THE RICE INSTITUTE

THE NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUES OF THOMAS HARDY

by

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A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

Houston, Texas
May, 1960
To my husband and parents for their constant encouragement.
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PART I

THE MONOLOGIST ENCOUNTERS SOME IMPONDERABLES
Although Hardy has more monologues which pertain to physical problems than to metaphysical problems, I feel that an understanding of his treatment of spiritual matters enables one to move more freely and comprehensively among his monologists who are involved in society. It is for this reason that I have devoted almost half of this thesis toward the understanding of monologists who are encountering some imponderables.
CHAPTER I

NATURE

The imponderable which is most frequently encountered by Hardy's monologists is Nature, often equated (by implication, not statement) with God. A typical monologue pertaining to Nature is "At a Bridal."

Nature Encountered Imaginatively
(Emotional Involvement—"At a Bridal")

In "At a Bridal" the poet is personified as a man who is addressing his lost beloved. Although the character is stationary in time, a feeling of progressive narrative development is achieved by the character's reflecting in the first stanza on his sweetheart's marriage, wondering in the second stanza whether he should also marry and establish a line of descendants, and anticipating in the third stanza Nature's indifference. Thus, the poem has progressed through the stages of past, present, and future.

The monologist's various considerations of the abstractions—Love, Mode, and the Great Dame, Nature—as personalities are key points in the poem's development. Willingly would he revere Love, for Love would desire his union with his beloved. Despair, therefore, is the mood of the first stanza, since Love's design is not fulfilled. The reality of the present situation forces
the monologist to consider obeying the prevailing, popular custom or style and marrying. This would be on a lower plane, as is indicated by his speaking of the decree of Mode, whereas he had spoken of the design of Love. If he marries, his love for his wife will only be a pretense ("false desire"), for his lost beloved will remain the object of his affections. While thinking of his own situation, he transfers his emotions to his beloved, attributing her "found" "a stolid line" to "false desire" also. He regards the possible descendants of two such "false" marriages as dull and impassive, rather than "rare forms," whom "high aims will fire." The second stanza carries a tone of frustration in the man's seeking a substitute for his beloved. "Grieved" that they had established two "stolid" lines of descendants, rather than one "rare" one as Love had designed, the monologist and his beloved approach Nature. Tension rises. She is called the "Great Dame." (Neither Love nor Mode had been so seriously considered by them. Love had been spurned by the woman. Mode had been distrusted by the man.) They "dare" question her "why." Her exalted answer is anticipated as the monologist speaks of the unborn offspring as "high-purposed children." Although Nature's answer of indifference seems ironical after such anticipation, Her speaking of the children as "sovereign types" seems sheer mockery. This is an even more cruel sensation than the despair of the first stanza.

The only physical action is the young woman's marrying. Even this one statement of fact, however, is colored by the
monologist's emotions, for he describes the wedding as a time from which she will "await maternity." The remainder of the first stanza is entirely his emotional reaction to the wedding. The other two stanzas concern his possible physical actions. The one physical action, the wedding, has served as only an introduction to his mental considerations. Thus, though he was at most only a spectator of the wedding, he has become the focal point of the poem.

The pace of the bride describes not only the traditionally slow, measured walk of a bridal procession, but perhaps connotes the assuredness and humility of the bride as she proceeds down the aisle and forth to a new life in marriage. By using a caesura, Hardy structurally retards the rhythm and intensifies "paced," for the listener (reader) becomes aware that a stop has occurred. It soon becomes obvious, however, that the true stop is not caused by the bride's reluctance, for she is anticipating the fulfillment of the marriage ceremony in bearing children. As the listener (reader) proceeds to the second verse, he believes that the reason for the pause was the monologist's mental distraction, since he says that "other offspring held ...[his] mind." The third verse, however, unfolds that the true cause of the hesitation was sadness, for the character's dreams of children were only speculations of children born through his union with her. The listener (reader) is then conscious that the bride has not only "paced forth" toward one union, but away from another possible union. An even longer pause, the semi-colon,
objective descriptions included) to classify "The Sleep-Worker" as a dramatic monologue.

As one can readily see by the addresses and references, the monologists of these three poems differ greatly in their attitudes toward God. In this poem the poet reverently, yet affectionately, addresses Nature as "O Mother." The entire poem carries a far more tender tone than the preceding ones. The speaker seems weary (as though he, too, had "laboured long"), sympathetic with the suffering products of Nature and with Nature's strivings; trustful that Nature will see her mistakes and take some action when she awakes, and detached from (though highly interested in) this weird enmeshment. The role of the monologist as an observer is treated quite differently in "At a Bridal." In "The Sleep-Worker" the primary emphasis is placed upon what is observed even though the monologist treats it subjectively. In "At a Bridal" the primary emphasis is placed upon the observer.

The common image of one's awakening physically, then mentally, is used several times in Hardy's monologues. In "Four in the Morning" the monologist awakes and arises, happily anticipating pleasure. Soon he becomes irked, for he hears a scythe and knows its operator is "taking his life's stern stewardship/ With blithe unsore; and hard at work/ At four o'clock!" The one addressing the Sleep-Worker commences patiently asking, "When wilt thou wake?" He grows more urgent—"wake and see"—then pauses, remembering that the tumults and troubles ("coils") caused by Nature are unintentional. She has only acted unconsciously
("by vacant rote") and, as yet, is unaware ("unwitting") of these problems.

He again shows that Nature is not to be condemned by saying that this situation is "unrealised" by Her. A catalogue succeeds in which he enumerates contrasting conditions. (One is immediately reminded of the "purblind Doomsters[1]" bestowing "blisses" and "pains" in "Hap.") Fair and cancerous growths exist side by side; right is entangled with wrong; victim-shrieks and songs comprise an orchestra. These "curious blends of ache and ecstasy" are nightmarish qualities and objects which well suit a "trance."

With the "morn" of awakening and recognition, the speaker questions what Nature's response will be. Thus he anticipates some response, not indifference. Again we see a range of possibilities, from destroying to healing. The monologue has progressed from the quiet state of Nature's sleeping, to the shock of Nature's discovering violent contrasts and possibly destroying the world, to the possible state of Nature's "patiently adjusting, amending, and healing."

Biological imagery is not frequent in Hardy's monologues. Here, however, we discover such words as "trance," "growth," "canker," "ache," "palpitating tissue," "shock," "heaving," and "heal." Among the words which have musical denotations and connotations in "The Sleep-Worker" are "orchestras," "song," "blends," and "heaving," a particularly rich word since it inherently combines several possibilities. Considered architecturally,
it emphasizes the height of the structure of the heavens. One feels the rising, uplifting quality of Gothic cathedrals. That Nature might destroy such a grand edifice, fitted and united together to form the very vault or arch of the sky, indeed, is shocking. The speaker conveys the suggestion that detached observers would be more stunned in beholding this feat than Nature would be in discovering her mistakes. Nonetheless, this is a possibility, since there are so many incongruities. Furthermore, if the frame is not suitable, it is doubtful that any amount of adjustment will be of service. Considered biologically, "heaving" points out that this is an organism which Nature has created. Her destroying it would truly seem unnatural. "Heaving" could mean sighing. If so, the sorrow and weariness of Nature's created beings are suggested. These are not lowly creatures, for they have a heavenly ("firmamental") "frame," having been made in Nature's image. Nevertheless, they are diseased. The speaker had before mentioned cancerous growths. Could Nature "heal" this? (When this poem was written, no cure for cancer had yet been discovered.) Considered musically, one begins to hear the "music of the spheres" in this rhythmical, rising heavenly body. Life's heartbeats ("palpitating tissues") would cease with the destruction of its frame.

"At a Bridal," "Hap," and "The Sleep-Worker" illustrate, as I have shown before, three views toward Deity. Nevertheless, they could well be read as a series in which the speaker progresses respectively to the attitudes indicated in the foregoing
poems. They could be followed by the vision-poem, "God Forgotten," in which the poet envisions that God says to him, "Thou shouldst have learnt that Not to Mend/ For me could mean but Not to Know."

Nature Encountered Objectively

--Observer of Observers--

(Personal Involvement, Yet no Concern--"The Bullfinches")

Another approach to a monologist's encountering a deity is "The Bullfinches." In the first stanza the framework of a song is established as the monologist says, "Brother Bulleys, let us sing." Repetitions and internal rhymes in several verses give a lyrical quality. The following are examples:

"For we know not that we go not,"

"Roosting near them I could hear them,"

"Yet, in seeming, works on dreaming," and

"All things making for Death's taking."

Since the last verse is a refrain for the first verse, the musical motif is even further established.

The second stanza completes the exposition. The monologist reveals when ("flew"--past), where ("Blackmoor Vale/ Whence the green-gowned faeries hail"), how ("roosting near them I could hear them"), and what ("Nature's ways,/ Means, and moods") he has learned. The heart of the poem, stanzas three through the first half of five, pertains to the "what" of the exposition. Nature, "said they there," has not protected her children--
"bird or beast." Her works which She has continued while sleeping have been distorted by fiends. The last half of the fifth stanza, in restating how and where he has received this information, forms a parallel to the second stanza and is a transitional passage, returning the listener (reader) to the monologist's present state.

Among the few puns in Hardy's works possibly is "hussif'ry," which is perhaps a pun on "housewifery" and "hussy." This would indicate a contemptuous attitude toward Nature's success. The pun seems unlikely since Nature is referred to as "queenly" and "Mother." Again, as in "The Sleep-Worker, Nature is portrayed as sleeping ("falls a-drowse" and "dreaming"). Her "groping hands" recall to mind the blindness of the "Doomsters" in "Hap."

Although the monologist in "At a Bridal" was an observer at a wedding, this is the first monologue we have considered in which the monologist is the observer of another's encounter with a deity. Whereas in "The Sleep-Worker" the monologist seems somewhat detached, yet much concerned and very compassionate toward the scene of misery, the monologist in "The Bullfinches" seems involved (for some day he will die), yet unconcerned (for he plans to sing). The "faeries," to whom the primary discussion of Nature's role is given, specifically had mentioned birds as unprotected by Nature. His awareness of this fact is shown by his reminding the birds of their frailty ("pale") and saying that death may overtake them
that night. He admonishes his brother bullfinches to sing from "dawn to evening," and this may be interpreted in several ways. One is that the singing will be a symbol of obtaining whatever joys they may, another that it will be a symbol of stoically accepting death. I am inclined to the former position, since the monologist has not shown other signs of rage or despair.

There is a fraternity-in-death not only among the present brother bullfinches, but also between the present and past bullfinches. Another poem which treats of the similarity (almost identity) of a living bird and its ancestor is "In a Museum." Death is undoubtedly one of the most frequently used subjects and themes in Hardy's monologues. "The Bullfinches" is only one of the dozens of ways the topic is developed.

Various uses are made by Hardy of titles. "At a Bridal" shows (together with the first verse) the background for the poem's development. "Hap" points to the monologist's discovering that the "Doomsters" have ruled him by chance. "The Sleep-Worker" indicates the auditor. In "The Bullfinches" the monologist and auditors are both birds. The title and subtitle specify in "The Bedridden Peasant to an Unknowing God" the monologist and auditor.

Nature Encountered Directly
(Physical Involvement; Expression of Belief—"Bedridden Peasant")
The title of "The Bedridden Peasant" clearly signals Hardy's objectivity. Within the poem one finds only one direct reference to the physical condition of the monologist ("I--here long low-laid"). No reference is made to the monologist's being a peasant except in the title. This is the first monologue which we have considered in which the monologist is suffering physically. Paradoxically, it is also the first monologue in which the monologist praises God.

The development of this monologue can best be seen by the progression of stanzas. The first expresses the wonder of the peasant; the second, a mild argumentation to God; the third, the indignation of the peasant; the fourth and fifth, the separation of God and Man; the sixth, the beginning of God's awareness of man's suffering; the seventh, the action of God upon his realization; and the eighth, the praise and exaltation of God by the peasant. The last stanza is actually an example of "willing suspension of disbelief," for God's awareness and action have been only conjecture.

One of the most interesting symbols thus far encountered is the wall mentioned in verse two of this dramatic monologue. At first it appears to be only the wall of a sickroom. Then it seems to represent the barrier between God and Man, for it is "betwixt the Maker and the made." Since the monologist is ill, the listener (reader) soon transfers the adjective ("dead") modifying the physical wall of the room to the symbolical level of a spiritual barrier. It would then appear that the speaker desires death as in "A Wasted Illness," for death would overcome this
barrier. It would be a door to God. (The first and sixth stanzas seem to support this view.) This, however, is not the correct interpretation, we soon learn, for the peasant seems more concerned with health and well-being as he evokes in the second stanza the image of one's nursing a child. Since the monologist speaks of being in "bondage" and "shut in/ Where voice cannot be heard," the image of men's being in a prison is brought to mind. The peasant strongly feels this barrier in communicating with God. (It should be noted here that in Hardy's dramatic monologues no monologist has a close, personal relationship with God, who is generally depicted as a force or power. When God is addressed as a person, e.g., as Mother Nature, there is sometimes a sense of reverence or awe, but never the sense of understanding love, which in the Christian tradition one feels toward God, the Father. This wall or barrier to communication or understanding between God and man, man and society, man and man, man and woman, man and animal, and man and himself is found in many of Hardy's monologues. It is, however, in his monologues pertaining to the relationship between God and man that it is most discernible.) Within this poem the wall takes many forms. We have already seen that it could represent a sickroom or a prison. Less obvious are other walls of misunderstanding. In the third stanza the monologist emotionally fortifies himself against God's lack of care by being indignant. The final wall for the peasant is a true fortification against despair, rather than a barrier to God. It is a fortified faith in the Almighty. He will willingly
suspend his earlier disbelief and now believe in a faith which he has built on supposition. He believes that some force external to God has altered God's original plan of taking tender care of mankind. Furthermore, were God to know of man's suffering, He would rescue him. The monologue may be considered as a study of the question of the "why" of suffering.

Words and phrases pertaining to health are used to support the image of the bedridden peasant. Among these are "dead," "long low-laid," "nurse," "better it is, or worse," "helpless," "agonize," "lame, starved, or maimed, or blind," "heal," "ills," and "heart." (As in most of Hardy's monologues which deal with a man's encounter with God, the particular man speaking could well be the spokesman for humanity.) His physical pains could well symbolize his greater emotional pains. Likewise, the words and phrases which pertain to the senses could be interpreted as having emotional, mental, or spiritual meanings as well as physical meanings. Among these are "eyes," "cry," "voice can not be heard," "word," "sense flash," and "seeing."

The monologist's tender attitude toward a child's being "put...to nurse," not only acts as a strong contrast to his indignation toward the Lord's "think[ing] no more of us," but also anticipates the lines concerning his belief in the Lord's gentleness. ("For Thou art mild of heart...that we should win/ Thy succour by a word....Wouldst heal the ills with quickest care/ Of me a [bedridden peasant] and all my kind [humanity].")
This could leave no question in the listener's (reader's) mind that the auditor is not only a god, or the god of the peasant, but is the only God.

Nature Encountered As Created Beings

Hardy's monologues include some monologists who address Nature as the Creator, as created beings, and as a combination of these two. In the preceding poems Nature has only been considered as God, or a god, or an aspect of either. In "In a Wood" the monologist thinks of natural objects (created beings) rather than Nature (the Creator).

The monologist of "In a Wood," "city-opprest" (tired of the hypocrisy and unfaithfulness of mankind as well as the confinement of space and stress of time), had already sought the woods for peace and rest before the monologue commenced. The poem is basically an explanation of his dissatisfaction with nature and his decision to return to humanity. The only passages regarding his own physical actions are: "city-opprest,/ Unto this wood I came/ As to a nest" and "since, then, no grace I find/ Taught me of trees, Turn I back to my kind." He is the only human participant mentioned in the poem. His own background is important primarily because it serves as a framework for the poem. Although the monologist is only the observer of nature's cruelties, nature is interpreted more than described by him.

Stanzas one and four are addressed to various trees in this wooded area. Stanzas two, three, and five are perhaps addressed
to another human being or himself rather than nature, for nature as a whole, and trees in particular, are spoken of in the third person. Although the time sequence is often split (present, reflection of the past, present) and the mood is often changed because of this time sequence or because of a monologue's organic split between supposition and reality, auditor-focus is rarely split in Hardy's monologues. (His dialogues and narratives by their very nature employ changes in auditor-focus far more often.)

(Just as birds, next to human beings, are given more attention by Hardy in his monologues than are other animals, so trees are treated more often than any other plants. The trees mentioned in this poem include "beech," "sycamore," "oak," "elms," "ash," "hollies," and "poplars." In other monologues he refers to "pine," "birch," "trees," "bushes," "cypress," and "cheesnut." Other plants mentioned include "chrysanthemum," "iris," and "rose." "Ivy-spun halters choke/ Elms stout and tall" reminds one of the monologue, "The Ivy Wife," in which an ivy plant expresses its delight in temporarily mastering a large tree.)

In the monologues considered previously the speakers believed that a superior power had caused, or at least controlled, the suffering of man and that it was the responsibility of this higher force to cure the miseries of mankind. The monologist in "In a Wood" feels it is the responsibility of earthly creatures and plants to refrain from causing further suffering. These trees
provide both a contrast to, and a comparison with, mankind. The cycle is contrast implied, comparison implied, and contrast stated. In the first verses "pale" connotes white, symbolic of purity; "blue" connotes heavenliness and truth; "set in one clay, Bough to bough" shows unity. The monologist's failure to find these traits in men could well have been the reason he had sought communion with nature and solitude from men. Soon he begins to question the nobility of nature and says, "Bough to bough cannot you/ Live out your day?" Alas, nature, too, has mortal failings ("set in one clay"). He sees that nature, like human nature, has marred "sweet comradeship" and repaid "neighbourly" intentions with poisonous contempt.

It is only after having heard (read) the second stanza that one can see this second level of meaning in the first stanza, for one does not know until then the author's perspective. "City-opprest" then appears to have been foreshadowed by the first stanza, for just as the trees had been physically marred and blighted by neighbors, so the monologist had been injured emotionally ("heart-halt" and "spirit-lame") by neighbors. Having dreamed of peace, he had come to nature. As a "nest" is often physically high in a tree above the earth, so he hopes his living conditions would be on a higher plane, not materially (for a nest consists only of necessities), but emotionally. In "this wood" he hoped to find kindness in company with reason. Instead, he found the conditions which
are denoted by the Middle English meaning of "wood," i.e., madness! (Hardy was not one to minimize the grotesque incongruities of nature.) The monologist had thought that the wood would provide ease for persons tormented or vexed ("harrowed"). Ironically, it vexed and tormented ease, i.e., it gave no ease. (The first level of "harrowed ease" is indirect object, then object. The second level, which one sees more clearly after the next stanza has been heard, is adjective, then noun—"the harrowed ease," all being the direct object.)

In the third stanza a stated comparison is made: "show them to men akin--/ Combatants all!" "Shoulders," "stout," and "tall" in the third stanza could well describe men, as could "scorn," "brave," "rival's air," and "black despair" in the fourth stanza. The last stanza again presents a comparison: "my kind/ Worthy as these." His retreat to nature would seem to imply that he found nothing admirable in mankind. Now he finds nothing admirable in nature. One soon discovers that the monologist does not regard mankind as completely base, for he admits that, though rare, "now and then, are found/ Life-loyalties." The comparison has again become a contrast. Hardy's monologists use the vegetable world primarily as a backdrop for dramatic action. Other uses, however, occur. Here nature is the auditor and unconscious revealer of a truth.

An interesting contrast to "In a Wood" is seen in "The Caged Thrush Freed and Home Again," in which a bird reports
the knowledge he has gained from his imprisonment by men. He had anticipated gleaning from human nature "how happy days are made to be." The monologist of "In a Wood" had sought peace in nature (trees). Both poems have as auditors non-humans. The thrush addresses other birds, as did the monologist in "The Bullfinches"; the man addresses trees. The bird learns that "men know but little more than...[he]/ How happy days are made to be"; the man learns that his kind is "worthy as these" trees which are constantly fighting ("combatants"). The cruelties of nature are emphasized in "In a Wood." Although the emphasis in "The Caged Thrush" is placed on the limitations of men, their cruelty is revealed, also, for the thrush was "borne from yonder tree/ In bonds to them."

Another dramatic monologue in which a man views a created being is "The Blinded Bird." Here again suffering is evident, for the bird was "blinded ere yet a-wing." The monologist blames God ("and all this indignity,/ With God's consent on thee!"). Stanzas one and two are addressed to this maimed creature. In the last stanza, which is a eulogy of the bird, the auditor is unidentified. This poem is an unusual one for Hardy in that the climax is reached in the last verse as the monologist says, "Who is divine? This bird." This title of divinity is an ironical contrast to "God's consent" at the beginning. The poem is similar to the beginning of "Hap" in that earthly creatures are portrayed as superior to God. Through a creature of Nature the monologist has encountered a true deity.
Unlike "At a Bridal," the monologist, a compassionate observer, does not gain the distinction of being the primary participant.

"To Outer Nature" is unique in that "Love" is depicted as the Creator, or at least the purpose of creation. The monologue, like many of Hardy's poems, falls into two parts. The first division is a supposition that "Love" had created ("wrought") the natural objects. The monologist shows both future hope ("show thee as I thought thee") and past belief ("when I early sought thee/ Omen-scouting,/ All undoubting"). The second division depicts reality ("but such re-adorning/ Time forbids with scorning"). The most unusual aspect of this monologue occurs in the first portion. A type of re-creation is desired by the monologist, for he says to Nature, "Show thee as I thought thee." Nature here is to be the Creator and the created simultaneously. Having already implied that his earlier belief concerning "Love[1's]" share in creation ("all undoubting/ Love alone had wrought thee") was false, the monologist says in the fourth stanza that "time forbids with scorning" and makes him "see things/ Cease to be things." When the monologist becomes aware that "Love" was not a principal force in creation, his hope for re-creation vanishes.
CHAPTER II
OTHER IMPOUNDERABLES

Birth and Death

Among the unanswerable questions which Hardy considers are those concerning birth and death. One dramatic monologue indicative of Hardy's narrative treatment is "The Unborn." Endowing spirits, e.g., the unborn, with personalities is typical of Hardy. These unborn, who represent hopeful innocence while questioning whether life is "a pure delight," contrast sharply with the experienced monologist, whose "heart was anguished for their sake." Understatement intensifies the contrast. The monologist, torn between truth and pity, "could not frame a word" of answer to the questions of the unborn, but "silently retired" and "turned and watched them." The unborn, nevertheless, "seemed to read" the truth in his "sunken face," for they no longer wished to rush into life. They enter life only by being "driven forward like a rabble rout."

Similar in content is the dramatic monologue, "To an Unborn Pauper Child." Here again is a monologist of experience confronting an unborn child. Now, however, he admonishes the child to "sleep the long sleep." Whereas the monologist of "The Unborn" presents the dramatic constituents of time
("I rose at night"), place ("the Cave of the Unborn"), and action ("and crowding shapes surrounded me"); the monologist of "To an Unborn Pauper Child" gives only one fact pertaining to the dramatic situation ("and thou thy birth-hour beckons thee"). The primary difference between these two monologues is that the former monologist tells of a past experience, while the latter is presently involved in the situation. Although the entire monologue is addressed to the titled auditor, an unborn pauper child, there is no more communication ("no hint of mine may hence/ To theeward fly") than in "The Unborn," in which the monologist "could not frame a word."

Organically, "To an Unborn Pauper Child" can be divided into four parts: command ("breath not, hid Heart: cease silently") and reasons for command ("time-wraiths turn our songsingings to fear" and "thou const not mend these things if thou dost come"), desire for communication ("had I the ear of wombed souls" "then would I tell thee all I know") and lack of communication ("to thy locked sense/ Explain none can/ Life's pending plan"), desire to protect ("fain would I, dear, find some shut plot/ On earth's wide wold for thee, where not/ One tear, one qualm,/ Should break the calm"), and the actual state of things, softened by a blessing ("can dream thou wilt find/ Joys seldom yet attained by humankind").

The lack of communication between the experienced and the inexperienced expressed in the two preceding monologues is also seen "In Childbed," in which a new mother is the
monologist, reporting her own mother's visit and opinion. Though dealing with a recent birth the spirit mentioned is not that of a newborn child, but of the child's deceased grandmother. Furthermore, the spirit is not the inexperienced, but the experienced. The child's understanding is not even considered; it is the young mother who, mystified, says, "Such strange things did mother say to me." Just as the unborn had thought that life would be "a pure delight, a beauty-spot" and "a scene the loveliest," so the young woman believed in her "innocent maternal vanity" that these characteristics were fulfilled in her newborn child. She was blinded by her dreams to the truths which her own mother revealed to her ("this midnight time unwombs/ Thousands just as rare and beautiful" and "your fond exploit but shapes for tears/ New thoroughfares in sad humanity").

Besides the general sadness of life, there are specific tragic situations. Death in "A Sunday Morning Tragedy" is an indirect result of a mother's desire to save her daughter from the disgrace of bearing an illegitimate child. Hate as well as love is a factor sometimes responsible for death. "The Man He Killed" presents a circumstantial cause of death; the monologist in reflecting why he had killed another comments, "Yes; quaint and curious war is!/ You shoot a fellow down/ You'd treat if met where any bar is,/ Or help to half-a-crown."
More frequent than the presentation of causes of death is the presentation of the loved ones of the dead. "Why She Moved House (The Dog Muses)" illustrates the mystery of death experienced by those yet living. In Hardy's monologues this mystery is enhanced by frequent visitations from ghosts and spirits as well as references to folklore and superstitions. "A Sign-Seeker" presents a monologist who is familiar with many signs of nature and human nature. His one unfulfilled desire, however, is a sign from a phantom parent or friend that death is "not the end!" He had even "lain in dead men's beds" and "walked/ The tombs of those with whom...[he] had talked," but none had replied. To his sorrow "Nescience mutely muses: When a man falls he lies."

There are primarily two views regarding life-after-death in Hardy's monologues, neither of which attaches any importance to the Christian concept of spiritual immortality. The scene for many of these revelations regarding immortality is a graveyard (though spirits are often believed to dwell where their "life-parts most were played!" as in "Her Haunting-Ground" and "The Phantom"). In "Her Immortality" the monologist is told by his beloved's spirit, "By living, me in you keep alive,/ By dying you slay me." This death of memory among living loved ones is called the "second" and final death by the voices in "The To-Be-Forgotten." The other opinion is that which is expressed in "Friends Beyond," in
which the spirits of the dead say, "Curious not the least are we if our intents you make or mar."

These last two poems are not true monologues, for (though reported by monologists) they contain long passages directly quoted from groups. It is primarily in relation to death that Hardy has choral responses. The poem, "Her Immortality," is very typical of Hardy's monologues, for a man "pilgrimed" unto the place where last...[he] saw/...[his] dead Love's living smile." Furthermore, the woman had married another man, but regretted her choice. (She says, "My husband clasps another bride:/ My children's love has she.") The only strong tie is between her and her lover, whom she addresses as her "faithful one." This poem is particularly interesting because it deals with the two themes most used in Hardy's monologues—death and love (outside of marriage). I would not, however, classify it as a pure monologue (though so typical of Hardy's poems) since it contains an extended passage quoted from the spirit.

Abstractions Considered as Personalities

Physical beings, e.g., animals, plants, and nature, are not alone personified in Hardy's monologues. "Death," "Life," "Time," "Solace," "Doom," the "Immanent Will," "Spirits," "Despair," and Memory" are also personified. An interesting way in which a personification is revealed is "The Ghost of the Past." This ambiguity, however, serves to enrich the context. Either the
spirit of a departed loved one, or the memory of a deceased loved one, or both the spirit and memory compose the substance of the Past. Since the monologist speaks of the Past as his "housemistress," there is a strong probability that the monologist is a man and the departed one is his dead wife. The auditor is unidentified.

The monologist commences by saying simply, "We two kept house," and immediately expanding "we two" to "the Past and I." Like a ghost, it "hovered close; like a memory, it left him "never alone." There was never any discord ("no jarring tone") between the two, only tranquillity ("still"). Truly it was foreign to the customary procedure ("as strange.../ As ever has been known"), for he was keeping house with a non-living being—spirit and/or memory.

The general subject of the first stanza is particularized and commented upon in the second. In such insignificant occurrences as going up and down the stairs the Past accompanies him. His contentment with the arrangement pervades the poem, giving a happy ("something of ecstasy") and tender ("meek companionship") tone to the entire first part of the poem.

In describing the Past's presence with him, the monologist indicates that there was a period in the latter years of his wife's life in which there was not utmost concord. "Torn old troths" and "dulled old rapturings" state not only a condition of the past, but also anticipate future sadness for the monologist. Just as his first joys of marriage had faded, so
his joys of memory "began to fade." The Past continues to become less significant. At last he acknowledges that the Past is "a far-off skeleton/ And not a comrade nigh." This enlightenment was in keeping with the calmness of the first part of the poem. It was not a violent situation which brought the awareness about, but a passive one. ("Its gentle echoes faintlier played" and "it dwindles in [his]...eye."\) Reality was not sought; it simply occurred, leaving "the lonely chambers" and "a far-off skeleton." Again, we see that Hardy has revealed a monologist who accepts reality only after having lived in a state of false happiness. To a small extent this monologue reveals another tendency of Hardy: love found within marriage is discovered only in reflection after one of the companions has died.

Such a stark attitude toward happiness is reflected in many of the poems dealing with abstractions. In "To Love" the monologist bids Love depart, for the present age is now aware that Love is not young or fair. Mankind's earlier praise of Love was due to its weakness in judgment. To Love's re-tort that if he departs "mankind shall cease," the monologist replies, "So let it be." "To Life" could well have been written as its sequel, for the monologist in the first stanza says, "I weary of seeing thee." It is not that the monologist desires unhappiness. Indeed, he is willing to feign (hoping that he will believe) that Earth is Paradise. Throughout
this monologue (as in the rest of Hardy's monologues) the final emphasis is placed on its being only a pretense. The desire for happiness only intensifies the awareness of physical and emotional suffering.
CHAPTER III
PROBLEMS OF FAITH

On the whole, the monologues which have been discussed earlier in this thesis tend to form a pattern in which the monologists lack trust in the Almighty. Much has been written and said about the pessimism of Hardy. Although many of the monologues which I have previously discussed could well support such a view, there are several which indicate Hardy's position as stated in his "Apology" of Late Lyrics and Earlier.

"And what is to-day, in allusions to the present author's pages, alleged to be 'pessimism' is, in truth, only such 'questionings' in the exploration of reality, and is the first step towards the soul's betterment, and the body's also."

This same idea is presented in the poem, "To Sincerity," which is an argument rather than a dramatic narrative.

"Yet, would men look at true things,
And unilluded view things,
And count to bear undue things,

"The real might mend the seeming,
Facts better their foredeeming,
And Life its disesteeming."

The effective vividness of dramatic monologues can be illustrated by the manner in which Hardy exemplifies the thought of meliorism, expressed in the above prosaic and poetic statements, in "God's Funeral." In the latter poem the author is
personified as an observer of, then a mourning participant in, the funeral procession of God. From the depth of despair at having lost the foundation of his faith, the monologist begins to ascend to a new faith, which he considers truer, though less orthodox, than his previous convictions.

A solemn mood is immediately conveyed as the monologist describes the "slowly-stepping train." Whereas the listener (reader) was immediately made aware that the woman in "At a Bridal" was pacing toward a glorious new life in marriage, the listener (reader) of "God's Funeral" learns of a joyous new life for those of the procession only toward the end. (In fact, the monologist himself had only gradually learned of the occasion for the slow procession—the death of the concept of God.) Contrary to the anticipation of the bride, this group anticipates only future despair, as the utterances of the group reveal. In both of these monologues, which concern the important ceremonies of life—wedding and funeral, the physical participants grieve. In "At a Bridal" the monologist attributes (but does not document) grief to the woman after marriage; in "God's Funeral" the monologist documents through direct quotations the onset of grief.

"Lined on the brows, scoop-eyed and bent and hoar" could well describe the physical effects of age, as well as grief. Since it is twilight, the end of day, the implications of age perhaps are intended. If so, this opening stanza could be
dually interpreted as describing the physical and/or emotional state of an observed group and anticipating the revelation that an age-old concept had died, symbolized by the physical funeral of God. Similarly on the physical level, the corpse is carried at the head of the procession; on the secondary level, the revelation of the death of the God-concept is carried by the "foremost," the intellectual leaders of society. Just as pallbearers are generally the closest friends of the deceased, so these symbolic pallbearers could be interpreted as being formerly the closest believers, thus emphasizing the grief of the leaders in acknowledging such a calamity. That this stanza should be interpreted symbolically, as well as imagistically, is indicated by the monologist's describing the dead man as "a strange and mystic form."

From the position of an objective observer in the first stanza, the monologist progresses to the position of a sympathetic observer in the second stanza, and becomes a participant in the fifth stanza. Tolerance (extended generally to sympathetic understanding of others' beliefs and actions) and compassion for others' suffering are primary characteristics of Hardy's monologists. In this particular monologue the monologist is united with the observed ("wrought/ To consciousness of sorrow even as they") by a previous similar conviction or experience ("latent knowledge that within... him lay/ And had already stirred...[him]"). This could easily have been the monologist of "The Problem," who had decided to let "the old view
reign" by concealing "the Case," since "hearts that are happiest hold not by it"; or the monologist of "The Impercipient," who said that the "faith by which...[his] comrades" stood seemed "fantasies" to him. Since he characterizes this disbelief as "contagious" and his doubts as "latent," this encounter was, according to his experience, undesirable. His emotional involvement supersedes his mental involvement, however, as is evidenced by his using "throbs," "stirred," and "wrought."

This emotional involvement could account for his "blurred eyes" in the third stanza. Physically, his vision is marred by tears; mentally, his vision is marred by a partial "willing suspension of disbelief." His "knowledge" of God's death had passed from his consciousness to his subconsciousness and was concealed so deeply that it was almost dormant. It is only after he has become sympathetic with the mourners that he begins to capture the true nature and significance of the corpse. The "phantasmal variousness" could symbolize, as do the quotations, the historical development of mankind's conception of God. (In "A Plaint to Man," in which the monologist is God and the auditor is Man, God described Himself as "One thin as a phasm on a lantern-slide." ) By describing the deceased as "man-like," the author may intend to symbolize God, the Son. The heavenly, formless aspect of God in the Holy Spirit could well be symbolized as "an amorphous cloud of marvellous size." The "wings of glorious range" indicate the powerful and protecting nature of God, the Holy Spirit. Throughout the transformations the
monologist noted "potency vast and loving-kindness strong," attributes of God, the Father. The revelation is completed when the monologist, too, has become a participant.

The sixth through twelfth stanzas emphasize the mourners' grief by means of direct quotations. There are some questions regarding the future in the sixth stanza ("th’y knell who shall survive?") and twelfth stanza ("and who or what shall fill his place?"). Between these passages are a self-accusation, an historical account of the rise and fall of the God-concept, and a description of the past peaceful state of believers, which is an effective contrast to the distraught, questioning mourners.

"Whence came it we were tempted to create/ One whom we can no longer keep alive[?]" bears a close parallel to God's asking in "A Plaint to Man," "Therefore, O Man, did there come to you/ The unhappy need for creating me[?"]"

In giving an account of the development of the God-concept, the monologist adheres to the Jewish-Christian tradition of enlightenment. God's "jealous[y]" was revealed by His casting Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. (They had dared to gain knowledge equal to God's wisdom.) God's "fierce[ness]" was vividly evidenced by His destroying the world by a flood in Noah's time; His "just[ice]," by His sparing the good man, Lot, from death in Sodom. God's "will to bless those by circumstance accurst" was shown by Christ's delivering the "Beatitudes"; His "longsuffering" was proved beyond doubt in allowing His Son to be crucified, as a sacrifice for all sin and a means
for men's salvation. Following this historical account is an explanation of the cause and effect of this creation. Man had created God because of the "need of solace." God Himself in "A Plaint to Man" says, "I was framed in your first despair."
The height of confusion is depicted as the monologist says, "Our making soon our maker did we deem" and (similar to Galatea toward Pygmalion) "what we had imagined we believed."

The fall of this God-concept is attributed to mankind's awakening to reality, the non-resting, secret influence or weapon ("stayless stealthy swing") of Time. The contrast between the deeds of mankind and "rude reality" is quite effective. Mankind fashions a noble "Monarch"; "reality" causes him to quiver, sink, and cease to be. Hardy's frequent alliterations abound in this stanza ("stayless stealthy swing," "rude reality," and "mangled the Monarch").

Stanza ten, the only stanza depicting the present, describes in physical terms how this loss of perspective has emotionally affected the mourners. In the blackness of despair the mourners, exhausted from murmuring, move slowly and timidly, searching for a foundation of belief. "Creep" suggests that without some faith as the basis mankind is like a child, who crawls, or like a worm, which moves along with its body prone to the ground. It is having an ideal which elevates mankind. Not even the Babylonian Captivity, one of the saddest occasions of Biblical recording, could compare with these mourners' anguish, for the moderns have lost hope through losing their ideal. The
past seems idyllic to the mourners, for their forerunners had a belief and trusted in prayer.

Having realized the falseness of their past ideal, the mourners wonder what the new ideal will be. The mourners' own need for a perspective is reflected in their concern for wanderers' needing "some fixed star." This new ideal must be absolute ("fixed") and have a heavenly quality ("star"). (Perhaps as stars are shared by all, this new religion will be universal in that it will be open to all.)

In the midst of presenting the mourners' wondering about the future, the monologist changes focus and observes the background of the funeral, in which the believers of the old faith proclaim, "Still he lives to us!" They think that this unbelief, symbolized by the funeral, has no basis. Its value is not even worth a straw; in fact, it is only "a counterfeit of straw." To the listener's (reader's) mind comes immediately the ageless image of a drowning man, grasping for a straw. Thus the monologist, while disclosing the bystanders' indignation, has ironically proved the comment of the spokesmen true. Stanza fourteen supports this interpretation, since the monologist, in expressing his desire, but inability, to sustain their faith and keep them from sinking in despair ("buoy"), acknowledges the false basis of their faith. The most ironical fact, however, is that the bystanders, who profess belief, are really the unbelievers ("incredulous").
The monologist expresses his compassion when he says, "With all I sympathized." Although he has become identified with the mourners, his compassion for the others remains. That it is a genuine understanding of fellow-suffering is evidenced by his saying, "Many I had known" and "That what was mourned for, I, too, long had prized."

As Paul on the road to Damascus had been struck blind during his religious experience, so this monologist had been struck speechless with his experience. Paul had encountered a living God; the monologist, a dead God. Paul had gained a faith; the monologist had lost his faith.

The monologist's mental alertness is attested by his awareness of sorrow—manifested by his believing that the uppermost question in living minds is "how to bear such loss?"—and his awareness of hope—manifested by his "gazing" and seeing "a pale yet positive gleam." This "positive gleam" is, perhaps, the "fixed star," which the mourners desired. Yet the mourners cannot even recognize this sign of hope, for when asked whether they saw the light, "each mourner shook his head." (The monologist's own sight had grown as the light of faith had increased.) Just as the monologist has not censured those who clung to their dead belief, he does not condemn those who desire hope, but cannot see the signs of its fulfillment. He compassionately remarks, "Some were right good, and many nigh the best." Although he has seen the light, he admits being "dazed and puzzled 'twixt the gleam [of hope] and the gloom [of despair]." His choice of
following the few ("the rest") who conceived a new faith reflects his confusion, for it is "mechanically" done.

Hardy, I feel, has well presented his conception of meliorism. Truly nothing could be worse than losing one's faith, but it is only after reality has been accepted that a firm foundation can be established for a true faith. The monologist would probably not have seen, much less embraced, the new faith, symbolized by the "gleam" had he not been dissatisfied with the old. (Another monologue which shows a change in faith is "The Respectable Burgher." It is particularly interesting that the burgher concluded by reading the skeptic, Voltaire. Who knows? Perhaps Hardy would say that he, too, was a meliorist!)

No one could deny that the tragic pervades Hardy's dramatic monologues. The question of tragedy is, however, less clear. Just as I believe certain of his novels, e. g., The Mayor of Casterbridge, could be classified as tragedies, so I feel many of his monologues could qualify. "God's Funeral" certainly contains a catharsis, for pity and fear are present. Not only does the listener (reader) pity the suffering monologist, but the monologist himself sympathizes with others. The listener (reader) also feels the fear and terror which would result from the loss of his own ideals. The monologist's awareness of his situation is evident. His struggle, however, is weak. (He only "mechanically" follows the "gleam.") It is with this last point that one could primarily build an argument against its being a tragedy. Excluding the validity of a strong struggle,
many of Hardy's monologues are developed like tragedies, emphasizing the monologists' growing awareness of their fates. This is, perhaps, most obvious in their encounters with God and problems of faith.
PART II

THE MONOLOGIST ENCOUNTERS SOCIETY
In the previous chapters I have sought to show distinctions in the ways monologists face problems. Part II will extend this treatment as well as show general patterns. Although more monologues deal with man's encountering woman than any other topic, I shall not devote a large portion to the subject, for I feel the few examples given will be more effective if one knows the framework of varying relations, e.g., friendship and society, in which lovers move. Chapter IV will also show a general pattern, the lack of understanding of society toward some individuals. For this purpose I have chosen to explicate one lengthy monologue, which contains many features typical of Hardy's poetry. One of the main reasons I have chosen to explicate "The Chapel-Organist" is that the importance of music is stressed. More than eighty of Hardy's poems have either titles or subtitles which include musical terms.
CHAPTER I

MAN ENCOUNTERS HIMSELF

As I have previously mentioned, the auditors of Hardy's poems are often unidentified. If readers are the only intended auditors, the poems fail to qualify as monologues. There is, however, a small group of monologues which does not have a second person as auditor, for the auditor if clearly designated to be the monologist himself. Among these is "The Weary Walker."

The dramatic setting portrays a tired traveler upon a seemingly endless road, bordered by a wide plain. The importance of the road in the monologist's mind is evident, since every other verse ends with the word "road." All vision and meaning is limited to that which involves the "road." Not only does the road play the role of dominant image, but it is also the thread of the narrative, which leaves the impression that the material (monologue) which the reader is beholding is only a center piece of a much larger fabric. Furthermore, it is this thread upon which variations in pattern play. Although the monologue could well be an inner portion of a continuous narrative, there is a development within the monologue itself through the variations of the pattern.
"And, too, the road!" indicates that the monologist is already weary of seeing the extended road. The second stanza presents a variation of the flat plain as two ridges appear. Hope occurs in the monologist's mind as he thinks, "Perhaps no other/ Ridge for the road?" This hope is dispelled as the walker sees a third ridge, "which still the road/ Has to climb furtherward," in the third stanza. Weariness creates a more desperate hope and resolves it even more quickly and finally in the last stanza. The monologist's fancy that the "sky seems to end its track" could symbolize that death would be a relief from the weariness of life's trail. This fulfilled desire is immediately realized as unrealistic, for the monologist says, "But no"; as he approaches the peak of the ridge, another milestone in life, he discovers what he could not see before: "the road/ Trails down the hill at the back." Life will continue; "ever the road."

Several of Hardy's novels also commence with travelers upon a dusty road, e. g., *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *The Return of the Native*. In the former novel Michael Henchard is portrayed with his wife, Susan, on the road to Weydon-Priors. Like the weary traveler, they are tired. Their weariness, implies the author, is emotional as well as physical, for each seems weary of the other. In the latter novel the opening pages depict a reddleman, who like the weary walker is progressing slowly over a road. Unlike Michael Henchard, his primary desire is to protect the young woman in his charge.
The setting of "a plain," "wide country," and three ridges is typical of the Wessex which Hardy uses as a background in many of his poems. These occur not only in his book, *Wessex Poems*, but also (in varying degrees) throughout his books of poetry. The wildness of the moor is used frequently and quite appropriately as the scene for the rendezvous of lovers. Typical is "On Martock Moor," in which an unfaithful wife is describing to an unidentified auditor her evening wanderings upon the moor. Her preference for the "bareness of the moor" and her "dear one/ Who, save in soul, was poor" to the "wealth" of her "husband's house" and her "deep-dyed husband," who trusted her and felt "his mastery sure," is a frequent subject of Hardy's monologues. Not unusual for the violence occurring on the moor is the "flounce at Weir-water/ One night upon the moor" and the resulting "fitful phantom." In monologues such as this, there seems to be a strong kinship not only with many of Hardy's novels, e.g., *The Return of the Native*, but also with Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. (Both describe the heath extensively. In the latter the ghosts of Catherine and Heathcliff wander upon the moor, as does the lover in "On Martock Moor.")

In "Wessex Heights" scenery is used as the subject, not as the background. Again, a monologist is addressing an unknown auditor. The heights, he says, lend themselves to all situations of life, since they can be used "for thinking, dreaming, dying on, and at crises." Only here is he at peace. All other places--
"the lowlands," "the towns," "the great grey Plain," "Yell'ham Botton," and "Froom-side Vale"—make him aware of his having "no comrade, not even the lone man's friend—/ Her who suffereth long and is kind" or his seeing "phantoms" or a "ghost." It is not only external situations which concern him, however, for he says, "Down there I seem to be false to myself." As music is an escape for the monologist of "The Chapel-Organist," so the heights seem to be an escape for this monologist. Contrarily, the ridges are viewed by the monologist of "The Weary Walker" as undesirable.

Another monologue with a similar setting is "The Milestone by the Rabbit-burrow (On Yell'ham Hill)." Instead of a man, a rabbit is the monologist; the auditor is unidentified. This monologue could be read as an objective commentary on "The Weary Walker," for the rabbit has observed "men looking/ At a stone" and has discovered that "the strong of frame/ Gladden or surprise," whereas the "frail and lame" become distressed and "sigh." The rabbit wonders if the milestone indicates the distance to "some blest champaign/ Where no gins are."

Both "The Weary Walker" and "The Milestone by the Rabbit-burrow" are composed of short verses, the former of dimeter and trimeter, the latter solely of dimeter. Not only weary, but also short-winded, the walker speaks in monosyllables. ("Upon," "country," "perhaps," "another," and "furtherward" are the only words containing more than one syllable in the entire poem.) The much longer verses of "Wessex Heights" are
also well suited to the monologist, who has a reason for or against his being contented in each section of his locale. Since Hardy's experimental treatments of prosody are well discussed in J. G. Southworth's *The Poetry of Thomas Hardy* and especially since prosody is not so essential in the development of narratives as physical or emotional actions, I would like only to note in passing that Hardy generally succeeded in his efforts to enhance the mood or tempo of his monologues or character of his monologists by varied meters, rhyme schemes, and stanzaic lengths.

A traveling person is the most common subject Hardy uses in developing monologues in which the speaker and auditor are the same individual. The monologist of "The Wanderer" has quite a different attitude toward his journeying from the monologist of "The Weary Walker." Much of the difference stems from their respective positions. The weary walker was journeying only because of necessity. The only scenery which he noticed was the road, which seemed never to end. The wanderer was traveling for pleasure. In fact, he had chosen the enjoyment of wandering, rather than an occupation, as his pursuit in life. Although a particular time is used in "The Wanderer," it could be any day in the wanderer's life, for it represents his daily activities, thoughts, and interests. It could be called either an account of one day or an exposition of his way of life. The thread of continuity in "The Wanderer" is different from the strand in "The Weary Walker."
The walker had stepped on and would leave the seemingly unending road; the wanderer's way of life is the larger piece of fabric. Roads will appear and disappear throughout his wanderings. The listener (reader) knows that the auditor is intended to be the speaker himself in "The Weary Walker," since no other person is addressed and the monologist says, "A plain in front of me"; the listener (reader) knows in "The Wanderer" because the monologist says, "There is nobody on the road/But I."

Basically, "The Wanderer" can be divided into three sections. In the first two and the last two stanzas the monologist speaks of his physical necessities. In the middle two stanzas he relates his observations. The monologist's enchantment with life is not a common situation in Hardy's monologues. ("Epitaph" and "Cynic's Epitaph" are examples of poems which reveal the monologist's complete dissatisfaction with life.) Feeling "witch-drawn," the monologist enjoys his observations and does not worry about necessities. His statement about shelter in stanza one ("and no beseeming abode/ I can try/ For shelter, so abroad/ I must lie") is repeated in stanza five ("and where I rest anon/ Do not know!") and commented upon in stanza eight. He feels that his present condition ("this bed of jay/ And roofless plight") is suitable ("yet it's meet"), for his own mortal body ("for there's a house of clay,/ My own, quite") would soon be covering his spirit after his body's death ("to roof me soon, All day/ And all night"). His close communion with
nature is evidenced in stanza two, in which the "stars," "set out in a hollow cup," provide "the lights by which...[he] sup[s]."

With the "stars" as his roof there is little wonder why he is content with his "roofless plight."

He considers the "stars" as affectionately as he would a faithful dog, for he says, "They wag as though they were/ Panting for joy." They also epitomize the contentment which he feels ("above all care,/ And annoy,/ And demons of despair--Life's alloy"). His observations are not limited to the spectacular features ("stars") of nature, for he also notices such homely scenes as "feet swinging past" "outside the fence."

Hardy's versification in "The Wanderer" lends itself to rich effects. Alternating long and short verses with the rhyme scheme a, b, a, b; c, d, c, d; etc., compose each stanza. Just as the monologist has given little concern to his own needs, so his longer verses contain little reference to himself. His short verses provide a pause for self-consideration before a rush into more objective matters.

Closely allied with these monologues of wanderers are the poems about crossroads. The crossing in "Where Three Roads Joined" was at one time the place of a happy meeting of a couple, who had "bliss for a spell," but now grieve. The monologist says, "And though life laughed when I halted there,/ It is where I never again would be." Two ways in which this monologue is typical of Hardy's poetry are that joy turns into sorrow and the auditor is unidentified. In "By Henstridge Cross at the
Year's End" the monologist gives an example of sorrow associated with each of the roads. This leads him to ask, "Why go any road now?" The irony of the stones' answering that they desire "new feet," "chit-chat," and "laughter" is revealed as the reader notices the date of writing ("during the War") and realizes that even greater sorrow awaits those who desire to venture upon the road to battle. (Hardy devoted many pages of his poetry to themes connected with war.)

An interesting variation of a monologist's acting as speaker and auditor is "He follows Himself," in which the functions are so divided that the monologist seems almost to be addressing another man. Actually the "leading self" represents the man's emotions and the "following self," the man's intellect. After having trailed "a louring way" and the path to a "green-grassled door," the two aspects unite over the death of a friend. There are three stages in the narrative development before the listener (reader) reaches the conclusion and discovers the two selves haunting a grave unavailingly ("bootlessly"). The "following self" had first tracked ("dogged") and endeavored to tire ("harassingly") with his constant presence the activities ("I have pursued, Feeling such truancy/ Ought not to be") of the "leading self" from youth to old age ("I dogged him on/ From noon to the dun of day"). The second narrative stage is reached when the "following self" refuses to leave for a far different reason. Before, he had been a guardian, who had demanded that duties be fulfilled. Now he is to be a disciplinarian, who would
urge his other self, "a man" whose hours were dimming to gray, not to suffer so greatly the death of a friend. The last stage results when the "following self" acknowledges his similar grief ("and at his green-grassed door/ By night's bright galaxy/ I bend a knee"), thus becoming not only a comforter, but also a fellow-sufferer. Thus reason submits to feeling. That this submission, a decided change from his preceding life, is sorely felt by the "following self" is seen in his words: "—The yew-plumes moved like mockers' beards." Even the grave scene by which he grieves seems to mock his expression of sorrow.

The conflict of emotionalism versus rationalism is an interesting problem in Hardy's poems, for Hardy presented both, often simultaneously. As mentioned in Chapter I of Part I and Chapter III of Part II, Hardy endowed his monologists with compassion for others. Often this compassion is caused by unorthodox rationalism and leads to actions condemned by society, as discussed in Chapter III of Part II. It is primarily the rationalistic approach to God (co-existing often with an emotional regard for man) which cannot allow for any measure of faith that causes the sorrow of most of the monologists discussed in Chapter I of Part I.

The monologist of "He Wonders about Himself" professes that neither emotionalism ("no use hoping, or feeling vext") nor rationalism ("shall I be watching the stars of heaven,/ Thinking one of them looks like thee?") is of any value, for
the determinism of "the general Will" shapes his destiny. Yet he questions whether his "share in the sum of sources" cannot direct his life in some small way ("bend a digit the poise of forces,/ And a fair desire fulfil?"). The general pattern of Hardy's monologues is a poet's awakening to truth, which in turn makes him despair. In this monologue, however, the monologist realizes his role and only questions at the end whether he can have any governing power over it.
"The Old Neighbour and the New" depicts a monologist, who, as a faithful parishioner, calls "to greet the new rector." Clearly the situation is of one man's meeting another. The monologist, however, speaks to himself about his shock at "seeing in the arm chair" his "old friend, for long years installed...[there]/ Who palely nods to" him while the new rector "explains what he's planning." Although the tense is present and the two men are together, the monologist does not address the other, but speaks of him as the "new rector," "new man," and "newcomer." A monologist's reminiscing on past experiences while viewing a similar setting is a frequent device of Hardy. This frequent remembrance of the charms of the past (whether in nature, as in "To Outer Nature," or friendship, as in "The Old Neighbour and the New") is, I think, one of the strongest effects of Hardy's having written much of his poetry while an old man.

Another monologue in which the monologist encounters an old friend through memory is "The Casual Acquaintance." Whether the monologist is speaking to himself or to another is not clear. Also typical of an older man's viewpoint is the progressive improvement of the past. Whether an older person
through his experiences can evaluate and appreciate the good things of the past more than a youth appreciating a present experience or whether an older person tends to recall the past with more tender vision than the present, and thus speaks of "the good old days" is an ageless question. Nevertheless, a great many of Hardy's monologues depict the monologist's discovering the value of a loved one, friend, or experience when it is too late to benefit from the knowledge. In "The Casual Acquaintance" the monologist discovers "what that man did for" him after the other had "slipped from human eyes."

In "A Confession to a Friend in Trouble" the monologist again encounters another man through memory. This time, however, the one encountered is living, and the monologist refers to him in the second person as though he were present even though they are far apart. The natural compassion which is typical of Hardy's monologists is not present. Only through self-discipline does the monologist come to sympathize with his friend.

The development of the action, which is completely on a mental plane, is in two parts. The monologist's attitude of unconcern toward his friend's problem becomes more intense until an extreme thought ("--That I will not show zeal again to learn/Your griefs, and sharing them, renew my pain...") serves as a turning point. The falling action consists of the monologist's banishing the "unseemly instinct," and the denouement is a commentary on his thoughts before they were purged. He says, "Yet,
comrade old, can bitterer knowledge be/ Than that, though
banned, such instinct was in me!" The turning point is em-
phasized by its being placed in the center of the poem, being
given italics, being preceded by a space and followed by an
ellipsis, and foreshadowed by the opening of the first stanza
("Your troubles shrink not, though I feel them less"), and
reflected upon by the closing of the last stanza ("though
banned, such instinct was in me!").

The monologist's general awareness of being less burdened
with his friend's troubles now that he is "far away" shows
physically as he smiles "old smiles." (The monologist im-
plies that his expression was doleful while his friend was
near.) "With listlessness" implies that he retains pangs of
sympathy enough that he does not fully participate in his own
immediate sphere. Nevertheless, his "smiles" are genuine, "not
ghastly mockeries mere."

Guilt sets in. The monologist's disgust with his revealed
thought leads him to compare the idea to a "murky bird" and
"buccaneer." Since he had disciplined himself to sympathize
with others, he condemns such "lawless" unconcern. (The degree
to which he desired to regulate his thoughts and emotions is
indicated by his speaking of "precincts" of his "brain."). It
is his "staunchness" which forces the idea to depart quickly.
Hardy's ability to unite stanzas effectively is illustrated
here as the monologist speaks of ousting the instinct from its
"lodgment." In the preceding stanza he had said that it was
"a thought too strange to house within...[his] brain." He would not even permit the "lawless figure" to haunt "its outer precincts."

Whereas the three preceding monologues portray a man's encountering another man through memory, "A Young Man's Exhortation" portrays a direct encounter. Unlike the former monologues which carry tones of sadness and guilt, the latter is filled with anticipations of joy. It is a piece of argument rather than narrative, for advice constitutes the first three stanzas and the reasons for the advice constitute the last two. Who the monologist is, is not specifically stated. However, his speaking as a voice of experience ("if I have seen one thing/It is the passing preciousness of dreams") seems to indicate that he is an older man.

In "A Confession to a Friend" the monologist uses the intellect to overcome lack of concern and sensitize his sympathies; in "A Young Man's Exhortation" the monologist urges his auditor to use his rational powers ("by some determined deftness") to "call off...[his] eyes from care." The youth is then urged to "put forth joys" and turn "Life's" frowns into smiles ("and charm Life's louring fair"). Each hour ("the hour/That girdles us") should be used ecstatically ("blind glee"). The monologist obviously intends the youth to use his intellect only to overthrow "care," and then allow his emotions to lead, for he describes the "glee" as "excelling aught could ever be/Were heedfulness in power." Not only should the auditor use his
emotions for the greatest possible enjoyment, but he should also use music ("strains") and imagination ("Fancy's pack") to make the most of each experience. In short, the monologist admonishes the youth to reap all that his soul is capable of reaping.

The fourth stanza particularizes the reasons for such advice. The examples which are cited are some of the subjects most often treated by Hardy. "That a fresh love-leaf crumpled soon will die" I will discuss in the next chapter. "And that men moment after moment die;/ Of all scope dispossest" can be well illustrated by "The Temporary the All," in which a monologist had chosen mistress, friend, and dwelling as temporary until better ones would appear. His comment: "Bettered not has Fate or my hand's achievement" shows that his aims were never fulfilled. Death, as mentioned in Chapter II of Part I, is one of the most often used themes in Hardy's monologues.

The fifth stanza of "A Young Man's Exhortation" is, I think, one of the most beautiful passages in Hardy's works. In it the monologist generalizes his previous stanza and shows the nobility of the individual when he says, "If I have seen one thing/It is the passing preciousness of dreams/That aspects are within us; and who seems/Most kingly is the King."
Of the numerous monologues which involve the separation of loved ones, "In Vision I Roamed" alone contains a visionary contrast to the concrete situation of separation. Although this monologue is typical of Hardy's method presenting first an imaginary, then a real, situation, it is unique in that the imaginary situation is regarded by the monologist as worse than the actual condition. The two-part organic division (the imaginary and the real) is made even clearer by the structural fusion of the first and second stanzas. This fusion is a result of the monologist's completing in the second stanza the statement which he had begun in the first.

The visionary portion of the monologue depicts a journey quite different from the earthly journeys discussed in Chapter II of Part II, for the speaker of "In Vision I Roamed" says that he imagined he "roamed" the heavens. The monologist describes "Night" as seeming to grow pale ("waxed wan") through "awe" at such an unnecessary display ("ostent") of the heavenly spheres ("orbs"), which compose the coat-of-arms ("blazon") of the firmament. The mood of a tiresome journey is effectively conveyed as the monologist pauses after the concluding words of the first stanza ("my spirit ranged on and on").
Only in the second stanza does the listener (reader) learn that the monologist's "footless traverse" has been an extremely unpleasant experience. Heaven is now described as having "ghast heights" and a "monstrous Dome." The monologist's complete dissatisfaction with such an abode is summarized by his concluding statement of stanza two: "Then, any spot on our own Earth seemed Home!"

The last stanza depicts not only his actual situation but also explains why he had been so discontent on his journey in the sky. The vision had primarily served one purpose: it had changed his perspective of his separation from his loved one. Before he had only felt "sick grief" that she was so "far away." Now he felt "thankfulness" that she was as near as "Earth" and not "set on some foreign Sphere." Worse than separation would be his not knowing her ("lived unaware") and not desiring her presence ("less than a want to me"). The concluding verse ("locked in the Universe taciturn and drear") repeats the idea of her being "set on some foreign Sphere" and reflects his own dissatisfaction with his visionary visit in the sky.

This monologue presents a variation of Hardy's idea of meliorism, stated in "Tenebris, II": "If way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the worst." The monologist of "In a Vision I Roamed" looks at the worst, but instead of finding a better solution to his problem merely becomes more willing to accept his present situation.
"The Colonel's Soliloquy" presents a different perspective of separation. Whereas "In a Vision I Roamed" presents a monologist who is separated from his unidentified beloved, but who, nevertheless, addresses her as though she were present, "The Colonel's Soliloquy" presents a monologist who is in the process of departing from his wife and who, though still seeing her is out of hearing distance, and speaks of her in the third person. (Probably he is addressing himself.)

The concrete situation of an old colonel's leaving his faithful wife to go into battle again is made even more realistic by many images. He commences by stating his present position aboard a ship ("'the quay recedes'") and his anticipation concerning the future ("'Hurrah! Ahead we go'"). There is a pause and then the revelation of the past: "'It's true I've been accustomed now to home.'" Characterization becomes more vivid as the monologist speaks of the effects of age, "'And joints get rusty, and one's limbs may grow/ More fit to rest than roam.'"

The stamina of the monologist enables him to endure "'fair stress and strain'" even though his "'years mount somewhat.'" Returning to battle ("'but here's to it again'"), he shows his true pluck when he says, "'There's not a little steel beneath the rust.'" His attitude toward his own future seems fatalistic, for he says, "'And if I fall, I must.'"

He immediately hastens to add in the third stanza that he is not concerned about himself. In the remainder of the
third, fourth, and fifth stanzas he speaks of his impairments caused by war and age.

Stanzas six through nine show another aspect of the old soldier. The tune, "'The Girl I've left behind me,'" reminds him of the greatest change of years. Just as she did "'some twenty years ago,'" his beloved is "'waving from the wharfside, palely grieving.'" He realizes that her suffering is not only more intense (though she shows it less) than at their parting years before, but also her future suffering will be greater now "'if her man goes underground!'" than it would have been in the past. With such thoughts the colonel begins the last stanza with a prayer that "'those left at home will take care of her.'" As a note of cheer or comfort he says, "'I shall come back; I have before.'" Even this, his trust in his safe return, is shaken, however, when he remembers his wife. The present, though in many ways similar to the past, is different enough to cause him to conclude by saying that "'when/ The Girl you leave behind you is a grandmother,/ Things may not be as then.'"

Another monologue which depicts the separation of lovers is "A Broken Appointment," in which the monologist is a man who is gravely disappointed that his loved one did not keep her appointment. The first stanza is primarily an account of his waiting and growing awareness of her lack of "high compassion which can overbear/ Reluctance for pure lovingkindness' sake"; the second stanza is an acknowledgement of the fact that
she does not love him. The monologist shows, however, that he has not completely accepted this loss of love when he asks her the following question, which is based on "high compassion": "Was it not worth a little hour or more? To add yet this: Once you, a woman, came/ To soothe a time-torn man; even though it be/ You love not me?"

"I Need Not Go" also depicts a broken appointment. The sufferer this time, however, is a woman, and the time of the appointment is indefinite. (He may or may not come to see her when he has "overgot/ The world somewhat.") This poem is not typical of Hardy's monologues, for the monologist is quite heartless, as is shown by his saying, "New cares may claim me,/ New loves inflame me,/ She will not blame me,/ But suffer it so." Even the monologist in "A Maiden's Pledge" is not willing to suffer much mistreatment, for she says, "I will wait/ With patience.../ If never another 'twixt us two/ Shall come, and you stand wholly mine."

Separations of another kind occur in Hardy's poetry, those caused by the death of one of the loved ones. "She, to Him, II" concerns such a separation. The monologist speculates on her lover's thoughts of her after her death. The first stanza depicts her lover as seeing another woman who reminds him of her in "feature, accent, thought," or speech ("what I used to say"). The second stanza reveals that his reactions to the other woman will be a thought of her, his beloved. The fact that he may "yield a sigh to" her "as ample due" disturbs the monologist,
who devotes the last half of her monologue to explaining that such is not "ample due," for her "whole life" has been devoted to him.

"Thoughts of Phena at News of her Death" reveal the thoughts of a man after his loved one's death. The first stanza depicts the monologist's regretting that he does not have any tangible remembrance of her; the second stanza reveals his wondering about "her last days." In the last stanza the monologist not only accepts his situation, but begins to regard it as the better one, for he only retains the "phantom" "of the maiden of yore," "yet haply the best of her."

Under this rare heading some of Hardy's monologues present a monologist seeing again a former loved one. The monologist in "Amabel" comments upon the changes which have come with time. Now she had "ruined hues" and "custom-straitened views"; her "gown" is "earthen brown"; her "step" is "mechanic"; her "laugh" now spoils her. In short, she has grown old. The monologist for the next three stanzas transcends his own experience by seeing it as representative of Love's pattern, being destroyed by Time. The last two stanzas concern the monologist's decision regarding his own problem. (He will "leave her to her fate.")

In "She, to Him, I" the monologist anticipates such a change as happened to Amabel, and accordingly discusses the future with her beloved. In the first stanza she tells how
age will treat her. Her name will be forgotten; her eyes will lose their luster; her "lauded beauties" will fade. In the second stanza she tells him of the changes which will occur in him. His mind will overpower his heart and he will be disgusted that her beauty has vanished. The last stanza is a plea for him to remember that her loss of beauty will not be her fault, but that of "Sportsman Time." Furthermore, her soul will remain the same; her love for him will be as strong then as now. Having warned him of their future changes and pleaded her innocence and love for him, she concludes by asking what his reaction will be. Playing upon his sympathy, she asks, "Will you not grant to old affection's claim/ The hand of friendship down Life's sunless hill?"

The change which occurs in "The Chosen" is mystical, not physical as in "She, to Him, I." The monologist of "The Chosen" is at least as fickle as the monologist of "I Need Not Go." While in the very process of telling a young woman of his love ("a woman for whom great gods might strive!") he thinks of his five former loves and "how charms outwear." In the next two stanzas he recalls why he was attracted to each of his former loved ones.

To prove his faithfulness (probably more to himself than to his new beloved) he traces on a beech these words: "After scanning five; yes, each and each,/ I've found the woman desired—at last!" The reaction of the young woman is not what he expected, for she begins to feel a "benumbing spell,/ As one
ill-wished!" and "wanly" swerves. Not even his plea, "O darling, turn your head!" affects her.

Not until the monologist passes a "Christ-cross stone" does she turn. "Her face was all the five's." It is she, who tells the monologist to look at her face, yet she half forgets who he is in her alteration. The next change which occurs in the young woman is death. The monologist says that he "carried her to an arbour small." He denies that his tending to her is an act of love ("not passion-moved"), but claims that it is an act of penance ("because/ In one I could atone to all"). As the monologue begins with the monologist's thoughts of his six loves, so the monologue ends with the thoughts animated and incorporated in the body of his sixth beloved, who is now dead.

It is possible that the following interpretation could be given. The man had loved the characteristics of the six women, not the women themselves. It was at a "Christ-cross stone" that he began to see these qualities embodied in an animate creature. That this woman did not recognize him is no surprise, for she was a new creature, one who had been blessed by a miracle. (She was now the composite of several women's beautiful features.) Having been transformed into an unearthly (perhaps heavenly) creature, she could not live long. Perhaps in her previous, happy state she would have felt that death would be a curse. Now, however, she would be the means of the monologist's atonement. The moral could be very simply that
one's complete Ideal cannot be incorporated into one person. I would like to state that all of this allegory is strictly hypothetical, for the treatment Hardy gave his other monologues was quite contrary to an exaltation of God's miracles.)

Another monologue which deals with a revealing spirit is "Rome--The Vatican: Sala Belle Muse." The monologist is at first disturbed that his love is not consistent, but "is swayed like a river-weed as the ripples run!" The spirit gives him the following advice: "Woo where thou wilt; and rejoice thou canst love at all!" This attitude is very different from the attitude of the sixth beloved in "The Chosen," who said weakly, "O, five were there?" How the sixth beloved became the composite of all six women is not clear; the spirit in Rome tells the man that she is "projected from" him.

More common than any of the previously discussed dramatic situations in Hardy's poetry are those which involve the age-old triangle in love. "The Burghers" is typical of Hardy's monologues, for the poet portrays a husband whose compassion extends beyond his own selfish love and the standards of society. The exposition reveals a husband's learning of the latest plans of his wife's elopement with her lover. The action quickly rises as the eleventh hour approaches; it is near its peak when he meets them "so close...[he] had but bent/...[His] lifted blade on either to have let/ Their two souls loose upon the firmament." When he sees their love for each other, his emotions reach a climax, for his thoughts tell him that he is
"but a licensed tyrant to this bonded pair." Charity advises him to "do as...[he] would be done by." He then throws his "iron to the bushes." At this point the physical climax is reached. The falling action consists of his bidding them stay, giving his wife "the gold, her jewels all,/ And him the choicest of her robes diverse," taking them "to the doorway in the wall," bidding them "adieu," and addressing them as "friends." The denouement consists of his speculating on society's reactions to his deed and his telling his friend that he has given the couple "lingerling" wounds.

Not all monologists are as forgiving as the monologist of "The Burghers." In "She, to Him, IV" the monologist shows no compassion whatsoever for the other woman in the triangle. She emphatically says, "This love puts all humanity from me;/ I can but maledict her, pray her dead." A different triangle is present in "Her Reproach." It consists of woman, man, and man's ambition. The monologist reproaches her lover for rejecting her love and concentrating on ambition.

If there is one dominant impression of Hardy's varied treatments of a man's encountering a woman, it should be that Hardy took no set stand, but presented monologists whose varied views often resulted in unorthodox actions.
CHAPTER IV

MAN ENCOUNTERS SOCIETY

("The Chapel-Organist")

In Chapters I-III of Part II the word "Man" in the chapter titles has been used to distinguish sex. In this chapter, however, it will be used to designate mankind. Although more lengthy than almost any other of Hardy's dramatic monologues, "The Chapel-Organist" contains many elements typical of his work in this form. "The Chapel-Organist" depicts a situation resulting from the interaction of the monologist and society. In the first stanza the monologist describes the physical setting and says, "I've been thinking it through." The remainder of the monologue is a narrative expanding "it," which commences in the past, continues to the present, and predicts the immediate future.

Within the very first verse Hardy effectively hints at the past, present, and future of the narrative. "I've been thinking it through" at once states much of the monologist's problem and prepares the listener (reader) for an expansion of the problem. Had the young woman been able to discuss (and think with another) her problem of society's suspicion (originally unfounded) of her immorality, the friend might have strengthened her moral convictions or spoken in her behalf.
Her problem stemmed largely from the fact that she had begun thinking so late. Previously her emotions had ruled. "As I play here tonight" expresses her present position as the chapel-organist of the title, while "to play never again" indicates the resolution of her thoughts and future plans. The full impact of these phrases, however, occurs only as the monologue progresses.

The remainder of the first stanza sets a solemn mood with its description of the chapel engulfed by approaching dusk. The "lowering sun" perhaps anticipates the closing of her own life. Read symbolically, the "sun" could represent the high-minded deacons, whose estimation of the organist had been dwindling from one's initial comment that there was "too much sex in her build" to another's observation of her "comrading close a sea-captain." In the "light" of their "worthy" purpose of guarding the "good name of the chapel" the deacons had remembered the close association between the "boys of the chore" and the organist, "sitting up to these keys once more," and had stooped to "peering" into the organist's private life ("window pane"), which they discovered was seemly ("back-street"). With this in mind, the narrative could be interpreted as not only a narrative of "it" but also the "why" and "outcome" of "it."

The listener (reader) knows that the organist had aroused curiosity from the beginning of her position as church musician, for the monologist "used to hear tongues ask," "Who is she playing
the organ'!

At first there were only compliments ("'she touches it mightily true'") and kindness ("the deacon would softly speak"). Little did the members realize that her fidelity to music would lead to falseness to herself. Set in a chapel, it is ironic that the magnification of music, one aspect of worship, had become for her a religion in itself. Her fatal flaw can be summarized in her own words, concluding the second stanza: "For I have craved minstrelsy more than lovers, or beauty, or gold.'"

In the third stanza the revelation of society's relationship to the organist commences. The deacon, who might be the young woman's only friend since it was he who had known most about her ("'she travels from Havenpool Town'") and had "softly" expressed his appreciation of her ("'the stipend can hardly cover her fare hither in the week'"), begins to levy judgment against her from society's gossip. Instead of seeing her as a minister of music, he begins to observe her physically. His own observations of her being "'a handsome girl'" and having "'fine eyes,'" are qualified by his viewing her in terms of society's report. At first he seems to hesitate to accept this report. His second censuring remark (which, like the first negative comment, follows a positive remark) bears no hesitation and is immediately followed by two more condemning remarks. Society's opinion has warped his own view. "The curtain that screened...[her] from people below" symbolizes society's failure to see and understand. Even the deacon who "could see round the
curtain" gave an incorrect emphasis to his observation of the organist. Neither society's rumors nor the deacon's later description had dealt justly with her.

The self-knowledge and honesty of the organist are brought out to the listener (reader) as she comments inaudibly to herself, "And so I am," after the deacon had described her as "a handsome girl." Her remark was not boastful; it was merely a statement of fact. Her ("it may be") inaudible response to the deacon's description of her external sexual features shows more of a reluctant acknowledgement. Immediately following is a question ("But who put it there?") and answer ("Assuredly it was not I") of defense. These too, however, were spoken to herself. No active defense or striving for a bridge of communication and understanding is made by the young woman. Just as she had remained silent concerning her physical needs ("the stipend...fell far short of doing, indeed; but I never told"), so she remained silent concerning her physical appearance ("I went on playing and singing when this I heard"). Nevertheless, it seems that she was deeply hurt that society should condemn her morally because of her form, which she could not help.

Though her fortitude remained quiet and long-suffering ("I remained going on and on"), her emotions did show, for "tears half-blinded" her.

"I used me to chord and to sing at the selfsame time" provides an opening for the following interrelated verses of the past and present. "For it's a contralto—my voice is" focuses
the listener's (reader's) attention on the monologist, rather than the narrative itself. "They'll hear it again to-night" at once describes the organist's present physical situation and reflects the past. "In the psalmody notes that I love far beyond every lower delight" has a different function, for it unites past, present, and future. It reflects her former silent refutation of the deacon's intimations of immorality concerning her. Simultaneously it shows the present attitude or emotional state of the organist. Acting as a refrain of "for I have craved minstrelsy more than lovers, or beauty, or gold," it anticipates further narrative development.

"Every lower delight" forms a transition for the monologist's present interjection back to the narrative. The fifth stanza gives the background of the third and throws a new interpretation upon the organist's being "half-blinded" by "tears" in the fourth. After having simply said that the deacon "that day had learnt new tiding about" her, which "troubled his mind not a little," the organist shows another noble trait—lack of prejudice. Although it had been the deacon who had advocated her future dismissal and thought her to be immoral, she explains his concern and actions by stating that "he was a worthy man." In desiring to pursue the correct course, he had gone to a fellow-deacon, a bookbinder, and explained his reason ("the good name of the chapel") for desiring her dismissal. The latter said, "But get such another to play here we cannot for double the price!"
The monologist has thus shown three separate motivations. The former deacon had been ruled by principle. The latter deacon had been ruled by monetary values and expediency. Love of music motivated the organist. Although church music is generally considered an aesthetic experience or an asset to an elevating spiritual experience, she had allowed it to become such an obsession with her that she was more concerned over losing her position as organist than gaining an immoral reputation. Thus her weeping in the fourth stanza was caused probably by a fear of the results of an immoral report, not the report itself. Throughout the monologue there is a constant revelation of the monologist's awareness of the true situation. Although she had recognized the worth of the former deacon's action, she had rejoiced in the monetary argument proposed by the latter deacon and had felt temporarily victorious ("triumphed awhile in their strait"). For the first time she neither acknowledged nor refuted rumors concerning her behavior.

That her security was only "pending" was immediately seen in "more headshakes and murmurs." The lack of communication between the organist and society was more evident than ever, for she was "not warned" of her dismissal until several days after it was decided upon. She had overheard the deacon's original praise and condemnation. How she gained the knowledge of the chemist-deacon's visiting the bookbinder-deacon is not clear. At the time of describing the event the monologist seems omniscient. It is ironical that the first communication which
society directed toward her pertained to severing its bond with her. Whereas the first report of her immoral actions and possible dismissal had only made her weep, the news of her dismissal made her "so pallid of face that they thought...[she] should faint." She now responded more violently. Previously she had remained silent; now she cried, "'O, rather than go, I will play you for nothing!" (At first she had silently refuted immoral intimations; then she made no comment; now she almost seemed to admit the accusations.) Not only had the news pierced like a sword, and broken her fragile hope of being retained, but it had also broken her outward stoical attitude and led to the breaking of her character. Her pride was forfeited as she offered to render free service. Her perversion of the importance of music is stressed, for she portrays herself as having "laboured and lived" for "those melodies chorded so richly." There was a moment of hesitation among the deacons ("they paused") before her proposal was accepted. Again, the decision to let the organist remain had been based on monetary reasons. Tension begins to build as the price of her playing becomes greater for her. At first she had given up luxuries, for the salary barely covered her fare. To play for nothing would mean sacrificing physical necessities. "Blan-
dishments lavished of men" particularizes her potential downfall far more than the previous "love, or beauty, or gold" or "every lower delight." It is with this statement that a sacrifice of her virtue is foreshadowed as the third price of her staying.
The seventh stanza commences like the preceding stanzas (with the exception of the first stanza) with reports concerning the organist. For the first time she admits (still, however, secretly) that she had stooped to immoral actions. It is also the first time that the pastor, who could symbolize morality, appears. This clash of opposites foreshadows more decisive action by the deacons. The contrast between her love of music and the general pleasures of sex is particularized by her naming hymns and speaking of the "embraces of [her] body by wooers who sought...[her] and won!" With this acknowledgment comes a defense of a different type, though still inaudible. It is a cynical trust in another, God. She says, "Yet God knows, if aught He knows ever!" The stanza ends in an example of her immorality. ("I was seen coming home with a swain ere the sun.")

Since there is no need for further rumor, the eighth stanza opens with "the deacons [ ]...[insisting] then, strong" that she be dismissed. It is no wonder that she implored no "forgiveness," for she had felt no repentance. Just as she had held another power responsible for endowing her with emphasized sexual characteristics, so she blamed men's senses for libelling her soul. She had merely followed her inclination and found her necessities ("victual") through others' lust. Furthermore, she had never been hypocritical. "I saw all was lost for me quite," however, may imply that she would have even sacrificed her truthfulness if she had thought that it would have aided in retaining her privilege of playing. Her victories had become progressively
shorter. Now she requested, "But—let me just hymn you once more!" Her insight into others is revealed further by her pleading ("It's a little thing, Sirs, that I ask; and a passion is music with me!") and realizing "that consent would cost nothing, and show as good grace." (Actually she shows her disdain for society's religion, which is limited by monetary values. Her adoration of music knows no such limitations.) Though she had foreseen their reasoning, she trembled, felt sick, and paused dumb for their verdict, which was given rather begrudgingly ("gloomily nodded assent"). To insure its finality they conclude, "And only once more, understand." This is truly ironical, for it was all she wanted. It well suited her plan for her soul's dying "game." Although this plan is revealed only at the end of the monologue, it is foreshadowed by her statement: "I've a fixed and far-reaching plan, and my look only showed it." Her smile indicates content in her own final decision, and points forward to the rigidity ("fixed") and eternalness ("far-reaching") of a death smile.

By the commencement of the next stanza the narrative has progressed to the present. ("This evening of Sunday is come—the last of my functioning here.") Many of her problems could probably have been settled had the members not thought of the organist as a functioning object, but as a rational human being with whom they could discuss their concern. From making accusations of immorality, society moves toward the position of regarding her as demon "possessed." Thus, her style of playing is
probably attributed to demonic powers when a member of the congregation says, "Such harmonies I never dreamt the old instrument capable of!"

The description of the transition into night is symbolic of the organist's last night. "The sun lowers and goes" represents the light of hope (of continued joy in music) gradually being extinguished and finally going out; "shades deepen" symbolizes the approaching shadows of death; "the lights are turned up" represents the illuminated voice of the organist, being raised with the congregation in song. The light could also be a symbol of a soul's dying bravely.

The presence of mind of the monologist is evidenced as she names the hymn sung ("tune Tallis: the Evening Hymn"), comments upon the congregation's liberality ("it shows them more liberal in spirit/ At this little chapel down here than at certain new others I know"), and remarks on the reception of her voice ("never more will its richness outspread"). Her speaking favorably of the congregation which had censured her shows that she had kept her awareness of noble traits even after her virtue had been tainted. She still thought with some degree of pride that the murmur by a member of the congregation that "no woman's throat [was] richer than hers!" was "true: in these parts." More important than any of the foregoing relationships with the hymn is her singing the verse: "'The grave dread as little do I as my bed.'" This not only anticipates the ending, but almost describes her "far-reaching
plan." Here is an excellent example of irony, one of Hardy's most frequently used devices. The organist is singing her own funeral song, yet no one knows it.

Typical of Hardy's monologists, the organist intensifies the listener's (reader's) sympathies by refraining from begging sympathy. Although some might feel that she is more typical of a weeping, fainting melodramatic heroine, I feel that her eyes' being "still wet/ From the symphonies born of...[her] fingers" is in character with the woman sacrificing all for music. All other actions she describes rather simply and straightforwardly. ("I lift up my feet from the pedals" and "do that whereon I am set.") In describing the final action leading to her death, the monologist perhaps stoops temporarily to sarcasm as she says that she drew the bottle (containing poison) "from...[her] 'full round bosom' (their words)." It had been more the congregation's attitude toward her body than her body itself, which had led to her dismissal. Even as she prepares to drink the poison, she disclaims responsibility for her sexual characteristics as she says of her bosom: "How can I help its heave?"

As the congregation had not understood her motivations in life, so the choir does not comprehend her intentions of suicide; as they had considered her immoral actions the result of self-indulgence, so they think her drink is a "pick-me-up." Actually, she had indulged in neither for sensual gratification. Little does the choir realize that as she
gathers her "books as to leave" she is departing from life as well as from the chapel. Likewise, they misinterpret her "bending over the keys" and perhaps think it is an act of final repentance. Instead, it is an act of defiance by death.

Having noted that her final acts are being misinterpreted, the monologist begins to speculate on the congregation's reactions to her death. The description of the choir's discovering her death could well be applied to her life. When she had overheard intimations of her immorality, she had remained "motionless," not striving to refute them. Soon words became deeds. She had been discovered "stooping" to lower actions. Death will soon have "whisked" her away from her problems as her music had. The choir's response indicates for the first time a brief note of pity, for the organist reports that they said, "Sure, nobody meant her to poison herself in her haste, after all!" The monologist immediately regains a realistic perspective as she imagines the deacons justifying their actions ("'though the charges were true'") then sternly condemning her ("'It's a case red as scarlet within!'").

For the first time the monologist boldly admits her guilt. ("I have never once minced it. Lived chaste I have not. Heaven knows it above.") The next verse, however, is a plea for pardon. ("But past all the heavings of passion--it's music has been my life-love!") Both are inaudible. Thus, in the midst of her dying she remarks on her musical agility. ("That tune
did go well—this last playing!"") As the pause structurally and organically follows the comment and music respectively, death draws nearer and with it brings only an objective comment concerning the funeral from the deceased-to-be. ("I reckon they'll bury me here."")

One of the frequent associations which Hardy made between society and music is that of the "quire," the local group of musicians and singers who participated in almost every religious service and many social occasions. Legends and customs surround this group to such an extent that many of its members regard their position much as the organist did hers. The death of the organization, the Mellstock Quire, is treated as seriously as the death of the organist herself. As the organist had speculated on her future burial, so several poems deal with the graves of the "quire" members.

No other group is handled at such length and in such a variety of ways as the "quire." This is particularly interesting to note since it is a socially accepted group. One of the most distinct tendencies which "The Chapel-Organist" exemplifies is Hardy's dealing primarily with unorthodox situations and views. Theologically, this is illustrated in Chapter III of Part I; morally, it is evidenced in Chapter III of Part II. As I have tried to show through explication, there is little, if any, repentance by the organist. Although she knows that Heaven and Earth consider her acts as evil, she never
fully comprehends her sins. Her justification is based on a code outside of Christian reason. Society's failure to understand her and her failure to conform to society's expectations are themes typical of Hardy's monologues.

Hardy's interest in music was homely, dealing with amateur musicians of the village and the folk tunes and hymns sung by those of the village. These simple topics are typical of Hardy's unpretentious style. His images are commonplace items. Classical allusions are not present. His interest in humanity often results in sentimental elements creeping in beside rational and emotional elements.

Another typical feature of "The Chapel-Organist" is the depiction of middle class people (the organist, a bookbinder, and a chemist). In Hardy's monologues the occupations of the middle and lower classes are mentioned more often than the positions of the monologists of upper society. Class distinction is not felt in this poem, although in many of Hardy's monologues a sharp division is made.

Even more important is the setting of the narrative in a chapel; many of Hardy's monologues which deal with the monologist's relationship with society are set in or near a church. One of the most startling is "The Church Builder," in which the monologist commits suicide in the church for which he has sacrificed all his material possessions ("all in hand and hoard"). This could certainly form a striking
parallel to the organist who sacrificed even her honor for one facet of worship.
CONCLUSION

The characteristic which makes Hardy's monologues seem so homogeneous is meliorism, i.e., a full look at the worst before better can result. This serious intention led Hardy to write on subjects ranging from man's self-consideration to man's relationship with others and God. Regardless of the topic—religion, death, birth, or love; Hardy (almost without fail) chose sad examples to reveal in his poetry.

Simplicity is a keynote in Hardy's monologues. In keeping with the genre, Hardy seldom wrote abstractly—and then only about the most abstract subject, God. Homely objects are the primary images. Folklore and superstitions are not infrequently interspersed in the narrative. Classical allusions are almost non-existent. Biblical allusions to Christ occur, but are treated in an unorthodox manner.

Whether the monologist is a peasant or a king, simplicity prevails. Characterization is enhanced, however, by prosody and self-revelation. Though Hardy's poems deal with all strata of society, the occupations of the middle and lower classes predominate. More often than not, neither the class nor the occupation of the monologist or participating characters is stated. Hardy's objectivity is sometimes signalled by the title. Generally the poet is personified adequately
through the subject matter. Just as there are a range of classes depicted, so there are diverse views expressed. Regardless of varying opinions, the monologists generally have one common characteristic—compassion. The role of the monologist is sometimes observer-reporter. Generally it is participant-reporter. Less clear is the role of the auditor, for he is often unidentified or absent.

The narratives of the monologues often progress from the present, to the past, to the present. Among the most common situations is the one in which the monologist accepts the true state of things only after having first borne disappointment that his dreams were unfulfilled. Lack of understanding is often a primary barrier to happiness. Sometimes it is the monologist's initial failure to see reality; often it is society's failure to understand the actions of the monologist. By the end of the narratives the monologists have usually become aware of their actual situations. Alternatives usually remain unsuggested, and the monologists still feel some despair though they have accepted reality.

One of the most common causes of society's misunderstanding of the monologists is the latter's unorthodox approach to their problems. Whether the monologist confronts religion or love, he generally remains independent in his decision, although he has an awareness of society's customary procedures. Hardy is to be commended for delving into situations in which people often act because of the pressures of society rather than their
own principles. Nevertheless, his failure to find a faith results in his poetry having an overall tone of despair. Consequently, his monologues do not rise to the greatness which would have been possible had he taken one more step in faith and overcome his skepticism. His searching mind, nevertheless, produced many verses which surge to greatness.
NOTES

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