that evening, and she was not long in suggesting what might be done. When did she ever fail? We had then paid five hundred dollars upon the house, and in some way she thought this might be pledged as security for a loan.

My mother took the steamer the next morning for East Liverpool, arriving at night, and through her brother there the money was secured. He was a justice of the peace, a well-known resident of that then small town, and had numerous sums in hand from farmers for investment. Our house was mortgaged and mother brought back the five hundred dollars which I handed over to Mr. Scott, who soon obtained for me the coveted ten shares in return. There was, unexpectedly, an additional hundred dollars to pay as a premium, but Mr. Scott kindly said I could pay that when convenient, and this of course was an easy matter to do.

This was my first investment. In those good old days monthly dividends were much more plentiful than now and Adams Express paid a monthly dividend. One morning a white envelope was lying upon my desk. . . . I

opened the envelope. All it contained was a check for ten dollars . . . . I shall remember that check as long as I live. . . . It gave me the first penny of revenue from capital -- something that I had not worked for with the sweat of my brow. "Eureka!" I cried. "Here's the goose that lays the golden eggs."<sup>13</sup>

In Carnegie's article, "How I Served my Apprenticeship," he tells the same story, with some variations. Here Scott offers to help Carnegie if he cannot raise all the money. Carnegie declares: "Indeed, had Mr. Scott known our position he would have advanced it himself; but the last thing in the world the proud Scot will do is to reveal his poverty and rely upon others. The family had managed by this time to purchase a small house and pay for it in order to save rent. My recollection is that it was worth eight hundred dollars."<sup>14</sup> His mother again goes to the Uncle in Ohio to mortgage the house. Carnegie adds:

Adams Express stock then paid monthly dividends of one per cent, and the first check for five dollars arrived . . . .

The next day being Sunday, we boys -- myself and my ever-constant companions -- took our usual Sunday afternoon stroll in the country, and sitting down in the woods, I showed them this check, saying "Eureka!" We have found it."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 75-76.

<sup>14</sup>Carnegie, "How I Served my Apprenticeship," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 10.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

Here in this sylvan glade properly on Sunday this almost religious event occurred. The house value has now risen to \$800 and the check, for one month, is five dollars instead of ten. This was the check that Carnegie would never forget.

Alderson, who interviewed Carnegie extensively to write his book sees the stock initially costing six hundred dollars, sixty dollars a share, with Scott advancing one hundred dollars at once. The stock paid one per cent monthly interest on the six hundred dollars.<sup>16</sup> Stead agrees to most of the details in his book, finding the Carnegie house worth \$800.<sup>17</sup> What really happened as Wall correctly indicates was that Carnegie borrowed all the money from Thomas Scott and gave him a note.<sup>18</sup> To meet Scott's note Carnegie borrowed in turn from George Smith at higher interest. It was not until two years later, when Carnegie, making other investments and barely keeping all the balls he was juggling in the air, had his mother, who was visiting in Ohio, arrange a mortgage on the family home.<sup>19</sup> The truth of the mortgage, however, is that the Uncle in Ohio did not have "numerous sums in hand from

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<sup>16</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, pp. 22-24.

<sup>17</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 16.

<sup>18</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 133. See Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. I.

<sup>19</sup>Three separate notes and several letters in the Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. I, attest to these facts. Wall discovered these matters first and deserves full credit though in the long period before he published, this researcher independently arrived at the same conclusion.

farmers for investment," but rather that the Uncle arranged on March 27, 1858, the mortgage of the house to Richard Boyce of East Liverpool.<sup>20</sup> Curiously Wall repeats the Carnegie version in Gospel of Wealth that the first check from the Adams Express Company was ten dollars, rather than the probably correct version in the Autobiography that indicates the profit was five dollars.

None of this explains why Scott let Carnegie in on such a lucrative deal. The key clue is omitted from all the stories. Here was a young secretary-telegrapher, twenty years old, certainly ambitious, probably even inquiring about investments, doing everything in his power to flatter and curry favor, but still why did Scott loan Carnegie the money to make the investment? The initial Carnegie story of dispatching his mother to mortgage the house is not quite believable anyway, but it is obvious that for whatever reason Scott offered the stock to Carnegie, the magnate was much more in the debt of Scott than he ever told.

A few months after the Adams Express stock purchase, Scott was promoted to the position of general superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Carnegie went with him to Altoona, receiving an increase of salary to \$50 a month. In 1857, Carnegie was able to purchase stock in the Woodruff Sleeping Car Company. The story Carnegie tells on this stock purchase is almost total

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<sup>20</sup>Pittsburg Press, December 9, 1962, p. 6.

mythology. In his Autobiography the magnate relates the tale in this fashion:

While sitting on the end seat of the rear car watching the line, a farmer-looking man approached me. He carried a small green bag in his hand. He said the brakeman had informed him I was connected with the Pennsylvania Railroad. He wished to show me the model of a car which he had invented for night traveling. He took a small model out of the bag, which showed a section of a sleeping car.

This was the celebrated T.T.Woodruff, the inventor of that now indispensable adjunct of civilization -- the sleeping car. Its importance flashed upon me. I asked him if he would come to Altoona if I sent for him, and I promised to lay the matter before Mr. Scott at once upon my return. I /arranged a meeting between Woodruff and Scott and Woodruff was/ . . . contracted to place two of his cars upon the line as soon as they could be built. After this Mr. Woodruff, greatly to my surprise, asked me if I would not join him in the new enterprise and offered me an eighth interest in the venture.<sup>21</sup>

Why the "celebrated T. T. Woodruff" did not go directly to J. Edgar Thomson, the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, or to Thomas Scott, the Superintendent, is not explained. How the "farmer-looking man" who was not clever enough to find his way to the railroad company's front office with his invention, but went through the railroad cars instead, with his green bag, looking for stray company officials who might happen to be riding the train,

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<sup>21</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 83.

suddenly became an organizer of a company and insisted on Carnegie having one-eighth share is not explained either.

In Carnegie's article: "How I Served my Apprenticeship," the same story is told, with the "farmer-looking gentleman" approaching the magnate on a railroad train. This time it was a "conductor" who pointed out to "Woodruff the inventor" that Carnegie was an official of the Pennsylvania line and Woodruff had the model with him in the famous green bag.<sup>22</sup> Later biographers, such as Alderson,<sup>23</sup> Stead,<sup>24</sup> Burnely,<sup>25</sup> Winkler,<sup>26</sup> and Hendrick<sup>27</sup> repeat the same story.

This story was really told first in Triumphant Democracy, the great panoramic book that Carnegie published in 1886.<sup>28</sup> This was essentially the same version as the other later stories, but Theodore Tuttle Woodruff read a copy of Triumphant Democracy which Carnegie sent to him, and on June 12, 1886, Woodruff wrote to Carnegie, thanking him for the copy of "Triumph and Democracy" (sic) but accused the magnate of making "garbled and untruthful

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<sup>22</sup>Carnegie, "How I Served my Apprenticeship," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 11.

<sup>23</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 27.

<sup>24</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 18.

<sup>25</sup>Burnely, Millionaires and Kings of Enterprise, pp. 8-9.

<sup>26</sup>Winkler, Carnegie, pp. 67-68.

<sup>27</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 93-96.

<sup>28</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 297-299.

statements" that were arrogant and misleading. Woodruff continued in his letter to Carnegie:

You must have known before you ever saw me that there were many sleeping cars furnished with my patent seats and coaches running upon a number of railroads, viz: B.B. & C.R.R., N.Y.C.R.R., M.C.R.R., C. & G.R.R., O. & M.R.R., C.C. & C.R.R., M.S. & N.I.R.R.; together with my sample sleeping car. In the aggregate there were twenty-one sleeping cars running before my application had been made for the right to place them on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Now I will relate to you what transpired in connection with the introduction of sleeping cars upon the Penn. R.R. Firstly, I met J. Edgar Thomson . . . and gave him a letter of introduction from the then President of the O. & M.R.R. Co. . . . I asked Mr. Thomson if he would call at the depot and see my sample car, which was standing there. . . . In the meantime I had seen Mr. Scott and on the following evening Mr. Scott and myself . . . concluded an arrangement for the operation of my patent sleeping cars upon the Pennsylvania Railroad. . . . One of the conditions of the said agreement was that a certain specified interest therein should be held for another person, and represented (as the talk ran) by a boy then in the superintendent's office at Altoona. . . .

When we came to consummate the agreement in a written form, I learned that the boy alluded to was "Andie Carnegie." A contract was entered into with Murphy and Allison, of Philadelphia, for the construction of four sleeping cars, which were built and placed upon the Pennsylvania Railroad.<sup>29</sup>



Carnegie replied to Woodruff as follows in a private letter without ever publicly altering his story:

My Dear Sir:

Your letter surprises me. Your error lies in the supposition that I intended to write a history of the "Rise and Progress of sleeping cars." I only mention them incidentally; but I think no one can read what I have said, without seeing that you are the Inventor, and that the hundreds and thousands should bless you, "the man who invented sleeping cars," as I say and not anybody else.

It is impossible to enter into details in one volume, which aims to give a history of the country as a whole.

Please take the will for the deed. I intended to put you right on the record as the Inventor. . . .

I do not think you can get any of your friends to say that I have not performed a very graceful act in speaking of you as I do, and I am still and always,

Your Friend,  
Andrew Carnegie<sup>30</sup>

Carnegie's letter is smooth,<sup>31</sup> as the steel king always was, but far from denying the Woodruff charges, he all but admits they are completely true.

Wall has again carefully investigated this matter and correctly decided that the Woodruff investment for Carnegie was once more the kind offering of a benevolent superior.<sup>32</sup> It is also obvious that Carnegie did not wish so many of his early

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., Vol. IX, p. 1591.

<sup>31</sup>"There is much in the way one puts things," Carnegie declared once in his Autobiography, p. 114.

<sup>32</sup>Wall, Carnegie, pp. 138-143.

ventures to appear to have come from the hands of his benefactors Scott and Thomson. Why this young Scotch immigrant boy should have been invited to participate in the money-making schemes of Scott and Thomson is not so readily apparent. Certainly Carnegie had the habit of happiness; he told stories well, was an amusing companion and possessed what Hendricks refers to as an optimistic nature.<sup>33</sup> Above all, Carnegie had a knowledge of men,<sup>34</sup> and he tended to learn from all men.<sup>35</sup> There was an aura about Carnegie, an attitude, for he was not imposing in appearance, but he inspired confidence, even in his early twenties.. There was a peculiar feeling about him that you could rely on him absolutely. He tended to consider things extremely rapidly and decided perplexing problems at once.<sup>36</sup> As Wall and Hendrick point out, the Woodruff investment was the first substantial success for Carnegie, for after borrowing only \$217.50 from a bank for the first installment on the stock, he repaid the rest of the installments from his dividends and only two years later he was receiving almost \$5,000 each year on his investment.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup>On optimism, see Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 157, 310, and Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 193, 209, Vol. II, pp. 4, 198, 279, 344. Winkler speaks of the magnate as "Merry Andrew," Incredible Carnegie, p. 226.

<sup>34</sup>Stead, Carnegie, p. 20.

<sup>35</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 172-173.

<sup>36</sup>Farquhar and Crowther, The First Million, the Hardest, pp. 166-167.

<sup>37</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 143.

Carnegie's promotion at the age of twenty-four to the Superintendency of the Western Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad in December, 1859, at a salary of \$1,500 a year was only further evidence of how he was regarded. Here the myth is fact. Two years later, while living in Homewood, a new suburb of Pittsburgh, Carnegie was introduced to the Titusville Oil Fields and the Columbia Oil Company by a neighbor, William Coleman.<sup>38</sup> His investments here, on profits from the Woodruff Company stock, again led to annual profits far exceeding his original investment. The Columbia Oil Company story is another fact that reads almost like a myth. Carnegie tells the story in this way:

The most celebrated wells were upon the Storey farm. Upon these we obtained an option of purchase for forty thousand dollars. We bought them. Mr. Coleman, ever ready at suggestion, proposed to make a lake of oil by excavating a pool sufficient to hold a hundred thousand barrels (the waste to be made good everyday by running streams of oil into it), and to hold it for the not far distant day when, as we then expected, the oil supply would cease. This was promptly acted upon, but after losing many thousands of barrels waiting for the expected day (which has not yet arrived) we abandoned the reserve. Coleman predicted that when the supply stopped, oil would bring ten dollars a barrel and

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<sup>38</sup> Thomas Carnegie was later to marry Coleman's daughter, Lucy, and to have the first great Carnegie blast furnace named after her -- the Lucy furnace.

therefore we would have a million dollars worth in the lake. We did not think then of nature's storehouse below which still keeps on yielding many thousands of barrels per day without apparent exhaustion.<sup>39</sup>

Whether spinning fabrications or telling facts, Carnegie told the story well.

By 1863 Carnegie had reorganized the Woodruff Company into the Central Transportation Company, adding some of his friends and outside capital to the company he now controlled. In 1862 he had invested \$1,250 in the Piper and Shiffler Company, Carnegie's first venture into iron. A wartime income tax caused Carnegie to list his earnings for 1863. Hendrick reproduces this tabulation as follows:

| <u>Income 1863</u> <sup>40</sup>               |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Columbia Dividends . . . . .                   | \$17,868.67        |
| Extra Dividend Cent. Tran. . . . .             | 2,000.00           |
| Sales 40 Shares Cola @ \$100 cost 10 . . . . . | 3,600.00           |
| T.M.C. from Kloman . . . . .                   | 4,250.00           |
| Adams Express Co. . . . .                      | 1,440.00           |
| C. Tran. Co. Dividends . . . . .               | 3,050.00           |
| J. V. . . . .                                  | 4,000.00           |
| Sales 50 shares stock from E.L. . . . .        | 750.00             |
| Salary . . . . .                               | 2,400.00           |
| Piper & S. . . . .                             | 7,500.00           |
| Insurance. . . . .                             | 120.00             |
| Union Line . . . . .                           | 450.00             |
| Freedom Iron Co. . . . .                       | 250.00             |
| Western Union. . . . .                         | 182.00             |
|  | <u>\$47,860.67</u> |

<sup>39</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 133.

<sup>40</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 120.

Here at the age of twenty-eight, Carnegie was already approaching an annual income of \$50,000 a year. The Columbia Oil Company, including sales of 40 shares of Columbia stock, the Central Transit Company, the Adams Express Company, and Piper and Shiffler, combined, brought in over \$35,000 of that amount while his salary was only \$2,400. Carnegie had now reached the point of economic take off. It was not the virtues of thrift nor the blessings of poverty (see Chapter Six) that led Carnegie to multi-millionaire-dom, but rather careful use of friends and crucial investments that paid such phenomenal dividends that the principal at times was exceeded by the interest annually.

While Carnegie was a story teller, which made him a valued companion, he was also a phrase maker, a myth maker, and later a writer who coined little mottos delivered at times as homilies. We have seen the diversity of Carnegie's interests in 1863, and this spectrum of varied interests remained for the next dozen years. Later, the magnate myth maker was to suggest that the businessman "if he is wise . . . puts all his eggs in one basket and then watches that basket."<sup>41</sup> In his major work on business he repeated the motto continually: "Do not put all your eggs in one basket," does not apply to a man's life work. Put all your eggs in one basket and then watch that basket, is the true doctrine."<sup>42</sup> The advice was similarly repeated in his

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<sup>41</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 190.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 121. See also p. 17.

Autobiography,<sup>43</sup> in his book on James Watt,<sup>44</sup> and in speeches such as his address on Ezra Cornell.<sup>45</sup> Mark Twain enjoyed the revised proverb and borrowed it in his own book, Puddinhead Wilson. As a result of Carnegie's claiming interest in watching the eggs hatch in one basket, most of the writers who have dealt with Carnegie have also dealt with eggs. Alderson,<sup>46</sup> Bridge,<sup>47</sup> Hendrick,<sup>48</sup> and Wall<sup>49</sup> all deal with this concern for a single receptacle of hen fruit. As Wall rightly suggests, Carnegie had a cow bird period in which the magnate watched scattered eggs in many baskets and finally he placed all his profits in one large steel basket.

After it was all over and the profits were making themselves, Carnegie began his writing. Many of the stories the steel king told of himself, his company, and his men were related

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<sup>43</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 170.

<sup>44</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 141.

<sup>45</sup>Carnegie, "Ezra Cornell," address to students at Cornell University, April 27, 1907, in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie ed. by Burton J. Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 249.

<sup>46</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 74.

<sup>47</sup>Bridge, Inside History, p. 14.

<sup>48</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 180, 199, 350, Vol. II, p. 273.

<sup>49</sup>Wall, Carnegie, pp. 197, 295, 577.

in a striking fashion. Some of the stories are true; others such as the Adams Express Company stock story and the Woodruff sleeping Car deal contain at least the germ of truth. Finally, it must be noted, that Carnegie himself has attempted to rewrite history, to make his fancies conform with the facts.

## 2. The Rise of Andrew Carnegie

Andrew Carnegie was more than a man who fit some of the characteristics of a Horatio Alger hero, more than a central figure in the success cult, who topped off his success by writing on success and advising others how to succeed.<sup>50</sup> Andrew Carnegie, above all, was one of the handful of nineteenth century men whose wealth could be measured in hundreds of millions of dollars. The scoffers, cynics, muckrakers and belittlers, historians and general writers alike, who have declared in effect that this American cult of personality is unnecessary, that Carnegie should not be eulogized merely because he made more money than most

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<sup>50</sup>As to Carnegie's writing on success, see especially: Carnegie, "Business," an address delivered at Cornell University, January 11, 1896, reprinted in Empire of Business, pp. 189-225.

Andrew Carnegie, "Educating for Business Success," Sunday Magazine, November 22, 1914, in Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Room Collection.

Andrew Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich and the Right View of Wealth," World's Work, XVII (December, 1908), 11047-11053.

Andrew Carnegie, "How to Win Fortune," New York Herald Tribune, April 13, 1890, reprinted in Empire of Business, pp. 103-122.

Andrew Carnegie, "Road to Business Success," an address to the students at Curry Commercial College, Liberty Hall, Pittsburgh, June 23, 1885, reprinted in Empire of Business, pp. 3-18.

Andrew Carnegie, "Secret of Business," World's Work, VI (June, 1903), 3520-3528.

Andrew Carnegie, "Stepping Stones to Success in Business," New York Times, January 19, 1900.



anyone else, stand in an analogous position to those who dislike the female fainting over the latest popular singer, who grimace over the tone of articles on the subject of a movie hero created by public relations men,<sup>51</sup> or H. G. Wells when he denied that Napoleon was a great man apparently because Napoleon was a warrior.<sup>52</sup> There are billionaires today who have made less stir than Carnegie, some because they have opted for secrecy but most because we have become accustomed to the super rich.<sup>53</sup> Carnegie created intense interest for he was one of the first of a new species, a cynosure indicating the future direction, a man who even outstripped most of his twentieth century rivals, in that he came to control an entire basic industry.

Carnegie made more money than almost everyone else and he gave away more than anyone else. What is a great man?<sup>54</sup> What is a success? Each man answers that question for himself. It may be the most difficult question for most men to answer. Men

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<sup>51</sup>See Daniel Boorstin, The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America (New York: Harper & Row, 1961).

<sup>52</sup>H.G.Wells, The Outline of History (3 vols.; New York: Triangle Books Edition, 1940), Vol. III, p. 956.

<sup>53</sup>The phrase is that of Ferdinand Lundberg, The Rich and the Super-Rich (New York: Bantam Books, 1968). This is a book in the best muckraking tradition, a fact filled enlightening expose, which sadly enough will change nothing.

<sup>54</sup>Richard Watson Gilder said "A.C. is truly a 'great' man." Letters of Richard Watson Gilder, ed. by Rosamond Gilder (New York, Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1916), quoted in Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 280. See also Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p.272

in various occupations will ask themselves self-effacing questions as to their success and worth, the value of the job they are performing, but the steel magnate, in the end, had one criteria, wealth earned, and by that standard he won.<sup>55</sup> Andrew Carnegie saw success in terms of money and the power it brought him.

Historians at the time often remarked on the publication of another of Carnegie's books or articles, that they wished for more exact information on the rise of the steel king. The story he told and retold seemed to cover the same events.<sup>56</sup> Carnegie was a man of many words, but he kept repeating them. In several of the articles he wrote he briefly alluded to steps he had taken toward success, only Carnegie always cautiously told fairly nearly the same tale so that historians have had to look

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<sup>55</sup>Carnegie tended to equate things to money. See Lynch, Personal Recollections, pp. 58-59. Giving money was even equated to heroism, see Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 271.

<sup>56</sup>Carnegie told his story in most detail in The Gospel of Wealth and in his Autobiography, but the tale is also told more briefly in Carnegie, "How I Became a Millionaire," Cassell's Magazine, June, 1896, pp. 450-456. Hendrick cites this article, but has the date wrong. The Gospel of Wealth article which deals with the Carnegie's beginnings was an essay, originally published in The Youth's Companion, April 23, 1896, entitled "How I Served My Apprenticeship as a Businessman," pp. 218-219. It was reprinted by P. Mason and Company of Boston as a 16 page booklet. See also the story in the New York World, "Carnegie tells how he made his first \$10,000," February 16, 1910. It must be said that people wanted to know! Carnegie in a speech, "Railroads Past and Present," delivered to Railroad Men in New York, January, 1902, and printed later in the Empire of Business, pp. 291-300, tells the story of his early life also.

beyond the steel magnate's own stories for the real answer to how he succeeded. Psychologists have often spoken of family structures which are ideal for a son's success, as composed of hard-driving mothers and weak fathers whom the sons found it easy to bypass on the road of life. The theorizing by the psychologists is worthy of remarking upon, nothing more, for it may help to explain Carnegie's personality, but certainly not why he reached the very top. We have examined, rather easily, for here the account is detailed, how Carnegie moved from bobbin boy to junior bookkeeper then to telegraph operator and finally to secretary and private telegraph operator for Thomas Scott, an assistant superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad and one of the rising young railroad men of the period. Carnegie was everywhere learning, storing up information during this period. He was ready to learn more about bookkeeping by going to night classes, so that he could improve his skills if that job was to be his launching platform. When he became a telegraph operator, he began at once to learn street names so that he could find his way around and deliver messages, then to learn business names on those streets, and then to learn who the men were who ran these businesses. He learned to use the telegraph keys, became an operator, and finally learned to take the messages by ear. When he obtained his job with Scott, he began to learn in the same insatiable fashion about the railroad business. Carter H. Hepburn in his article at the time saw Scott's influence as the major factor in Carnegie's success, and

no doubt Scott was enormously helpful, but we also see Carnegie almost hydra-headed as he looked in all directions for opportunity.<sup>57</sup>

Carnegie was later to see himself as a widely read, well rounded, generalist who had started into business early and learned the trade from the bottom up. The generalist in business Carnegie saw as properly the boss of a business, commanding the specialist who knew only a few things very well.<sup>58</sup> Said Carnegie:

You may find men who will become famous as specialists in many branches of life, especially in the professions. Great talents in one line will atone for the lack of many other qualities. But in the business career there must, I think, be an all-roundedness to secure success.<sup>59</sup>

It was obvious there were no perfect men; "the universal genius who can manage has yet to appear," so it was important for an enterprise to choose men who supplemented one's shortcomings, as "every man has shortcomings."<sup>60</sup> Still he referred to his junior executives as "young geniuses," a phrase used rather lavishly.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Carter H. Hepburn, "Andrew Carnegie," Munsey's Magazine, September, 1892, pp. 672-674.

<sup>58</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 196; Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 176.

<sup>59</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 22. Quoted from the Daily News Weekly.

<sup>60</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, pp. 97-98.

<sup>61</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 23; Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 5; Alderson, Carnegie, p. 57.

Carnegie was to egregiously flatter his "partners," by such remarks as: Every good manager surrounds himself with men smarter than he is.<sup>62</sup> "Carnegie . . . conspicuously differed from the other big figures of his day in being a manager of men rather than an expert on his own account."<sup>63</sup> Schwab was to declare that Carnegie found the right man for the right job; his success lay in getting good men who wanted to work and paying them well.<sup>64</sup>

Schwab saw Carnegie as using his personal charm to enlist the "best efforts and loyal support" of his men.<sup>65</sup> Particularly it is what Schwab does not tell us, or even comment upon, that is the real clue. Schwab relates a story of taking Carnegie through a new mill built at Braddock, "at a time when money was not too plentiful in the Carnegie Company."<sup>66</sup> The mill was everything anticipated, but still Carnegie said to Schwab: "Charlie, there is something wrong about this; I can see by your expression

<sup>62</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 56.

<sup>63</sup>Farquhar and Crowther, The First Million, The Hardest, p. 174.

<sup>64</sup>Charles M. Schwab, "Schwab's Story of Carnegie," Personality Magazine, November and December, 1927, pp. 45-53. A copy of this is in the Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, box 261, folder 6.

<sup>65</sup>Charles M. Schwab, Andrew Carnegie: His Methods With His Men (Pittsburgh, Memorial Address, November, 1919), p. 6

<sup>66</sup>Curiously, Hendrick, usually reliable, tells this story, citing the Schwab article, and uses quite different words. Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 36.

that you are disappointed." Schwab replied that the new mill was all that was expected, but now he realized that further improvements were possible that would reduce costs even more. Carnegie asked if the present mill could be altered and Schwab sadly admitted that the alterations would mean tearing down the new mill and beginning again. At once Carnegie suggested that they do just that. Schwab comments in his article: "That spirit was characteristic of Mr. Carnegie. He did not say in criticism, "Why didn't you think of this before?" And Schwab added, "If he had been the type of man who would say that sort of thing to me . . . he would never have learned of this new idea."<sup>67</sup> Schwab makes these comments, but he does not reflect on the ability of Carnegie to "read" people, to notice that Schwab felt something was wrong. In this sense, too, Carnegie was a "reading man," a person who could almost intuitively grasp how others felt. He did not ignore the feelings of others, nor was he insensitive to them. Carnegie understood people and used this ability to succeed.

Carnegie himself spoke of the need to understand people in these terms:

Genius is sensitive in all its forms, and it is unusual, not ordinary, ability that tells even in practical affairs. You must capture and keep the heart of the original and supremely able man before his brain can do its best. Indeed this law has no limits.

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., pp. 9-11.

Even the mere laborer becomes more efficient as regard for his employer grows. Hand service or head service, it is heart service that counts.<sup>68</sup>

Managing people was a factor both at the top and at the bottom:

Unless a man knows how to manage those above him, as well as those below him, he will never achieve supreme success. Knowledge of human nature is the chief element in the composition of the successful businessman. The test of any man's ability is not what he does himself, but what he can get others to do in cooperation with him.<sup>69</sup>

Winkler describes Carnegie as "plausible, pleasant, insinuating, suave . . . with a positive talent for the blind side of folks whom he wanted to hypnotize and use."<sup>70</sup>

Carnegie for his part described how he and his men worked together "like a band of brothers."<sup>71</sup> The steel magnate declared: "The great secret of success in business and of million-

<sup>68</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Human Side of Business," The Ironmaker, May 9, 1903, pp. 21-25, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton J. Hendrick, Vol. II, pp. 9-10.

<sup>69</sup> Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 22, quoting an interview of Carnegie in the Daily News Weekly.

<sup>70</sup> Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 12.

<sup>71</sup> Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 21. This was a favorite Carnegie phrase. See also, Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 243.

aire-making is to make partners of valuable managers of departments."<sup>72</sup> Whether you called it using men,<sup>73</sup> managing people, making them partners,<sup>74</sup> implied it was personality, or "heart service,"<sup>75</sup> it is obvious Carnegie understood people.<sup>76</sup>

Carnegie was curious, eager, retentive, and energetic.<sup>77</sup>

In some ways the magnate had the personality of the super salesman type, genuinely friendly.<sup>78</sup> Farquhar, a businessman who was quite perceptive, speaks of meeting Carnegie when he was still in his middle twenties and describes him in this way:

He was . . . not imposing in appearance and rather shy in manner, but it took only a comment or two of conversation to gain a peculiar sort of confidence in him. Carnegie was one of those men you instinctively had to trust. That is why I call the confidence he inspired "peculiar." You did not stop to wonder, "Will he do?" and then answer "Yes." You simply decided at once, "He will do."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy of the World," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 99.

<sup>73</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 279-280.

<sup>75</sup>Schwab, His Methods, pp. 4-5.

<sup>76</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 203.

<sup>77</sup>His wife commented with many examples upon his energy, even in old age, to Burton Hendrick when Hendrick visited her at Skibo Castle in 1927. See Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 257.

<sup>78</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 72; Wall, Carnegie, pp. 349-350.

<sup>79</sup>Farquhar and Crowther, The First Million, the Hardest, p. 166.



Carnegie was never a worrier; he was always able to fall asleep almost at will. He was the one man with whom associates did not become angry, even when they were mistrustful of others.<sup>80</sup> Again and again men turned to Carnegie to solve problems, to help them with stock, to manipulate someone right out of a company, but few blamed the magnate for the results.

Carnegie was forever optimistic, often almost to the point of naivety, and he believed there were opportunities to rise for anyone who was willing to work in America. He was later to talk and write freely on the theme that things were constantly becoming better; there might be dips in the route ahead, but the tendency was upward.<sup>82</sup> Men everywhere were rising, in an evolutionary sense. Man was a descendant of a low creature, constantly rising, not the progeny of an original perfect being

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<sup>80</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 95. Thomas Miller in a letter speaks of his hatred for Henry Phipps, but declares he always "loved" and still "loved" Carnegie. Miller was one of those forced out of the business, largely by Phipps, it is true, but Carnegie bought Miller's stock at a bargain price.

<sup>81</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 80.

<sup>82</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Britain and Her Offspring," Nineteenth Century and After, May, 1911, pp. 920-927, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick Vol. I, p. 145.

degraded and fallen.<sup>83</sup> All things were getting better.<sup>84</sup>

Carnegie declared at one point:

It is not . . . to the savage past that we should look for guidance. The part of wisdom is to hold fast to that which has proved itself good, and to keep on as we have been doing. Marching upward, the race is not led by the multitude but by the few exceptional natures, just as all orders of vegetation have been . . . improved by the exceptional plants, from the sour crab to the apple of today. . . . So in the animal kingdom; from the wolf came the collie dog.<sup>85</sup>

Again and again Carnegie declared: "Cheer up, cheer up. No use looking on the dark side of things. . . . All's right with the world or will be later. She's on the upward path, by the law of things can't go backward though it may have a jolt or two now and then."<sup>86</sup> Youth should look to the stars. "There is no such outcome in the youth who does not already see himself captain in his dreams."<sup>87</sup> Carnegie combined his beliefs on education,

<sup>83</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 147.

<sup>84</sup>"All is well since all grows better," an oft-repeated motto of Carnegie. See: Andrew Carnegie, "A Rectorial Address," (untitled), delivered at the University of Aberdeen, June 6, 1912, republished by Redfield Brothers, New York, 24 pages. Quotation, p. 24. Evidence of the truth of Darwinism, Carnegie saw everywhere. "Orang outangs" were seen as the missing link, Carnegie, Round the World, p. 117; Burns is justified by Darwinism in seeing the mouse as a fellow creature, Andrew Carnegie, "Genius Illustrated from Burns," The First Book of the Author's Club (New York: privately published, 1893), pp. 86-99, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 168; and natural selection is seen as having more influence upon men rising in Republics than in monarchies.

<sup>85</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 53.

<sup>86</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 204, writing to Morley.

<sup>87</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 28.

religion, the upward tide of history, evolution, and his understanding of Social Darwinism to assert again and again that all was growing better.

We find that from the dawn of history until now man, overcoming temporary interruptions, has steadily developed, making great progress in every field. Contrast his condition at various periods in the past with the present and we have one unbroken record of improvement, morally, intellectually, and physically. Infant mortality is very much less, the death rate has fallen, the average of life has lengthened. Pestilences which swept away our progenitors are today unknown. Many diseases once uncontrollable are now conquered. The homes of the people have improved and the poor are now taken care of. The food and clothing of the people are better, hours of labor less, wages much higher. Free education leaves no child in ignorance; illiteracy is almost unknown. Carlyle only ventured to imagine a future when every considerable town would have a collection of books; now they have free public libraries. Even the prisons have been improved. Sentences for crime have been lightened. Man has become more law abiding and better behaved. There is less intemperance and . . . in every domain the comforts of life have been increased, its miseries mitigated. The masses of the people are better housed, better fed, better clothed, better educated and better paid than ever before.<sup>88</sup>

For Carnegie it was a living optimism, participatory in nature; the world was steadily improving and he would help it along.

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<sup>88</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, pp. 134-135.

Carnegie often used the figure of a ladder in speaking of young men rising. Opportunities were there for young men in business. Profit sharing in a business put young men's "feet upon the ladder, and they are bound to rise."<sup>89</sup> But the man must be willing to work for himself. "You cannot push any one up a ladder unless he be willing to climb a little himself."<sup>90</sup> Using DuBois' talented tenth idea for himself, the magnate concluded:

One man cannot push another up a ladder. The moment he releases his grasp the assisted one falls. It is only possible to really help those who cooperate with the helper. It is not the submerged but the swimming tenth that can be steadily and rapidly improved by the aid of their fellows. The former should be the special care of the State and should be isolated.<sup>91</sup>

But a real climber makes himself and his employer happy. "His foot is upon the ladder; how high he climbs is his own affair."<sup>92</sup> Business was a "race" with prizes to be won.<sup>93</sup> Said Carnegie:

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<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 72. Curiously, learning about Shakespeare was merely a "new ladder upon which to climb upward." Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 48.

<sup>90</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 143.

<sup>91</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 11.

<sup>92</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 199.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 106; Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 326.

Remember every business can be made successful, because it supplies some essential want of the community; it performs a needed office, whether it be in manufacturing which produces an article, or in gathering and distributing it by the merchant; or the banker, whose business is to take care of and invest capital.

There is no line of business in which success is not attainable.<sup>94</sup>

The magnate, looking back, often told his story in such a way that his rise appeared simple and preordained, as if Carnegie, as a superman, would leap to the top of all tall businesses at a single bound. The steel king was to feel at the end of his life that success was bound to come to him, that some events had been helpful, but that he would have risen anyway.

There is much truth to that common phrase commonly used, and utilized by Farquhar and Crowther as the title of their book; the first million is the hardest. If one can gain that first million, even today, the income after taxes is likely to be \$35,000 a year, enough to free the man on the rise completely and allow him the leisure to look for ways of augmenting his fortune. Just as with nations, it is the initial rise, the take-off, that is the problem. Later, Carnegie the myth-maker, was to make it all sound easy, to talk as if he was a money magnet and wealth just jumped in his direction.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 204.

<sup>95</sup>See Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 95.

Carnegie made his rise sound so easy, that muckrakers, such as Winkler, declared that the magnate could not have grown wealthy by honest means. Winkler suggested that Carnegie did not tell how he made his fortune, for he dared not. "On a salary that increased slowly from thirty-five to one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month, our young man lived in comfort, supported his family well, and managed to invest in a heterogenous collection of enterprises, most of them speculative."<sup>96</sup> Winkler goes further and suggests that Carnegie used his railroad position "to line his pockets."<sup>97</sup> His job as telegraph agent and secretary to Scott "was a lush field for an intelligent young man with itching palms and favors to barter."<sup>98</sup> Wall disagrees and asserts that Carnegie was in no position to offer lower freight rates or speedy service for bribes.<sup>99</sup> Certainly the Carnegie family practiced the famous "thrift" that the steel king was later to write about at such length;<sup>100</sup> they continued to live at a rock bottom scale for some years after the Scotch boy was on the rise.<sup>101</sup> Winkler uses no

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<sup>96</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, pp. 58-59.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>99</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 126.

<sup>100</sup>See Chapter Six for section on Thrift.

<sup>101</sup>Carnegie spoke of the initial capital accumulation to achieve take off as "gathering gear," a phrase he borrowed from a poem by Burns. Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 97.

footnotes to back his accusations, but partly Carnegie leaves himself wide open to such charges by making his rise seem easy and by simply talking and writing too much.

In his article, "My Experience with Railway Rates and Rebates," Carnegie makes a fairly compelling case for special train rates. If Winkler read this article, one can see where the muckraker might conclude Carnegie was selling favors. Writing of the railroads in these early days when he was secretary for Thomas Scott, Carnegie reported: "One enterprising man would write or call to say that he was thinking of opening a stone quarry on the line and shipping dressed stone to the towns and cities, if he could get rates enabling him to do so."<sup>102</sup> Carnegie gave several examples of such special needs which tended to open new businesses in the territory along the railroad. Returning to the original example, Carnegie adds: "The plot began to thicken when a second man came with a proposition to open another similar factory or quarry, which he could not do unless he received rates equal to those given to his predecessor, although his railway haul might be longer."<sup>103</sup> Carnegie leaves unanswered in the article questions such as: Who decided what those lower rates would be? To whom were they extended? Did a

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<sup>102</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "My Experience with Railroad Rates and Rebates," Century Magazine, March, 1908, p. 723.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid.

bright young man who memorized businesses and streets and learned names and flattered people inordinately, go out and suggest business opportunities to men along the Pennsylvania Railroad and receive a commission in the form of a "kick-back" for obtaining lower rates? One can only wonder if Carnegie profited by some special train rates after all.

Carnegie's myth-making not only caused him to tell his story of his rise as a businessman as if it had all been easy, but it caused him later to talk about directing a huge enterprise as if this could be easily managed also. Carnegie conveyed the impression that you did not have to work very hard to be a success if you were really extraordinarily clever and well organized. Carnegie might have been able to create the impression a little easier if he were not simultaneously convinced of the value of hard work. In an essay, "The Advantages of Poverty," the magnate proclaims: "The day is over when even the richest can play at business, as rich men's sons almost invariably do."<sup>104</sup> Carnegie agreed he worked hard as Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad. In his Autobiography he tells the story in this fashion:

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<sup>104</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Advantages of Poverty," Nineteenth Century, March, 1891, reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Burton J. Hendrick, p. 58.



The Superintendent of a division in those days was expected to run trains by telegraph at night, to go out and remove all wrecks, and indeed to do anything. At one time for eight days I was constantly upon the line, day and night, at one wreck or obstruction after another. I was probably the most inconsiderate superintendent that ever was entrusted with the management of a great property, for never knowing fatigue myself, being kept up by a sense of responsibility probably, I overworked the men and was not careful enough in considering the limits of human endurance.<sup>105</sup>

Later he declared that was not the way to do the job:

In those days the superintendent had to do everything; there was no division of responsibilities. It was supposed that no subordinate could be trusted to run trains by telegraph or attend to a wreck, and Mr. Scott and I, his successor, were two of the most foolish men I have ever known in this respect. We went out to every wreck, worked all night; often I was not at home for a week at a time, scarcely ever sleeping, except a few snatches, lying down in a freight car. I now look back and see what poor superintendents we were; but I had a great example in Mr. Scott. It took me some time to learn, but I did learn, that the supremely great managers, such as you have these days, never do any work themselves worth speaking about; their point is to make others work while they think. I applied this lesson in after life, so that business with me has never been a care. My young partners did the work and I did the laughing. . . . When you see a president or superintendent or a treasurer loaded down with his duties, oppressed with care, . . . be sure that he has more responsibility than he is fit for.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 89.

<sup>106</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 294-295.

Thus we see Carnegie, young, energetic, needing little sleep, desiring desperately to succeed, working day and night in his early days as Superintendent of the Western Division.

At the time Carnegie organized his own Keystone Bridge Company to produce iron bridges for the railroads, he declared: "I gave a great deal of personal attention for some years to the affairs of the Kaystone Bridge Works, and when important contracts were involved often went myself to meet the parties."<sup>107</sup> It was the personal touch with Carnegie, when selling bonds to the House of Morgan, steel rails to the railroads, or buying ore fields. He traveled to Europe to sell bonds himself, he spoke to the great executives of the American railroads himself to persuade them that his steel rails were better than the iron ones, and he inspected oil fields, ore fields, and sites for building steel plants personally and carefully.

When it came to the details of management of his own companies, he tried to find men he could trust to do these tasks. For some time his brother Tom served as the chief of those he could trust with complicated minutae. From 1853 to 1865, when he worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad, first as the secretary of Scott and then as Western Division Superintendent, Carnegie worked hard. Later he worked sporadically, selling his own rails.

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

organizing companies, selling bonds, and above all working with people. He tried to rise above the battle to obtain the broad view, and he spoke of delegating work.<sup>108</sup>

An interview by the Daily News Weekly, reproduced by Stead in his book recounted the following exchange:

Question: "Do you think, Mr. Carnegie, that the manager of a great business concern should have practical acquaintance with all the details of the business?"

Answer: "Well, I am not one who could say that, because I am nothing of a scientific man or a mechanical man. What is important is that the manager should know the clever men who are scientists and mechanics. He should always keep his eyes open for a genius in any branch of the business, and when he finds him take him into the concern as a partner. The great manager is the man who knows how to surround himself with men much abler than himself. . . . The latent reserve power in men waiting to be called into action has never been accurately estimated. I have always found that a manager of one of our great works has been able to make excellent managers out of material which before his magic touch was quite mediocre. He inspires his subordinates to almost superhuman effort."<sup>109</sup>

Carnegie was the first steelmaker to employ a full-time chemist,<sup>110</sup> and this venture saved him a great deal of money. Many of his fellow steelmakers at the time fell into two classes, businessmen

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<sup>108</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 29, 122.

<sup>109</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 22, from the Daily News Weekly.

<sup>110</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 175-177.

types who knew little about making steel, and mechanic types who knew about making iron and were unwilling to change their ways. The mechanics were self-taught and, like the nineteenth century agrarians who regarded themselves as natural men of the soil who intuitively knew how to farm and scorned agricultural colleges, these mechanics eschewed the science of metallurgy. Carnegie as the controlling owner, a position he maintained, was able to force technological improvements.<sup>111</sup>

The mythology of Carnegie scarcely exceeds the myth-making of historians themselves who tried to make Carnegie's life conform to their stereotypes. Josephson declares: "According to Schwab, who came to work for him in 1879, Carnegie seldom came near his plant and had but the scantest knowledge of its techniques. But from an office building in New York or Pittsburgh, or a castle in Scotland, he managed the 'hiring and firing' with uncanny skill."<sup>112</sup> While Carnegie was the generalist with the broad view who employed the experts to tell him the facts, he mastered many of the facts himself. How he could manage "hiring and firing" with "uncanny skill" knowing little about the plant is not explained. Winkler too makes this error, declaring that "Carnegie . . . knew little of machinery."<sup>113</sup> Carnegie, even

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<sup>111</sup>Wall, Carnegie, pp. 473, 499, 500.

<sup>112</sup>Josephson, Robber Barons, pp. 255-256.

<sup>113</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 5.

when living abroad for six months each year, which was his custom for more than two decades while in active business, demanded and received full reports on every phase of the company's activities.

One persistent problem in correctly evaluating Carnegie is that he was a pretender, a consummate actor on the world stage, a man who would bring visitors from Europe through his great plant at Pittsburgh and ask the most simple-minded questions just to convey the impression that he did not even begin to understand this intricate apparatus that he had built, organized, and indeed created. Yet, on the other hand, Carnegie felt that it was his duty to lecture the American people on the values of thrift, hard work, and effort. Carnegie once declared: "Great fortunes . . . are built by lifelong devotion . . . by the exercise of . . . prudence, forethought, energy, and not least, by resolute self-denial."<sup>114</sup> Yet from 1865 onward, Carnegie hardly denied himself anything.

Actually, from a perverted sense of patriotism, Carnegie stuck at his railroad job until the Civil War was obviously about over. He resigned March 28, 1865. After that the magnate began traveling widely and was away as much as he was at the plant. But he always left orders as to how things should be

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<sup>114</sup>Carnegie, "The Aristocracy of the Dollar," p. 7.

managed; he found men who could do the job as he wanted it done; and he kept in touch.

As to the Civil War, Carnegie tried to turn a few months of service into a bit of mythology. In that way he also squared matters with his own conscience. One of Carnegie's persistent mottos was: "to thine own self be true,"<sup>115</sup> or "thine own reproach" alone do fear."<sup>116</sup> Carnegie found it difficult to believe in a hereafter, but he did have a conscience, and he held his actions up to the highest judgment possible; his own.<sup>117</sup> He believed in the cause of the Civil War; slavery was the only serious blight on the honor of the American commonwealth; the conflict was indeed an irrepressible one.<sup>118</sup> With tens of thousands of Union soldiers volunteering or accepting the draft, there was a need to rationalize Carnegie's own non-participation.

Almost immediately after the fall of Sumter, Thomas Scott was called to Washington to keep the railroads open into the capital. Scott asked Carnegie to serve as his assistant, and Carnegie chose some railroad men and went to Philadelphia

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<sup>115</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 135.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>117</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 3, he declares: "The judge within sits in the Supreme Court and can never be cheated." Perhaps just a little!

<sup>118</sup>Carnegie speaks of the Civil War as an "irrepressible issue," in Triumphant Democracy, p. 452, a common phrase, used at the time.

April 20, 1861. The railroad lines had been torn up by Southern sympathizers, and Carnegie directed the troops in rebuilding the lines into Washington. The process took several days, and on April 25, when the trains finally began their run from Annapolis to Washington, Carnegie rode in the locomotive cab, watching the track ahead for danger. The train stopped often and the troops removed obstacles from the tracks. Carnegie tells the rest of the story himself in these words:

I took my place upon the first engine which started for the Capital, and proceeded very cautiously. Some distance from Washington I noticed that the telegraph wires had been pinned to the ground by wooden stakes. I stopped the engine and ran forward to release them, but I did not notice that the wires had been pulled to one side before staking. When released, in their spring upwards, they struck me in the face, knocked me over, and cut a gash in my cheek which bled profusely. In this condition I entered the city of Washington with the first troops, so that with the exception of one or two soldiers, wounded a few days previously in passing through the streets of Baltimore, I can justly claim that I "shed my blood for my country" among the first of its defenders.<sup>119</sup>

This is quite a visual image, of heroic little Carnegie, bleeding profusely from the cheek, riding in the cab of the engine, bringing the trainload of troops into Washington to save the Capital.

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<sup>119</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 95-96.

The story is no doubt true, but how profuse the bleeding really was and why someone didn't lend him a handkerchief at least to hold back all that blood is not explained. The pinned down wire was certainly no Southern booby trap meant to injure, and only Carnegie's lack of care caused the accident. Later the magnate was to claim he was the third man wounded on the Union side in the Civil War.<sup>120</sup> The Carnegie biographers mention the incident on the way to the Capital, and it has become a part of the mythology.<sup>121</sup>

Carnegie sent dispatches to newspapers back home,<sup>122</sup> he organized what became the United States Military Telegraphers Corp.,<sup>123</sup> sending for the best telegraph operators on the Pennsylvania Railroad, and he worked hard keeping the railroad and telegraph lines open. In the heat of that summer, while working

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<sup>120</sup>"Carnegie on the Verge of Seventy," Current Literature, May, 1907, p. 502; Alderson, Carnegie, p. 26; Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 17; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 106.

<sup>121</sup>Burnley, Millionaires and Kings of Enterprise, p. 8, speaks of the many other narrow escapes Carnegie had at what he refers to as the "Battle of Bulls Run." From a distance in England it was still more romantic.

<sup>122</sup>The Pittsburgh Chronicle Telegraph, April 29, 1911, reprinted some of his dispatches advising the North not to despair over the defeat at Bull Run.

<sup>123</sup>See David Homer Bates, Andrew Carnegie: Founder of the United States Military Telegraph Corps: April 22, 1861 (no place: privately published, 1917), 35 pages total. Twenty-five copies of this book were printed, copy number 17 being in Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 256, File 2. A laudatory account.



on a bridge, Carnegie suffered a mild sunstroke and remained permanently sensitive to the sun. Carnegie tells the story of these events in the following terms in his Autobiography:

When I was called to Washington in 1861, it was supposed that the war would soon be over; but it was seen shortly afterwards that it was to be a question of years. Permanent officials in charge would be required. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company was unable to spare Mr. Scott, and Mr. Scott, in turn, decided that I must return to Pittsburgh, where my services were urgently needed, owing to the demands made upon the Pennsylvania by the Government. We therefore placed the department at Washington in the hands of others and returned to our respective positions.

After my return from Washington reaction followed and I was taken with my first serious illness. I was completely broken down, and after a struggle to perform my duties was compelled to seek rest. One afternoon, when on the railway line in Virginia, I had experienced something like a sunstroke, which gave me considerable trouble. It passed off, however, but after that I found I could not stand heat and had to be careful to keep out of the sun -- a hot day wilting me completely. (That is the reason why the cool Highland air in summer has been to me a panacea for many years. My physician has insisted that I must avoid our hot American summers.)

Leave of absence was granted me by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and the long-sought opportunity to visit Scotland came. My mother, my bosom friend Tom Miller, and myself, sailed in the steamship Etna, June 28, 1862, I in my twenty-seventh year; and on landing in Liverpool we proceeded at once to Dunfermline.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>124</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 105.

Carnegie was ready to work for his country's cause for months, but not for years. Actually there were a series of changes in the bureaucratic structures supervising the civilian branches of the war effort and after five months working in or around Washington, Carnegie found his excuse to first return to Pittsburgh to his old position as Superintendent of the Western Division and later to obtain a three month leave and make his first triumphal return visit to his native Scotch town of Dunfermline.<sup>125</sup> He was actually in a weakened condition and took ill in Dunfermline for six weeks, half of his vacation time. His weakened condition by June of 1862 was as much due to investigations of oil fields in all kinds of weather for his own investment as it was due to overwork on the Pennsylvania Railroad. There is no doubt of Carnegie's sensitivity to the sun, but the magnate was to use this patriotic Civil War sunstroke as the excuse for spending summers in Europe for several decades. This was part of being true to oneself also. Carnegie wanted very much to enjoy all of life.<sup>126</sup> Carnegie remained with the Pennsylvania Railroad as a patriotic duty, a rationalized belief that

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<sup>125</sup>Carnegie's College Lectures, tells the magnate's version of his life story in the introduction, essentially the same story as in his Autobiography, Gospel of Wealth, and "How I Became a Millionaire," but declares Carnegie traveled in Europe for a year for his health during the Civil War. It was three months, half of which he was ill in Dunfermline.

<sup>126</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, the magnate declares that if men do not go out and enjoy life while they may, time will pass them by and they will lose the capacity to enjoy life, p. 95.

since the railroads were needed for the war effort, this was his contribution to the Union cause. When he was drafted in mid-1864, he paid \$850 for a substitute rather than the standard \$300 cash settlement which he might have made to the government to stay out.<sup>127</sup> Here again he managed to ease his own conscience. After the Civil War was over, the magnate joined a G.A.R. post in Pennsylvania.<sup>128</sup>

Carnegie resigned his position with the Pennsylvania Railroad just before the Civil War ended and prepared to take full advantage of the post war industrial expansion. When he couldn't beat them he was ready to join them, as was the case when Pullman had the advantage in the sleeping car business. The story of Carnegie and Pullman, two short men, both going up the stairs of the St. Nicholas Hotel in New York, again creates quite a visual image. Carnegie declared they were making fools of themselves. "Unite," Carnegie suggested and when Pullman asked what he would call the Company, Carnegie replied: "The Pullman Palace Car Company."<sup>129</sup> Here is a fine little vignette of the myth-maker's art, yet it may have actually happened that way. By this time Carnegie and his mother had taken up permanent winter residence at the St. Nicholas Hotel in New York City. When the same owners opened the even more splendid Windsor Hotel, the

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<sup>127</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 190.

<sup>128</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol.17,#3255.

<sup>129</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 155-156.

Carnegies moved there; these hotels were Carnegie's American residence for twenty years from 1867 to 1887.

Here at the heart of the American financial nerve center, Carnegie began indulging in a number of speculative business negotiations. Later Carnegie would attack such manipulation and speculation as gambling and evil,<sup>130</sup> but at this point he sold bonds, exchanged stock, and dabbled in oil. From Carnegie's point of view most of these ventures were not really speculative. He acted swiftly, but he considered carefully. The risks taken were with the odds in his favor after a critical analysis of the possibilities and the men involved. It was knowing the men, obtaining favors, that made the difference. Carnegie's interest in the Pacific and Atlantic Telegraph Company led him to obtain the use of railroad rights of way for telegraph lines which in turn made the stock manipulation possible, and finally he sold out the company itself to the expanding Western Union in a massive series of speculative ventures. Carnegie had both sparkling eyes open for business opportunities; even when traveling abroad he was heedful of new techniques and cultivating men who might be future customers.

Carnegie's manipulations in his early days in the iron business were intricate indeed. When the magnate described his

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<sup>130</sup> See Chapter Six.

entrance into the iron business in his Autobiography he also made it sound simple:

Andrew Kloman . . . made the best axles. . . He was a great mechanic -- one who had discovered what was then unknown in Pittsburgh, that whatever was worth doing with machinery was worth doing well. . . . He was the first man to introduce the cold saw that cut cold iron the exact lengths. He invented . . . the first "universal" mill in America.<sup>131</sup>

Not so simple were the almost kaleidoscopic changes in the iron and steel companies in which the magnate was interested. The movement to bessemer steel later was complicated with legal battles. When he built his great plant at Braddock, Carnegie named it after J. Edgar Thomson, the man who was president of the Pennsylvania Railroad for so long, one more effort to continue his friendship with that line.

Above all Carnegie was incredibly lucky. Several of his childhood associates became major figures in American manufacturing, and probably would have succeeded quite well without Carnegie, for they went into the iron business before he did. Carnegie was extremely lucky with Captain William Jones, who in 1873 came to work for the magnate at the Edgar Thomson plant. Captain Jones was a superb manager of men and he developed a crew with spirit that worked hard. Jones had many patents which he

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<sup>131</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 126

turned over to Carnegie and several of them are still in the collection of Carnegie Papers in the Library of Congress. Carnegie confesses that Captain Jones alone produced the early profits for them at the Edgar Thomson Steel Company.<sup>132</sup> Captain Jones was a picturesque character and many of Carnegie's stories came to revolve around him. Captain Jones was the one man the magnate could not entice into his web with the offer of a partnership. Carnegie told the story of Captain Jones' salary this way:

In later years he declined an interest in the firm which would have made him a millionaire. I told him one day that some of the young men who had given an interest were now making much more than he was and we had voted to make him a partner. This entailed no financial responsibility, as we always provided that the cost of the interest given was payable only out of profits.

"No," he said, "I don't want to have my thoughts running on business. I have enough trouble looking after these works. Just give me a h-l of a salary if you think I'm worth it."

"All right, Captain, the salary of the President of the United States is yours."<sup>133</sup>

The partnership was the major fish hook that Carnegie utilized in later years to retain worthy men. Carnegie was always pleased by the advantages of a partnership over a corporation. A corporation was mindless and soulless and without heart.

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<sup>132</sup>Carnegie, "My Views Upon the Tariff," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 28.

<sup>133</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 196.

Everyone owned a part of the stock but everyone could sell out tomorrow for a profit. A partnership was a group of men working together in a common cause. In the case of Carnegie's partners, it was made pretty costly to sell. Carnegie's partnerships worked in this fashion: Young men who were seen as exceptionally able, deserving, and capable of rising in the business received shares in the firm, which they did not have to pay for, the dividends each year paid for the shares themselves, until the share value was paid up and then the partners received the dividends. The young junior partners knew if they continued to work hard they would become millionaires eventually. However, if they failed to please, the agreement stated that "three-fourths of their colleagues had the right to cancel . . . paying the party the sum then to his credit."<sup>134</sup> This was the famous Iron Clad agreement, the very name indicative of the determination of certain men for control. If the partner were asked out of the business, and this did happen again and again, the final time being Henry Clay Frick himself, then the former partner received

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<sup>134</sup>Carnegie, "The Human Side of Business," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 5.

only the book value of the stock.<sup>135</sup> Since by 1900 the book value was ten to twenty times less than the actual value, it paid to work hard, to please the steel king, and to stay with the business waiting for the glorious day when the big pay-off would come in terms of actual value.

One of Carnegie's most unshakable maxims was that the wise man spent his money to build his company in times of depression when prices were low. Such a dogma was rooted in optimism and above all in belief in the future of the nation. Carnegie had no sooner begun his great Edgar Thomson plant, than the Panic of 1873 issued in six years of serious depression. Carnegie disposed of most of his other possessions and placed all his money to win on the steel industry. He had the money, and at low prices the plant went up and began production. Again, in 1893, as twenty years before, when a great depression passed over the land for four years, Carnegie had the money not just to go on, but to expand. The Panic of 1873 gave him entrance into the world of steel; the end of the depression of 1893-1897, saw

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<sup>135</sup>Frick fought the Iron Clad agreement when he was forced out and achieved a favorable settlement. Hendrick carefully and convincingly illustrates that in the Carnegie-Frick quarrel it was Frick whose cold disposition, quick temper, touchy pride, and unbending determination to have things his way that caused most of the problems. Surely, Carnegie prodding people forever onward was not easy to live with, but what it amounts to is that for a variety of reasons, Frick, who was fourteen years younger than Carnegie, did not have the emotional stability to continue in a secondary position for another year. If he had possessed a little more team spirit and willingness to compromise he might have controlled most of the company when Carnegie finally bowed out a year later. Of course in the world of "if" anything can happen, and for all Frick knew, Carnegie might have never retired, in which case the actualities would have been that Frick barely outlived the younger man by a few months. Hendrick, Carnegie, covers this whole matter thoroughly, Vol. II, pp. 54-70, 89, 90, 99-103, 108-113.



Carnegie's companies in a position of such eminence that they dominated the world. While other companies had declined and their machinery had become outdated, Carnegie had rebuilt and expanded and modernized. He was the first man to scrap really large scale machines, before they were worn out, for better more productive instruments. Since he held a majority of the stock himself, he was able to continually press for expansion and modernization rather than dividends. The value of the company grew.

We will not follow all the side-adventures into wealth of Andrew Carnegie, these would take several sizeable chapters and are already well recounted by Wall and Hendrick and even Bridges if you but remember that the latter did not like the steel king. We have seen Carnegie as the immigrant boy in America seeking work in a bobbin factory, as a telegraph messenger, and finally as a telegraph operator (1848-1853). We have seen Carnegie working for the Pennsylvania Railroad first as Scott's secretary and then as Superintendent, becoming a junior capitalist, slowly at first, but spreading out (1853-1865). We have seen Carnegie engaged in a maze of enterprises, expanding, developing, traveling, selling bonds to the House of Morgan (1865-1872). Finally we see Carnegie moving into iron and steel, growing stronger during panics, joining pools and selling under the market price by turn, until he literally controlled the steel

industry (1872-1901). These are overlapping periods, just as the period of Carnegie the philanthropist began before 1901 and continued, in some ways, through the trusts and foundations he beget (these were his real children) to this very day.

PART II

Andrew Carnegie on the American Cultural and Educational Scene

Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7

## CHAPTER FOUR

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## Chapter Four

Andrew Carnegie's Own Education:  
Education Continued Throughout Life

## 1. The Origin of Education in the Community and in the Family

Petrus Paulus Vergerius, an Italian humanist educator in his essay written in 1404, De Ingenuis Moribus, declared that "a parent owes three duties to his children. The first of these is to bestow upon them names of which they need not feel ashamed. . . . The second obligation is this: to provide that his child be brought up in a city of distinction . . . third . . . is the duty of seeing that he be trained in sound learning. For no wealth, no possible security against the future, can be compared with the gift of an education."<sup>1</sup> In many ways Andrew Carnegie was fortunate on all three counts. He was justly proud of his name, pronounced CAR-NAY-GEE,<sup>2</sup> and of his happy, optimistic, grandfather

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<sup>1</sup>William Harrison Woodward, tr. & ed., Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897), p. 96. \*

<sup>2</sup>And still pronounced CAR-NAY-GEE in Pittsburgh, where he lived and made his fortune. Citizens of Pittsburgh will tell you that the other pronunciation is corrupted New York accent. But Carnegie did not really care. People even wrote him begging letters asking for money with his name misspelled in a dozen different ways.

As to the city of Carnegie's birth and childhood, no more fitting place could be imagined. Dunfermline was the ancient capital of Scotland. Vergerius does not mention religious training in his trinity of child development, but for Carnegie, Dunfermline itself was religion enough. "What Benares is to the Hindoo, Mecca to the Mohammedan, Jerusalem to the Christian, all that Dunfermline is to me,"<sup>3</sup> Carnegie exclaimed. He always described his fellow for Dunfermline as one of intense devotion.<sup>4</sup> Carnegie almost appears to be bearing Vergerius' admonition in mind when he affirmed in his Autobiography:

Fortunate in my ancestors I was supremely so in my birthplace. Where one is born is very important, for different surroundings and traditions appeal to and stimulate different latent tendencies in the child.<sup>5</sup> Ruskin truly observes that every bright boy in Edinburgh is influenced by the sight of the Castle. So is the child of Dunfermline, by its noble Abbey, the Westminster of Scotland, founded early in the eleventh century (1070) by Malcolm Canmore and his Queen Margaret, Scotland's patron saint. The ruins of the great monastery and of the Palace where kings were born still stand, and there, too, is Pittencrieff Glen, embracing Queen Margaret's shring and the ruins of King Malcolm's Tower with which the old ballad of "Sir Patrick Spens" begins:

"The King sits in Dunfermline Tower,  
Drinking the bluid red wine."

<sup>3</sup>Carnegie, An American Four-in-Hand in Britain, p. 262.

<sup>4</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 260.

<sup>5</sup>A real doctrine of education there.

The tomb of The Bruce is in the center of the Abbey, Saint Margaret's tomb is near, and many of the "royal folk" lie sleeping close around. Fortunate, indeed, the child who first sees the light in that romantic town, which occupies high ground three miles north of the Firth of Forth, overlooking the sea, with Edinburgh in sight to the south.<sup>6</sup>

Here we have a typical Carnegie quotation, replete with a couplet of poetry perhaps reproduced from memory. We note that Dunfermline is the Westminster of Scotland, indeed twenty of the Scottish royal family were buried there. The many historical ruins and the easy proximity to the sea made for numerous childhood field trips by Carnegie. Here was a town that lived with its history. In 1818, only seventeen years before Carnegie was born, some workmen digging to build a new Abbey Church found the remains of Robert Bruce himself. It had been known that Bruce was buried in Dunfermline Abbey, but knowledge of the place had been lost. A new tomb for Bruce was built in the center of the Abbey. Carnegie asserted that "the child privileged to develop amid such surroundings absorbs poetry and romance with the air he breathes, assimilates history and tradition as he gazes around."<sup>7</sup> Carnegie certainly was a romantic all his life.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 6-7.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>8</sup>See Chapter 5 for Carnegie as a Romantic.

The holy of holies is the pure and happy home," Carnegie proclaimed.<sup>9</sup> He was almost reverent about the value of the happy home where love could overcome all. The really happy home was one of the outgrowths of coming from good "kith and kin," a matter of primary importance in the development of the child.<sup>10</sup> Carnegie came from a long line of weavers and shoemakers, radicals independent producers if you will, and men who read. "Lineage is, indeed, most important," the magnate insisted, "but only the lineage of the immediate parents; for in each generation one-half of the strain is changed."<sup>11</sup> That is why hereditary titles as well as hereditary fortunes are nonsense. A man need not look back further than his own father and mother. The steel king remembered his father as a man who sang sweetly as he worked, was shy, reserved, and kind, "one of the most lovable of men, . . . deeply religious, although non-sectarian and non-theological, not much of a man of the world, but a man all over for heaven."<sup>12</sup> William Carnegie, as his father before him, was an "awful man to read," perusing novels, history, and theology.<sup>13</sup> American was

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<sup>9</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 157

<sup>10</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 3; Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 2; Andrew Carnegie, "Stanton -- The Patriot," Ohio Archeological and Historical Quarterly, (1906), reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 214; Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich," p. 11047. Carnegie continually spoke of good "kith and kin."

<sup>11</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 61

<sup>12</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 11, 50, 60, 61.

<sup>13</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 15.



too much of a change and his "father at last broke down completely, and all was left to the mother. Of course, she rose to the occasion."<sup>14</sup> Speaking of the mother of James Watt, Carnegie as usual personalized and saw his own mother mirrored in the words "What teacher, what companionship, to compare with that of such a mother! She taught him to read most of what he then knew, and, we may be sure, fed him on the poetry and romance upon which she herself had fed."<sup>15</sup> Again, writing of William Chambers, Carnegie saw his own mother when he quoted Chambers saying that his mother was "the solace of my existence."<sup>16</sup> Indeed, Carnegie saw Chambers' mother as a "guardian angel through life."<sup>17</sup> which is more accurate of Carnegie than Chambers. Carnegie spoke of his mother as his "saint,"<sup>18</sup> and dedicated his book An American Four-In-Hand in Britain to "My Favorite Heroine, My Mother."

While Carnegie's parents were both rather widely read, his mother was a much more complex person. Carnegie was to stress later: "What a Scotch boy born to labor is to become, and how, cannot be forecast until we know what his mother is, who is to

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<sup>14</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 205.

<sup>15</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. 1, p. 201.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 7.

him nurse, servant, governess, teacher, and saint, all in one."<sup>19</sup> Indeed, to the magnate, his mother always spoke truly and went beyond sainthood almost to godhood itself.<sup>20</sup> William Carnegie left the Presbyterian Church over the question of infant damnation<sup>21</sup> and took up the mystical Swedenborg teachings, but while Margaret Carnegie sent her children to church, she did not go herself. She read Channing's Sermons on Unitarianism while still in Scotland, but it was obvious to her oldest son that his mother believed true wisdom was not to be found in a particular creed or dogma. Inner understanding was a product of one's entire life. Parents can often teach best by indirection, and here certainly the mother taught the child.<sup>22</sup> While Carnegie may have dogmatized that to know the mother is to know the son, after his own mother's death he revealed very little of his feelings toward her. His deep loss was beyond words. Even in his Autobiography, his final published work, the steel king asserted that he still was not capable of speaking at length

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<sup>19</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 7.

<sup>20</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 17.

<sup>21</sup>Actually the infant Carnegie was the cause of his father's action; loving his son, his father could not tolerate the minister preaching a sermon on the subject of childhood damnation. His father rose in church and protested: "If that be your religion and that your God, I seek a better religion and a nobler God." Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 22.

<sup>22</sup>For more on Carnegie's religion, see Chapter Five.

concerning his special private divinity. "Perhaps some day I may be able to tell the world something of this heroine," he divulged, "but I doubt it. I feel her to be sacred to myself and not for others to know. None could ever really know her -- I alone did that. After my father's early death she was all my own."<sup>23</sup>

Rather it was all probably more nearly the other way around; after his father's death, Andrew Carnegie was all his mother's. Margaret Carnegie saw in the strong son a hope not to be found in the weak father; in a very real sense the magnate was raised for a purpose, to win the financial game his father had lost. This hope for success seen in the oldest son was not one to be relinquished easily to some other passing female, but held to and kept secure. Thomas, born eight years after Andrew, was allowed to marry and raise his brood of nine children, but Margaret Carnegie held all the closer to her eldest. When the magnate became engaged to Louise Whitfield, it remained a secret from his mother.<sup>24</sup> In speaking on the Venezuelan question, Carnegie once used an analogy in comparing American and Britain, which he never really followed himself: "There comes in the life of every manly man a time when he has to assert his own manhood. It is difficult for the mother to understand, or to approve of, the child she nursed in his utter helplessness, standing up

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<sup>23</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup>For Carnegie's marriage see Chapter Five.

against her fond decisions for his career and in turn ruling over his mother for her good."<sup>25</sup> To Carnegie it was quite important to be a manly man.<sup>26</sup> The magnate emphasized that "There comes a time, although the fond mother cannot see it, when a grown son has to put his arms around his saint and kissing her tenderly try to explain to her that it would be much better were she to let him help her in some way; that, . . . the mode of life delightful for young boys should be changed. . . . Especially should the slaving mother live the life of ease hereafter, reading and visiting more and entertaining dear friends."<sup>27</sup>

While Carnegie never escaped or desired to escape his mother's sphere of influence, and after her death merely turned himself over to Louise Whitfield who had been waiting in the wings as an understudy, it was George Lauder, Senior, who most affected the early education of the future steel magnate. Uncle Lauder had married a sister of Margaret Carnegie's, Seaton Morrison, but his wife died very early leaving him one son, named after himself. Uncle Lauder was a grocer in the High Street of Dunfermline, the prestige trade avenue of the town, and yet he was a man whose imagination and cultural acquisitions were considerable. Andrew Carnegie, who was two years older

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<sup>25</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Venezuelan Question," North American Review, February, 1896, in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 57.

<sup>26</sup> He repeats this desire in his Autobiography, p. 94.

<sup>27</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 85.

than George Lauder, Junior, loved to spend his early childhood days in his Uncle's shop.

My father was necessarily constantly at work in the loom shop and had little leisure to bestow upon me through the day. My uncle being a shopkeeper in the High Street was not thus tied down. Note the location, for this was among the shopkeeping aristocracy . . . in Dunfermline. . . . He possessed an extraordinary gift of dealing with children and taught us many things. Among others I remember how he taught us British history by imagining each of the monarchs in a certain place upon the walls of the room performing the act for which he was well known. Thus for me King John sits to this day above the mantelpiece signing the Magna Charta, and Queen Victoria is on the back of the door with her children on her knee. . . . In the list of the monarchs which I learned at my uncle's knee the grand republican monarch appeared writing his message to the Pope of Rome, informing His Holiness that "if he did not cease persecuting the Protestants, the thunder of Great Britain's cannon would be heard in the Vatican." It is needless to say that the estimate we formed of Cromwell was that he was worth them "a' thegither."

It was from my uncle I learned all that I know of the early history of Scotland -- of Wallace and Bruce and Burns, of Blind Harry's history, of Scott, Ramsey, Tannahill, Hogg, and Fergusson. I can truly say in the words of Burns that there was then and there created in me a vein of Scotch prejudice (or patriotism) which will cease to exist only with life. Wallace, of course, was our hero. Everything heroic centered in him.<sup>28</sup>

How happy is the child who finds a teacher who truly loves children! And everyone who comes in contact with the child is

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<sup>28</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 14-15.

his teacher. People often do not take this responsibility for what they say and do before children seriously enough. George Lauder took his namesake son and his nephew Andrew and made his store a place of history and legend, romance and literature, adventure and story. Lauder was truly concerned with teaching the boys, and he used story interest as his means. So often the lessons of the classroom are made purposely dull; the joy is eradicated in the name of academic learning. Uncle Lauder went to improbable lengths to bring the histories of the British and Scotch monarchs to the boys, and when he told the stories they made a permanent impression.

It was from Uncle Lauder's stories that Carnegie first learned to be a Scotch chauvinist. When an older schoolmate told the magnate that England was much larger than Scotland, he went to his Uncle for the answer. "Not at all," Uncle Lauder supposedly replied, "if Scotland were rolled out flat as England, Scotland would be the larger, but would you have the Highlands rolled down?" Of course Carnegie replied in the negative. The other famous tale was told when the greater population of England was related to Carnegie by someone. Again he went to Uncle Lauder who explained that these facts were indeed true. The population differential was actually "seven to one, but there were more than that odds against us at Bannockburn." Once again the

young Scotch boy was satisfied.<sup>29</sup> Wallace was the hero of Carnegie's childhood; the magnate asked himself what Wallace would do as he took the frightening path beside the churchyard at night or struggled with the boiler in the factory in Pennsylvania. Bruce was the King, but Wallace was the man of the common people and the hero of Carnegie. In a moment of exuberance the magnate declared: "It's a God's mercy I was born a Scotchman, for I do not see how I could ever have been contented to be anything else."<sup>30</sup> When he left Scotland for America it was years before he felt that America could be anything more than a temporary residence.<sup>31</sup> In his later writing Carnegie remained the Scotch chauvinist; he enjoyed pointing out again and again how the Scotch defeated the English or were better in some way.<sup>32</sup>

Uncle Lauder took his boys on field trips, but always the educational purpose was established in truly the best pedagogical manner. There was conversation first about the place to be visited, pointed suggestions as to what to watch for, and occasionally poetic lines to be memorized in conjunction with what was to be seen. Afterwards there was a questioning about what had been seen and a review of the answers to the questions initially posed. The trips might be mere walks into the fields or more

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>30</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, p. 152.

<sup>31</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 18.

<sup>32</sup>For an example, see Carnegie, James Watt, p. 135.

elaborate historical or religious pilgrimages.<sup>33</sup> Carnegie also reported other educational benefits he received from his grocer Uncle of High Street:

My good Uncle Lauder justly set great value upon recitation in education, and many were the pennies which Dod and I received for this. In our little frocks or shirts, our sleeves rolled up, paper helmets . . . with laths for swords, my cousin and myself were kept constantly reciting.<sup>34</sup>

My power to memorize must have been greatly strengthened by the mode of teaching adopted by my uncle. I cannot name a more important means of benefiting young people than encouraging them to commit favorite pieces to memory and then recite them often. Anything which pleased me I could learn with a rapidity which surprised partial friends.<sup>35</sup>

There is no doubt that Uncle Lauder in using story interest to illustrate his teachings, in discussing his excursions before and after the journey, and in giving instant rewards to his young charges, was using some of the best methods to coax the boys to learn. Carnegie developed a positive love for memorizing, for the attention of putting on performances before friends and relatives, and storing up what he termed "gems of wisdom" in his mind. Uncle Lauder's inclination ran to Shakespeare's

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<sup>33</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 23-24.

<sup>34</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 19.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 20.



Histories, The Lady of the Lake, and the poems of Burns.<sup>36</sup>

Carnegie learned many of Burns' poems before he attended school and the love of Burns persisted all his life. The magnate was to later write on Burns,<sup>37</sup> and quote him in speeches and books.

Here, from this early giving of pennies for performances, this Pavlovian response mechanism of Uncle Lauder's, along with the glory of being the central actor in dramas for a selected coterie of relatives, an almost incongruous multi-millionaire steel magnate developed, a man who later in life could quote Burns and Shakespeare to meet a multitude of situations and circumstances.

The magnate's early affection for George Lauder and his son was never forgotten. Carnegie could not pronounce "George" when he was very young and called his youthful companion "Dod," while the Lauder boy had problems with Carnegie, and named his friend "Naig." "Dod" and "Naig" they remained in letters back and forth to Scotland and America, and once Carnegie was successful, nothing would do but that George Lauder, Jr., his old friend "Dod," should come to America and be an executive in the magnate's

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<sup>36</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 26.

<sup>37</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Address by Andrew Carnegie at the Unveiling of a Status to Burns, erected by the citizens of Montrose," (Dunfermline: A. Romanes and Son, 1912), reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick.

Andrew Carnegie, "Genius Illustrated from Burns," in The First Book of the Author's Club, (New York, no publisher, 1893), pp. 86-99. This volume is in the Rare Book Room of the Library of Congress. Reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick.

company. The two men remained friends for life and both lived to be over eighty.

The first historians and also the first myth-makers are mothers who record every utterance, especially those of their first born children. There is of course a danger in seeing too much in the small vignette, the little incident remembered later. Certainly the visual picture of the magnate as a very small boy, digging into his Scotch porridge with a spoon in each plump little hand is striking, however, when Winkler as a biographer sees in this the future greedy capitalist and Wall the protected child who was to talk of poverty but remain well fed all his life, we may wonder if the porridge is not serving too much.<sup>38</sup> Wall is probably correct; Carnegie was always a protected child; the magnate extolled the virtues of poverty but never knew poverty.

The rabbit story,<sup>39</sup> too, has served a multiplicity of ends. As a child Carnegie raised rabbits and went Tom Sawyer one better in organizing the boys in his neighborhood to help him feed his pets, who naturally increased dramatically. Carnegie promised each child who gathered feed that a rabbit would be named after him. Later he named factories and blast furnaces, gave titles in a company, and everything but a larger share of

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<sup>38</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 108.

<sup>39</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 22-23; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 29.

of the profits to those who were thought helpful in his ventures.

Carnegie had been raised upon mottoes, and as with most children, he sought the key words that would cause him to have what he wished. So we have Carnegie as a child, his father taking him for a field trip walk to the seashore three miles away. On the return his father carried the boy uphill on his back for a time, but growing weary, suggested his son walk. Carnegie replied: "'Ah, father, never mind, patience and perseverance make the man, ye ken.'"<sup>40</sup> And so the boy got his way, using words for his purpose. The stories are probably true, not myths, interesting in their own way as told and retold tales, but there is considerable question as to just what they can really be used to prove about Carnegie the steel king.

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<sup>40</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 108; Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, pp. 33-34.

## 2. The Origin of Education in the School and the Community

The Coleman Report<sup>41</sup> recently stressed the contextual effect of an individual particularized in a societal paradigm, an exemplar being that the ecological processes themselves result in segmentation of socio-economic groups within a community and attitudinal value structures that stratify along normative class lines. Sub-communities thus produce their own climatic effect and lead to aspiration values which the school alone cannot alter. The conclusion appears to be that the school may not be able to change neighborhood patterns and ideals at all and its only chance may be to break out into the community itself, attempting to develop a partnership with the family in the inner city so that grass roots changes can produce new insights and ultimately new solutions. Andrew Carnegie came from a tightly knit family, in a community of largely individual producers. The drive to success came from both the home and the town. The cultural shock of his father's defeat causing the family to leave beautiful, beloved Dunfermline behind and journey to America, was a spur to action as sharp and pointed as can be imagined. The reason for coming to America was to rise and the prize was to return home in triumph. This was almost a pursuit of the Holy Grail. The quest

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<sup>41</sup>James S. Coleman, Equality of Educational Opportunity (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1966).

for money and culture were implanted early and remained the driving goals of Carnegie's life.

As McLuhan correctly indicates in Understanding Media, "The culturally disadvantaged child is the T.V. child."<sup>42</sup> Carnegie did not begin school until he was seven, and concluded later this was "quite early enough for any child to begin attending school."<sup>43</sup> The magnate was probably quite right for himself. Kindergarten is valuable, especially for children who have not played much with others, and this lack of meaningful play is likely to be more disastrous for the children of urban inner city dwellers. Headstart and even pre-headstart type classes are desirable for children of deprived cultures, which may be the condition of most American children before long in our great age of video-baby sitting. For children with parents who cannot or will not tend them, children with bilingual and bicultural backgrounds, children where non-standard English is spoken at home, the early childhood education becomes valuable, even necessary, under the guise of institutional upgrading so that something approaching "normal" progress may be hoped for when ghetto children are compared to the types of groups used by

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<sup>42</sup> Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (New York: New American Library, 1964), p. x.

<sup>43</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 13.

testers for norming purposes. But Andrew Carnegie had a good home, loving care, and his Scotch dialect was the standard at home and in school. For Carnegie, seven was quite an acceptable age to begin school.

Carnegie described how his boyhood good fortune in not beginning school until seven came to pass:

In an incautious moment my parents had promised that I should never be sent to school until I asked leave to go. This promise I afterward learned began to give them considerable uneasiness because as I grew up I showed no disposition to ask.<sup>44</sup>

William Cobbert, the radical editor whose journal *Old Thomas Morrison*, Carnegie's maternal grandfather, followed so avidly, believed that a home of good conversation was the best school and children should not be sent to school too young.<sup>45</sup> It may also have been the schoolmaster who made the suggestion to allow the boy to choose for himself.<sup>46</sup> It was Rousseau, of course who said:

Nature provides for the child's growth in her own fashion, and this should never be thwarted. Do not make him sit still when he

<sup>44</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 13.

<sup>45</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 19.

<sup>46</sup>See Hendrick's notes, Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Box 257.

wants to run about, nor run when he wants to be quiet. If we did not spoil our children's wills by our blunders their desires would be free from caprice. Let them run, jump, and shout to their heart's content.<sup>47</sup>

Rousseau even went so far as to declare: "Sacrifice a little time in early childhood and it will be repaid you with usury /interest/ when your scholar is older."<sup>48</sup> And so, Carnegie, like a Rousseau-born wild child was allowed to wander in Dunfermline, to visit Uncle Lauder, required at times to help in the shop, but largely left to his own wishes. When he was well past seven and still had not requested the right to go to school, the parents began to regret their rash promise but instead of breaking their word, they resolved upon a really Rousseauan stratagem to ease their child into education without upsetting him. For many children, the first real trauma in life comes upon entering school and having to conform to a world no longer centered upon the family. Knowing how Carnegie loved it when Uncle Lauder took him on occasional excursions, the local schoolmaster, Robert Martin, was brought into the conspiracy. Mr. Martin took young Andrew upon a trip one day with some of the boys who already attended the Rolland Street School, and soon thereafter Carnegie asked permission to begin attending school.

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<sup>47</sup>Jean Jacques Rousseau, Emile (London: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1957, Barbara Foxley translation), p. 50.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

The year before, in 1842, Dunfermline had thirty-three schools in the parish with 2,200 students, 1,200 boys and 1,000 girls.<sup>49</sup> This of course would average out to some sixty-seven students per school, with one teacher to a school. The facts were, however, that the less expensive schools had more pupils and the more highly regarded teachers who charged less had the most pupils. Some might feel that this was not a bad way to arrive at a pupil-teacher ratio. "Snuffy Martin," as his pupils called him, ran one of the more crowded and less expensive institutions, with well over a hundred students. He operated his establishment on the monitorial or Lancastrian plan with older students who knew particular lessons listening to younger ones recite. Indeed this was a reciting school, with many things going on at once in some of the sessions. So, with the parental plot successful, Andrew Carnegie began attending a Dunfermline school of Mr. Martin's that was the educational center for quite a number of students.

Carnegie enjoyed Mr. Martin as a teacher. "The school was a perfect delight to me, and if anything occurred which prevented my attendance I was unhappy," he recalled.<sup>50</sup> Here was obviously the ultimate school, with the child desiring to attend and saddened when any event prevented his presence. Actually,

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<sup>49</sup>Henderson, Annals of Dunfermline, p. 650.

<sup>50</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 13.



the school was a delight because Carnegie won the game here too. The magnate had a quick, retentive mind, and school then and now is likely to be largely memorization and reciting back. There was one problem, however:

One cause of misery there was, however, in my school experience. The boys nicknamed me "Martin's pet," and sometimes called that dreadful epithet to me as I passed along the street. I did not know all that it meant, but it seemed to me a term of the utmost opprobrium, and I know that it kept me from responding as freely as I should otherwise have done to that excellent teacher, my only schoolmaster, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude which I regret I never had opportunity to do more than acknowledge before he died.<sup>51</sup>

Here is another graphically illustrated tale, probably true and well illustrative of a number of factors in primary education. Children in school who are clever eventually learn to temper their answers so that they please the teacher and their classmates too. Children who attend school only a short period are much more likely to look back to one particular teacher who helped them than those who have a long succession of instructors. Inner city teachers are likely to be longer remembered than suburban instructors by their clientele. Carnegie for his part, felt "Mr. Martin -- the first great man I ever knew. Truly great

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

was he to me."<sup>52</sup> It all begins when we start school.

What lessons are learned at school? Often the lessons are quite other than the teacher or parent realize. If education is indeed preparation for life, then school does prepare in strange ways. Some children are early impressed with their success, others with their failure. Some by their very nature are called upon to recite often, expectancy of the correct answer in the very voice and tone and gesture employed by the teacher, while others are silenced, curbed, humbled, taught that in a group they had best be silent and take a secondary position. Andrew Carnegie amid all these other potential scholars soon became known as the teacher's pet, a phrase he did not exactly like, but in his own way accepted as deserved. He learned to make a friend of the power in the classroom just as he was later to make friends in the world of the telegraph office and the greater world of the Pennsylvania Railroad. So lessons can be learned at school and they can be training for life.

How closely education and life may be connected is illustrated by Carnegie's statement that "the first penny I ever earned or ever received from any person beyond the family circle was one from my schoolteacher, Mr. Martin, for repeating before the school Burns' poem, "Man was made to Mourn."<sup>53</sup> That both

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

Mr. Martin and Uncle Lauder gave pennies for reciting well and correctly is almost too much of a happy coincidence, and it is probable that Uncle Lauder took his cue from the master. If the recent report of the Carnegie Foundation is correct and the schools are gloomy places, then partly the blame must fall upon the lack of real rewards to young children when they accomplish.<sup>54</sup> We are all seeking praise and young children especially are like sunflowers, ready to turn in any direction in which they may catch a friendly ray. That pedagogical method is best which suggests the most often that children are doing well, that encourages, and lauds achievement even of the most minute. No pedagogical device is universally successful, but with younger children the penny or silver star for having done well is a real elevator of spirits. Carnegie's biographer, Hendrick, sees Mr. Martin as kindly and only rarely using the strap upon students who refused to concentrate. Carnegie was such an accomplished student he did not receive the strap, and even was released from the Catechism instructions by special dispensation from his mother.<sup>55</sup>

After only five years of actual classroom experience, the Carnegies moved to America and Andrew's days in the

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<sup>54</sup>Charles E. Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 10.

<sup>55</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, pp. 20-21.

Dunfermline school were over. The magnate explained:

I had left school forever, with the exception of one winter's night-schooling in America, and later a French night-teacher for a time, and, strange to say, an elocutionist from whom I learned how to declaim. I could read, write, and cipher, and had begun the study of algebra and of Latin. A letter written to my Uncle Lauder during the voyage, and since returned, shows that I was then a better penman than now. I had wrestled with English grammar, and knew as little of what it was designed to teach as children usually do. I had read little except about Wallace, Bruce, and Burns; but knew many familiar pieces of poetry by heart. I should add to this the fairy tales of childhood, and especially the "Arabian Nights," by which I was carried into a new world.<sup>56</sup>

The winter of night school was to learn double entry bookkeeping and the French teacher came before he began to return frequently to Europe. For Carnegie the rest of his education was on the job training and the self-education of the self-made man.

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<sup>56</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 25.

### 3. And Education Continues Throughout Life

We have seen young Andrew Carnegie, studying double entry bookkeeping on the side to buttress his position as a clerk in the second job he held and finally beginning to grasp at information of all kinds as a telegraph messenger boy. The streets, the business firms, the names of the leaders of Pittsburgh were all learned avidly. His letters written home to Scotland were exercises in composition that later were to turn into literature. Here was the future author beginning his development. "Leaving school," Carnegie declared, "does not mean the end of education -- but the beginning of self-education."<sup>57</sup> The delivery of telegraph messages for instance provided entre' into many a doorway, including the portals of the Pittsburgh Theater. A telegram to the theater meant being invited to view the performance from the balcony. The plays were often extravaganzas, gaudy and without depth, but a series of Shakespearean plays fascinated Carnegie and caused him to renew his memorizing of lines from the bard.<sup>58</sup> It was the same story interest, the oral tradition of the theater in this case, that introduced Carnegie to Shakespeare, as Uncle Lauder had shown him Burns. Carnegie responded by learning whole scenes, and learning them well, so

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<sup>57</sup> Carnegie, James Watt, p. 90.

<sup>58</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 46-47.

that later the multi-millionaire magnate was able to surprise friends who knew not a line of any writer by reciting Shakespeare and Burns to meet a variety of occasions. Carnegie was anxiously seeking "self-improvement,"<sup>59</sup> as a part of opportunity.

Uncle Lauder to encourage his "boys" to further self-improvement, suggested a trans-Atlantic debate by letter between his son and Carnegie on the respective virtues of the British and American government. This forced Carnegie to look up, digest, and transmit facts on his new land and do the same for the British government in order to attack its values. The interest aroused led to a series of exchanges and, for the future steel king, the interest continued throughout his life, leading to articles and eventually resulting in the magnate's most impressive volume, Triumphant Democracy, a generation later. At the time when he needed books for his inter-continental debate, he obtained volumes such as George Bancroft's History of the United States, along with many other works, from the Library of Colonel James Anderson.<sup>60</sup>

Colonel Anderson, a retired businessman, had in his home a small library of four hundred books, which he opened to young men on Saturday afternoon, at which time they might take out one

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>60</sup>Carnegie also took out such books as Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, Lamb's Essays, Macaulay's Essays, and Plutarch's Lives; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 66-67.

book each week. Suddenly a serious problem occurred. The good Colonel, determined to increase his benefaction, purchased additional volumes from a book store in New York and brought his library to eighteen hundred books. With these books he created what he named "The Mechanics' and Apprentices' Library" as a gift to the city of Allegheny, providing only that the city find space to house his project. This the city did; a room was rented on Federal Street and a librarian hired to issue the books. The fact that Carnegie followed a similar pattern with his own libraries is noteworthy and shows the influence of Colonel Anderson; for the magnate with his libraries would provide money for a building if the city would buy books annually and hire a librarian. But as the biographers of Carnegie have nobly recounted, the new librarian who had custody of Colonel Anderson's books proved to be a threat to the continued reading pleasure of the young telegraph messenger. The library was for mechanics and apprentices, but telegraph messenger boys were obviously neither. Therefore, Carnegie would have to pay a fee of two dollars a year. The librarian was technically correct, but officially carrying out the letter not the spirit of the bequest. True, the words "apprentice and mechanic" had definite meanings, but to Carnegie, Colonel Anderson was attempting to spread light and his agent was casting a dark shadow. Carnegie wrote the editor of the Pittsburgh Dispatch, May 9, 1853, his first letter to a newspaper and his first writing published. Carnegie

declared that certainly the generous Colonel Anderson had never meant to exclude boys employed in other lines of work. The librarian replied in some hauteur and Carnegie answered the reply. In the end, by admitting he had made some errors and not known all the facts, but in insisting on sticking to the question of Colonel Anderson's intention, Carnegie may be said to have clearly won the debate. The newspaper editor asked him to call at the office and matters were adjudicated. Carnegie, as well as his fellow messenger boys were allowed to use the library free.<sup>61</sup>

From this victory we can see Carnegie's faith in democracy and freedom of the press vindicated, his love of a competitive battle, typically won, his willingness to fight for the right to read, his including his friends in his success, and a growing awareness of his own abilities. Carnegie was later to ask what he could possibly have done, how could he ever have acquired "knowledge, had it not been from the most precious of all earthly possessions -- books, which a public benefactor opened to working boys."<sup>62</sup>

Carnegie biographer, Winkler, in a striking statement declared: "If the telegraph office had been young Carnegie's prep

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<sup>61</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 68-70 contains two Carnegie letters and a reply by the librarian. This is the most complete study of this episode.

<sup>62</sup>Hendrick, ed. Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 296.



school, the railroad was his college."<sup>63</sup> As secretary of Scott and later as Superintendent of the Western Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad, the young Scotchman met many rising businessmen on equal terms, noting their sales approach as they dealt with the great railroad, seeing which men failed and which succeeded. It was an advanced course in business administration with a minor in human relations. The future magnate associated with both the masses and the classes, the roustabout railroad men working day and night to keep the trains running and the men of affluence and position in the new suburb of Homewood where Carnegie and his mother now moved. At Homewood Carnegie met his first circle of cultured, educated people. Musicals and fashionable parties, theatricals and games for young people were the rule and Carnegie was invited because he was a neighbor, a bachelor, and charming to the ladies. Here we heard talk on subjects he had never known existed, but he listened when he did not know and as quickly thereafter as possible he read books on matters which he heard discussed.<sup>64</sup> Here he met John Vandevort and D. A. Stewart who were to become his partners. Judge Wilkins was the grand old man of Homewood, a man whose wife had been the daughter of George W. Dallas, a Vice-President of the United States, and Wilkins himself had been a minister to Russia. Judge Wilkins' name dropping of "President Jackson once said to me,"

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<sup>63</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 58.

<sup>64</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 90.

and "I told the Duke of Wellington," impressed Carnegie mightily.<sup>65</sup>

But it was Miss Leila Addison, who had the most influence upon Carnegie. The daughter of a physician who had recently died, and a mother, who could casually mention that Carlyle had been her tutor for a time, Leila Addison had been educated in Europe so that she spoke not only English, but French, Spanish and Italian. "It was through intercourse with this family," the magnate declared, "that I first realized the indescribable yet immeasurable gulf that separates the highly educated from people like myself."<sup>66</sup> Carnegie saw Leila Addison as "an ideal friend," trying to polish "the rough diamonds" those jagged surfaces the magnate presented to her. His ideal friend was extremely critical of all his outward manifestations. Carnegie had to deal with

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., pp. 91-92.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

railroad crew men and for all his shortness of size<sup>67</sup> and fragility of body<sup>68</sup> had come to affect a roughness of clothing, an almost studied carelessness of appearance that he felt was "manly." Indeed he had become a caricature of a railroad boss, accustomed to long hours on the trains and repairing track in all kinds of weather: wearing heavy sox, thick brogan shoes comfortably too large, a heavy great coat, and sturdy clothes, obviously inexpensive, designed to make their wearer appear a bit larger than life and ruggedly ready for any adventure. Leila Addison suggested more careful dress, politeness, courtesy, a gentler tone of voice, and above all correctness of grammar and language. Carnegie began to read the English classics and especially examined the errors in speech that his ideal friend corrected. He took evening classes after work in French and elocution to correct his language problems. The self-made man was beginning to look for outside help.

One of the turning points of Carnegie's life was his first return to Dunfermline. The magnate returned in triumph, still very young, only twenty-six years old, holding a well-paying job, and just beginning to make money very rapidly. The

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<sup>67</sup>Stead and Alderson, Carnegie's early biographers, were so friendly that they were quite willing to see him as a giant of humanity in all respects. Stead describes Carnegie in his mid-sixties as: "below middle height. He is slight and sparsely built, active on his legs, his hair is gray with the lapse of years, and physically he is as active as he has ever been." Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 57. Alderson goes further and declares: "In personal appearance Mr. Carnegie is a short, sprightly man, about five foot six inches in height, with an erect bearing, deep gray eyes, broad forehead and powerful jaw." Alderson, Carnegie, p. 224. Winkler, on the other hand, closes in on the target a little more accurately. He says of Carnegie, "In person he was short, thick, tough, hickory-knot of a man, five feet four inches in height. His head was round and big and broad and Scotch and full of brains." Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 10. Hendrick declined to comment, only suggesting that Carnegie was short, however, Wall more accurately sees Carnegie as only five feet three inches tall. Wall, Carnegie, pp. 150, 137.

<sup>68</sup>He weighed barely a hundred pounds in those days, Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 134.

young hero was returning home. To his surprise the world of Dunfermline had shrunk:

Every object we passed was recognized at once, but everything seemed so small, compared with what I had imagined it, that I was completely puzzled. Finally, reaching Uncle Lauder's and getting into the old room where he had taught Dod and myself so many things, I exclaimed:

"You are all here; everything is just as I left it, but you are now all playing with toys."

The High Street, which I had considered not a bad Broadway, uncle's shop, which I had compared with some New York establishments, the little mounds about the town to which we had run on Sundays to play, the distances, the height of the houses, all had shrunk. Here was a city of the Lilliputians, I could almost touch the eaves of the house in which I was born, and the sea -- to walk to which on a Saturday had been considered quite a feat -- was only three miles distant. . . .

Everything was there in miniature. . . . But one object remained all that I had dreamed of it. There was no disappointment in the glorious old Abbey and its Glen. It was big enough and grand enough, and the memorable carved letters on the top of the tower -- "King Robert The Bruce" -- filled my eye and my heart as fully as old. . . .

My relatives were exceedingly kind, and the oldest of all, my dear old Auntie Charlotte, in a moment of exultation exclaimed:

"Oh, you will just be coming back here some day and keep a shop in the High Street."

To keep a shop in the High Street was her idea of triumph.<sup>69</sup>

As usual Carnegie is descriptive and easily able to convey strong visual images with a few words. The world of Dunfermline, the world which he returned to, a hero, had shrunk, and he had outgrown it. He had already the money and ability to be a merchant

<sup>69</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 106-107.

in the High Street and become one of the town's elite, but he could see his native village in perspective now, and see that it was possible to conquer greater towns elsewhere. His childhood dreams were already surpassed and new dreams came to take their place.

When one works and saves there is usually a purpose. For Carnegie this purpose was first very interwoven: he worked because his family needed money; because his father had been defeated in Scotland and the magnate hoped somehow to beat the money game himself; he worked because of his love for his mother and to help his younger brother; but especially he worked for success itself and to return to his beloved Dunfermline in triumph some day. Later, with his father dead and Tom Carnegie a success in his own right, he worked because of the approval it brought from his mother, because he found himself in a great game that he enjoyed playing, and because he wished to be able to do some great things for people and the world. His boundaries expanded from his family to his town to the world.

Carnegie, ever watchful of what was de rigueur made the transition after the Civil War into New York society. Leaving Henry Phipps and his brother to run the business in Pittsburgh, Carnegie took permanent residence with his mother in the finest of New York hotels and became the New York representative of his company in the financial capital of America. The house in

Homewood was given to his brother after the marriage of Thomas Carnegie and the magnate opened an office on Broad Street in New York. For a time the new city seemed too big, but gradually the steel king made new friends, his interests again were broadened, and he began to call New York home. Carnegie speaks of the widening influences in terms of education and training, reading and study, for he more than read the Pittsburgh and New York papers, he read avidly whenever he heard a topic discussed he did not understand.

Among the many educative influences from which I derived great advantage in New York, none ranks higher than the Nineteenth Century Club organized by Mr. and Mrs. Courtlandt Palmer. The club met at their house once a month for the discussion of various topics and soon attracted many able men and women.

Here in the Nineteenth Century Club was an arena, indeed. Able men and women discussed the leading topics of the day in due form, addressing the audience one after another. The gatherings soon became too large for a private room. The monthly meetings were then held in the American Art Galleries. I remember the first evening I took part as one of the speakers the subject was "The Aristocracy of the Dollar." Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson was the first speaker. This was my introduction to a New York audience. Thereafter I spoke now and then. It was excellent training, for one had to read and study for each appearance.<sup>70</sup>

Carnegie was nominated to the Nineteenth Century Club through the influence of Mrs. Anne Botta, the wife of a professor of Italian at New York University. Anne Botta was a charming woman, a

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<sup>70</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 145-146.

hostess of literary parties, and her circle included some of the most important literary and political figures in America.

Carnegie saw her drawing room more nearly resembling a salon than any gathering in New York. The magnate was carefully climbing the social as well as the financial ladder; throughout his life he was determined to meet the right people and cunning in his arrangements to gain introductions. An invitation to a party would lead to further acquaintanceships and other introductions. "I was honored," Carnegie indicated, "by an invitation one day to dine at the Bottas and there met for the first time several distinguished people, among them one who became my lifelong friend and wise counsellor, Andrew D. White, then President of Cornell University, afterwards Ambassador to Russia and Germany, and our chief delegate to the Hague Conference."<sup>71</sup> Mrs. Botta herself became Carnegie's entree into the Nineteenth Century Club.

So Mrs. Botta became another woman who was interested in that many faceted rough gem, Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie, as always, admitted to his rough spots and showed great willingness to be polished. "Madame Botta, the author, the sculptor, the critic, and not least, the charming woman of the world, had naturally a wider horizon," he emphasized.<sup>72</sup> He saw her as

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>72</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Anne C. Botta," a chapter contributed by Carnegie to a book edited by her husband after her death, The Memoirs of Anne C.L. Botta (New York: 1894), in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 152.

opening the way for him into American cultural society.

In Italy, Germany, France, or England, no woman has the slightest pretension to the foremost place in society who is not able to draw to her, through congenial tastes, the literary, musical, professional, and artistic celebrities -- the leading ministers, physicians, painters, musicians, and actors, and especially the coming man or woman in these branches. Millionaires and fashionables are poor substitutes for the real lions of a cultivated society.<sup>73</sup>

Carnegie was apparently originally invited by the Bottas as a mere example of that American curiosity, the rising young businessman on the make, self-taught, and unlettered. He surprised his hostess by his consuming interest in a number of cultural topics and was often invited back, eventually being introduced by Anne Botta to others of the inner circle of New York culture. Carnegie for his part genuinely liked Mrs. Botta. The steel magnate, in his later tribute, remarked on his first invitation in this fashion:

I judge that none can write from my standpoint, which is that of a young, unmarried and unknown man, a stranger in the great metropolis, whose first entrance into such a circle . . . came through the dear lady whose loss means so much to all of us. It pleases me to remember that . . . I was often invited by the Bottas thereafter. Speaking, long years afterward, of the beginning of our intimacy, Madame Botta told me she invited me again because some words I had spoken the first night struck her as a genuine note, although unusual.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 153.



Carnegie, the rising young business figure on the make, turned out to be a man who could quote a line of verse, was knowledgeable of current affairs, and had a variety of outspoken opinions on every subject from politics to religion. In the drawing room of Madame Botta he was able to talk to some of the best people of the western world and give his mind a chance to grow.

Self-educated, Carnegie above all depended upon his wide reading to carry him through. A taste for reading is the most valuable attribute a man can have, the magnate was to insist.<sup>75</sup> Reading aloud to oneself was very valuable.<sup>76</sup> "Be sure to read promiscuously," was the steel king's advice,<sup>77</sup> and his highest accolades were reserved for teen-agers of whom it could be said: "he was a reading boy."<sup>78</sup> Indeed the "taste for reading," was to be regarded in business as an "inestimable prize,"<sup>79</sup> for the man who had a wide range of knowledge soon surpassed the businessman whose boundaries of the universe were his own company books.<sup>80</sup> In Round the World Carnegie repeatedly drops the titles of the latest volume he was reading, and he was probably speaking truly.

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<sup>75</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 79.

<sup>76</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," p. 8.

<sup>77</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 83.

<sup>78</sup>Carnegie, "The Laird of Briarcliff Manor," p. 107.

<sup>79</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 88.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

He saw one of the really strong points of the Chinese culture in the fact that they are "a reading and writing people."<sup>81</sup> Carnegie even tries to see his fellow countrymen in America in his own mold when he openly asseverated:

The American is not only a reader, but he is above all other men a buyer of books. Circulating libraries are not so generally used as in Europe. It is when you enter the home of the American farmer or artisan that you are struck with the number of books and magazines you see -- the two or three shelves and often far greater number filled with them -- all of which are his own, except perhaps the few stray borrowed volumes which most collections contain, and which are conscientiously counted as belonging to another, to be returned some day, but somehow that some day never arrives. There must be a special punishment in store surely for such as do not return these treasures to their rightful owners. (This hint is not without a purpose.)<sup>82</sup>

Carnegie's trips abroad to sell bonds to the House of Morgan were also periods of mental expansion. He loved the travel and meeting people. Carnegie's Keystone Bridge Company made little money on the bridge at Keokuk, but it proved they could build bridges and the Company received the contract to build the great bridge over the Mississippi at St. Louis. Carnegie took the proposal to raise the capital, four million collars, to Junius Morgan, the father of the great banker who was

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<sup>81</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 106.

<sup>82</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 362.

later to buy out Carnegie. Carnegie presented a prospectus to Morgan, which he had written during the sea voyage and had printed in London, and gave the banker a day to look it over. Morgan was delighted but his lawyers wished a series of changes. The banker suggested Carnegie go up to Scotland, as was his plan, and the exchange of letters would take place by the time the magnate returned. Instead, Carnegie numbered the lines of the contract, used the newly laid Atlantic cable, and being an old telegraph man himself, with a series of private code books,<sup>83</sup> he easily transmitted the changes. Carnegie made a large commission and Morgan was agreeably surprised when the company board met that night and the changes were approved and ready the following day.<sup>84</sup>

While some of Carnegie's trips were business negotiations with a bit of travel on the side, he was willing to use excuses such as sunstroke and overwork as reasons for traveling abroad. Carnegie simply believed life should not be all business and he was determined to see the world and enjoy himself. The real life credo of Carnegie was to be true to his dreams.<sup>85</sup> Carnegie's trip around the world had a lasting effect. The magnate suggested

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<sup>83</sup>Some of the Carnegie private telegraph code books are still in the Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress. See especially Vol. 259, Folders 1, 4. Word substitution, in which one word was utilized to mean another, is the main coding device used.

<sup>84</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 150-151.

<sup>85</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, pp. 1-2.

his shift in ideas in this fashion:

It quite changed my intellectual outlook. Spencer and Darwin were then high in the Zenith, and I had become deeply interested in their work. I began to view the various phases of human life from the standpoint of the evolutionist. In China I read Confucius; in India, Buddha and the sacred books of the Hindoos; among the Parsees, in Bombay, I studied Zoroaster. The result of my journey was to bring a certain mental peace. Where there had been chaos there was now order. My mind was at rest. I had a philosophy at last.<sup>86</sup>

Carnegie declared after his coach ride across the British Isles that "travel is in one sense the only possible educator."<sup>87</sup> His trip around the world with John Vandevort in 1878 led him to publish his first book. The dedication on this book was: "To My Brother and Trusty Associates, who toiled at home that I might spend abroad, these notes are affectionately inscribed by the Grateful Author."

One of the really misleading statements on Carnegie is Josephson's suggestion that "the immortal donor of free libraries who was the most articulate of the industrialists had no further thoughts upon the making of books than the cash profit to be derived from them."<sup>88</sup> Josephson, usually a most able historian,

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<sup>86</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 199.

<sup>87</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, p. 104.

<sup>88</sup>Josephson, Robber Barons, p. 336.

here is startlingly at deviance with the facts. Carnegie published his first book with his own money as a gift to his friends. In comparison to his other forms of income, the magnate made little on his books. Indeed, his literary outpourings were published largely because people were interested in what the successful steel man might say. It took far longer to make a million writing and rewriting magazine articles than producing steel. Much closer to the truth is the eulogistic view: "Andrew Carnegie was a bookman. He early fell in love with books; he fingered, he read them; he pondered them; and today his libraries are scattered throughout the United States and in more than one foreign country."

To see Carnegie as traveling primarily to learn new steel processes and make money or as writing primarily to make money, is to miss the point. Carnegie had twin aims in life: to make money and to develop himself as a cultured and cultivated man of the world as much as possible; as close runners-up were secondary aims to achieve immortal fame and the applause of mankind. How long does a man live? What is fame? Carnegie saw success partly in terms of book titles in library catalogs, partly in terms of building libraries, partly in terms of money and what it would do, and partly in terms of influence upon the world. In a very real sense he was searching all his life for the kind of greatness found in the famous men in the stories Uncle Lauder told

in the grocery store on High Street. Often greatness and individual success are measured in terms of educational goals and family aspirations. Once Carnegie had made his first few millions he was motivated far more by another word Josephson used in his quoted sentence -- the desire for immortality.

Carnegie was a compulsive writer as he was a compulsive speaker. He could not really write even a short article on any subject without his own personality intruding. He speaks quite frankly of "the sensation one has when he first sees his remarks in the form of a printed book."<sup>90</sup> And so we see Carnegie in the 1870's, traveling, reading widely, and entering the highest cultural circles of New York society. In the 1880's, as he began to have money to distribute, Carnegie began to write widely and spend half of each year in Europe. Now he became a part of London society as well and soon was a cultural intermediary between the continents. By the 1890's we find Carnegie traveling in style. In February and March, 1892, he was touring Mexico and California with a party in his private railroad car, the Iolanthe.<sup>91</sup> In January 1894, Carnegie sailed on the Columbia to Europe, going to Alexandria in Egypt and occupying the "Captain's Room," the best suite on the ship.<sup>92</sup> After going through the Near East, he went

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<sup>90</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 197.

<sup>91</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 14, #2592.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., Vol. 23, #4480.

on to Paris in April 1894, and then to Cluny Castle, which he rented for half of each year, his summer home in Scotland. In 1897 he purchased Skibo Castle, in the far north of Scotland for \$425,000.<sup>93</sup> In 1902 we find the now retired magnate, continuing to summer at Skibo Castle, and building his own mansion at 2 East 91st Street in New York City. He enjoyed boating and spent a considerable amount of time on his yacht, the Seabreeze. The magnate's universe was Einsteinian, perpetually expanding. In his last decades, in retirement, Carnegie sought to learn how to best spend his money, and instead of a man with narrowing horizons, became a man sought out by the world for every project, worthy or lunatic, that came along.

One of his prouder moments came with his election as Rector of St. Andrews College in Scotland. Carnegie tells the story in this fashion:

My election to the Lord Rectorship of St. Andrews in 1902 proved a very important event in my life. It admitted me to the university world, to which I had been a stranger. Few incidents in my life have so deeply impressed me as the first meeting of the faculty, when I took my seat in the old chair occupied successively

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<sup>93</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 218. "Upon his arrival at his new home he met with an enthusiastic reception from the tenantry." Carnegie spoke to the tenants and said: "The best key to the castle . . . would be the knowledge that he 'possessed the hearts of his people.'" Alderson, Carnegie, pp. 218, 219. Alderson as usual was given the wrong information by Carnegie and had the date of purchase of Skibo Castle as 1895. Carnegie has it correct in his Autobiography, p. 209.

by so many distinguished Lord Rectors during the nearly five hundred years which have elapsed since St. Andrews was founded. I read the collection of rectorial speeches as a preparation for the one I was soon to make.<sup>94</sup>

Here we have Carnegie loving his title of Lord Rector, taking his job seriously and doing his homework. He pleased his clientele as usual and reported:

My unanimous reelection by the students of St. Andrews, without a contest for a second term, was deeply appreciated. And I liked the Rector's nights, when the students claim him for themselves, no member of the faculty being invited. We always had a good time. After the first one, Principal Donaldson gave me the verdict of the secretary as rendered to him: "Rector So-and-So talked to us, Rector Thus-and-So talked at us, both from the platform; Mr. Carnegie sat down in our circle and talked with us."<sup>95</sup>

Whether the students really enjoyed it, Carnegie certainly did. The magnate, as much as any man in his position could, believed that education continued throughout life and exemplified that belief in action.

<sup>94</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 260.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., p. 262.



## CHAPTER 5

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## Chapter Five

The Views and Interests of Andrew Carnegie as Seen in  
His Writings

## 1. The Views of Carnegie: A Potpourri

Those who saw Carnegie as the robber baron capitalist who stepped on the faces of the masses in rising and then gave away his blood money to clean his name, have usually not read him. Curiously, Carnegie deserves to be read. His articles are far from flawlessly written, but he was published in his lifetime only partly because he had become such a financial success. Frequently his efforts are interestingly conceived, with the unique view of the professional writer who shuns approaching a topic in an ordinary fashion. Carnegie wrote on many of the vital issues of the nineteenth century and did not represent merely his own class, but rather a special, personal set of ideas. True, Carnegie lacks control; he is unable to write about one subject; he meanders so that the whole spectrum of his basic beliefs emerge in a few articles. Some important novelists have been accused by critics of being one-book authors, of writing the same book over and over again, regardless of the title, setting or characters. So, with Carnegie, his views surface in his meandering style no matter what his subject. The magnate did work at his writings. He produced a penciled first copy which was typed for him, and then

using this, made corrections and changes, until the page had almost as much pencil as type. Then the copy was retyped and he might begin again. He aimed to achieve a simple, lucid, naturally clear style that really mirrored his thoughts. Many read Carnegie with judgments formed, but if one comes with an open mind, one finds, as a sort of surprise, a man who reasons, who writes rather well, who says things that need saying, who is logical and often quite persuasive.

Carnegie was a phrase maker and a creative writer, a developer of his own mottoes, endlessly repeated. We have mentioned a few of these slogans already: Put all your eggs in one basket and then watch that basket; We could cease concerning ourselves over trifles if we only could tell what trifles were; In America it is shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves in three generations; Thine own reproach alone do fear; All is for the best, since all grows better. Some of these he altered, some he borrowed, some were common slang, but they became a sort of shorthand for basic beliefs which the magnate held. "Millionaires who laugh are rare." was another rather sardonic expression he used.<sup>1</sup> The magnate often used intriguing images and figures, comparisons, parallels and contrasts. He compared Bismarck's stroke of genius in uniting the petty kingdoms of Germany with the amalgamation

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<sup>1</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, p. 210; Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich and the Right View of Wealth," p. 11052.

of a large number of companies to form a great monopoly.<sup>2</sup> They were both part of the modern spirit. Carnegie's article on the Venezuelan question is really a delightful spoof in a satirical vein, not unlike what might be expected from a columnist like Art Buchwald today.<sup>3</sup> Often, on the other hand, the magnate indulged in a simplistic interpretation of events that was so precarious as to become ludicrous, viz., he sees the Alabama Case as angering the United States and so leading to a tariff of thirty per cent on steel which allowed the American steel industry to grow and become the greatest in the world.<sup>4</sup> His ideas were usually expansionist, but as we shall see anti-colonial and anti-imperialist; Carnegie usually was a nineteenth century American enough to equate bigger with better; Jefferson feared great cities, Carnegie welcomed them.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup>Carnegie, "Venezuelan Question," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, pp. 44-45. Carnegie teases the British for making several claims of Venezuelan land, each one greater than the last, not quite being able to make up their minds how much they wanted. He sees four British claims, each extending further into its neighbor's territory. He then pokes fun at the assertion of the Daily News of London for saying the British claim is just. Which one, he asks? "Probably the scale runs thus: First claim, just; second, more just; third, most just."

<sup>4</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Anglo-American Trade Relations," printed originally as "Address on 'British American Trade Relations,'" (Halifax: S. Mortimer, September 26, 1900), reprinted in Empire of Business, pp. 173-186.

<sup>5</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 46-73.

## 2. The Views of Carnegie: For an English Speaking Union

Some referred to Andrew Carnegie as the Star Spangled Scotchman, and, indeed, there was some truth to the belief that the magnate acted the part of the Scotchman in America and the American in Scotland. There was no doubt of his love for both Britain and America, and one of Carnegie's strongest, most persistent beliefs was that there was nothing more certain "in the near future than that they must unite. It were criminal for them to stand apart."<sup>6</sup> Carnegie declared that the great Americans in the Revolutionary period had never intended to split with Britain; actually the division had been forced upon them. It was really too bad that the Revolutionary War had taken place. If Britain had only continued to control America, by now the shifts in economic and political power would have meant that America controlled Britain, from Washington, D. C., which was where control of the Empire should lie. Of course there were some small problems. The Queen would have to resign. The Established Church would need to be abandoned. Hereditary titles would be ended.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Drifting Together: Will the United States and Canada Unite?" World's Work Press, 1904, p. 4. Copy in Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, 12 page article, Vol. 264, Folder 5.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "A Look Ahead: The Reunion of Britain and America," North American Review, June, 1893, Copy in Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 245, Folder 9.

The non-English speaking colonies, especially India, which was a drag upon the British government anyway, would need to be set loose.<sup>8</sup> Britain would still be the motherland of the great race, the center of culture and tradition and history, so it would not matter that Washington, D. C., became the real capital.<sup>9</sup> The Union would be of all the English speaking lands, the United States, Canada, the British Isles, Australia, and New Zealand. This was an inevitable, fated necessity, evolutionary in nature and certainly Spencerian and Darwinian. Force would never be needed "to accomplish this union -- it will come -- must come -- in the natural order of things."<sup>10</sup> So Carnegie, the Star Spangled Scotchman, hoped to do his bit to combine all the English speaking people in a still more perfect union.

The magnate believed that an international manifest destiny was working to accomplish the dream of an English speaking world-wide union. It was of course obviously all for the best. How could one even conceive of the American continent split down the middle, the northern half remaining under a monarchy thousands of

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<sup>8</sup>On India, Carnegie declared: "I find it impossible to repress the wish that springs up at every turn, as a lover of England. Would she were safely and honorably out of it! Retiring now is out of the question; she has abolished the native system in large districts and must, perforce continue the glorious task of giving to these millions the blessings of order." Carnegie, Round the World, p. 193.

<sup>9</sup>Philadelphia Record, June 1, 1902.

<sup>10</sup>Carnegie, "Drifting Together," p. 4.

miles away and the southern half a vigorous republic. It was obvious also that Canada and Australia would become independent.<sup>11</sup> These two nations would never be much if they remained colonies. They might produce "wood, corn and beef" but not men or books or inventions or pictures.<sup>12</sup> And Britain herself needed the union.

The day is coming when Britain will have to decide on one of three courses. First, shall she sink -- comparatively to the giant consolidations -- into a third or fourth-rate power. . . . or, second, shall she consolidate with a European giant? or, third, shall she grasp the outstretched hand of her children in America and become as she was before, the mother member of the English-speaking race?<sup>13</sup>

The true test for the new Union would be:

If Shakespeare's tongue be spoken there and songs of Burns are in the air.<sup>14</sup>

Eventually the magnate even was willing to relent a little and allow Britain to keep her monarchy, aristocracy, established church and Indian Empire, if she would only join his Union.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Carnegie, "Venezuelan Question," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 42.

<sup>12</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 111.

<sup>13</sup>Carnegie, "Drifting Together," p. 11.

<sup>14</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Imperial Federation," Nineteenth Century, September, 1891, reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland, p. 231.

<sup>15</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 52.

It was meant as a truly gracious gesture. Carnegie wrote many letters<sup>16</sup> and numerous articles to convince people that his dream of a worldwide English-speaking Union was feasible.

As transportation and communication across the Atlantic became more rapid, Carnegie saw the possibility of his proposed Union improving. In 1755 it took men from Glasgow twelve days to reach London; while in 1905, "if the capital of the English-speaking race were in America, . . . if thereby the union of our English-speaking race were secured, the members of the Great Council from Britain could reach Washington in seven days, the members from British Columbia and California, upon the Pacific, in five days."<sup>17</sup> Carnegie suggested that he agreed with Cecil Rhodes on Federation of "the race," and wanted to meet with Rhodes.<sup>18</sup> Rhodes of course had slightly differing views as to where the center of power might be placed. Carnegie, for his part, suggested similar institutions for all the English-speaking countries, but these similar institutions turned out to be very like American rather than British institutions.<sup>19</sup> "Just as more

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<sup>16</sup>For instance he wrote to John Patterson of Hamilton, Ontario, Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, January 13, 1892, Vol. 14, #2477 and 2478. Usually he tried to influence men such as Gladstone and Morley. He also wrote continually to newspaper and periodical editors on both sides of the Atlantic.

<sup>17</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 24.

<sup>18</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 16, #2892.

<sup>19</sup>Carnegie, "Imperial Federation," in Gospel of Wealth, pp. 234, 235.



rapid transportation and communication were tending to unite the English-speaking people, Carnegie believed the inevitable tide of a common culture also was bringing them together.

Carnegie referred to his efforts at creating an English-speaking Union as race patriotism, race union, a race alliance, or race imperialism. This was the nineteenth century, when men still equated language with race. Carnegie insisted upon speaking of race in many contexts when he meant language or nationality. He saw America fortunate in her race. Britain had founded America and it was largely from the British Isles that Americans had come. If any other race had founded America, the United States would not have had its great growth.<sup>20</sup> British and American seizure of territory was seen "as a race trait" because they were a "dominating" race, superior to others.<sup>21</sup> Carnegie in lecturing English students at St. Andrews College on the subject of the American industrial ascendancy declared:

One is not wrong in believing that it is the ablest and most ambitious who leave their own land -- men who have saved enough to enable them to reach and to start in the new; that they have saved being the best possible proof of their value. One such emigrant is worth to America a score of inert stay-at-homes. . . . The American is efficient beyond other men because compounded

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<sup>20</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup>Carnegie, "Venezuelan Question," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 46.

of the best of other nations and developed in a climate under political, educational, and social conditions all stimulating beyond any to be found elsewhere.<sup>22</sup>

Carnegie's statement is a curious mixture of his beliefs as to race, education, and the value of thrift all in one paragraph. In this same lecture, Carnegie moved beyond his hopes for an English-speaking international union to discussing the United States of Europe that was bound to come in the future as well.<sup>23</sup>

Carnegie often spoke of the value of a Home Market and the necessity for Home Rule. Politicians who looked to foreign markets, where the people were poor and unable to buy, were deluding their own nations and playing an empire game for their own interests.<sup>24</sup> The need for a large home market to provide a base for developing manufacturing demands the union of all of Europe; it required continental divisions.<sup>25</sup> In the same way, Home Rule for Ireland was a necessity. The first step toward great international unions was to initially let the children go and then bring them back into a greater union on the basis of equality. Carnegie, speaking to the Glasgow Junior Liberal Association, suggested that the answer for Ireland was the same

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<sup>22</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 97.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>24</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 95.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 113.

as the answer for America: first release Ireland and then bring her back as a state on the basis of equality. The American Constitution was the answer to all.<sup>26</sup> The magnate's interest in Irish Home Rule kept cropping out, even in articles that were written to eulogize the Queen.<sup>27</sup> Carnegie, always pretty sanguine, saw the Home Rule issue pressing Britain toward an American federal system.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the competition of America was forcing all of Europe toward union; only by a continental union could Europe survive the industrial threat of the United States and once that was achieved, then Britain would be forced to see that only by Union with America and her colonies could the motherland of Englishmen survive.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Home Rule in America," a political address delivered in St. Andrews Halls, September 13, 1887 (Glasgow: Glasgow Junior Liberal Association, 1887), reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland. The original essay is more interesting in that it is replete with parenthetical crowd sounds: (laughter), (cheers), (applause).

<sup>27</sup>Carnegie, "The Jubilee," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 73.

<sup>28</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 314.

<sup>29</sup>For other views at the time on Carnegie's proposal see: Goldwin Smith, "Anglo-Saxon Union: A Response to Mr. Carnegie," North American Review, August, 1893, pp. 170-185; E. Anthony, "Mr. Carnegie and the re-Union of the English Speaking Race," Westminster Review, June, 1905, pp. 636-642.

### 3. The Views of Carnegie: Anti-Colonialism

In his trip around the world in 1878-1879, Andrew Carnegie noted again and again the cost of imperialism. "If America can learn one lesson from England," he declared, "it is the folly of conquest where conquest involves the government of an alien race."<sup>30</sup> Here the magnate was and remained entirely consistent in his views and intentions throughout the remainder of his life. In 1886, in Triumphant Democracy Carnegie asserted that:

In the end, more speed is made in developing and improving backward races by proving to them through example the advantages of Democratic institutions than is possible through violent interference. The man in America who should preach that the nation should interfere with distant races for their civilization, and for their good, would be voted either a fool or a hypocrite.<sup>31</sup>

In 1896 he repeated a favorite theme, quoted from Disraeli, that her colonies were a millstone around England's neck.<sup>32</sup> Carnegie saw as one of the significant differences between America and Britain, the anti-imperialism of the new world. True, America

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<sup>30</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 154.

<sup>31</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 412.

<sup>32</sup>Carnegie, "Venezuelan Question," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 43.

had acquired territory, but always contiguous territory, without large populations of natives to be ruled. Even Alaska was merely a step toward unifying the continent north of the Rio Grande, an obvious step toward acquiring Canada that had to come in the nature of things. Britain had wasted her substance in far off lands on distant people that could never be united into a permanent empire. "It is pitiable," Carnegie lamented, "to see so many lives lost and so much money squandered in pursuit of shadowy dominion over barren territory in far off, sparsely populated lands, ostensibly to secure new markets for British products."<sup>33</sup> The magnate constantly congratulated his new land upon its wisdom in not wasting its substance in idle colonialism.

How severe, then, was the blow, when Carnegie saw his beloved adopted country pursuing a reckless imperialistic policy itself, forcing Filipinos, against their will, to submit to the American Empire, fighting a long and bloody guerilla war in the jungles against a people who only wanted their independence as America itself had in 1776. Here was imperial America, a colonial power, trying to dominate an unwilling archipelago on the doorstep of Asia, thousands of islands and thousands of miles from home, all in the name of democracy. Carnegie protested bitterly in speech and in writing.

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<sup>33</sup>Carnegie, British Pessimism, p. 8.

Has the influence of the superior race upon the inferior ever proved beneficial to either? I know of no case in which it has been or is, and I have visited many of the dependencies. . . . On the contrary, the mass of authority declares that the influence of a superior race upon an inferior in the tropics is not elevating, but demoralizing. . . . We can only retard, not hasten, their development. . . . India has been subject to British rule for nearly two hundred years, and yet . . . the people have still to be held down as in the beginning.<sup>34</sup>

During the actual Spanish-American War, Carnegie himself had been swept by patriotic fervor and gloried in the victories against imperialistic Spain, but as the shape of the peace emerged, he found himself at odds with the majority of his American countrymen over a significant issue for the first time.

A common myth persists to this day that business interests, such as those represented by Carnegie, contributed to and encouraged involvement in the Spanish American War in order to secure greater profits for themselves. This generalization of war profiteering as a reason for a business expansionist plot is not true. The business class, who profited by the war, had an additional reason to support the conflict, but most businessmen, as a social group, tended to follow rather than to lead in the matter of American involvement in the Spanish American War. Certainly the sugar interests and those who were concerned with the Cuban trade pressed for war. The munitions makers and

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<sup>34</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, quoting Carnegie, p. 53.

battleship builders, however, were not organized and presented no concerted power bloc as a lobby in Washington. It is probable that the sheer length of the period of peace, thirty-three years since the Civil War, helped to precipitate the conflict as much as any other factor. If we except the Indian Wars of the period from 1865-1898, this was the longest period of peace that America has ever enjoyed since the founding of the early colonies in the seventeenth century. The intense enthusiasm for this conflict may have been merely the result of the length of time since the last great war. Regardless, the business class, as a group, and even the munitions makers as a segment of society, scarcely had a major influence upon the American entrance into the war, nor did they exhibit a concerted action that could be identified as pro-war. Carnegie was typical of many Americans, probably exhibiting the normal feelings of desiring to help Cuba, disliking Spanish policies, gradually increasing his antipathy until the Maine disaster brought consensus. Carnegie may actually be said to be typical of the business class in riding the tide of popular sentiment into war. But he did not lead here nor see the possibility of profits. Only after the war was over did he realize that the Philippines meant colonialism and in opposing the acquisition of the distant islands the magnate climbed out of the mainstream and hiked off with a small following on a lonely, hopeless crusade.

In his article, "Distant Possessions: The Parting of the Ways," Carnegie demanded that the destiny of North America not

turn aside from the dream. America should not change her principles and acquire alien races and disjoined, distant territory. Internal growth must come first. The choice was growth at home or pouring money into foreign swamps. Was America now to play the role of Britain in the American Revolution? Colonies of like people, such as Canada, was one thing, but colonies such as India would always be a drawback. He quoted Disraeli again, that India would always be a millstone around Britain's neck. The distinction here was between colonies and dependencies: colonies were founded in empty lands where one's own race was reproduced and dependencies were of conquered people in already crowded lands. The heaviest British burdens were her colonies. America, the greatest trading power in the world, had proven that it needed no possessions of poor, backward people on distant islands to increase its trade. The Philippines were so obviously bad for America, that Carnegie wondered that everyone could not see his viewpoint. This wide-flung archipelago would leave America open to far off foreign wars. The Philippines would require a huge navy and a standing army to protect the distant possessions with no gains but empty glory. How can we coerce the Philippines and then hang the Declaration of Independence and the Emancipation Proclamation up in the schoolhouses of the land with a straight face? There are two great continental powers in the world today he declared in almost prophetic fashion: Russia and America.



Are we to throw away our only advantage when we have a great continent to develop and to populate? Here was the parting of the ways with all our traditions and beliefs of the past; triumphant democracy would be turned into shoddy despotism.<sup>35</sup>

A few months later, as the "obdurate" course of American foreign policy pursued the goals of glory, Carnegie wrote another article, "Americanism versus Imperialism,"<sup>36</sup> in which he restated most of his earlier arguments, adding only a few afterthoughts. He asserted that only the protection of Britain in the Pacific allowed America to follow its reckless course of annexing the Philippines and of course Britain would expect favors in return. This could only be an annoying thesis to Americans and Carnegie was well aware that he was striking where it hurt. Carnegie also rounded out his argument by suggesting that to claim the Philippines were not fit to rule themselves, so it was America's duty as civilizer to take over, was merely repeating what was said of every South American republic, as they became independent. The British had said the United States was not ready for self-government after the Revolution. The greatest dangers

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<sup>35</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Distant Possessions: The Parting of the Ways," North American Review, August, 1898, in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland, pp. 123-234.

<sup>36</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Americanism versus Imperialism," North American Review, January and March, 1899, reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland, pp. 135-165.

that he saw were the great cost, the taking of our attention from important domestic issues, and the supreme likelihood of becoming constantly involved in foreign wars. Again Carnegie ranged the world, indulging in a little international analysis, and he could not help but return to Russia, as the only other great continental power. Both Russia and America were "solid, compact, impregnable, because each has developed only coterminous territory, upon which its own race could grow."<sup>37</sup> Carnegie concluded his article with several pages of quotations, lining up authorities on his side. The magnate was a traditionalist in that after he had decided, he would look for authorities to buttress his beliefs. There were very few issues which Carnegie felt more strongly about and his frustration is not being able to effect any change in the course of events was extreme.

In April, 1899, Carnegie published another article on "The Philippine Policy,"<sup>38</sup> and a year later in October, 1900, he was still so irritated over his failure to change the course of events, that he almost turned Democrat and would certainly not have voted for McKinley if it had been someone other than Bryan who was running on the other ticket. He regarded Bryan's silver policies as unsound domestically. Carnegie's article, "The

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Philippine Policy," The Independent, April 20, 1899.

Presidential Election -- Our Duty, Bryan or McKinley?"<sup>39</sup> was a real tightrope act for the steel king. He could not make up his own mind between the two men and his article, instead of a logical and clear cut exercise, is rather like the meandering thoughts that a man who could not decide about the election might put on paper to help himself arrive at how he ought to vote. It is agonizing on paper. The illogic of the American Philippine policy was almost too much for Carnegie, but not quite enough to make him stray from the party of Lincoln.<sup>40</sup>

It is a principle of Leo Tolstoy that even the strongest man, as an individual, cannot alter the flow of events if he stands alone against the tide. Carnegie wrote McKinley and his Secretary of State, he wrote Congressmen, and of course he had money to place in campaigns. He wrote letters to newspaper

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<sup>39</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "The Presidential Election -- Our Duty, Bryan or McKinley?" North American Review, October, 1900, pp. 495-507.

<sup>40</sup>Carnegie voted for Lincoln in 1860, the first time he voted in a Presidential election, and he voted Republican every time thereafter. He dearly liked Cleveland, but never quite enough to vote for him. In 1912, he wrote Wilson, congratulating him on winning, (for Carnegie wrote all the presidents often) and declared to Wilson that he was the magnate's second choice in the field of three. So it is no surprise, that after all his agonizing on paper, he decided it was "his duty as a citizen" to vote for "the party of Protection of American Industries, of Internal Improvements, the Party of the Union, of Emancipation, and of the Highest Standard of Value for the money of the People." Carnegie, "Presidential Election," p. 506.

editors in key cities. When he heard that America had paid \$20,000,000 to Spain for the Philippine Islands, he offered to pay the twenty million himself, if America would but turn the Islands free. He was serious; he had the money; and it was no idle publicity stunt. Anti-imperialist newspapers such as the New York World,<sup>41</sup> were very favorable to Carnegie and continued to hope he would be allowed to carry out his plan. The New York Times along with the majority of newspapers as well as the leaders in Congress continued to oppose his views. The Literary Digest in an editorial summed up the debate in this fashion:

Mr. Carnegie calls his gifts of libraries to cities that agree to expend the money necessary to maintain them, the "best bargains" of his life; but the New York World thinks that the bargain which he tried to make with President McKinley, when he offered to furnish the \$20,000,000 which we agreed to pay to Spain for the Philippines, was the best bargain Mr. Carnegie ever tried to make, for "it would have been a master stroke alike of business and benevolence." The offer was made known to the world last week. . . . It was made, it seems, and declined when the Treaty of Paris was still pending, and the condition attached was that Mr. Carnegie should be sent to the islands as a special commissioner, or as one of several commissioners, with authority to assure the Filipinos of our kindly disposition and to promise that the United States would recognize the independence of the islands as soon as we had established there a stable government. The comment of the Brooklyn Eagle is that "no sum, however great, could compensate us for the self-reproach that would surely follow a policy of

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<sup>41</sup>New York World, June 14, 1902.

abandonment." The Philadelphia Inquirer says the offer "was magnificent but it was not statesmanship. The New York Times says:

"Mr. Carnegie's fame rests securely upon his genius in business and his career as a philanthropist. He would have destroyed himself utterly and would have become the most disliked and worst ridiculed man in the United States if he had been permitted to carry out the terms of his offer to Mr. McKinley. It was an astoundingly foolish proposal and, not to put too fine a point upon it, a reckless and wicked one. William McKinley had too deep a sense of the national honor and the national duty to give it any consideration."<sup>42</sup>

And so using phrases such as national honor and national duty, America marched on its way to its far eastern adventure, nor could all Andrew Carnegie's money turn it aside. To add to Carnegie's severe disillusionments, the British adventure in Africa, the Boer War, occurred at about the same time and the magnate also attacked this as completely unwarranted.

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<sup>42</sup>New York Literary Digest, May 24, 1902.

#### 4. The Views of Carnegie: International Peace

The belief in peace, in moral force, and in arbitration were traditional concerns of the Carnegies and the early nineteenth century Dunfermline radical cause. In writing home from Pennsylvania, in 1852, when he was sixteen, Carnegie expressed displeasure that the two leading presidential candidates were warriors.<sup>43</sup> Of course if human kind belonged to one family, if waste and destruction were to be ended, then war must be abolished. For Carnegie it was a mere obvious exercise in logic. On his trip around the world, on Christmas Day, in 1878, he saw British soldiers in India and lamented: "I scarcely ever see soldiers without being saddened by the thought that the civilization of the race is yet little better than a name when so much must still be done to teach millions of men the surest way to destroy their fellows."<sup>44</sup> Wherever he went as he traveled about the globe, he saw too many soldiers and felt it such an expensive and dangerous waste for the world.<sup>45</sup> Carnegie told Frederick Lynch that his interest in world peace was renewed when he first returned to Europe and saw the eternal soldiers everywhere.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 47.

<sup>44</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 98.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., pp. 226, 227.

<sup>46</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 13.

Peace to Carnegie was a positive good,<sup>47</sup> and questions of national honor and national duty were merely excuses for evil, for wasting one's substance on war. In "A League of Peace," Carnegie was quite eloquent:

We exclaim, "Oh Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" -- but these are trifling compared with those committed in the name of "honor," the most dishonored word in our language. Never did man or nation ever dishonor another man or nation. This is impossible. All honor's wounds are self-inflicted. All stains upon honor come from within, never from without. Innocence seeks no revenge; there is nothing to be revenged -- guilt can never be.<sup>48</sup>

And again in a speech, "Honor and International Arbitration," Carnegie approached the problem head on:

In man's triumphant upward march he has outgrown many savage habits; he no longer eats his fellows, or buys and sells them, or sacrifices prisoners of war, or puts vanquished garrisons to the sword, or confiscates private property, or bombards unfortified ports, poisons wells, or sacks cities.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 379-380.

<sup>48</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "A League of Peace; a Rectoral Address Delivered to the Students in the University of St. Andrews, October 17, 1905," in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. II, p. 248.

<sup>49</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Honor and International Arbitration," speech at the Annual Meeting of the Peace Society, in the Guild Hall, London, May 24, 1910, in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. II, p. 273.

In some ways it was well that Carnegie lived most of his life in the relatively peaceful nineteenth century; what his views might be of the trouble-filled twentieth century are only too obvious.

The magnate, however, did see the dangers from the common man as well as the elite. "War is always a winning card for the scheming politician to play when differences arise between nations, because it appeals to the baser part of man, dethrones divine reason, exalts brutal passion, and excites the traits man shares with the brute which degrade humanity."<sup>50</sup> But the common man too was a danger. "Humanity has traveled far and upward in the ages past, but there remains in us a substratum of the savage, far too rapidly moved to draw the sword and kill."<sup>51</sup> Of course, the magnate himself had once thought of killing kings.

Carnegie did see parts of the problem quite clearly, however:

Preparation by one nation compels rival preparation by others, each honestly protesting that only protection and not attack, is desired, the inevitable result being, however, that mutual suspicion is aroused, and as each vies with the other in fearful preparation, national hatreds develop, and then only a spark is needed to kindle the torch of war.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Carnegie, "Presidential Election," p. 496.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 497.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 275.



Although Carnegie was a self-proclaimed Darwinian and Spencerian, he felt that men had evolved enough beyond the law of the jungle, that survival of the fittest meant a game to be played by minds for money now, not contention with weapons with life and death at stake. Carnegie's own success in the business game, using his mind, and his lack of physical ability to contend, enhanced this feeling.

One reason, in Carnegie's view, that America held the industrial ascendancy of the world was that Europe was divided into a group of armed camps, each spending its wealth upon preparation for war.<sup>53</sup> This is not unlike the argument of J. Fred Rippy, who suggested in America and the Strife of Europe that American success and freedom from attack could be ascribed to the lack of unity and national antagonism in Europe.<sup>54</sup> If a particular European nation attacked America, the enemies of that nation in Europe could be expected to join America. Therefore, distant America was left free to develop on her own. This is rather simplistic, but no doubt true. It was, of course, an easier, less complicated world that the magnate addressed himself to. The steel king was an advocate of complete disarmament at a time

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<sup>53</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 106.

<sup>54</sup>J. Fred Rippy, America and the Strife of Europe (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938).

when the vast distances from Europe, the great extent of America, and the slowness of the delivery systems available, made the United States almost invulnerable to attack. For this reason America could afford to have no navy to speak of, and Carnegie gloried in the fact.<sup>55</sup> Universal military service was unnecessary and wicked.<sup>56</sup> The magnate was gleeful that the military in both England and America were finding it difficult to recruit men at the time.<sup>57</sup> War was "the foulest blot upon our civilization," the greatest imaginable evil.<sup>58</sup> And at times Carnegie sounded almost as if he were speaking to the world today:

In considering the problem of war, let it be noted that it is no longer actual war itself which the world in our day has most to dread. This is not the greatest curse. It is the ever-present danger of war, which hangs over the world like a pall, which we have to dispel.<sup>59</sup>

The fear of war, the preparation for war, the evil of militarism,<sup>60</sup> the waste, Carnegie attacked them all.

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<sup>55</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 209; Carnegie, "The Conservation of Ores and Minerals," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 72.

<sup>56</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 31.

<sup>57</sup>Carnegie, "League of Peace," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, pp. 260, 266.

<sup>58</sup>"Pan American Union Bulletin," Vol. LXX, No. 1, January, 1936.

<sup>59</sup>Carnegie, "Honor and International Arbitration," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 275.

<sup>60</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 266.

The euphemistic phrase of our own post World War Two period, "peace-loving people," used so extensively for home consumption to describe themselves and their friends by both the United States and Russia, was a slogan the magnate also employed to praise and he naively hoped that careful flattery of rulers might do the trick. Carnegie speaks of the "peace-loving people of the United States,"<sup>61</sup> and the "peace-loving Emperor of Russia,"<sup>62</sup> he praises Victoria as a woman of peace,<sup>63</sup> and is effulgent with his praise for the German Emperor in the hope he will lead to peace.<sup>64</sup> William II became one of Carnegie's heroes, a man who could bring peace to the world almost single-handed if he but chose to do so.<sup>65</sup> Carnegie asserted his strong feelings in his Autobiography:

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<sup>61</sup>Carnegie, "Venezuelan Question," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 51. See also, Carnegie, "League of Peace," Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 264.

<sup>62</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 117.

<sup>63</sup>Carnegie, "Queen Victoria," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, pp. 192-193.

<sup>64</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 119.

<sup>65</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "William II, German Emperor, and King of Prussia," Dunfermline: A. Romanes and Son, 1913, in Library of Congress, Rare Book Room.

I have for some time been haunted with the feeling that the Emperor was indeed a Man of Destiny. My interviews with him have strengthened that feeling. I have great hopes of him in the future doing something really great and good. He may yet have a part to play that will give him a place among the immortals.<sup>66</sup>

The German Kaiser's part proved a bit different than the role the magnate imagined. Carnegie, usually optimistic, saw humanity on the march, evolving, climbing upward away from war. His optimism led Carnegie to see every new president, Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson as offering renewed hope that war would end.<sup>67</sup> War was no longer a heroic and manly battle with individual contenders but a game of death with cannons fired from a distance.<sup>68</sup> It was a game all "Peace loving" people must oppose.

When a German professor, Dr. Munsterberg of Harvard, declared in a speech that service in the German army was not felt to be a burden by his people, Carnegie arose trembling when it was his turn to speak, and departing from his text, invited the professor to visit Pittsburgh so he could introduce him to the many immigrants, good workmen in his factories, who had fled to America

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<sup>66</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 358.

<sup>67</sup> John P. Campbell, "Taft, Roosevelt, and the Arbitration Treaties of 1911," The Journal of American History, (September, 1966), LIII, pp. 279-298, is an excellent article on the peace movement and sees Carnegie as a naive supporter of Taft when Taft talked of peace.

<sup>68</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "A Rectoral Address, delivered at the University of Aberdeen, June 6, 1912," New York: Redfield Brothers, 1912, p. 22.

to escape the army in Germany.<sup>69</sup> When a Christian bishop made a speech boasting of America's strength, Carnegie really took him to task.<sup>70</sup> War, to the magnate, was the "deepest disgrace."<sup>71</sup> It was "the foulest stain that remains to disgrace humanity."<sup>72</sup> It was "an anachronism in a world that has become so much one family."<sup>73</sup>

Carnegie, of course, was not perfect on the issue of peace vs. war. He had favored the Civil War to free the slaves; he favored the Spanish-American War to free Cuba. He was determined to make Britain back down over Venezuela even if it came to war. Wars of defense were just, but the problem was tricky:

The defense of home and country may possibly become necessary, although no man living in Britain or America has ever seen invasion or is at all likely to see it. Still, the elements of patriotism and duty enter here. That it is every man's duty to defend home and country goes without saying. We should never forget, however, that which makes it a holy duty to defend one's home and country also makes it a holy duty not to invade the

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<sup>69</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, pp. 38-39. This was a continuing theme of Carnegie's. See, Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 96.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>71</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 263.

<sup>72</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 29.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., pp. 75-76.

country and home of others, a truth which . . .  
is one incumbent upon the thoughtful peace-  
loving man to remember.<sup>74</sup>

This appears to be an easy distinction that could be generalized into a rule universally applied, however the question of the perimeters of defense is not resolved even today.

Carnegie's ideas on a Canadian-American union, an English-speaking union, and a European union were all upsetting to some of his pacifist friends. Then, too, Carnegie would at times be affected by patriotic feeling from participating in a great event, such as the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and write about the glories of the display of might that the British fleet had shown.<sup>75</sup> The real wonder was that Carnegie cared at all, that the huge profits he made on armor plate for battleships did not turn him away from peace permanently. On the other hand, if it had not been for all that Carnegie money that was so helpful to the cause, his pacifist friends would have stuck to their guns and routed the magnate from their movement.

For his own part, as he aged, Carnegie more and more came to believe his own words on the evil of war. His great speech, worked over so carefully, the first one he delivered to the students at St. Andrews as their elected Rector, "A League of Peace," was a massive rather scholarly effort to quote authorities

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<sup>74</sup>Carnegie, "A League of Peace," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 264. Italics are in the original.

<sup>75</sup>Carnegie, "Results of the Jubilee," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 75.

over the centuries against war. The magnate also reviewed the terrible monetary cost of wars, the vast expenses of maintaining standing armies, all done by a man who knew the financial facts.<sup>76</sup>

"Honor and International Arbitration," was an effort to show that honor did not exist in wartime and arbitration was the only solution to war. "Arbitration," was another article of the same kind. "Americanism versus Imperialism," "Distant Possessions: The Parting of the Ways," and "The Philippine Policy," all attacked the American policy toward the Philippines. "Armaments and Their Result," "Results of the National Arbitration and Peace Congress," "Kaiser Wilhelm II, Peacemaker," "The Next Step for Peace," "Peace versus War: The President's Solution," an essay on the Taft arbitration treaties, "The Anglo-French-American Understanding," "The Decadence of Militarism," "The Crime of War is Inherent," "The Wrong Path," and "War as the Mother of Valor and Civilization." were some further articles by Carnegie on the subject of peace. "The Baseless Fear of War," "Cry of the Wolf," and "Silver Lining to War Clouds," tried to minimize the dangers of wars.

Long before Woodrow Wilson came to the White House, Carnegie was talking of a League of Peace. He possessed the typical nineteenth century naive, believing that war would cease if only a peace tribunal was created and men saw war did not profit them.

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<sup>76</sup>Carnegie, "League of Peace," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, pp. 254-255.

He is not to be censured for he was a child of his time; he had not lived, as we, through world wars and the threat of nuclear destruction. Though his efforts failed, he was at least an activist, not as men today, struck numb by the possibilities of nuclear horror. In 1907 Carnegie proclaimed: "Personally I am a convert to the League of Peace idea -- the formation of an International Police, never for aggression, always for protection to the peace of the civilized world. . . . War now involves the interests of all, and therefore one nation has no longer a right to break the peace without reference to others."<sup>77</sup> Carnegie believed the League of Peace was the eventual answer, but the immediate and continuous solution was arbitration.<sup>78</sup> He suggested arbitration treaties long before the efforts of Taft and Wilson. He told the students at St. Andrews in 1905:

Here is the answer. Whenever an international dispute arises, no matter what party is in power, demand at once that your government offer to refer it to arbitration, and if necessary break with your party. Peace is above party. Should the adversary have forestalled your government in offering arbitration, which for the sake of our race I trust will never occur, then insist upon its acceptance and listen to nothing until it is accepted. Drop all other public questions,

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<sup>77</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 30, quoting Carnegie.

<sup>78</sup>The importance of arbitration Carnegie continually stressed. Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 383, 489; Carnegie "A League of Peace," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 258.



concentrate your efforts upon the one question which carries in its bosom the issue of peace or war. . . . This is the time to be effective.<sup>79</sup>

And what should women do under these circumstances?

The women of the land, and the women students of St. Andrews, -- what shall they do? Not wait as usual until war has begun, and then, their sympathies aroused, organize innumerable societies for making and sending necessaries and even luxuries to the front, or join Red Cross Societies and go themselves to the field, nursing the wounded that they may the sooner be able to return to the ranks to wound others or be again wounded, or to kill or be killed. The tender chords of sympathy for the injured, which grace women, and are so easily stirred, are always to be cherished; but it may be suggested that their united voices raised in stern opposition to war before it was declared, urging the offer of arbitration, or in earnest remonstrance against refusing it, one day of effort would then prove more effective than months of it after war has begun.<sup>80</sup>

Arbitration, indeed, was a universal panacea, for arbitration needed to replace strikes in labor disputes just as it did in wars between nations. However, when it came right down to it, Carnegie would refuse arbitration in labor disputes, just as he tried to avoid it at the top management level with Frick in his own company.

In November, 1910, Carnegie gave \$10,000,000 to the Endowment for International Peace; in February, 1914, he gave

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<sup>79</sup>Carnegie, "A League of Peace," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 268.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 269.

\$2,000,000 to create the Church Peace Union; and in 1913 his great Peace Palace was completed at the Hague in the Netherlands, almost completely conforming to the Parkinson Law, for it was finished just in time for the First World War.<sup>81</sup> On New Year's Day, in 1914, Carnegie sent his hundreds of friends the following message:

New Year's Greeting

1914

The foulest blot remaining upon so-called civilized man, beyond question, is the killing of each other. That he has ceased to eat his fellows after killing them matters nothing to the slain and little to the survivors. It is the killing of each other that stamps man still the savage. That this practice is not soon to pass away from civilized man is unthinkable, since history proves that from age to age, by a law of his being, he has been slowly yet surely developing from the beast; hence we are justified in believing that there is no end to his upward march to perfection.

.....  
 We send this New Year's Greeting, January 1, 1914, strong in the faith that International Peace is soon to prevail, thru several of the great powers agreeing to settle their disputes by arbitration under International Law, the pen thus proving milder than the sword. Three of these did sign such treaty recently -- Britain, France and the United States -- Germany looking on approvingly. . . .

"War is hell," said General Sherman. Peace will be an approach to Heaven. Be of good cheer, kind friends, . . . Ever Yours

Andrew Carnegie<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup>C. Northcote Parkinson, Parkinson's Law (New York: Ballantine Books, Paperback Edition, 1957), p. 82. One of Parkinson's more amusing laws is that institutions are finally completed just before their decline.

<sup>82</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 280, Folder 30.

Here, composed, printed, and signed by Carnegie was his testament almost ironically sent out to his friends in the year "the Great War" began. On June 18, 1914, before the National Liberal Club in London, Carnegie again almost prophetically warned of the dangers of war, attacking war as evil in strong terms, just ten days before the assassination at Sarajevo.<sup>83</sup> In many ways the beginning of World War One broke his heart and his spirit. He returned to America, for the last time, believing that Britain was probably correct in going to war, that Germany was at fault, but not quite understanding how his world had become engaged in this deadly savagery. In the end, as with most Americans, he eventually came to believe that the United States, too, should enter the conflict and congratulated Wilson on his stand when it came. The magnate waited in America, trying to keep up his spirits, looking forward to a League of Nations, but still never quite understanding how the world could have done this.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., unpublished address, Vol. 255, Folder 6.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., Hendrick notes on interview with Mrs. Carnegie, Vol. 257.

## 5. The Views of Carnegie: The Evils of the Income Tax

During the years when Andrew Carnegie was building his fortune he was steadfastly against any income tax. Indeed, one of the virtues the magnate saw in nineteenth century America was the lack of an income tax:

We see the question of a graduated income tax coming to the front in the Monarchy. The Republic had this when immense sums were required to meet the cost of the Civil War, but one of the first taxes abandoned at the close of the struggle was the income tax. It was not reduced or made uniform, it was abolished; nor has there ever been a movement to re-impose it. The masses favored its abolition although it was paid by the few, for all incomes below \$2,000 . . . were exempt. . . . They approved its repeal because it was shown that although theoretically the justest of all modes of taxation, in practice the honest citizen paid it and the dishonest escaped, and that to enforce its honest collection a thorough system of espionage and minute examination would be required not in harmony with the spirit of free institution.<sup>85</sup>

Here is precisely our problem today, a huge bureaucracy to administer the tax is necessary and those who in theory should pay most are likely to pay least with the burden placed on the middle class. This 1886 assessment by Carnegie in Triumphant Democracy was repeated when the horror actually made its appearance as part

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<sup>85</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 479.

of the Wilson Tariff Act in 1894. Carnegie then wrote an article entitled: "What Would I Do With the Tariff if I Were Czar?" He declared that no income tax should be added to the tariff bill. "I know of no statesman or authority who does not denounce an income tax as the most objectionable of all taxes," the magnate asserted. He then quoted Gladstone as attacking income taxes since they tended "to make a nation of liars."<sup>86</sup> Carnegie suggested that instead of the income tax, the tariff should be raised on luxury items used by the wealthy few. Those who demanded their French wines and perfumes, their imported cloth, tobacco, and china should be made to pay. As to the tariff:

First, my aim would be to keep free of duty the necessaries of life used by the many, and to tax highly the luxuries of the few. The masses who wear and consume home products /articles manufactured in the United States/ I should not tax, but the luxurious man and woman of fashion who will wear at whatever cost the fine woolens and the exquisitely fine silks and the delicately fine linens of Europe should pay the tariff duties. This small rich class under the new tariff would be made much more fashionable by paying perhaps double the present duties. . . . The champagne and rare old wine drinkers and purchasers of rare old or rare new foreign china and glass, perfumeries, and similar articles de luxe should be able to boast with perfect truth of their enhanced value.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "What Would I Do With the Tariff If I Were Czar," The Forum (March, 1895), reprinted in Empire of Business, p. 338.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 328.

But of course the magnate did not favor any further reductions in the tariff upon the commodities with which he himself was concerned, coal and iron ore, as he said, since these tariffs had been reduced already. When the Supreme Court found the income tax unconstitutional Carnegie was pleased. Democracy had triumphed again.

In 1900, Carnegie once more insisted that an income tax would be a serious blunder. "Nothing would be more un-American than to subject every man's business and financial affairs to the scrutiny of government officials, who would be in many cases affiliated with rival concerns, or possible competitors in the future."<sup>88</sup> There was, as usual, truth to the magnate's suggestion as to what might happen if income taxes were adopted. Once again Carnegie declared that government revenues should be raised by increasing death duties and by tariffs. In 1908, in his Problems of To-Day, Carnegie buoyantly exclaimed:

When President Roosevelt sent his notable message to Congress, three years ago, calling attention to the unequal distribution of wealth, and recommending high, progressive taxes upon estates at the death of the owners, the writer sent him a copy of "The Gospel of Wealth." The President wrote in reply, that he was "greatly struck with the fact that seventeen years ago you had it all."<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup>Carnegie, "Presidential Election," p. 504.

<sup>89</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, pp. 3-4.

Roosevelt usually managed to soothe Carnegie, but he did not always believe the magnate "had it all." In 1908, Carnegie continued to press for taxing foreign wines, Havana tobacco and the luxury items imported by wealthy Americans.<sup>90</sup> But he did see the taxation rates in Britain as unequal. "About 1½ per cent of the whole population own the bulk of the wealth, and the rest of the community pay the bulk of the taxes," he protested.<sup>91</sup> What could be done about such vital differences within the nation.

Those whose incomes are only sufficient to meet physical wants should not be subjected to taxation at all. Adam Smith's dictum, "The subjects of every State ought to contribute to the support of government as nearly as possible in proportion to their respective abilities, that is, in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the State," should be the rule, especially since there is so much wealth concentrated in the richer classes.<sup>92</sup>

Carnegie was now ready to take a new position, and the magnate announced openly: "There is . . . nothing specially Socialistic" in income taxes and exempting the poorest from paying any tax. "It is sound Adam Smith doctrine that all should pay taxes only in proportion to their ability to do so."<sup>93</sup> Here we note a change

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 8

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

in the steel king's position. It would be easy to see Carnegie as the retired businessman who had made his hundreds of millions speaking here, but, while that was probably true enough, we should also bear in mind that Carnegie had read widely before he wrote Problems of To-Day and was quite capable of growth and change himself in the Progressive Era.

By 1912, at a time when the press and periodicals were full of stories on the income tax and the sixteenth amendment was only months away, we find Carnegie completely favorable to the income tax, and as is customary with him, believing that it was pretty obvious he always favored such a tax. In his address at Montrose on "Burns," the magnate declared that he was for the income tax twenty years ago when he wrote his "Gospel of Wealth."<sup>94</sup> The steel king saw the motherland of Britain leading in establishing a graduated income tax and America taking note and following. "Modern millionaires should receive part of the treatment proposed for Shylock, who . . . according to the laws of Venice," would lose half of his goods to the state. So should it be with the hoards of the millionaires of our day, Carnegie declared, and this, not as a punishment but for their own good.<sup>95</sup> By 1912 the magnate felt the income tax was justified.

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<sup>94</sup>Carnegie, "Burns and the Modern Spirit," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 178.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.



Originally Carnegie favored death duties rather than an income tax to prevent the busy bee millionaire from passing on all his money to his coupon clipping, indolent children. But as the world and especially America became richer, and the chasm between the wealthy and the poor grew greater, the steel king came to be fearful for both his native and his adopted land and felt that an income tax was required. Carnegie could not have foreseen that the income tax would become a means for paying for entrenched big government with the rich escaping through loopholes while the middle class paid the fees. When he died, the steel king had given away more than 90% of his money and still there were federal taxes of \$6,000,000, one-fifth of the \$30,000,000 that he left to his family.<sup>96</sup> Carnegie actually would have been pleased.

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<sup>96</sup>The Pittsburgh Gazette Times, August 31, 1919.

## 6. The Views of Carnegie: The Tariff

As with the income tax, Carnegie's views on the tariff could be seen as growing, developing, and becoming more progressive, or they might be cynically considered as first the opinions of a man in business making millions on a high tariff and then the notions of a retired super multi-millionaire who no longer had to concern himself with monetary losses due to a lowered tariff. To all of this the magnate might well have replied that he was consistent enough, first favoring a high tariff to protect the growing iron and steel industries from European competition, and later, when the American industries were the greatest in the world, opting for a lower tariff and indeed declaring free trade would not be harmful.

In 1881, Carnegie took his famous coaching trip with a group of friends across Britain from Brighton to Inverness. What followed smacked of the accomplished writer, for Carnegie published his first magazine article, an essay dealing with the trip, as if it were a trial balloon. Then followed his privately published book, and finally he was asked by a legitimate publisher to re-work his book for a public edition. He began his 1882 article "As Others See us," with the question, supposedly posed by an important member of the British government to him: "Why don't you . . . tell us what your dozen of American guests thought

of us?"<sup>97</sup> It is doubtful that an important member of the British government asked that question; Britons, unlike Americans, are not that concerned with what people think of them, but it was a fine literary attention getting device. What Carnegie's American friends apparently thought of Britain was a compound of all the magnate's own prejudices, including the belief that Englishmen were speaking absurdly when they suggested America adopt free trade. Since America already took more British goods than any country except India, there was no problem admitting the goods, the Carnegie argument ran. Carnegie next poked fun at the Englishmen who pretended that if America adopted free trade, Britain would be in trouble:

The Free Trade enthusiast was certain that if America only went in for Free Trade she would soon be Britain's strongest competitor in the neutral markets of the world, and that the worst thing for Britain that could possibly happen would be America's conversion to the Free Trade theory. We met this gentleman not once nor twice, but often; and I see no less an authority than Mr. Gladstone . . . has just said at Leeds that Britain's control of the world's commerce was assured only as long as the United States adhered to the protective system. If this be so, my American friends wish /the British/ . . . would pay due regard to the best interests of their own land, and allow America with all her home trade to rest satisfied, and leave for Britain as long as

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<sup>97</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "As Others See Us," Fortnightly Review, (February 1, 1882), reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 1.

possible the trade of the world. . . . When the labor of America has no fertile, unsettled prairies inviting it at all times, and the country is populated as Britain is, then manufacturers can produce here and ship to neutral markets in competition with you, because labor will be as cheap. In five hundred years perhaps Mr. Gladstone's theory may be applicable; at present it has no bearing.<sup>98</sup>

Here we see Carnegie speaking plainly, mockingly, and making one of his famous predictions which he was to revise in his own lifetime. It did not take five hundred years for things to change in America and in Britain, but they did not change at once. The coaching trip of Carnegie's was a fine platform from which to write and make predictions.

In 1890 we find the magnate still opposed to lowering the tariff, in his essay, "Summing Up the Tariff Discussion."

It is said that, if free trade were adopted, so enormous would be the demands thrown by the United States upon European manufacturers that prices would advance to such a point as to enable American manufacturers to continue operating their works. If this be correct, let me ask what benefit would ensue to the American consumer? If the only result of a change of policy be that matters shall remain as they are as to prices, I submit that change in itself in our fiscal policy is a serious obstacle to prosperity. To justify change we should have a decided advantage in view.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>Ibid., pp. 13-14

<sup>99</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Summing Up the Tariff Discussion," North American Review, (July, 1890), in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 342.

Of course Carnegie was not all that concerned about the consumer, and as he disclosed immediately thereafter, he felt if the United States tariff was lowered, Europe would increase its steel production and American manufacturers might have difficulty.

In his 1895 article, "What Would I Do With the Tariff If I Were Czar?" Carnegie indicated that his "aim would be to keep free of duty the necessities of life used by the many, and to tax highly the luxuries of the few."<sup>100</sup> He attacked the recent reductions in the tariff on goods used by the rich, the stained glass, the gold pens, the clocks, the silk umbrellas, the brandy, the cordials, all of which were reduced in duty.<sup>101</sup> He found the Wilson Act a bad tariff and suggested en passant that further reductions on iron and steel would not be in America's best interest. In his 1898 article, "The Manchester School and Today," Carnegie saw the world changing, but he was not yet ready to opt for free trade. By 1905, however, he hinted that he had changed his mind and that free trade might be desirable after all.<sup>102</sup>

In 1908, the retired steel king's views had altered completely and in his essay "My Experience With, and Views Upon, the Tariff," Carnegie accounted himself a "conservative reformer," a rather curious juxtaposition. He explained how he influenced

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<sup>100</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 328.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., p. 329.

<sup>102</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 206.

Congressmen in the past to prevent tariff reductions, but now he felt the iron and steel industries, and many other industries as well, were no longer infants and could stand reductions. America was already ahead of all the rest of the world in iron and steel production. "The infant we have nursed approaches the day when we [sic] should be weaned from tariff milk and fed upon the stronger food of free competition. It needs little, if any more nursing, but the change should not be made abruptly.<sup>103</sup> In his Autobiography, Carnegie made a further assessment:

The Civil War had resulted in a fixed determination upon the part of the American people to build a nation within itself, independent of Europe in all things essential to its safety. America had been obliged to import all her steel of every form and most of the iron needed, Britain being the chief seller. The people demanded a home supply and Congress granted the manufacturers a tariff of twenty-eight per cent ad valorem on steel rails -- the tariff then being equal to about twenty-eight dollars per ton. Rails were selling at about a hundred dollars per ton, and other rates in proportion.<sup>104</sup>

The tariff resulted in highly profitable manufacturing and as American iron and steel industries developed it was possible to lower the tariff successively until by 1911 the duty was one-eighth what it had been originally. The duties could be reduced

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<sup>103</sup>Carnegie, "Views Upon the Tariff," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 46.

<sup>104</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 140-141.

further without harm, the steel king suggested.<sup>105</sup> So the Carnegie viewpoint on the tariff changed with the times and with his own success.

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

## 7. The Views of Carnegie: On Labor

Andrew Carnegie began life as a child laborer; he was self-educated. He rose rapidly. A man with such a background may identify himself with labor, but must also believe in his own superiority in having risen quickly above the common herd. Carnegie's chief labor problem may be simply stated: the magnate wanted to be beloved by his workmen, but he also wanted to keep costs at a minimum. The steel king was ready to try the eight hour day to give his workers a better life, but when other steel companies did not follow, and his costs rose, he reverted to the twelve hour day seven days a week, with the Fourth of July off as a patriotic holiday every year.<sup>106</sup> Some of the realities of the nineteenth century are pretty apparent when Carnegie in his Autobiography gladly hailed a partner in manufacturing who gave conservatories to Pittsburgh which were open on Sunday and fought the ministers who protested that Sunday was the Lord's day. The workmen needed to enjoy their day off.<sup>107</sup> Carnegie's men did not even have Sunday off. The magnate declared that he had tried the

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<sup>106</sup> As a result he was considered by some as being opposed to the eight hour day. See Sidney Fine, "The Eight-Hour Day Movement in the United States, 1888-1891," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XL (December, 1953), pp. 441-462. See also, Alderson, Carnegie, pp. 71-72; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p.373; Wall, Carnegie, pp. 520-521; Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 184-185.

<sup>107</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 125-126.



eight hour day for two years in Pittsburgh and it cost him a half million dollars and only one other mill in the country followed suit. Carnegie suggested a national eight hour day law as the only way to fairly force all manufacturers to move in the right direction.<sup>108</sup> Until that day, when the federal government intervened, in the game of the love of workmen versus costs, labor was going to lose at the Carnegie plant.

While Carnegie could assert that he favored workers organizing into unions,<sup>109</sup> what he really desired was a very docile company union that accepted humbly every fiat of management. Yet on the world stage in the famous article he wrote for the Forum in 1886 Carnegie had declared:

While the public sentiment has rightly and unmistakably condemned violence, even in the form for which there is the most excuse, I would have the public give consideration to the terrible temptation to which the workingman on a strike is sometimes subjected. To expect that one dependent upon his daily wage for the necessaries of life will stand by peaceably and see a new man employed in his stead, is to expect much. This poor man may have a wife and children dependent upon his labor. Whether medicine for a sick child, or even nourishing food for a delicate wife, is procurable, depends upon his steady employment. In all but a very few departments of labor it

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<sup>108</sup> Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 40; Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 90; Carnegie, "Results of the Labor Struggle," reprinted in Gospel of Wealth, p. 114.

<sup>109</sup> Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 55; Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 37.

is unnecessary and, I think, improper to subject men to such an ordeal. In the case of railways and a few other employments it is, of course, essential for the public wants that no interruption occur, and in such case substitutes must be employed; but the employer of labor will find it much more to his interest, whenever possible, to allow his works to remain idle and await the result of a dispute, than to employ the class of men that can be induced to take the place of other men who have stopped work. Neither the best men as men, nor the best men among the best workers, are thus to be obtained. There is an unwritten law among the best workmen: "Thou shalt not take thy neighbor's job."<sup>110</sup>

Here is the entire essence of the Carnegie labor policy. Public sentiment should be considered; violence was always evil; the problems of workmen ought to be recognized; good workmen would never take another man's job; in most industries it was best to shut down the plant and sit out the strike. As usual, Carnegie hoped to pontificate above the battle.

The tale of Carnegie's labor relations and the story of the Homestead Strike have been told so often and in such amplified versions that any attempt to retell this episode in greater detail would require a large book in itself. While we may issue a disclaimer that digesting events of this kind to a few paragraphs inevitably distorts, our purpose here is to consider the views of Carnegie and to make a particular point concerning these views.

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<sup>110</sup> Carnegie, "Results of the Labor Struggle," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 120.

Carnegie actually loved his men and wished to be beloved by them. He considered them his men in a true paternalistic sense, not much different in aspect than the way the medieval nobility saw their tenantry. The Carnegie plants had not been without labor difficulties before the Homestead strike, but by means of labor spies to identify and fire the most radical unionists,<sup>111</sup> by Carnegie himself smoothly flattering the union leaders, and by compromises that sometimes amounted to surrender when Carnegie was in Europe and a weak administrator was acting for him, a serious showdown was averted. Homestead as a plant had a history of labor difficulties so severe that the previous owners who had built the factory to compete with Carnegie, gave up and sold out to the steel king. The union at Homestead was strong and grew stronger. Carnegie, on the other hand, had moved his men from the twelve hour day to the eight hour day and then back. He had brought in a sliding scale, which really reduced wages for many men, but offered exceptional men, able to work quickly and well, an opportunity to make higher salaries. Carnegie saw the sliding scale as an answer to labor problems, for he felt it would make

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<sup>111</sup>After the Homestead Strike we find Carnegie and his new found top man, Charles Schwab, corresponding over the firing of four men who would organize the workers once more. Six more would be fired later when they were identified. Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 65, #12666, May 27, 1899. Again, July 6, 1899, Schwab writes Carnegie of the discharge of more men for attempting to organize at Homestead, Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 67, #12892.

businessmen out of his laboring force.<sup>112</sup> The magnate was always seeking a method of binding labor to his plant in the same way he bound his partners with the promise of future riches.

When the great strike came at Homestead, Carnegie was in Scotland and he had at home, in the person of Henry Clay Frick, a man capable of fighting the union and winning; Carnegie and Frick had discussed the matter and both were determined to break the union. From Carnegie's point of view it appeared at the beginning that here was a perfect situation. Frick could break the union while the magnate was in Scotland. The steel king, who had no particular title in the firm, titles were for others who needed them and required flattery, told newsmen he was retired from business. He merely owned well over half of the shares. Yet Carnegie was ambivalent. Great events were taking place in America involving his very company and he found it very difficult to keep out. Frick, and indeed even the magnate's old friends on the board of the company, were afraid the steel king would return or say something to prevent the victory over the union.<sup>113</sup>

Carnegie desired a victory over the union as much as anyone but the magnate could not stand public opprobrium. Carnegie's answer to a strike was to close down the plant and wait. Capital had more money than labor and after a month or two months the workers

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<sup>112</sup>Carnegie, "The Human Side of Business," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 14.

<sup>113</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 219.

would come crawling back seeking their jobs even at lower wages. It was just here in the methodology of dealing with the strike that Carnegie and Frick differed.

Carnegie had found in Frick a strong man to deal with this strike, but in finding a strong man, he also had a man he could not control. Frick and Carnegie had discussed the procedures to follow in case of a strike, but the coke king was not a man to wait things out. Instead Frick built emplacements around the works at Homestead, brought in his Pinkertons, and tried to do just what Carnegie declared was so evil, to replace the good workmen at Homestead with others who would stoop to take the jobs of fellow workmen. The result was violence, just what Carnegie abhorred. Bridge in his Inside History makes a fair case that the Homestead strike was prolonged and intensified by Carnegie's maudlin articles eulogizing labor and insisting that a man should never take another man's job.<sup>114</sup> This is no doubt true. Just

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<sup>114</sup>Bridge in his Inside History, indicated not only his total distaste for Carnegie, but a close reading shows that the muckraker could not make up his own mind on several other issues so that he inadvertently weakens his own argument. Bridge suggested that the men were worked too hard, (pp. 194-197), which was no doubt true, for this was the nineteenth century, but then Bridge swallowed the most absurd of the Homestead mythology and suggested that the workers were overpaid (pp. 200-202), which certainly was not true. A very few highly skilled men received high wages for the time, but the stories of Homestead workmen going to their jobs in carriages with chauffeurs are nonsense. Bridge discussed the Homestead Strike in some detail, (pp.203-223). Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. 2, p. 382, says: "The Homestead roller earning forty to fifty dollars a day, riding to his toil in his private carriage, sedately posed behind a liveried coachman, had become a national legend. The most grotesque anecdotes, such as the foregoing, were untrue, yet . . . a minority of Homestead mechanics were highly paid. . . . Wages ranging from eight to twelve dollars a day -- and this forty years ago when the purchasing power of the money was half again what it is today." (sic) Hendrick means twice. In terms of today (1971) it would probably be five times this amount. Yet the number of such mechanics was a tiny minority indeed. Wall says that only forty-eight men out of 3800 employed at Homestead received the highest wages which ranged between \$6.00 and \$12.65 a day in a good month. The average worker was paid somewhat less than two dollars a day. Wall, Carnegie, p. 554.

How many workmen read or heard of the Carnegie article is a difficult problem, but certainly the union leaders were aware of the magnate's public utterances. The problem was, that in making these statements, the steel king entered an area that has not been resolved to this day. Carnegie saw strikes as wasteful and violence as abhorrent and he suggested arbitration. In case of a strike, just lock the plant and wait. But in this case, the magnate also wanted to break the union.

Later, Frick was to declare with considerable justice that if the plant had been closed down as Carnegie suggested, months and months might have elapsed and in the end the press might have accused both Carnegie and Frick of trying to starve the men into surrendering.<sup>115</sup> Here is the place Carnegie had not thought his way through to a solution. But can we really ask that he should have done so, for in labor relations it must be admitted that the anti-strike formula still has not been found

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<sup>115</sup>Harvey, Henry Clay Frick, p. 172.

eighty years after Homestead. In the 1970 General Motors strike we have the classic government efforts at intervention, the efforts at arbitration, then finally a strike and a long shut-down. No strike breakers or soldiers or violence entered the picture but still there was a protracted period of non-production before at last an agreement was reached. This is the classic Carnegie pattern. But what if the board of arbitration suggests an agreement that management does not want or what if the real issue is the survival of the union itself? How well would Carnegie have been able to withstand the public pressure caused by a strike going on for months with men growing hungry but still determined?

It is easy then, because of his essays, to expect more of Carnegie than a typical nineteenth century capitalist, and indeed, in the 1890's the time was fast approaching when the take off of American business made higher wages possible. Actually Carnegie could have paid higher wages in 1892 and still made money, but his partners would have objected and the habits of looking at costs for a generation in business were too strong for the old man. And so we have the ludicrous picture of Carnegie beating down wages in order later to give away his money. If he had written less and given away less some would have liked him better.

Would Homestead have been different if Carnegie had stayed home in America and Frick had left for Europe? This is a

great guessing game that has been played ever since the strike.<sup>116</sup> Almost certainly things would have been different. No fortification around the works would have been built; no Pinkertons would have been employed. Carnegie was smooth and the workmen liked him better than Frick, but Carnegie was too mercurial for a long strike and public criticism would have been too much. In the end the magnate probably would have given way, which would have meant that the union issue at Homestead would have merely been postponed. Carnegie himself was to declare later that it was all Frick's fault and to suggest the whole issue would never have happened if he had been home.<sup>117</sup>

Carnegie was unusually silent on the questions of child labor and the labor of women. Always cautious of his public image when he wrote, the magnate was not particularly bothered

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<sup>116</sup>"Carnegie on the Verge of Seventy," sees the problem as Frick's fault and suggests things would have improved if Carnegie had been home, p. 501; Williams, Men of Stress, feels there would have been no problem if Carnegie had been there, pp. 218-219; Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, declares "that if "the little boss" had been in command there would have been no strike," p. 33.

<sup>117</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 65. In a letter to Gladstone he speaks of Homestead as "the trial of my life," and sees Frick as "too rash." Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 17, #3198, 3199, 3200. However, his letters home at the time of Homestead indicate Carnegie felt the strike "foolish" on the part of the men and that if Frick held fast the company would "win." (July, 1892) Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 17, #3111. Letter to "Dod" (George Lauder, Jr.).



over employing women and children, but he did not write on these topics. Women he romanticized and yet he was quite willing to see women as capable of doing a job, almost any kind of a job, that did not involve physical work beyond her capacity. Children, too, were not hurt by work, if they were given time to play and to be educated. Indeed, the best education for children was on-the-job training, performing simple tasks or becoming acquainted with the company by acting as a messenger boy.

### 8. The Views of Carnegie: The Negro

While Andrew Carnegie, who favored the abolition of slavery, had not participated in the Civil War as he might have, the magnate was never one who quietly stood back and allowed people to voice their prejudices. When his friends in Homewood, the Wilkins, were upset that Negroes were admitted to West Point, Carnegie interrupted to say that "There was something even worse than that. I understand that some of them have been admitted to Heaven."<sup>118</sup> After the Civil War ended, Carnegie like many men of the north, felt the problem was solved. Only later when his brother Tom bought a winter home in the south, did Carnegie travel to the south and see for himself that the problem persisted. It was not enough to remove the shackles of slavery, Carnegie lamented, a northerner who had never visited the south could not appreciate the enormity of the problem.<sup>119</sup>

Indeed Carnegie himself did not understand the enormity of the problem. He saw the Negro as making progress and needing

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<sup>118</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 92.

<sup>119</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "The Work and Influence of Hampton," proceedings of a meeting held in New York City, February 12, 1904, under the directions of the Armstrong Association, with addresses by: Mr. Andrew Carnegie, Chairman, President, Charles W. Eliot, Dr. H. B. Frissell, Dr. Booker T. Washington, p. 6. This copy, in the Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 252, Folder 7, has been utilized. The speech was reprinted under the title: "White and Black in the South," in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. II.

help. America, he declared in an interesting parallel, would "be in the position in which South Africa is today but for the faithful, placable, peaceful, industrious, lovable colored man."<sup>120</sup> On another occasion he wrote: "As a class the American Negro is of happy disposition, placable, affectionate, singularly free from promptings to commit secret crimes, most grateful and responsive to kindness. There is nothing of the plotting assassin in him."<sup>121</sup> Here was the stereotype that continued until shattered by the revolutions of the 1960's. How did Carnegie view the problem? Sending the Negro back to Africa was impossible and undesirable.<sup>122</sup> The American South was unique, unusual, unlike anything in the North or in "any other English speaking" country.<sup>123</sup> Freedom for the slave had only begun the process. Sounding much like the typical Northern liberal, the magnate saw the problem as solvable, but only over a long period of time.<sup>124</sup>

Part of the problem, Carnegie conceded, was knowing and understanding the Southern White.<sup>125</sup> But the magnate went quite

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<sup>120</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>121</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Negro in America, October 16, 1907 address before the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. II, p. 109.

<sup>122</sup> Carnegie, "Work of Hampton," p. 9.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid.

a distance toward accepting in its entirety the Southern White position:

Perhaps I can give you a just conception of the difference in the situation with us in the North and our white friends in the South. We safely extend the suffrage in this home of free schools and universal education, and trust to education to make sober-minded, intelligent citizens as the sure effect of knowledge. The number of new citizens given the suffrage who are not sufficiently informed is relatively small. Even if they vote unwisely they do not drown the voice of the intelligent. These are still in the majority and their views prevail. Good and safe government is not endangered.

In the South the ignorant are the immense majority. To give suffrage without restriction to the blacks would mean that the intelligent whites were powerless -- overwhelmed. Government would be in the hands of men steeped in ignorance of political responsibilities to a degree impossible for Northern people to imagine. Only residence among them can give a true impression. No fault this of the colored people who were reared and held in slavery, or who at best are only emerging from that depth. . . .

Now, the wise policy seems obvious. We should agree that the keeping down of millions of people, even if successful, would be destructive to civilized society and a menace to the state. To treat them as if they had already risen would be equally so, therefore, an educational test for the suffrage should be adopted and strictly applied, applicable to white and black alike, for ignorance in the white is deplorable.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>126</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

While education would solve the problem of the Blacks eventually,<sup>127</sup> Carnegie's views on the South and southern politics were similar to the compromise that was worked out between southern business interests and northern Republicans that the federal government would desist from interference and that industrialization should be encouraged in the South. Carnegie, before the Spanish-American War, saw the way of life of the North in the United States as the best pattern of culture on earth. Evolution and Spencer meant to the magnate not much more than that the world was improving and there was inevitable progress inherent in being. The Civil War was desirable because it had shaken the South loose from the slavery of the plantation system and the ideal of the English country gentleman. As the South became more industrialized and like the North, problems would vanish. Carnegie tried everyone in his first years in business and eventually put all his eggs into one basket, in the North. He never tried to help industrialize the South himself. The southern white and black both needed educating.

Even education, obviously posed some problems. In the South it led to some revolts. "Education is moral dynamite which invariably explodes into rebellion," Carnegie conceded happily.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>128</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Negro is America," in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, p. 90.

It is, at first thought, remarkable that the Negro in America has been so long-suffering. There never was a Negro conspiracy nor a united revolt. Never were national troops needed to repress serious outbreak. But let it be remembered that the Southerner, the master, knew better than to teach them as we now teach subject races. It was unlawful to teach the slave to read. Ignorance is the only possible foundation upon which dominion over others can rest.<sup>129</sup>

Here Carnegie exposed his own ignorance of the situation. Even in going, as he did, to the leaders of Tuskegee and Hampton and requesting facts, the magnate posed a problem for the men from whom he desired information. Here was this White millionaire, a man who must be pleased, for he might leave a large sum to the school, demanding data so he could make a speech in Scotland. Scotland was obviously not going to help or understand the Black cause in the South, but if Carnegie was too widely quoted and it was discovered where he got his facts, the Black Colleges could be in trouble. How much did they dare tell him? Of course he ended up with his facts all wrong. There were slave revolts and even slave conspiracies in the antibellum South. Slaves were taught to read in spite of laws to the contrary and little effort was made to achieve statewide enforcement of the laws prohibiting teaching slaves to read, for the White man was still running the

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

South -- indeed he still is. Finally, the non-slave owner combined with the slave owner to enforce social control in the South.

Carnegie's article, "The Negro in America," was filled with the magnate's usual optimism. The Negro was becoming a reading and writing man, and also a saving man, so he was on his way.<sup>130</sup> The virility of the Negro race was seen in the continued increases in his population.<sup>131</sup> This was Darwinian but not a route Carnegie followed himself. Negro progress was seen by the facts that in 1870, 83.5% of the adult male Blacks were illiterate and in 1900 the illiteracy had been reduced to 47.4%.<sup>132</sup> Who tested the adult male Blacks Carnegie did not indicate. The magnate observed hopefully that there was "no public school system in any Southern state before the war; now 1907 there is no state without one, embracing Negro as well as white schools."<sup>133</sup> Carnegie saw the success of the Negro in the land some owned, the professions some entered, the books some had written, and the businesses some had begun.

One example of Carnegie's naivete was that he swallowed

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<sup>130</sup>Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

almost completely the mythology of the White scare stories.

We are staggered now and then by assaults of the lowest and most brutal Negroes upon white women in the less settled states. . . . Every case of this kind is given the widest publicity, and naturally arouses the strongest passions. These outrages are committed in lonely districts where policemen are unknown. . . . The guilty fiend is captured by the residents, tried, and hung to the nearest tree. Every man and woman is aroused and mad for instant and sweeping punishment. . . . It is easy for those thousands of miles away . . . to preach patience . . . but were we present . . . it may be doubted whether we could preserve the judicial spirit needed to preach patience. "Judge" Lynch is rarely, if ever, accused of punishing the innocent -- undue haste or excessive "efficiency" is his fault. The number who suffer, not from injustice but undue haste, is not great. As the population becomes denser and the Negroes better educated, these brutal attacks may be expected to cease. They are steadily decreasing. In 1885, 181 assaults were made, in 1906 only 72.<sup>134</sup>

Carnegie had adopted almost entirely the southern post war apology for race relations. Here he followed without much thought the pattern of the white northern industrialists. He did not comment on race relations in the north, but he obviously felt, as usual, that things were going to become better. That the Blacks might take the law into their hands, as well, he did not even consider. Here the magnate was misled by the southern mythology, partly due to his own nineteenth century racist feelings and his romantic notions about women.

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<sup>134</sup>Ibid., pp. 109-110.



The Reverend Frederick Lynch, whose own racial feelings, like those of Carnegie's were a product of the times, saw the magnate in this way:

Carnegie was so convinced of the splendid results for the Negro from the technical training which Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute were providing, that it was a little difficult to get him interested in the higher education such as Atlanta University and Fisk University were furnishing. I think he had a little of that feeling that Mr. Washington himself occasionally seemed to have, that the Negro would be wise not to worry over social standing, but bend all his efforts toward success in agriculture, trade, and business, and especially try to make himself indispensable to the community.<sup>135</sup>

As to Booker Washington, Carnegie felt as so many Whites did, Washington was the magnate's favorite Negro:

No truer, more self-sacrificing hero ever lived: a man compounded of all the virtues. It makes one better just to know such pure and noble souls - human nature in its highest types is already divine here on earth. If it is asked which man of our age, or even of the past ages, has risen from the lowest to the highest, the answer must be Booker Washington. He rose from slavery to the leadership of his people -- a modern Moses and Joshua combined, leading his people both onward and upward.<sup>136</sup>

When Carnegie liked somebody, he did not spare the hyperbole. The magnate gave \$600,000 to Tuskegee. He did not spare the money either.

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<sup>135</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 14.

<sup>136</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 266.

## 9. The Views of Carnegie: Romanticism

Near the end of his life, Andrew Carnegie was to look back at his Uncle Lauder in Scotland as his "instructor, guide, and inspirer," who made him "romantic, patriotic, and poetical at eight."<sup>137</sup> The magnate remained a romantic all his life. Everyone may be expected to be a bit of a romantic when going around the world and standing in the moonlight gazing at the Taj Mahal,<sup>138</sup> but the steel king found romance everywhere. He could scarcely write a book chapter or an essay without quoting a bit of poetry to emphasize a point; he believed people should love their job, but not let work blind them to nature, poetry, and the joy of travel.<sup>139</sup> "The man who finds no element of romance in his occupation is to be pitied,"<sup>140</sup> Carnegie declared, and "if the young man does not find romance in his business, it is not the fault of the business, but the fault of the young man."<sup>141</sup> For, after all, "there is a romantic as well as a prosaic side to

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<sup>137</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 108.

<sup>138</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, pp. 170-171.

<sup>139</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, pp. 4-5. Indeed he insisted on his coaching trip across Britain that the party adopt the maxim for travel, "Whatever is, is lovely," so no one would quarrel. p.11.

<sup>140</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 99.

<sup>141</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 221.

business."<sup>142</sup> When the steel king bought Pittencrieff Glen and gave it as a public park to his native town of Dunfermline, he found it "a true romance, which no air-castle can quite equal or fiction conceive."<sup>143</sup> Very early Carnegie had a romantic love of life and joy of living instilled into his being and he remained a romantic throughout his days.<sup>144</sup>

Nowhere is Carnegie's romanticism more strongly exhibited than in his veneration for women.<sup>145</sup> The magnate's trip around the world led him to believe that "the American woman is the most intelligent, entertaining, and most agreeable in the world."<sup>146</sup> In the Far East the steel king missed the company of "intelligent and refined women."<sup>147</sup> Carnegie married late in life, but he always enjoyed the company of the ladies. Since this was his only form of sexual expression, he really found the conversation with clever western women a serious problem in Asia. He tended to

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<sup>142</sup>Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>143</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 279.

<sup>144</sup>Carnegie's major biographers declare him a romantic, Wall, Carnegie, p. 397; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 187, 188, 324, Vol. II, pp. 137, 251. Indeed, Herbert Newton Casson, the early historian of the industry was influenced enough to entitle his book The Romance of Steel (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1907).

<sup>145</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, pp. 52, 89-90.

<sup>146</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 337.

<sup>147</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 212.

enthroned women, to look at them from afar. "In our day," he declared, "man, and notably the American man, finds in his wife the angel leading him upward, both by precept and example, to a higher and holier life, refining and elevating him, making him purer and nobler. . . . Not a little of her power to influence for good flows from increased knowledge. She is now educated as never before, and not only is she more of a woman in her womanly qualities, but her mind is of ampler range, making her a wider companion."<sup>148</sup> Carnegie enjoyed being with educated women who had read widely and could appreciate his conversation; they were more nearly perfect creatures than the empty headed giggling ones that so often tried for his attention.<sup>149</sup> But the magnate romanticized most women. "Most wives are too good, sweet, tender, and self-sacrificing to do more than make believe when they rebuke,"<sup>150</sup> the steel king asserted hopefully. "The most conspicuous instances of charming manners I have seen have not been those born to the purple, but untitled ladies, whose superior charms of intellect and manner have captivated the ablest nobles."<sup>151</sup> So Carnegie opted for an untitled, but

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<sup>148</sup>Carnegie, "Ezra Cornell," in Miscellaneous Writings, ed. by Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 257.

<sup>149</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Hendrick notes, Vol. 257, pp. 1, 2, 4-7.

<sup>150</sup>Carnegie, "Genius Illustrated from Burns," in Miscellaneous Writings, ed. by Hendrick, Vol. I, p. 166.

<sup>151</sup>Carnegie, "The Aristocracy of the Dollar," p. 3.

educated and cultured American woman.

Biographer Wall sees Carnegie's romantic feelings focalized within his own pure home, when at the age of seventeen, as Thomas Scott's secretary and telegrapher, the future magnate was first introduced to the coarse world of the railroad men.<sup>152</sup> Wall's assertion is no doubt true, but a bit too pat. The nineteenth century was certainly not a time when sex instruction was widely disseminated in an edifying fashion by any institution: home, church, or school. All young men were left to find their own answers from street talk. Most introspective and pure young men still have the "crudities" of life brought to their attention at some point in their adolescence and generally this comes in an abrupt fashion so that much is revealed in a flash. If the shock was indeed greater for Carnegie than it was for others, we must look at why the shock was greater and not at the shock itself, for almost everyone who traveled the road of life in the nineteenth century suffered that shock. How much more severe would it be to have the crudities brought out right in the home itself by parents continually drunken and immoral? Actually, there is little reason to see his railroad days as a turning point in the magnate's life; Carnegie did not stop glorifying womankind and romanticizing his feelings concerning them; there

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<sup>152</sup>Wall, Carnegie, pp. 118-119.

was no reason for him to think that he could not find a "perfect woman," for this was the prize he sought for his own "pure home."

Certainly Carnegie had a mother problem, in fact Margaret Carnegie had become more than just a mother, for in steering her son into a business career and priming him for success, Margaret Carnegie effectively married her son to his business. The magnate, in fact, likened a business partnership to a marriage:

The businessman seeks first in his partner "the soul of honour," . . . Is he intelligent? Is he capable of forming a correct judgment, based upon knowledge, upon distant and far-reaching issues? Young men, yes, and old men also, sometimes marry in haste, which is very foolish in both classes. But there is this to be said for the partnership -- it is rarely entered upon in a hurry. It is not one or two qualities which insure it, but in all-round character, desirable in many respects, highly objectionable in none, and with special ability in one or two.<sup>153</sup>

Here was the basis for a good partnership and a good marriage.

When Carnegie's expanding energies looked beyond business alone, his mother was at his side, delighted to travel to Europe with him on his early trips. The magnate had taken a self-denying ordinance of the pursuit of wealth and was so busy with the romance of business he ignored the business of romance. Whatever his relationship with his mother, it is obvious that the

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<sup>153</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 201.

factors which caused his caution with women also propelled him onward into his business career. He enjoyed the comradery of his male business connections. He sensed, more than put into words, how his mother felt about his marrying. When he returned from the coaching trip across Britain with his mother to the New York hotel which they called home, he mourned the end of his pleasant holiday with his many friends:

"All our family gone! I feel so lonely, so deserted; not one remains." But mother was up to the emergency. "Oh you don't count me then! You still have one that sticks to you." Oh yes, sure of that, old lady.<sup>154</sup>

How much of an "emergency" this was is a question that can never be answered, but it was obvious he still had his mother. Biographer Winkler sees a promise made by the magnate to his mother never to marry in her lifetime, but Wall denies this, probably correctly, declaring it was unnecessary for Carnegie to make such a promise.<sup>155</sup> The steel king and his mother had an understanding that may never have been expressed in words.

When Carnegie did find his perfect woman, in Louise Whitfield, he was past forty and not ready for swift action in a matrimonial venture. They rode horses together in Central Park

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<sup>154</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, pp. 272-273.

<sup>155</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 66; Wall, Carnegie, p. 129. See also Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 314-315.

and enjoyed each other's company and conversation. As companionship gradually grew into real affection, Margaret Carnegie was all too well aware of the danger. The magnate's mother loved the hotel life in New York with her oldest son and enjoyed the cool summers in Cresson, Pennsylvania, up in the Allegheny Mountains where she could chaperone parties for her boy. When the magnate asked his mother to go herself to the Whitfield home and issue a special invitation asking Louise Whitfield to go on the coaching trip, Margaret Carnegie indeed went as requested and spoke to Louise and the girl's widowed mother, but something in the tone of voice in which the invitation was issued prompted the question of propriety from Louise Whitfield's mother. Then Margaret Carnegie was able to respond on her own: "If she were a daughter of mine she wouldna go."<sup>156</sup> Andrew Carnegie never knew of these events; Louise Whitfield never even told him after they finally married the full extent of the web of protection that Margaret Carnegie had thrown around him.

That some could see the maternal influence as an aura about the magnate was obvious, for on the coaching trip, it was Provost Mathieson at a banquet for the Carnegies in Dunfermline, who spoke the truth right out. Praising the steel king lavishly on his success, Mathieson found that "the only flaw in Mr.

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<sup>156</sup>Burton J. Hendrick and Daniel Henderson, Louise Whitfield Carnegie (New York: Hastings House, 1950), p. 59.



Carnegie's character is that he wanted a wife. (Laughter and cheers). I attribute that very much to the fact of his having a mother. (Laughter.)"<sup>157</sup> The crowd sounds made it all very pleasant, but the truth was spoken. After returning to America, Carnegie began again to see Louise Whitfield. For a few months in 1883-1884 Andrew Carnegie and Louise Whitfield were secretly engaged but then it was broken off.

Louise Whitfield was a well educated, quiet, introspective woman, just twenty-one when her father died suddenly at the age of forty-six. She was left with family problems that needed solving at home and only gradually became reconciled to loving a man more than twenty years her senior. She was several inches taller than the magnate, which was no doubt one reason why so many of their early dates were equestrian. On horseback, Carnegie might be the physical equal to all. He really enjoyed riding. As time went by, the difference in age did not seem as important to Louise Whitfield. In the summer of 1886, a second secret engagement took place. The magnate tried to suggest a variety of reasons why the engagement should be a secret and marriage should be delayed, but they had an almost unspoken understanding that the marriage would have to wait until after Margaret Carnegie's death. What would have happened if the "old lady" the magnate loved so dearly and dared not hurt had lived on for

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<sup>157</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, p. 210.

another ten years, we can only surmise. This was the autumn that almost wiped out the Carnegies. Thomas Morrison Carnegie died of a fever, perhaps weakened by heavy drinking of which his brother was unaware. Margaret Carnegie died of pneumonia. Simultaneously Andrew Carnegie caught typhoid and lay for weeks hovering between life and death. When the crisis for the magnate was past and he could be told of his mother's death -- he already knew his brother had died -- the steel king wrote Louise Whitfield a short note, signing himself, "yours alone."<sup>158</sup> It was true at last. When Andrew Carnegie, aged 51, married Louise Whitfield, aged 30, on April 22, 1887, the steel magnate had found a new celestial being for the one he had lost, a "guardian angel of a woman . . . who lifted him upward with her."<sup>159</sup> Of course it is obvious that perfection is not of this life, and that Carnegie was using his usual hyperbole, but Louise Whitfield listened well, was intelligent and cultured, was an American, rode and read, enjoyed travel, adapted well to Scotland, declared openly her love of Dunfermline, and as far as we know, the marriage was a very happy one. It was ten years later, when the magnate was sixty-one and Louise was forty that they had their only child, a daughter, appropriately named Margaret after the steel king's mother.

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<sup>158</sup> Wall, Carnegie, p. 419.

<sup>159</sup> Carnegie, "Ezra Cornell," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 242.

## 10. The Views of Carnegie: Some Predictions

Andrew Carnegie was always ready to make some predictions as to the future, and especially in the case of business in writing his partners, to couple his prognostications with a handy phrase such as "mark my words." Oftentimes the predictions were merely optimistic and bouyant feelings as to the future, as in the following: "The writer is confident that this prophecy will soon be fulfilled, for nothing can keep the republic from speedily dwarfing all other nations industrially, if she only frowns upon great navies and increased armies and continues to tread the paths of peace, following the truly American policy of the fathers."<sup>160</sup> It is all there -- pacificism, the rise of America, the appeal to tradition, and the Carnegie confidence. On the other hand, Carnegie could be less sanguine: "Notwithstanding all the cheering signs of the growth of arbitration, we should delude ourselves if we assumed that war is immediately to cease, for it is scarcely to be hoped that the future has not to witness more than one great holocaust of men to be offered up before the reign of peace blesses the earth."<sup>161</sup> At other times the predictions were hopeful statements that what the magnate wanted for the world would

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<sup>160</sup>Carnegie, "My Views Upon the Tariff," in Miscellaneous Writings,

<sup>161</sup>Carnegie, "A League of Peace," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 258.

happen: "I am on record as having predicted years ago that our English-speaking race would one day be again united."<sup>162</sup> Or: "Of course there is little question . . . as to the coming universal language. The world is to speak English, think English, and read English. The only question is, whether it will be aristocratic or democratic English, Queen's English or People's English, and there is not much question about that."<sup>163</sup> It was also pretty obvious to Carnegie that industrialism would soon force a United States of Europe; just as Nice and Savoy had been added to France, just as Italy had united and Germany had united, so would all of Europe unify. When this event occurred, it would be the American Constitution and the German that would be used to govern the united continents.<sup>164</sup> On the other hand, Russia would be the dominant country in Europe before long.<sup>165</sup>

If Carnegie did not, in making his predictions, so often make a strong point that one should remember his statement in the future, the soothsayings would not be so obvious. At times he could be overwhelmingly correct, as for instance, in this statement seventeen years before the Wright Brothers flew:

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<sup>162</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 185.

<sup>163</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 354.

<sup>164</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, pp. 114-119.

<sup>165</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

If ever aerial navigation becomes practicable it will like railways attain its highest development in America; for here men's lives are too full of activity to permit lounging in parlor-cars drawn wearily by a locomotive at only forty miles an hour when it is possible for men to soar through the air and outstrip their own symbolic eagle in its flight.<sup>166</sup>

On the other hand when the magnate tried to dissuade his partners from going into profitable oil ventures or suggested that the great Lake Superior iron ore fields were worthless, he sounded just as certain. One of the real coincidences was that Henry Oliver, for whom Carnegie obtained a job at the telegraph office in Pittsburgh and was a fellow messenger boy with the magnate, turned up with the leases on the vast ore fields around Lake Superior. We need not here recount again the story of how this all came about. Carnegie mistrusted Oliver and his leases and only over the magnate's own objections was Oliver allowed to make millions for everyone concerned -- Oliver, Carnegie's partners, and especially Carnegie. Bridge gleefully tells the story in detail, for it is a tale that makes the magnate look foolish and one of the instances that backs the muckraker's theory that everybody made money for Carnegie in spite of the magnate's efforts to stupidly run things:

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<sup>166</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 301.

The matter was at once brought to the attention of Mr. Carnegie, who laconically opposed it as follows, in a letter dated Rannoch Lodge, Kinloch-Rannoch, Perthshire, August 29th, 1892:

"Oliver's ore bargain is just like him -- nothing in it. If there is any department of business which offers no inducement, it is ore. It never has been very profitable, and the Massaba is not the last great deposit that Lake Superior is to reveal."

Mr. Frick, however, made the combination with Mr. Oliver; and, on his return from Europe, Mr. Carnegie expressed himself so vigorously in condemnation of it that there ensued the first coldness between himself and Mr. Frick.

Mr. Carnegie's attitude was not modified by the successful working of the arrangement; and during the next two years he repeatedly placed himself on record, with increasing emphasis, as being opposed to any venture in Lake Superior ores. Writing to the Board of Managers from Buckhurst Park, Withyham, Sussex, on April 18th, 1894, he says again:

"The Oliver bargain I do not regard as very valuable. You will find that this ore venture, like all our other ventures in ore, will result in more trouble and less profit than almost any branch of our business. If any of our brilliant and talented young partners have more time, or attention, than is required for their present duties, they will find sources of much greater profit right at home. I hope you will make a note of this prophecy."

Of course the managers made a note of the prophecy; and it afterwards furnished subject for many a subdued laugh at their meetings.<sup>167</sup>

Here again it is the emphatic nature of Carnegie's reading of the future that caused his statements to be remembered. Also it was the very multiplicity of the forecasts that are curious. Whether he was predicting the success of an unknown artist,<sup>168</sup> a literary renaissance in America,<sup>169</sup> or telling Lord Rosebery that "no peer will ever be Prime Minister of Britain again," a few years before Lord Rosebery himself became Prime Minister,<sup>170</sup> Carnegie spoke ex cathedra, pontificating in all directions. Again, within a sphere he knew, Carnegie let his hopes lead his wisdom when he predicted the future of industry in America:

In the industrial world the days of corporations seem likely to come to an end. It has been necessary for me to watch closely most of my life the operations of great establishments owned by hundreds of absent capitalists, and conducted by salaried officers. Contrasted with these I believe that the partnership conducted by men vitally interested and owning the works will make satisfactory dividends when the corporation is embarrassed and scarcely knows which side the balance is to be.<sup>171</sup>

Even when he was wrong, Carnegie did it with a flair.

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<sup>168</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 221.

<sup>169</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 355.

<sup>170</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 272.

<sup>171</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 115.

It was in the area of population growth and national development that the steel king was most intrigued by the future possibilities and both accurate and wild in his crystal ball gazing. In Triumphant Democracy in 1886 he asserted rather accurately that the population of New York City would reach that of London by 1920.<sup>172</sup> In the same book the entails indicated that by 1935 the United States would have 180,000,000 people.<sup>173</sup> Instead, of course the population stood at about 125,000,000 and we were in the midst of a great depression. But that was not to be the limits of American population growth! The magnate forecast in 1902 that "soon" the American republic would reach 200,000,000, a condition not achieved till the 1960's.<sup>174</sup> Yet again in Triumphant Democracy, in 1886, Carnegie's divination indicated that by 1950 there would be 290,000,000 Americans.<sup>175</sup> Further, in an 1890 article, the steel king disclosed that if the American population "continues to increase with even a little less rapidity than its normal rate, there are persons now living

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<sup>172</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 51.

<sup>173</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>174</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 121.

<sup>175</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 38.



who will see the population under the Stars and Stripes more than 500 million."<sup>176</sup> Further, once more in Triumphant Democracy, the magnate revealed that by 1980 American and Europe would each have a population of about 600,000,000.<sup>177</sup> This would be a real blow for the ZPG. To top matters off, Carnegie declared unequivocally in his earliest published article in 1882 that it would be five hundred years before America was densely settled.<sup>178</sup>

Of course predictions are risky and Carnegie's efforts at prescience were compounded of his desire to see industry grow, his feelings that an expanding home market was dependent upon population increases, his equating of numbers with national greatness, and his rather Malthusian inferences that "nations tend to increase in population according to their capacity to produce cheap food."<sup>179</sup> The most interesting light that the magnate's omens suggest, is that cast upon the nature of Carnegie himself; or, as the steel king declared, "Genius is, of all things, most difficult to control."<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>176</sup>Carnegie, "Summing Up the Tariff Discussion," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 334.

<sup>177</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 1.

<sup>178</sup>Carnegie, "As Others See Us," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 14.

<sup>179</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 104.

<sup>180</sup>"Tariff Hearings: Before the Committee on Ways and Means, December 21, 1908," p. 5782.

## CHAPTER SIX

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## Chapter Six

## The Carnegie Value System: What is a Good Man?

## 1. What Makes a Hero?

When Richard Watson Gilder, the editor of the Century Magazine, one of the men Andrew Carnegie met through the salon of Anne Botta, wrote his poem "In the Time of Peace," it served as a reminder to the steel king of many conversations the two men had over the years.<sup>1</sup> Carnegie was to tell Frederick Lynch later: "The whole idea of my Hero Fund is in that poem. I conceived the Fund before Mr. Gilder wrote this poem; but we often talked it over together."<sup>2</sup> The Gilder poem, a maudlin eight stanza series of couplets, dealt with heroes of peace. The message was that the greatest victories were not won on the battlefield but in seeking the truth, in the war on disease, by "a civic hero" in the field of law, by firm women, and even by suffering children. Actually, the Hero Fund was one of the offshoots of Carnegie's quest for peace, a hopeful gesture, founded on the firm belief that true heroes were not the men of war who ran up records for planes shot down or opposing soldiers killed.

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<sup>1</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 252-253.

<sup>2</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 61.

They were not the man dashing onto the front lines flinging grenades and turning the tide of battle single-handed with a sub-machine gun, but rather the man who took a dangerous risk to save a life, who accepted the challenge of helping another human in mortal danger. The real hero, then, was the man who saved lives, not took them. Carnegie told Frederick Lynch, "Most of the monuments in the world are to somebody who has killed a lot of his fellow men."<sup>3</sup> It is likely that the Carnegie-Gilder conversations over the years inspired Gilder to write his poem and finally Carnegie to pursue his idea of the Hero Fund.

While many of Carnegie's friends in the pacifist movement could not understand the relationship between the Hero Fund and world peace, in some ways the magnate was quite shrewd here in seeing that world peace was too large an order to be won by a frontal assault. The Hero Fund was thus a flank attack, diversionary, certainly not expected to storm the citadel of war, but rather act as an insidious propaganda effort that might lead eventually to some men thinking of peace. Carnegie recognized that to have world peace meant in effect the rewriting of books, the restructuring of thinking, the altering of values. In truth, Carnegie was not trying to produce heroes or heroism, or even conduct a unique effort in "vocational guidance;"<sup>4</sup> his effort

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>4</sup>C. W. Holmes, "Unusual Experiment in Vocational Guidance," Education, January, 1925, pp. 263-276.

was rather educative in another sense, to place the heroes of peace above the heroes of war in the public mind. We would have to stop equating the knight and his lance, the Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Rider types with heroism and see in other achievements the true greatness of man. As with William James' famous "moral equivalent of war," it was easier to write of such matters than to really effect changes. Carnegie felt a love for the Hero Fund idea because the idea was his own and he thought of it as his own child.<sup>5</sup>

Indeed the magnate became obsessed with the idea of his Hero Fund and many of his writings allude to heroes of peace before the fund was even established, just as his interest continued after the program was launched. In 1902 he wrote: "What the barbarous triumphs of the sword compared with those of the pen! Peace hath her victories much more renowned than those of war: the heroes of the past have been those who most successfully injured or slew, the heroes of the future are to be those who most wisely benefit or save their fellow men."<sup>6</sup> In 1905, the year after the Hero Fund was first established, Carnegie in

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<sup>5</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 253.

<sup>6</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 124.

his great Rectorial Address on "A League of Peace" at St. Andrews College spoke of war being exalted as a means for man to show courage, but there were better ways to show one's character.<sup>7</sup> This idea is also central to Carnegie's peace society pamphlet, "War as the Mother of Valor and Civilization," published in 1910. In this essay the steel king declared that war was the enemy of civilization and peace "the mother of true heroism." The pen was truly mightier than the sword and the golden rule superior to brute force. "The true heroism inspired by moral courage prompts firemen, policemen, sailors, miners, and others to volunteer and risk their lives to save the lives of their fellow men." Only when the last war is finally over will "heroism" . . . no longer mean to kill, but only to serve or save our fellows."<sup>8</sup> Carnegie wrote to William Stead in 1908 that "it was time that the Heroes of Peace had recognition."<sup>9</sup>

When Carnegie established his Hero Fund in America, with headquarters in Pittsburgh, on April 15, 1904, with \$5,000,000, it was only the beginning. In his own words the magnate tells the rest of the story succinctly:

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<sup>7</sup>Carnegie, "A League of Peace," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, passim.

<sup>8</sup>Carnegie, "War as the Mother of Valor and Civilization," pp. 3-6.

<sup>9</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 158.

Later I extended it to my native land, Great Britain, with headquarters at Dunfermline -- the Trustees of the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust undertaking its administration, and splendidly have they succeeded. In due time it was extended to France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and Denmark.<sup>10</sup>

The Hero Fund idea, with the aid of Carnegie money, spread through much of Europe, though the total Carnegie spent on all of Europe was the same as that of the United States: \$5,000,000.

In the same fashion the magnate in his Autobiography looked back in pleased retrospection and explained the purpose of the fund:

The Hero Fund will prove chiefly a pension fund. Already it has many pensioners, heroes or the widows or children of heroes. A strange misconception arose at first about it. Many thought that its purpose was to stimulate heroic action, that heroes were to be induced to play their parts for the sake of reward. This never entered my mind. It is absurd. True heroes think not of reward. They are inspired and think only of their fellows endangered; never of themselves. The fund is intended to pension or provide in the most suitable manner for the hero should he be disabled, or for those dependent upon him should he perish in his attempt to save others. It has made a fine start and will grow in popularity year after year as its aim and services are better understood. To-day we have in America 1430 hero pensioners or their families on our list.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 253.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 255.

The daily newspapers indicated to Carnegie that there were many heroes of peace.<sup>12</sup> To his friend John Morley in Britain, the steel king wrote some further details:

Sixteen Heroes and Heroines injured while engaged in rescuing others were placed on our list. One man (fisherman) rescued seven men when the life boat crew declared it impossible. Our 'visitor' went to his home, found him and his wife only one wish to give their boy a better education than they had -- good, we send him to college, of course -- a small mortgage on house, pay that.<sup>13</sup>

Here we notice that the hero had not only done a noble deed but answered the questions of the visitor correctly.

With all the delicacy of determining Sainthood, the Hero Fund investigated on its own, not taking the probably emotional and exaggerated newspaper accounts as truth, but carefully scrutinizing, interviewing without haste, considering not only the instant deed itself but the entire background and character of the person who performed the act. What were the requirements of a Carnegie hero in America? First, the person who performed the exploit risked his life voluntarily or sacrificed himself for the benefit of others in some way. Second, the act was performed in the United States or Canada, or on the sea, within

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<sup>12</sup>Burton J. Hendrick, The Benefactions of Andrew Carnegie (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1935), p. 39.

<sup>13</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 146.



six miles of the territorial borders of the United States of Canada. Third, the achievement had to be reported within three years so that the facts were not forgotten by the time the research was begun.

Thomas Shaw Arbuthnot, in Heroes of Peace, wrote in 1935, at the centennial of the birth of Carnegie, on the progress of the Hero Fund. At that time an average of one thousand cases a year were brought to the attention of the commission, only eight per cent of which were felt to be worthy of an award. The award might be a Carnegie Hero Fund Medal or a stipulated amount of money. The money came from the interest on the trust fund, not the principal. Awards of money were given only to those of good moral character who were in need or who had a good purpose. The highest monetary awards were for up to \$2,000 a year, but such an award was never paid in a lump sum. Forty dollars monthly was granted to some of the heroes, or more commonly to a hero's widow. The press always wrote of the \$2,000 as if it were given in one amount, and this annoyed Carnegie, who felt that such a gift might ruin rather than aid a hero. Carnegie especially enjoyed reading the letters of thanks from those who received the Hero Fund money. Agents of the fund traveled throughout America, tracking down witnesses and investigating.<sup>14</sup> Arbuthnot's book is

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<sup>14</sup>Thomas Shaw Arbuthnot, Heroes of Peace: A History of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission. Commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth, on November 25, 1835, of Andrew Carnegie (Pittsburgh: Privately Printed by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, 1935), pp. 83, 94.

really a rather naive account, often dealing with the adventures of the agents who were tracking down the facts rather than the heroes themselves.<sup>15</sup>

There is of course a certain absurdity in analyzing a hero. The very examination of the components of heroism tends to destroy the integrity of the man and the act. As soon as you begin to really closely scrutinize the parts, the gestalt is gone, the event evaporates. As with a work of art, an idea of an inventor, or a poem, once you critically consider the matter, the flash of genius disappears and something rather ordinary is all that remains. The English teacher who feels he is doing his students a favor by spending several weeks thoroughly considering all the possible implications of a few lines of Shakespeare, is really more likely to be destroying Shakespeare forever for that class. The play was meant to be seen as a whole, to move before the eyes. When the action stops and we break the events into slow motion, the characters appear ridiculous, not heroic. Heroism, in fact, is a style, and as with good teaching, it defies analysis; it becomes a pallid imitation of life when we bring in our checklist and truncate teacher activities upon paper. The efforts to measure heroism, to ascribe value to acts, appear to be a study in futility. We may agree in principle with

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<sup>15</sup>See also L. E. Theiss, "The Sleuth and the Hero," Harpers Weekly, June 8, 1912, pp. 9-10.

with Arbuthnot and the Hero Fund investigators that a good swimmer who rescues a child in warm water is not as much the hero as a poor swimmer who rescues an adult in a cold lake.<sup>16</sup> Obviously. But how cold is a cold lake; how good is a good swimmer; how heavy is a child? When we begin to measure acts of heroism against each other the evaluation becomes rapidly rather subjective. While the directors of the Hero Fund in Pittsburgh serve without pay, the bureaucracy of the investigators could cause some cynically amusing comments. The expense of investigating the hero appeared to be less considered by Arbuthnot than the matter of the size of the gift the hero should have. Certainly Carnegie meant well and obviously the Hero Fund investigators believe in the purpose of their organization and there is much to be said for the thought that counts.

If the deserving hero was not in need, he received a Carnegie Hero Medal. The magnate was very pleased with this medal. The American medal, to be awarded heroes of peace, not war, was a large affair, three inches in diameter, with the steel king's picture on one side and an outline map of North America and much other detail on the other side. Around the outline map of North America were the great seals of the United States, Canada, and Newfoundland, and the words around the edge:

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<sup>16</sup>Arbuthnot, History of the Carnegie Hero Fund, pp.59-60.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." In the center, across the outline of the continent, was a place for the name of the hero. In 1955, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Hero Fund's establishment, Lewis Njordyke reported in The American Mercury that only 19 Gold Medals had been issued, and none of those had been issued since 1925.<sup>17</sup> The fund apparently has recently become rather more restrictive in its definition of the ultimate in heroism. On the other hand, 561 Silver Medals had been presented in the first half century and 3312 Bronze Medals had been offered. At the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Hero Fund, the investments of the original Carnegie grant of \$5,000,000 to the United States had allowed distribution to heroes of almost \$7,500,000 and left almost \$8,000,000 on hand for future heroes.

The Carnegie Hero Fund has continued to this day, but has received less publicity in the name of peace than the magnate

might have preferred.<sup>18</sup> Carnegie's original conception was that the fund might lead, in its own small way, to insights into the advantages of peace and the glorification of heroes of peace, yet the nature of publicity in America has made it necessary at times for the Hero Fund Commission to shield its recipients. What makes a Carnegie hero? In general he is a person who takes risks to save or aid another human being quite beyond the expected call of duty or anticipated amenities of society. Lewis Nordyke writes that of the 79 people cited for heroism in 1953, 13 died while performing their feats.<sup>19</sup> The hero exhibits unusual energy, courage, fortitude or determination in persevering in order usually to help another human being in some distress. The motivation of the hero is love of human life and a willingness to risk and even sacrifice his own life to help another. To Carnegie this was the highest human achievement.

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<sup>18</sup>Some other articles on the Carnegie Hero Fund include:  
 "Carnegie Hero Fund," Charities, April 23, 1904, pp. 413-415;  
 "Hero Fund Medals," Independent, October 19, 1905, p. 898;  
 "First Awards From the Hero Fund," Independent, June 4, 1906, pp. 1209-1210;  
 "Heroes and Heroism," Outlook, October 27, 1906, pp. 444-445; August, 1909, pp. 694-699;  
 H.K. Webster, "Just Heroes: How the Carnegie Hero Fund Works in Practice," American Mercury, August, 1909, pp. 594-599;  
 H.M. Phelps, "Making Heroism Profitable," World To-Day, March, 1910, pp. 261-264;  
 "German Hero Fund," Outlook, January 14, 1911, p. 55;  
 "Awards to the Brave," Harpers Weekly, May 17, 1913, pp. 17-18;  
 "Report of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission," Outlook, May 31, 1913, p. 230;  
 "Roll of Heroes," Outlook, May 31, 1913, p. 230.  
 D. Wilhelm, "Medals for the Nation's Heroes," Technical World, May, 1915, pp. 314-317;  
 S. Mackenzie, "Only 18 Men Have Won the Carnegie Gold Medal for Courage," American Magazine, July, 1923, pp. 32-33.  
 It is worthy of note that only two articles in this list were published after World War One began. War and the problems of the twentieth century seems to have taken attention from the Carnegie Hero Medals.

<sup>19</sup>Nordyke, "Heroes Without Headlines."

## 2. The Carnegie Value System

As has been indicated, the values of Andrew Carnegie were hierarchical and ranged from international, global concepts such as peace, equality of opportunity, eventual world unity, a dominant English speaking language, and anti-colonialism to national values such as the right of trial by jury, habeas corpus freedom of the press, and constitutional government,<sup>20</sup> to beliefs in the dignity of man,<sup>21</sup> the importance of labor, and the value of effort. Carnegie almost paraphrased Emerson's "hitch your wagon to the stars." The magnate believed men should aim for leadership.<sup>22</sup> Gambling, speculation, drinking, and smoking, wild spending, and poor marriages were the downfall of men. "There is nothing that the success and happiness of a working man so much depends upon, next to his own good conduct, as a good managing wife," the steel king asserted.<sup>23</sup> Carnegie quite believed that marriage was "a very serious business indeed, and gave rise to many weighty considerations." "Be sure to marry a woman with

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<sup>20</sup>Carnegie, "Democracy in England," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 169.

<sup>21</sup>Sometimes beliefs in the dignity of man were rather contaminated by nineteenth century parochialism. All Chinamen are seen as looking alike and as "stupid looking," Carnegie, Round the World, pp. 11, 14.

<sup>22</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 191, 17-18.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 293.

good common sense," was the advice given me by my mentor, and I just hand it down to you. Common sense is the most uncommon and most valuable quality in man or woman."<sup>24</sup> Destroying beauty, killing life, hunting for instance, was evil, but fishing was not all that bad.<sup>25</sup> There were no perfect men; all men had faults. All men were in a race to achieve; any man who worked diligently could succeed to some extent. Men were improving; the world was growing better and becoming more civilized.

On these matters Carnegie spoke with considerable consistency in his writings but in other areas he can be rather readily quoted against himself. For instance one can compare the following Carnegie quotations with some levity. In Problems of To-Day the steel king announced:

Man has not been placed in this world to play and amuse himself. He is entrusted with a serious mission and has onerous duties to perform, not to /sic/ a future generation but to his own, and he who fails to labor for the improvement of this, our own life of to-day, does not deserve another.<sup>26</sup>

But in lecturing the workers at Braddock on the "Common Interests of Labour and Capital," the magnate suggested:

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>25</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 289.

<sup>26</sup> Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 180.

Life must not be taken too seriously. It is a great mistake to think that the man who works all the time wins in the race. Have your amusements. Learn to play a good game of whist or a good game of drafts, or a good game of billiards. Become interested in baseball or cricket, or horses, or anything that will give you innocent enjoyment and relieve you from the usual strain. There is not anything better than a good laugh.<sup>27</sup>

The difference in the tone is probably nothing more than Carnegie discussing how young men have to work to get ahead in the first case and trying to be one of the boys with his workmen in the second case. The first quotation represents the secularization of the magnate's childhood religious values; the second quotation is more nearly how Carnegie lived. In the same fashion, Carnegie could scarcely write a major article on a subject he felt important without quoting authorities and appealing to tradition,<sup>28</sup> but when authorities did not agree with his beliefs he could accuse them of being "doctrinaires who sit in their cozy studies and spin theories."<sup>29</sup> Taken as a whole, however, for a self-made man who was almost constantly developing, growing, and learning, Carnegie

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<sup>27</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 88.

<sup>28</sup> For example, on peace, see Carnegie, "A League of Peace," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, pp. 223-234 and on the tariff, Carnegie, "Summing Up the Tariff Discussion," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, pp. 308-310.

<sup>29</sup> Carnegie, "Results of the Labor Struggle," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 115.



presents considerable continuity and symmetry of belief.

In Empire of Business Carnegie depicted the negative values that might defeat a young man in his efforts to climb. "There are . . . great rocks ahead of the practical young man who has his foot upon the ladder and is beginning to rise. First, drunkenness, which of course is fatal."<sup>30</sup> The magnate continued on to recount the horrors of gambling and speculation and concluded with the need for thrift. It is to the negative values of drinking, smoking, gambling, and speculation and the positive value of thrift to which we now turn.

<sup>30</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 119-120.

### 3. Drinking and Smoking

Andrew Carnegie did not smoke and drank only moderately, usually at meals or at social events. It annoyed him in his later years to have anyone in the room smoking and angered him if men at dinners smoked in the presence of ladies.<sup>31</sup> He often suggested to college students that they avoid liquor and avoid smoking,<sup>32</sup> and saw the success of William Chambers, one of the heroes of whom he wrote, due in part to the fact that Chambers touched no liquor or tobacco.<sup>33</sup> Carnegie warned working men, too, of the dangers of indulgence. "It should be remembered by the working man that neither liquor nor tobacco can be considered as needs. The dire consequences resulting from the use of liquor would justify much higher taxation upon it in the interest of the workers themselves. The greatest single evil in Britain to-day is intemperance."<sup>34</sup> Of course Carnegie did not believe that work was the curse of the drinking class. "When one asks himself what would most benefit the worker," he proclaimed,

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<sup>31</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, pp. 119-120; Carnegie, Round the World, p. 43.

<sup>32</sup>Carnegie, "Rectorial Address, June 6, 1912," pp. 10, 11.

<sup>33</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 201.

<sup>34</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 10.

"there is no hesitation in the reply -- To avoid liquor and gambling. The working man who indulges in either is . . . the architect of his own poverty."<sup>35</sup> Again and again Carnegie emphasized that one should drink little or not at all, never smoke, and never gamble.<sup>36</sup>

Carnegie revealed in an address at Grangemouth, while dedicating a library, how he was saved by a book.

Let me tell you for the first time -- for I have never spoken of this before -- let me just now give you a little episode in my history. I was a poor boy in the city of Allegheny -- a poor Scotch boy. I thank the kind fates that made me poor. I would not give a fortune to a poor boy any more than I would give that boy a curse, for there is not in the world so grand a legacy as honest poverty. (Cheers). I had no money to buy books, but there was a good man in that city of Allegheny who had four hundred well-worn volumes, and the thought occurred to him that every Saturday afternoon he would attend in his own little house, and he would give to any good young boys the privilege of coming and getting a book to read, which might be returned next Saturday, when a new book could be obtained. . . . His name was Colonel Anderson. And what did Colonel Anderson open to me? Wealth? No; what is wealth? He opened to me the intellectual wealth of the world. I learned then what I could never learn elsewhere. I became fond of reading. I reveled week after week in the books. . . . Can you wonder that I have thought that when I have made wealth that the noblest use to which that wealth can be placed is to imitate Colonel Anderson and establish Free Libraries. (Cheers). And I would say to young men here, and to middle-aged workmen, too, that among the first lessons I

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>36</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Ascendancy," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 100.

learned was a sentiment that is graven upon my heart. . . . I read how in Othello, a noble officer and a good man, Cassio, had ruined his life. By what? By putting "an enemy in his mouth to steal away his brains." (Cheers). I said with Shakespeare --

"Oh, thou invisible spirit of wine,  
if we have no name to know thee by,  
Let's call thee devil."

Therefore, I never entered a barroom. (Cheers). I have never made myself so common that I should enter at a public bar and ask for a drink of liquor. That is one good thing free libraries did for me. And then I soon learned this grand sentiment --

"To thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day  
Thou cans't not then be false to any man."

(Hear, hear, and cheers). I take no low view of human nature. I scorn the idea that we were conceived in sin and born in iniquity. I want manhood exalted.<sup>37</sup>

This long quotation is reproduced here because it is almost extemporaneous Carnegie, and his personality as a speaker is revealed. It is all here: the stories, the oft-repeated mottoes, Colonel Anderson and the books, the rationale behind donating money for libraries, the blessings of poverty, the hints at

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<sup>37</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Address: Opening of Free Library at Grangemouth," (No place; no publisher, 1887), pp. 33-34. This address is one that was never published in the Hendrick, Miscellaneous Writings, in the group of Kirkland, Gospel of Wealth essays, in any of the collections of essays under Carnegie's own name, nor have any of the Carnegie biographies reproduced it. It saw the light of day only in a very insignificant pamphlet and this portion reproduced here.

irreligious convictions, the love of Scotland, and the value of reading. There is also here a bit of Carnegie snobbery; the refusal to enter public bars but the love of public libraries. While some, in our pornographic age, are concerned by men being ruined by lurid books, Carnegie announced that he was saved by books.

In his Autobiography Carnegie recounts a story of General Grant which is at once romantic nonsense and also Carnegie myth-making at its absurd worst -- this time on the subject of drink:

The story is told that during the trials of war in the West, General Grant began to indulge too freely in liquor. His chief of staff, Rawlins, boldly ventured to tell him so. That this was the act of a true friend Grant fully recognized.

"You do not mean that? I was wholly unconscious of it. I am surprised!" said the General.

"Yes, I do mean it. It is even beginning to be a subject of comment among your officers."

"Why did you not tell me before? I'll never drink a drop of liquor again."

He never did. Time after time in later years, dining with the Grants in New York, I have seen the General turn down the wine glasses at his side. The indomitable will of his enabled him to remain steadfast to his resolve, a rare case as far as my experience goes.<sup>38</sup>

It is indeed too bad someone did not tell Grant earlier when he was conscious.

<sup>38</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 103-104.

Carnegie, before certain audiences, would suggest to young men that they never touch liquor, or again, with a straight face, he would suggest that young men working for success wait to have their first drink until they had made their first million. In "The Road to Business Success: A Talk to Young Men," taken from an address to students at Curry Commercial College in Pittsburgh, June 23, 1885, Carnegie suggested steps on the pathway to success: Young men should begin low. Sweeping out the office was a good way to start. "Aim high," however. "Be king in your dreams." Of course one should be "honest, truthful, fair-dealing." Naturally people should "live pure, respectable lives, free from pernicious or equivocal associations with one sex or the other." Having suggested these things Carnegie warns against "the most seductive, and the destroyer of most young men . . . the drinking of liquor."<sup>39</sup>

I am no temperance lecturer in disguise, but a man who knows and tells you what observation has proved to him; and I say to you that you are more likely to fail in your career from acquiring the habit of drinking liquor than from any, or all, the other temptations likely to assail you. You may yield to almost any other temptation and reform. . . . But from the insane thirst for liquor escape is almost impossible. I have known but few exceptions to this rule. First, then, you must not drink liquor to excess. Better if you do not touch it at all -- much better; but if this be too

<sup>39</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 3-5.

hard a rule for you then . . . resolve never to touch it except at meals. A glass at dinner will not hinder your advance in life or lower your tone. But never drink a glass of liquor at a bar. Be far too much of the gentleman ever to enter a barroom.<sup>40</sup>

You could almost draw from this lecture, if you listened to it and did not pursue the matter, that Carnegie did not drink. Indeed, one of the temperance newspapers badgered the magnate into declaring that workers who never drank were worth ten per cent more than those who even drank moderately.<sup>41</sup> One of the signs of progress he found in America, Carnegie wrote back to Dod in Scotland when the future magnate was still only sixteen, was the increasing temperance legislation.<sup>42</sup>

Biographer Winkler affirmed that "Carnegie drank moderately, mostly at meals. Tobacco in any form he detested. It made him ill. Smoking was forbidden in his home. When he entered a room where cigars or cigarettes were being puffed, he quickly sought a window."<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, the reality was that Carnegie not only drank Scotch whiskey, but he was snob enough to pay extra in order to obtain the same brand and mixture as was served the royal family, and this he distributed for its

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-6.

<sup>41</sup>The New Voice, Chicago, Illinois, October 23, 1902, in Pennsylvania Room of Pittsburgh Carnegie Library collection.

<sup>42</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 48.

<sup>43</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 20.

prestige appeal to several presidents of the United States, to literary friends such as Mark Twain, and to business associates he wished to please.<sup>44</sup> It is perhaps the fact that the magnate was a distributor of the liquor purveyed to the Queen which caused biographer Wall to declare that Carnegie "insisted upon the best in food and in Scotch whiskey, the only spiritous liquor he ever drank."<sup>45</sup> The steel king himself declared that one glass of wine is all right at dinner,<sup>46</sup> and on Christmas Day in Hong Kong, he "had a glass of good wine" with John Vandevort.<sup>47</sup> It is difficult to believe that this was the only glass of wine the magnate ever consumed. Carnegie was quite willing to see men who drank on the job fired,<sup>48</sup> but on his coaching trip across Britain, in an ebullient mood with his "gay charioteers," he suggested that most men would never abstain so they should be taught to handle their liquor.<sup>49</sup> In the end the temperance task was educative and like so many impossible tasks, society might leave it to the schools.

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<sup>44</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, pp. 273-275.

<sup>45</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 942.

<sup>46</sup>Carnegie, College Lectures, p. 17.

<sup>47</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 100.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 162-163.

<sup>49</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, pp. 16-17.



#### 4. Gambling and Speculation

After Carnegie, in his lectures on success, finished advising men not to smoke and to drink moderately or not at all, he would launch upon the evils of gambling and speculation. "You can never be an honest man of business and a speculator," the magnate asserted.<sup>50</sup> He felt the constant gambling by the Chinese was a defect in their character.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, speculators made a fortune one day and lost it the next; it was far better to work steadily and patiently.<sup>52</sup> One should do his own investing, if in business. Carnegie testified: "It has been with me a cardinal doctrine that I could manage my own capital better than any other person, much better than any board of directors."<sup>53</sup> Gambling and speculation were both evil, the steel king was to declare again and again,<sup>54</sup> and they were synonymous.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 208.

<sup>51</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 81.

<sup>52</sup>Carnegie, "Road to Business Success," in Empire of Business, p. 9.

<sup>53</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 171.

<sup>54</sup>Carnegie, "Ezra Cornell," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 248; Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 202.

<sup>55</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 132.

Carnegie saw these matters as a single problem, a gaming instinct on the part of people who would not practice thrift, patience, or hard work, which were positive virtues, but who wished wealth now, without effort. Certainly the matters are related, but there were at least four basic items here that may be disentangled from the skein. First, the outright gambler, who bet on a chance, whether it was horse racing, a winning number, or a stock someone advised him upon, Carnegie despised as a fool. Second, the speculator who with some information took a chance, was still in a risky position and might be ruined. Third, Carnegie saw that the matter reached him personally, for in the nineteenth century men were often liable, and even their partners might be held by a court as jointly liable, if a company failed and left large debts to be paid. Carnegie had a great fear that one of his close associates might somehow involve the magnate's company in some speculative scheme which would require the steel king to spend his own money to extricate the partner.<sup>56</sup> Finally, the Scotchman was totally opposed to what he called "endorsing," which was equivalent to signing a note to stand behind someone or some business venture. The fact is Carnegie felt the twinge of conscience here, for it was Thomas Scott who had pleaded with Carnegie to lend his backing during the Panic of 1873, when Scott had gotten in over his head. There is no doubt that Carnegie

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<sup>56</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 168, 215.

acted correctly here, for Scott had involved himself too deeply and the magnate would probably have been ruined also. But the debacle, when it came for Scott, was total and possibly even led to Scott's early death. Since Scott had generously instructed Carnegie in the ways of the business world and invited the magnate into lucrative business deals which were the basis for the steel king's early fortune, the matter was certainly one that tried the conscience. Carnegie biographer Hendrick sums this up best when he suggests: "Carnegie . . . most abhorred . . . the speculative businessman; his hatred of gambling, in the conventional sense, was a sincere conviction, and only became stronger as time went on, yet Carnegie never hesitated, on critical occasions, to stake his whole future on a single throw."<sup>57</sup>

Carnegie's advice as to speculation might be summarized under another motto that the magnate did not utilize: "Do as I say, not as I do." Often adults who teach children find themselves in the awkward position of having to rationalize behavior, but the steel king had a habit of denying unpleasant facts. "I never bought or sold a share of stock speculatively in my life, except one small lot of Pennsylvania Railroad shares," he insisted in his Autobiography.<sup>58</sup> And of course it was true that Carnegie

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<sup>57</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 69.

<sup>58</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 147.

did not deal much in stock ventures nor was the Carnegie Company ever allowed to be traded upon the stock exchange until those final months when Frick forced a showdown and the magnate was looking for a way to sell out. But as to speculative ventures, Carnegie was in these almost continually in the 1860's, when he was beginning his business career. Carnegie sold bonds, not stock, commercially to banking houses, but the bonds he sold did not always prove very valuable to the purchasers. He held large blocks of telegraph stock, which he manipulated fantastically and eventually sold out near the top of the market leaving small holders stranded. The main reason that Carnegie, with a straight face, talked of never speculating or gambling, was that he was always extremely careful, even when taking his risks. He knew the companies in which he invested; he knew the men; he never went in over his head; and even when he acted quickly it was after careful analysis.

Carnegie was well aware that conclusions some drew from the early years of his career. In his Autobiography he confirms:

Up to this time I had the reputation in business of being a bold, fearless, and perhaps a somewhat reckless young man. . . . My own career was thought by the elderly ones of Pittsburgh to have been rather more brilliant than substantial. I know of an experienced one who declared that if "Andrew Carnegie's brains did not carry him through his luck would." But I think nothing could be farther from the truth. . . . I am sure that any competent judge would be surprised to find how little I ever

risked for myself or my partners.<sup>59</sup>

There was much truth to this; the risks Carnegie took were calculated and seldom involved him in great danger. His most daring feats, actually, were based on his basic belief in the nation, when he staked his fortune twice on expanding in times of panic, in the 1870's and 1890's, and came out far ahead.

Carnegie was appalled by the speculation in New York, when he first arrived in that city, which caused him to characterize America's biggest city as a stock gambling town, in contrast to solid Pittsburgh, which was a manufacturing city. Paper profits might be wiped out in a twinkling; build a plant that produced a substantial necessity and you had something that might be affected by the winds of fortune, but no gale could ever really demolish it. The magnate was astonished, after he moved to New York, by the people who saw him as a man on the rise and quickly stood ready to put funds in his hands to invest for them.<sup>60</sup> In investing, Carnegie suggested that a person pick a company which was headed by a great captain of industry, a man who used his own name proudly as the nomenclature for the company. Do not invest in a corporation, but a partnership, the magnate stressed. The difference between the two was the same as "individualism and communism applied to business, between the owners managing their own business as partners, and a joint stock concern of a thousand

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 146-147.

shifting owners ignorant of the business."<sup>61</sup> When men such as Andrew Kloman ruined themselves trying to form their own company to compete against Carnegie, when other such as J.G.A. Leishman were caught speculating and removed from the enterprise, when even Charlie Schwab gambled after the magnate had retired from business, it only added to the steel king's own inner certainty that his advice was right and had been correct all along. A cynic might paraphrase Carnegie and suggest that the essence of the magnate's advice was: Do not speculate unless you have all the facts; do not get in so deep you cannot easily pull out; calculate carefully how much you can afford to lose and do not ever go beyond that limit; base decisions on knowledge of people and the business enterprise in which they are engaged; and if you succeed and become rich, call all your speculations only wise investments and frown on all others who dare to speculate.

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<sup>61</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 203-204.

## 5. Thrift or the Extreme Value of Poverty

In one sense it would be proper to characterize elements of the value system of Andrew Carnegie as mythical, for he spoke against drinking, but drank and gave presents of liquor, he protested against speculation, but speculated more successfully than anyone, and he stressed the great value of being raised in poverty but never himself experienced much want or deprivation. True, the weaving business, which his father knew, evaporated in Dunfermline and when Andrew Carnegie and his mother paid their first return visit fourteen years later, they found the trade had almost vanished. But Carnegie's mother had gone to work when the family had money problems and the decision to come to America, which was quite a gamble in itself, was based on the hope that the Carnegie sons would have more opportunity. In his Autobiography, the magnate first revealed his early poverty and then renounced it.

I remember that shortly after this I began to learn what poverty meant. Dreadful days came when my father took the last of his webs /woven material/ to the great manufacturer, and I saw my mother anxiously awaiting his return to know whether a new web was to be obtained or that a period of idleness was upon us. It was burnt into my heart then that my father, though neither "abject, mean, nor vile," as Burns has it, had nevertheless to

"Beg a brother of the earth  
To give him leave to toil."

And then and there came the resolve that I would cure that when I got to be a man. We were not, however, reduced to anything like poverty compared with many of our neighbors. I do not know to what lengths of privation my mother would not have gone that she might see her two boys wearing large white collars, and trimly dressed.<sup>62</sup>

Here is another typical Carnegie quotation, replete with a Burns' couplet, announcing his firm resolve to win. But in a way poverty was unreal to Carnegie. There is little doubt, however, that his desire to succeed grew out of the extreme expectations of his mother, perhaps the most important teaching device of all. True, the Carnegies arrived in Allegheny almost broke and in debt to Scotch friends who helped to pay for their trip, but even so, Margaret Carnegie refused to send her son Andrew out to sell things on the waterfront to rough men and was cautious about what job he might obtain. A grinding, absolute, continuous poverty was never experienced by Andrew Carnegie.

Looking back, Carnegie was to extol the noble fiction of the pure and happy home where "sweet poverty" reigned.<sup>63</sup> "The virtues and all that is precious in human character grow," Carnegie was to insist, in the home of "poverty -- honest poverty."<sup>64</sup> Men who are "born in poverty . . . and see the

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<sup>62</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 12-13.

<sup>63</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 14; Carnegie, "How I Became a Millionaire," p. 452.

<sup>64</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 129.



harrowing sight of father and mother, sister and brother, suffering from want . . ." /decide it is their/ holy duty . . . to drive the wolf from the door and make fortunes. Young men with such experiences go into the world resolved to win -- they must win, and the business life furnishes their best chance of victory in our time. Their foot once upon the ladder, it is easy climbing upward.<sup>65</sup> "The greatest of all advantages with which . . . /a man/ can begin life is that of being poor . . . . He must feel that it is sink or swim with him. . . . If in addition to being poor himself he has witnessed his parents struggling with adversity, and resolves to drive the wolf from the door of his family, he has the strongest incentives which lead to success. No ambition of merely personal nature can be compared with this."<sup>66</sup> Since hereditary wealth was the worst evil; it was obvious that the fortunate man was born poor.<sup>67</sup> "Something in . . . poverty . . . compels exertion."<sup>68</sup> Because of need, "the children of honest poverty have the most precious of all advantages over those of wealth."<sup>69</sup> It was very important that a boy have to go

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<sup>65</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 43.

<sup>66</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 21, quoting an interview in the Daily News Weekly.

<sup>67</sup>Carnegie, College Lectures, pp. 10, 12.

<sup>68</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 200.

<sup>69</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 30.

out into the world and earn some money at an early age. Carnegie, as usual appealing to authority, quite agreed with President Garfield's verdict . . . "The best heritage to which a man can be born is poverty."<sup>70</sup> In fact, poverty was such a blessing because it was actually educative, it was the "sternest yet finest of all schools."<sup>71</sup>

Carnegie insisted that "wealth is a curse to young men, and poverty a blessing."<sup>72</sup> This statement, from the magnate's article, "The Advantages of Poverty," was one of the Gospel of Wealth series. "The millionaires," Carnegie proclaimed, "who are in active control started as poor boys, and were trained in that sternest but most efficient of all schools -- poverty."<sup>73</sup> The characteristics of a future millionaire, who was to Carnegie the real American, the great American, were that he loved to work, saved his money, was ambitious, was born poor, and as to his family structure, "he has no rich father, or still more dangerous, rich mother . . . he has no life-preserver, and therefore, must sink or swim."<sup>74</sup> This value of poverty, actually extended to all

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<sup>70</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 6.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>72</sup>Carnegie, "The Advantages of Poverty," in the Gospel of Wealth, p. 50.

<sup>73</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 109.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

lines of endeavor:

It is not from the sons of the millionaire or the noble that the world received its teachers, its martyr, its inventors, its statesmen, its poets, or even its men of affairs. It is from the cottage of the poor that all these spring. We can scarcely read one among the few "immortal names that were not born to die, or who has rendered exceptional service to our race, who had not the advantage of being cradled, nursed, and reared in the stimulating school of poverty."<sup>75</sup>

The worship of poverty was the other side of the coin; it was the reverse of the magnate's hatred of hereditary wealth and unearned noble titles. Sometimes the steel king became so carried away in trying to prove his argument true that he would even downgrade the millionaires as in the following example, men whom he usually felt had proven themselves and were the most valuable class of citizens:

The great teachers of their fellows, the presidents and professors of our seats of learning, and the teachers of our common school -- what thought have they of bowing before the vulgar idol of wealth? Our poets, authors, statesmen, the very highest types of humanity, are above the allurements of money-making. These know of higher satisfactions and nobler lives than those of the mere millionaire.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 126. Carnegie himself, was very interested in leaving an immortal name, not born to die. See Chapter Seven.

<sup>76</sup>Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich, and the Right View of Wealth," p. 11051.

Carnegie might have been surprised at how some of these men might have been allured a bit by money.

The magnate finally unleashed a bit of the log cabin mythology, never really true even in the Age of the Common Man:

No party is so foolish as to nominate for the presidency a rich man, much less a millionaire. Democracy elects poor men. The man must have worked for his bread to be an available candidate; and if, like Lincoln, he has been so fortunate as to be compelled to split rails, or, like Garfield, to drive mules upon a canal, and subsequently to clean the rooms and light the fires of the school in part payment for his tuition, or like Blaine, to teach school, so much more successfully does he appeal to the people.<sup>77</sup>

With Carnegie the argument is always finally an appeal to authority and tradition.

The extreme value of poverty was that it was pure and honest;<sup>78</sup> it brought the family together; it emphasized hard work and effort; it promoted self-sacrifice and fixed the eye of the young man upon the economic ladder so that he saw the way to carry his family from the swamp of despond. The most important result of poverty was thrift. "One of the greatest differences between the savage and the civilized man is thrift," Carnegie pontificated.<sup>79</sup> While thrift is desirable, "great wealth is quite

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<sup>77</sup>Carnegie, "The Advantages of Poverty," in the Gospel of Wealth, p. 62.

<sup>78</sup>Carnegie, "How I Became a Millionaire," p. 452.

<sup>79</sup>Carnegie, "Thrift," Youth's Companion, September 20, 1900, p. 455. This article was digested and reprinted under the title "Thrift As a Duty," in Empire of Business, p. 95.

another and a far less desirable matter. It is not the aim of thrift or the duty of man to acquire millions."<sup>80</sup> Thrift is "a duty," because "the saving man is a temperate man, a good husband and father, a peaceful, law-abiding citizen"<sup>81</sup> Independence required thrift. "Everyone is agreed that it is the first duty of a young man to train himself to be self-supporting. Nor is there difficulty about the next step. Wisdom calls upon him to . . . begin to save a portion of his earnings and invest them, not in speculation, but in securities or in legitimate business." Emergencies, the requirements of old age and our self respect all demand this.<sup>82</sup> Poverty led to thrift and thrift was a supreme virtue.

Indeed, the best test of men, and the easiest test to administer, was that of thrift. "Apply to the masses of men any of the tests that indicate success or failure in life, progress, or stagnation, valuable or worthless citizenship and none will more clearly than that of thrift separate the well-behaved, respected and useful from the unsatisfactory members of society."<sup>83</sup> We may mock this interesting thesis, but if we had to employ men in a business of our own, such a test might begin to appear quite

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<sup>80</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 98.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>82</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 130.

<sup>83</sup> Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 99.

sensible. Said Carnegie:

If we divide the vast army of workers of mature age into two classes, the savers and the spend-thrifts, we should practically separate the creditable from the discreditable, the exemplary from the pitiable, the progressive from the backsliders, the sober from the intemperate. A visit to their respective homes would confirm this classification. The thrifty would be found not only the best workmen, and foremost in the shop, but the best citizens and the best husbands and fathers, the leaders and exemplars of their fellows.<sup>84</sup>

Thrift thus became a quick yardstick for all positive values.

Once money was accumulated, Carnegie offered this advice:

Exercise much circumspection before you invest. As I have said to working men and to ministers, college professors, artists, musicians, and physicians, and all the professional classes: Do not invest in any business concerns whatever: the risks of business are not for such as you. Buy a home for yourself first; and if you have any surplus, buy another lot or another house, or take a mortgage upon one, or upon a railway, and let it be a first mortgage, and be satisfied with moderate interest. Do you know that out of every hundred that attempt business upon their own account statistics are said to show that ninety-five sooner or later fail.<sup>85</sup>

Hoarding and greed are the abuse of thrift. If a man is wise he buys his home, accumulates enough for emergencies and his old age

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>85</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 134.

and tries to present his children with the best of inheritances, a good education. "The accumulation of millions is usually the result of enterprise and judgment, and some exceptional ability for organization. It does not come from savings in the ordinary sense of that word."<sup>86</sup> Great wealth came from exceptional abilities, but thrift was a valuable test by which all men might be judged. †

Carnegie believed that the rich earned their money because they worked for the good of the nation, but they could not spend all their money. They could not eat or drink much more than an ordinary man and a fine mansion did not use up vast wealth. Moreover rich men were often miserly and could not find it in their nature to part with much money.<sup>87</sup> Thus it became the children and grandchildren of the rich who spent the money. "Wealth . . . passes in three generations from shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves in all English-speaking lands except the United Kingdom, where the law or primogeniture and legal settlements guard a hereditary class and defeat the operation of the natural law," Carnegie declared. "In free lands the children of millionaires and their children may be safely trusted to fulfill the law; to keep a

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<sup>86</sup>Carnegie, "Thrift," in Empire of Business, p. 98.

<sup>87</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 136-137.

fortune is scarcely less difficult than to acquire it."<sup>88</sup> To Carnegie it was obvious that "wealth lessens rather than increases human happiness. Millionaires who laugh are rare. The deplorable family quarrels which so often afflict the rich, generally have their rise in sordid differences about money."<sup>89</sup> Here were the Carnegie mottos and beliefs all intertwined as usual.

To the steel king, poverty was a positive good as an incentive to the poor to work and attempt to rise. Few would actually rise far, but most by hard work could obtain a comfortable living. Great fortunes were rare and they in turn brought problems. Frequently fortunes were not managed well in America by ensuing generations and the money was lost again. Ultimately "the advantages of wealth are not to the individual owner. The advantages of wealth are what it enables its possessor to do for others."<sup>90</sup> This finally brings us to Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth

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<sup>88</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 36.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>90</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Railroad Reminiscences," Railroad Men, February, 1902, p. 167. Article is in Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 264, Folder 5.



which will be discussed in Chapter Seven. For Andrew Carnegie, however, poverty, thrift, and wealth, were three of the most important topics imaginable.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>Some Carnegie articles on this topic include:

Andrew Carnegie, "Advantages of Poverty," Nineteenth Century, March, 1891, pp. 367-385;

Andrew Carnegie, "The Best Use of Wealth," speech delivered at the dedication of the Carnegie Library at Pittsburgh December 5, 1895, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. 2, pp. 203-218;

Andrew Carnegie, "The Duty of Wealth," Charities Review, November, 1895;

Andrew Carnegie, "The Hereditary Transmission of Poverty," Century Magazine, January, 1914, pp. 441-443;

Andrew Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich and the Right View of Wealth," World's Work, December, 1908, pp. 11047-11053;

Andrew Carnegie, "Thrift," The Youth's Companion, September 20, 1900, p. 455;

Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," North American Review, June, 1889, pp. 653-664;

Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth and its Uses," Lecture at Union College, Schenectady, New York, January, 1895.

## 6. Andrew Carnegie's Religious Values

In his Autobiography Carnegie suggested the essence of his mature religious feelings when he quoted Confucius, "'To perform the duties of this world well, troubling not about another, is the prime wisdom.'" The magnate added: "The next world and its duties we shall consider when we are placed in it."<sup>92</sup> The steel king simply did not believe in a God of vengeance who could hate men over trifles or destroy men because they accepted slightly varying doctrinal beliefs; "Eternal punishment because of a few years' shortcomings here on earth, would be the reverse of Godlike. Satan himself would recoil from it."<sup>93</sup> One reason Carnegie so much enjoyed and worked at things in this life, was that he was not at all convinced there was a hereafter. Indeed, the magnate drew a distinction between his own romantic feelings, love of mankind, even religion itself, and the likelihood of Heaven. Carnegie's biographer, Hendrick, quotes the magnate saying to the Duchess of Sutherland concerning his estate at Skibo that "If Heaven is more beautiful than this, someone has made a mistake."<sup>94</sup> "'Not "Heaven Our Home" our motto, so much as "Home Our Heaven."' the magnate declared. In Problems of To-Day,

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<sup>92</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 328, 48.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>94</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 154.

published in 1908, Carnegie suggested: "Franklin was right when he proclaimed that "The highest worship of God is service to man." Power to render service to the Unknown. is not given us except by serving those of His creatures here with us in our own day and generation."<sup>95</sup>

Here was the essence of Carnegie's religious thought, "The highest form of worship is service to man"<sup>96</sup> Indeed, the motto, "It is more important to work at making "home our heaven" than worry about whether "heaven is our home,""<sup>97</sup> was an endlessly repeated slogan. The converse of this expression was as obviously false; Carnegie commented sadly on those fakirs who inflicted pain on themselves, seeking "to merit heaven by making earth a hell."<sup>98</sup> Indeed, Carnegie was full of his own homilies and fond of quoting wise saws. As usual, the magnate could not resist the couplet quotation, poetic authority for what he believed:

If there's another world, he lives in bliss;  
If there be none, he made the best of this.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 139.

<sup>96</sup>Andrew Carnegie, speech to Carnegie Veteran's Association, New York City, December 2, 1910, in Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 256, Folder 1.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>98</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 136.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

Here was' supreme wisdom. "Home is our Heaven, Not Heaven Our Home," the steel king told a Jewish audience in 1900, adding that he hoped in the new century there would be no Christians, no Jews, no Pagans, but "one United Human Race."<sup>100</sup> In Triumphant Democracy, Carnegie alluded to the fact that "Auguste Comte has gravely proclaimed a religion of humanity which he says is worshipful because of its' victories over nature, and over the discomforts by which the life of primitive man was surrounded. There have been religions founded on less worthy grounds than these," was the magnate's conclusion.<sup>101</sup>

On October 20, 1912, the New York World ran an article with the heading: "Carnegie prizes U. S. Citizenship above Paradise."<sup>102</sup> The steel king's statement was not so much patriotic boast as sincere belief, since the magnate felt that paradise, if it existed, was of this earth. Perhaps if any man found it here, he did! Indeed, the very success of the steel king caused him to believe heaven could be found on earth. All of this led Carnegie to lament: "Why, oh why are we compelled to leave the heaven we have found on earth and go we know not where!"<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>New York Sun, November 30, 1900.

<sup>101</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 314.

<sup>102</sup>New York World, October 20, 1912, p. 1, Col. 4.

<sup>103</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 210.

Speaking of this delicate matter, aloud, for the magnate always talked too much, caused the New York World in a story as early as June 30, 1901, to headline: "Carnegie would make Faust's fearful bargain."<sup>104</sup> Actually, the New York World was not the only source of this story.<sup>105</sup>

The religious views of Carnegie were largely an outgrowth of his family experience. Both the magnate and his boyhood friend, George Lauder, Jr., were allowed to skip the memorization of the Shorter Catechism in school. "All of our family connections, Morrisons and Lauders, were advanced in their theological as in their political views, and had objections to the catechism, I have no doubt." All had left the orthodox Scotch Presbyterianism. Some "found refuge for a time in the doctrines of Swedenborg." Still the very air in his home was heavy with theology.<sup>106</sup>

The magnate was to say later:

My early education at home as you may infer had given me a bent toward theology. What true Scot escaped that fifty years ago in this chief center of polemics? How many

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<sup>104</sup>New York World, June 30, 1901, p. 1, col. 3.

<sup>105</sup>Biographer Hendrick cites two other people to whom Carnegie made the same statement. When T. P. O'Connor visited Skibo and suggested he "envied" Carnegie, the magnate replied that he would be happy to trade his millions for the other man's youth. The steel king went on to wish that he "could make Faust's bargain." Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 157.

<sup>106</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 21.

succeed in escaping even now? I read as I travelled the sacred books of other countries and of the Ten Great Religions, and have since taken note of matters bearing upon historical and archeological discoveries which continually shed more and more light upon the gropings of man upward in all ages.<sup>107</sup>

Calvinism was "a terrible nightmare" in his childhood,<sup>108</sup> Carnegie was to declare in his Autobiography. But while the magnate may have later seen Calvinism as a youthful nightmare, the facts that his mother could choose for herself not to attend the kirk and his father could choose for himself, because of the issue of infant damnation, to leave one church and join another, put the ultimate control of one's earthly destiny in the hands of man and not God. Carnegie did see his father go into a "closet every

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<sup>107</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "A Confession of Religious Belief," published for the first time in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick, Vol. II, p. 309. This was a speech Carnegie meant for his first St. Andrews Rectorial Address, but Sir James Donaldson, the principal felt it too controversial. Hendrick views Carnegie as having "an intense dislike" for religious creeds, but still finds him "reverent" and very religious. While these statements are all no doubt true, there is an attitudinal differentiation that Hendrick was unable to grasp, perhaps because he sincerely liked Carnegie and wished to make a believer of him. The steel king had more than "an intense dislike" for organized creeds, he could not accept any organized religious beliefs. The point is a fine one: Hendrick sees Carnegie as opposed to religious creeds but still religious, which is true, but Hendrick still conveys more by this statement than it is really true to say of Carnegie.

<sup>108</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 22.

morning to pray and that impressed" him.<sup>109</sup> His father the magnate always felt, was a saint, a man destined for heaven, but partly this belief of Carnegie's may have been formulated because his father had failed in this life and had no heaven here. In America his father continued with the Swedenborg church, but his mother remained aloof and apart from all organized religion.

She /Carnegie's mother/ encouraged her boys to attend church and Sunday School; but there was no difficulty in seeing that the writings of Swedenborg, and much of the Old and New Testaments had been discredited by her as unworthy of divine authorship or of acceptance as authoritative guides for the conduct of life. I became deeply interested in the mysterious doctrines of Swedenborg, and received the congratulations of my devout Aunt Aitken.<sup>110</sup>

Aunt Aitken even hoped Carnegie might become a preacher. However, Carnegie was well aware what his mother's quietude signified and the liberality of the Carnegies was shown again and again by such acts as allowing young Andrew to ice skate on Sundays, since he was working so hard all week.<sup>111</sup> By the time the magnate had moved up through his period of working with rough men on the railroad, and was a superintendent and beginning to invest in all manner of undertaking, religion had lost all hold upon him; he had

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<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., pp. 50-51.

not as yet resolved his beliefs, but rather he had placed such thoughts in abeyance waiting for a time when he could read and reflect more.

While Aunt Aitken would never have approved, he almost tried his hand at preaching. While examining oil property with William Coleman and David Ritchie, the three men were caught in the rain and their wagon stuck in the mud. They spent the night thus. The next day, a Sunday, they reached a country town and a congregation was waiting, expecting a visiting minister. Carnegie was mistaken for the minister and declared: "I was almost prepared with my companions to carry out the joke (we were in for fun), but I found I was too exhausted with fatigue to attempt it. I had never before come so near occupying a pulpit."<sup>112</sup>

While Carnegie might have passed as a rather successful preacher with some of the homilies of which he was quite capable, his very thought of perpetrating such a hoax upon worthy people indicated the route he had already travelled from his early beliefs. Of course mammon affected even the Carnegie associates, for the magnate recounts in amusement how men like Henry Phipps skipped Sunday church to make sure the Lucy Furnace was all right.<sup>113</sup> Soon the steel king could report:

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<sup>112</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., p. 175.



All the remnants of theology in which I had been born and bred, all the impressions that Swedenborg had made upon me, now ceased to influence me or to occupy my thoughts. I found that no nation had all the truth in the revelation in regards as divine, and no tribe is so low as to be left without some truth; that every people has had its great teacher; Buddha for one; Confucius for another; Zoroaster for a third; Christ for a fourth.<sup>114</sup>

Carnegie omits mention of Mohammed, but Christ is relegated to fourth position and reduced to being a great teacher. "Instead of the Supreme Being confined revelation to one race or nation, every race has the message best adapted for it in its present stage of development. The Unknown Power has neglected none," the magnate asserted.<sup>115</sup> Carnegie now began to refer not to God, but to the Unknown. "I discovered as I travelled and read that the Unknown had left no nation without its religion, all very much alike. The same or similar miracle, and the same legends surround them, their ethics are also similar; I soon saw that too much attention has been paid to revelations in sacred books as the foundations of religious sentiment, for religion existed long before a book was written"<sup>116</sup> So Carnegie continued on his pathway, seeking the Unknown.

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<sup>114</sup>Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., p. 201.

<sup>116</sup>Carnegie, "Confession of Religious Faith," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 311.

Like Descartes, who demolished all the universe in order to begin again with his own initial concepts, Carnegie began with the Unknown, an almost pre-Socratic vacuum:

At this period of my life I was all at sea. No creed, no system, reached me. All was chaos; I had outgrown the old and had found no substitute. Carlyle's wrestlings will give you an idea of my condition. Here came to me Spencer and Darwin, whom I read with absorbing interest, until laying down a volume one day I was able to say, "That settles the question." I had found at last the guides which led me to the temple of man's real knowledge upon earth. These works were revelations to me; there was the truth which reconciled all things as far as the finite mind can grasp them. . . . I was on firm ground and with every year of my life since there has come less dogmatism, less theology, but greater reverence.<sup>117</sup>

Carnegie was really interested in Spencer as a great name and in his writings only at the most elementary and obvious level where the words of the father of sociology could be seen as disproving theology which the magnate had himself already abandoned. The bulk of Spencer he never understood, but Spencer the evolutionist, a supreme authority suggesting that man was evolving and growing better through his own efforts and those of inevitable natural laws, this Carnegie understood and accepted. He felt it was the essence of the quintessence of Spencer. Carnegie moved from the Unknown to science. He saw Copernicus, Darwin, and Spencer all shaking the concepts of organized religion. Yet these men were

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., p. 297.

also the hope of religion. Darwin and Spencer were seen as proving that man had begun as a brute and risen, not been created high and degraded. This belief in "the fall of man" by religions was faulty and needed correction. The work of Darwin and Spencer had made religion more sublime. Science had helped religion rather than the other way around.<sup>118</sup> In this Autobiography, the magnate tells this amplified version of his initial theology, his youthful questioning, his problems, his doubts, and finally his freeing himself from all theology and finding the true answer:

Reaction against the theology of past days comes to many who have been surrounded in youth by church people entirely satisfied that the truth and faith indispensable to future happiness were derived only through strictest Calvinistic creeds. The thoughtful youth is naturally carried along and disposed to concur in this. He cannot but think, up to a certain period of development, that what is believed by the best and the highest educated around him -- those to whom he looks for example and instruction -- must be true. He resists doubt as inspired by the Evil One seeking his soul, and sure to get it unless faith comes to the rescue. Unfortunately he soon finds that faith is not exactly at his beck and call. Original sin he thinks must be at the root of this inability to see as he wishes to see, to believe as he wishes to believe. It seems clear to him that already he is little better than one of the lost. . . .

The young man is soon in chronic rebellion, trying to assume godliness with the others, acquiescing outwardly in the creed and all its teachings, and yet at heart totally unable to reconcile his outward accordance with inward doubt. . . .

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<sup>118</sup>Ibid., pp. 300-301.

When I, along with three or four of my boon companions, was at this stage of doubt about theology, including the supernatural element, and indeed the whole scheme of salvation . . . I came fortunately upon Darwin's and Spencer's works: "The Data of Ethics," "First Principles," "Social Statics," "The Descent of Man. . . ." I remember that light came as in a flood and all was clear. Not only had I got rid of theology and the supernatural, but I had found the truth of evolution. "All is well since all grows better" became my motto, my true source of comfort. . . .

Humanity is an organism, inherently rejecting all that is deleterious . . . . The Architect of the Universe, we must assume, might have made the world and man perfect, free from evil and from pain, as angels in heaven are thought to be; but although this was not done, man has been given the power of advancement rather than of retrogression. The Old and New Testaments remain, like other sacred writings of other lands, of value as records of the past and for such good lessons as they inculcate. Like the ancient writers of the Bible our thoughts should rest upon this life and our duties here.<sup>119</sup>

Here Carnegie is seen rejecting theology, finding his answer in Darwin and Spencer, no longer believing in original sin, but still accepting a possible "Architect of the Universe."

Carnegie had a reverential feeling for life, nature, and mankind, but he was poetic rather than truly religious. He was ready quite early to follow Dean Stanley's advice and "go to Burns" for his theology.<sup>120</sup> The steel king could have experienced

<sup>119</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 326-328.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., p. 260. Also quoted in Carnegie, James Watt,

something akin to a religious feeling over the Bessemer Steel process as some suggested,<sup>121</sup> and certainly many of his thoughts and actions were secular. When he built the Peace Palace at the Hague and the Pan American Union Building in Washington, D. C. he insisted on referring to these as "Temples of Peace" and suggested the buildings were much more holy and lofty structures than any church, because they were designed to glorify peace and to aid man. God needed no help; man needed all the aid he could receive.<sup>122</sup> The banquets Carnegie gave for the authors he designated as the "gods of the literary world," is merely an example of his secularization.<sup>123</sup> Indeed, the magnate could take issue with Christ, Himself, when the steel king felt Christ was in error. "Five words spoken by Christ so interpreted, if strictly obeyed, would at one blow strike down all that distinguishes man from the beast. "Take no thought for to-morrow."<sup>124</sup> No one could tell Carnegie that thrift was not a virtue and that saving for tomorrow was not the best policy for most men. The magnate's rather truncated chapter on religion in America in Triumphant Democracy is really a lengthy polemic, not dealing with religion or America,

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<sup>121</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 183. There is some question how Carnegie really felt here and how much of a surprise the process was.

<sup>122</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 273.

<sup>123</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 277.

<sup>124</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 71.

but rather with the question of why the Episcopal Church in England should follow the American lead and be separated from the state.<sup>125</sup> Carnegie was not really interested in doctrinal theological matters and while he wanted to show progress in America exceeding that of the motherland, he could not in good conscience concern himself at length with the rapid growth of churches in the new world since he was not at all convinced that such growth was progress. The steel king showed his own feelings when he spoke of Matthew Arnold: "If ever there was a seriously religious man it was Matthew Arnold. No irreverent word ever escaped his lips. . . and yet he had in one short sentence slain the supernatural. "The case against miracles is closed. They do not happen.""<sup>126</sup> Here was precisely the magnate's own feeling; as with Matthew Arnold, Carnegie felt religious without theology.

The steel king's dislike of organized religion, of the institutionalization of God, of the memorized internalized responses that demanded obedience to ritual, form, and the whole panoply of customs led him to look with disfavor on missionaries trying to convert far-flung peoples,<sup>127</sup> and donations to churches as a means of philanthropy. Churches were seventh, and last, on his list of worthy uses of surplus wealth, because donations to

<sup>125</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 152-164.

<sup>126</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 287.

<sup>127</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 103.

them helped not mankind but only compartmentalized segments of the human family.<sup>128</sup> Indeed, the one major Carnegie donation to churches was in the form of organs, for music was seen as the most valuable element in the church service. Churches of all denominations applied, filled out the proper forms, and duly received their organ. In his own lifetime Carnegie disseminated some 7,689 organs at a cost of some \$6,000,000.<sup>129</sup> Mark Twain, desiring a little money and knowing the nature of Carnegie's beliefs, wrote the following begging letter to the magnate:

Dear Sir and Friend:

You seem to be prosperous these days could you lend an admirer a dollar and a half to buy a hymn book with? God will bless you if you do; I feel it, I know it. So will I. If there should be other applications this one not to count.

Yours

Mark

P.S. Don't send the hymn book, send the money. I want to make the selection myself.

M. 130

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<sup>128</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 46.

<sup>129</sup>Hendrick, Benefactions of Carnegie, p. 34.

<sup>130</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 282.

Only a man sure of his victim's propensities could write with assurance in this fashion. Carnegie found few satisfactions in religious services, but Mark Twain christened the magnate "St. Andrew" and others took up the name.<sup>131</sup> The "Saint Andrew" designation had been an easy one, due to the magnate's Rectorship at the great Scottish University, but many did not smile on the matter and saw Carnegie as a self-proclaimed candidate for cannonization due to his giving.<sup>132</sup>

While this monograph may be noted for a certain redundancy of documentation, even more noticeable in this section, there is a need to fully establish, in the magnate's own words, that while he may have felt reverence for what he termed the Unknown and was not without a global love of men and belief in justice, that his religious feeling was no more than a carry-over from his youth coupled with a love for life in all its forms and a poetic awareness of beauty.

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<sup>131</sup>C. Hartley Grattan, "Saint Andy," American Mercury, July, 1928, pp. 364-369.

<sup>132</sup>See, Arthur Lawrence, "The Beatitudes of Mr. Carnegie," New Liberal Review, 1903.



## 7. The Good Man

The good man, then, was a person who never gambled, speculated only on investments he considered with great care, did not smoke, drank only moderately at meals and social occasions, and was thrifty in the sense that whatever the scale of his income, he saved some of his money consistently. The good man belonged to no organized church or faith, but had a religious reverence for all humanity. Carnegie, of course, rejected doctrinalism and supernaturalism, but he accepted the virtues and values which were associated with Calvinism when they applied to thrift, honesty, and the avoidance of an indulgent life. Here the magnate was not unlike others such as Horace Mann and Benjamin Franklin who accepted no particularized faith but followed a concept of stewardship in their life and work. In the same way, the good man was a supporter of peace, but still he was willing on an instant's notice to risk his life to help a fellow man in distress. He was a man of ideals, a man who did his job, a man who worked and worked hard. But he was also a man who knew how to use leisure constructively and well, who could laugh, have fun, and really enjoy life. He was a man who planned his life and set something aside for his old age. The good man had a romantic attitude toward women and a love of little children. He enjoyed traveling as a broadening experience and had few prejudices. He

saw some good in all men and all ways of life. Above all the good man was interested in the good life, in his own self-development, education, and progress. He was a man who read. He loved to talk of the problems of the day and the great universal questions as well. The good man was a man of the day and also a man for the ages.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

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## Chapter Seven

The Doctrine of the Stewardship of Wealth: The Philanthropies  
of Carnegie

## 1. The Idea of Philanthropy

Philanthropy is as ancient as true man, as primeval as the Brotherhood of Man and aid rendered one human by another. Philanthropy is benevolence, altruism in action; it may range from temporary charity to sincere hope to improve permanently. Andrew Carnegie, however, once defined a philanthropist as "a man with more money than sense,"<sup>1</sup> thereby cynically suggesting that not all philanthropies were valuable. Alms giving, the helping hand and the begging hand, the satisfied conscience and the satisfied stomach, have been with us for milleniums. In Round the World, Carnegie declared that the only serious problem he ever had with beggars was in Egypt, not in India, and this 1879 statement is attested to by world travelers yet today a century later. The magnate determined to give nothing to Egyptian beggars and did not.<sup>2</sup> But while men have given

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<sup>1</sup>Carnegie, "How Men Get Rich, and the Right View of Wealth," p. 11052.

<sup>2</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 208.

and men have begged even before the Lydians invented money, it was the great transition of the industrial nineteenth century that for the first time placed millions in liquid capital in private hands. While institutions such as the Roman Empire or the Medieval Church were wealthy, and occasionally private Renaissance bankers or local barons had their treasures, Andrew Carnegie was not just rich as Croesus, but more wealthy than many of the ancient and medieval rulers combined. Philanthropy might be primitive in origin, but the growth of wealth made it possible for the greatest of modern philanthropists, Andrew Carnegie, to distribute so much money that he could alter national directions.

There is some truth to the suggestion by certain critics that many of the great philanthropists, such as Carnegie, were in part at least, concerned with their own immortality which they felt might be achieved by their benefactions. While the truth of this charge may be readily admitted, it is a fairly normal, natural, human motive, to be found alike in the reactions of the Pharaohs of Egypt who built great statues and pyramids, which produced at least a structural immortality, and the commonest of common men who may write their own name on the rocks along the beach of Lake Michigan, on the billboards in New York, on the walls of the Paris subway, or on the tiles of the subway in Leningrad.

Even ephemeral scribbling may be coated by volcanic ash as in Pompeii and remain sealed for centuries awaiting the archeologist. Carnegie's articles, speeches, and books, his company named after himself, his name on libraries, Carnegie Hall, and foundations which were to live and operate on the interest and leave the principal to grow forever, were all evident desires not to be lost in the mass of mankind. The steel king was quite interested in "names that were not born to die."<sup>3</sup> As Henry Pritchett cleverly suggested, "a man chooses his intellectual and spiritual children as he cannot choose those of his own flesh and blood."<sup>4</sup> Carnegie's foundations, at least appeared immortal, and the magnate suggested this fact when he instructed the trustees of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace that when they succeeded and war finally was abolished, they should choose the next most serious blot upon the happiness and well-being of mankind and attack that and so on. "Let my Trustees therefore ask themselves from time to time, from age to age, how they can

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<sup>3</sup>Carnegie, "Queen Victoria," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 186; Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 126. Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 16, declares that Carnegie required his name to be on libraries. This is not true.

<sup>4</sup>Henry Pritchett, "Andrew Carnegie," an address before the Carnegie Institute of Technology, November 24, 1915, p. 6.

best help man in his glorious ascent onward and upward, and to this end devote this fund."<sup>5</sup> Howard James Savage, in Fruit of an Impulse: Forty-Five Years of the Carnegie Foundation makes the point that the endowments Carnegie left were in perpetuity, apparently to continue eternally, as immortal foundations, living only on the interest for their good works and never touching the principal. Just how immortal even such funds may be is an open question, for time brings many changes and the future has a way of laughing at even institutional immortality in most forms, perhaps through inflation, war, government confiscation, or other terminations we can scarcely conceive of now. Carnegie himself saw periods of "vision" as well as "slack periods" ahead, depending upon the men who managed the great foundation.<sup>6</sup> Henry Pritchett saw far reaching consequences of the magnate's endowments:

These constructive agencies which Mr. Carnegie has conceived and set in motion are today in their infancy, but they are to have

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<sup>5</sup>Letter of instructions dated December 14, 1910, to the Trustees of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

<sup>6</sup>Howard James Savage, Fruit of an Impulse: Forty-Five Years of the Carnegie Foundation (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1953), pp. 28-29. This is a well conceived monograph on a single topic, but it unfortunately belies its title. Savage is not able to really show that the Carnegie Foundation was in any real sense the "fruit of an impulse."

immortal lives. Decade after decade, century after century, they will make their contribution to the progress of their age and of their generation. They are immortal agencies in the forward march of humanity. To have conceived and to have set in motion such immortal forces for human upbuilding is to become oneself a partaker of immortality.<sup>7</sup>

The immortality here touched all concerned. Carnegie's buildings and benefactions can indeed be seen as a part of the pyramid age come to America, and the steel king may be regarded as a pharaoh of finance and philanthropy, seeking earthly immortality in a world he never really wanted to leave.

However, there are other ways of viewing Carnegie, just as some historians today see all capitalists of the nineteenth century as Robber Barons, it is important to note that some men of his time judged Andrew Carnegie as part of "a new order of men."<sup>8</sup> The difficulty with the theory of Carnegie benevolence has always been that on the one hand the magnate dispensed his money in large chunks, attempting to do good, and on the other hand he held down costs, squeezing all he could from his labor, to increase his pile of dollars. Cartoons such as the one first printed in the Saturday Globe of Utica, New York labeled "An American Caricature: The Great Pittsburg Plutocrat in his

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<sup>7</sup> Pritchett, "Carnegie," p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Theodore Wesley Koch, A Book of Carnegie Libraries, (White Plains, New York and New York City: W. H. Wilson Co., 1917) quoting an article by Hamilton W. Mable.



"Double Role," hurt Carnegie's feelings. The cartoon, several times reprinted, showed the magnate as two figures, one frowning and cutting wages twenty per cent and the other smiling as he distributed money in Pittsburg and in Scotland.<sup>9</sup> There is no doubt that one of Carnegie's lifelong dreams was to make a great deal of money and benefit his world by the way he distributed it. He gave his pension to his workers only after he retired.<sup>10</sup> His respect for money was seen even in his care in giving it away. Carnegie declared in his essay, "The Best Use of Wealth,"

Distribute every month, for instance, your surplus gains among those you employ. This would be indiscriminate giving again. . . . Business in our day is a matter of small margins, a trifling sum per day upon each man employed. The firm that fails to apply the strictest rules of business will soon find itself of no use whatever to the community. . . . there are higher uses for surplus wealth than adding petty sums to the earnings of the masses. Trifling sums given to each every week or month -- and the sums would be trifling indeed -- would be frittered away, . . . in things which pertain to the body and not to the spirit; upon richer food and drink, better clothing, more extravagant living,

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<sup>9</sup> Reproduced by the Glasgow Evening Times, July 30, 1892 in Carnegie Scrapbook, Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 264, Book 2, p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 247.

which are beneficial to neither rich nor poor.<sup>11</sup>

The curious use of the word "trifles" here is interesting, for as we have noted previously, Carnegie felt trifles were likely to be important. Carnegie also enjoyed his forms of extravagant living. But by keeping these trifling sums, which the magnate labeled "surplus wealth," he could spend for all of the workmen as they ought to spend. He could then "minister to the higher, the divine, part of men."<sup>12</sup> It was easy to claim of course that in a democracy one man was equal to another and should not have this power, and the question concerned Carnegie also, even though he had no answer to it. The rationale Carnegie suggested was simply that men who had made millions had proven their ability to understand the use of money, so they should be the ones who also used this ability to spend the money for the good of all. It was an ability Carnegie was delighted to demonstrate. "It has often happened," says Hamilton Mable, "that a man has arrived at fortune and ease only to disclose the emptiness of his soul, the poverty of his ideals."<sup>13</sup> Carnegie met that test well. "Old age," the magnate

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Carnegie, "The Best Use of Wealth," in Miscellaneous  
pp. 208-209.

Hamilton W. Mable, in Koch's Book of Carnegie  
Libraries, p. 4.

declared, . . . "is the great test of success in life."<sup>14</sup> At least it is if you live that long! And living that long did worry the steel king. He recognized full well that if business conditions continued on as they were going, which in fact they did, in ten years or twenty he could again double his money and probably nearly control the steel industry in the world. Certainly the organization of United States Steel could have been engineered by Carnegie as easily as by Morgan, who was older than the Scotchman. The monopoly in the magnate's hands could have been made even more powerful and the First World War would have brought enormous profits. But Carnegie desperately wanted time left to distribute, to be true to his own dreams. He was not a man with nothing to retire to.<sup>15</sup> "Mere wealth," Carnegie stressed, "is of little importance; it is not the wealth, but the use we make of it, that is vital."<sup>16</sup> For Carnegie, his fortune was his fame. Hamilton Mable declared: "Carnegie has been a significant figure. He was one of the first in point of time to arrive at the position of a great man of wealth by modern

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<sup>14</sup> Carnegie, James Watt, p. 213.

<sup>15</sup> Said Carnegie; "I had seen so many pitiable cases of men with fortunes to retire upon but nothing to retire to, condemned to continue . . . to whom change means misery." Carnegie, "My Experience with Railroad Rates and Rebates," p. 727.

<sup>16</sup> Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 208.

standards; to acquire a fortune so vast that its possession gave him historical prominence."<sup>17</sup> Nicholas Murray Butler, one of Carnegie's great friends, asserted: "The reason for Andrew Carnegie's outstanding position in the history of his time, with fullest assurance that he will be remembered through the years, is that the making of his great fortune was wholly subordinate to his magnificent use of it."<sup>18</sup> Here is one of those statements that sound so extravagant that the reader begins to reject it, but, as Carnegie might have said himself, on sober second thought, the statement is indeed true enough after all! The cynics may smirk all they wish, but Carnegie was the winner of that game he was playing too, he gave away more money than any other man in the history of the world. Carnegie was indeed one of "a new order of men," a man with a plan for the world.

The steel king was to declare later: "There is nothing inherently valuable in mere money worth striving for, unless it is to be administered as a sacred trust for the good of others."<sup>19</sup> In the second major article Carnegie ever had

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<sup>17</sup>Hamilton Mable in Koch's Book of Carnegie Libraries, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup>Nicholas Murray Butler, "Andrew Carnegie, Benefactor," New York, 1935. Written for the centenary of Carnegie's birth, printed first in the New York Herald Tribune, November 24, 1935, and then reprinted privately as a pamphlet. In the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh collection.

<sup>19</sup>Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 48.

published, "The Aristocracy of the Dollar," the magnate declared:

The State, in the near future, will not permit great millionaires to ignore the truth that they are but trustees after all, and that their millions hoarded are detrimental to the general good, as the same millions bequeathed to their own issue are positively injurious to them. By cumulative taxation, by progressive legacy duties, or by some efficient means not yet devised, because not yet necessary in this country, while the laws of dispersion act so well, or perhaps by strong overwhelming public sentiment only, the degraded soul, whose chief aim . . . is to . . . hoard his millions . . . will meet at the hands of an indignant community the defeat he richly deserves. After a while the only condition upon which a man will be permitted to possess, or administer, an undue amount of wealth, in a Government of the People, will be that he makes good use of it, and spends it, not in such vulgar ostentatious display . . . but that he holds his wealth . . . for humanity.<sup>20</sup>

Here was the vigorous Carnegie of middle age, forty-six years old, already a multi-millionaire, but determined to go on earning, partly at least because he had a vision of what he would do for humanity. What more socialist, idealist, humanitarian statement could be found? The magnate continued by suggesting the question to be asked was not, "How was he born?" or "What a man owns? . . . but what has he done for his fellows? . . . How he has worshipped God will not be asked in that day, but

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<sup>20</sup> Carnegie, "Aristocracy of the Dollar," p. 12.

how has he served Man?"<sup>21</sup>

Carnegie biographer, Burton Hendrick, saw the magnate's St. Nicholas Hotel statement in 1868, quoted in Chapter 1, as meaning that the steel king was already in those early days thinking of the Gospel of Wealth.<sup>22</sup> This interpretation by Hendrick is really not accurate; the St. Nicholas paper was a young man's statement, evincing a desire to get out of business, to travel, to develop himself, to learn, to write, to have experiences, and not be caught in the trap of making money. The St. Nicholas Hotel statement was written at the age of thirty-three, by a man who could still get out, but who put it off and soon rationalized that his best chance for immortality and to do good in the world would be if he stayed with the money game and won. In many ways this analysis was quite correct, for who would remember Andrew Carnegie today for his eight books and over 150 articles, if he had not obtained and given away more than \$300,000,000 during the generation from 1890-1920? In America, and in our world even today, it is money that talks. When he wrote the "Aristocracy of the Dollar," Carnegie was forty-six, and the trap was closed. He was committed to going on with the steel business until he had made his fortune.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 330-331.

Seven years later, in June, 1889, when the North American Review published the steel king's article, "Wealth," the magnate could see that he was going to have enough money to do some things. In February, 1901, a dozen years later, when Carnegie did sell out at sixty-five it was with some misgivings. Of course the attachments of this life are characterized by the fact that there is always something else ahead, and Carnegie saw a great future for the steel companies. By this time most of the fond hopes of the St. Nicholas Hotel statement had been briefly tried or totally abandoned. It is probably more nearly true to see Carnegie thinking in terms of helping his family, his town, and finally, rationalizing his staying in business yet longer by seeing possibilities of helping the world.

It was fortunate for Carnegie that he meant what he said in his June, 1889 article entitled "Wealth,"<sup>23</sup> for the world was soon fascinated by the implications of his essay, and the truly original thinking suggested, so that soon the magnate himself became a symbol for the idea he created. Allen Thorndike Rice, the editor of the North American Review characterized

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<sup>23</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," North American Review, June, 1889, pp. 3-18; reprinted as "The Gospel of Wealth," Pall Mall Gazette, and reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 14-29.

the essay as the "finest article I have ever published," and flattered Carnegie greatly in a talk the two men had. The Carnegie article itself was reprinted in Britain by the magazine's great friend William T. Stead, in the journal Stead edited, the Pall Mall Gazette, under the much more striking title, "The Gospel of Wealth." This title, Stead's brain child, became the name for the Carnegie doctrine of philanthropy. In December, 1889, Carnegie published a second article in the North American Review entitled "The Best Fields for Philanthropy,"<sup>24</sup> and finally in the same journal, in March, 1891, the final essay of the "Gospel" trilogy was printed, "The Advantages of Poverty."<sup>25</sup> The Carnegie articles led to a review by William Gladstone in Britain and a reply in America by a Catholic Cardinal, a Jewish Rabbi, and a Methodist Minister.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Best Fields for Philanthropy," North American Review, December, 1889, pp. 682-689; reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland.

<sup>25</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Advantages of Poverty," Nineteenth Century, March, 1891, pp. 367-385; reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland.

<sup>26</sup> These have all been reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton J. Hendrick. Originally the Gladstone article was published by Nineteenth Century, November, 1890, and the other three articles by the same periodical all in December, 1890. William Gladstone, "Mr. Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth," pp. 125-156; Henry Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, "Irresponsible Wealth I," pp. 157-173; Rabbi Hermann Adler, "Irresponsible Wealth II," pp. 174-181; and Reverend Hugh Price Hughes, "Irresponsible Wealth III," pp. 181-202.



Naturally the newspapers of the day took up the discussion and it was a major topic of general conversation among the elite as well as the common people on two continents.<sup>27</sup> Carnegie could hardly have been more pleased with the results and for his own part did not allow the matter to rest but continued the debate with such articles as "The Duty of Wealth," in the Charities Review, November, 1895, speeches at dedications and colleges,<sup>28</sup> and the beginning of philanthropic gestures that excited the public enormously. The most notable phrase to come

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<sup>27</sup>The newspapers took up the discussion all over again when Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays appeared for the first time as a book. While some of the press found occasion to fault Carnegie as anti-American for his stand against intervention into the Philippines, most commented on the Gospel of Wealth lead articles which dealt with disposal of one's wealth. Detroit Free Press, October 29, 1900; Evening Post, Chicago, Illinois, October 29, 1900; Washington, D. C. Post, October 29, 1900; Boston Journal, October 17, 1900; Sunday School Times, Philadelphia, October 29, 1900, and other articles may be seen in the American Press Information Bureau's clipping file, supplied to Carnegie at the time, and now in the Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 273.

<sup>28</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "The Best Use of Wealth," speech at the dedication of the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh, December 5, 1895, reprinted in Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick (Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1933), pp. 203-218; Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth and its Uses," lecture at Union College, Schenectady, New York, reprinted in Andrew Carnegie, Empire of Business (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1902), pp. 125-150.

from the debate, certainly a statement designed to touch the public's fancy, was the Carnegie motto, again oft repeated, that the "man who dies rich, dies disgraced."<sup>29</sup> Carnegie who gave away more money than any man in history, and was the Santa Claus of the Western World, certainly obeyed the injunction of his own Gospel of Wealth and did not die disgraced.

The Gospel of Wealth according to Carnegie began with the suggestion that the proper use of wealth was the problem of our revolutionary times.<sup>30</sup> One requirement, a noblesse oblige demand upon the successful, was that they should point the way and instruct the average citizen as to how to live. The great transition to industrialism vastly increased wealth and produced a greater population. The population increase resulted in a mass society and the inevitable dehumanizing effects of such a society. The laws of competition are inevitable and part of the "survival of the fittest," said the magnate. "To those who propose to substitute Communism for this intense Individualism, the answer therefore is: The race has tried that. All progress from that barbarous day to the present has resulted from its displacement."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 144.

<sup>30</sup>Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 14-16, 18.

Since there was no point to changing the system, the problem of what "the few" who "inevitably" received wealth should do was important. Only three possibilities remained: the money could be willed to heirs, left for good causes, or disposed of by the wealthy in their own lifetimes.<sup>32</sup> This last was the preferred course of action. Men who left vast sums to their children or other heirs destroyed the initiative of those who received the money. Leaving money in wills for good causes might seem laudable, but invited law suits and suggested that the possessor wished to take it with him but could not. In "Wealth and its Uses" Carnegie enlarged on this theme to suggest that if the rich left their wealth to their children, it was fine for the ego of the parent but a curse to the child. The son would have no incentive to produce on his own and the daughter no desire to be a good wife and mother.<sup>33</sup> Peter Cooper and such men as Tilden and Pratt were held up as examples of men who made noble bequests.<sup>34</sup> Only those who disposed of their money before their deaths to worthy causes were really acting as they should. The results of not following this advice would inevitably be

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> Carnegie, "Wealth and its Uses," in Empire of Business p. 142.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 143; Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, pp. 23-24; Carnegie, "Ezra Cornell," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. 1, p. 251. The importance of Peter Cooper, especially, was a theme Carnegie continued to emphasize.

higher estate taxes and death duties.<sup>35</sup>

Now Carnegie approached the heart of his justly famous doctrine or gospel:

This, then, is held to be the duty of the man of wealth: To set an example of modest, unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and, after doing so, to consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust funds, which he is called upon to administer . . . for the community -- the man of wealth thus becoming the mere trustee and agent for his poorer brethren, . . . doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves.<sup>36</sup>

There were of course great dangers; the rich must be wise. Carnegie defended the free enterprise system, suggesting that "individualism will continue but the millionaire will be but a trustee for the poor, entrusted for a season with a great part of the increased wealth of the community."<sup>37</sup> Sounding almost biblical as he expounded his "Gospel," Carnegie declared: "It were better for mankind that the millions of the rich were thrown

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<sup>35</sup> Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, pp. 19-22.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

into the sea than so spend as to encourage the slothful, the drunken, the unworthy. Of every thousand dollars spent in so-called charity today, it is probable that nine hundred and fifty dollars is unwisely spent."<sup>38</sup> The steel king had originally written that nine hundred dollars of every thousand spent on charity was misspent, but Allen Thorndike Rice, editor of the North American Review requested the magnate change this to nine hundred and fifty. Carnegie agreed, declaring later: "You will perceive, when forced to the conclusion this indicates, how respected the field for the wise use of surplus wealth becomes."<sup>39</sup> Such was the Gospel according to Carnegie.

Six months later, in December, 1889, in "The Best Fields for Philanthropy," the steel king spelled out the direction benevolence by the rich should take. It was here he first declared that "the man who dies . . . rich dies disgraced."<sup>40</sup> The problem of wealth, was spending it in a worthy manner so that it brought the most good to the community. There was, Carnegie suggested, absolute harm in educating men to beg by giving something for nothing. The magnate quoted

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>39</sup> Carnegie, "The Best Use of Wealth," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 205.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

Plutarch's Morals that a man who first gives a beggar money assures he will be a "greater beggar" and continue "idle."<sup>41</sup>

Carnegie then listed the following as the best uses of surplus capital, in order of importance.

1. Found a University.
2. Build a library.
3. Build or add to a hospital, medical college, or laboratory.
4. Create a park.
5. Construct a great concert hall.
6. Build a swimming pool or bath for the poor.
7. Build a church.

Carnegie commented on each of these appropriate means of philanthropy at some length. As to founding a university, it was obvious that only a few extremely wealthy men would ever be able to do this. But of course a man might build a building, construct an observatory, or found a museum, the steel king described some of the great individual contributions in this regard. The magnate next recounted once more his experience with the little public library of Colonel Anderson and how he resolved to found libraries. Carnegie discussed the value of books to the community. In each case he reflected, with the potential giver, on how the philanthropist's name would be remembered, the benefit he would bring to many, the scholars working, the readers' minds developing, the discoveries of medical men and scientists, the

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

pleasure in a park, a concert hall or a swimming pool. The magnate was so overcome with emotion concerning the glories of philanthropy that he used Christ's name twice in the concluding pages of this article and three times more toward the end of his reply to an attack on his Gospel, "The Advantages of Poverty," certainly more times than he used Christ's name in all the other pages he wrote.<sup>42</sup>

In later writings, afterwards, Carnegie was to often repeat his interest in philanthropy, to declare repeatedly that "surplus wealth," a curiously Marxian term, was "a sacred trust, to be administered during the life of its possessor for the highest good of his fellows."<sup>43</sup> "A noble quartette" of good things to do with one's money was to spend it on libraries, art galleries, museums, and concert halls.<sup>44</sup> There were many people who hopefully heard about Carnegie's intentions to distribute money but never read him or understood him. One result of not understanding or reading the magnate is to be seen in Alderson's

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp. 48-49.

<sup>43</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 225.

<sup>44</sup> Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings Vol. I, p. 211.

report that by 1900 the magnate was receiving 500 begging letters each day.<sup>45</sup> Of course his secretaries handled these and Carnegie was never bothered with them. Most were never answered. Even a reply would have encouraged people, indeed, taught them, for most of our actions are instructive, to continue to beg or to try once more. Carnegie was shown the poems, written by the hundreds, by people who hoped to flatter him so that the steel king would respond with some money. Instead, there was what amounted to a form letter, which simply thanked the kind sender for the poem. Many of these poems are still in the Carnegie Papers in the Library of Congress. Even more startling was the number of the great and near great, the political, literary, and social leaders of the day, in England and in America, who wrote to Carnegie in their own behalf or to suggest aid for someone else. Mark Twain, John Morley, Herbert Spencer, and William Gladstone all wrote to the magnate for aid. Whether he was called upon to save historian Acton's library from the auctioneer, which he did, or support Theodore Roosevelt's African hunt in the hope that the ex-president would be useful to the cause of world peace, which he was, or contribute to a political benefit, it was all the same.

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<sup>45</sup> Alderson, Carnegie, pp. 148-149; see also Carnegie's letter to John Ross, Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 157. The Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 260 is largely devoted to 25 folders of poems sent to Carnegie by hopeful citizens. Chronologically arranged folders by years run from 1889-1918.



In fact, partly because he wrote as he did, after 1890 it became remarkably easier for Carnegie to move about in the highest circles on the continent and in America.

The attack upon the Carnegie gospel of wealth took a variety of forms. Gladstone was largely laudatory and began his 1890 article entitled "Mr. Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth," by complimenting the magnate on becoming a "celebrity" who was a link between the continents. Carnegie and Gladstone had been friends for a number of years and Gladstone quite agreed that an amazing growth of wealth, "irresponsible wealth," he termed some of it, had occurred in Great Britain. Carnegie was seen as an authority who had risen, knew all classes, and understood wealth. Gladstone, however, felt that inheritance was much more basic than Carnegie indicated; in many businesses it was a family tradition for children to carry on. Handing on great landed estates from father to son was not necessarily evil. Yet Gladstone agreed that there was more altruism in giving before one's death, indeed in a well turned comment he suggested that it was pretty obvious one cannot give at one's death, for then all was taken anyway. Giving at death was empty and in many cases devoid of meaning. Gladstone concluded that Carnegie was correct in many ways, that the wealthy had certainly not done enough.

Cardinal Manning, Rabbi Adler, and the Reverend Hughes all wrote articles for Nineteenth Century in December, 1890, responding to Carnegie, and the periodical used the general title suggested by Gladstone, "Irresponsible Wealth." Cardinal Manning did not condemn Carnegie so much as the system which paid the poor so little and continued poverty as an institution. The Cardinal actually considered the magnate to be practicing original Christianity, a fine creed that ought to be tried some day. The article provided a pulpit for the Cardinal to suggest that proportionately less was done for the poor in the nineteenth century than in medieval times. Carnegie and Gladstone were cited as fine examples of devotion to original Christianity, but alone they were not enough amid modern distribution of evil wealth. Rabbi Adler also saw the Gospel of Wealth as being as old as the Old Testament yet as golden an opportunity as the golden rule. The gap between wealth and poverty needed to be closed. The Reverend Hughes launched the strongest attack, for he was a devotee of Henry George and Edward Bellamy, and while he affirmed a personal predilection for the magnate as "generous," he could not but view him as a part of a generic group whom he despised, a commonality that was "an anti-Christian phenomenon, a social monstrosity, and a grave political

peril."<sup>46</sup> Hughes held that in a true Christian country millionaires would not exist and in any country in which they did exist they were evil. The rich were growing richer and the poor poorer and Carnegie's wealth did not represent his "superiority" over poor workers. Hughes suggested there was "a total fallacy at the very foundation of Mr. Carnegie's argument." There was no "inevitable" reason for millionaires.<sup>47</sup> This, of course, was the same argument that was advanced some months later by William Jewett Tucker, perhaps copied from Hughes. It was Hughes who declared: "He [Carnegie] assumes that millionaires are necessary results of modern industrial enterprise, and that consequently the only question ethical writers can discuss is the best way of enabling . . . them to beneficially spend their surplus wealth."<sup>48</sup> Instead Hughes suggested that "free trade, free land, and a progressive income tax . . . [plus a high] death-duty. . . . [would end] excessive wealth."<sup>49</sup> Of course creating a perfect state had been tried and was difficult, Hughes admitted, but if

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<sup>46</sup> Hendrick, ed. Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. 2, p. 183.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

we really tried to follow Christ it could be managed. Hughes even struck a hard blow by quoting Herbert Spencer and added insult to this injury by insisting that the real problem was not the hereditary nobility of England but the new millionaire class in both Britain and America of which Carnegie was an example.<sup>50</sup>

The magnate replied to these attacks in his March, 1891 article in the Nineteenth Century, "The Advantages of Poverty." The steel king suggested first that he was overjoyed at Gladstone's interest and disagreed with the former Prime Minister only in that Carnegie did not believe the accumulation and growth of wealth was injurious but a sign of coming prosperity. From here, Carnegie immediately moved to attack his main antagonist, the Reverend Hughes. The magnate first attacked Hughes' hero, Henry George, by intimating that both the major beliefs of Henry George as set forth by Hughes were untrue: the rich were not growing richer and the poor poorer and land was not falling more and more into the hands of the few. The steel king used some statistics to argue his point and then shifting the field of battle, cleverly agreed that Spencer was quite correct when he "'exposes the sad delusion that great

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., pp. 187-191.

wealth is a great blessing," but, the magnate added, can it be possible that Hughes does not know that Spencer has called all of Henry George's writings "trash?" Truly, Spencer was a wise man, Carnegie concluded. The magnate added that in his own particular case, the growing steel industry had not made America poorer as it made him rich, but offered many people jobs and made quite a few other men wealthy as well. Carnegie then quoted statistics to show that the average American was not becoming poorer. The steel king next moved on to a rather unsound effort to illustrate by world wide statistics that in those countries where there were the most millionaires, the common people also fared best.<sup>51</sup> This effort was too much for Carnegie's friend William Stead, who suggested, concerning this presentation by Carnegie, that in the Roman Empire, just before it collapsed, there were many rich and many poor also. Historical parallels are a problem. Carnegie next took up Gladstone's contention that leaving wealth to one's descendants to carry on the family business was not all that bad. The steel king protested that many "disastrous failures" resulted from nepotism; great businesses were destroyed because a doting father viewed his son as having "imaginary business qualifications."<sup>52</sup> In fact, Carnegie saw the fathers to blame for

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<sup>51</sup>Carnegie, "Advantages of Poverty," in Gospel of Wealth pp. 50-55.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

turning over great companies to incompetent children. This was more serious than handing over a hereditary title, since others could be involved in the ruin. Even in the inheritance of land, success was now more nearly based on knowledge of business methods, upon scientific agriculture, and an understanding of marketing.<sup>53</sup> Actually Carnegie most enjoyed attacking the Gladstone article, in going after the straw man of inherited titles and in suggesting that "many generations" of nobility in England were "fully comprised . . . in "Burke's Peerage" in the three letters, b.m.d."<sup>54</sup> Returning at last to Hughes, Carnegie simply stole his thunder:

I thank Mr. Hughes for the words he has written. He says: "The real question is not how much we ought to give away, but how much we dare retain for our own gratification." These words strike home to every man of wealth and station: "How much dare we retain for our gratification?" This is a troublesome question which will not "down." Giving the one tenth -- the tithe -- is easy. The true disciple of the gospel of wealth has to pass far beyond that stage.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

The rich, the magnate continued, should avoid conspicuous extravagance and then give away most that they accumulate. Carnegie may be said to have ultimately followed these twin precepts. His extravagances, that nevertheless existed, were not those of an oriental despot, which considering his hundreds of millions, they could have been. The question, one supposes is how extravagant is extravagance? Certainly Skibo Castle, the annual trips to Europe and back, the New York Mansion, the yacht, and the occasional private railroad cars did not come cheap. As to carrying out his Gospel, however, as has already been remarked, Carnegie kept only an inverse tithe of ten per cent for himself and gave away the ninety per cent, which would seem to exceed what might be expected of most wealthy men in any age. The proof of Carnegie's belief lay in the giving.

Some day a really interesting cross reference historical study might be attempted to consider what influence Carnegie's Gospel had upon fellow businessmen. What was the psychological impact of the Carnegie gifts upon the affluent community?<sup>56</sup> How many businessmen were there in the quarter century after the "Gospel of Wealth" was published, 1890-1915, who had more than a million dollars? How much total money above one million

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<sup>56</sup> See, "Psychological Value of the Carnegie Gifts," Gunton's Magazine, June, 1901, pp. 555-557.

dollars each did they possess? What proportion of this total did they use for beneficent purposes? What proportion was used for the major purposes that Carnegie suggested were most worthy: building or adding to universities, libraries, hospitals, parks, great concert halls and museums? How would these totals compare with the 1945-1970 period, which is the most protracted period of vast material prosperity that any nation in all history has ever known? Certainly there were more millionaires to be found in this later period and they averaged more millions. But, did they give away as much, or as much in proportion? And how did they give it? What is suggested here is that Andrew Carnegie had a far reaching effect, in writing and actually giving, upon his own business class and that for a time at least he helped to spark a renaissance of university contributions, museum building, and benevolent gestures in a variety of forms. "I do not want to be known for what I give," said Mr. Carnegie on one occasion, "but for what I induce others to give."<sup>57</sup> To prove or disprove this contention would require a vast statistical study well worth a monograph. It is heartily recommended.

Carnegie concluded his article by having further sport with Hughes. He quoted John Wesley, the founder of Hughes' own

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<sup>57</sup> Quoted in Koch, Carnegie Libraries, p. 12.



Methodism, as suggesting that men should obtain as much as possible "by honest industry."<sup>58</sup> Finally the magnate amusingly agreed that "Mr. Hughes' assertion that in a state under really Christian principles a millionaire would be an impossibility. . . . may be right. . . . But the millionaire will not lack good company in making his exit; for surely nothing is clearer than that in the ideal day there can be no further use whatever for those of Mr. Hughes' profession. The millionaire and the preacher will alike have to find some other use for their talents. . . . The successors of the Reverend Mr. Hughes and myself, arm in arm, will make a pretty pair out in search of some light work with heavy pay."<sup>59</sup> The problem with attacking someone else's profession is that he may attack yours!

So at least in this series of proposals and replies to his attackers, Carnegie titillated the fancy of the people of two continents and set the stage for the question of just how benevolent he would be.

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<sup>58</sup> Carnegie, "Advantages of Poverty," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 73.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp. 75-76.

## 2. Carnegie's Benevolence: Aid to Schools and Libraries

Carnegie in later writings continued to view the wealthy as mere temporary custodians of their riches,<sup>60</sup> even as he took one step after another to relieve himself of the burden of abundance. We have discussed Carnegie's \$4,000,000 pension for his former employees in Pittsburg, his \$6,000,000 for church organs, and the \$5,000,000 for his hero fund for America and his further hero funds for various European countries. We have touched upon the magnate's "temples of peace;" his peace palace at the Hague which cost Carnegie \$1,500,000, his Pan American Union Building in Washington, D.C., and we might add the Central American Court of Justice built at San Jose, Costa Rica. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, created in 1910, with a trust fund of \$10,000,000 was one of Carnegie's fondest hopes.<sup>61</sup> This endowment was to be one of the immortal trusts, using the interest alone, and working perpetually, first to alleviate war, and if that problem was ever solved to turn its attention to the next most serious world difficulty. \$10,000,000 was a comfortable block of money which Carnegie

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<sup>60</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 137.

<sup>61</sup> Hendrick, "Benefactions of Carnegie," passim.

liked to deal with in establishing funds.<sup>62</sup> The \$2,000,000 spent to endow the Church Peace Union, in February, 1914, practically at the time the guns began to fire was Carnegie's final gift for peace.

Aside from these philanthropies, Carnegie's constant attention to his native town of Dunfermline in Scotland, made that little municipality almost an endowed city. Dunfermline was small enough so that the magnate might well have bought the place. Naturally the city was given a library, and it received some swimming baths. Income also came to the community because it was made the center for the United Kingdom's Carnegie Hero Fund, and a number of the residents received pensions or direct aid from the magnate. But in 1902 the steel king had the opportunity of his sentimental and romantic lifetime to present to his home city a gift of enormous proportions. Pittencrieff Glen was purchased and made into a public park and really a national shrine for all of Scotland.

The tale of Pittencrieff is that of another victory for the steel king, which can be seen as one more indication of what vast wealth can do, but it also illustrates what some have

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<sup>62</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 260.

termed the "luck" of Andrew Carnegie, for this romantic success story rivals the fairy tales or a Walt Disney motion picture. When Carnegie was a small boy, James Hunt was Laird of Pittencrieff, owning the glen, the Abbey grounds, the ruins of the historic palace of Scotland, King Malcolm's tower, St. Margaret's shrine, the mansion house of Pittencrieff, and the wooded hills that could be seen from the town. These were all objects of historical lore. James Hunt was the villain of the town, trying to extend his domain into the public land of Dunfermline, quarreling continually with the inhabitants, patrolling the high walls around his estate to determine that no small boy entered. Indeed, the Laird of Pittencrieff was the epitome of evil, the iniquitous inheritor of what should have been a national treasure and public monument, holding through private ownership a historical shrine from which the public was barred. On frequent Sundays Uncle Lauder walked with "Dod" and "Naig" to a high point outside the walls of Pittencrieff, where they might look down into the Glen. The great relics of Scotch history could only be viewed from afar by the townsmen of Dunfermline, but no one might enter. For an extended period a battle between the townsmen and the Laird had continued concerning the possession of public land and the rights of inhabitants to visitation of the glen. Carnegie's grandfather, Thomas Morrison, had been a part of one of the early struggles

with the Hunt family and the continuing exacerbation between the town and the Laird. Thomas Morrison's son, the Bailie, as well as Carnegie's own father and Uncle Lauder had been among others who pressed the town's campaign in the next generation. The Bailie led the court battle which finally opened the Glen one day of each year to the townsmen. Even this slight victory caused the Laird, as he acquiesced, to announce that no Morrison would ever be allowed to enter. Since both Andrew Carnegie and George Lauder, Jr. were the children of Morrison mothers, the two boys were denied entrance. So young Carnegie, Scotch chauvanist that he was, could only look over the wall at this seat of national history, the center of so many stories that his Uncle Lauder told. Carnegie revered, as a child and man, these grounds, equating them with paradise throughout his life.<sup>63</sup> The earthly center of Heaven was the divine Glen of Pittencrieff; unfortunately evil had risen to control this earthly paradise and prevent men from viewing this Scotch Eden, this historical promised land. So the Carnegie family went off on their money seeking pilgrimage to America, worked hard, became fantastically wealthy, and in old age, the son returned

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<sup>63</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 275. See also Clair V. Duff, "Pittencrieff Park," Carnegie Magazine, May, 1965, pp. 155-159.

as a man, and was startled to be told in 1902 by a friend that the son of James Hunt, Colonel Hunt, who was then Laird of Pittencrieff, was willing to sell the estate.

Obviously if the great Carnegie wealth had not come to the attention of Colonel Hunt, through the magnate's many benefactions in Dunfermline, the Colonel would never have made his first exorbitant offer to sell, and finally, after some months of negotiations through intermediaries, actually dispose of the Glen for a still inflated but not ridiculous price. Here was romance, dreams, "air-castle building," Carnegie phrased it, for the magnate was now Laird of Pittencrieff, which the steel king regarded as "the grandest title on earth."<sup>64</sup> A group of trustees were selected and a trust for Dunfermline established, ultimately with \$4,000,000 of Carnegie's steel company bonds, drawing \$200,000 in annual interest that might be spent to "forever" improve the town of Dunfermline and Pittencrieff Glen.<sup>65</sup> In the trust deed, dated August 2, 1903, Carnegie

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 276.

<sup>65</sup> Some of the articles at the time included:  
 W. H. Tolman, "The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, Social Service, April, 1904.  
 H. Church, "Carnegie's Endowments at Dunfermline," Survey, May 4, 1912, pp. 211-220.  
 "Mr. Carnegie's Gift to his Native Town," Outlook, August, 1903.

declared his purpose was:

To bring into the monotonous lives of the toiling masses of Dunfermline more of sweetness and light; to give to them -- especially the young -- some charm, some happiness, some elevating conditions of life which residence elsewhere would have denied; that the child of my native town, looking back in after years, however far from home . . . will feel that simply by virtue of being such, life has been made happier and better.<sup>66</sup>

Carnegie continued by speaking of experimenting, trying new things, and then talking directly to the trustees he made this proposal:

The problem you have to solve is -- "What can be done in towns for the benefit of the masses by money in the hands of the most public-spirited citizens?" If you prove that good can be done you open new fields to the rich. . . .

Remember you are pioneers, and do not be afraid of making mistakes: those who never make mistakes never make anything. Try many things freely, but discard just as freely.

As it is the masses you are to benefit, it follows you have to keep in touch with them. . . .

Not what other cities have is your standard; it is something beyond this which they lack, and your funds should be strictly devoted to this.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, 1903-1953 (Dunfermline: West Fife Publishing Company, 1953), pp. 5-6.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

The steel king suggested that Dunfermline, as a town, must do the normal things all towns did, for herself with money raised from taxes. The trust fund the magnate created was to be used as a pioneering experiment, in elevating the vision of the town, in raising the standards within the city, and in pointing the way to what could be done with wealth in changing a community. Pittencrieff Park was turned into a garden of flowers, with museums, playgrounds, and summer open air concerts, so that it has become a center for visitors in Scotland. So his great wealth made it possible for Carnegie to become a patron of Dunfermline in a fashion that the magnate felt suggested immortality.<sup>68</sup>

Carnegie's interests; peace, museums, concert halls, his native town, education, and libraries, the last two of which we shall consider shortly; still had cost him only about half of his fortune by 1911. Through the great Carnegie Institute of Pittsburgh, he had made donations to his adopted American city, as he had in Dunfermline. A great library and its branches, a music hall, an art museum, the Carnegie Institute of Technology, and the Margaret Morrison Carnegie College

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<sup>68</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 279.



had all gone to Pittsburgh.<sup>69</sup> The magnate desired to spend his money, but money was not to be spent frivolously. He often asked the advice of his friends; he listened well to suggestions; and he read the newspapers of both of his lands. However, Carnegie was hooked on the horns of the dilemma of wishing to dispose of his vast fortune, but determining that it should be used wisely. At the age of seventy-five, in early 1911, the situation began to appear ominous. At such an age, and with so much wealth remaining, it was obvious by the terms of his own beliefs, the magnate might die disgraced at any time. Carnegie had rejected many suggestions for disposing of his money as unfitting or in someone else's province. Finally the steel king attempted to accomplish his purpose through his will, a means which curiously he had declared himself, in his "Gospel of Wealth," to be an inferior way to dispose of funds. When he handed the completed will to Elihu Root, his friend and attorney, Root observed that the document setting up a foundation at the steel king's death was a dangerous way to handle

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<sup>69</sup>There are several brief summaries of Carnegie's philanthropies. A good one is the April 25, 1920 address by Elihu Root, "In Memory of Andrew Carnegie: His Life and Work," at a meeting held under the auspices of the Author's Club, New York Public Library, Oratorio Society, Saint Andrew's Society, United Engineering Society, at the Engineering Societies Building.

such a huge sum of money. Root suggested, perhaps remembering the words of Carnegie's Gospel better than the steel king himself, that the magnate should create a foundation at once, while he still lived. Carnegie was delighted with the idea and June 9, 1911 the Carnegie Corporation of New York was established. The \$125,000,000 which ultimately found its way into this endeavor, allowed Carnegie to continue to spend money as he pleased on a variety of undertakings in America, but left the principal, the largest single sum ever given for humanitarian purposes, behind under the guidance of some trustees at his death. The aims of the Carnegie Corporation of New York were "to promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding among the people of the United States, by aiding technical schools, institutions of higher learning, libraries, scientific research, hero funds, useful publications, and by such other agencies and means as shall from time to time be found appropriate."<sup>70</sup> In recent decades the Carnegie Corporation of New York has been interested in the "improvement of teaching, basic research, studies of educational developments, training for teachers and administrators, and other educational

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<sup>70</sup> This is an example of Carnegie's own reformed spelling. For more on reformed spelling, see Chapter Nine.

projects of an experimental nature. The Corporation has also supported a few projects of national scope or significance at the secondary level, primarily in the fields of mathematics and science teaching."<sup>71</sup> For the first few years the Carnegie Corporation of New York was merely "Andrew Carnegie, Incorporated,"<sup>72</sup> with the meetings in the magnate's New York home, and the steel king serving as president of the corporation. As he grew older, and especially after 1915, Carnegie relinquished control. So the magnate disposed of the bulk of his fortune in a form that might hopefully remain doing its benevolent work forever; the Carnegie Corporation of New York was the first of the great open-ended foundations.<sup>73</sup>

Carnegie's gifts to colleges and universities and to libraries have been the subject of so many articles, essays,

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<sup>71</sup>"Notes on Andrew Carnegie and His Philanthropies," 11 page pamphlet, published by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. No date.

<sup>72</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, pp. 352-353, Savage, Fruit of an Impulse: Carnegie Foundation, p. 27.

<sup>73</sup>In a recent article, William W. Brickman, "Leadership and Scholarship," School and Society, March 5, 1966, p. 116, suggests convincingly the necessity for the great foundation to continue to exert leadership in the years ahead.

and books at the time and today, and has been told so elaborately that there is no point to attempting here more than a sketch of the main outlines of his benefactions. In actuality, Carnegie's gifts to schools, universities, and libraries, by their very size, by the guide rules set up for the recipients, and by demanding matching funds in a variety of forms, tended to change national and educative directions in ways that the magnate himself could never have anticipated.

The Carnegie gift of \$10,000,000 to the four ancient universities of Scotland, St. Andrews, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, schools the magnate had never been able to attend himself, led the steel king into a massive educational controversy. The magnate was actually accused by some of attempting to destroy the Scottish Universities.<sup>74</sup> Half of the \$10,000,000 trust was to upgrade the teaching of science, history, economics, medicine, English literature, modern languages, as well as technical and commercial subjects and half was to pay the fees of young students who might not have the money to enter the

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<sup>74</sup> "Mr. Carnegie's Gift to the Scottish Universities: A Blessing or a Curse?" New Liberal Review, January, 1902, pp. 247-255; "Will Mr. Carnegie Corrupt Scotland?" National Review, September, 1903, pp. 56-58.

universities.<sup>75</sup> This was a fantastic gift, enough to remake the schools, to change directions, and to anger some people who saw this unschooled American with all his money coming back to Scotland to effect changes inimical to tradition. The antecedent of the trust fund was an article by Thomas Shaw in 1897 on the financial plight of the Scottish Universities and the major need which Shaw saw of abolishing tuition fees so that poor but able students would be able to attend the universities.<sup>76</sup> Since Shaw was originally born in Dunfermline and had become a successful man who was then a member of Parliament, Carnegie respected him. Shaw followed his article up by discussing the matter with Carnegie, in 1901, when the magnate was ready to spend his money. Carnegie asked Shaw how much money was needed. Shaw replied: "Five million dollars." However, as Carnegie consulted with others, an argument began. The needs of the Scottish Universities were so great, and here was the steel king spending all this money to make tuition free

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<sup>75</sup>Root, "Carnegie," p. 35.

<sup>76</sup>Thomas Shaw, "The Educational Peace of Scotland," Nineteenth Century, January, 1897.

for the needy.<sup>77</sup> Traditionalists were especially unhappy. Finally a compromise was achieved in which the Carnegie grant was raised to ten million dollars, half to be spent on aiding bright but needy students with tuition and half to be used to raise the level of teaching through "the erection and maintenance of buildings, laboratories, classrooms, museums, or libraries, the providing of efficient apparatus, books and equipment, the institution and endowment of professorships and lectureships . . . for the purpose of encouraging research."<sup>78</sup>

This doubling of Carnegie's generosity merely served to clarify and sharpen the two prongs of contention and disagreement that grew from the bequest. There were those who felt that more of the money should have gone to the classical subjects and those who feared that a lowering of standards would be the only result of giving some free tuition. In the end, after several years of experimentation, the payment of student fees proved too much even for a trust fund of this size. There were three problems: first, the universities raised their fees, second, not all who could afford to pay did so, and third,

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<sup>77</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, pp. 217-218.

<sup>78</sup>A Manual of the Public Benefactions of Andrew Carnegie (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1919), p. 230.

there was a great increase in those who sought admittance. Standards were not lowered, but in the end the money was simply not enough. At last the Scottish universities had to investigate family incomes, require statements of ability to pay, and grant only partial payments in many cases.<sup>79</sup> But despite problems and objections, aid to poor students has continued to this day and the influx of money to upgrade the schools produced something of an educational renaissance in Scotland.

Carnegie's next venture into education was to consider establishing a national university in Washington, D.C., a dream of certain Americans, including George Washington and Benjamin Rush, since the beginning of the Republic. This vision led the magnate to review the reasons for and against such a project and to think in terms of centralism versus localism. Originally he discussed the matter with Andrew D. White and later with Daniel Coit Gilman and John S. Billings. Finally the concept of a national university was rejected and the magnate decided upon the Carnegie Institute of Washington, which he originally began with a grant of \$10,000,000. Later he increased this trust fund to \$25,000,000. Carnegie believed in research and here was an opportunity for scientific study in

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<sup>79</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, pp. 222-223.

many directions. The magnate was always curious and his interest in pure science, in the sailing ship "Carnegie" that was used to study terrestrial magnetism and in the Mount Wilson telescope, used to study the stars, amounted to nothing short of a constant excitement. So the national university had become national research.

Just as the magnate had been research minded in his own chosen field of steel production, so he was interested in research in every field he entered. He became desirous of completing a historic aim of some of the founding fathers, that of founding a national university, and when this seemed to be an unnecessary undertaking, his concerns led him directly into making a large contribution to national research. The \$25,000,000 Carnegie donated in this early period, it needs to be emphasized, was again a sum sufficient to alter national directions. In an age when men were aiming to make money, to spend their money in a conspicuous way, and to promote only philanthropies with the probabilities of immediate results, Carnegie here contributed a significant amount to pure research to further such activities as charting the seas and the heavens. Great philanthropy for pure research was a new concept in America and in the world, one as unusual as a national university.



In the first years of the twentieth century Carnegie also aided education by dispensing almost \$20,000,000 to over 300 small colleges and in 1905 he created the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching with an endowment of \$10,000,000. The great presidents of the large universities usually appealed to the magnate for support of their schools in vain while the smaller colleges received desired grants more easily. But what really amazed Carnegie was teachers' salaries and pensions; he could scarcely believe that men who were so bright earned so little. When Dr. Henry Pritchett discussed the matter of professors' pensions with the steel king, the pension fund was launched and led to changes no one could have foreseen. The result, indeed, was the standardization and secularization of education and the development of the Carnegie Unit, which we shall discuss further in Chapter Ten. Simultaneously the Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching became an instrument for research in education; it began studying teacher pensions and gaining background information, in fact as the research continued the chief drawback was that some of the studies appeared endless and never terminated easily. The Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching became a true spearhead in the field of educational research and development.

Usually when we think of the philanthropies of Carnegie it is the public library that first comes to mind. The very

prevalence of the public library in America and in the world today is a monument to the steel magnate. Influenced by his own lack of schooling, viewing books as the most important factor in his own self improvement, remembering always the little library he loved so well created by the beloved Colonel James Anderson in Pittsburgh, Carnegie turned to the library as the one place where he might reach the most people through books and reading. The steel king proclaimed in his Autobiography:

It was from my own early experience that I decided there was no use to which money could be applied so productive of good to boys and girls who have good within them and ability and ambition to develop it, as the founding of a public library in a community which is willing to support it as a municipal institution. . . . If one boy in each library district, by having access to one of those libraries, is half as much benefited as I was by having access to Colonel Anderson's four hundred well-worn volumes, I shall consider they have not been established in vain.<sup>80</sup>

Libraries, then, were part of the self-help movement. Said Carnegie:

The fundamental advantage of a library is that it gives nothing for nothing. Youths must acquire knowledge themselves. There is no escape from this. It gave me great satisfaction

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<sup>80</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 45.

to discover many years later that my father was one of the five weavers in Dunfermline who gathered together the few books they had and formed the first circulating library in that town.<sup>81</sup>

So, Carnegie was delighted to discover, library founding was a family affair.

Amid the Carnegie Papers in the Library of Congress is an article, "Progress of Reading in Dunfermline, 1808-1908," written by W. Munro Mackenzie, chief librarian of the Carnegie Library of Dunfermline. Mackenzie's paper begins:

In the old manuscript volume of the Minutes of the Tradesmen's Library of Dunfermline, which covers the years from 1824-1847 and from 1852-1877, the following account is found of the origin of the Tradesmen's Library in Dunfermline: -- "It had its origin," we read, "in James Kirkland's shop, Moodie Street, in the year 1808. Richard Gosman, William Carnegie, and Charles Anderson, weavers there, . . . agreed to make common stock of the books which each of them possessed. . . . and . . . a Library was proposed."<sup>82</sup>

Andrew Carnegie, in his own hand, had drawn a line under the name of William Carnegie, and written at the side of this article in pencil the words, "my father." But for the magnate,

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>82</sup>Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 260, Folder 29. The article was printed in the "Dunfermline Quarterly Record." The date is not available, but probably was 1908. The copy that Carnegie wrote upon is in the Carnegie Papers in the Library of Congress, Vol. 260.

libraries were more than a family tradition, they were a way for all humanity to climb the ladder of self help. Carnegie saw the working man, even in his poverty, ahead of the kings of old, in that the poor man of today has access to free libraries and free books beyond any that the kings of old had in their palaces.<sup>83</sup> Alvin Johnson, in his brief article, "Andrew Carnegie, Educator," suggested that the magnate was really an adult educator, a man who viewed establishing libraries as a means of providing continuing education for adults. The steel king truly hoped for a broad general education for all; he desired a widely read and widely reading populace.<sup>84</sup> "My reasons for selecting public libraries," Carnegie wrote, "is my belief as Carlyle has recorded, that 'the true University of these days is a collection of books.'"<sup>85</sup> The importance of establishing a library, Carnegie declared, was that you created "an open door through which the

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<sup>83</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Popular Illusions About Trusts," Century Magazine, May, 1900, reprinted in Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland, p. 81.

<sup>84</sup> Alvin Johnson, "Andrew Carnegie, Educator," Journal of Adult Education, January, 1936, reprinted as a pamphlet by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. In the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh collection, Pennsylvania Room.

<sup>85</sup> Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, quoted by Charles Clarence Williamson, in "Andrew Carnegie: His Contribution to the Public Library Movement," Cleveland, June 15, 1920, Bulletin of Western Reserve University.

bright and ambitious boy could find his way out into the world. If you will examine the biographies of great men you will note how often the impulse to go to college and get out into the world came from a book. In Scotland the minister and the school teacher were always looking for the bright boy, especially in the smaller villages, and they would encourage him to go to college and lend him books. But he always needs books."<sup>86</sup>

The need for books led Carnegie to feel that libraries could work a quiet revolution in the world. On his coaching trip through Britain in 1881, the magnate intended to dedicate his first library, at Dunfermline, so he was extremely interested in the free library he noticed in Wolverhampton. Carnegie said of the Wolverhampton Library: "I do not know where better proof of the advantages of such an institution is to be found. It was started upon a small scale, about fifteen thousand dollars being expended, now some forty thousand dollars have been spent upon the buildings. Last year eighty-six thousand books were issued. I counted at noon, June 30th, sixty-three persons in

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Lynch, Personal Recollection, p. 141, quoting

Carnegie.

the Reading Room, and at another time nearly two hundred readers. On Saturdays, between two and ten P.M., the number averages fully a thousand."<sup>87</sup> These figures are difficult to believe, but Carnegie's counts and estimations certainly show his interest and his belief that the proof of the library was in the reading. Carnegie was delighted to dedicate the first, of the 2,500 libraries he helped create, at Dunfermline.<sup>88</sup>

Carnegie hoped for more from the library than was possible, just as early public school men hoped for more from the school than could be expected. These hopes led the magnate to overestimate the very number and effect of libraries in America. In Triumphant Democracy the steel king bragged of his adopted country by saying: "It is estimated that there are twenty-three thousand school libraries in America, containing forty-five million books -- twelve million more than all the public libraries of Europe combined. Other educational establishments increase this number by two and a half million volumes; and thirty-eight state libraries contribute over a million more."<sup>89</sup> Carnegie does not say who estimated this, but

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<sup>87</sup> Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, p. 99.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>89</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 361. Italics in the original.

it was probably the magnate himself who made the estimation. This is one of the few statements he was asked to prove. A letter from a statistician in the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education in Washington, D.C., to the magnate, January 31, 1891, asked verification of the figures and stated unequivocally that the steel king's statistics were greatly in excess of any other information that seemed to be available from any source.<sup>90</sup> There apparently is no reply from Carnegie existent on this matter but there is little doubt that the lowly statistician was correct and the magnate was caught in his exaggeration. In the same way, Carnegie saw himself as the teacher of millions through his libraries creating an immortality of knowledge for future ages.

Carnegie viewed the library as a school for the self-made man, the man on the rise who could not afford to stay in school. To the magnate, the library was seen much as Horace Mann had considered the common school two generations before: "The idea of taxing the community for the maintenance of a library had not then developed," the steel king declared, writing of the time of Ezra Cornell. "Such would no doubt have

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<sup>90</sup> Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 12, #2054.

been considered decidedly socialistic, for why should property of those who had a library, and did not need one, or did not want books, be assessed for the benefit of those who did want to read books? Much water has run under the bridges since then, and I venture the prediction much more is to run in the same direction."<sup>91</sup> Here we have Carnegie predicting as usual, but we also see a Carnegie ready to assert his radical beliefs, prepared to tax the classes to help the masses. As some have noted, it was also the working man, the laborer, the men who had little but their job, their clothes, their humble home, for which the library would be a palace of books, a romantic castle of dreams, a temple of knowledge and learning.<sup>92</sup>

An inscription on a tablet at the St. Louis Public Library contains the following words from donor Carnegie: "I choose free libraries as the best agencies for improving the masses of the people because they only help those who help themselves. They never pauperize. A taste for reading drives out lower tastes."<sup>93</sup> Some have seen the library as "the most

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<sup>91</sup>Carnegie, "Ezra Cornell," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 250.

<sup>92</sup>See the well written concise article: R. Munn, "Hindsight on the Carnegie Gifts," Library Journal, December 1, 1951, pp. 346-349.

<sup>93</sup>Charles Clarence Williamson, "Andrew Carnegie: His Contribution to the Public Library Movement," Cleveland: Founder's Day Address, Delivered at the Library School, Western Reserve University, June 15, 1920, p. 4.



democratic" form of education, in that the masses may choose.<sup>94</sup> The library is supported by benevolence or the state, but choosing to enter and choosing a book are individualistic. The library could be directively educative, and in an age of child labor, the library might be the only hope for education. Therefore, there was hope by some, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, that libraries might become less austere, less adult, and the idea of children's rooms and the belief that children needed to be brought into the reading habit was advanced.<sup>95</sup> For the child with a job, the adult seeking pleasure or knowledge, the library offered hope.

One of the first libraries founded by Carnegie in America was at Braddock, Pennsylvania, near his steel plant. A center was created, with a swimming pool, gymnasium, baths, billiard rooms, and a music hall with a large organ, along with a reading room and a library consisting of 16,652 volumes.<sup>96</sup> The multi-purpose institution, all together under one roof, might tend to make more people think of the library and visit it. Here, too, Carnegie had not formulated his beliefs on library

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<sup>94</sup> William M. Stevenson, Carnegie and His Libraries, (Pittsburgh: Privately Printed, 1899).

<sup>95</sup> Fannie S. Bissell, "What the Libraries Are Doing for the Children," Outlook, February 15, 1902, pp. 420-424.

<sup>96</sup> Stevenson, Carnegie and His Libraries, pages not numbered.

giving, for the entire building and contents was given. During his lifetime Carnegie was to donate \$56,162,622 to build 2,509 libraries in America, Britain, and other English speaking countries. The early period, before 1896, Carnegie referred to as a retail period, after that year he moved into the wholesale library giving business. It became a business, in that it was organized, processed, and followed rules that the magnate established. By the time Carnegie reached the wholesale library giving stage, he had learned about library giving and routinized the philanthropy.

The essence of the Carnegie library philanthropy was that the community must make the request, the desire had to be indigenous, and most importantly, the locality must share in the undertaking. Philanthropy from above dispensed as a blessing by Saint Andrew was not as successful as a real desire by the city fathers coupled with a willingness to tax themselves to maintain the institution. Carnegie spoke of these matters in terms of its being "not philanthropy but a clever stroke of business."<sup>97</sup> As with financial sharing by government bodies, matching funds or revenue sharing in the current Nixon administration phrase, a considerable amount of control came without

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<sup>97</sup> "Mr. Carnegie's Investments," Library Journal, June, 1902, p. 329.

full payment. The city purchased an acceptable site, suggested plans that fit the Carnegie requirements, and the magnate built the building, while the city bought the books, hired the librarian, and agreed to continue the institution in operation perpetually. The correspondence, the plans, and the carrying out of the stipulations Carnegie often left in its entirety to James Bertram, his private secretary, Robert Franks, who handled some of the correspondence, and various lawyers, and architects. Bertram himself made use of officers of the American Library Association, trusted librarians of major cities, state library commissioners and state librarians to investigate local situations and give advice.<sup>98</sup> Carnegie's desire for the libraries to reach the people, led him to build branch libraries for the large cities, sometimes by the dozen or the score. While the early library building period had been personal with Carnegie not only paying for the entire building and its contents, but frequently combining his architectural creations, as in the case of the Braddock Library, the later large scale library building was handled through the mail, formalized, routinized, and usually required that the town

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<sup>98</sup> Frank P. Hill, James Bertram: An Appreciation (New York: Charles Scribner, 1941).

must buy the site, the books, and continue to support the library at a given level.<sup>99</sup>

Not all requests for libraries were granted. Even after the questionnaires were properly completed, there were formalities and sometimes investigations. The only major failure of the library philanthropy, was that it often ended, in spite of its best efforts, in giving libraries to towns too small to support them properly. Says Munn, speaking for Indiana:

The Carnegie gifts were made before there was a substantial body of experience with libraries, and a majority of the grants went to small communities. I have figures for Indiana only. . . . Of 163 grants, 101 were to towns and villages with populations under five thousand. Using the Post-War Planning Committee's minimum standard of 25,000 inhabitants, we find that Mr. Carnegie should have given only 14 instead of 163 libraries to Indiana.<sup>100</sup>

Munn suggested that unified libraries serving a larger area with a really good library were in the best interest of the

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<sup>99</sup>Much of the preceding here has been taken from George S. Bobinski's excellent short volume, Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969). Bobinski examined and reported on forty reels of microfilm correspondence largely dealing with efforts by communities to obtain libraries. The film is in the files of the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

<sup>100</sup>This is the main criticism which Munn makes in "Hindsight on Carnegie Libraries."

nation; but he was speaking as a trained librarian, while Carnegie was more interested in people. Even a small library in a small community, might reach people who wished to read, perhaps a young working boy who could not travel to another town.

George Bobinski, in his recent classic monograph on Carnegie Libraries indicates in detail many of the hitherto uncharted aspects of the magnate's book benefactions. There was a deliberate lack of haste to the correspondence on libraries. Often the letter writing dragged on for several years before the building was completed. Yet in certain cases of need, where a fire destroyed the library, the matter could be rushed. All manner of questions were asked of Bertram on the care and management of libraries by local officials. Quarrels over the library, usually concerning location or the raising of funds, divided some small towns as well as big cities. New York City was at war over the issue during 1902.<sup>101</sup> Votes on increasing taxes or disputes over library locations occasionally developed into bitter contests. The regulations,

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<sup>101</sup>See newspaper articles February 5, 6, 12, 13, 21, 24, March 2, 4, 12, 13, 19, 25, 28, April 6, May 17, 24, June 7, 11, 20, July 12, 21, 23, 26, 1902, in New York Times, Brooklyn Eagle, Brooklyn Times, New York Herald, New York Sun, New York Mail & Express, New York World, New York Reporter, and New York Evening Post. Some of these articles are to be found in the Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress.

requirements, and questions asked of the town officials grew as Bertram came to be more experienced in the library business. After 1908, efforts to help communities by sending floor plan designs and later even demanding that the library conform to one of several sets of plans, were the rule. Bertram's little booklet, "Notes on Library Buildings," in the Carnegie simplified spelling, written after consultation with many professionals, was sent out to aid communities. These "Notes" passed through six slightly varying editions, gradually growing in size. Libraries in small towns were sometimes used for other purposes, contrary to the regulations, or on rare occasions were abandoned, stood idle, were turned over to be used as schools, or for city offices. Inflation decreased the value of the pledge communities had to make of ten per cent of the original cost of the building to be spent annually for maintenance of the library and buying new books. Libraries that held to this ten per cent minimum, often were hardly able to buy books or pay a librarian. By the end of the Second World War the Carnegie library buildings were growing old and there was less effort by the Carnegie Corporation to keep the towns to their original pledge of maintaining the buildings and using them for library purposes. Towns that asked permission to tear down the structure were granted the right, but it was suggested a small tablet marking the spot be erected. After

1915 Carnegie did not usually bother to attend library dedications even when he was invited. The hatred that grew from the Homestead strike in 1892 led many in the labor union movement and left wing political parties to take up the cry that the Carnegie libraries were built with blood money and communities should reject them.<sup>102</sup>

There were also suggestions that a Carnegie Book Committee be established to choose the most worthwhile volumes each year and purchase 1,000 copies of these to be distributed to libraries. At a cost of \$50,000 a year, each library might receive fifty good books annually.<sup>103</sup> Here we have an example of what inflation might have done to an "immortal" foundation! Also we may reflect upon what quarrels of choice the Carnegie Book Committee might have faced! Ezra Pound and H. L. Mencken made similar criticisms. The small town libraries, said Pound and Mencken, selected trash for their shelves and ignored the great works.<sup>104</sup> The low standards of the purchasers for the libraries, of course, reflected the low standards of the

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<sup>102</sup>Bobinski, Carnegie Libraries, pp. 47, 58-59, 97, 102-103.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., p. 108. The plea for the committee was advanced in an article in the Dial, "Library Suggestion," February 1, 1909, pp. 69-71.

<sup>104</sup>Bobinski, Carnegie Libraries, p. 108.

librarians and most of the readers as well and posed the problem of how Carnegie or anyone could bridge the "standards gap" without chasing the public from the library.

As Bobinski points out, Carnegie stimulated other philanthropists to help, the public library movement was growing anyway, and in spite of criticism, the library movement had its day.<sup>105</sup> A week before Carnegie turned eighty years old, at a point when his control of the great philanthropy he created was ending, some of the other trustees of the Carnegie Corporation of New York sent Alvin Johnson, an economics professor at Cornell, on a fact finding mission. Specifically, it would appear from what subsequently happened, that Henry Pritchett and the Carnegie Corporation of New York's trustees were thinking of leaving the library giving business on the magnate's death. A trained librarian was not chosen to do this survey or report but rather Johnson was asked to take a trip and give impressions. He was critical of many aspects of library giving, and when he presented his report in 1916, James Bertram objected to the document strenuously, fighting for Carnegie's ideas. The United States entered World War One, the

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp. 191-193.



following year and library philanthropy was shelved for the duration. Afterwards the magnate did die. The trustees of the Corporation, now free of their master, could move Bertram away from the library giving. The great library philanthropy game came to an end.<sup>106</sup> This is not to say that the Carnegie Corporation in changing its focus did not continue to do much for libraries, but the objectives were no longer quite the same.

Some referred to the magnate as a divinity, the patron saint of libraries, and here, as with Saint Andrew, there was immortality too. Humorists at the time spoke of Carnegie as attempting to "corner" the free library business.<sup>107</sup> Finley Peter Dunne, in his charming spoof, "A Carnaygie libry is . . . Archytechoor Not Lithrachoor," saw the magnate's philanthropy best through the eyes of Mr. Dooley.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., pp. 143-160. Some of the conclusions in this paragraph are not Bobinski's such as ending of library giving.

<sup>107</sup> Burnley, Millionaires and Kings of Enterprise, p.15.

<sup>108</sup> First published in 1906 by Harper and Brothers, "Dissertations by Mr. Dooley," this article was reprinted by the Library Journal, April 1, 1968, p. 1418.

"Has Andrew Carnaygie given ye a libry yet?" asked Mr. Dooley.

"Not that I know iv," said Mr. Hennessy.

"He will," said Mr. Dooley. "Ye'll not escape him. Befure he dies he hopes to crowd a libry on ivry man, woman, an' child in th' country. He's given thim to cities, towns, villages, an' whistlin' stations. They're tearin' down gas-houses an' poorhouses to put up libries. Befure another year, ivry house in Pittsburg that ain't a blast-furnace will be a Carnaygie libry. In some places all th' buildin's is libries. If ye write him f'r an autygraft, he sinds ye a libry. No beggar is iver turned impty-handed fr'm th' dure. Th' pan-handler knocks an' asts f'r a glass iv milk an' a roll. 'No, sir,' says Andrew Carnaygie. 'I will not pauperize this onworthy man. Nawthin' is worse f'r a beggar-man thin to make a pauper iv him. Yet it shall not be said iv me that I give nawthin' to th' poor. Saunders, give him a libry, an' if he still insists on a roll tell him to roll th' libry. F'r I'm humorous as well as wise,' he says."

"Does he give th' books that go with it?" asked Mr. Hennessy.

"Books?" said Mr. Dooley. "What ar-re ye talkin' about? D'ye know what a libry is? I suppose ye think it's a place where a man can go, haul down wan iv his fav'rite authors fr'm th' shelf, an' take a nap in it. That's not a Carnaygie libry. A Carnaygie libry is a large, brown-stone, impenethrible buildin' with th' name iv th' maker blown on th' dure. Libry, fr'm th' Greek wurruds, libus, a book, an' ary, sildom -- sildom a book. A Carnaygie libry is archytechoor, not lithrachoer. Lithrachoer will be ripsinted. Th' most cillybrated dead authors will be honored be havin' their names painted on th' wall in distinguished comp'ny, as thus: Andrew Carnaygie, Shakespeare; Andrew Carnaygie, Byron; Andrew Carnaygie, Bobby Burns; Andrew Carnaygie, an' so on. Ivry author is guaranteed a place next to pure readin' matter like a

bakin'-powdher advertisemint, so that whin a man comes along that niver heerd iv Shakespeare he'll know he was somebody, because there he is on th' wall. That's th' dead authors. Th' live authors will stand outside an' wish they were dead.

"He's havin' gr-reat spoort with it. I r-read his speech th' other day, whin he laid th' corner-stone iv th' libry at Pianola, Ioway. Th' entire popylation iv this lithry cinter gathered to see an' hear him. There was th' postmaster an' his wife, th' blacksmith an' his fam'ly, the station agent, mine host iv th' Farmers' Exchange, an' some sthray live stock. 'Ladies an' gintlemen,' says he. 'Modesty compels me to say nawthin' on this occasion, but I am not to be bulldozed,' he says. 'I can't tell ye how much pleasure I take in disthributin' monymints to th' humble name around which has gathered so many hon'rabable associations with meself. I have been a very busy little man all me life, but I like hard wurruk, an' givin' away me money is th' hardest wurruk I iver did.

Certainly there were others around who suggested that the reason that Carnegie gave away large stone mausoleums was to immortalize his name. The critics saw the magnate really uninterested in books and demanding that the community share in the expense of making his name live forever.

There was no doubt that Carnegie enjoyed praise and appreciation, but only about one quarter of the libraries constructed with Carnegie money used his name. The actuality was that there seemed to be state patterns in naming the libraries, for Indiana's 155 libraries did not use the Carnegie name at all while Iowa's 99 libraries added Carnegie to the

designation Free Public Library every time.<sup>109</sup> Carnegie, in reality, looked upon the building as a "bribe" to the community, not an expensive "white elephant," but a palace for reading, pleading to be filled.<sup>110</sup> It was part of the Carnegie philosophy of encouraging others to spend money on things of value.

"I do not want to be known for what I give," said Mr. Carnegie on one occasion "but for what I induce others to give."<sup>111</sup> The national census often was used to discover accurate information concerning the populations of communities where Carnegie considered giving a library. Two dollars per person was the amount often used as the standard of giving. So a city of 25,000 people might receive a \$50,000 library if it agreed to spend \$5,000 a year to maintain the facility and buy books.<sup>112</sup> At this rate, the community had spent as much as Carnegie in ten years, and three times as much in a generation. Naturally it was the magnate's hope that the community support

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<sup>109</sup> William S. Learned, The American Public Library and the Diffusion of Knowledge, (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1924), p. 74.

<sup>110</sup> Burton Hendrick interview with James Bertram, September 24-27, 1927, pp. 5-6, in Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 257; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 203.

<sup>111</sup> Kock, Carnegie Libraries, p. 12.

<sup>112</sup> Hendrick, "Benefactions of Carnegie," p. 14.

would be continued and maintained at an even greater rate. It was the aim of Carnegie's bribe, as usual, to change national directions to make municipal authorities aware that it was the duty of the local community to support not only schools for educational purposes but libraries as well.<sup>113</sup> Carnegie was not averse to praise or to libraries using his name, but he did see a permanent value to changing community habits and providing reading for millions.

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<sup>113</sup>State laws even had to be changed in many cases to allow municipalities to tax themselves for such purposes as spending money on libraries.

### 3. Summary: Carnegie on Philanthropy to Support Informal Education

Every experience man has is educative. This is a truism, but we accept it as a maxim in an unreflective way. We realize that children learn in the home; that children can become wise to the ways of the street and the city; that values can be taught by television. We speak in a vague way about the influence of the family, the community, and the media. Often, when the school is not succeeding, or is being attacked, the reply is that the school has children perhaps five hours a day, five days a week, for forty weeks of the year, minus holidays, and that the other influences upon the children are greater from the point of view of time and perhaps even relevancy. Are good readers made at home, for instance? What of the children of today who come to school at the age of five with their most formative years already behind them having logged several thousand hours of television? What has the child learned before arriving in school? Hopefully he has learned to walk and run, to speak, with an already extensive vocabulary, to understand how to follow some directions, and he knows his place in the small society in which he lives. It is obviously much better if the school can build upon the child's patterns, rather than trying to change them. School is that period between the time the child learns to speak, run, and

play and the time he leaves to find a permanent job in society. The outside forces continue while the child is in school and education does not stop with graduation.

Informal education, for most men, is more vital and sustaining throughout life than formal education, and even for the perpetual student who returns to take classes in later life, books from a library can be a source of continuing education as important as formal classes. Education is truly a process of learning faster than one forgets. Andrew Carnegie was interested in education, but since he had himself experienced little formal education, he looked to the broad region of informal education as the hope for most men who had neither time nor money for college or even secondary school. Carnegie hoped by his immortal foundations to point the way for education in the future. The immortal foundations, with men of wisdom at their helm, would point directions in each age for mankind. The rich were to create foundations or themselves found universities, libraries, medical schools build parks, concert halls, or swimming pools. The parks would bring beauty to the masses, show them a bit of the world of nature, teach in an informal way how life should be lived. The magnate's benefactions in Dunfermline, especially Pittencrieff Glen, is an example of the steel king's desire to turn earth into heaven, to recreate Eden, to show men how pleasant life could be. Certainly if all men waited until they were past fifty to marry

and past sixty to have one child, and they married women who were thirty and gave birth to their one child at forty, the world would not have to concern itself with the hopes of ZPG and men everywhere would have more time to walk in parks and study what they pleased. While Carnegie would be the first to say that life should not be an endless walk in a park, that work and achievement must be mingled with pleasure and enrichment, still the Carnegie belief in informal education was a cafeteria type selection of the things one wished to study and the ideas one wished to learn.

In many ways Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth was a secularized version of Horace Mann's conception of stewardship. The great Massachusetts educator also spoke of stewardship. The wealthy were to be stewards for the community; they would through their taxes allow some of their "surplus wealth" to be used for public schools which would benefit all. Says Gerald Gutek in his An Historical Introduction to American Education:

In framing his appeal for a tax-supported system of common schools, Mann developed a theory of humane and responsible capitalism which greatly resembled the stewardship concept contained in the Protestant Ethic. . . . As responsible men, these stewards had a moral and a civic responsibility to direct their surplus wealth into investments which would pay social dividends. Mann was thus using the profit motive to argue his theory when he



pointed out that investment in public education would contribute to the growth of social intelligence, and enable men to exploit natural resources with greater efficiency.<sup>114</sup>

Horace Mann declared education was necessary to upgrade the common people and also to teach them the sacredness of property, obviously something the elite would wish taught. Certainly the directions Carnegie gave to his trustees in Dunfermline suggested his interests were close to those of Horace Mann.<sup>115</sup>

Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth, with his own primary accent on libraries, suggests very much a secularized version of Horace Mann's concept of stewardship, for the magnate suggested that other wealthy men should also give to found libraries, and that all the money of the rich was a sacred trust to be spent wisely for the masses. Carnegie did not sugar coat the pill by suggesting, as Mann did, that revolutions might sweep away the wealthy if they refused to act. Violence and revolutions were wrong and not to be considered, as far as Carnegie was concerned. Not their own best interest, but an altruistic best interest of the nation was to be kept in mind as men dispersed their funds. The great value of libraries was that you were not forced to attend their sessions, you might bring yourself there at any time and

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<sup>114</sup>Gerald Lee Gutek, An Historical Introduction to American Education (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1970).

<sup>115</sup>Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, pp. 5-6.

search out books, making your own selection of newspapers, magazines, journals, novels, poems, reference works, or monographs. Carnegie, of course, was hoping for more from the library than was possible. The very quiescent nature of the library, tends to make it an inactive influence in the community; it does not come to you, you come to it. Yet the library was the center for informal education, the school for the man on the rise. In some ways, the earliest Carnegie libraries as centers of culture and housed in great community buildings, had the most chance of attracting people. Yet the library has its own purpose, which is not swimming, exercise, shopping, bowling, or a promenade; joint living here would not necessarily be successful. The Sears branch library in Pittsburgh is an example of the library of the 1970's in a great shopping mall, thus following one of the minor Carnegie traditions in his home city. Certainly the central theme of the Carnegie library was community involvement, even if the money came from above handed down by an affluent member of the community as a sacred trust.

Carnegie saw the library as a way to provide opportunities in American society, but his libraries, while they were a thrust for progress and uplift, were reflective of society rather than reconstructive. While Carnegie felt that classic myths and stories of the ancient peoples were really tales of a barbarian past better forgotten, he was interested in the great classic moderns, in Shakespeare and Milton, in Burns and Scott. There

were classics, then, that all men could appreciate and gain from reading. Carnegie also felt that very recent books, which had not stood even a little of the test of time, were of doubtful value. He suggested librarians wait a year after publication and see if the demand continued for a book before buying it. Such a purchase policy might have allowed good books to be lost, but the great book would probably survive. The libraries would carry the best of the present society; their main function would be to instruct and elevate men, not to change directions. Carnegie himself sat above the libraries, changing national directions by the act of giving libraries and causing others to give, and all the time pointing the way toward a brighter future inevitably evolving of which he, Carnegie, was the instrument and partner.

PART III

ANDREW CARNEGIE ON THE SCHOOLS

Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11

CHAPTER EIGHT

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## Chapter Eight

## Carnegie's Conception of the Common School

## 1. Carnegie's Interpretation of the Development of Education in America

In the rare book room of the Library of Congress is a Broadside issued on the centenary of the birth of Andrew Carnegie, suggesting the value and importance of education:

The most imperative duty of the state is the universal education of the masses. No money which can be usefully spent for this indispensable end should be denied. Public sentiment should, on the contrary, approve the doctrine that the more that can be judiciously spent, the better for the country. There is no insurance of nations so cheap as the enlightenment of the people.

Andrew Carnegie<sup>1</sup>

Here we see the need for education, the essential duty of the state, the obligation to spend all the money necessary, and the requirement that public opinion be supportive of public education. Carnegie naturally saw in his own Scotland a model for education in America; John Knox trying to establish a public school in

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<sup>1</sup>There are 28,000 Broadside in the Library of Congress collection, all on poster paper, measuring 23 x 16-1/4 inches, only a few of which bear quotations by Andrew Carnegie.

every parish in Scotland was a cynosure for the world.<sup>2</sup> Universal compulsory, world-wide public education was a true goal for all peoples.<sup>3</sup> The root of democracy was voting money for public schools.<sup>4</sup> In fact, Carnegie saw educational ideas coming from Scotland to New England, and then moving to the British colonies. "Public schools in all the British colonies are upon the American model, free from sectarianism, which is never permitted to produce such lamentable results as in some parts of the motherland, dividing the people by maintaining schools belonging to or governed by the one favored sect."<sup>5</sup> The model for public schools moved from Scotland to America and then to the world.

It is really intriguing to reflect that in his magnum opus, Triumphant Democracy, first published in 1886, and in a short essay, "Old Scotland and New England," an address delivered in 1905, Carnegie anticipated the direction that early historians of education were to travel and laid out a rather systematic

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<sup>2</sup> Carnegie, James Watt, pp. 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 508.

<sup>4</sup> Carnegie, "Home Rule in America," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 184.

<sup>5</sup> Carnegie, "Britain and her Offspring," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 139.

conception of the development of education in America. In "Old Scotland and New England," Carnegie suggested that the New England colonies really should have been named New Scotland, for the colonies were Calvinistic, were eventually to fight England as Scotland had, and especially the common school ideas of New England were closer to the conceptions of John Knox than any seventeenth century English thought.<sup>6</sup> New England should have been named New Scotland and the south in America should have been designated New England, for the south was closer to Old England in culture, in the ideal of the country gentleman, and in religion. Carnegie viewed New Englanders as the best people in America just as the Scots were the best people in Britain. The Scot and the Yankee were the dominant force in the two countries and would remain so in the future.<sup>7</sup> Both New England and Old Scotland were in the north, with "bracing cold climates, comparatively stern soils, and in the northern parts mountainous regions, all favorable for producing a hardy race." In both countries the state was based upon "universal and compulsory education, the only sure foundation for a state."<sup>8</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>6</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Old Scotland and New England," Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie, ed. by Burton Hendrick Vol. I, pp. 126-135.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 132-133.



Carnegie concluded:

New England seems in one respect, and in one only, unfortunate. She was surely christened wrongly at her birth. There must have been some mistake. She is no child of England's, politically, religious, educationally, climatically, geographically or socially. She is republican politically, nonconformist religiously, democratic socially and educationally non-sectarian as Scotland is, and all her characteristics, her shrewdness, tenacity, frugality, indomitable will and her enthusiasms and intellectuality are similar to the Scotch. She is no child of the soft south plains of England . . . but of the stern north.<sup>9</sup>

Fortunately for America, New England exported her culture to the middle west, the Great West, and clear to the Pacific coast. Here in this brief, striking essay, Carnegie makes some wildly interpretive and interesting parallels. Even more intriguing are the conclusions on education set forth in Triumphant Democracy.

The chapter on education in Triumphant Democracy published much earlier than the "New England and Old Scotland" narration, is also brief, only twenty pages in length, but Carnegie manages to convey a great deal in that narrow space. He begins, what amounts to a short essay, with two quotations:

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

There being education, there will be no distinction of classes.

- Confucius

Education is the only interest worthy the deep, controlling anxiety of the thoughtful man.

-Wendell Phillips

The chapter opens with still another quotation this time from Plutarch, suggesting that the only institutional immortality possible must have its foundations in education. We have already seen that this concept of immortality was one that hovered at the forefront of Carnegie's thought. "Upon no foundation but that of popular education can man erect the structure of an enduring civilization," the magnate continued.<sup>10</sup> Carnegie was now prepared to launch upon his main theme:

Whether the sturdy Pilgrim Fathers were conversant with the conceptions of the Greek thinkers who were filled with projects for universal education, whether they were versed in the speculations of Plato's "Republic" or Aristotle's "Politics," is doubtful; but it is certain that they were imbued with the spirit which animated Luther and Knox in regard to the education of the masses. The true parent of modern education was the Reformation, for did not Luther himself say that if he were not a preacher he should be a teacher, as he thought the latter the more important office?

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<sup>10</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 131.

John Knox demanded a public school for every parish in Scotland, and it was the Protestant State of Germany that first undertook the education of the whole people. Fortunate indeed for the world that the demand for religious freedom necessarily involved the priceless boon of secular education.<sup>11</sup>

Here we find the roots of education in Plato and Aristotle and respects paid to the Protestant Ethic as an activating basis for modern education.<sup>12</sup> Carnegie continued his survey of American education by a long quotation from the Massachusetts law of 1642, frequently referred to as the "old deluder, Satan" law and then noted how Connecticut also followed in the same path. The magnate reflected that the Puritans "scarcely . . . got roofs over their heads in the forest before we find them establishing public schools and appointing schoolmasters." Education was seen as required by God in order to read the Bible. "Only six years after the first settlement of Boston, four hundred pounds was appropriated toward the establishment of a

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 131-132.

<sup>12</sup> The Protestant Ethic is a concept developed by Max Weber and Richard H. Tawney which suggested that Protestantism had been created and changed from Catholicism so that capitalism might be equated with virtue. Monetary success was viewed as a gift from God and a sign to the Puritan culture that the rich man was destined for Sainthood. Or as Rockefeller is supposed to have said two and a half centuries later: "I believe the power to make money is a gift of God." Josephson, Robber Barons, p. 325.

college," Carnegie wrote, adding: "This sum exceeded the entire tax levy of the colony for the year."<sup>13</sup> Here we find the magistrate commenting upon this amazing event, the establishment of Harvard College. Harvard College was founded illegally, in a sense it was an act of rebellion and even the very first American revolution, in that there was no royal charter, no authorization from the king to establish the school, and the institution of higher learning was designed to furnish ministers for the anti-establishment church. Here was dedication amid a fresh beginning, a starting confrontation of a college in the wilderness. Finally, the creation of America in the shape of Europe exceeded the dream of the old world in New England by the demand for education.

Carnegie gloried in the early development of schools in the America of New England and contrasted this support of schools in every town, with "the aristocratic" control "with which Virginia was cursed." He quoted Sir William Berkeley's famous disclaimer, thanking God that "there are no free schools or printing" in Virginia.<sup>14</sup> New England, to Carnegie, was the

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<sup>13</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 133-134.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

prototype for developing democracy<sup>15</sup> while Virginia represented aristocracy, inherited wealth, titles, the old world replanted in the new, which Carnegie hated.

The instinct which led the slave-holder to keep his slave in ignorance was a true one. Educate man, and his shackles fall. Free education may be trusted to burst every obstruction which stands in the path of the democracy towards its goal, the equality of the citizen, and this it will reach quietly and without violence.<sup>16</sup>

So education was a universal panacea, curing all ills of the body politic and the community. Carnegie emphasized that the twin ideals of freedom and liberty in the north and slavery and ignorance in the south continued their parallel existence for two centuries, the cultural modes resisting the changes

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<sup>15</sup>That early New England was a seminal period that produced a democratic civilization later is the thesis of such books as Max Savelle, Seeds of Liberty: the Genesis of the American Mind (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1948), and Clinton Rossiter, Seedtime of the Republic (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1953). The trouble with the idea of planting seeds of liberty which bear fruit at a later time, is that the people of 1640 in Massachusetts were no more thinking of what we in 1970 might be doing than we in 1970, regretfully, are thinking of what the Americans, if any survive, may be doing in 2300.

<sup>16</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 134.

which the war for independence might have been expected to create. The magnate quoted European visitors to America in the 1830's, and contrasted once more the North and the South. Since education was left to the states, the federal government could not act.

Proceeding with his historical survey of the growth of American public education, Carnegie described the reserving of the sixteenth section of each township for education, land grants to colleges and universities in 1862 (the Morrill Act), and the growth of expenditures for education in the United States.<sup>17</sup> Here the steel king made a special plea for spending more on education. He saw the United States spending twice as much money on education as on war, and asserted that this situation "is in startling contrast to that of" every European state. He published a column of figures illustrating graphically that "America is the only country which spends more upon education than on war."<sup>18</sup> Since the money spent upon war was "squandered" and could bring no benefit, it was obvious that the Republic was far ahead.<sup>19</sup> Carnegie next took the still current view of historical scholarship that education began

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 136-138.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

early in New England, and moved into the middle west, but was delayed from immediate extension into the variety package that was the middle colonies. (later the middle Atlantic states), due to the pluralisms of religions, nationalities, and cultures contending for leadership. No single pattern emerged in states such as New York, so "while the New England States fully embraced the idea of free and universal public instruction very early in their history, the great State of New York adjoining them only reached this height after a struggle of many long years. It was not until 1851 that the popular vote sanctioned the principle that the State must educate all its children."<sup>20</sup> The steel king saw voting money for public education as a positive good and praised those states which were furthest in the lead in this endeavor.<sup>21</sup>

One of the chief problems, Carnegie saw, facing public education in America was that of assimilating Roman Catholics.

The United States have not escaped entirely the religious difficulty in their march to universal free education, but fortunately opposition to the system has been confined to one sect -- the Roman Catholic -- all others having united in giving to

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<sup>20</sup>

Ibid., p. 139.

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Ibid., p. 140.

it enthusiastic support. The dissatisfied Catholics have not been strong enough even in the city of New York, where they are much more powerful than elsewhere in the Union, to disturb the complete exclusion of dogmatical teaching which everywhere characterizes the public schools of America. A few verses from the Bible are generally read without comment in the schools as a public exercise once each day. At this no one takes offense, and everyone, with the exception of the Roman Catholics is satisfied, as all feel that the public school is not the proper place for religious instruction.<sup>22</sup>

These 1886 opinions of Carnegie are interesting in the light of subsequent events. The steel king was always pretty sanguine about conditions in America. He would have been surprised to find that other than Roman Catholics might object to simple prayers at the beginning of the school day and that the Supreme Court might concur. As with many who followed Protestant traditions and culture patterns, Carnegie was hopeful that the public school might be an institutional instrument for subtly weaning the Roman Catholics from the milk of Rome. The magnate was gleeful that not all the Catholics sent their children to the parochial schools.

So vitally important to the child is education considered throughout America that not even the rigid discipline of the Roman Catholic Church is strong enough to restrain Catholic

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 140-141.



parents from sending their children to the public schools. Remonstrances against this soul-destroying practice were recently made simultaneously in all the Catholic churches of Pittsburgh, Penn., and so vehement were the denunciations hurled at offenders that the Commercial Gazette had a thorough canvas made to determine to what extent Catholics were availing themselves of the public schools. Statements were asked from the principals of fifty-six schools, and replies received from twenty-four. The others declined from conscientious scruples to inquire into the religious beliefs of the scholars. Most significant this of the complete toleration which prevails in this country upon the subject of religion. . . . For this reason, some of the strongest Catholic districts were unreported, nevertheless, it was clearly proven that one-half as many Catholic children attend the public schools as the denominational schools, notwithstanding the fulminations of the priests and the command of the Vicar of Christ, the supreme pontiff, which is quoted in the recent attack in Pittsburgh against the godless public schools.<sup>23</sup>

The gathering of information on the religion of the students in the public schools in Pittsburgh to see what effect the Sunday fulminations in the priestly sermons were having is reminiscent of the present age when statistics on race are compiled, with principals again wondering how far they should go in releasing statistics on the racial, linguistic, or bicultural nature of their school's student bodies and even

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 141-142.

their school's faculties. Carnegie declared finally that he had inquired of William Wood, a Commissioner of Education in New York City and learned "that in New York and other large cities Catholic children receive their education even in greater numbers side by side with Protestant children in the State schools." Carnegie was happy in the success of the public schools and declared that the school tax is paid more willingly than any other tax.<sup>24</sup>

Commenting on higher education, the magnate was pleased to report on the number of colleges and universities and the army of scholars studying there, but he noted there were no standards. "A school entitled in Tennessee to call itself a university or college might not rank as either in Massachusetts."<sup>25</sup> However the steel king saw growth everywhere, indeed, the story of America was the story of "upward," and the easiest route to take was that which the magnate followed, quoting statistics on the number of elementary, high school, and college students, the number of teachers, and the growth in stamping out of illiteracy. There was, of course, a need to educate the immigrant and the former slave. Carnegie's

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

desire to statistically portray led him to quantify female education, wages per month of teachers in various states, and the cost of education in selected cities and areas in the nation.<sup>26</sup> The steel king savored the moment when he finally could pause in his survey and discuss comparative education, suggesting how far in advance of the monarchy of Great Britain the Republic of America was. Anticipating his "Gospel of Wealth," not yet promulgated, Carnegie waxed warmly upon the benefits some philanthropists had bestowed upon the nation by their contributions to educational institutions: Johns Hopkins, Cornell, Vanderbilt, Vassar, Wellesley, Smith, Bryn Mawr, to name a few.

America, in Carnegie's view, thus stood as an exemplar to all, indeed the Puritan ideal of a cynosure, the City on the Hill, the beacon light for humanity, remained.

The moral to be drawn from America by every nation is this: "Seek ye first the education of the people and all other political blessings will be added unto you." . . . The education of the people is the real underlying work for earnest men who would best serve their country. In this,

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 143-148.

the most creditable work of all, it cannot be denied that the Republic occupies the first place.<sup>27</sup>

So Carnegie concluded:

There speaks the inspired voice of triumphant Democracy, which holds as its first duty the universal education of the people. Of all its boasts, of all its triumphs, this is at once its proudest and its best. We say to the old Monarchies of the world: Behold Democracy produces as its natural fruit an educated people.<sup>28</sup>

As with the Puritans creating Harvard College, Carnegie was interested in the fruits produced by education in America. But the most important educational progress the steel king saw in America was the common school and growth of literacy.

As was the case with the great men in developing the common school in America, Horace Mann of Massachusetts and Henry Barnard of Connecticut, Andrew Carnegie also saw education as a universal solvent of all problems. Here was the "true panacea for all the ills of the body politic . . . education, education, education."<sup>29</sup> The way to solve problems was to

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 150-151.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

study them and educate the people. Education could indeed do anything. Its value was omnifarious. "The influence of free and universal education, together with that of political institutions which at every point inculcate self-respect and stimulate ambition, must be accorded much weight in keeping the Republic the freest of all civilized nations from pauperism and crime."<sup>30</sup> But while education was obviously elevating and tended toward equalitarianism, Carnegie admitted that some were fearful of the results. He related: "I have heard employers say that there was a great danger that the masses of the people might become too well educated to be content in their useful and necessary occupations."<sup>31</sup> While this fear has turned to reality today, with mediocre students creating community colleges to satisfy their needs while good auto mechanics cannot be found, Carnegie felt the concern with over-educating people was entirely unjustified. The more learned both employers and employees were, the more likely the whole nation was to prosper. Naturally more education would tend to result in equality, including a more equal distribution of wealth, but the magnate believed this was all quite

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>31</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 87.

desirable. "It is obvious that just as the masses grow in intelligence (and the school system ensures this) they will demand in all lands and obtain a fairer distribution of the comforts, rights, and privileges of their day; especially is this true of men of our own race in the old home. . . . What the people of Canada, Australia, and America have today, Britons will soon demand and obtain."<sup>32</sup> Carnegie constantly confused education and intelligence in his writings; sadly enough they are quite separate. This is to say, again sadly enough, that an educated man is not more intelligent for his experience, but merely a man who has been given an opportunity to develop in some way the intelligence he has by opportunities to listen, to talk, to read, to write, to study, to learn, to acquire skills, and form ideas. The Lockian tabula rosa is not an endless scroll but varies in quantity and quality with each of us. As with other determinisms, there is something to be said for educational determinism, but not everything is to be hoped for.

Even in his great work, Triumphant Democracy, Carnegie lacked control, and his beliefs as to education seeped out in

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Carnegie, "Britain and her Offspring," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 141.

the contexts of other chapters in this volume under a variety of headings. Thus we see Carnegie declaring; "Wherever the American settles he begins at once the erection of his school house and his church."<sup>33</sup> One result of Democracy was obvious, to the magnate America had the smallest percentage of illiterates of all the nations of the world.<sup>34</sup> Carnegie, as a child immigrant, saw the school itself as the melting pot, producing Americans, making fine citizens from a heterogeneous mass of people.

The free common school system of the land is probably, after all, the greatest single power in the unifying process which is producing the new American race. Through the crucible of a good common English education, furnished free by the State, pass the various racial elements -- children of Irishmen, Germans, Italians, Spaniards, and Swedes, side by side with the native American, all to be fused into one, in language, in thought, in feeling, and in patriotism. The Irish boy loses his brogue, and the German child learns English. The sympathies suited to the feudal systems of Europe, which they inherit from their fathers, pass off as dross, leaving behind the pure gold of the only noble political creed: "All men are created free and equal."<sup>35</sup>

The school, of course, was only part of the process. But there was no doubt that the school brought groups of children together

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<sup>33</sup>Triumphant Democracy, p. 158.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 489.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-20.

and promoted the generation gap, a gap that has always existed in America. The gap, in fact, was even more serious between the children born or raised in America and their parents, who spoke no English or pronounced "the language" with an embarrassing accent. These children of immigrants often came to feel themselves superior to their parents, repudiating segments, but certainly not all of their native culture. So Carnegie saw the immigrants coming, "children of Russian and German serfs, of Irish evicted tenants, Scotch crofters, and other victims of feudal tyranny, . . . transmuted into Republican Americans."<sup>36</sup> And Carnegie noted, quite correctly, that the newcomers were more intensely patriotic than the natives.

Education was good for all and none should be too uncommon for the common school. But the common school needed support. An inferior education produced a lower class who were too "rough" and too "surly" in manner.<sup>37</sup> "He only is a free man whom education makes free," Carnegie declared.<sup>38</sup> "Poverty, want, and pauperism are rapidly diminishing quantities . . . because of an improvement through education in the habits of

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>37</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 63, quoting Carnegie.

<sup>38</sup>Carnegie, "White and Black in the South," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 81.



the people themselves -- the only foundation upon which their continued progress can surely be built."<sup>39</sup> The need to educate all and offer everyone all the education they needed was necessitated by the continual rising from the mass of fresh genius. "It is not the . . . classically educated man, it is not the aristocracy, it is not the monarchs, that have ruled the destinies of the world. . . . The great inventions, the improvement, the discoveries in science, the great works in literature have sprung from the ranks of the poor."<sup>40</sup>

Here was the equalitarianism of Andrew Carnegie, a Darwinism, evolutionary, inevitable rising of the best from the mass using the ladder of books and education. And so to take the rough edges off the common man, to make him free, to assure him of a job, to provide for future progress, and to help the occasional genius to achieve his fullest potential, the common schools needed to be universal and set their standards high.

Andrew Carnegie, self-educated himself, saw in the early development of the American common school the cynosure for the success of the nation; he believed the future development of the school would assure continued leadership for the America he loved.

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<sup>39</sup> Carnegie, "Advantages of Poverty," in Gospel of Wealth p. 54.

<sup>40</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 89.

## 2. Andrew Carnegie on the Nature of the Common School: an Interpretation and Extrapolation

What kind of elementary school would Andrew Carnegie have designed, created and left as his heritage if he had ventured in this direction instead of building libraries? It should naturally be noted that the main reason the steel king did not build elementary schools was that the magnate believed the common school should be built by the local school community, from their own tax money, and that outside support might be positively deliterious. However, if the steel king could be brought back today, a half century after his death, into the America of the 1970's and beyond, and presented with the task of constructing a model school that would act as an exemplar for others, what might be the probable result?

First, the school would be situated on open ground, with a playground, surely, but also even if it were only in miniature as a Japanese garden, there would be a spot of woods, some trees flowers, shrubs, and a bit of landscaping.<sup>41</sup> Certainly, this is even more necessary in the inner city, where the concrete presses in on all sides, where the whole world, to the young,

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<sup>41</sup>The example of Pittencrieff Park and Glen is enough evidence here.

must seem an endless mass of man-made stone and masonry, buildings, alleys, viaducts, expressways, dwellings crowded together or built high to pile the people atop each other, and all the rest of the city merely for the convenience of the automobile and truck, for transport and not people, with variations only afforded by types of stores along the main thoroughfares. This homogeneous mass, an eternity of glass and steel and cement with just occasionally a beleaguered tree or patch of grass struggling amid the waste and humanity to suggest what the earth should be, has a need to be broken by small parks and open land. What more fitting place for a park than in connection with and in the setting of the school. Some semblance of nature, even an artificial waterfall a few feet high and a narrow stream winding through a man made grassy glen would be enough to call attention to beauty for the hoard of young children of a community.<sup>42</sup>

The school building itself should be an impressive one, proud, demanding respect, indicating by its imposing nature that something significant and of consequence is going on there.<sup>43</sup> The Carnegie libraries as the focal point of the community are

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<sup>42</sup> Hendricks, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 155.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 206-207.

enough evidence to cite here.<sup>44</sup> While local feelings should naturally be respected and the individuality of the architect not be inhibited, there was a need that the school stand out and take its rightful place as the pride of the community. The architect needed to be watched and worked with, so that the design was harmonious, fitting, and appropriate. There was no need for ostentation and a classic facade such as the schools of the twenties, with expensive ornamentation, nor did the school need to be a glass palace that reminded children to throw rocks as a sort of a challenge, as the schools of the fifties. But there could be constructed a building large enough to handle future needs, with adequate closets, shelving, storage space, and electrical power, imposingly situated and solidly built, adding dignity and permanence to the community.<sup>45</sup> Some attention in the design needs to be given to the educational program itself, to the openness of large spaces and closed off cubicles for small groups as well. An educational value is to be seen in being

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<sup>44</sup> Often the Carnegie Library was the first architecturally impressive building in a town. Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 138. See also, Carnegie, "Value of the World's Fair to the American People." The exterior view and the grand facade were of consequence.

<sup>45</sup> Wall, Carnegie, p. 856.

able to line children up, march them inside and outside, taking turns, without pushing, so that the students became self-directive without too much monitoring.<sup>46</sup> The building itself should be a segment of the community, an exemplar to the students and a part of the educative process, helping, not hindering, the instructional program.

The ideal of democracy in education needs to be practiced.<sup>47</sup> The spirit of equality and the belief in the rights of man needs to be instilled by classroom teaching and example. There will be no school uniforms worn by the students.<sup>48</sup> The students will march into the building, somewhat quietly, but not in absolute silence, and move to their classrooms. There will be an effort made to promote the concept that the school belonged to the community and the children, not to the teachers, the principal, or the Board of Education. The classrooms will be bright, cheerful places, with pictures of great men and great scenes from history about the walls.<sup>49</sup> All around the rooms there will be mottoes, ready to meet the

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<sup>46</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "The Value of the World's Fair to the American People," Engineering Magazine, January, 1894, p. 422.

<sup>47</sup> Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 240, #45125-45126.

<sup>48</sup> Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 152.

<sup>49</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 15.

wandering eye of the students who idly gaze about. The slogans will change, but they will not be left there to be found accidentally. At some point during the few weeks or months each special quotation is exhibited, the teacher will take the time to point out this gem to the class, read it, have the students read it in turn, and then discuss its meanings, implications, and value.<sup>50</sup> Students will be asked to recall the sayings without looking and remember who wrote them. Applications will be suggested. The very permanent pictures in the room and statues of great men, the famous scenes from history, will be the subject of discussion and the source of lasting inspiration. There will be an effort to find teachers for the school who truly loved -- who loved students, birds, flowers, music, stories, and games -- and who enthusiastically and sincerely wished to inspire and touch children, who would, in the way of Uncle Lauder, entertain as he instructed, elevate as he explained.

If we are to succeed in the inner city schools of today we must find and employ sufficient teachers who really love children as well as their work, we must reduce class size, and

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<sup>50</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 857; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 268.

we need to add the supportive paraprofessionals to do the task.<sup>51</sup> While many teachers, the majority in fact, are doing a fine job frequently against enormous odds, there is a large minority who have not read a book since they graduated from college, who simply do not like children, or even worse, are indifferent to children entirely. They "keep" school as some women "keep" house, with everything neat and antiseptic in its place. Such "teachers" feel the school would be a very fine place if only it were not for all those children. This is not to say that everyone in education cannot become fatigued at times, angered, bored, sated, and wish to get away for a weekend, a week, a summer, or a whole sabbatical year.<sup>52</sup> The profession rightly affords these opportunities, for this is not a job that can be done at the optimum level continuously. But the enemy are the teachers who have been at a school for ten years and still cannot control a class; the teachers who control the class so well they stamp out all the spirit; the teachers who are such creatures of routine that they are infuriated when someone suggests even a simple change; the teachers who have

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<sup>51</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 23-24, 80-81, 216-219.

<sup>52</sup> Carnegie was a great believer in taking the whole summer off and going to Scotland; his summer vacations lasted six months of most years.

not kept up with the literature of their own field and thereby degrade their vocation from a profession to a job; the teachers who constantly (all do it occasionally) let home problems interfere with their performance; the teachers who do nothing but talk "at" a class, but never give the children an opportunity to respond.<sup>53</sup> Carnegie would wonder why we could not dismiss those who were obviously incompetent, injuring the lives and development of our children, and preventing educational production.

Classroom discipline is composed of the following main elements: understanding the child, planning and preparing a variety of interesting tasks and intriguing the child into beginning them, teacher experience, the development of a variety of techniques, so that when one effort fails another may be tried, and truly loving the children and wanting to help them, whether this is called rapport, empathy, or exchange. Carnegie offered the following clues in dealing with people, and the advice holds up well in a multiplicity of circumstances:

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<sup>53</sup>Carnegie attacked analagous types of workmanship in his own plant. For the last item, see, as an example, Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 262.



True it is, we only hate those whom we do not know. It certainly is often the way to peace to invite your adversary to dinner and even beseech him to come, taking no refusal. Most quarrels become acute from the parties not seeing and communicating with each other and hearing too much of their disagreement from others. They do not fully understand the other's point of view and all that can be said for it. Wise is he who offers the hand of reconciliation should a difference with a friend arise.<sup>54</sup>

Translated into classroom terms the advice is simple, but often goes unrecognized. Frequently the student who does something that cannot be tolerated, does it within the context of the classroom. The teacher challenges him and the battle is on. Whoever loses is more angry and determined. It is the adult who must be forgiving if at all possible. A conference with the student after class, alone, and an examination of the basis for the pupil's actions, some explanations why these actions cannot be tolerated, and some effort to genuinely understand the student's own motivation often can solve the problem. A positive attitude was always Carnegie's solution to dealing with people. Those who are working well should be complimented rather than continually giving recognition to improper behavior

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<sup>54</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 281.

by openly recognizing it. The magnate himself was educated in a school where whippings were the usual mode of punishment, but the steel king believed in mind punishments for most offenses. Carnegie proposed: "The civilization of a people may be tested by the character of their punishments. The milder these are the more civilized the nation, as that home is to be rated highest in all the land in which the mildest system of parental government prevails, in which reproof takes its gentlest form, and yet suffices."<sup>55</sup> This last is only too true, however, the entirety of the quotation should be noted; the mild reproof suffices. This is not a call for license. In Carnegie's home, his parents took him into their council. The boy was told of the parents' earnings, their aims, their financial problems, their hopes, and he was made a part of a familial corporative structure quite early. Such a child does not carve up the furniture and probably does not rebel too much. To what extent, in the school, do we bring the child, even the student of ten or twelve, or fourteen, into harmony with "our" educational goals

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<sup>55</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 179. Carnegie indeed was tender hearted enough to call for an end to the death penalty, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 178-179, but at a younger age, he approved torture to save time in making criminals confess. Carnegie, Round the World, pp. 86-87.

and acquaint him in an overall way with what we hope, expect, and anticipate? The student, gradually, as he becomes old enough, needs to be brought into the educational enterprise, to help plan, to help move toward the goals. The school itself should have a student council, elected by the rooms of the older students, and the council should engage in real tasks, perhaps even reporting to an adult evening council that advises on school problems. This does not mean the student will lead, but it does mean he should become at least a junior partner in the joint venture so that we secure his help and do not have to drag him unwillingly with us.

Carnegie would have joined those who believed that the school should provide a variety of services to the child and the community. The magnate tended to combine his beliefs and interests anyway. It is right at this point that we have a major matter of contention in education today. Those who favor so-called basic education suggest that the school is leaving no time for its main purpose, ignoring the one job it can do and was created to do, and trying to solve the problems of the world in a futile effort to do everything for everybody. The very meaning and function of the school is lost in the shifting sand of trying to solve all problems, say these essentialist critics. Practical men such as Hyman Rickover and educational professors and writers such as Arthur Bestor see a need to omit

the frills and return to educational truths. They speak of the school not being a playground, a medical center, and a cafeteria. The opponents of this view declare that the school needs to fill the necessary gaps so the child may learn and function. A hungry child that has no coat on a wintry day and who needs glasses and medical attention can scarcely be "taught" in any legitimate sense. One cannot divorce education from the total needs of the child, say those who disagree with the essentialist position. In fact, many today would go further, beyond providing the child with health, psychological, and food services. Hungry children need to be fed. Medical diagnosis and treatment for school children should be given at least annually including eye tests, hearing tests, and general examinations of health.<sup>56</sup> Gymnasiums and even swimming pools at the high school level are not luxury items but necessities.<sup>57</sup> Children should have their games and life should have its pleasures. If children are guided into how to play competitive games that will not be harmful to them, they will have useful pleasures and fewer

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<sup>56</sup> Such examinations were given to the children of Dunfermline by the Carnegie Foundation for his native town. Hendrick, "Benefactions of Carnegie," pp. 16, 37.

<sup>57</sup> New York Times, January 31, 1901; Centenary of the Birth of Andrew Carnegie: The British Trusts and Their Work With a Chapter on the American Foundations (Edinburg: H. & J. Pillans and Wilson, 1953), pp. 44-46.

difficulties in life.<sup>58</sup> The question even supercedes these services, however, for if the Coleman Report is to be believed, then education must break out into the community of the inner city, the school must abandon what Havighurst referred to as the four wall concept.<sup>59</sup> Carnegie would have been in agreement with this concept, for he came from a family and a town (Dunfermline) where the school and community were quite united in their view on education.

Carnegie recognized only too well the importance of family and school goals coalescing, though he saw positive advantages to the child being raised in "honest poverty."

The magnate said in his Autobiography:

This is where the children of honest poverty have the most precious of all advantages over those of wealth. The mother, nurse, cook, governess, teacher, saint, all in one; the father, exemplar, guide, counselor, and friend! Thus were my brother and I brought up. What has the child of millionaire or nobleman that counts compared to such a heritage?<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 88.

<sup>59</sup> The four wall concept was the best known result of the so-called Havighurst Report: Robert J. Havighurst, The Public Schools of Chicago (Chicago: Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 1964).

<sup>60</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 30.

As the magnate often suggested, his mother was an exceptional woman and Carnegie well knew that it was to this he owed his exceptional upbringing. Indeed, the importance of the family in creating character was an abiding belief and concern of Carnegie. He returned to the same theme again later on in his Autobiography:

Among the manifold blessings I have to be thankful for is that neither nurse nor governess was my companion in infancy. No wonder the children of the poor are distinguished for the warmest affection and the closest adherence to family ties and are characterized by a filial regard far stronger than those who are mistakenly called more fortunate in life. . . . The child that has in his father a teacher, companion, and counselor, and whose mother is to him a nurse, seamstress, governess, teacher, companion, heroine, and saint all in one, has a heritage to which the child of wealth remains a stranger.<sup>61</sup>

Yet again in his article, "The Advantages of Poverty," the magnate discussed the topic:

It is not permitted the children of king, millionaire, or noble to have father and mother in the close and realizing sense of these sacred terms. . . . To the poor boy these are the words he conjures with. . . . Neither nurse, servant,

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

governess, nor tutor has come between him and his parents. In his father he has had tutor, companion, counselor, and judge. . . . in his mother nurse, seamstress, teacher, inspirer, saint -- his all in all.<sup>62</sup>

The magnate certainly believed the matter was one that bore repeating.

The question of parental influence upon education is one that has been compelling to educators in all the ages of the past. Plutarch in his Morals discussed under the heading of education the upbringing of children. He asserted that mothers should care for and feed their children themselves, not trust the matter to nurses. Slaves picked as teachers should be examined to see if they spoke well. Plutarch was one of the upper class and his writings were addressed to the classes, who read, not to the masses. But the problem was a real one in all ages where wealth made slaves or serfs or labor that could be hired easily available so that parents could free themselves of one of the most oppressive of burdens -- raising their own children. Plutarch's letter to his wife, Timoxena, on the death of their only daughter, "The Consolation," indicated that he put his beliefs into practice. He spoke of how he and

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<sup>62</sup> Carnegie, "Advantages of Poverty," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 63.

his wife raised all their children themselves, at home. The problem has been a continual one in all societies where wealth and poverty abounded in close juxtaposition. The temptation to hire nurses, governesses, and tutors to watch over a child, who then hardly could gain an audience with his own parents, was commented upon by nineteenth century English writers regarding the children of the British nobility and nineteenth century Russian writers as well. Nikolai Novikov's article, "On the Upbringing and Instruction of Children," written in Russia in 1783 is not unlike Plutarch's admonitions that good tutors be found and that the parents not leave the whole burden to the tutor but remember that the children also see an example in their own father and mother. What Carnegie really believed, but never quite put on paper, was that a child raised by parents who were moderately poor, but still working, struggling to rise, whose parents loved him and cared for him themselves, a child whose parents saw opportunities and had goals which they imparted to their offspring, a child whose parents taught him themselves, encouraged him and cared for him, and especially a child whose parents read and thought and inspired, was more fortunate than a child of multi-millionaires who entrusted the upbringing of their child to uncaring tutors, unfeeling nurses, and unloving governesses. Plutarch and Novikov would have agreed across time and space, from Rome and Russia that the



best guides are loving and intelligent parents and that family and school goals must coincide.

This Carnegie doctrine of education suggested rightfully that under the circumstances where the home is able to do three things, the child may well postpone his schooling until the age of seven or eight, as Carnegie did. First, the home must be able to offer an exemplar for living and developing. The parents must be able and willing to spend time with the child and the goals of the home must be viable in the microcosmic community of the neighborhood and in the larger world community that the child may find himself in later. Second, the parents must themselves be in agreement upon aims. They need to offer the child shelter, supportive understanding, and opportunities for enrichment and growth. Third, the parents must both read. This means not just functional literacy but functioning literacy. The child must see the parents with a book in their hands at times, reading it. Carnegie's friend, Mark Twain phrased it this way: "The Man who can read and does not has no advantage over the man who can't read at all." The child raised in an environment where the parents exhibited these three characteristics probably could begin Kindergarten at eight, and after a few months move on to first grade and then in a few months to second grade. We are supposing, of course, that the child

would have the opportunity to enter an ungraded school, of the kind Carnegie himself attended. For certainly one of the advantages of the one-room schoolhouse was that the children were allowed to continuously develop, the classes were non-graded and children were not locked in to a Prussian type curriculum pattern in which no upward mobility was possible until the earth had made its predictive revolution about the sun. The rapid movement through school, once he entered the classroom, of a child who received home opportunities of the kind suggested, would be simply the result of what once was referred to as maturation and now is more often considered developmental by followers of Piaget.

However, Carnegie also saw that children whose parents left them with a curse were at least in as difficult a position as those who willed them only money,<sup>63</sup> while children whose parents spoke a foreign language needed further help.<sup>64</sup>

Carnegie was an experimenter; not a traditionalist and we must assume that his school would have led and not followed. The

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<sup>63</sup>The obvious inverse of a typical Carnegie aphorism.

<sup>64</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 23-26.

magnate's articles on the Negro indicate that he felt that they needed additional educative aid to overcome the burden of slavery. Also those people who were recent immigrants, the Latins with their bilingual, bicultural patterns, would obviously have to be offered earlier schooling. What is suggested, of course, is a flexibility of scheduling that would almost defeat the monolithic character of most educational establishments: first, the ten or twenty per cent of children whose parents wished to tutor and work with them at home for a time and whose parents seemed capable,<sup>65</sup> would be allowed to keep their children at home until the youngsters were seven or eight;<sup>66</sup> second, it would be expected that most of the children whose parents spoke standard English would see to it that their children began school at the normal age of five; third, for children whose parents spoke another language, or non-standard English, or whose parents worked and needed the help of the school, that pre-school classes would be instituted beginning almost from the time the child was toilet trained. The school

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<sup>65</sup>What Carnegie called the "swimming tenth."

<sup>66</sup>Carnegie had been allowed to stay home until this age, he felt without ill effect. Carnegie felt also that the bright child would also use "self-improvement" if available to catch up. Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 43. Carnegie also commented very favorably on William Chambers in his article because Chambers, while serving his apprenticeship, arose at five A.M. every morning to read, until it was time to go to work. This was how to do it. Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 203.

in such cases would bring the child into the larger community.<sup>67</sup> To suggest that classes in pre-kindergarten have not succeeded is to say that the teaching has been poor, that the administration has failed and that the rest of the school has not followed through with the success of the pre-school, perhaps due to larger class size, fewer paraprofessionals to aid the teacher and lack of innovative materials.<sup>68</sup> A whole new system of education is needed, as men evolve and struggle upward, a system that will end past ignorance and lead men to the light.<sup>69</sup>

Children would begin in the Carnegie school at the ages they needed to begin, two or three years old for the deprived

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> This may turn out to be a minority opinion, which does not make it incorrect. Litwak and Meyer in an important sociological article, see a "balance" between bureaucracies, as the school, and primary groups, as the family, rather than opposing ways in which the child is reared. The two should and must work together for "optimal" success. Litwak and Meyer also see the need for the school to break out into the community, by utilizing community leaders, by becoming a clearing house for community problems, and by using a variety of experts who are allowed to autonomously do their job. Eugene Litwak and Henry J. Meyer, "A Balance Theory of Coordination Between Bureaucratic Organizations and Community Primary Groups," Administrative Science Quarterly, June, 1966, pp. 31-58.

<sup>69</sup> Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, pp. 198-199.

or disadvantaged,<sup>70</sup> four or five for the average child, even older for the child whose parents indicated to the school how their child would benefit more from further home enculturation. However, none of this flexibility of entrance would be to foist expected standardization of achievement and promotion policy upon children, so that all would be anticipated to reach fourth grade reading simultaneously in fourth grade. Indeed, those who entered school at seven might be ahead at fourth grade and this would not be considered suggestive that the school had not done its job, but rather that in the case of "pre-packaged" children a good home could offer more than the school. For children with specific skill deficiencies, one-to-one instruction by specialists working right with the child was the perspective offered by Carnegie.<sup>71</sup> The child should be taught to read between the ages of two and ten, so that at ten he might read on a fourth grade level. This would be the aim and should be achieved by most pupils and surpassed by many. Carnegie would have favored the "Right to Read" program of the Nixon administration; such a program might require technology,

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<sup>70</sup>Educational terms are almost akin to slang in that new pedageese takes on additional meanings. Words often begin life as descriptive and definitive and end their existence as tokens of disparagement.

<sup>71</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 287.

equipment, and a variety of classroom aides.

Carnegie would be the first to declare that teaching was one of the few places where the least was done to supply the workman with the tools necessary to do the job. One might contrast the teacher, here, with the auto mechanic. Of course the auto mechanic may be expected to have in his tool box a number of personal implements to help him on the job. But his employers, the company, expect to furnish him with the elaborate diagnostic equipment needed to determine the nature of the problem with a particular automobile and prescribe the remedies. In the school, the teacher is typically given no elaborate technological diagnostic aids. She receives only the classroom, the blackboards, a few books, (sometimes these books are not even of her own choice), chalk, perhaps a little paper, and a few paints. When we realize that in big city school systems today, teachers are being paid over \$10,000 a year on an average, but are given less than \$1,000 a year for supplies (paper, pencils, chalk, crayons, art paper, paints, scratch pads, expendable booklets, decorative materials, paper clips, staplers, and so on), textbooks in all subjects, equipment (referred to as hardware today, which may include, radios, television sets, programmed reading machines, overhead projectors, filmstrip projectors, copying machines, duplicating machines, movie projectors, opaque projectors, language master type implements, movie screens, and other equipment of all kinds), maps of all

varieties, charts, globes, storage cabinets, filing cabinets, new chairs, and so on, then we can begin to grasp the nature of the problem. It is a fact that in most schools, even when there are filmstrip projectors, there are few filmstrips to project, and when they have tape recorders, they are likely to soon run out of blank tape on which to record. Since far less than \$1,000 a year is spent per classroom on all these items, combined, many of which are quite expensive, it is obvious that few of the more costly technical aids are available to teachers and that they must not just share, but in many instances the equipment does not even exist in the school. While the public and the Boards of Education have been willing to grant higher salaries, they have refused, except in a few isolated instances in wealthy or extremely interested communities, to see the need to supply the teacher with the materials to really get the job done.

On the other hand, the teachers have not demanded the tools to teach as they should. There are two reasons for this. First, there is habit and second there is fear. The habit is simply that the teachers have never been exposed to the materials in any meaningful way. The teachers went to schools themselves without seeing technology at work; they did their practice teaching in such schools; and they accepted positions in such schools. The fear is simply the common one of the unknown.

The teacher is concerned about change, about how to use the machine, and even about being replaced by the machine. Teacher replacement by machines is not going to be an event of the twentieth century, to venture a Carnegie type prediction, though of course, it may come. In the first place, the machines are likely to require more teachers and more aides. The machines break down faster than the people. The machines, even in the best programs, do not even begin to answer all the questions that the students may ask. A teacher is needed at every step in the process. Carnegie, it should be noted, was a great believer in education, in spending money to achieve results, in technology, in cost accounting techniques that would suggest just what the costs are in educating children, and in giving the professionals the tools needed to do a job.

Along with technology, teachers need a variety of aides. If teaching is ever to become a true profession, and not a craft, the teacher will have to learn to supervise and work with paraprofessionals. Volunteers, who are willing to work without pay, usually from a sense of duty or a love of children, and teacher aides, who are hired, paid a salary, and have in some way demonstrated certain marketable skills, both need supervision and guidance. The variety of the usefulness of paraprofessionals is indicated by the number and kind of recent professional articles on this topic. Teacher aides and volunteers at the primary level are extremely helpful. Placing a



second adult in the classroom to listen to an entire reading group, in one corner of the room, can double the student's reading time. Especially with the younger children, pre-kindergarten, and primary, aides are very valuable. At the intermediate level and upper grades, and in the high school, a sharing of aides by groups of teachers, is quite feasible and worthwhile. What is often forgotten is that teachers need in-service too, in the use of the aide. Sometimes the instructors are young, inexperienced teachers and the aide is older, yet the teacher needs to be in charge, setting the tone in the classroom. From the point of view of Carnegie, differentiated staffing was a positive good. Carnegie felt that aides were needed.<sup>72</sup>

Carnegie saw a need for Boards of Education with the courage to break teacher's unions, if need be, to fire inefficient, lazy, and non-productive teachers, even while he believed

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<sup>72</sup> Although he usually had eighty-five servants at Skibo Castle, to take care of the summer visitors, occasionally for a few weeks the Carnegies would get away to a small cottage, Auchindinagh, and later to another cottage, Aultnagar, high on the moors above Skibo. Here, as Wall explains, "they lived a simple life as an ordinary family . . . with only two servants." Wall, Carnegie, pp. 948-949.

in differentiated salary schedules, merit pay increases, and equal pay for women.<sup>73</sup> The idea of allowing the inefficient, the indolent, and the inept to continue receiving huge salaries, which sadly is the pattern in many school systems, due to tenure, would not have appealed to the magnate.<sup>74</sup> He wanted teachers who were dedicated, devoted workers, producers, inspirers, involved, excited by their tending the flame of learning. "The test of genius in any writer," Carnegie declared openly, sounding somewhat like Ion,<sup>75</sup> "therefore seems to be whether he has power to lead the understanding and sympathetic reader step by step, line after line, into regions more and more elevated, stirring the heart, the altar upon which the God-like is placing the elements which he is to set blazing anon."<sup>76</sup> So also with the teacher. The good teacher was an inspiration, a

<sup>73</sup>Carnegie, of course, tried to break unions, wanted to fire non-productive workers, and did love to claim that he hired the first female telegraph operator ever put to work by the Pennsylvania Line.

<sup>74</sup>Carnegie, "Industrial Problem," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 51.

<sup>75</sup>The reciter (teacher) of Homer and hero of the Paltonic Dialogue by the same name.

<sup>76</sup>Carnegie, "Genius Illustrated from Burns," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 159.

truly great man.<sup>77</sup> Very young children should be led simply, easily, upward, beginning with early childhood education; indeed, it was supremely important to make the child love to learn, and provide for early successful experiences.<sup>78</sup> Primary reading should begin with the initial sounds and the alphabet, and beautifully illustrated books would help in leading the child upward.<sup>79</sup> Carnegie was optimistic, hopeful, saw improvement and believed in constant rewards rather than punishments. No educational task is too much for the great teacher hero, who always must triumph.

Of course Carnegie would be shocked but gratified at the way that teacher salaries and other salaries had risen in the half century since his death. In one way he did not really see the need to pay teachers that much more, for they actually did not expect it. "The great teachers of their fellows," said Carnegie, "the presidents and professors of our seats of learning, and the teachers of our common schools -- what thought have they of bowing before the vulgar idol of wealth? Our

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 21.

<sup>79</sup>Carnegie, "Best Use of Wealth," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 216.

poets, authors, statesmen, the very highest types of humanity, are above the allurements of money making."<sup>80</sup> The magnate might have been surprised. Still, the steel king was always optimistic that things were improving and progress upward was being made; he might have worried about the effect of prolonged material prosperity on people, but he believed in progress.

At the level of the elementary school, once the teacher is given sufficient salary, enough aides, the equipment to do the job, differentiated staffing is achieved and the entrance of children to the school at varied ages established, the next step would be to eliminate the graded structure of the school and move the child through the institution truly at his own rate.<sup>81</sup> The child should not be a time server nor should he be socially promoted onward without knowing how to read. There are skills that need to be acquired, and these should be worked on until they are really mastered. Competition should be employed to stimulate pupils to work to win,<sup>82</sup> but for the losers, remediation and encouragement were needed. "One of the chief advantages of the public schools is the enduring friendships boys form there, first in importance through their

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<sup>80</sup> Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, pp. 34-35.

<sup>81</sup> Carnegie went to an ungraded school.

<sup>82</sup> Wall, Carnegie, p. 880.

beneficial influence upon character and, second, as aids to success in after life." The neighborhood or community school was very desirable, in fact children should be educated near home, "so that early friendships may not be broken."<sup>83</sup> So the neighborhood school, non-graded and allowing for continuous development of the child in patterns of individually prescribed learning, would ensure lifelong friendships and a successful education.

The school should offer a variety of opportunities and experiences. The school library should not be a place where dull periods of enforced reading create permanent distaste for books, just so the library time can be a free period for the teacher. The library needs to be a pleasant place, where primary children are introduced to books, told stories, and have their interest piqued. For intermediate and upper grade children, the library should be a place for quiet reading or reference, not a place where a whole class is sent for an enforced period of silence. Nor should the library become too much the multi-media center. The machines and media belong in the classrooms and reading laboratories; the library should remain a place of books. Often the innovations to teach reading

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<sup>83</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 20.

in the school become media and not books; under the guise of teaching the student to better read a book, we buy a machine. Encyclopedias and fact books should be in every classroom, and children should learn to use them and consult them.<sup>84</sup>

Exciting stories should be told, especially to boys, both in the classroom and in the library.<sup>85</sup> The astute teacher will select a wide variety of interesting and practical material, outside the world of the schoolbooks, and utilize it for lessons.<sup>86</sup> That is, in each case, the material in the curriculum should be relevant for the children in that school.<sup>87</sup> There should be an effort made to show the relationship between what is being studied and how this affects the lives of the children. While some of the reading materials and some of the other subject matter is strangely inappropriate to children, in most cases the elementary school is not in too much trouble here,

<sup>84</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 357.

<sup>85</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 19.

<sup>86</sup> Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 207.

<sup>87</sup> The word relevant has become a "cop out," a term employed as an excuse for not learning what you do not wish to learn. The problem with the term, is that everything in the curriculum can be adjudged irrelevant to those who do not like it. The term is thus one of potential nihilism; the whole culture is destroyed because the present generation does not like parts of it.

for the elementary school is engaged in teaching the basics and here there is more agreement as to what should be taught. As with Plato, Carnegie hoped to take the great stories, the myths and legends, the immortal oft told tales, and eliminate those with unhappy endings, those that might not be optimistic, those that showed a poor side of life or suggested evil, and then with the residue of uplifting, optimistic, material, utilize it to teach lessons and present it to children in ways that would live with them forever.<sup>88</sup> The magnate was especially disturbed by parts of the Old Testament that are continuously bloody and filled with battles with God shown above supervising the slaughter. Carnegie would like to have these sections edited right out of the Old Testament. Later, university students could study the unabridged versions, but these bloody passages were not for children. The glory of war, especially, was to be expurgated from books.<sup>89</sup> While the schools should hold a whole spectrum of possibilities for the students to consider, books should be especially widely available, and always expurgated of war and evil.

Such is the nature of the Carnegie common school, and we turn now to the curriculum of that school and the higher schools.

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<sup>88</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, pp. 170-171; Wall, Carnegie, p. 950.

<sup>89</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, pp. 169-170.

CHAPTER NINE

Carnegie on the Curriculum

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## Chapter Nine: Carnegie on the Curriculum

### 1. Reading and Literature

Reading is the basic subject in the elementary school, the high school, and even in college. Math is the next most vital to individual survival in life and in school. The usual modern curriculum adds science, some history, geography, music, art, and physical education. The curriculum in the Carnegie elementary school is much the same. Reading is the primary subject of the common school and continues to be central to success in all the higher schools. To be unable to read well in high school means simply that geography, history, science, and most other subjects cannot be understood except through the oral tradition, a method that antedates civilization. The child without the ability to read well is still on the level of the barbarian: he is human, able to use some artifacts, but neither cultured nor civilized. Reading is the beginning of education and enculturation and remains the basic subject.

Rousseau indicated the problem and at least part of the solution:

Reading is the curse of childhood, yet it is almost the only occupation you can find for children. Emile, at twelve years old, will hardly know what a book is. . . . When reading is of use to him, I admit he must learn to read, but till then he will

only find it a nuisance.<sup>1</sup>

Rousseau continued:

People make a great fuss about discovering the best way to teach children to read. . . . There is a better way than any of those, and one which is generally overlooked -- it consists in the desire to learn. Arouse this desire in your scholar and . . . any method will serve.<sup>2</sup>

Carnegie too was not averse to beginning later, and he too advocated story interest, highly exciting material, that would bring the child to books. The magnate sounded a bit more optimistic than the French philosopher when he declared:

Imagine a precocious boy of twelve . . . launched into the great world upon arrival in America and going to work among rude men. What could he have done, how ever gain knowledge, had it not been from the most precious of all earthly possessions -- books.<sup>3</sup>

Carnegie certainly believed the job of teaching reading should be accomplished, even if it meant spending quite a bit of money to complete the task.<sup>4</sup> In this sense, the magnate was an experimentalist.

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<sup>1</sup>Rousseau, Emile, pp. 80-81.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Carnegie, "Confession of Religious Faith," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 296.

<sup>4</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 850.

The steel king often rejoiced that "Americans are a reading people."<sup>5</sup> On innumerable occasions, in speaking of hiring someone, Carnegie requested: "Give me a man who reads." The magnate continually underlined his preference: "Educate yourself in useful knowledge. That is the moral I would emphasize. Get knowledge. Cultivate a taste for reading."<sup>6</sup> Again and again the magnate alluded to the fact that "the taste for reading is one of the most precious possessions of life."<sup>7</sup> Here is an obvious point, but one often sadly and almost criminally overlooked. The teacher, who is the primary instructor of the child in his early years, should be a person who himself loves books. He should be a reader. He should enjoy stories. He should be enthusiastic, interested, and creative. If he does not feel, emotionally, any of these things, he is being paid for nothing; his influence is negative, even baneful. He should leave the profession and find another sphere than early childhood education or primary schooling. The child quickly sees through parents and teachers alike who are saying: "Do as I say, not as I do." Fundamental beliefs, such as a reverence for reading, a

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<sup>5</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 82.

<sup>7</sup>Carnegie, "The Best Use of Wealth," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 210.

devotion to books, a love of stories, cannot be hidden. Coupled with this need for teachers who themselves really love to read and love stories, there is as Carnegie suggested, a need for the child to acquire a "taste for reading" and as Rousseau proposed, "the desire to learn" to read is the way to teach reading. From the school's viewpoint, the child must be taught to read so that reading test scores improve, so that the school can proudly say that they taught the child to read and thereby turned out another successful product. The school also has its own purposes in teaching reading, in that the child must be taught to read to do the work of the school, to read its textbooks, to be able to continue on to high school, college, and graduate school, in infinite sequence, with the school becoming an endless end in itself. The school sets as a standard its own needs, the necessity to understand its own subjects, the requirement that the child be able to read textbooks on science, history, and bookkeeping and answer questions. These are the school's purposes, but they are not the purposes of the child. The child learns to read because the school wishes him to, his parents wish him to, his teacher wishes him to, and his classmates are learning, but he learns best if he himself enjoys the process, sees books as fun, and cannot wait to learn more in order to unlock more of the mysteries of the world for himself.

Reading should begin with the alphabet and the sounds;

but even here story interest and pleasure can be built in.<sup>8</sup>  
 Reading aloud is good, by the teacher, by the student, and by  
 the entire class.<sup>9</sup> Reading should be informative as well as  
 entertaining. Literature should end with a poem, quotation,  
 or parable; it is good to teach a valuable lesson. For instance,  
 to illustrate the value of freedom over slavery, Carnegie tells  
 the following story in his Autobiography:

In the days of slavery and the underground  
 railroads, there lived on the banks of the Ohio  
 River . . . a . . . Judge French, who said to  
 some anti-slavery friends that he should like  
 them to bring to his office the first runaway  
 negro that crossed the river, bound northward  
 by the underground. He couldn't understand why  
 they wish to run away. This was done, and the  
 following conversation took place:

Judge: "So you have run away from Ken-  
 tucky. Bad master, I suppose?"

Slave: "Oh, no, Judge; very good, kind  
 massa."

Judge: "He worked you too hard?"

Slave: "No, sah, never overworked myself  
 all my life."

Judge, hesitantly: "He did not give you  
 enough to eat?"

Slave: "Not enough to eat down in  
 Kaintuck? Oh, Lor', plenty to eat."

Judge: "He did not clothe you well?"

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>9</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings,  
 Vol. I, p. 207.

Slave: "Good enough clothes for me, Judge."

Judge: "You hadn't a comfortable home?"

Slave: "Oh, Lor', makes me cry to think of my pretty little cabin down dar in old Kaintuck."

Judge, after a pause: "You had a good kind master, you were not overworked, plenty to eat, good clothes, fine home. I don't see why the devil you wished to run away."

Slave: "Well, Judge, I lef de situation down dar open. You kin go rite down and git it."

The Judge had seen a great light.

"Freedom has a thousand charms to show,  
That slaves, howe'er contented, never know."<sup>10</sup>

The questions for class discussion are obvious: Did the author emphasize the probable joyful conditions in Kentucky too much to make his point? What was his point? Do you think the Judge went down to Kentucky and applied for the position? Do we all have difficulty placing ourselves in the position of others and seeing how they really feel? Can you think of any quotation from Burns or another poet that might illustrate that last point? As the students grow older, there is a need to see that they continue the joyful reading of fiction and other works of interest for pleasure.

Reading has its own purpose. "The severe study of scientific books must not be permitted to exclude the equally important duty of reading the masters in literature and by all means of fiction," Carnegie declared. "I know that . . . most of the

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<sup>10</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 331.

eminent men find in a good work of fiction one of the best means of enjoyment and of rest."<sup>11</sup> The idea of reading as fun, for relaxation, is becoming a lost pleasure today in our media world. People read to gain information and not for the joy of reading. The love of reading should be part of the enculturation process; it needs to be taught, or rather an effort to find completely individual interests at every level needs to be made and intriguing literature suggested. "It is no disparagement of free libraries," Carnegie asserted, "that most of the works read are works of fiction."<sup>12</sup> There should be some effort made to encourage people to read the great works of literature. Carnegie did not approve of all the classics, though he would have approved of the great books idea for adults. "The works of Scott, Thackeray, Eliot, Dickens, Hawthorne, and others of the same class, are not to be rated below any other form of literature for workingmen," Carnegie asserted.<sup>13</sup> It was clear that even difficult novels should be utilized in the regular public schools; inferior literature should not be assigned because the teacher believes the great books are too difficult. Interest

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<sup>11</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 84.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

should be sparked by the teacher, praising the books, telling enough of the story to whet the curiosity. Carnegie was not severely restrictive of the new in favor of the old. The Brooklin Citizen, February 14, 1902, devoted a lengthy editorial to one of the steel king's passing comments, thus indicating how seriously the magnate's views were taken in his own time:

Mr. Carnegie on Fiction

In the course of his speech last night, before the Author's Club, Andrew Carnegie suggested that it might be well for public libraries to buy no work of fiction that was not at least one year old. If this rule were adopted it would do something toward curing the evil complained of by the public libraries of England and the United States, the evil of having the resources of these institutions largely diverted from the work of circulating literature of permanent value to the gratification of an appetite for productions that neither nourish the intellect nor strengthen the moral character.<sup>14</sup>

For four more paragraphs of equal size, the Citizen praised Carnegie's suggestion, stressing that "90 per cent of the output" of current fiction would die within a year and that with its passing no "noble thought . . . high emotion, or . . . beautiful image" would be lost. Carnegie was not averse to the

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<sup>14</sup>

Brooklin Citizen, February 14, 1902.



public indulging in its taste for low reading, but he believed there were classics that were valuable for all times and all places which people should be encouraged to read. There were immortal stories, that would never die. To live and miss these treats was tantamount to never having lived at all. "The grandest friends are those we find in books," said Mr. Carnegie. "There we have the companionship of the masters. They are always with you, always round you, ready to open to you their richest treasures, always at your call, and they are friends who never have other appointments."<sup>15</sup> Here again, in his unique way, Carnegie indicated the importance of literature.

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<sup>15</sup>New York Times, January 31, 1901.

## 2. Spelling

Andrew Carnegie, the self-educated steel magnate, who never really learned to spell correctly himself, oddly enough, set off in the name of world peace, to reform and simplify English spelling. The great spelling crusade was one of those fianchetto moves of the steel king to approach the problem of world peace surreptitiously by the side door. The rationale was a convoluted case of higher logic, beginning with the major premise that if the entire world spoke one language, wide-scale communication would improve and peace would be more likely. The apparently obvious and given minor premise was that this world wide language would be English. The conclusion was that if English were made easier to learn and to spell it would be more readily adopted universally and spread with greater ease. Therefore, simplified spelling was a positive good and should be supported. Brander Matthews, of Columbia, Thomas R. Lounsbury, of Yale, W. W. Skeat, of Oxford, and Melvil Dewey, the creator of the Dewey Decimal System, all had a hand in Carnegie's decision in 1906 to contribute money so that a National Simplified Spelling Board might be established.<sup>16</sup> Carnegie was eventually to spend

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<sup>16</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 891; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 263; Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 281.

\$280,000 on this project. The initial purpose of the Board was to enlist major writers in a crusade to use the simplified spelling versions of only twelve words, a rather minute crusade. A further list of three hundred words were recommended as candidates for alteration to newspapers and periodicals who joined the crusade. Theodore Roosevelt agreed to use the simplified spelling and ordered that all messages and all documents from the White House be printed in the new spelling. Mark Twain accepted the simplified spelling, but he could not help but "laf" at the hopes of the new crusade. December 9, 1907, at the Engineer's Club, Twain followed Carnegie as a speaker, and the man from Hannibal, in a jocular mood, told the assembled audience that the magnate's spelling crusade did not go nearly far enough; if all of spelling could only be reformed, language would be eliminated. Twain next challenged Carnegie to spell Pterodactyl according to any rules. No reply by Carnegie is recorded.<sup>17</sup>

Other jokesters also had a great "laf" about the spelling crusade and Wallace Irwin wrote the following verse, typical of many:

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<sup>17</sup> Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 259, from dated, but otherwise unidentified photostat of a loose newspaper clipping for December 10, 1907.

Grate scot! I kannot spel the wurdz  
 That sizzle 'neath my brow  
 Sins A. Karnaygy spoyld the rulz  
 We ust to hav in grammar skulz.<sup>18</sup>

The New York Times proposed that "the Bored of speling" start first "with their own names, thus: "Androo Karnage," "Tomus Lownsbre," "Richurd Watsn Gildr," "Brandr Mathooz."<sup>19</sup> Carnegie issued the following statement from Hot Spring, Virginia:

"The organized effort I have agreed to finance is not revolutionary -- far from it. Its action will be conservative. Word after word it will endeavor to improve the spelling and the language -- slowly, of course, but hastening the pace if possible. . . .

"Since our language has been constructed through unceasing change, literary men should welcome new words and new spellings with favoring eye, since it is by these alone that further improvement can come. Scholars denounced "plow" for "plough," for instance. But "plow" has been accepted. So with many words that will readily occur to readers.

"Our language is likely to prevail in the world, and we may hope it is to become finally the universal language, the most potent of all instruments for drawing the race together, insuring peace and advancing civilization. The foreigner has the greatest difficulty in acquiring it because of its spelling. This is, at least his chief obstacle; for its grammar is easy.

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<sup>18</sup>Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 282. This of course was not the Carnegie simplified spelling.

<sup>19</sup>"Andrew Carnegie's "Spelling Reform" Crusade," Current Literature, May, 1906, p. 499.

"Hundreds of scholarly men have agreed to use improved spelling for twelve words. These words are already well started in actual use. Other simplifications will be suggested."<sup>20</sup>

Carnegie suggested a joint English-American spelling board; he saw Shakespeare himself on the side of spelling reform for the bard was the greatest innovator, speller, and creator of new words that had ever lived.<sup>21</sup> Carnegie accepted the new spelling and continued to write most of his articles, letters, and speeches in the simplified spelling during the remainder of his life.

Some of the rules of the new simplified spelling board included the following:

1. Words spelled with ae, . . . Rule: Choose e, as in anesthetic, esthetic, and medieval.
2. Words spelled with -dge-ment or dg-ment. Rule: Omit e, abridgment, acknowledgment, judgment, and lodgment.
3. Words spelled with -ed or -t, the preceding single consonant being doubled before -ed. (-pped, ssed) and left single before -t (-pt, -st). Rule: Choose -t in all cases, dipt, dript, dropt, stept, blest, prest, distrest, blusht, husht, washt.
4. Words spelled with -ence or -ense (Latin -ens-a). Rule: Choose -ense, defense, offense, pretense.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 497. The statement was also reproduced widely by the newspapers of the land.

<sup>21</sup> New York Times, September 4, 1906.

5. Words spelled with ette or -et. Rule: Omit -te, coquet, epaulet, etiquet, omelet.
6. Words spelled with gh or f. Rule: Choose -f, draft.
7. Words spelled with -gh or without. (1) -ough or -ow. Rule: Choose -ow, plow. (2) -ough or -o. Rule: Choose -o, altho, tho, thoro, -boro (in place names)
8. Words with the verb suffix of Greek origin, spelled -ise or -ize. Rule: Choose -ize, catechize, criticize, exercize, legalize.
9. Words spelled with -ite or -it. Rule: Omit e, deposit, . . .
10. Words spelled with -ll or -l (ill or -il). Rule: Choose l, distil, fulfil, instil.
11. Words spelled with -il-ness or -l-ness. Rule: Omit one l, dulness, fulness.
12. Words spelled with -mme or -m. Rule: Omit -me, gram, program.
13. Words spelled with oe, . . . or e. Rule: Choose e, ecumenical, esophagus.
14. Words spelled with -our or -or. Rule: Choose -or, favor, fervor, flavor, honor, labor, rigor, rumor, tenor, tumor, valor, vapor, vigor.
15. Words spelled with ph or f. Rule: Choose f, fantasm, fantasy, fantom, sulfate, sulfur.
16. Words spelled with -rr or -r. Rule: Omit one r, bur, pur.
17. Words spelled with -re or er. Rule: Choose -er, center, meter, miter, niter, sepulcher, theater.
18. Words spelled with s or z (in the root). Rule: Choose z, apprize, assize, comprize, raze, surprize.
19. Words spelled with -s or -sc. Rule: Omit c, simiter, sithe.
20. Words spelled with or without silent -ue. Rule: Omit -ue, catalog, decalog, demagog, pedagog, prolog.<sup>22</sup>

The most amusing aspect of the great Carnegie word reform was that the magnate, himself, never really was able to spell

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<sup>22</sup>"Carnegie's "Spelling Reform" Crusade," pp. 497-498.

very well before or after the simplified verbage. He misspelled his own motherland as "Britian," and spelled Rockefeller's name in a variety of ways.<sup>23</sup> Carnegie saw the simplified spelling as Darwinian, evolutionary, part of the progress of humankind, in which he truly believed, but he had great difficulty staying with his own cause. His papers in the Library of Congress are replete with speeches in which he wrote the words in standard spelling and then changed them to the new simplified as a correction. The printers had problems with the steel king's letter changes in his manuscripts, for it was not always apparent which errors were in simplified spelling and should remain and which were non-purposeful and unintentional renditions of words which were still inviolate. Carnegie simply could not hold up under the burden of the new spelling, because he had no ear for spelling and did not really believe that orthography was of consequence. Most of the articles Carnegie wrote for national magazines changed his spelling to standard American or British as part of the policy of the journal, but for privately printed pamphlets, we find in articles written and edited by Carnegie examples of the same words in both standard

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<sup>23</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 691; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 17.

and simplified spelling. An example is the use of the word "wealth," a term that the magnate was rather fond of in any case, spelled "welth" in simplified spelling and "wealth" as in the old spelling on the same page of Carnegie's article, "William Chambers."<sup>24</sup> At times the situation became even more involved, such as when Carnegie spelled the same word in two differing ways, both versions of possible new spelling.

In the article "William Chambers," the word "already" is spelled as "alredy," but in Carnegie's St. Andrews address of June 6, 1912, it is spelled as "alreddy."<sup>25</sup> Again in the "William Chambers" article, we find the standard and phonetic spelling for "heart" and "hart" in the same article,<sup>26</sup> and also the word "triumphed" simplified to "triumpht"<sup>27</sup> while in a letter to Woodrow Wilson, April 21, 1914, Carnegie used his simplified

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<sup>24</sup>This is not the version of "William Chambers" reprinted by Hendrick in Miscellaneous Writings. Hendrick edited all the simplified spelling out of the later Carnegie articles he reproduced. But in the original, Andrew Carnegie, "William Chambers; An Address Delivered at the Celebration of the Jubilee of the Chambers Institution," Peebles, Scotland: Privately Printed, October 19, 1909, p. 15, Carnegie uses the word "wealth" spelled in these two ways on the same page.

<sup>25</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," original, privately published address, p. 14; Carnegie, "A Rectorial Address, June 6, 1912," pp. 4, 22.

<sup>26</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," original, privately published address, pp. 6-7.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 10.



spelling and spoke of a "triumph."<sup>28</sup> It is fairly obvious that Carnegie himself could not stay with his own spelling crusade, try as he would, in fact general consistency was not a strong point of Carnegie.

In a count of 140 words of simplified spelling actually employed by Carnegie in some of his letters, in the "William Chambers" article, in his "Rectorial Address, June 6, 1912," the introductory page to a book he edited entitled Business,<sup>29</sup> his "William II" essay, and Carnegie's article, "Ideal Conditions between Employee and Employer,"<sup>30</sup> over half of the word

<sup>28</sup> Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 223.

<sup>29</sup> Business, edited by Andrew Carnegie, (Boston: Hall and Locke Co., 1911). This is Volume Four of a ten volume edition under the general editorship of William DeWitt Hyde, entitled Vocations. The ten volumes are entitled:

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Mechanical Arts | 6. Public Service  |
| 2. Homemaking      | 7. Education       |
| 3. Farm and Forest | 8. Literature      |
| 4. Business.       | 9. Music and Drama |
| 5. Professions     | 10. Fine Arts      |

Carnegie had some 36 businessmen write articles on all phases of business for the volume he edited. He included two of his own articles from Empire of Business, "How I Served My Apprenticeship," and "Wealth and its Uses." Carnegie has only one new item in the volume, Business, and that is the introduction which he wrote especially for this volume in his simplified spelling. The steel king is identified in the prospectus for these ten volumes as the "Lord Rector, St. Andrews University, New York City." St. Andrews, of course, was in Scotland, not New York City. Carnegie is also listed as having an LL.D., but no mention is made that this was an honorary degree.

<sup>30</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Ideal Conditions Between Employee and Employer," The Third Rail, 1906.

modifications the magnate used involved the final "ed" ending. Either the final "e" was dropped or the "ed" ending was changed to a "t." The 140 words of new spelling of Carnegie which he actually used in the above articles and some of his correspondence are found below.

| <u>Standard</u> | <u>Carnegie</u>   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| abolished       | abolisht          |
| achieved        | achievd           |
| ahead           | ahed              |
| allowed         | allowd            |
| already         | alredy - alreddy* |
| although        | altho             |
| appeared        | appeard           |
| approved        | approvd           |
| asked           | askt              |
| attached        | attacht           |
| attacked        | attackt           |
| beamed          | beamd             |
| because         | becaus            |
| before          | befor             |
| believe         | believ            |
| bestowed        | bestowd           |
| borrowed        | borrowd           |
| bright          | brite             |
| brought         | brot              |
| burned          | burnt             |
| business        | bizness           |
| called          | calld             |
| carved          | carvd             |
| cause           | caus              |
| cherished       | cherisht          |
| compelled       | compeld           |
| condemned       | condemnd          |
| conferred       | conferd           |
| considered      | considerd         |
| creative        | creativ           |
| daughter        | dauter            |

\* Two versions of this are found. See footnote 20.

StandardCarnegie

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| dead         | ded          |
| destined     | destind      |
| debt         | det          |
| death        | deth         |
| debtors      | dettors      |
| devolve      | devolv       |
| displayed    | displayd     |
| doctrine     | doctrin      |
| doomed       | doomd        |
| doubt        | dout         |
| entered      | enterd       |
| enough       | enuf         |
| earliest     | erliest      |
| early        | erly         |
| earth        | erth         |
| enough       | enuf         |
| established  | establisht   |
| explained    | explaind     |
| expressed    | exprest      |
| feather      | fether       |
| fight        | fite         |
| flashed      | flasht       |
| give         | giv          |
| guard        | gard         |
| have         | hav          |
| heart        | hart         |
| head         | hed          |
| healthy      | helthy       |
| heard        | herd         |
| height       | hight        |
| honored      | honord       |
| impressed    | imprest      |
| indebtedness | indettedness |
| inferred     | inferd       |
| instill      | instil       |
| laugh        | laf          |
| lacked       | lackt        |
| leave        | leav         |
| leaves       | leavs        |
| learn        | lern         |
| lessened     | lessend      |
| light        | lite         |
| live         | liv          |
| looked       | lookt        |

StandardCarnegie

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| maintained   | maintaind   |
| marched      | marcht      |
| marked       | markt       |
| mastered     | masterd     |
| matched      | matcht      |
| measure      | mesure      |
| might        | mite        |
| mighty       | mitey       |
| native       | nativ       |
| nourished    | nourisht    |
| obtained     | obtaind     |
| pause        | paus        |
| phonetic     | fonetic     |
| phanthom     | fantom      |
| philosophy   | filosofy    |
| physical     | fysical     |
| pleasure     | plesure     |
| possessed    | possest     |
| practice     | practis     |
| presumptive  | presumptiv  |
| promptly     | promptly    |
| published    | publisht    |
| puffed       | puft        |
| reached      | reacht      |
| read         | red         |
| relinquished | relinquisht |
| remained     | remaind     |
| remembered   | rememberd   |
| rendered     | renderd     |
| revealed     | reveald     |
| reversed     | reverst     |
| seductive    | seductiv    |
| served       | servd       |
| service      | servis      |
| spheres      | sferes      |
| sight        | site        |
| so-called    | so-cald     |
| solemn       | solem       |
| spread       | spred       |
| stopped      | stopt       |
| steadily     | stedily     |
| straightened | straitend   |
| stripped     | stript      |
| sustained    | sustaind    |
| though       | tho         |

StandardCarnegie

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| thought     | thot       |
| through     | thru       |
| toiled      | toild      |
| tongue      | tung       |
| touched     | toucht     |
| triumphed   | triumpht   |
| touch       | tuch       |
| tough       | tuf        |
| turned      | turnd      |
| unfettered  | unfetterd  |
| unhonored   | unhonord   |
| unvarnished | unvarnisht |
| vanished    | vanisht    |
| washed      | washt      |
| wealth      | welth      |
| wrecked     | wreckt     |
| write       | rite       |
| young       | yung       |

Certainly the Carnegie school would work to establish some national changes in spelling. While some of the words the magnate wished to alter are poor choices, because, though they contain a silent letter, they occur so often in the language, and the rule is so easy to learn, that there seems to be little point in making the change; in other cases, some changes toward a more phonetic spelling might improve the ability of children to spell and eventually everyone might spell better. It was Thorstein Veblen who declared in a classic remark: "English orthography satisfies all the requirements of the cannons of reputability under the law of conspicuous waste. It is archaic, cumbrous, and ineffective; its acquisition

consumes much time and effort; failure to acquire it is easy of detection.<sup>31</sup> Veblen believed spelling as well as speech created class distinctions and many archaic forms were continued just to maintain such differentiation. Carnegie who disliked class distinctions and hated hereditary titles, saw nothing sacred in tradition and was quite willing to change. The magnate even looked forward to the day when Pitman shorthand or some other free form would replace ordinary writing, as quicker, simpler, and more efficient. It is quite logical that a standard shorthand, based on phonics, should be developed and taught in the elementary school. Carnegie would have favored that.<sup>32</sup> The spelling reform was like world peace, a conspicuous failure for Carnegie, yet, of course, the problem of phonetic spelling remains and is with us today. Carnegie's failure does not mean he was wrong. John Malone points out that English is in the awkward position of being simultaneously the major lingua franca in the world today and also more difficult to learn to use than

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<sup>31</sup>Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class, (New York: Viking Press, 1924), Chapter 14. This is a "classic quotation," even though the phrase would have been offensive to Veblen.

<sup>32</sup>The magnate would not have favored Pitman programs such as ITA, the Initial Teaching Alphabet, because it added extra letters to the alphabet and in the guise of being helpful, gave the child more to learn in order to teach phonics and bring the student quickly into reading.

many other languages. English does not fit the needs of sound-discriminating typewriters as other languages do. Students in American schools have more trouble with English than students in schools in Germany, Russia, Turkey, Japan, Spain, and Scandinavia. Malone offers his own panacea, the forty letter single-sound alphabet.<sup>33</sup> As Carnegie would say, the world moves.

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<sup>33</sup> John R. Malone, "The Larger Aspects of Spelling Reform," Elementary English, May, 1962, pp. 435-445. An interesting article.

### 3. Other Language Arts

The term Language Arts has come to cover a number of sins in the elementary school and for Carnegie the really mortal sin was that of grammar. The magnate believed it was totally worthless to teach grammar.<sup>34</sup> The reasoning behind the steel king's conviction was that grammar really is of interest to only a few who enjoy concerning themselves with the structure of language. Most people learn their language correctly or incorrectly at the knees of their parents, especially their mother. Carnegie, when he came to America, went into a mild cultural shock, when he found his Scotch accent was noticeable and not standard speech. His ear was as good for language as it was bad for spelling. He altered his speech pattern to fit his new land. He listened and modeled himself after others who served as exemplars. This method is the only way one learns correct speech. Taking lessons in public speaking Carnegie believed in wholeheartedly and recommended to his friends. But studying grammar, diagramming sentences, dissecting the language, filling in the proper word in little books was a tedious, uninteresting waste of time as far as the steel king was concerned. And of course Carnegie was completely correct. Every day we still print

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<sup>34</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 322.



"English" books which contain few stories in "English" but massive doses of rules and convoluted explanations. as to why we speak as we do. What we give lip service to, but really do not admit, is that good grammar is simply good usage. The rules and their many exceptions are not the living language, but the dead parts of speech. Grammar has been a subject foisted upon the schools from the time that there were vernacular languages and everyone who wished to appear truly educated needed to learn Latin and Greek. An exact knowledge of dead languages was required by medievalists. Grammar today is a medieval throwback, and is of real interest only to grammarians. Children, especially, dictatorial as this may sound, really wish only to be told, "This is the way we say it," or "This is how we write it." To those who insist that such statements are authoritarian, the obvious reply is "nonsense." This is a real world that does exist here and now. When children learn English initially, generally between the ages of six months and three years, we do not continually pause and bombard them with absurd explanations as to why we call a "horse" a "horse." Grammar, as a subject, no more belongs in the elementary or secondary schools than etymology. A child who mispronounces a word is corrected until he pronounces the word right, he is not given seven rules as to how this word was derived from the Greek and Latin, changed its meanings and pronunciation over the ages, until today we say it this way. It is obvious from the fact that few

remember the rules of grammar into adulthood, that they are not what is called "relevant" or utilitarian nor are they in any way functional. There are, naturally, some who like diagramming sentences, just as there are some who enjoy crossword puzzles. Neither are very helpful or valuable in this life except that if one persists, one gradually becomes better at diagramming sentences or doing crossword puzzles. There is little carry over in any direction; one might as well teach chess in the hope of improving math scores.<sup>35</sup> The saddest part of the problem of grammar, is that most elementary and secondary teachers would rather teach more reading or more literature than grammar. They come to the grammar regretfully, somewhat as we take bad tasting medicine on the theory that the worse it tastes the better it is for us. Such is our habit, and we shall probably continue to sin for some time to come against children by teaching large blocs of grammar.

While Carnegie believed that grammar was obviously useless, being able to speak correctly and write well were needs that everyone had. The magnate often stressed the importance of good pronunciation.<sup>36</sup> Public Speaking was a valuable subject.

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<sup>35</sup> Grand Masters at chess are highly correlated to certain aspects of mathematical ability, but for most people playing chess does not improve math and math does not improve playing chess.

<sup>36</sup> Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, p. 19.

When Matthew Arnold came to America, Carnegie arranged that he take elocution lessons.<sup>37</sup> Arnold's special problem was that he spoke so low that the Carnegie-arranged tour was an interesting example of one audience after another trying to be polite to a man whom they could not hear.<sup>38</sup> Carnegie himself had this advice to give:

There is one rule I might suggest for youthful orators. When you stand up before an audience reflect that there are before you only men and women. You should speak to them as you speak to other men and women in daily intercourse. If you are not trying to be something different from yourself, there is no more occasion for embarrassment than if you were talking in your office.<sup>39</sup>

Voices needed training and enunciation was felt to be especially important.<sup>40</sup> Biographer Alderson declared:

Carnegie is an orator as well as an author. His speeches have a fine literary flavor, and are always distinguished by sound common sense argument and logical reasoning. He is fertile in ideas and felicitous in expression, and speaks with a clear, telling voice, enforcing his points with graceful gesture.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 287.

<sup>38</sup> Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 245-247.

<sup>39</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 202.

<sup>40</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 337.

<sup>41</sup> Alderson, Carnegie, p. 214.

So in the ancient art of declamation, Carnegie excelled, his mellifluous voice coupled with careful preparation, made him a much sought after speaker. He usually read directly from the manuscript, but interpreted himself as he spoke.<sup>42</sup> Oratory still has its uses today and public speaking especially needs to be taught.

Starting with the primary grades and continuing upward through school, it is important to practice handwriting and learn to do compositions.<sup>43</sup> Compositions ought to begin by learning to write one good sentence. Here the "concept game" can be played with a whole class or a group of children. The teacher writes a brief sentence upon the board, for example: "The boy ran." The class builds upon this complete sentence. What kind of a boy: short, tall, fat, skinny, freckle-faced, dirty, strong, angry, happy, sad, sick, friendly, laughing, crying, and so on forever. Where did he run: home, to school, to the store, to his mother, in front of a car, to the candy store, grocery, drug store, A & P, to the dentist, over the bridge and through the trees to grandmother's farm, and so on forever. Next we might go to phrases. What was the boy wearing or doing: "The boy, in the brown coat, ran." "The boy, with the

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<sup>42</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 20.

<sup>43</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 25.

new shoes, ran." "The boy, carrying the big package, ran." Inner city children need concept development of this kind especially, if they are ever to reach near equity upon the standardized tests administered nationwide. Once children are really aware of what a sentence is, then they should go on to two sentences, and finally a paragraph. This is structure, but it is necessary structure in writing, and Carnegie approved.<sup>44</sup> Letter writing, one of the old pedagogical standbys, is a valuable exercise which of course one needs in the real world.<sup>45</sup> Carnegie agreed that it was important to try to involve children in actual competitive letter writing.<sup>46</sup> Children of two schools may correspond, and that can be meaningful. Often the children find or believe they have little in common and the replies become shorter and less imaginative. But to try to defend one's school as best, in a contest with another institution, with the best letters read orally by students to the class, could inspire some collection of facts and gradually increase the tempo of

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<sup>44</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 255.

<sup>45</sup>Carnegie was a great letter writer. He wrote to newspapers, presidents, associates, and friends in an ever increasing flow.

<sup>46</sup>When Uncle Lauder suggested shortly after the Carnegies came to America that Carnegie and "Dod" correspond and each write in a contest defending their respective lands, the young immigrant to America was driven to a variety of reference books to try to prove his newly adopted country superior.

correspondence by the more able students. So handwriting, compositions, essays, and for abler students, even the writing of plays and dramatic productions, are possibilities.<sup>47</sup>

Children need early experience at acting in short plays, in being exposed to drama, and in being introduced to poetry and great literature. Great literature varies in complexity, and over-analysis should be avoided, but even young children can learn by heart various short verses and wise sayings. Memorization, especially for a classroom recitation, is valuable.<sup>48</sup>

Said Carnegie:

I was especially favored in the realm of poetry, for before I was twelve my uncle had so aroused my taste for recitation that I had most of Burns' chief poems by heart. Burns was first, and also naturally last, with Uncle, whose range of literature was narrow, but whose soul was deep. To the last he never was quite reconciled to what he called my craze for Shakespeare, but as I could always accompany him in joint quotations from the Ploughman, this was some atonement for divided allegiance. . . . Do fill your minds while still young with the finest passages of the poets -- these will prove your trusty friends. . . . He is<sup>49</sup> never alone who is accompanied by noble thoughts.

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<sup>47</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 113.

<sup>48</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 21.

<sup>49</sup>Carnegie, "Confession of Religious Faith," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, pp. 304-305.

Carnegie received his first pennies from his teacher and from his uncle for reciting. Children at this early age need praise and need rewards -- indeed we all do!

#### 4. Mathematics, Science, and Technical Subjects

While the basic subject of the elementary school is reading and the cluster of language arts subjects around reading -- spelling, speech, handwriting, composition, poetry, dramatics -- mathematics is the second most vital part of the curriculum. Then, of course, come science, history, geography, music, art, and physical exercise. Carnegie approved of all of these. The magnate would not have been so sure of the virtues of modern mathematics, but he strongly believed that the school should lead society and the community in teaching the metric system. This would bring "order out of chaos."<sup>50</sup> Just as the decimal system for money, which America used, was superior to the absurd English monetary system, so the metric system was better than the inches and feet, the pints, and quarts, the ounces and pounds which America had inherited from England.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, while in Carnegie's day, the English continued to try to teach all the units of this archaic system, Americans began to ignore the in between measures, the rods, the cubits, the stones, until today, even educated Americans tend to know only a few of the measuring units in their antediluvian system. Americans in common practice may speak of something being so many inches long, or so many feet, or yards. If they wish to go beyond the yard, they

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<sup>50</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 176.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 177.



begin to express the distance not in the rod or the furlong (except at horse races), but they will speak of one hundred feet or yards, two hundred, five hundred, even a thousand feet, or yards. Or perhaps the Americans may simply divide the next measure they know and speak of a quarter mile, three-quarters of a mile. The inexactitude of talking of city blocks as a measure, showing the urban nature of our society, or one-third mile, or perhaps fifteen hundred feet, are all indicative of the bind the English system of measurement has pressed upon us. In the same way we move from ounce to pound to ton, ignoring the former intermediate measures, so that we speak of something weighing five hundred pounds, or a quarter ton. The cumbersome additional learning necessitated by having to teach that a mile is 5,280 feet or that there are 640 acres in a square mile is nowhere more evident than when we see urban residents trying to purchase half-acre or quarter-acre suburban housing sites and determine just how large their lot will be. America is handicapped by being bimathematical, using the metric system for every scientific purpose and yet teaching the vernacular mathematics for the people to learn in the common school.

Carnegie would have been most distressed to find that England, which finally went metric just a few years ago, had led the way, and America was behind the mother country in this matter. Indeed, America remains the one large nation still

refusing to adjust to the decimal system. Certainly Carnegie would have been for conversion to the centigrade scale and dropping the fahrenheit measure of temperature. This too is merely a decimal matter, adjusting ourselves to starting our thermometers at freezing with a range up to boiling, instead of beginning a temperature at a zero that means nothing and arriving at a hundred that is also meaningless. The magnate was ready to try new things, to test them, and to adopt them if they proved successful.

In both math and science, Carnegie believed in the discovery method.<sup>52</sup> Children needed to have their curiosity unleashed as they sought to find for themselves the best way and the real answers. Math was a part of finding the answer and science was a part of the wonder of the universe. Especially in science, the schools need equipment to make experiments, to teach the subjects, to give young children a chance to handle the tools. Aquariums in the classroom, for instance, are very desirable.<sup>53</sup> Some small animals might be caged in the classroom and the children allowed to feed them, watch them, see how they

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<sup>52</sup>Wall, Carnegie, p. 863.

<sup>53</sup>Carnegie, Our Coaching Trip, p. 25.

produce young.<sup>54</sup> A positive good was to inculcate early in the child the love of animals, and a concern for all creatures, all of life. There were values to be taught even in science. The camera was superior to the gun; it was better to take a picture which might last forever than to snuff out life needlessly and call it "sport." It was far better to shoot a picture than a rifle.<sup>55</sup> The elementary school should teach the dangers of smoking, drinking, and drugs very early, before children are exposed to these hazards. A math lesson might deal in explicit terms with how most people are bound to lose most of the time when they gamble. Thus values could be taught in science and in math.

Carnegie also believed that children needed to be taught the simple rules of health, of caring for oneself, of personal cleanliness.<sup>56</sup> Here you have the typical values of the middle class teacher, sent to an inner city school. The only hope of success lies in some value-sharing; some willingness to accept part of the community culture while suggesting improvements outside values. Science itself should begin with

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<sup>54</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 22-23.

<sup>55</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, pp. 70-71.

<sup>56</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 135.

personal care, a few hints on health, on dress, and on living.<sup>57</sup>

Science and the social studies meet on the need for field trips.<sup>58</sup> Familiarizing children with their own community is the beginning of orientation for life. The guided trip with the teacher is a form of experience education which is necessary for every child. In a small community this may take the form of a walking trip, in which the teacher points out the kinds of stores, types of jobs, and the typical vegetation of the town and its environs. In a larger community, where museums are available, it is very valuable to take children to these.<sup>59</sup>

In any case, the community should become part of the classroom, a laboratory experiment in how people live, work, play, and travel. In inner city communities, free field trips should be arranged by the Board of Education.<sup>60</sup> Trips to science museums, art galleries, flower shows, or just a walk in the woods are all valuable. The Dunfermline Trust financed free field trips

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<sup>57</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 340.

<sup>58</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 137.

<sup>59</sup> Carnegie, "Value of the World's Fair to the American People," p. 421.

<sup>60</sup> Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 117, suggested the magnate might spend some of his money on international field trips, paying for the cost of students traveling to broaden themselves. This never occurred, but Carnegie loved to travel.

for Dunfermline elementary school children with some of the Carnegie money. Field trips are a multi-disciplinary experience, valuable for children and teachers as well if the modern concepts of open classrooms are to be believed.

While the elementary school needs to set its sights high, the middle class teacher of inner city children should always keep in mind the probable destination of most of her charges. There are absolute needs to train skilled craftsmen and technicians if the nation is to continue. Opportunities should be stressed. Carnegie declared: "Let no one, therefore, under-rate the advantage of education; only it must be education adapted to the end in view, and must give instruction bearing upon a man's career if he is to make his way to fortune."<sup>61</sup> Vocational education needed to be stressed quite early.<sup>62</sup> Carnegie saw manufacturing spreading throughout the world, machines becoming more automatic, and a continual need for labor that would do the world's work.<sup>63</sup> While we will consider how Carnegie

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<sup>61</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 112.

<sup>62</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 10. Lynch really misses the point here, however, when he declares that many educators agreed "with Mr. Carnegie's views, namely that the vocational side of education should be stressed, and that science should replace the classics." Actually, Carnegie never wished to see science replace the classics. See Chapter Ten for more on this matter.

<sup>63</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 180.

felt on these matters in greater detail when we discuss the secondary schools and colleges in the next chapter, it is enough to suggest here that between science and math, at the elementary level, Carnegie believed there was a place for what once was referred to as manual training. Children needed to be taught to use simple tools, to repair small appliances, to be taught how electricity ran through a wire. In his book on James Watt, the magnate stressed: "We may be pardoned for again emphasizing the fact that it is not only for his discoveries and inventions that Watt is to be credited, but also for the manual ability . . . for his greatest idea might have remained an "airy nothing," had he not been also the mechanic able to produce it in the concrete."<sup>64</sup> So math and science met in the practical needs of the technical arts, some understanding of which was necessary for every child in our mechanical age.

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<sup>64</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, pp. 62-63.

## 5. The Social Sciences

History, along with literature, is the most important of the value carriers; Carnegie believed there is great worth in building story interest in history, in showing people how to live, in indicating by the success of young men the true path that should be followed.<sup>65</sup> The most consequential reasons for studying history are to understand the past in terms of the present, to place the self in context, to have some knowledge of the great men of the past as exemplars of the present, to grasp some facts about chronology and causality. To make the study of history as concrete and meaningful as possible it was wise to have field trips, to visit local places of historical interest, and to establish and visit historical museums where objects of the past might be viewed.<sup>66</sup> Just as the present is more important than the past, so current events as a study, is more necessary, immediate, and proper to study than history. At least this was Carnegie's belief. History should be understood in terms of current events. Children need to be taught

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<sup>65</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 208.

<sup>66</sup>Carnegie, "The Best Use of Wealth," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 212.

to read newspapers; they should receive special instructions in understanding the parts and purposes of the newspaper.<sup>67</sup> Carnegie asserted: "Teach a man how to read and you at once invest him with the appetite for reading. And what can be of greater interest than the world's history read in contemporary lights."<sup>68</sup> Ancient history, as a field of elaborate study in the elementary or even the secondary schools, Carnegie felt was valueless.<sup>69</sup> A survey of the ancient past was in order, but detailed concern should be left to the antiquarians. History, then, is a value carrier, imparted lessons worth teaching, lessons that should be built upon story interest. The supreme worth of history is most completely evident when it allowed the child to find himself in time and in place, when it permitted the child to see relationships and most consequential of all, when the child is able to grasp the significance of the present in the light of the past.

There were dangers, too, in the teaching of history. Carnegie saw China as having a great and important ancient historical heritage, but the worship of the past was, in the

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<sup>67</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 344.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 80.



magnate's day, still making each generation a mere copy of the last, so that the west had bypassed China.<sup>70</sup> Thus children should not be taught to worship the past as the good old days, or the golden age, but actively be taught to expect change and that change was a part of life.<sup>71</sup> More pertinent, even, was the Carnegie concern that history, in glorifying the heritage of a particular nation-state, led to a chauvanism that perpetuated wars. The outstanding figures of the past were often warriors, "great slaughterers," Carnegie called them. History was too often the story of past wars and a tale of palace intrigues which Carnegie felt was valueless. Yet Americanism needed to be taught; there was a national need to inculcate love of the country and love of the flag as a symbol of the nation.<sup>72</sup> The opening exercises of the classroom, beginning with the salute to the flag, the singing of the national anthem, tended to teach positive virtues. There was a fine line, however, to be drawn here, a careful road to be followed; it was well to try to stir love and respect for one's homeland on the one hand, without developing absurd warlike patriotism on the other.

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<sup>70</sup> Carnegie, Round the World, p. 106.

<sup>71</sup> This can lead the teacher into a sort of conundrum, of which the maxim "Expect the unexpected," is a good example.

<sup>72</sup> Carnegie, Coaching Trip, p. 24.

The study of history tended to perpetuate wars. The "child must first learn that Washington's foe was England." Carnegie spoke of how his young nephews did "rise from the Revolutionary story and feel about England as I did about her and her kings and monarchy."<sup>73</sup> The study by each nation of its own private heroes leads always to a villain of the piece, a neighbor nation that must be considered evil at the time in order to place the national hero in proper perspective. What is the solution to this problem? Carnegie suggested that if children learned these history lessons at the age of seven, they were going to take quite a while to outgrow them. Our wars, with Britain, Mexico, Spain, Germany, Austria, and Japan could cloud the feelings of generations of our children for a long time to come. In another article on this same theme, "Does America Hate England?" Carnegie asserted:

Much stress has been laid in the discussion upon American school books reciting the facts of American history; this is held to make every American boy and girl a hater of England. This is undoubtedly true; and the pity of it is that there is no possible escape, for American history begins

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<sup>73</sup>Carnegie, "Do Americans Hate England," p. 758.

with the result of the colonies and their struggle for the rights of Britons. . . . It is impossible to do otherwise than state the facts as they occurred; and even if there were added the further facts that some of the greatest and best of British statesmen opposed the attempt to tax the colonies . . . and that now the kindness and consideration with which Britain reigns over her colonies gives an example to the whole world, these things would make no impression upon children. The young American must begin in our day as an intense hater of England; and this we must accept: generations will elapse before it can be greatly modified.

On the other hand, . . . Englishmen and Hessians fighting Washington must give place in the minds of the young, as they grow older, to other pictures in which Britain and America are standing side by side, the two great pillars of civil and religious liberty throughout the world.<sup>74</sup>

Carnegie wished to show that the real danger of wars lay in the continuing historical hatreds that might take centuries to wipe away. Americans may have some resentments and prejudices against England, but these are no longer "deep, permanent," hatreds.<sup>75</sup> Trade wars, Canadian questions, Venezuelan controversies,

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<sup>74</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Does America Hate England?" Contemporary Review, November, 1897, pp. 660-668, reprinted in The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays, ed. by Edward C. Kirkland, pp. 200-201. This article was reprinted also in the Electric Magazine, December, 1897, and in Living Age, December 4, 1897. It represents a constant theme of Carnegie's and is not to be confused with Andrew Carnegie's earlier article, already cited, "Do Americans Hate England?" North American Review, June, 1890.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

fisheries disputes may muddy the waters, but children should be taught that there will always be world problems. However, arbitration is the answer to international disputes. As the American student learns more of the great men of Britain, as "the young American learns that from Britain he has derived, not only his language, but his laws, religion, and even his free institutions; and that the political institutions of the two countries are similar . . . . From this time on, the race sentiment grows stronger and stronger in his heart as knowledge increases."<sup>76</sup>

The problem was a constant concern for the magnate, who in another article, "Imperial Federation," took up the same theme:

The American boy is forever to be in youth the hater of the old home, for in his early years he is fed with stories of the Revolution -- of the struggles and sufferings of Washington and his patriot army, of the desire of his native land for independence, and of the mistaken efforts of Britain to hold it in subjection.

This early impression of Britain as the oppressor of his country is not easily removed.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., pp. 201-202.

<sup>77</sup> Carnegie, "Imperial Federation," in Gospel of Wealth, p. 226.

One solution, Carnegie pointed out to Britain, was that she free her colonies, so there would not be further Revolutionary Wars remembered for centuries.

Again the magnate returns to the theme in his Autobiography:

War breeds war, . . . every battle sows the seeds of future battles, and . . . nations become traditional enemies. The experience of American boys is that of the Scotch. They grow up to read of Washington and Valley Forge, of Hessians hired to kill Americans, and they come to hate the very name of Englishman. Such was my experience with my American nephews. Scotland was all right, but England that had fought Scotland was the wicked partner. Not till they became men was the prejudice eradicated, and even yet some of it may linger.<sup>78</sup>

The Scotch boys too were raised on stories of England and Scotland fighting. The tales of Bruce and Wallace, the very ballads of Scotland, the poems of Burns, and the literature of Scott made young chauvanists of students. Even the study of "the dead languages and their semi-supernatural, quarrelsome, self-seeking heroes," which were not worth learning, also inspired national feelings.<sup>79</sup> The seminal influence of history

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<sup>78</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 16.

<sup>79</sup> Carnegie, James Watt, p. 16.

in producing "future hatred or affection," is so strong, that Carnegie suggested the only true solution was a rewriting of history.<sup>80</sup>

This Carnegie revisionism would alter history by looking at the positive side of developments. The wars would be mentioned, but only as examples of the evils of the past, showing the benighted ignorance of earlier ages. Washington would be seen as a reformer, a revolutionary yes, but a man whose contemporaries claimed he was not only first in war, but of more importance, first in peace. The Revolution would be viewed as forced upon America not by the people of Britain, but by her rulers. The role of Edmund Burke and others who opposed the war in Britain would be strongly accented. Finally, the influence of the American Revolution upon subsequent British history would be taught. How George III went mad after the war and how no king tried to be absolute since that time in Britain would be emphasized. The influence of the Revolution in driving the bad king mad and steering Britain toward more open democracy would be stressed. Peace would become the model, the core of the new history; the heroes of peace who fought to end the

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<sup>80</sup> Carnegie, "Does America Hate England?" in Gospel of Wealth, p. 202.

absurd wars of the past would be the examples of youth. Children would be taught the virtues of peace, beginning on a simple level in early elementary school and no doubt the college curriculum would contain such courses as Peace 101 and Peace 201, with Peace 101 as a prerequisite. More mature students would examine propaganda and the psychology of wars. The wastefulness of wars would be made abundantly clear. The study of peaceful cultures whose people were happy, would be suggested as models. The point would be driven home that preparations for war are not preventatives for war but the steps toward war.<sup>81</sup> Democracy, as a positive good, would be taught.<sup>82</sup> The optimism, the progress, the upward tendency of the whole human race, in a Darwinian, evolutionary manner, would be asserted, and along with the rising standards of the whole human race, the task of each generation to further elevate and enlighten would be placed squarely before even the very young.

In the same way, geography would accent world unities and similarities rather than differences.<sup>83</sup> The books and audio-

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<sup>81</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "The Palace of Peace . . . An Address Delivered at The Hague, August 29, 1913, on the Occasion of Presenting the Bust of Sir Randal Cremer to the Palace of Peace." No date; no publisher, p. 4. Pamphlet is in the Library of Congress collection.

<sup>82</sup>Carnegie, "Do Americans Hate England," p. 754.

<sup>83</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 117.

visual materials might show the quaint foreign peculiarities, but they would also dwell upon the basic unity of the universe, the brotherhood of man, the hunger for wholeness and understanding that lies within all men. Simply put, this unity would underline the obvious facts that all men were born, most dwell in some family relationship, many worship, all must earn money or find food. Clothes and ornamentation may vary, but all men wear some apparel. The accent on unity would suggest too, how the world is moving together due to modern technology. The standardization of mechanical products means more and more men are coming to use the same implements. The advent of radio and television, the vast increases in ability to move about the planet, are making for unity. History and geography combine in indicating how the telegraph, the telephone, the airplane, automobile, railroad, and steamship, have brought men together. Communication and transportation need to be studied in this relationship. The student needs to know something of the great world divisions too: the languages of the world, the religions, the cultures, and the effect of geography upon man and his history. The coming unity of the English speaking peoples and of Europe, the eventual world unity that must come to save mankind, needs the active proselytizing of the teacher as missionary.

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These were oft-repeated Carnegie beliefs.



## 6. Music and Art

- Music, to Andrew Carnegie, was "an aid to high living and pure refined enjoyment."<sup>85</sup> Indeed, the magnate found that "music is heaven."<sup>86</sup> Biographer Alderson, in his visit to Skibo Castle, discovered that the music on the organ began "every morning before breakfast. . . . It is Mr. Carnegie's substitute for family prayers."<sup>87</sup> In fact, it was the Swedenborgian Society and choir singing that first developed in Carnegie the taste for music,<sup>88</sup> and one of his oft-repeated phrases was the maxim from Confucius: "Music, sacred tongue of God! I hear thee calling and I come."<sup>89</sup> For some of his guests at Skibo Castle, Carnegie's most outstanding aberration was his employment of a personal Scotch piper who strolled about the castle awakening guests in the early morning by playing the bagpipes. Since Carnegie was an early riser, the

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<sup>85</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 261.

<sup>86</sup> Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 18; Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 332.

<sup>87</sup> Alderson, Carnegie, p. 224.

<sup>88</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 49.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

magnate thought this was only normal, but for some who concluded that the bagpipe was the only musical instrument that, if played well, still sounded as if the instrumentalist needed lessons, it was the major trial at the castle. Carnegie found the Japanese music horrible, but he never considered that anyone would dislike Scotch bagpipes.<sup>90</sup> Instead Carnegie, Star-Spangled Scotchman that he was, took his piper back home to New York with him.<sup>91</sup> Carnegie's love of music is remarked on by almost everyone who wrote of him.<sup>92</sup> Carnegie gave away thousands of organs, wrote again and again of his love of music,<sup>93</sup> was "President of the New York Oratorio Society for many years and attended all its concerts,"<sup>94</sup> loved to listen to good orchestras,<sup>95</sup> built Carnegie Hall in New York and contributed \$50,000 annually to his good friend,

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<sup>90</sup>Carnegie, Round the World, p. 37.

<sup>91</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 208.

<sup>92</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 15; Lynch, Personal Recollections, pp. 60, 91-100; Winkler, Incredible Carnegie, p. 9; Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, p. 326, Vol. II, p. 260; Wall, Carnegie, pp. 829-830, 854, 943.

<sup>93</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 49-50, 138, 208, 261, 311.

<sup>94</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 97.

<sup>95</sup>Pennsylvania Post, March 3, 1901, p. 18. This contains a long article on the Carnegie love of orchestras.

Walter Damrosch.<sup>96</sup>

Carnegie saw the value of a choral society in every town,<sup>97</sup> and felt that music indeed soothed the savage child. Any school that did not make use of music, was missing a real opportunity to bring in the community for shows, for unifying classrooms of disparate students, and to bring a little light into the dreary world of the school. "A taste for good music," he declared, "was as necessary to progress as a taste for good reading."<sup>98</sup> It was obviously necessary to teach singing so that the students could perform without "slurring over or cutting off troublesome syllables."<sup>99</sup> Indeed, for young children as well as adults, music was one way to reach people that might not be reachable in any other way. This is especially true for inner city or underprivileged children. Carnegie quoted Goethe to the effect that "Straight roads lead from music to everything good."<sup>100</sup> Music could be utilized to teach of foreign places, to call children to order, and to give those with special

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<sup>96</sup>Hendrick, "Benefactions of Carnegie," p. 33.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>98</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 260.

<sup>99</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 337.

<sup>100</sup>Carnegie, "The Best Use of Wealth," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 216.

abilities a chance to be recognized here. Music indeed could be used to lead everywhere. In the elementary school and in the high school, some instrumental music, bands, even orchestras, need to be established.<sup>101</sup> There is a necessity to explain the great music to the student, in the upper grades or in secondary school, to make certain that each individual at least is exposed to the finest of music. Some connection with the best music available over the media or in the community should also be made. If there are concerts, school tickets should be obtained at special prices and the students should attend as a group. Music should be seen as a high art as well as merely sound and expression.

Art, Carnegie felt less strongly attracted to, though he declared that it "beautifies and refines life."<sup>102</sup> Color and art, as with music, the magnate felt, was heaven upon earth. "I am firmly convinced that no surer means of improving the tastes of men can be found than through color and the sense of beauty," Carnegie asserted.<sup>103</sup> There is no universal truth in

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<sup>101</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 338-339.

<sup>102</sup>Carnegie, "William Chambers," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 211.

<sup>103</sup>Carnegie, "The Best Use of Wealth," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 213.

art, music, or literature, the steel king emphasized, and "since art is universal, and the judgment of the masses of the people is finally to prove the truest test of the supreme in art," students should be shown something of all schools and all kinds of art.<sup>104</sup> Art must please the people, not the critics, to survive.<sup>105</sup> But of course the critics will have their day. Carnegie wrote to W. M. Frew concerning the names to be carved on the Carnegie Institute: "Some of the names have no business to be on the list. Imagine Dickens in and Burns out. Among painters Perugini out and Rubens in, the latter only a painter of fat, vulgar women, while a study of the pictures of Raphael will show anyone that he was really only a copyist of Perugini, whose pupil he was. Imagine science and Franklin not there."<sup>106</sup> Certainly art, as with music, is a way to reach certain students that can be reached in no other way. Students should be allowed free expression and permitted to draw freely.<sup>107</sup> Field trips to art museums and local art galleries was a means of suggesting the best in art.<sup>108</sup> Students on field trips in large urban areas

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 213-214.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., Vol. II, p. 217.

<sup>106</sup> Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 28.

<sup>107</sup> Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, pp. 316-318.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., pp. 324-325.

should have examples of architecture pointed out to them; architecture is one of the most practical aspects of art.<sup>109</sup> Views of the city from above, from a skyscraper, may indicate art, urban history, and sociology all at once.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., pp. 329-330.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 332.

## 7. Physical Fitness

It is rather obvious that Carnegie would have joined those who believe today that ROTC should be eliminated from the secondary and college curriculums and also those who felt that sports such as football were unnecessary on the college campus. The magnate joined with President Eliot of Harvard and would have agreed with Chancellor Hutchins of the University of Chicago that college football should be eliminated.<sup>111</sup> The steel king felt, as many did who had not been to college, that the purpose of college was to learn, and those who had come to the university to waste their time and their father's money, should be elsewhere doing other things. Carnegie declared sarcastically at one point: "It is the business of the preacher to preach, of the physician to practice, of the poet to write, the business of the university professor to teach, and the business of the college student, one might sometimes think, from the amount of attention bestowed upon it, to play football."<sup>112</sup> The magnate agreed that young men should exercise, that common schools should have gymnasiums, and that secondary schools and colleges

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<sup>111</sup> Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 137. Carnegie wrote to Charles Eliot, December 7, 1906, asking Eliot for a copy of the latter's address denouncing football.

<sup>112</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 189.

should have swimming pools and broad fields. But what really created annoyance, was the magnate's feeling that a school was after all a school. Buildings, laboratories, libraries, books, lecture halls, quiet walks, a setting in a park, this was all very understandable. Even the Greek ideal, of a sound mind in a sound body was not one with which the magnate cared to quarrel. But while one might train to set records at running, throwing, jumping, swimming, and lifting, was it necessary that these things be connected with a university? Further, what did even these records for individual physical achievement have to do with a group of muscular fools on scholarships training for hours to run madly into another group of muscular fools. Carnegie would have been delighted with the opportunity to attend college from eighteen to twenty-two, but instead he was working, trying to rise, helping his family. He felt strongly that if he had attended college during that period of his life, it would have been to learn, to read, to think, to write, to ask questions, to study, to talk, and to develop his mind. Seeing young men with this noble opportunity never granted him, squandering their time and their parents' money by bruising themselves and others, was enough to make the magnate supremely angry. When Woodrow Wilson asked Carnegie out to Princeton in the hope that the steel king would make a large contribution to that University, the magnate asked questions about the football



games Princeton played, and finally agreed to give Princeton what it needed, a man-made lake for rowing crews and water sports so that students might forget the madness of football and consider the more rewarding aspects of nature as they became involved in water sports.<sup>113</sup> Horseback riding, for instance, was a natural and ideal sport.<sup>114</sup> ROTC and football, however, were examples of elements in the college curriculum that should be totally eliminated.

Carnegie himself was always very energetic, but never very physically strong. As a telegraph messenger boy, he knew that he might be required to climb a pole to help fix the wires in an emergency, and though the contingency never took place, the problem was enough to worry the Scotch boy. Practice as he would, Carnegie could not learn to climb the telegraph poles as the other boys did.<sup>115</sup> What was especially annoying about this was that the magnate was always a competitor and wished to

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<sup>113</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Address by Andrew Carnegie at the Presentation of Princeton Lake," December 5, 1906, no place, privately published, no date. A copy of this pamphlet is in the Carnegie Library at Pittsburgh.

<sup>114</sup> Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 95.

<sup>115</sup> Alderson, Carnegie, p. 19.

"win" at any game he played, and here was a competition in which he failed. Later, well past middle age, when Carnegie discovered golf, he gloried each time he won a game from somebody. He even wrote his friends about victories over other guests at Skibo Castle, who played there on his private course. Sometimes he admitted that the younger men gave him a certain number of strokes, but a "win" even with his opponents handicapped, he felt was a "win" in any case. And Carnegie loved to win. Unlike climbing telephone poles, Carnegie came to love golf, to feel that the walking about helped him to stay physically fit, which might well have been true. The magnate wrote an article for the Independent entitled Dr. Golf, in which he extolled the virtues of the game.<sup>116</sup> One of the great virtues of golf, of course, was that it was a game of Scotch origin. Since golf was also a sport that required energy and determination, which Carnegie possessed, he enjoyed it far more than pole climbing.

Carnegie did believe in a competitiveness in school, making school work a game, and enjoying life as much as possible.<sup>117</sup> Outdoor sports might be competitive, but also should

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<sup>116</sup> Andrew Carnegie, "Doctor Golf," Independent, June 1, 1911, pp. 1180-1192.

<sup>117</sup> New York Times, January 31, 1901.

bring men to nature and make them brothers.<sup>118</sup> Physical activities and games were important, and those subjects taught in school that could be reduced to games or presented as story interest should be, but one should also never forget the most important reason for schools and colleges -- they were places where one came in order to acquire an education.

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<sup>118</sup>Carnegie, "Dr. Golf," pp. 1183-1188.

CHAPTER TEN

Andrew Carnegie on Secondary and Higher Education

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## Chapter Ten

## Andrew Carnegie on Secondary and Higher Education

## 1. The Education of Women

This chapter on secondary and higher education will deal with Andrew Carnegie's views on the education of women, on the curriculum, on specialization in school, standards in schools, the place of the secondary school and college in American society, and the value of a college education itself. Though Carnegie held none but honorary degrees, never took a college course, attended any secondary school with a definite program, and was an elementary school drop out, as so many of his generation, he read widely, visited schools, counted among his friends the leading educators of his day, and had definite viewpoints on all these matters. He saw women as the equal of man, different in many ways, a creature who was the softer, better side of man, but he did not fear education for women. The best of women were the educated women who could share in the intellectual life of man. In the same way the steel king had definite views on the curriculum. School was not an endless chain with the next grade or level of schooling supposed to cover with its remedial efforts the failures of the lower school. The child learned or left. School was not forever. People should decide upon careers early and use schools in furthering their careers. The Carnegie Unit indicates the extent that the magnate saw all of education as a whole; for the

definition of a college could only come by defining a secondary school. Finally we note the importance of manual training and the value of a college education. Carnegie truly loved the colleges, education in general, the ideal of the schools, that of learning, and of course the educated woman.

Though Andrew Carnegie tended to romanticize women,<sup>1</sup> to enshrine them, to treat them with nineteenth century courtesy, to hold them as special beings worthy of being revered, he was also well aware that women varied in personality and abilities as greatly as men. The magnate claimed to have hired and trained the first female telegraph operator ever employed; he believed that for many tasks, even mechanical ones, women were quite as capable as men. In his book, Round the World, Carnegie made it abundantly clear that he felt the social culture and education of a country formed the personality and character of its people. Oriental women were regarded as inferior to men, given little in the way of meaningful education, and expected to remain mute during many social occasions. As a result, Carnegie much preferred the company of intelligent, educated western women, who were capable of discussing matters with him on equal terms. Not all western women exhibited this capacity; some were giddy, simple creatures, pleasant enough for the moment, but not sufficient company for a lifetime. The highest type of women was one who read, was educated, could speak well

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<sup>1</sup>For Carnegie as a romantic, see Chapter Five, Section Nine.

on a variety of topics, had the energy to travel, ride horses, and entertain. Anne Botta, Queen Victoria, Leila Addison, Louise Whitfield, and his mother, Margaret Morrison Carnegie, were examples of this highest type of woman. These were women who read, women who were educated or self-educated, women who were active and entertaining. The very belief by society that a group is incapable of achieving, is enough to make achievement difficult, if not unlikely; it is only when we expect achievement that our anticipations lead to success. Anticipation of success coupled with the freedom to achieve leads any group to prosper best.<sup>2</sup>

In elementary and secondary schools, there is a need to give some thought to the education of women as mothers. Some training should be offered in the care of the home, the raising of children, and the ways of bringing happiness to a family.

Said Carnegie:

A woman can enter into the life of her husband, sharing all his cares, bringing to him a refining influence that counteracts the coarser elements of the world in which he works, who makes a really beautiful home, and brings up children to be fine, good men and women, does more for the world than any woman can ever do in politics or public life.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 106. The quotation is from a dinner conversation remark Carnegie made.

Carnegie would have feared in the women's liberation movement of today that the women might lose the superiority they already had. Certainly he saw the best tutor as a boy's mother and the need of girls to receive training in family life and home-making.<sup>4</sup> Girls need to be taken aside early in elementary school and given a little guidance and counseling on how to handle and deal with that strange beast -- man. Pre-adolescents and adolescents of both sexes need help in understanding their emotions. Girls especially, Carnegie believed, needed to realize that the way to captivate a man was to be able to share his interests and hopes. Louise Whitfield convinced the magnate that she loved Scotland more than the steel king himself. She conveyed the impression to others that she was more Scotch in attitude than Carnegie himself. Her feelings for the wild Scotch flowers seemed greater than her husband's own concern. Whether this interest of Louise Whitfield's was sincerely as intense as Carnegie believed, we shall never know, but the magnate regarded his wife's love of the things he loved as "fulfilling" his "fondest dreams."<sup>5</sup> The woman of many interests Carnegie believed, had the most to offer. The need to educate

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<sup>4</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 207.



women to be good wives and mothers was not even relegated to elementary and secondary school. The Carnegie Institute of Technology<sup>6</sup> had as a sister institution the Margaret Morrison Carnegie College, named for the magnate's mother. This college, in Carnegie's day, and for a long time thereafter, had a curriculum centered around homemaking activities: dietetics, food chemistry, home economics, "dressmaking, weaving, and designing."<sup>7</sup> The Margaret Morrison Carnegie College today still offers to train women for business and research, and while much of the training aims to supply the female assistants to the male engineers who will graduate from the Carnegie Institute of Technology, the need exists for these lab assistants, and even this was a step forward in Carnegie's day.

Yet, while acting as a tutor to her children was the primeval task and high duty of women, Anne Botta was an example of what could be expected from the very best of women. "It is a pity that those who fear that the highest education, the widest range of knowledge, upon the part of women will make them less feminine, did not know Madame Botta," Carnegie asserted.

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<sup>6</sup> Arthur W. Tarbell, The Story of Carnegie Tech, 1900-1935 (Pittsburgh: 1937) is the most important study of the history of this institution.

<sup>7</sup> Hendrick, "Benefactions of Carnegie," pp. 38-39.

"Everything she knew -- and she knew much, and thought deeply -- made her a higher type of woman. She had not a trace of anything in her whole being which was not exquisitely feminine."<sup>8</sup> Higher education for women, was not an anomaly or harmful. Women should read and think deeply. Carnegie believed that the novel, Scottish Chiefs, by Jane Porter, even though it dealt with almost continual warfare, was a great book for girls to read. It was written by a female and Louise Whitfield loved it.<sup>9</sup> While this belief that women should read and think does not seem to be a very revolutionary concept today, the idea that higher education could be valuable for women and not baneful was a minority opinion when Carnegie expressed it three-quarters of a century ago.

Both the elementary and high school need to offer counseling services and guidance to help young people. While groups of school children have always met for friendship, and Carnegie's adolescent coterie known as "the Original Six" engaged in a variety of activities, gang action of any kind was anathema to the magnate. Mob rule, disrespect for law, violence in any form, were evil. Counseling also was needed to help prevent

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<sup>8</sup>Carnegie, "Anne C. L. Botta," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 155.

<sup>9</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 207.

disastrous early marriages. The hasty marriage was especially to be avoided.<sup>10</sup> Young people should not marry without due thought. Where the home failed to offer guidance, the school needed to take up the slack to help preserve society. There was especially a need to counsel young people on the value of money. Actually the need to counsel concerning the value of money increased enormously when young people considered marrying. Carnegie viewed favorably the Chinese custom of buying brides, only because he felt this would insure that the young man had been steady enough to accumulate some capital.<sup>11</sup> The steel king thought this was a useful custom, one that America and the west might well consider. The thought was not so much a typical example of nineteenth century male chauvanism, as an effort to make young men reflect, consider that marriage and money were related factors, and therefore marrying was not a simple adventure to be entered into lightly. There was a need for the school to give advice and counsel to its students as to jobs, careers, education, marriages, and money.

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<sup>10</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 201.

<sup>11</sup> Carnegie, "Wealth and its Uses," p. 14; Carnegie, James Watt, p. 59; Carnegie, Round the World, p. 69.

disastrous early marriages. The hasty marriage was especially to be avoided.<sup>10</sup> Young people should not marry without due thought. Where the home failed to offer guidance, the school needed to take up the slack to help preserve society. There was especially a need to counsel young people on the value of money. Actually the need to counsel concerning the value of money increased enormously when young people considered marrying. Carnegie viewed favorably the Chinese custom of buying brides, only because he felt this would insure that the young man had been steady enough to accumulate some capital.<sup>11</sup> The steel king thought this was a useful custom, one that America and the west might well consider. The thought was not so much a typical example of nineteenth century male chauvanism, as an effort to make young men reflect, consider that marriage and money were related factors, and therefore marrying was not a simple adventure to be entered into lightly. There was a need for the school to give advice and counsel to its students as to jobs, careers, education, marriages, and money.

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<sup>10</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 201.

<sup>11</sup> Carnegie, "Wealth and its Uses," p. 14; Carnegie, James Watt, p. 59; Carnegie, Round the World, p. 69.

## 2. Secondary Education: Curriculum and Specialization

While the purpose of the Carnegie elementary school is to teach the foundation subjects well, the high school extends the basic background of the student to many of the important branches of knowledge thereby suggesting to the pupil possible future occupations or interests. The Carnegie elementary school is divided into primary, middle school, and junior high, as are our most modern American schools today. Differentiated ages have become a key factor. The primary school, with children from two years to ten, entering when they need to and leaving as they learn to read at a third grade level, is the first school. The middle school, with children from seven to fourteen, is a place where the early knowledge of reading and math is broadened and deepened. While the primary child may only know how to count and add, the middle school child will move into subtraction, multiplication, and division. They will proceed from the printing of the primary school to the writing of intermediate and from easy reading to a variety of reading matter. There will be history books, geography books, and science books. When they begin to approach sixth grade reading level, they will become candidates for the upper school. The junior high will be a preparation for secondary school, but also a self-contained preparation for life. Children will enter this school from the ages of eleven to

fourteen and leave between the ages of thirteen and sixteen. A real effort will be made to counsel and guide the child, to explain the options ahead, to suggest what subjects may be taken in secondary school, what those subjects are about, what college opportunities exist, and what jobs are available.

The child entering the secondary school should have a reading score of at least 7.0 as a minimum, should know his basic mathematics, been exposed to history, geography, science, music, art, physical education, and counseled as to the future. Carnegie, who favored cost accounting analysis and efficiency experts on the job, would have favored such new approaches now on the horizon of education as the Program Planning Budgeting Systems, the accountability of teachers, the testing movement to determine where the child is, and the hope for individually prescribed diagnostic teaching for each child. Children who were almost sixteen and arrived at the high school with less than a 7.0 reading rate would move into a remedial pattern, but the hope would be that accountability produced some results. For the rest of the students, a sliding scale of entrance requirements would be the standard. The children might enter high school from twelve to sixteen, but the oldest who entered would have the lowest reading scores, the youngest the highest. The child entering high school would have picked up his basic information and reading in the primary and middle school and received an

orientation as to education in the junior high school. He would now be capable of making selections. English literature would be taught; the plays of Shakespeare, and the great works of recent fiction would be read. But, aside from this, the secondary school would offer as much variety as possible. If the children found an interest, they would be allowed to pursue it; and if they had no central concern, they might well enter a work-study shared program until they found an interest. Education is wasted upon the uninterested, until they have found their direction. The steel king did not at all approve of what has become a typical prototype of the middle class young man of today, moving through high school, college, and even graduate school, picking and choosing from the cafeteria line of education, but never able to state what his interest is or his destination might be. Carnegie quoted Carlyle and looked to James Watt as a helpful guide in this matter of choice:

"Happy is the man who has found his work," says Carlyle. Watt found his when yet a boy at school. Thereafter never a doubt existed as to the field of his labors. The choice of an occupation is a serious matter with most young men. . . . When the goddess lays her hand upon a mortal dedicated to her shrine, concentration is the inevitable result; there is no room for anything which does not contribute to her service.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Carnegie, James Watt, p. 16.

The high school needs to have available specialized courses for the future specialist as well as the future generalist to take; each of these may elect to go on to college or not.

The question of the generalist versus the specialist was one that really concerned Carnegie, indeed, he admired the specialists, but felt the generalists, in which class he placed himself, were in the long run superior. The high school has to be a school that prepares those going on to college adequately, but simultaneously it must be a general school for the generalist, who in the end is the best of men. "In regard to what are called the learned professions, we notice the effect produced by specialization to a very marked degree," Carnegie declared.<sup>13</sup> But while the specialists employed the generalists, while the best people knew a wider range of things, there was room for specialists. Concerning lawyers, for instance, Carnegie said:

The legal profession must tend to make clear, but narrow intellects, and . . . great lawyers have seldom arisen to commanding position and power. . . . This does not mean that men who study law become unsatisfactory legislators or statesmen and rulers. If it did, our country, of all others, should be in a bad way, because we are governed by lawyers. But the most famous Americans who have been great men, were not great lawyers. . . . The

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<sup>13</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 217.



great lawyer and the great judge must deal with rules and precedents already established; the lawyer follows precedents, but the ruler of men makes precedents.<sup>14</sup>

Of course America is still governed by lawyers, and the law schools are training schools for politics. But Carnegie was a little sad that the businessman, the true generalist, was not elected to office more often. The businessman "follows a career, . . . which tends not only to sharpen his wits, but to enlarge his powers, that . . . tends not to specialization and the working of the mind within narrow grooves, but tends to develop in a man capacity to judge upon wide data. No professional life embraces so many problems, none other requires so wide a view of affairs in general. I think, therefore, that it may justly be said, for the business career, that it must widen and develop the intellectual powers of its devotee."<sup>15</sup> Carnegie appreciated the specialist, but naturally felt the highest type of man was the supreme generalist, such as himself. The specialist was narrow and provincial. Said Carnegie:

I have learned that the artistic career is most narrowing, and produces such petty jealousies, unfounded vanities, and spitefulness, as to furnish . . . a great contrast to that which I have found in men of affairs.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

Music, painting, sculpture, one would think, should prove most powerful in their beneficent effects. . . . Experience, however, is against this. Perhaps, because the work, or the performance, of artists is so highly personal, so clearly seen, being brought directly before the public, that petty passions are stimulated; the artistic mind becomes prejudiced and narrow.<sup>16</sup>

The businessman, is thus a "man of affairs" when contrasted with artists and other professional specialists.

So, because a variety of interests were necessary, for the generalist, and a variety of specialties possible for the specialist, the high school needs to offer many possibilities.<sup>17</sup> It should prepare a student for college if such was his goal. There should be high schools of commerce and business, for future businessmen and their assistants.<sup>18</sup> Commercial subjects need to be taught in regular high schools, however.<sup>19</sup> Bookkeeping, commercial geography, transportation, commercial law, economics, economic history, money and banking, business organization, and business management were all good subjects to begin on the high

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>18</sup>New York Herald, December 15, 1901, carries an article on Carnegie's interest in the New York High School of Commerce and the attendance of Carnegie, whom the newspaper called the "Dean of the School of Philanthropy" at the dedication of this building.

<sup>19</sup>Alderson, Carnegie, p. 201.

school level and continue on the college level.<sup>20</sup> Advanced mathematics should be offered for those interested in a college career or in the study of mathematics. Algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and calculus all need to be taught. Science, biology, physics, and chemistry need to be offered for the same reason. Such subjects, indeed, were better than the dead languages or a great deal of classical learning.<sup>21</sup> Carnegie distinguished between the later classic plays of Shakespeare and the classics of Greece and Rome. Shakespeare needed to be studied, but the Greek and Roman writers were too far removed from the life of today to be a value to anyone but a student of ancient history. Carnegie announced in a speech March 30, 1889 to the workmen at the Edgar Thompson Steel Mill at Braddock, Pennsylvania:

A knowledge of chemistry, for instance is worth a knowledge of all the dead languages that ever were spoken upon earth; a knowledge of mechanics more useful than all the classical learning that can be crammed into young men at college. What is the young man to do who knows Greek with the young man that knows stenography or telegraphy, for instance, or bookkeeping, or chemistry, or the law of mechanics in these days. Not that any kind of knowledge is to be underrated. All knowledge is, in a sense, useful.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>21</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 81.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

To understand Carnegie we must see him as desiring to promote practical and useful studies, but also favoring pure research in areas where no immediate utilitarian payoff might be expected except for increases in general knowledge such as studies of the seas or the solar system. The realms of study the magnate felt were the most useless were exemplified by the rote relearning of dead languages. He agreed that a certain few students of the ancient civilizations who wished to do actual work in the field of interpreting classical history might find a value in learning ancient Greek, for instance, but Carnegie rebelled at the thought of thousands of college students being given a little training in Greek under the guise of furthering culture. These students would soon forget all but a few phrases of what they had learned and almost none of those who studied the language would continue reading Greek in later life. Talk of transfer of training or the value of doing something difficult because it was good for the spirit, left the magnate as cold as it did the psychologists of learning who later rejected both transfer of training and the concept of education as medicine. Carnegie would agree that the high school should serve many purposes and not pretend, with a full one-third of its students dropping out and another third not going on to college, that it was a college prep school and demand that many of its pupils take such subjects as algebra. While steering everyone who went to high school

through algebra was never attempted in a wholesale fashion, it was a wide-spread enough practice a few decades ago to be worthy of comment. Students going on to college, students with special interests, students who desire certain types of jobs, need to be given a curriculum that will fit their needs. A variety of subjects need to be available and be taught today right on the secondary school level. Psychology, sociology, and even subjects such as ecology ought to be available for students with special interests. Carnegie probably would have favored a course in conservation, which might be akin to the ecology of today.<sup>23</sup> Some modern languages were valuable to learn;<sup>24</sup> James Watt for instance learned French, Italian, and German because there were important writings in these on steam experiments which were not translated.<sup>25</sup> Some history, government, citizenship, and geography all might be taught to good purpose at the secondary level. Above all, some compromise is needed between the traditional teaching psychosis of trying to "cover the material," that is reach the end of the textbook at any cost, and the need for mastery of certain relevant facts to produce a well rounded thinking person.

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<sup>23</sup> Carnegie, "Conservation of Ores," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. II, p. 78.

<sup>24</sup> Alderson, Carnegie, p. 119.

<sup>25</sup> Carnegie, James Watt, pp. 46, 72.

Students coming to American schools from foreign nations should go about the business of learning English as quickly as possible and become assimilated. In fact, Carnegie opposed what will probably be one of the great urban educational revolutions in the early 1970's, that of bilingual, bicultural education in the elementary and secondary schools. Those who favor bilingual bicultural education, especially for Latin American students, are in an analagous position to those who desire Black education as a separate entity. The rationale for bilingual education is that the Puerto Rican and Mexican children have been cheated and mistreated in the southwest and in our great cities. These children have come from poor lands to a rich land so that their parents might find better jobs and they might have a better chance. The suggestion is made that something is needed to redress the balance and help ward off the cultural shock. Their own land is poor and the new land is rich; often the people coming are not aware of the great heritage of Spanish across the whole continent of South America, but they contrast only poor Puerto Rico and Mexico with the United States, concluding that the Spanish language and culture also is inferior. The aim of bilingualism is to build ethnic pride by teaching certain subjects in Spanish. While translators must know two languages, Carnegie declared there was little value in teaching second languages to most people. "We can no more draw our mental

sustenance from two languages than we can think in two. Man can have but one deep source from whence come healing waters, as he can have but one mother tongue."<sup>26</sup> This is a curious position for Andrew Carnegie, the star spangled Scotchman to take in view of his own rise as an immigrant capitalist and his return in triumph, acting as a bridge between the continents.

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<sup>26</sup> Carnegie, James Watt, p. 15.

### 3. The Secondary School: The Origin of the Carnegie Unit

When Andrew Carnegie created the Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in April, 1905, with an endowment of \$10,000,000, his primary aim was to help higher education by pensions to college teachers and no one realized the result would be the standardization of the secondary school and the secularization of the colleges. The Foundation grew initially out of Carnegie's interest in education and his invitations to attend many college and university functions at the turn of the century. The magnate enjoyed official meetings, relished being on these fin de siècle college programs, delighted in delivering speeches, appreciated being asked to sit at speakers' tables during banquets, and savored being involved in good talk at all times. The colleges and universities for their part hoped for millions in donations and continued to request the magnate's return. Carnegie noticed, as he became more knowledgeable about the university scene, that teachers' salaries were so abysmally low that the professors could save little for retirement and their pensions were so niggardly that they had nothing to retire to. The universities solved the problem with a poor compromise, by keeping the teachers on emeritus, until they died, but neither the leaders of higher education nor the super-annuated professors were happy with the arrangement.



It was Dr. Henry Smith Pritchett, then President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who persuaded Carnegie that the use of the magnate's money for college teacher's pensions would be the essence of wisdom. After a White House luncheon on May 18, 1904, where Carnegie met Pritchett, they rode back to Boston together on the train. In August, when the Pritchetts sailed to the British Isles, they were invited to visit the Carnegies at Skibo. The magnate continued to correspond with Pritchett thereafter, and the topic increasingly turned to questions regarding the cost of a national retirement plan for college teachers. Pritchett was a mathematician and he believed that the first step required the gathering of a great deal of statistical data. He brought in such men as Frank A. Vanderlip, Walter Humphreys, G.E. Gregory, M.E. Ailes, and William T. Harris, who together knew something of colleges, statistics, and banking. By April, 1905, Pritchett was able to present to Carnegie a list of ninety-two private institutions of higher learning with a total faculty of 3,100 earning annually \$6,200,000 who might be offered pensions. The institutions had been chosen because they were neither state supported nor connected with some religious denomination.<sup>27</sup> A grant of \$10,000,000 from Carnegie, it was

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Savage, Fruit of an Impulse: Forty-Five Years of the Carnegie Foundation, pp. 5-9.

believed, would bring in an annual income of \$500,000 at 5% interest and make it possible to pay a pension to those teachers who retired at the age of sixty-five, after thirty years of service, which would amount to half the annual salary that these teachers received in the average of their last five years of employment. Physical disability pensions and a widow and orphans pension were suggested also.<sup>28</sup> However, the strictures against institutions that imposed "a theological test for membership in governing boards, administrative posts, teaching positions, or" for student admission, were absolute and immutable.<sup>29</sup> Pritchett, who had written a pamphlet "What is Religion?" which impressed Mrs. Carnegie, became the first president of the Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and remained in general agreement with the steel king that the pension funds would serve secular purposes.

Under Pritchett, who remained the Foundation's president for a quarter of a century until he retired in 1930, a massive effort was made to study pensions in America and throughout the world and to examine related aspects of education. Carnegie stressed the noble aim of the Foundation:

This fund is very near and dear to me. . . . Of all professions, that of teaching is probably the most unfairly, yes, most meanly paid, though it should rank with the highest. Educated men, devoting

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 9

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

their lives to teaching the young, receive mere pittance. When I first took my seat as a trustee of Cornell University, I was shocked to find how small were the salaries of the professors, as a rule ranking below the salaries of some of our clerks. To save for old age with these men is impossible. Hence the universities without pension funds are compelled to retain men who are no longer able, should no longer be required, to perform their duties.<sup>30</sup>

But while the aim of the Foundation was a noble one, the purpose revolved around the use of money. As news of the pension fund reached the colleges, there were efforts by many of the schools that had only a few loose, traditional ties with denominational churches to discover a method by which they might have the pension fund for their teachers and still maintain their religious affiliation. On this matter Carnegie and Pritchett were in complete agreement and held fast. Since universities desired to hold their able professors and to reward them for long service, there is little doubt that the great universities with some ecclesiastical connections were under heavy pressure to drop their religious affiliations.<sup>31</sup>

State universities also requested to be added to the list of schools whose teachers would receive pensions. Carnegie felt

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<sup>30</sup> Carnegie, Autobiography, pp. 257-258.

<sup>31</sup> See Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, vols. 152, 162, 163, 164 for correspondence between Carnegie and Pritchett, Abram W. Harris, President of Northwestern and Pritchett, Harris and Carnegie. Wall, Carnegie, recently summarized this pp. 871-880.

these institutions should be provided for by increased aid from the state. Finally the steel king relented as to the state universities only, and in his usual fashion the magnate tried to facilitate matters by offering a further grant of \$5,000,000 to the Foundation.

Here we have a clearly indicative example of the power of a few million dollars at the turn of the century to change national directions. Curiously enough, after only twelve years, the pension fund was abandoned, but not until the auditors employed by the great Foundation had created shock waves which permanently altered the landscape of American education. As inflation began during the first world war, as more colleges and universities were admitted to the fund, as faculty size grew, it became apparent that a private fund, probably of any size, could not continue to handle a continually expanding output. The Foundation gradually moved away from pensions, though it continued to pay the pensions it had contracted to assume, and indeed it is still bearing the burden of the last of these today. In 1917 a new agency was established and became the instrument for dispensing pensions to teachers at institutions of higher learning. The Teacher's Insurance and Annuity Association of America began its life with a one million dollar gift from the Foundation, but by this time many changes had already taken place in American education.

The question of teacher pensions spread out in concentric circles until it appeared to involve everything in higher education and even in secondary education. If the Foundation was to pay pensions to certain retiring teachers in colleges and universities, then there had to be a decision on all kinds of matters which appeared simple enough initially until the auditors and the statisticians strove for real definitions. What was a university? What was a college? Who was a teacher at such an institution? What was a college course? These questions had to be answered to order to bestow pensions upon teachers who were teaching college courses in colleges and universities. Henry Pritchett, only too anxious to answer these questions, declared:

While the primary purpose of Mr. Carnegie's gift was the establishment of a pension system, there would be involved in the administration of this gift a scrutiny of education which not only would be desirable in the granting of pensions, but would go far to resolve the confusion that then existed in American higher education. There was no general requirement of admission to college. Many institutions that were colleges in name were really high schools, and many universities were scarcely more than modest colleges. He suggested the notion that in the administration of this agency some criterion would have to be introduced as to what constituted a college.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Howard J. Savage, "Forty-Third Report of the Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching," 1947-1948, p. 17, quoting: "The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Early Papers of the Foundation, 1935, printed for confidential distribution . . . in commemoration of the birth . . . of . . . Carnegie."

Was a college an institution that admitted students to its halls with only two or three years of high school? Was a college an institution that granted degrees in less than four years? Was there a minimum number of professors necessary to have a college? What degrees should the professors hold? Here were some of the questions the Foundation asked of higher education.

We live in a world in the midst of change; we admit the need for change; we agree that change is inevitable and in today's education we talk of little but change; but still when change does come, most men are upset by it. The colleges and universities wished to be a part of the Carnegie pension system, but they were violently upset at the thought that they had to change to receive the pensions. Pritchett was frankly "shocked" by how the college administrators tried to avoid the questions he asked to have answered.<sup>33</sup> More and more the word "standards" was used. Pritchett began to use the term not in the sense of a perfect ideal, but rather as a means of measuring. The colleges for their part, had their own concerns. They were fearful of being controlled, of outside interference, of losing their ability to make decisions. As with the federal grants in the 1960's and 1970's, there was a great desire for the money, but a fear of the possible "strings attached." In many cases, actually, the fear

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<sup>33</sup>Savage, "Fruit of an Impulse: Forty-Five Years of the Carnegie Foundation", p. 101.

was real enough, for the colleges had no standards, admitted students at the whim of the administration and graduated students as the school pleased.<sup>34</sup> In the end, the Foundation's efforts to define a college and a university in some definite, concrete, measurable fashion, led back into the high school. Without really intending to do so, and even while denying it was doing so, the Foundation led to the nationwide adoption of the Carnegie Unit.

Howard J. Savage, for a long time the able secretary of the Foundation, was only one of the men in active control of the Foundation who attempted to prove that high school standardization was coming in any case and that the term "unit was current in education parlance at least seven years before" Carnegie gave so much of his money to teacher pensions.<sup>35</sup> While the unit, as an attempt to quantify a year's work in a high school course for purposes of determining college entrance requirements, may have been inevitable eventually, there is no doubt that Carnegie's Foundation caused the standardization process to take place in a great hurry. The Carnegie Unit became defined as a minimum of at least 120 actual hours of sixty minutes spent in a classroom dealing with one particular major subject. This was labeled as a year's study of a subject. While the programs of America's four year high schools varied,

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Savage, "Forty-Third Report of the Foundation," p. 13.

it was believed most schools would be in operation thirty-two to forty weeks and that most would teach four to five subjects in class periods that varied from forty to sixty minutes. If a high school was open five days a week for thirty-two weeks and taught four major subjects each year, for four years, the students would obtain sixteen Carnegie units of credit. The minimum standard was therefore set a bit lower at fourteen units to allow for transfers between high schools and time for reviews for weaker students. This was the standard adopted by the "Second Annual Report of the Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching," in 1907. While the Foundation spoke of this as a "standard unit," the phrase "Carnegie Unit" became the popular designation.<sup>36</sup>

Since the American lower school prepares its students for the upper schools, the high schools were in the box of having to accept the standards imposed by the colleges. The Carnegie Unit set a standard in terms of credit given for time spent in school. The high school diploma meant that a student had attended four years and taken the required number of courses. But the high schools might differ as to their curriculum, their teachers, their textbooks, and the level of competency required to pass the courses. One problem, certainly, was that the units of subject matter are not all of equal difficulty. Another difficult

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<sup>36</sup> Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "Second Annual Report," 1906-1907, p. 10; Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "Forty-Third Annual Report," 1947-1948, p. 24.



matter has been the tendency to develop a textbook for a particular course and a curriculum for that course which together have resulted in a mania by teachers to try to "cover the material" regardless of what the pupils might know on the first day of class or the last. Henry Pritchett felt that the unit system might "sacrifice the individual," and in the early days of the Foundation he wrote denying much responsibility:

We have been using in the Carnegie Foundation certain so-called units, merely as a convenient measure of describing high school work. In this sense it seems to me they may serve a useful purpose. I should feel that the use of such units was unwise if it resulted in the acceptance of the idea that the secondary school education could be made up from any number of unrelated subjects selected at random.<sup>37</sup>

Pritchett thus felt the standards imposed should be buttressed by local schools who would have to determine that the course selections were not mere cafeteria style education but that a logical sequence was followed.

As the testing movement came to America, an alternative to the units appeared; rigid tests as utilized in some European countries might be given and are being increasingly demanded today by the colleges for entrance requirements. R.L.Duffus sees the pattern that evolved in the following way:

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<sup>37</sup>Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "Forty-Third Annual Report," 1947-1948, p. 26.

The golden age of the unit may be said to have run from 1906, when the Carnegie Foundation did its first full year's work, the group known as the National Conference Committee on Standards of Colleges and Secondary Schools held its first meeting, and the College Entrance Examination Board was getting into full stride, to about 1919, when the psychological test began to be taken seriously. The testing movement was ultimately to make the time-exposure theory of education look very strange, indeed. But this took many years. Before standards of college admission could be upset they had to be established.<sup>38</sup>

Any standards, of course, depend upon how an institution or an individual deals with them. A test for college admission or high school graduation could force secondary schools to teach for the test and this in turn might shape education also. The real problem of substituting tests for standard units, however, is simply that the whole secondary scene could become amorphous and return to anarchy rather readily. The General Education Development (GED) Tests of today, if carried to their logical conclusion, could do away with the high schools as an institution and lead to home reading of books on how to pass the GED. Time serving can be seen as an obvious fault of the Carnegie Units, but giving away diplomas could be a greater problem.

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<sup>38</sup>Robert Luther Duffus, Democracy Enters College (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 57.

Both the elementary school and the secondary school are caught in a bind of time that seems to promote lock step advancement regardless of work accomplished or ability. If the child enters kindergarten at five and first grade at six, then he enters high school at fourteen, if he is detained nowhere along the route. State laws as to when children may drop out of school, often set at about sixteen years, suggest the problem. Of course the laws may be criticized by some as union sponsored to keep children from the job market, but the laws usually have come to reflect the realities of today's world; in large urban centers children often drop out even before they reach sixteen and simply disappear into the city. The elementary school may hold children back for a year to try to teach them to read. To hold children back much more than a year is probably useless. The school runs the risk of having its upper grades crowded with over-aged, hostile students or seeing its clientele drop out without even an elementary school diploma, quite a lack in today's society. The high school is caught in a bind also, trying to serve a number of masters. It must set up a college preparatory school for those who wish to go on to college. It must offer part time job training for those who need to work and will drop out if they cannot. It must offer remedial subjects for those who still cannot read. It must offer technical subjects, commercial subjects, and special courses for those

who need them. The high school has become a counseling agency filled with students who are not sure what is best for them. The high school that fails a student in a course is accused of promoting drop outs and not being relevant. The high school naturally blames the elementary school for not teaching more children to read and for not preparing the children better, just as the college flings the same charge at the high school.

Since college entrance requirements varied from school to school and from department to department, there were no standards before the advent of the Carnegie Unit. Colleges competed for students, so that many students in the South were only elementary school graduates and many students in the North had only two or three years of high school. High Schools might find that colleges accepted courses taught for a few months only two days a week at par with courses taught for ten months five days a week. The requirements for college entrance were so particularized and individual that unless exceptions were made, students from many high schools simply could not meet the course demands for entrance to a great many colleges. But since in America, biggest has usually been equated with best, most of the colleges competed for admissions and allowed students to enter who were in a conditional category, that is these entrants had to prove in some fashion they were worthy of remaining, sometimes by taking remedial courses in the college's own preparatory school.

A college was defined, by the standards of the Foundation, at a rather low level, first of all, as an institution of higher learning that took students who had passed through a common school and attended a high school for four years. These students had received at least fourteen passing credits in courses that met the requirement of the Carnegie Unit. The college itself was a four year school, with a full course in liberal arts and sciences each year, and had a faculty of at least six professors who worked full time for the institution.<sup>39</sup> The colleges of the South were the least able to meet these standards, especially that of the fourteen Carnegie Units minimum for entrance. It was men such as William A. Shedd, President of the University of Florida who declared: "We need your standards more than we need your classification and your recognition," and Chancellor James Hampton Kirkland of Vanderbilt who asserted: "It would be disastrous for the Carnegie Foundation to accept a lower standard for the South than for other sections."<sup>40</sup> As the colleges were persuaded by the Carnegie money to accept the Carnegie Unit, the secondary schools were forced into line.

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<sup>39</sup> Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "Forty-Third Annual Report," 1947-1948, p. 20.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 22. Italics are in the original.

It is obvious in considering the sheer volume of articles written specifically on phases of the Carnegie college teacher pension program, that the issue had a great impact upon the academic community at the time. Many teachers regarded themselves as public servants who had willingly taken the vow of poverty, but they were not without a willingness to consider money when the subject was mentioned. Over a hundred articles were written in journals on the subject of a college pension during the first two decades of the present century. In many cases the ideas advanced by the journals were trail blazing, suggesting concepts which today have become commonplace, accepted, part of the familiar route upon which we all are traveling. At the time the thoughts were new and needed close scrutiny. Were college professors being ruined by accepting Carnegie's pension money? Would the magnate next attempt to force his political and social ideas upon the colleges? Were the pensions charity? Was it all socialism? Was it unAmerican? Were the widows of the professors to be cared for also?<sup>41</sup> Some people were greatly alarmed. A few of the professors themselves managed the trick of decrying the pensions in articles while accepting the money when they retired. Many of the learned journals were not above carrying articles on the matter, even

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<sup>41</sup>"Pensioning Widows of Professors," Science, XXVII (April 24, 1908), 672-675.

though the subject was money.<sup>42</sup>

Regional accrediting agencies were coming into existence everywhere, however, and these new institutions tended to cooperate with the Foundation. The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, in the middle west, and the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Middle States and Maryland and such special agencies as the American Medical Association sprang from the need for standards and joined with the Foundation in its efforts to achieve some uniformity. The Ninth Annual Report of the Foundation in 1914 spoke of the problem in the following terms:

Perhaps no word has been so overworked during the last decade, by those who have to do with professional schools, colleges, and secondary schools, as the word "standards." Americans, perhaps, more than other people are imitative. One sees this quality at its best and at its worst in our colleges, but in the main its tendency is toward a general wiping out of college individualism. What one college does, another must do. Distinctive academic flavors disappear. A common mediocrity remains. In this process the standardizing desire is sometimes a consequence.

The extremes are illustrated by the attitude of colleges, medical schools, law schools, and universities in the use of objective standards such as those instituted for admission. In one group of catalogues one finds these requirements set forth in great strictness only to be completely evaded in the

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<sup>42</sup> James McKeen Cattell, Carnegie Pensions (New York City and Garrison, New York: Science Press Publishers, 1919), reprinted articles from Science magazine by Cattell.

enforcement. All sincerity is abandoned. The college or medical school living on fees will talk with a solemn face about its "standards" and admit any student who has the price. It is safe to suspect the institution that talks loudly about its "high standards." The great resource in such cases is the word "equivalent." The requirement of admission is, perhaps, a "four year high school education or its equivalent." The interpretation of the admissions lies in the word "equivalent." It is a wonder-working word. With its help a coach and four can be driven thru any set of admission requirements. Without this invaluable word worthy colleges would be absurdly embarrassed and many medical schools would be compelled to go out of business.

At the other extreme is a group of institutions and state boards which translate entrance requirements literally. Equivalence with them means identity. A boy may present himself prepared to enter college so far as education goes, but if he lacks some specific study of his high school, nothing else avails. . . . This is standardization run to seed.<sup>43</sup>

The fight for standards at this time was still being waged and the outcome was in doubt. The Ninth Annual Report continues:

It is, however, the fate of virtune to be misunderstood, and . . . the Foundation has incurred the common lot. Admiring friends refer to it as a "standardizing agency" -- an expression which causes a cold chill to run down the backs of the Foundation trustees. The public in one way or another has come to believe that the Foundation has laid down certain arbitrary

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<sup>43</sup>"Standards and Standardizers," from the "Ninth Annual Report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching," New York City, 1914, p. 53.



standards which it is seeking to force upon the colleges of the country. Mr. Andrew Carnegie has been sharply attacked for inventing the "Carnegie units," which with a diabolical ingenuity and a clever use of money he is urging upon the universities, with special and particular designs on religious colleges. A committee of the National Education Association on normal schools at its last meeting "viewed with alarm" the efforts of the Foundation to "control the educational standards of the country," and a Methodist Bishop has solemnly warned the country of the same awful tendencies.<sup>44</sup>

Later, the Twenty-Ninth Annual Report was to look back on the accomplishments as a combined venture of the Foundation, the accrediting agencies, and the faculties of the schools themselves and see the changes in perspective:

Thus were set up standards of curricular offerings, of time allotment, of size of class, of laboratory equipment, and of preparation of teachers, all of which contributed to a high degree of conformity and uniformity. Throughout these years the typical college was faced continually with the necessity of meeting some new standard in one or more of its departments. Staff members through national organizations brought continual pressure upon the administrative officers for "improvement."<sup>45</sup>

The whole question of standards was complicated by the confusion over the use of the term in industries such as steel, where it

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>45</sup> Walter Jessup, "Facing Actualities in American higher Education," from the "Twenty-Ninth Annual Report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching," New York City, 1934, p. 9.

implied a sort of mechanical efficiency and uniformity, that the nation's colleges tended to eschew. The Foundation, while desiring standards in order to define the scope of its pension program and seeing values in standards in an educational field that appeared on the edge of anarchy, still felt the need to deny it was pressuring the colleges and secondary schools into accepting its formulas.

At its inception, the Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching had a high and exalted purpose that reached beyond mere teacher pensions, President Henry Pritchett regarded the new institution as what we would speak of today as a research and development agency -- the first of its kind for education. Statistics were gathered, standards were proposed and imposed, but above all studies were made.<sup>46</sup> The most famous early study was Abraham Flexner's report on medical schools, which

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<sup>46</sup> James E. Gourley and Robert M. Lester, The Diffusion of Knowledge; A List of Books Made Possible Wholly or in Part by Grants from Carnegie Corporation of New York and Published by Various Agencies During the Years 1911-1935 (Philadelphia: W. F. Fell Co., 1935); Morris Llewellyn Cooke, "Academic and Industrial Efficiency," New York City, 1910, Bulletin Number Five, by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; "Standard Forms for Financial Reports of Colleges, Universities, and Technical Schools," Bulletin Number Three, June, 1910, by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

described quite exactly what Flexner found at these institutions and led to efforts to reform weak schools and eliminate the obvious diploma mills by refusing accreditation.<sup>47</sup> Flexner consulted with leading men in the field of medical education, visited all of the 155 medical schools in the United States and Canada, interviewed in depth, ascertained the facts, and finally reported in quite a large study, the Foundation's Bulletin Number Four, Medical Education in the United States and Canada.<sup>48</sup> The facts were presented to the public in clear language; one of Flexner's strongest suggestions was that 120 of the schools should simply be eliminated.<sup>49</sup> The bulletin was soon the center of a storm of protest, but few would disagree today that Flexner was correct in most of his conclusions. While the Flexner Report was the most startling of the early bulletins, there was a strong research orientation to the Foundation's efforts.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has continued to make its studies, has published its annual

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<sup>47</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, pp. 265-266.

<sup>48</sup>Abraham Flexner, Medical Education in the United States and Canada: A Report to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, New York City: Bulletin Number Four, 1910, 346 pages.

<sup>49</sup>Flexner's story is told well in his autobiography, Abraham Flexner, I Remember published in 1940. Flexner also wrote the standard biography of Henry Smith Pritchett: Abraham Flexner. Henry S. Pritchett: A Biography (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943).

reports and has persistently pressed for change. An interesting example of this pressure is Oliver C. Carmichael's "Toward Better College Teaching," in the Forty-Third Report, 1947-1948.

Carmichael said:

Pre-service training of the college teacher, however effective, is not enough. One of the great weaknesses in American higher education is the lack of adequate training in service. Though young instructors have frequently had no internship, no instruction in methods of teaching or in the history and philosophy of education, and no basic understanding of society's structure and functioning, they are often given little or no help by their senior colleagues in the science and art of teaching or in the basic purposes of college instruction. In most institutions visiting of classrooms by older faculty members for the purpose of observing and helping the new recruit is not viewed with favor. For some reason which is not now clear but which must lie deep in the unwritten history of the profession, such means of passing on the experience of the senior to the junior members of the guild are taboo. It is not likely that college faculties will reach maximum efficiency until that unreasonable inhibition is lifted. The freest interchange of ideas and experiences between the younger and older faculty members based upon first-hand knowledge of each other's teaching methods as observed in the classroom would seem the surest way of assisting the neophyte in becoming proficient as a teacher.<sup>50</sup>

Certainly this was not a very popular report; no doubt it aroused the defensive fears of those few college teachers and administrators, beginning or experienced, who read this essay,

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<sup>50</sup> Oliver C. Carmichael, "Toward Better College Teaching," from the "Forty-Third Annual Report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching," New York City, 1948.

and it is likely that most college people rejected the beliefs expressed. Carmichael's heresy is the type Carnegie could well have endorsed. Teaching in many ways is a lonely task; and teachers are isolated and left secluded with the problem of re-inventing the wheel anew. College teaching is an area where both the best and the worst teaching in the world is done, and promotion lies almost entirely outside of the ability demonstrated in the classroom.<sup>51</sup> Where the Foundation has pressed for change and truly led the way, Carnegie, himself a tradition breaker, would have approved.

Efforts to abolish the Carnegie Unit continue and grow, but a real substitute has not been found,<sup>52</sup> and studies by the various Carnegie foundations are anti-establishment

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<sup>51</sup>Jacques Barzun, The Teacher in America (New York: Little, Brown, 1949), a classic account, unread as are many classics. Barzun suggests at one point that if you wish to succeed at college teaching you must forget about your students and teaching and pay attention to writing books.

<sup>52</sup>The National Association of Secondary School Principals suggested abolishing the Carnegie Unit as one step toward reform, "Education U.S.A.," newsletter, November 16, 1970.

right or wrong.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Charles E. Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom (New York: Random House, 1970), written under a grant from the Carnegie Foundation. Silberman, after more than three years of research, in which his wife was paid to act as his senior research associate, since she had once been a teacher, found that "most schools are grim, joyless places . . . oppressive . . . esthetically sterile," p. 10. This widely quoted phrase has become one of the operational catch-alls for the 1970's, a massive quarter truth without an honest suggestion for a cure.

## 4. The Secondary School: "Head-ication versus Hand-ication"

Andrew Carnegie's grandfather, Thomas Morrison, once wrote an article for William Cobbett's Political Register, December 21, 1833, entitled "Heddskashun and Handication." Cobbett referred to the essay as "the very best communication I ever received in my life for the Register." Grandfather Morrison two years before the steel magnate was born, went on record as being pleased to be a cobbler, and a man who had learned to work with his hands. The article, part of the reform movement of the nineteenth century, bitterly attacked classical learning as education that did not train men for useful work.<sup>54</sup> Andrew Carnegie, a half century later, was to reiterate his grandfather's concern that classical education was a waste and that manual training was needed for a truly well rounded life.<sup>55</sup> The steel king was an advocate of technical education. Carnegie well agreed with Booker T. Washington as to the handcraft approach to Black education, but he went beyond this to favor more technical training for nearly everyone.<sup>56</sup> Learning a useful trade in school was highly desirable. Carnegie believed that "the first essential of training was to fit

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<sup>54</sup>Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. I, pp. 8-9.

<sup>55</sup>Carnegie, Autobiography, p. 4.

<sup>56</sup>Lynch, Personal Recollections, pp. 125-126.

a boy to become self-supporting and independent and also contribute directly to his family."<sup>57</sup>

Most of the great men who made contributions to literature, science, politics, and inventions were manual workers who began life by working with their hands, Carnegie asserted.<sup>58</sup>

"It is really astonishing how many of the world's foremost men have begun as manual laborers. The greatest of all, Shakespeare, was a wood carder; Burns, a plowman; Columbus, a sailor; Hannibal, a blacksmith; Lincoln, a rail-splitter; Grant, a turner, and I know of no better foundation from which to ascend than manual labor in youth."<sup>59</sup> There is a quality of developmentalism in this Carnegie belief that is not unlike some recent educational theories. Carnegie at one time made a list of manual workers which included Shakespeare, Jenner, Lincoln, Burns, Gutenberg, Edison, Bessemer, Columbus, Watt, Bell, Arkwright, Franklin, Kay, Hargreaves, and Stephenson, but the magnate concluded:

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>58</sup> Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, pp. 151-152.

<sup>59</sup> Lynch, Personal Recollections, p. 101, quotation from a letter of Carnegie's.



Most of them, however, but not all, in due time abandoned labor of the hands, a salutary development, and one which every workingman should aspire to. Honorable and necessary as manual labor is, let us gladly greet productive labor of the mind as of a higher order, as the spirit is above the flesh, although it must never be forgotten that in the skilled labor of our day a union of both brain and muscle is imperatively needed. The trained first-class mechanic now works as much with his brain as with his hands, and, if in charge of machinery, much more.<sup>60</sup>

Here the steel king was not speaking in absolute terms and he left an escape clause in his expressed opinion.

Carnegie's real interest in technical education is seen in his creation of the Carnegie Institute of Technology. Engineering degrees and a knowledge of the trades may both be acquired at this institution.<sup>61</sup> Speaking in 1890, the magnate declared: "There has come, however, in recent years, the polytechnic and scientific school, or course of study, for boys, which is beginning to show most valuable fruits in the manufacturing branch. The trained mechanic of the past . . . is now to meet a rival in the scientifically educated youth." Polytechnical and scientific schools would teach an "attitude of

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<sup>60</sup> Carnegie, Problems of To-Day, p. 152.

<sup>61</sup> Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, p. 257.

mind, that of the searcher after truth," thereby causing young men to be "receptive of new ideas."<sup>62</sup>

The Carnegie high school would not be greatly at variance with the program in the high schools today. There would be physical education, music, and art, but these would be minor subjects, required, but not the solid major portion of the curriculum. For college bound students there would be the three or four years of math, the three or four years of science, perhaps at the most two years of history and government, with emphasis on recent American and European history, current events, and citizenship. The community would be studied. A year of geography might be included. Three or four years of English, with some Shakespearian plays studied each year, would be a standard part of the course of study for all. A minimum of one year of technical training and manual skills would be required of all. For those who desired it, a year or more of modern languages might be studied. This would not be a common course, even for the college bound, but would be suggested for those who felt this would meet their needs or interests. Colleges would no longer require a knowledge of foreign languages for graduation in most studies and even advanced degrees would usually be obtained without the demand for an examination in foreign languages. This is the direction American education is moving today, and Carnegie would have applauded.

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<sup>62</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 111.

Less effort by the community to place emphasis on the college degree for all would be a characteristic of a Carnegie-centric world. For students who were not college bound, there would be a curriculum that led into more technical, scientific, or commercial courses. For girls, a full program in family life, foods, clothing, and child care would be taught. With the exception of eliminating ancient history and classical languages from the curriculum, reducing the teaching of classical mythology and modern languages, and adding more practical subjects, technical training, and programs in homemaking for the girls, the Carnegie high school would be little at variance with our Carnegie Unit dominated high school today.

Carnegie would have little sympathy with rebellious youth today and probably feel they should all drop out for a while and obtain a job, performing hard manual labor. The steel king had a way of attempting to predict and act the part of the soothsayer, but as has been suggested, his predictions could be used against one another. Carnegie was never absolutely consistently dogmatic. Those who see him for technical education and against the classical education are correct, but might read Frederick Lynch's Personal Recollections. Says Lynch:

I was present once at a discussion on education, where he [Carnegie] expressed himself very freely. It was at a little dinner at the home of Prof. Samuel T. Dutton

Among those at the table was Principal Frissell, of Hampton Institute, who shared Mr. Carnegie's views on the supremacy of vocational and industrial training. The talk naturally ran along the line of education, as there were three other distinguished leaders in education present. Dr. Frissell was advancing the idea that the whole curriculum of our colleges was antiquated, and that the chief emphasis should be placed on the vocational side, and, except for the special boy, training in science, mechanics and hand-work should receive chief attention. The whole emphasis of the conversation was leaning toward doing. Mr. Carnegie was rather falling in with these views. I suddenly ventured the question whether there was not something to be said for education for being as well as for doing, and I reminded Mr. Carnegie that for several generations Scotland had been producing man after man who had been of outstanding character and ability, and that not only in Scotland, but in England these men who had been educated in the great cultural schools, and had generally been trained with little thought of what they were to do in after life. . . .

To this Mr. Carnegie replied: "There is some danger that we who believe that technical and scientific education is the chief thing, will become as extreme in our views as the advocates of the classical training are in theirs. What we have got to do is so to balance our education that boys should be taught to do some one thing well and at the same time be able to appreciate the best things in life. The only thing that I insist on is that the boys should be educated for the world in which they live and not a world which has passed away. This means adaption of our colleges to the times.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Lynch, Personal Recollections, pp. 104-106.

Carnegie did not wish to hurt anyone's feelings unnecessarily and he liked the Reverend Lynch, yet it is quite probably the case that this is an authentic expression of the steel king's beliefs. Carnegie is quite correct, of course, education tends to be conservative of society and not a leader of social change, for teachers are always of the previous generation, expounding views upon what is, rather than what will be. The secondary school must and the college should, become thoroughly concerned with eliminating from required studies those subjects which are necessary and pertinent to the life of only a few. As Carnegie was so fond of saying, "The world moves."

## 5. The Colleges: The Value of a College Education

Andrew Carnegie believed a man should obtain a broad background as rapidly as possible and then specialize. There has, of course, long been an argument between those who wish a well rounded education and those who believe in education in depth. The magnate, as with most people who have entered this conflict of views, suggested that both were needed, but Carnegie hoped that men would develop a perspective as to the broad picture quickly, early in life, and then specialize. The steel king declared: "Time was when men had so little knowledge that it was easy for one man to embrace it all, and the courses in colleges bear painful evidence of this fact to-day. Knowledge is now so various, so extensive, so minute, that it is impossible for any man to know thoroughly more than one small branch. This is the age of the specialist."<sup>64</sup> A man should be well rounded, should be broadly and deeply educated as quickly as possible, and then specialize while still young.<sup>65</sup>

Just as Carnegie found the classics useless baggage in the secondary school, so the steel king also found these studies completely worthless at the college level.<sup>66</sup> "All knowledge is,

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<sup>64</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 83.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp. 82-83.

<sup>66</sup> Carnegie, "Ezra Cornell," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 254.

in a sense, useful," the magnate declared once. "The point I wish to make is this, that, except for the few, who have the taste of the antiquarian, and who find that their work in life is to delve among the dusty records of the past, and for the few, that lead professional lives, the education given to-day in our colleges is a positive disadvantage."<sup>67</sup> Carnegie asserted that the "real universities" are not just places where scholars dig into archaic and valueless studies, but places "where any man can study everything worth studying."<sup>68</sup> There was surely a need to protect and take care of the real scholar, who is "too busy to make money,"<sup>69</sup> and Carnegie even tried to do that with his Foundation for the Advancement of teaching. Carnegie declared that he agreed with Spencer that some day the study of the classic languages would be considered "one of the aberrations of humanity."<sup>70</sup> Shakespeare and writers more recent were important, but the cult of the classics was an absurdity. Teaching ancient history and classical mythology were as valueless in college as in secondary school.

The self-education of Carnegie, which he could only

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>68</sup> Carnegie, James Watt, p. 38.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>70</sup> Carnegie Papers, Library of Congress, Vol. 240, #45125.

adjudge a success, combined with his disdain for some of the young men who were end-products of a college education, could only produce a strong element of anti-intellectualism in the magnate's educational philosophy. Above all, Carnegie was future oriented; he believed in change and its consequences. Mankind was evolving, traveling a road that had many detours and declines, but the general tendency was upward. He believed in an education for today and tomorrow, not for yesterday and the day before. This education was to be practical, mass education. No one believed more strongly that the years of youth were the best years and not ones to be wasted on sterile studies. Here is Carnegie on higher education:

We occasionally find traces even at this day of the old prejudice which existed against educating the masses of the people. I do not wonder that this should exist when I reflect upon what has hitherto passed for education. Men have wasted their precious years trying to extract education from an ignorant past whose chief province is to teach us, not what to adopt, but what to avoid. Men have sent their sons to colleges to waste their energies upon obtaining a knowledge of such languages as Greek and Latin, which are of no more practical use to them than Choctaw. I have known few college graduates that knew Shakespeare or Milton. They might be able to tell you all about Ulysses or Agamemnon or Hector, but what are these compared to the characters that we find in our own classics? One service Russell Lowell has done, for which he should be thanked -- he has boldly said that in Shakespeare alone we have a greater treasure than in all the classics of ancient time. They have been crammed with the details of petty and



insignificant skirmishes between savages and taught to exalt a band of ruffians into heroes; and we have called them "educated." They have been "educated" as if they were destined for life upon some other planet than this. They have in no sense received instruction. On the contrary, what they have obtained has served to imbue them with false ideas and to give them a distaste for practical life. I do not wonder that a prejudice has arisen and still exists against such education. In my own experience I can say that I have known few young men intended for business who were not injured by a collegiate education. Had they gone into active work during the years spent at college they would have been better educated men in every true sense of that term.<sup>71</sup>

Here in the last three sentences is a digested version of what became a constant Carnegie theme, that a college education was actually detrimental to most businessmen.

College graduates were seen as full of theory, but wanting practical knowledge, and rendered unfit for business by their education.<sup>72</sup>

In the storms of life are they to be strengthened and sustained and held to their post and to the performance of duty by drawing upon Hebrew or Greek barbarians as models, or upon examples of our own modern heroes? Is Shakespeare or Homer to be the reservoir from which they draw?<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 79-80.

<sup>72</sup>Carnegie, College Lectures, pp. 51-52.

<sup>73</sup>Andrew Carnegie, "Annual Address, Annual Graduating Exercises, Pierce College of Business and Shorthand," Philadelphia: December 17, 1891.

Again, in an article entitled "Business" reprinted in Empire of Business, the magnate proclaims under the heading: "College Graduates in Business:"

The graduates of our colleges and universities in former years graduated while yet in their teens. We have changed this, and graduates are older, as a rule, when they enter upon life's struggle, but they are taught much more. Unless the young university man employs his time to the very best advantage in acquiring knowledge upon the pursuit which he is to make the chief business of his life, he will enter business at a disadvantage with younger men who enter in their teens, although lacking in university education.<sup>74</sup>

This short passage seems to suggest that it would be better for colleges to graduate students earlier, as they did formerly, that it is unwise to spend so much of life at school, and that the real purpose of life is not an education or a well educated person, but what comes after. This might divorce education from life. But of course, Carnegie would have been the first to declare such was not his belief. Education continues throughout life, Carnegie truly believed, but at a certain age the individual is able to continue his own education

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<sup>74</sup>Carnegie, Empire of Business, pp. 206-207.

by using libraries, books, and perhaps taking an evening course on occasions. Full time schooling, into the twenties, which Carnegie never experienced, was a luxury and even a waste. For the man thinking of a business career it was sheer ruin.

In his essay, "How to Win Fortune," republished in Empire of Business Carnegie bluntly asked the question, in relation to a business career: "Where is the College-made Man?"

I asked a city banker to give me a few names of presidents and vice-presidents and cashiers of our great New York city banks who had begun as boys or clerks. He sent me thirty-six names, and wrote he would send me more next day. I cannot take the reader's time with a complete list, but here are a few of the best known: . . . . [and here Carnegie lists thirteen presidents and vice-presidents of banks.]

The absence of the college graduate in this list should be deeply weighed. I have inquired and searched everywhere in all quarters, but find small trace of him as the leader in affairs, although not seldom occupying positions of trust in financial institutions. Nor is this surprising. The prize-takers have too many years the start of the graduate; they have entered the race invariably in their teens -- the most valuable of all the years for learning -- from fourteen to twenty; while the college student has been learning a little about the barbarous and petty squabbles of a far-distant past, or trying to master languages which are dead, such knowledge as seems adapted for life upon another planet than this, as far as business affairs are concerned -- the future captain of industry is hotly engaged in the school of experience, obtaining the very knowledge required for his future triumphs.

I do not speak of the effect of college education upon young men training for the learned professions, for which it is, up to a certain point, almost indispensable in our day for the average youth, but the almost total absence of the graduate from the high position in the business world seems to justify the conclusion that college education as it exists seems almost fatal to success in that domain.<sup>75</sup>

To Carnegie, the businessman was the supreme individualist, the greatest generalist, the most well rounded possessor of the broadest based conceptions. He was a man on the make, a personage rising, making contacts, capable of learning on his own. Such an attitude may be on the side of anti-intellectualism, but it is not a pure strain. Carnegie was to continually reiterate and defend his beliefs, as in this statement from a letter to the New York Tribune: "There are some exceptional men who cannot be altogether spoiled for business by the present university education . . . [but] for those who must make a living in some kind of business, it is far better to launch forth early in life."<sup>76</sup> College graduates will become salaried subordinates in business, neither their "capital, nor influence, nor college learning" will lead them to the top.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., pp. 109-110.

<sup>76</sup> New York Tribune, February 3, 1892, in Carnegie Papers Library of Congress, Vol. 14, #2539-2541.

<sup>77</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 113.

Carnegie clarifies his position by making an important distinction in his essay: "How to Win Fortune:"

Lest anything here said may be construed as tending to decry or disparage university education let me clearly state that those addressed are the fortunate poor young men who have to earn a living; for such as can afford to obtain a university degree and have means sufficient to insure a livelihood the writer is the last man to advise its rejection. . . . Liberal education gives a man who really absorbs it higher tastes and aims than the acquisition of wealth, and a world to enjoy, into which the mere millionaire cannot enter; to find therefore that it is not the best training for business is to prove its claim to a higher domain. True education can be obtained outside of the schools; genius is not an indigenous plant in the groves academic.<sup>78</sup>

Carnegie goes on to suggest that the poor boy of genius can always learn by himself and make it on his own in any situation; that, indeed, the average man is in most need of universities.

Since Carnegie's opinions on this subject became rather well known, he was asked searching questions on the matter in an interview by the British, Daily News Weekly:

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., pp. 113-114.

"What education would you advise a boy to have who wished to go into business?"

"It depends wholly upon his bent. Had I been able to have chosen my own education, I should have preferred a classical, for I have no great taste for scientific subjects. Business is neither classics nor science. The study of human nature, I think, is the best education for any business man. But whether a young man chooses a scientific or a classical education, if he wishes to pursue a business career, he should not remain long at college and university."

"At what age should he go into business?"

"Well, all my brilliant partners have begun hard practical work in their teens. I think that a course at a modern university from nineteen to twenty-four will not teach a young fellow to be as successful a business man as if he had been sent into business in a subordinate capacity. This is not disparaging university education, for I limit the observation to the business career."<sup>79</sup>

Certainly Carnegie's feelings were partly mere jealousy, for he would have loved to attend college himself. One has a feeling he would have been quite a competitor in school. His empty feeling that he had missed something, led him to insist that the alternative path he had taken, that of a business career, could only be taken early. Carnegie loved life and would have

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<sup>79</sup>Stead, Carnegie's Conundrum, p. 24.

gladly tried a dozen other careers if he only had the time. "The business career is thus a stern school of all the virtues," Carnegie declared, "and there is one supreme reward which it often yields which no other career can promise; I point to noble benefactions which it renders possible."<sup>80</sup>

Carnegie favored the small college over the large,<sup>81</sup> the college where the student was an individual and important over the college where he was a number and lost in the mass. He favored the quiet, remote school to the ivy league institution. Working your way through college was a valuable experience. Sectarian colleges were closed against knowledge, institutions of higher education needed to be open to all.<sup>82</sup> Above all, scholarship was to be respected, in any field. Often times it was too narrow and jealous of its petty prerogatives ever to be helpful, but all efforts at gaining knowledge were approved. Carnegie felt that China was backward in many respects, still the way its scholars were held in higher repute than its military pleased him enormously. The magnate declared: "China is, as far as I know, the only nation which has advanced beyond the so-called heroic age when the soldier

<sup>80</sup> Carnegie, Empire of Business, p. 224.

<sup>81</sup> For Carnegie's support of the small college, see Hendrick, Carnegie, Vol. II, pp. 261-262,

<sup>82</sup> Carnegie, "Ezra Cornell," in Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I, p. 255.

claims precedence."<sup>83</sup> Carnegie added:

No general, no conqueror, be his victories what they may, can ever reach in China to the highest rank. That is held only by successful scholars who have shown the possession of literary talent. When the news reaches a town or village that a native has been victorious at Peking, a general rejoicing takes place, and triumphal arches are built in his honor to witness for centuries how deeply they appreciate the honor conferred upon the town by their illustrious fellow-citizen."<sup>84</sup>

Carnegie was one of those heretics of education who would leave the football hero lying at the goal post and hoist the great scholar on the shoulders of the chanting students to be properly acclaimed.

Carnegie saw the value of a college education, but he saw also the need to move students more rapidly through school. The Carnegie junior high or upper grade education might well be truncated at thirteen, with most students propelled into high school, expecting that most would finish at seventeen. This age expectation might lead more to actually finish high school, if the job of teaching them to read in the primary grades could be accomplished. Carnegie would have highly approved such plans as the quarter and trimester in the colleges,

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<sup>83</sup> Carnegie, Round the World, p. 84.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 85.



and anticipated that most students would stay in school summers and complete the courses in three years. College graduates at twenty would not create an undue waste of youth's precious time. Even so, after a year of remediation, if needed, and orientation, to provide the broad general framework, one would anticipate specialization at the college level, entering deeply into subject matter, so that the foundation for graduate study was well placed already. A graduate degree, then, would not be a time-serving period in which the school and the student tried to out wait each other, but a true course, probably with numerous rejections on the route to the ultimate degree, but few pitfalls for the really capable, hardworking student, who displayed an ability to perform at the required level.

Education, above all, should see changes ahead and be itself ready to change to meet new conditions. The last word has not been spoken. Carnegie, himself, in one of his "high noon" optimistic outbursts in Triumphant Democracy suggested the developmental and evolutionary path that lay ahead:

We have not traveled far yet, with all our progress upon the upward path, but we still go marching on. That which is, is better than that which has been. It is the mission of Democracy to lead in this triumphant march and improve step by step the conditions under which the masses live.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p. 315.

**CHAPTER ELEVEN**

**CONCLUSION**

## Chapter Eleven

### Conclusion

Andrew Carnegie was the most prolific of the literary American industrialists, a speech maker, essayist, and author of eight books, who simultaneously has been the subject of many historical studies that have viewed him from a variety of vantage points. Carnegie was very much a man of his time, reacting to and reflecting the shifting nineteenth and early twentieth century scene so well that more studies are to be anticipated in the future. The magnate was not a typical employer, as some have seen him, nor a man who changed after acquiring his wealth, but rather he was all one man who grew, developed, and changed as his times changed. While further studies are anticipated, the hope has been expressed in this work that these studies are not the product of the minor detractors as in the past, who in their short summations have not read Carnegie before they wrote.

This account has seen Carnegie as a man who was given his opportunity by the enormous transition to industrialism in America. A general rule was suggested that the metamorphosis to the Industrial Revolution is always difficult for those people involved in the enormous transition. In England, Russia, China, and the developing nations of the world today, whenever the

movement through the enormous transition to industrialism has begun, the people suffer. The openness of American society, its limitless quality, gave birth to a boundless optimism that encouraged immigration and a belief in progress. But while many immigrants and natives alike remained trapped in jobs in the city or caught in their particularized small town or rural enclave, Andrew Carnegie was the immigrant as capitalist, the foreign boy who beat the natives at their own game and won. For Carnegie, and a few others who began at ground zero and achieved their own personal economic take off, the story of America was one of rising. Carnegie is a success story, the teenage immigrant that made good in the strange land. He epitomized the story of America as an epic of success. Certainly the magnate was aided by arriving at the right time and in the right place, in finding the right early jobs, and in making the right friends. Although the steel king might have succeeded anyway, given other circumstances, he probably would not have risen as far and as fast.

Neither the term "Robber Baron" or "Captain of Industry" really fits the facts of the Carnegie story. "Robber Baron" has been borrowed from another context and suggests a plot, of men lying in wait, which is far too simplistic, and the term is really a pejorative indicating that the great capitalists stole their money. The phrase "Captain of Industry," though more

appropriate in Carnegie's case, really is just a generalized favorable term, as "Robber Baron" indicates disapproval. The American business world was not a military order. Carnegie did not create "the system" of the mid-nineteenth century, but in many ways America was fortunate to have a Carnegie rather than someone else accumulate all that money. Carnegie, in the steel business, turned out a necessary product, made some actual contributions to the success of the business, and in the end spent most of the money he obtained in areas that proved most beneficial to America and the world. Certainly Carnegie can be reproached, as an absentee owner who lived abroad while exploiting his workers, as a strike-breaker and union destroyer, as a man who pushed his managers hard and paid his workers little, but he must be seen in the context of his times. If we must choose, we will have to opt for "Captain of Industry" but we might instead declare the steel king a "General of Finance" who manipulated from his castle in Scotland or his hotel in New York, rather than remaining at the front.

Carnegie came from three generations of weavers, on his father's side, but when weaving was overcome by the machine, and his father came to America, defeated, the stage was set for the rise of Carnegie. His defeated father, unable to adjust to America, his strong mother, determined that her son would "win" the game in the new land, led the magnate onward and upward. By

the age of thirty-three, Carnegie had reached the place where he knew he could arrange his affairs to give himself a secure income of \$50,000 a year for life. Wild dreams beckoned him. He thought of buying a newspaper and writing; moving to Oxford and getting an education; going into politics; improving the lot of the poor; aiding education. But although he was to extend himself in all these directions, the seeking of vast wealth was too much to resist, and in fact the lure of millionairessdom seemed to suggest the best hope for really achieving some of these other things, including immortal fame. The magnate's assessment of the situation was correct; he is remembered today for his rise to great wealth and his distribution of that wealth, rather than for other activities.

Curiously, the steel king's family traditions on both sides were radical, and Carnegie liked to believe that he was radical and following in the footsteps of his forebears. Carnegie's radicalism fastened on a hatred for the English monarchy, the inherited titles of the British nobility, the established church of Britain. He made statements radical enough to cause quite a stir in his "old home" but he saw in America the accomplishment of his beliefs. And accomplished radicalism is conservative. Yet the maghate was particularly fond of Queen Victoria. He actually courted many of the British aristocracy; it was the titles he hated, not the men. Carnegie felt his

beliefs were proven, as the superior American democracy bypassed in total production the British aristocratic nation. Carnegie never really had much problem in resolving the seeming dichotomy between his hatred of privilege in Britain and the hundreds of millions he garnered in America. His father had employed a few men in the weaving business in Scotland; his mother urged him on to wealth; his friends and associates were all trying to rise. The magnate declared his intention to use his wealth for good purposes, and he did so. When the Progressive Era dawned, he came to change his mind and favor such alterations in the national pattern as the income tax and the lowered tariff. This was not just a case of a man who had made his money, but of a man still capable of changing with his times, still seeing himself as a radical of sorts. The steel king believed all his life that wealth grew out of the community context and should be returned to the community; Carnegie, indeed, as he grew richer, saw wealth as power, the power to do lasting good for mankind.

Andrew Carnegie was a Horatio Alger hero type, both in his rise and in his writing. Carnegie's job as a telegraph messenger boy, his learning the streets, the businesses, and the names of the businessmen, and his learning how to take telegraph messages all suggested promotion. His advancement, when it came, led to a truly Algerian type of noble deed for he took charge and straightened out the rail lines, and again he

rose further. Carnegie not only was a fine example of the success myth, but he himself wrote on success.

Andrew Carnegie was his own myth maker, his own public relations man; he was an industrialist with a sense of history, a feeling for the past and the present and especially of the part he was playing. The magnate believed, however, that a good story was more important than historical truth, and proceeded to spin some fine weaver's tales about himself. The steel king's rise is told beautifully in his Autobiography and his essays; it is an oft-told tale with its own built in myths. Yet some of the mythology is worthy of consideration, for Carnegie did accumulate more money than most anyone else in the nineteenth century, and gave away more money than anyone else ever has before or since.

Carnegie combined his part-time efforts to follow Herbert Spencer and his full-time belief in Charles Darwin into his own non-violent Social Darwinism. The magnate's Social Darwinism united evolution with an optimistic belief in human progress. Hard work was always rewarded. Carnegie worked hard in his youth, and never gave up a steady attention to the most minute details of the business, but once he had enough money to begin his own company, he found men he could trust as managers and left the day to day work to others who were on the spot. In the same way, Carnegie managed to participate in the Civil War, to create some myths around a cut on the cheek though he was a



civilian, and to use a sunstroke as an excuse for traveling to Europe every summer. He worked hard to organize the telegraph and railroad men for northern victory, but once the organization was working smoothly, he left to continue his money making. Carnegie's Social Darwinism did not include approval of most military conflicts, but wars might be approved on an ad hoc basis, for instance the Civil War was justified in order to free the slaves.

The steel king's financial rise was partly hard work, some luck, and largely a matter of how he was able to use other men. People aided Carnegie, came to him for help and advice, worked well with him, and accepted his leadership. The magnate understood the motives of men and managed to reach them in ways that bound them to his enterprise. His partnership arrangements, which gave a small share of the business to associates, who would be rich, eventually, if only they stayed on and worked for the business, was as smooth a bit of business management as has ever been developed.

The story of Carnegie is the tale of man whose own education and interest in education continued throughout his life. It would be difficult to find a happier man than Carnegie was. He loved his family, his town, and his school. His parents both read widely. He enjoyed the stories of George Lauder, his uncle, and he was not packed off to school until he was almost

eight. At school he was the teacher's pet. He learned verses from Burns easily. He was early taught success at home, at his uncle's house, and in school. Success can be taught and Carnegie was primed for success. He received pennies from his uncle and his teacher for reciting well; school and monetary success were united in one goal.

"Leaving school," Carnegie declared in his book, James Watt, "does not mean the end of education -- but the beginning of self-education." The Scotch boy left school to come to America, and his family, pressed to near poverty for the first time, was forced to send him off to work. But in a series of small steps, Carnegie obtained a job as a telegraph operator. The city became his school, as he learned the streets, the business firms, and met the men involved in the growth of Pittsburgh. He found a theater where delivery of telegrams meant an opportunity to watch plays and he discovered a free library and fought a letter writing battle to keep it open free for himself and his comrades. He learned all he could about the telegraph office and went off to work as the secretary to a Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad as other young men might go off to college. In a few years he had made stock investments and was moving to the suburbs of Pittsburgh. Here and in New York society became his graduate school. Carnegie was always a "reading man" and he quite early became a traveling

man as well, visiting Europe, traveling around the world, broadening himself constantly. He moved from writing letters home, to letters to the newspaper editors, to travel books, and finally to essays in the leading journals of both of his lands: America and Great Britain. Carnegie's writing was compulsive, as was his speaking, and it was an expression of his self-education and development, not a desire to earn more money.

Carnegie wrote on a variety of topics, his views were a potpourri of reflections and attitudes that covered the entire menu before the American people. He favored an English Speaking Union of the United States, Great Britain, and the British colonies. He opposed colonialism, including the British in India, the Boer War, and the American acquisition of the Philippines. He wrote on international peace, joined peace societies, founded trust funds for peace, and built peace palaces. He wrote on the evils of the income tax, but later changed his mind in the twentieth century during the Progressive Era. He favored a high protective tariff during the time when American industries were growing, and he believed that the period of growth would be a long one. However, when American industrial ascendancy was accomplished in the twentieth century, he saw less need for a high tariff. Labor, Carnegie flattered, and even sincerely tried to help. He put his companies on the eight hour day, with the hope that other companies would follow. But

when other companies did not follow, and it cost him money, he retreated again to the twelve hour day, seven days a week, with only the Fourth of July off as a patriotic holiday. Carnegie wished to be loved by "his" men and he spoke of never taking a man's job from him and of the need for unions. But the only unions he really favored were very docile company unions that would accept his every order. Carnegie was glad to see the union broken at Homestead and only hoped that Frick would receive all the blame. Yet, to expect more from Carnegie, because of what he said in his essays, is to expect a man to rise from the context of his time -- indeed as to labor unions we still have not really learned to deal with the problem of major strikes to this day.

Carnegie favored the Civil War as a means of removing a real blight upon American honor: slavery. But when the Civil War ended, the magnate, as with most northerners, forgot the problem and went back to his personal way of life. Later, traveling in the South, Carnegie as usual was entertained by the highest society and accepted the southern viewpoint that the Negro was making progress, but should not be allowed to vote until more success was exhibited. Education was seen as the answer for the Blacks, but it was a particularized education, for Carnegie saw schools such as Tuskegee and Hampton as pointing in the desired direction. The steel king swallowed the mythology of the White scare stories and saw the need for

lynchings where assaults upon White womanhood had been committed. The magnate favored the Civil War to end slavery, saw education as the way out for the Negro, but again did not rise above his nineteenth century values and accepted a good part of the Southern position on the inadequacy of Blacks.

Carnegie remained a romantic all his life. He tended toward an optimistic belief in human progress and found romance everywhere. He saw romance in business; he venerated women; he tended to look beyond the crudities of life. The magnate had a mother problem, in that Margaret Carnegie had expectations which the steel king felt forced to fulfill. Business partnerships were likened to a good marriage. Good conversation, travel, writing, all filled the Carnegie years, but he dared to marry only after released by his mother's death, when he was past fifty. In Louise Whitfield he found a pure woman for his own happy home and this late marriage proved to be a happy romantic one.

The value system of Andrew Carnegie suggested that the true hero was the man who did things for humanity, not the great killers of men in wartime. The Carnegie Hero Fund was a flank attack on the problem of war, to reward the heroes of peace. The Good Man opposed war, favored international unity, a world language, which of course would be English, and a true League of Nations. On the national level, he favored individual rights, democracy, and the constitutional protections of trial

by jury, habeas corpus, and freedom of the press. The Good Man on the individual level saw the importance of labor, the dignity of man, and the evils of gambling, speculation, drinking, smoking, wild spending, and poor marriages. While all men had faults, the world and humankind were improving and becoming more civilized. Thrift was of such value to men, that it was desirable that men should be born in poverty and given a chance to rise. "Poverty . . . compels exertion," the magnate declared. Similarly, wealth was a curse to young men; inherited wealth was one of the worst of evils. Poverty led to thrift, hard work, and united the family into a cooperating team displaying cohesive effort. The best test of men was thrift; determine which men, of any class, saved the most, and you had the best men.

The Good Man looked beyond the empty religions and found his own heaven on this earth. "The highest form of worship is service to man," Carnegie declared often. The magnate soon passed beyond his belief in organized religions; he found in reading Darwin all his answers. The Carnegie Good Man did not need a church or a theology; he could find his religion in helping people, in reading, in good conversation, in all of life about him. The Good Man was a person of ideals who performed his appointed tasks, who worked hard, used his leisure constructively, who could really enjoy life, but who also planned his life by setting something aside for his old age.

The steel king set enough aside for his own old age that he could advance the Doctrine of the Stewardship of Wealth and suggest that the rich should give away most of their money in their own lifetimes to causes that would advance humanity. There is little doubt that Carnegie took pleasure in the thought that some of his great foundations would be immortal, providing new benefits to continuing generations and that his own name would always be remembered as a "Benefactor of Mankind." Indeed, the phrase, "Benefactor of Mankind," was used on the two inch buttons circulated by the Carnegie Corporation of New York during the Carnegie Centennial in 1935. Wealth, Carnegie believed, should not be given away indiscriminately nor parceled out in small lots to workmen who would probably use it for inferior purposes of the body, but rather apportioned through wisdom of the men who had proven their understanding of the importance of money by accumulating it in the first place. Money was a "sacred trust" to be utilized for the general good. Wealth should be spent on universities, libraries, hospitals, parks, concert halls, and in general to elevate humanity. What was most important about the Carnegie Gospel of Wealth, however, was that it touched other rich men and led to a vast contribution by the wealthy to a variety of worthy community causes.

The steel king's benevolence took a great many forms,

a pension fund for his former employees, church organs, a hero fund, temples of peace, vast libraries, aid to schools and colleges, and money for his native town of Dunfermline in Scotland. The great Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, received over one-third of the money the magnate was to dispense, \$125,000,000. The Carnegie gifts for education and libraries, by their size, by their guide rules, by the demand for matching funds, tended to alter national directions in education. Indeed, the Carnegie money was sufficient to have a really significant impact upon American national directions at the time.

The public library was Carnegie's own favorite philanthropy and the most remembered of his endeavors. It was good books and the free library that the magnate himself saw as the basis for his own self-education. The library was a school for the man on the rise who could not continue his education any other way. As the Carnegie library philanthropy grew and developed, guidelines were formalized and community participation in the venture was built into the program.

Carnegie wrote on the development of American education and saw New England really following Scotland and the Calvinistic beliefs of John Knox. Knox called for a common school in every parish in Scotland. The magnate felt it was fortunate for America that New England exported her culture and



pattern of education to the middle west and the far west. Carnegie's conception of the educational ideal of New England is reminiscent of the Protestant Ethic. The steel king saw education as a universal panacea, curing all ills; he emphasized the contrast between the ideals of freedom and liberty in the north and those of slavery and ignorance in the south. The magnate expressed happiness that he lived in a country where more was spent on education than on war. He saw the schools acting as the melting pot; one of the major problems was assimilating Roman Catholics who built their own schools. As with Horace Mann and Henry Barnard, Andrew Carnegie saw education as the panacea, solving all problems, curbing crime, ending pauperism, elevating, enriching, and promoting equality.

The Carnegie elementary school would be built in a park, the school building itself would be proud and impressive structure, and every effort would be made to run the enterprise day and night to benefit the community. Classrooms would be bright and cheerful with pictures of great men, great scenes, and there would also be great mottoes upon the walls. Teachers who truly loved students, who were enthusiastic and wished education to be a joy would be employed. The emphasis would be placed on rewarding good behavior rather than punishing evil. Children would be brought into the teaching process.

While the main function of the school is to educate, you cannot expect to teach a hungry child, nor a sick child, nor a child with hearing or vision problems, nor a child with clothing so poor he is an object of mockery. The school must step in, where the family and community agencies fail. It is one thing to raise a child in honest poverty, it is another to reduce his opportunities. Where the home is functioning as it should, there is not the urgency about primary education, but where the home is failing to fit the child for society, the school must initiate a program of early childhood education. Children will begin at the Carnegie school at the ages they need to enter, two or three years of age for the deprived and disadvantaged, four or five years for the average child, and as old as seven or eight for the child who would positively benefit from further home enculturation. The Carnegie school would be experimental, and the teacher would be given the tools with which to teach, from textbooks to technology, from teacher aides to more supplies. The new school would be one of differentiated staffing and non-graded in structure.

The curriculum would be rewritten, not just to make it relevant, but to be sure that it was uplifting, hopeful, optimistic. The glory of war would be expurgated from books just as evil was removed. Reading would remain the basic subject in the elementary school, the high school, even in

college. Reading is necessary for life, but the school sets its own standards; reading is necessary to do the work of the school. Reading would begin with the alphabet and sounds, but it would always be kept informative and entertaining. The idea of reading as fun, for enjoyment, should be conveyed but cannot really be taught. To live and miss the great literature is tantamount to never having lived at all.

Spelling, the magnate saw in great need of reform, but as with his peace crusade, he failed here. Carnegie saw the English language as the world-wide tongue of the future and hoped to make his contribution by simplifying the spelling. Some simplification of spelling, though not as much as the steel king hoped for, is needed to make early reading and spelling easier. Carnegie also saw a need to eliminate grammar, as worthless to teach to students. The other language arts he heartily endorsed, speaking, listening, writing, and compositions were all valuable to teach.

Other subjects in the Carnegie elementary school would include math, science, and technical studies. Carnegie favored the metric system. He believed in the discovery method. Children should be taught to love living creatures and they should be taught the dangers of smoking, drinking, and drugs very early. Children needed also to be taught the simple rules of health and caring for themselves. Field trips to museums,

art galleries, around the city, or a walk in the woods, were all valuable. Children also needed to know something of the technology that made up the world in which they lived.

History and literature were the value carriers. History, the steel king believed, should be understood in terms of the present by the use of current events. The ancient civilizations and the medieval world might be mentioned, even studied for a few weeks, but the emphasis should be on modern society. An interest in the past did not make for progress and glorifying the nation could lead to nationalism and more wars. A Carnegie revisionism would change history by looking at the positive side of developments. Wars would be mentioned only as examples of past evil. More mature students would examine propaganda and the psychology of wars. Models of peaceful cultures, prosperous, happy, living in abundance would be suggested as the proper societies for all of humankind. Democracy would be taught as an example of positive good. An optimistic faith in the future would be suggested. There would be an accent on world unity in both history and geography. The ways that students might advance the race would be suggested.

The Carnegie school also would teach music, art, and physical fitness. Music was a unifying factor. Music had charms to soothe the savage child. Art, a sense of beauty, a knowledge of color, also needed to be taught. Art was personal,

it needed to please the viewer. The Carnegie elementary school would have a gymnasium and the high school a gymnasium and a swimming pool, but the Carnegie college would not have huge stadiums nor would they compete in sports with other schools. Physical fitness is necessary; exercise is important; but a vast audience for sporting events is not the purpose of the college.

Carnegie was quite ready to educate women, as mothers, as the companions for men, and as managers of the home. The well educated woman of many interests had the most to offer in all aspects of life. Education was good for all and would not reduce the femininity of women. Counseling of both sexes in elementary school and high school would prevent disastrous early marriages. There was a need also for the school to counsel on the value of money.

Counseling on the secondary level for future occupations is most needed. The high school must also offer guidance to its own curriculum; too often does the student merely accept subjects because a teacher recommends them or a friend is taking that course. The high school must offer subjects for the specialist as well as the generalist. The high school must be able to prepare students for college, but also offer a full complement of commercial, technical, and home management subjects. Carnegie was determined that both practical and useful studies should be pursued on the one hand and pure research for its own

sake be attempted on the other. The real counseling might be reserved for the leaders of education, whom the magnate felt were headed in the wrong direction in his day when they required a classical education consisting of the dead languages and a study of dead civilizations.

The Carnegie Unit was the development of the times; it probably would have come anyway, but its advent was hurried by the magnate's entrance upon the scene, and its rapid universal acceptance was the result of Carnegie money. The magnate was invited to university functions so that he might be interested in institutions of higher learning and contribute money. Instead he became interested in professor's pensions and this led to the creation of the Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The Foundation, in desiring to pension professors, needed to find research answers to many questions. "What is a professor?" as a question, led to further questions such as "What is a college?" Eventually, defining a college teacher led to a need to define a college, and defining a college forced the researchers to consider the college in terms of the secondary school students it received. The further question was asked: "What is a high school?" Since all these questions were answered variously, at the time, it was obvious that the high school had to be defined in respect to the courses it taught. And so, by this rather involved, elaborate process, the Foundation moved into the world

of standards and helped other agencies develop the Carnegie Unit. The Foundation applied pressure to the colleges through the pension funds and the colleges applied pressure to the secondary schools by admissions policies and the Carnegie Units became the educational standard.

Carnegie followed his grandfather in the belief that some technical training was good for everyone and that a good deal of technical education was valuable for some. Carnegie had little sympathy for rebellious youth; his feeling was that if they dropped out and worked with their hands for a while, they might begin to respect the opportunities for education. The magnate believed that colleges and secondary schools must eliminate subjects no longer of value and constantly add those which would fit the needs of the students of today.

A college education was valuable, but it tended to make specialists of people who majored in the classics, and this study was useless to the businessman. Carnegie would have been delighted at the growing schools of business in America with their classes in all the technical subjects of the many specialized businesses of the land, but in his own day he found that most college students had wasted their best years in school, when they could have gained valuable experience as a messenger boy or performing some tasks at the bottom of the ladder. The practical experience, in which one learned the organization and structure

of the business at close range, where one became familiar with the names of the men involved, this was far more important than the mastery of dead languages and dead stories. Young college men found themselves behind in the race of life. Carnegie would have suggested that young men get into college as early as possible, certainly by seventeen, and he would have been happy with the all year college program in its various forms that turns out college graduates in three years. Small colleges were superior to large schools; personal attention was important. Sectarian colleges were inferior to non-denominational schools. The task of the college was to open the doorways of the mind.

Above all, there is a spirit of optimism, a belief in mankind, a future oriented thrust to the ideas of Andrew Carnegie that suggested why he created his Foundations with a thought to their immortality. The world and mankind are on a journey together and the future belongs to the innovative man.



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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Roger Lee Vernon has been read and approved by members of the Department of Education.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that all necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

May 17, 1971

Date

Ronald Lee Gutek

Signature of Advisor