

RELIGIO PEPERIT DIVITAS, & FILIA

DEVORAVIT MATREM: COTTON

MATHER AND THE MODERATE

GOSPEL OF WEALTH

By

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PREFACE

Cotton Mather's role as a religious, political, and social leader has held a fascination for me ever since I was first exposed to the works of the great Puritan divine during my studies under the late Dr. Otho T. Beall at the University of Maryland, College Park. This study pursues two aims: to examine Max Weber's theory of the Protestant Ethic in selected works of Cotton Mather, and to remove some of the popular misunderstandings of Mather's role in Puritan New England.

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Cotton Mather's reputation as a Puritan clergyman, historian, politician, and social worker has been disputed throughout the centuries. While the merchants resented the power of the pulpit in Puritan New England, they nevertheless welcomed Mather's political leadership which led to the ousting of the hated Governor Andros and his regime in 1689. Mather's mediating role during the witchcraft trials of 1691/2 was also misinterpreted by later historians who deeply resented the divine's Wonders of the Invisible World (1692). Though both Mathers objected to spectral evidence as the basis for judgment, Governor Phips and his magistrates, responding to inquiries from across the Atlantic, asked Cotton Mather to write this justification tract for the proceedings of the Salem judges. Likewise, Mather's advanced medical knowledge in fighting the small-pox epidemic in 1721/2 earned him the unwarranted ridicule and hatred of Boston's physicians. Interestingly, while the Mathers, supported by the clergy, gave medical proof for the effectiveness of inoculation practices, the medical profession tried to show from the Bible that inoculation was condemned by God.

In more recent years, studies such as A. W. Griswold's "Three Puritans on Prosperity" have presented a one-sided picture of Mather as a preacher of the traditional Protestant

Ethic. While Griswold shows that Mather sanctioned the pursuit of wealth by the merchant community, Griswold neglects to discuss that Mather welcomed prosperity only for social ends, namely to employ this God-given wealth for the benefit of the commonwealth at large.

No single in-depth study of the Protestant Ethic in the writing of New England's most renowned Puritan minister, Cotton Mather, has been undertaken though Max Weber and his disciples have thoroughly traced the development of this Ethic in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century American ecclesiastical and secular documents. Even though he was aware of the corruptive influence of material possessions, Mather preached the Gospel of Wealth from his Boston North-Church pulpit. His condemnation of the materialism that gnawed at the very root of Puritanism, its spiritual mother, is apparent in Mather's lament, "Religio peperit Divitas, & Filia devoravit Matrem." To counteract this subversive tendency, Mather, at the turn of the century, not only attacked evil practices among New England's merchant community, but also adapted his gospel of successes to the new situation, henceforth advocating the doing of good especially by those who had reaped the blessings of God's providence. Consequently, Cotton Mather preached, at best, a moderate Gospel of Wealth.

No doubt, Max Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism is one of the most famous and disputed theories of modern social science. First published in 1904

in the Archiv für Sozialwissenschaften und Sozialpolitik, it has aroused a fury of discussion that almost eighty years later has not died down. The Protestant Ethic--an outgrowth of nineteenth-century German philosophical and political theory--is an endeavor to investigate the science of economics as a result of post-Reformation Western Culture. In coming to terms with modern capitalism, Weber did not merely analyze the pursuit of gain in capitalistic enterprise per se--a quest that has existed in ancient and modern cultures--but the Work Ethic as reflected in the rational organization of labor in Western society. He attempted to find the root of this rational pursuit of wealth in the Protestant Work Ethic, which encouraged the acquisition, accumulation, and reinvestment of money, discouraging at the same time the consumption of money for personal ends. This ethic of acquisition without consumption--stripped of its religious cloak--Weber called the "Spirit of Capitalism," which he saw operating in Protestant cultures. "Man," Weber proposed, "is dominated by the making of money, by acquisition as the ultimate purpose of his life. Economic acquisition is no longer subordinated to man as the means for the satisfaction of his material needs."¹ And it is this asceticism, the attainment of wealth without its consumption, to which Weber had devoted his investigation. This asceticism, however, did not proceed from a society with relaxed moral standards, Weber argued; rather it necessitated the kind of self-control that could only be found in

the ideology of a society with a rigid code of morals, a code that combined industry with frugality. It is Weber's contention that these virtues were distinctly Puritanic and that they grew out of the Calvinist ethic of "Calling," a concept which did not exist in pre-Reformation cultures. This ideology stressed the individual's duty to fulfill his obligation toward society through his secular calling, his vocation. The ethic of calling stood in strict opposition to monastic asceticism, which prescribed a life of seclusion and prayerful service commonly found in Catholicism. An unproductive life was repulsive to Protestants and was in opposition to their concept of the productive and beneficial life of the individual who, as a member of society, had to seek its improvement through his active contribution in his secular work. This ethic Weber insisted, predominated in Lutheranism and the Puritan branches of Calvinism, Methodism, Pietism, and Baptism.

Weber saw the doctrine of predestination, a central tenet of Calvinism and Puritanism alike, as the driving force behind modern capitalism. In Calvinism, God arbitrarily selected some people while he rejected others; since God furnished the elect with signs of their adoption, the Calvinist and, in turn, the Puritan, had to search for proof of his special status, the certainty of which a Puritan--in contrast to the Calvinist--could never attain. He continuously had to engage in a life-long struggle to find evidence of his election. The Puritan's election manifested itself

in his works as a Saint, achievements which provided him with a relative sense of certainty of his salvation, but not with the means to salvation. While good works, secular and spiritual, were evident signs of election, Calvinist and Puritan alike could not ascribe salvation to them. Success in one's personal calling, however, gave evidence of God's blessing and thus sanctioned the accumulation of wealth provided that secular pursuits did not lead to the breakdown of those virtues which had fostered prosperity. Idleness resulting from the enjoyment of luxuries was an abomination to God and a violation of man's calling. And it is this self-discipline in one's pursuit of wealth which Weber identified as the dynamo within Calvinist religions, a force which brought about modern capitalism. This dynamic thrust expressed in the Protestant Work Ethic stressed discipline in labor as a religious service to God. Once the Protestant Ethic was stripped of its religious orientation, the virtues of industry, frugality, and the pursuit of wealth--duties to be rendered by rich and poor, worker and entrepreneur alike--evolved into the "Spirit of Capitalism," which stressed the systematic structuring of one's life around one's work as a moral attitude, a disposition that is illustrated, for example, in Franklin's utilitarianism.

The purpose of this analysis is not to refute Weber's theory or to embellish it; the task here is to show how the Protestant Ethic was advocated for social ends by one of the foremost Puritan divines, Cotton Mather. Mather's sermons

clearly illustrate that the Puritan dogma not only advocated the pursuit of wealth, but also furnished the religious justification for the Gospel of Wealth.

In order to understand Cotton Mather's Gospel of Wealth, it is important to comprehend the Calvinist concept of "Calling," along with the doctrine of "Assurance," which served as a generating force to keep Puritans active in their secular pursuits. Whereas the General Calling summoned Puritans to join the elect as living saints, the Personal Calling required them to be successful in a personal vocation. Because the Puritan modification of Calvin's doctrine of assurance stressed that one could never be certain of one's election, Puritans had to scrutinize themselves constantly, creating a life-long anxiety which served, said Weber, as a propelling device for their intense secular activity. Apart from measuring their relationship with Jehovah in their business success, Puritans were encouraged to be diligent in their trade, to avoid slothfulness, to spend time wisely in their vocations, to mind covetousness, and to attribute their success not to their own endeavor but to God's blessings. Mather also gave specific business advice to his congregation. He preached on how to avoid business failures, decried unjust business practices, and--when the colonial currency supply in New England ran low--he advocated the introduction of paper money. In his New-England hagiography, Magnalia Christi Americana, Mather also exemplified how believers could rise from obscurity to

wealth and social leadership. In many ways, Mather became the father of the American success story.

Mather, though sounding the trumpet of the Gospel of Wealth, nevertheless recognized its inherent danger. In his widely-publicized Bonifacius, Essays upon the Doing of Good, Mather stressed that all recipients of God's material blessings are but stewards of God's wealth. Through their wealth, the rich accrued social responsibility toward the poor and were thus to employ their estates for the benefit of the community at large. If the well-to-do accepted their responsibility, they could, said Mather, even obtain greater blessings from Jehovah's cornucopia. Since Mather discouraged the pursuit of wealth for its own sake and stressed the social responsibility arising from acquired wealth, he advocated a qualified Gospel of Wealth, at best. His jeremiad against hypocrites who used religion to attain status and position, however, was ineffective, since the New Charter of 1691 had successfully curbed the political power of the Puritan pulpit. By the turn of the century, the stylistic modes of Restoration England offered far greater attraction for the merchant class than Puritanism could ever hold out after the introduction of the Half-Way Covenant of 1662.

The study of Mather's Gospel of Wealth then is ultimately a study of Puritan ideology; the complex nature of this underlying task necessitates a step-by-step approach to demonstrate how Mather, like his ideological forefathers, preached a religious philosophy which aimed at the material

and spiritual well-being of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The subsequent analysis of Mather's religio-economic ideology has been divided into eleven sections in order to trace the origin of this intricate ideology, to accommodate its individual facets, and to elucidate Mather's pietism, his panacea against the corruptive power of materialism which he himself, ironically, had helped to foster.

The first section distinguishes between two different "Callings," the General and Personal: the former, dealing with the Saint's spiritual election, the latter with his secular vocation. Section two investigates the doctrine of "Assurance" which served as a generator for the Puritan's intense secular activities. The next section shows how all members of Puritan society, irrespective of their social station, endeavored to render sacred service to their Puritan God through diligence in their worldly professions. Sections four and five analyze Mather's view of idleness and, respectively, the value of time. These sections show that Mather not only decried idleness as one of the seven deadly sins, but also stressed the preciousness of time as a redeeming factor in one's quest for salvation. Because the Puritans could not attribute their wealth to their own acquisitive endeavors, but had to acknowledge God's authorship, Puritan merchants--as is illustrated in the sixth section--viewed themselves as stewards of their fortunes, suppressing with self-denial

excessive consumption and, in turn, stimulating intense business activity. This asceticism, rooted in Calvinism, emerged as the secularized virtue of frugality in the eighteenth century, exemplified in Benjamin Franklin's self-help manuals. Section seven elucidates Mather's advice on such controversial issues as the borrowing and lending of money, followed by a discussion, in section eight, of his rather farsighted position on the introduction of paper money. Section nine examines Mather's self-made man in America. The pastor of Boston's North Church provides an exemplary study of two Puritan merchants who--through honesty, industry, and piety--were elevated to positions of leadership in Colonial New England. The issue of covetousness and the corruptive influence of material possessions, as illustrated in Mather's sermons, are investigated in the tenth section. Mather's attack on crooked business dealings is evaluated in the context of the contemporary debate of corrupted business morals among New Englanders. The final section explores Mather's praise of pietism as a panacea against the decline of Puritanism. His Bonafacius illustrates Mather's ultimate purpose in life: the doing of good. Bonifacius, characteristic of his interest in the pietist movement, was written to rekindle the zeal for religion and to incite New Englanders to please Jehovah by doing good to their fellow men. All of these individual discussions combined, not only give an insight into the complex nature of Mather's moderate Gospel of Wealth, but also, on a larger

scale, examine the Puritan mind at work.

I

The doctrine of "Calling" structured the relationship between God and man in a religious and social manner.² Whereas in a religious context the Christian was called upon to join the elect as a living saint, in a social context, he was to glorify God through his earthly vocation. The combination of the two molded his attitude toward work as a life-long endeavor. To the Puritan as to the Calvinist, the only right way of living was not monastic seclusion, but active participation in society as a social member whose sole obligation was to fulfill his two callings and through this fulfillment attain to his goal, salvation. The general calling, then, summoned man to lead a life in God's grace; the personal calling, in turn, required man to exert himself in his vocation for the benefit of society at large.³

Cotton Mather--using the parable of a man rowing his boat to the shore of salvation--illustrates the importance of joining both callings: "A Christian, at his Two Callings, is a man in a Boat, Rowing for Heaven; the House which our Heavenly Father hath intended for us. If he mind but one of his Callings, be it which it will he pulls the Oar, but one side of the Boat, and will make but a poor dispatch to the Shoar of Eternal Blessedness."⁴ In this metaphor, Mather ranks the personal calling, one's vocation, on the same level as one's general calling, one's election. Mather

here seems to echo the great Puritan teacher William Perkins, who, in A Treatise of the Vocations or Callings of Men (1626), required the true believer to prove his election in his secular calling. Just as the personal calling was worthless without observing the general, so the general calling "without the practice of some particular calling, is nothing els, but the forme of godlinesse, without the power thereof: And therefore both callings must be joyned, as body and soule are joyned in a living man."⁵

A Christian derived the justification of his works from the moral characteristics implied in his callings. All selfish inclinations were to be subordinated to the interests of society; as long as he was guided by modest principles, he was safe.⁶ This caution, however, did not imply that man could not work for his own good: since each individual was a member of society, he ultimately contributed to its progress by being diligent and successful in his personal vocation. "We are Beneficial to Humane Society," Mather asserted, "by the Works of that Special Occupation, in which we are to be employ'd, according to the Order of God" (CC, p. 37). A Puritan could not be lax in his business. Because his vocation was not just a job that helped him to earn his daily living, but a methodical endeavor to fulfill the duties of his personal calling while he was on his pilgrimage to heaven, Mather instructed his audience to devote most of its time to business: "There should be some Special Business, and some Settled Business, wherein a

Christian should for the most part spend the most of his Time; and this, that so he may Glorify God, by doing of Good, for others, and getting of Good for himself" (CC, p. 38). Not only is a Christian to devote most of his time to his personal business, but also to glorify God through all his endeavors, a sacred service that becomes the worship proper.⁷ More so, by getting good for others and himself, the Puritan's acquisitiveness was sanctioned by the church as holy worship.

In the eighteenth century, the doctrine of calling continued to exert its influence on people of all walks of life. To use Weber's terminology, Benjamin Franklin embodies the "Spirit of Capitalism," once the Protestant Ethic had been stripped of its religious justification. Franklin, in the eighteenth century, advocated the Calvinist doctrine of calling in secular rationale. In the final number of Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanack (1758), his essay "The Way to Wealth" is reminiscent of Mather's election sermon The Way to Prosperity (1689). Franklin reminded his readership of the importance of its calling to pay taxes: "He that hath a Trade hath an Estate, and He that hath a Calling, hath an Office of Profit and Honour; but then the Trade must be worked at, and the Calling well followed, or neither the Estate, nor the Office, will enable us to pay our Taxes."⁸ In the persona of Father Abraham, Franklin's economic advice for those who want to be rich mirrors the influence of his Puritan upbringing. In his The Self-Made Man in America,

Irwin G. Wyllie maintained that Franklin, particularly among nineteenth century self-help propagandists, "became the first object of adoration in this cult, the convenient symbol which linked the success tradition of the two centuries."⁹ His success essays and Autobiography were frequently reprinted and were the subject of numerous lectures on business success and self-improvement. Thus, Puritanism placed its imprint on the minds of subsequent generations long after it had lost its religio-political fervor. By the time Franklin published his Poor Richard's Almanack, the intense secular activity of the seventeenth-century Puritan merchant who attempted to find proof of his election in the success of his business enterprise had come to a worldly end in itself.

II

In part, the Puritan's dilemma rested in the doctrine of calling itself. Calvin's arbitrary Jehovah elected whomever he pleased to a life among the Saints, who were to become Christ's bride. While Calvin stressed that the chosen ones were not left in doubt about the certainty of their election, the Puritans--desiring that assurance of one's election did not make for false security--modified this dogma considerably. Nobody could be absolutely certain of his election; a person's good conduct and works could only provide some evidence of God's grace. Calvin's position on the certainty of one's election is evident in his treatise,

The Institutes of the Christian Religion:

Though it is sufficiently clear, that God, in his secret counsel, freely chooses whom he will, and rejects others, his gratuitous election is but half displayed till we come to particular individuals, to whom God not only offers salvation, but as signs in such a manner, that the certainty of the effect is liable to no suspense or doubt.¹⁰

Whereas a Calvinist could rest assured of his election through the manifestation of signs, the Puritans in Old and New England could never attain absolute assurance. The best way to be certain about one's salvation, paradoxically, was to be uncertain, as is clearly illustrated in the Lectures upon the Forth of John (London, 1629) by the English Puritan Arthur Hildersam. Warning of false security, Hildersam admonished his flock:

for one that Sathan hath overthrowne by desperation, there are twenty whom he hath overthrowne with false assurance. Wee are therefore to be exhorted to examine our assurance. . . . For, as the true assurance of God's favour is a comfortable thing; so is a false peace and assurance one of the most grievous judgements that can befall man. . . . Of the two, it were better for a man to be vexed, with continuall doubts and feares, than to be lulled asleepe with such an assurance. For, besides that it keeps a man from seeking to God, it will not hold, but faile him, when he shall have most needs of it.¹¹

Caught between the desire to attain a sense of certainty and the awareness that assurance can never be attained, in fact, that false security was detrimental to their salvation, the Puritans bestowed their religious fervor on their worldly

activities, consequently trying to attain some proof of their election.¹² The disciples of Calvin, however, were not much better off than their fellow believers across the Atlantic. John Calvin strongly discouraged emotional delusions of false security; rather, he admonished his brethren to seek concrete proof of salvation in verifiable results. Max Weber illustrated that Calvinists suffered from similar anxieties: "But since Calvin viewed all pure feelings and emotions, no matter how exalted they might seem to be, with suspicion, faith had to be proved by its objective results in order to provide a firm foundation for the certitudo salutis."¹³

The disciples of Calvin and Perkins were at a loss: their election manifested itself in their good works and diligence; works in themselves, however, did not contribute to their salvation but were only signs thereof; the signs, in turn, were true indications of their election only if their works were motivated by faith in Christ. Consequently, Puritans and Calvinists alike faced the problem of whether their works were engendered by their faith or whether they were simply an expression of their zeal to find evidence of their salvation; the line between the two could only be drawn with difficulty.¹⁴ Because Puritans were denied seeking salvation in monastic seclusion and prayers, they had to come to terms with their anxiety by looking for evidence elsewhere; steady activity in their secular callings seemed to furnish the nearest proof they could find in an ideology

that derived its generative force from this anxiety. Unlike the Catholics, who could receive absolution through the cycle of repentance, confession, and atonement, Puritans were driven by the emotional pressure of leading a life of good works, a life systematically structured to achieve the approved conduct. The Puritans, who saw themselves as temporary residents on earth en route to heaven, thus structured every facet of their lives for the glorification of God.

III

Max Weber, tracing the origin of the spirit of capitalism, contested that a worker who was influenced by a traditional, medieval work ethic would rather choose to work less if his wages for the completion of the same task were increased than to raise his standard of living by the prospect of earning more through an increased input of labor. "The opportunity of earning more," Weber concluded, "was less attractive than that of working less" as long as his wages provided for his accustomed living expenses.¹⁵ This attitude, which Weber termed "traditionalism," did not prevail among people with a specific pietistic upbringing. He showed that girls from a non-pietist background working in factories of nineteenth-century Germany stubbornly resisted any innovation of work-efficient methods, which jeopardized their accustomed work habits. Those with a work-oriented pietistic background were most ready to abandon old methods for more efficient ones since, said Weber, "the ability of

mental concentration, as well as the absolutely essential feeling of obligation to one's job are here more often combined with a strict economy which calculated the possibility of high earnings, and a cool self-control and frugality which enormously increases performance."¹⁶

In the light of Mather's advice to his flock to work as unto God and to devise more efficient practices that further its vocation--be it a mere milk maid or an independent merchant--Weber's theory seems to find ample proof. This Weltanschauung, which characterizes the attitude of people who subscribed to Protestant faiths, distinguishes medieval traditionalism, which fostered a strong discouragement of auri sacra fames--the cursed hunger for gold--from that attitude which Weber sees arising out of Protestantism, in particular out of its Calvinist branches.¹⁷

The two great Protestant reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin, redefined the medieval concept of work in that both ecclesiastics postulated that salvation did not depend on good works as was commonly believed, but solely on God's grace. Faith as a result of God's grace, however, manifested itself in a person's works. For God, the faith of the individual was the determining factor which rendered a person's works acceptable to Him. Luther contested that no matter how mean one's occupation were, faith rendered it sacred: "The works of monks and priests, be they never so holy and arduous, differ no whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic toiling in the field or the woman going about

her household tasks, but . . . all works are measured before Him by faith alone"18 Luther thus established a new religious approach to a person's occupation which he interpreted as a means to glorify God. In this way, everyone was given the opportunity to return God's love by showing his gratitude through diligence in his occupation.

John Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion echoes Luther's approach: since God cast men into their respective vocations, a Christian can derive satisfaction from the assurance that "there will be no employment so mean and sordid (provided we follow our vocation) as not to appear truly respectable, and be deemed highly important in the sight of God."¹⁹ Thus, Luther, as well as Calvin, elevated the meanest work to the station of highest repute provided the work was carried out faithfully.

The Puritan attitude toward work parallels that advocated by Luther and Calvin. An investigation of Puritan sermons reveals that the clergy preached to all walks of life that the God of Heaven had cast them into a specific business (See CC, p. 61). Regardless of their position in society, whether rich or poor, artisan or unskilled laborer, man's works were acceptable to God if carried out in faith. Nobody was barred from heaven because of his lowly occupation; each individual--by laboring diligently at his vocation, be it only to sweep the streets--rendered sacred service to his Supreme Being.²⁰ William Perkins, the great Puritan teacher, advised his audience,

how men of meane place & calling, may comfort themselves. Let them consider that in serving of men by performance of poore and base duties they serve God: and therefore that their service is not base in his sight: & though their reward from men be little, yet the reward at Gods hand, shall not be wanting. For seeing they serve God in serving of men, they may justly looke for reward from both. And thus we reape marveilous contentation in any kind of calling, though it be but to sweepe the house, or keepe sheepe, if we can thus in practise, unite our callings.²¹

Similarly, Cotton Mather exhorted indentured servants that servitude to a master would become servitude to God if their duties were performed with an eye to these two lords:

The Work of a poor Milk-Maid, if it is done with an Exercise of Grace, is more glorious than the Triumphs of Cæsar. Truly, the meanest Work that you have to do, in your Service, though it be in the Stable, or the Kitchen, you may thus render very Glorious; Do it with such a Consideration as this, Though it be a mean Thing that my Master, or my Mistress will have me to do, yet it is the Will of the Lord Jesus Christ, that I should now do it; & therefore I will do it cheerfully. (MS, p. 34)

Even the most humble vocation was elevated above the triumphant achievements of those who shaped history. No matter how insignificant one's contribution to society, if the Puritan glorified God through his diligence and obedience in his servitude, the blessings of Jehovah would not fail to come.²² Likewise, if a servant were negligent in his duties and disobedient to his master, he would not receive the reward of salvation.²³ Mather laborously quotes biblical evidence to prove his point:

there is a Notable Prophecy concerning the Diligent . . . 'tis in Prov. 10.4. The Hand of the Diligent makes Rich; 'tis in Prov. 12.24. The Hand of the Diligent shall bear Rule; 'tis in Prov. 22.29. Seest thou a man Diligent in his Business? He shall stand before Kings, he shall not stand before mean men. So then, Where you see a Diligent Servant, you may ordinarily Prophecy concerning him; That Servant will one Day be Preferr'd; yea, if it be possible, he'll be a Rich and a great Master before he Dies.
(MS, pp. 41-42)

The industrious man could thus bring himself to preferment in Puritan society and earn the respect of his fellow brethren.²⁴ And to be fully employed in one's business, Mather admonished the young, "Let your Business Engross the most of your Time. Tis not now and then an Hour at your Business, that will do. Be flirting about your Business as Early as tis Convenient" (CC, p. 48).

Roughly fifty years later, Franklin, having admitted Mather's influence in a letter to Mather's son Samuel, seemed to echo the great Puritan divine. In his "Way to Wealth," Franklin advocated the same virtues of diligence as Mather before him: "If we are industrious we shall never starve; for . . . At the working Man's House Hunger looks in, but dares not enter. . . . Diligence is the Mother of Good Luck . . . and God gives all Things to Industry. Then plough deep, while Sluggards sleep, and you shall have Corn to sell and to keep . . ." (WW, p. 282). In seventeenth-century Puritan society, as in Franklin's time, respect for an industrious businessman increased with his growing prosperity. While idleness is the source of

one's wantonness, Franklin explained, "Industry gives Comfort, and Plenty and Respect: Fly Pleasures, and they'll follow you. The diligent Spinner has a large Shift; and now I have a Sheep and a Cow, every Body bids me Good morrow" (WW, p. 283). Clearly, for Franklin, as for Mather before him, respect for the individual was closely connected with his material and thus his social station in life.

Puritans were generally called upon to make use of their God-given talents to serve God more effectively, as is illustrated in Christ's parable of the talents.²⁵ If, for example, God showed his servant a way in which he could work more profitably for God, himself, and society, then the Puritan, said the English Puritan divine in his monumental Christian Directory (1663), was required to abandon his less profitable business for the more efficient one:

If God show you a way in which you may lawfully get more than in another way (without wrong to your soul or to any other), if you refuse this, and choose the less gainful way, you cross one of the ends of your calling, and you refuse to be God's steward, and to accept His gifts and use them for Him when He requireth it: you may labour to be rich for God, though not for the flesh and sin.²⁶

Seen in this light, the devout Puritan was only one step away from pursuing material gain as an end in itself. When this religious frame of reference gave way to secular utilitarianism, diligence--now a moral virtue rather than a theological duty--retained its Puritan zest, but was reduced to a worldly ethic. The motivation to advance oneself in

his vocation, stripped of its religious basis, was now founded on the "Pursuit of Happiness" as we know it from Franklin and Jefferson.

Richard Baxter also stressed the importance of man's activeness during his life: "It is for action that God maintaineth us and our activities; work is the moral as well as the natural end of power It is action that God is most served and honoured by" ²⁷ Two-hundred years later, this utilitarian thinking still persisted in American thought and emerged in Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Self-Reliance." Most of the philosophy Emerson presented in this essay would have been discarded as a heresy which violated the Puritan perception of man's dependence on God. Emerson's attitude about man's passive prayers that implore God for material goods without showing forth actions, however, would have received the whole-hearted applause by the Calvinist and Puritan clergy alike. For Baxter, Perkins, and Mather, as for Emerson, man's prayers were an abomination to God if the supplicant did not engage in activity. Emerson asserted that prayer for material goods "loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural Prayer that craves a particular commodity . . . is vicious [And] prayer as a means to effect a private end, is meanness and theft [But] prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends." God sees "prayer in all action." ²⁸

Here, Emerson seems to be just half a step away from the old saying, "God helps those that help themselves," advice that Father Abraham administers in Benjamin Franklin's "The Way to Wealth" (WW, p. 281).

IV

For the Puritan, idleness was not simply the neglect of one's personal business, but a crime against society. For Mather, idleness was a snare of the devil, who brought about the death of the slothful. In the "Preface" to Bonifacius, Mather stated that "IDLENESS" was "the most concealed and yet the most violent, of all our passions It lays adamantine chains of death and of darkness upon us."²⁹ Because it was unlawful for a Christian to be without a vocation, a slothful person was withholding his contribution to society and thus committing a serious felony: stealing. Just like the Corinthians, who made those without a vocation "suffer as a Thief," Cotton Mather reminded those who are unwilling to work that "there should be a degree of Stealing chargeable upon them" (CC, p. 40). One's calling fulfilled a twofold function: first, it was a duty required of each Christian; second, exertion in one's vocation was a safety device that kept the Puritan from falling into Satan's snare of idleness which soon corrupted the whole man: "If men have nothing to do, they'l soon do Too much; do what they ought not. The Temptations of the Devil are best Resisted, by those that are least at Liesure to Receive

them. An occupation is an Ordinance of God for our safeguard against the Temptations of the Devil" (CC, pp. 41-42). Here Mather seemed to echo Perkins' sermon on calling. The man who did not have a calling, just like the man who idled his time away as a result of his material wealth, transgressed God's institution of calling and thus had become a thief, a felon who withheld dues from his fellow man. Thus, idleness became thievery and a temptation of Satan.³⁰

Characteristically, Franklin's "Way to Wealth" evidences the same attitude toward slothfulness as Mather's A Christian at his Callings and Perkins' A Treatise of the Vocations or Callings of Men. Of interest is Franklin's disease imagery which is peculiar to Perkins' sermon. "Sloth," Franklin pointed out, "by bringing on Diseases, absolutely shortens Life. Sloth, like Rust, consumes faster than Labour wears, while the used Key is always bright . . ." (WW, pp. 281-82). Thus, Franklin closely resembled his Puritan intellectual forebears to whom slothfulness and idleness were a crime and a sin.

Because the Puritan was encouraged to glorify God through diligence in his business, a slothful man disdained serving and glorifying God in the right manner. Consequently God would withdraw his blessing hands from the idle, and poverty would certainly reside in the house of the slothful. Servants were also admonished not to resist their masters' commands, since their "Tongues . . . Hands . . . [and] Feet" (MS, p. 38) were not their own but their masters'. In their

service to their employers, servants were advised to complete their errands quickly so that "they would not have the Blemish of Hateful Sluggards Ly upon them" (MS, p. 42).

Likewise, Richard Baxter recommended that a master should not employ servants whose God is their flesh, but obedient and faithful servants who carry out their task as unto God. Thus, businessmen were furnished with conscientious servants who subscribed to the same work ethic as their masters.³¹

The rich, too, had to fulfill their function in society. The successful acquisition of wealth did not exempt them from being useful members of society.³² The enjoyment of their possessions was distasteful to the Puritans, because the rich man derived the justification of his wealth from God's blessing of his business endeavor. Gentlemen of leisure would fall into the same snare of Satan as do idle businessmen who squandered their precious time and money.³³ Even the best gentlemen had to be beneficial to society, Cotton Mather asserted, because "Idle Gentlemen have done as much Hurt in the World, as Idle Beggars." And "Honest Mechanicks" who exerted themselves in their calling "are more Honourable than Idle and Useless men of Honour" (CC, p. 42). To Mather, men of leisure and beggars were akin to each other and were "the pests of the commonwealth" (B, p. 117). Beggars and vagabonds and those without a specific trade or calling were the scum of Puritan society and did not deserve to be supported by alms, which would only perpetuate their vices. Rather than supporting the beggars, God commanded

that those who did not work should not eat.³⁴ Mather reminded his Boston audience,

as for your Common Beggars, 'tis usually an Injury and a Dishonour unto the Country, for them to be countenanced; as for those that Indulge themselves in Idleness, the express command of God unto us, is, That we should Let them Starve; and as for those that when they Get, will melt and waste our Money in Drunkenness, 'tis a Sin to supply those Monsters with what may be Fuel for such a Beastly Vice. Let never any thing but a Nought, stand for them, in the Books of Accounts. (DR, p. 20)

Mather's statement, however, must not be misunderstood. While Mather objected to giving alms to undeserving people who would only foster their favorite vices with these gifts, he strongly recommended that his parishioners be constantly on the lookout for the opportunity to do good to their fellow men. In his Bonifacius, Mather even suggested to the rich to have as their friend a minister who could advise them on whom to bestow charity.

V

A Puritan in his two callings was continuously laboring to fulfill his duties. Because their general calling did not stop where their personal calling began, Puritans were to spend their time wisely, a responsibility which was not to be taken lightly. Mather's sermon on the text of Exodus 21:19, "He shall pay for the LOSS of HIS TIME," exemplifies the preciousness of time in Puritan theology. Idleness, sloth, excessive sleep, and "unprofitable Talk" were all

thieves of time. Mather recommended efficiency: "Our time is to be Redeemed, & Rescued, & Recovered, out of the Hands of Time" (HP, pp. 13-14). Mather advised businessmen and shopkeepers to utilize their time wisely when bad weather or absence of customers left them with much spare time. Mather suggested to shopkeepers, men of leisure, and ministers alike that they employ their time in reading books that were beneficial to their secular and general callings. "Good BOOKS of all sorts, may employ your leisure," Mather pointed out, "and enrich you with treasures more valuable, than those, which the way and work of your callings would have purchased. Let the baneful thoughts of idleness be chased out of our minds" (B, pp. 39-40). He advised those whose hands, but not minds, were at work to think of ways to improve their business (See HP, p. 21). The Puritan might even lose time in his endeavor to do good to his fellow man "if it be Spent in doing a Smaller Good, when it might and should have been Spent in doing Greater Good" (HP, p. 15).

Robert Keayne's last will reveals the anxiety of the Puritan mind which forced him to utilize his short life-span wisely. In an effort to justify his success as a merchant, Keayne, a self-made man in 1653--ten years before Cotton Mather's birth--wrote down in his last will:

. . . if all these [proofs of his diligence] should be of no other use, yet they will testify to the world on my behalf that I have not lived an idle, lazy, or dronish life, nor spent my time wantonly, fruitlessly or in company-keeping as some have been too ready to asperse me, or

that I have had in my whole time either in Old England or New many spare hours to spend unprofitably away or to refresh myself with recreations, except reading and writing hath been a recreation to me, which sometimes is mixed with pain and labor enough. Rather I have studied and endeavored to redeem my time as a thing most dear and precious to me and have often denied myself in such refreshings that otherwise I might lawfully have made use of.³⁶

In the light of Mather's admonitions, Keayne's concern becomes intelligible. The divine admonished his congregation that, apart from the time set aside for prayers and Sabbaths, "all the Time that is not Spent in Mowing or in Whetting" is misspent; recreation is only permissible when it serves a useful purpose that will "Whet" and "FIT" a man for his increased business endeavors. Nevertheless, "Laudable Recreations" should only "be used for Sawce, but not for Meat" (HP, p. 16 and CC, p. 49). Thus, the Puritans were required to spend their time in their callings; any time used for purposes other than the worship of God through diligence in their vocations or Sabbatical services was misused because slothful persons were "dead while they live" (CC, p. 49).

Benjamin Franklin's position on leisure and the loss of time clearly correlates with that voiced by Mather. In "The Way to Wealth," Franklin warned, "If Time be of all Things the most precious, wasting Time must be . . . the greatest Prodigality, since . . . Lost Time is never found again" (WW, p. 282). Similarly, Franklin did not encourage his readership to indulge in leisure time, but like Mather

before him, urged them to use recreation only with caution. Before man could use some of his precious time for purposes other than advancement in the world, he had to earn a livelihood: "Employ thy Time well if thou meanest to gain Leisure; and since thou art not sure of a Minute, throw not away an Hour. Leisure, is Time for doing something useful; this Leisure the diligent Man will obtain, but the lazy Man never" (WW, p. 283). For Franklin himself, "a Life of Leisure and a Life of laziness" were "two different things;" a fact which he illustrated in his own life (WW, p. 283). As soon as Franklin had gained his fortune and had thus earned his leisure, he turned his attention to things other than moneymaking. Max Weber pointed out that "it does not yet hold, with Franklin, that time is money, but the proposition is true in a certain spiritual sense. It is infinitely valuable because every hour lost is lost to labour for the glory of God."³⁶

The juxtaposition of Mather's foremost sermon on business, A Christian at his Callings (1701), with Benjamin Franklin's "Advice to a Young Tradesman" (1748) and "Hints to those that Would Be Rich" (1736), reveals how the Puritan attitude toward industry--stripped of its religious cloak--became a business ethos which exemplifies what Weber calls the "Spirit of Capitalism." Franklin advised his young tradesman to "remember that time is money" and to bear in mind that if he goes on vacation, he throws away not only the money for his expenditures, but also the wages of a good

day's labor. Since "Money can beget money, and its offspring can beget more," the young tradesman should turn his shillings twice before spending them unwisely because "he that murders a crown, destroys all that it might have produced even scores of pounds" (AT, p. 196). For Mather, the minister, the loss of time was a sacrilege; for Franklin, the apostle of commerce, it was a violation of the business ethic, and the violator of this ethic forfeited the privilege of earning money. In his essay, "Hints to those that Would be Rich," Franklin shows how the loss of time and money are intricately related. The man who idles away even a fraction of his daily time loses, over a period of one year, as much as "six pounds," a sum which would cover a year's interest on a loan as high as "one hundred pounds":

For £ 6 a Year you may have the Use of £ 100 if you are a Man of known Prudence and Honesty.

He that spends a Groat a day idly, spends idly above £ 6 a year, which is the Price of using £ 100.

He that wastes idly a Groat's worth of his Time per Day, one Day with another, wastes the Privilege of using £ 100 each Day.

He that idly loses 5 s. worth of time, loses 5 s. and might as prudently throw 5 s. in the River.

He that loses 5s not only loses that Sum, but all the Advantage that might be made by turning it in Dealing, which, by the time that a young Man becomes old, amount to a comfortable Bag of Money. (HR, p. 176; see also Weber, pp. 48-57)

The correlation between time and money demonstrated by Franklin exemplifies the "Spirit of Capitalism" at its best. For Mather, time was to be redeemed because one's salvation ultimately depended upon it; for Franklin, time was to be redeemed because time was money. While time had lost its religious meaning for Franklin, it became an economic quantity that determined the relationship between interest and money rather than spiritual salvation.

VI

According to Puritan dogma, all wealth originated with Jehovah and was a sign of His blessing. The acquisition of wealth as a secular pursuit was objectionable only when it fostered man's idleness or when it tempted him to enjoy the fruits of his labors. As the duty of one's calling, the pursuit of wealth was not just permissible but rather, a sacred service for the glorification of a God who allowed his stewards to be rich for Him. This matter could not be dealt with lightly, as Puritan divines assured their congregations. If, for example, a man in an attempt to fulfill the duty of his calling found a more profitable way of attaining success without infringing on the rights of his fellow man, then, as a steward of God's wealth, he was bound to abandon the less profitable undertaking for the more profitable one since God allowed man to be rich for Him; he had to employ his god-given talents to the greatest glorification of Lord Jehovah.³⁷ Without the smile of God, no

business could be prosperous.

The Puritan could not ascribe the success of his hard work to his own endeavors but had to acknowledge Jehovah's benevolent hand. In his sermon, Durable Riches, Mather cautioned his audience not to fall prey to the sin of self-reliance: "Deut. 8.17.18. Thou shalt not say in thine Heart, my power has gotten me this Wealth; but thou shalt Remember, the Lord thy God; for it is He that gives thee power to get Wealth. 'Tis neither Skill nor Chance, that brings our Estates into our Hands; but it is God, of whom we are told, That He is the Maker both of the Rich and of the Poor" (DR, p. 2). Consequently, if the Puritan wanted to procure future prosperity, he had to acknowledge God's authorship of wealth. Though many might cast their nets, it was God who brought the catch. If God favored his success in business and blessed this thriving, a Puritan could implore greater favors by being more useful to God in his own vocation. As God's steward, a merchant enlarged his estate by being diligent in his vocation; diligence, in turn, glorified God; and diligent glorification opened up Jehovah's cornucopia. Mather asked his parishioners, "if you depend on the Glorious GOD for your Thriving in the World, ought you not then to seek His Favour, that you may Thrive under His benign Rays upon you? It is a Document of Zion; Prov. X.22. The Blessing of the Lord maketh Rich. That you may not labour in Vain, ought you not to make the Service of GOD, your Aim in all you Labour for your Subsistence?" (SS, p. 26).

Here, the Puritan reconciled the idea of worldly acquisition with his service to Jehovah; since he was but the steward of God's property, the enlargement and increase of this property was but holy service to the Master and not personal gain.³⁸

Robert Keayne--in an effort to dissipate the magistrates' accusation that he was covetous--attributed his overwhelming success as a merchant to God's providential blessings. Keayne's estate, valued at four-thousand pounds, was not acquired by oppressive measures--he assured his prospective readers--but by diligence in his trade, which was greatly increased by God's blessings. In true Puritan manner, he acknowledged God's authorship of his riches:

If none did know of this I am bound to acknowledge [it] that all may be attributed to the free mercy and kindness of God alone who raiseth up and pulleth down as He pleaseth, so that when I call to mind my first beginning or my first going to London I may with old Jacob thankfully say, with my staff came I over this Jordan and now the Lord hat given me two bands.³⁹

Robert Keayne's Apologia, his last will written in 1653, clearly reveals Puritan asceticism at its best. Carnal enjoyment of one's God-given riches was a sin against the God who had allowed the Puritan to acquire wealth. Puritans released this restrained energy from the compulsion of ascetic self-denial by channelling their vigor into enhanced acquisitiveness. Because consumption beyond that of mere daily necessities was indicative of moral

corruption,² successful Puritans had no choice but to reinvest their proceeds into their own businesses or into joint business ventures with their fellow brethren. "When the limitation of consumption is combined with this release of acquisitive activity," Weber asserted, "the inevitable practical result is obvious: accumulation of capital through ascetic compulsion to save."⁴⁰ This Calvinist asceticism, intense acquisitiveness combined with frugal self-denial, furnished the businessman with a mercantile ethos that was conducive to his success.

This attitude of self-denial is also evident in Franklin's "Way to Wealth" in which wise Father Abraham warned his audience to abstain from wasting money on unnecessary goods that satisfy the vanity of the individual. As Father Abraham continued, the spendthrifts and slothful men think that "a little Tea or a little Punch now and then, Diet a little more costly, Clothes a little finer, and a little Entertainment now and then, can be no great Matter." But ere long, poverty will take up residence in the house of the spendthrift because "Many a Little makes a Mickle [and] "a small Leak will sink a great Ship; and again, Who Dainties love, shall Beggars prove" (WW, p. 285). One must particularly shun goods that appear to be sold at a bargain price, yet which only entice man to purchase goods which he really does not need--the "Cheapness is apparent only, and not real." Those who want to succeed in business should think twice before buying a "Pennyworth" since many people

have come to nought doing so, and those who indulged in luxuriousness of outward display of their means have done much harm to themselves and their families: "Many a one, for the Sake of Finery on the Back, have gone with a hungry Belly, and half starved their Families; Silks and Sattins, Scarlet and Velvets . . . put out the Kitchen Fire." Before these spendthrifts had realized what they were doing, their "artificial Wants . . . thus become more numerous than the natural" (WW, p. 285). This squandering of money to satisfy their vanities has been particularly the case with the "Genteel," who, Father Abraham continued, were thus "reduced to Poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who through Industry and Frugality have maintained their Standing; in which Case it appears plainly, that a Ploughman on his Legs is higher than a Gentleman on his Knees . . ." (WW, pp. 285-86).

Interestingly, Franklin hardly makes mention of God's divine hand at all. Franklin, who himself did not profess the religion of his forefathers, nevertheless advocated the spirit of the Protestant Ethic. He preached the worldly asceticism of his forebears devoid of any religious justification. His version of Puritan business wisdom is rendered in proverbial sentences that caught the ears of his contemporaries and those of later generations. Only occasionally does the Calvinist God lurk behind Franklin's worldly wisdom, as in his summons, toward the end of his "Way to Wealth," to subscribe to "Reason and Wisdom," but not to

rely on one's own faculties altogether: "Do not depend too much upon your own Industry, and Frugality, and Prudence, though excellent Things, for they may all be blasted without the Blessing of Heaven; and therefore ask that Blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them" (WW, p. 288).

VII

Apart from expounding the Calvinist work ethic and the doctrine of calling, Cotton Mather did not hesitate to adapt his advice to the changing needs of an increasingly commercial society. In his sermon on Fair Dealing between Debtor and Creditor, Mather justified borrowing and lending money as an essential aspect of trade. Though Romans 8:8 commands that, apart from love, man should not owe anything to his fellow man, Mather realized that successful trade required some form of credit system. Because lending money to one's neighbor could not but create dependency, Mather maintained, "That some Debt is to be allowed of. Yea, without some Debt, there could no Trade be carried on. It would strangely Cramp the Trade of a People, if it might be no more than the Cash that is running among them" (FD, pp. 7,8). In times when cash was hard to come by, a good reputation and well-kept "Books of Account" were "an Excellent Provision . . . to carry on a Lucriferious Busineß" (FD, p. 8). As long as every party involved willingly submitted to Lex Mercatoria, no harm could be done to anybody. Nevertheless,

Mather warned of the evils of bad bookkeeping and of those people who did not examine their balance sheets.

Franklin, again, inherited the advice of his Puritan forebears, as is evident in the attitude toward money borrowing in "The Way to Wealth": "If you would know the Value of Money, go and try to borrow some; for he that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing; and indeed so does he that lends to such People, when he goes to get it in again" (WW, p. 286). Those who take up loans, Franklin continued, lose their independence: "You give to another, Power over your Liberty" because "Creditors . . . have better Memories than Debtors." Before debtors realize that the appointed day of repayment has approached, the Creditor knocks at their doors and demands satisfaction. Thus, "The Borrower is a Slave to the Lender, and the Debtor to the Creditor, disdain the Chain, preserve your Freedom; and maintain your Independency: Be industries and free; be frugal and free" (WW, pp. 287-288).

For Franklin, as for Mather, it was "an Evil Tendency for People to go from year to year without setting their Accounts; to Jog on in a blind Confusion, and not know how much they may be gone back-ward, or whether they have any thing, they may call, Their Own, or no" (TA, p. 25). Many rich men had fallen into poverty and disgrace because they had failed to inspect their accounts properly. Yet before some "Dealers of the best Fashion" had realized that they had over-reached themselves in their trade, the "Torrent of

Debt" broke in upon them "like the Water at a Beach" (TA, p. 26).⁴¹

Though a Christian was obligated to help a brother in need, the world of commerce required different rules. For the Puritan, charity started at home. Mather warned his audience not to be overly rash in extending credit to a person or to co-sign any securities for a fellow merchant. He quoted Solomon in Prov. 11:15: "He that is Surety for a Stranger shall be sore Broken for it; and he that hateth Suretiship is sure," and warned to "use abundance of Deliberation, when a Suretiship shall be propounded unto you. Think over & over again; Am I Safe? Does God call me into any Sponsorial Hazards? Do not the Circumstances of my Family forbid my coming into them?" (FD, p. 12). To be helpful to one's neighbor was a Christian duty; to endanger one's business and family, however, was foolishness.⁴²

VIII

New England, particularly in the latter half of the seventeenth century, was heavily indebted to the mother country. The flow of produce and money in return for English merchandise far exceeded that which went in the opposite direction. Attempts to stabilize the Massachusetts money supply failed badly, overvaluing the little cash supply that remained in New England. To continue their transatlantic trade and to prevent the flow of goods from breaking down, merchants were willing to incur twenty to

twenty-five percent interest rates.⁴³ Because the lack of ready cash necessitated payments in kind among New England merchants and farmers alike, goods were heavily undervalued, much to the dismay of all parties involved. When in 1690 Sir William Phips, who was to become Massachusetts' first royally appointed governor, returned from his unsuccessful expedition against the French colony at Quebec, merchants who had furnished the troops with supplies were not willing to extend their credit to the Massachusetts government any longer. Faced with empty cash boxes and bickering merchants, the colonial government issued 47,000 pounds of paper money and declared it legal tender for all debts. The new currency, however, was received with much scepticism, and the recipients were eager to trade it for goods or hard cash. The soldiers who took part in the Quebec expedition suffered most from the new currency, since most merchants were reluctant to sell any goods in exchange for the bills unless the customer was willing to incur a substantial loss of up to forty percent of the face value.⁴⁴

In 1691, Some Considerations on the Bills of Credit was published anonymously, advocating the acceptance of paper money as legal tender.⁴⁵ Here, Mather was much disgusted with his countrymen who valued Spanish silver coins more than the money issued by their government and tried to convince his readership that all the inhabitants of the colony had to share burdens and benefits alike. Discount, Bills, and Taxes, Mather proclaimed, were all "current and good

pay" and fulfilled the same function as the newly issued paper money; "If neither Silver can be had, nor Corn brought in without loss both to the Government and People," Mather asked, "what remains but Accounts, Bills, or such like Paper-pay? Is there not hereby 40,000 l Running Cash in the Country more than ever was, If mens folly hinder not its Currency? yes and more than they are ever like to have, so long as they cannot keep Silver in the Country, which they will never do while the European Trade continues." Unless the trade with England and the West Indies would not be heavily regulated, Mather wailed, New England's "Millpond [would] be quickly drained" (BC, p. 6). The acceptance of paperbonds would, therefore, be beneficial for the trade in New England; the population would not have to suffer from any money shortages, since the new currency would not be accepted outside New England, and would thus prevent the currency from diminishing. To enforce acceptance of the bills of credit, Mather suggested that all those who refused to accept them as payment or charged higher rates should be punished with higher taxes and should be required to pay their own taxes in silver rather than in kind. French Canada, which had successfully used paper money as legal tender, Mather related, had benefited greatly from this provision since the French government could easily issue new bills if necessary. "Now if we account our selves to Transent the French in Courage," Mather appealed to his New Englanders, "'Tis a shame for us

to come so far short of them in Wit and understanding" (BC, p. 9).

Mather, ever ready to come to the assistance of his beloved New England whenever the colonial government was in need of support, shows a surprising flexibility and far-sightedness.⁴⁶ Though many of his contemporaries and later historians charged him with orthodoxy and backwardness, it was Mather, who along with his fellow ministers, seemed to be most progressive and knowledgeable despite the derision he received from his contemporaries during the inoculation controversy. During this controversy as thirty years earlier during the introduction of paper money in colonial Massachusetts, it was again Cotton Mather, who took the most enlightened and broad-minded stand on medicine and commerce while the medical profession and the merchants displayed a surprising orthodoxy with which Mather and his colleagues were usually charged.

IX

For centuries, the American continent has held out the promise of fortune and happiness. The ideal of the American Dream is fulfilled in the Horatio-Alger millionaire who, through industry, sobriety, and frugality, raised himself from his humble beginnings to fame and fortune. The past two centuries of American history, in particular, have witnessed an ever-increasing production of self-help manuals and fictitious accounts of economic reward through moral

virtue. Early examples of self-help manuals can be found in sixteenth and seventeenth century English society, which denied financial climbers the necessary social prestige they were after. The values of English feudal society were as much based on inherited wealth as on a century-old pedigree which determined position and power. When this position of the nobility was challenged by the aspiring merchant class, the social structure of English society began to crumble. Money could only buy power, not prestige and social recognition. Consequently, merchants who did not lack money, but social esteem and acceptance among the nobility, were particularly busy justifying their social aspirations and employed a number of secular and ecclesiastical worthies to hail their business progress.

In The Self-Made Man in America, Irvin G. Wyllie pointed out that "Publicists associated with the English business community turned out many pamphlets, sermons, and guidebooks which pointed the way to wealth."⁴⁸ Self-help manuals and sermons, such as Johnson's Nine Worthies of London (1592), celebrating the rise of nine apprentices from obscurity to fame and fortune, and William Perkins' A Treatise of the Vocations (1603), Wyllie continued, fell on fertile soil among American colonists who, barely established in the New World, welcomed successful members in their midst regardless of their social descent.⁴⁹

While Cotton Mather's forebears in New England sounded the trumpet of success from New Canaan's pulpits, Mather, in

his filiopietistic hagiography Magnalia Christi Americana (1702), appears to be the first to celebrate self-made men in America. Sacvan Bercovitch suggests, in his seminal opus The Puritan Origin of the American Self, that Mather, because of his delineation of early colonial self-made men, deserves to be called "father of the American success story."⁵⁰ In fact, Mather's biographies of Theophilus Eaton and Sir William Phips embody the Puritan version of the American success story.

Theophilus Eaton, a minister's son of Stony-Stratford, Oxfordshire, became a merchant "contrary to his Intentions" (M, p. 254) because his father's untimely death had put an end to his ecclesiastical aspirations. His way to success, according to Mather, was marked by his outstanding humility and diligence in all his undertakings. Thus Eaton, "most signally Diligent in his Business," before long fulfilled "the Maxim of the Wise Man" and came "to Stand before Princes" (M, p. 255). Made a "Freeman of London" and working profitably for the East-Country Trade" company, he soon was chosen "Deputy-Governor" and became so "well Improved" as a business man that Charles I employed him as an agent to the Danish king. Mather was careful to relate that, though Eaton was exposed to the carnal temptations of wealth and courtly life, he resisted Satan's encroachments and returned to London, where he led a reputable life as a wealthy merchant. When religious persecution became too oppressive in England, Eaton, along with Thomas Davenport,

set sail for the New World (1637) to establish New-Haven Colony. Chosen first governor, he distinguished himself as an excellent magistrate and became a "Guide of the Blind, the Staff of the Lame, the Helper of the Widow and the Orphan, and the Distressed" (M, p. 257). Because of his prudence, hospitality, and above all his piety, Mather assured his readers, Theophilus Eaton "ensured his own Prosperity, as long as he lived." Besides being a good magistrate, he was also an outstanding father and master who looked after his children's education and his servants' observation of "their General and Particular Callings" (M, p. 257).

Clearly, Mather made sure to point out that Eaton's business success was God's reward for Eaton's virtuous life. His success as merchant qualified him for the leadership of the fledgling New-Haven Colony. Thus Mather combined personal accomplishments with public leadership, showing his readers exemplarily, how an industrious man, through a God-approved faith, could raise himself far beyond the social station into which he was born.

The rags-to-riches story of Sir William Phips, first royally appointed governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony after the New Charter of 1691, illustrates Mather's exemplum of the Puritan self-made man even more so. Born in 1650 as one of the youngest of the twenty-six children of the Bristol gunsmith James Phips, William Phips began his career as an apprentice to a ship carpenter in Boston, became

Captain of a British frigate, struck it rich as a treasure hunter in the Bahamas, was knighted by James II, and crowned his career with the governorship of Massachusetts. Mather, in his characteristic Plutarchian manner, playfully groped for classical examples that parallel Phips' rise from obscurity to wealth and political leadership. Neither Eumenes, nor Marius, nor Ithycrates, nor Dioclesian, nor Benosus, nor Mazarini--though all classical examples of self-made men--fit the example of Mather's great governor. In the New World, however, Mather found Phips' equal in Francisco Pizarro, who, despite his birth in infamy, succeeded as a fortune hunter and conquistador and was "created Marquess of Anaitilla" and made "first Vice-Roy of Peru" for his distinguished service to his Spanish majesty.

Losing his father while William was still young, the eighteen-year-old Phips left off tending the "Sheep in the Wilderness" (M, p. 278) because God's providence had seen otherwise. Characteristically, Mather placed Phips' development into its Calvinist context, explaining that "Providence of God . . . took him from the Sheepfolds, from following the Ewes great with young, and brought him to feed his People" (M, p. 278). Like King David, to whom Mather here alluded, Phips was "Born to greater Matters" (M, p. 279). He became a shipbuilder's apprentice in Boston "to pursue the Spes Majorum & Meliorum," his "Hopes of greater and better things" (M, p. 279). Success bound, he learned to read and write at the age of twenty-one, married the young

widow of the renowned Boston merchant John Hull, and promised his wife to build a "Fair Brick-House" on stylish "Green-Lane" (M, p. 280). Mather related exuberantly that Phips in his ambitious business dispositions "would prudently contrive a weighty Undertaking, and then patiently pursue it unto the End. He was of an Inclination cutting rather like a Hatchet, than a Razor; he would propose very Considerable Matters to himself, and then so cut through them, that no Difficulties could put by the Edge of his Resolution" (M, p. 280). Phips thus set out for London, persuaded some wealthy gentlemen of White Hall to furnish him with a ship and crew, and set sail for the Bahamas to retrieve the treasures of a sunken Spanish ship. Though Phips had to return to London without having located the treasures, he succeeded in persuading his financiers to invest in a second expedition into the Bahamas. On the verge of a second failure, Phips continued patiently in his endeavor. He appealed to providence and was finally rewarded with "Thirty Two Tuns of Silver" (M, p. 284) and "vast Riches of Gold, and Pearls, and Jewels" (M, p. 285). Returning to London under pains to put down another mutiny that seemed to impede his goal at the last minute, Phips vowed to God that "he would for ever Devote himself unto the Interests of his Lord Jesus Christ," and in particular unto that of his native New England, if God saw him safely to London "with what he had now given him, to suck of the Abundance of the Seas, and of the Treasures hid in the Sands"

(M, p. 285). Thus Mather's self-made man arrived safely in London with a load worth 300,000 pounds Sterling and received 16,000 in exchange for his services and great probity in this delicate matter. His outstanding honesty and integrity, Mather emphasized, won Phips "the Favours of the Greatest Persons in the Nation." Thus, Mather's hero proved the biblical maxim "he that had been so diligent in his Business, must now stand before Kings, and not stand before mean Men" (M, p. 286). In turn, James II, rewarding Phips for his integrity, knighted the future governor of Massachusetts. Mather, who struggled to write a hagiography of such a controversial governor as Phips, dubbed him "Knight of the Golden Fleece" (M, p. 286) and celebrated his unprecedented rise, writing, "for it was Honesty and Industry that raised him" (M, p. 286). Consequently, Mather exhorted his readers to halt "and behold One Raised by God!" (M, p. 286). Mather continued to exult in New England's prodigious son, who did not allow himself to be corrupted by his new wealth and England's courtly vices, but who returned to his cradle and devoted his energy and estate to the service of his country. Although he encountered envy and opposition in Massachusetts, unselfish and humble as Mather's Phips is presented, Sir William turned "the Old Heathen Virtue of PIETAS IN PATRIAM, or LOVE TO ONES COUNTRY" into a Christian virtue (M, p. 288).

When, during the Andros Crisis (1684-9), James II appointed Phips as High Sheriff in which capacity Phips later

tried to obstruct Andros' oppressive actions, Phips returned to the treasure ship a final time and retrieved the remaining silver. Upon his return to New England, he set up his "Fair Brick-house" in the North End of Boston and now would have had the means to retire to a life of leisure if his Puritan upbringing and vow to Jehovah had not prevented him from living a life of ease and plenty. Characteristically, Mather had Phips reason, "I have no need at all to look after any further Advantages for my self in this World; I may sit still at home, if I will and enjoy my Ease for the rest of my Life; but I believe that I should offend God in my doing so. . . . but I think 'tis my Duty to venture my Life in doing of good. . . . I was Born for others, as well as my self" (M, p. 298).

Again, the Puritan mentality illustrated earlier, pushed Phips on to further actions. Having acquired a sizable estate in this world, Phips, in the spirit of Mather's Bonifacius, published eight years after the Magnalia, was obligated to devote himself to the doing of public good. When William III, unwilling to restore the privileges of the Old Charter to the Massachusetts Colony, appointed Phips as governor, Sir William embarked on his final career.

Mather's aim is apparent: In writing his ecclesiastical history of New England, he tries to exemplify the Puritan ethic of virtue rewarded and vice punished. His self-made men embody the Calvinist success ethic of

industry combined with honesty and frugality. Typically, as in the life of Theophilus Eaton, Mather's heroes unite success in business with public leadership and personal wealth with public benefactions.

X

In his New England epic Magnalia Christi Americana, Cotton Mather characterized New England's "chief Hazard and Symptom of Degeneracy" as confirming the old saying "Religio peperit Divitas, & Filia devoravit Matrem: Religion brought forth Prosperity, and the Daughter destroy'd the Mother."⁵¹ Instead of being grateful through faithful observation of God's Laws, New England, Mather complained, fell into a mad pursuit of earthly riches, forgetting its Errand into the Wilderness.

New England's dilemma in the second half of the seventeenth century arose primarily out of the conflict of interest between religion and commerce. While the New-England theocracy required isolation to maintain its spiritual strength, the merchants, in supplying the steadily increasing population with goods from their transatlantic trade, ultimately moved Massachusetts into the lime-light of colonial commerce. Two irreconcilable forces were at work: New England's separation and isolation from the corrupting influence of the Old World could only be maintained if a sufficient supply of goods guaranteed New England's survival; increased trade, however, counteracted the isolationist

intentions of the Puritan fathers and thus imported Old World corruption along with the merchandise. "To be sure," Max Weber asserted, "these Puritanical ideals tended to give way under excessive pressure from the temptation of wealth, as the Puritans themselves knew very well. With great regularity we find most genuine adherents of Puritanism among the classes which were rising from a lowly status, the small bourgeois and farmers, while the beati possidentes, even among the Quakers, are often found tending to repudiate the old ideals."⁵² The Puritan clergy felt that as long as the merchants adhered to the principles of the faith and did not allow wealth to corrupt society, their trade was not harmful, and a merchant could pursue his calling without conflict. Paradoxically, the Puritan faith delivered the very devices that ultimately gnawed at the roots of the dogmas themselves. Merchants, like any other members of society, were encouraged to glorify the Ancient of Days with industry in business and abstinence from consumption, virtues that could not but foster materialism and thus undermine the idealistic standards of the fathers. The possession of wealth, however, was not objectionable, but the enjoyment of it was, because the desires of the flesh brought about the vices of idleness and apostacy. Weber related that "It is only because possession involves this danger of relaxation that it is objectionable at all."⁵³

The doctrine of assurance contributed much to the

unlimited pursuit of wealth, as each Puritan was told that he could not be sure of his election. Only signs of God's favorable providence in one's endeavor to glorify Him could provide the necessary clue to one's election. Consequently, the merchants labored to glorify their God with diligence in their business, the success of which, in turn, furnished them with the signs of assurance they so desperately looked for. But where could the line between industry and covetousness be drawn? Where did diligence in one's personal calling as a glorification of God end and the pursuit of wealth for its own sake begin? The Puritans had the key: the just price. The just price was the amount of money which both parties in a business transaction agreed upon. Yet when prices soared and the trade-balance deficits made it more and more difficult for customers and merchants alike to arrive at a just price, the population raised its voice, accusing the merchants of an unwarranted price hike.

Robert Keayne's testament gives evidence of rising discontent among Bostonians. The same principles which had justified Keayne in his personal calling were interpreted differently by magistrates and ministers who charged him with covetousness. Bernard Bailyn, in The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century, summarizes Keayne's dilemma: "To be both a pious Puritan and a successful merchant meant to live under what would seem to have been insupportable pressures. It meant to extend to the life of business a religious enthusiasm which must be continuously

dampened lest it singe the corner of another's life. It meant to accumulate as much wealth as one righteously could, only to dispose of it. . . . Above all, it required an amount of self-discipline that only great faith could sustain."⁵⁴ Nevertheless, merchants--willing or not--were the driving force that wrought New England's social change. Their involvement with the Old World, along with their sustained interest in business, was simply incompatible with the principles of Puritanism.

For the most part, merchants did not seek to destroy those roots which had brought them forth, yet they could not prevent the rise of commerce from reciprocally affecting the religious foundation of New England. With the decline of Puritanism, the New England jeremiahs clamored periodically and launched a frontal attack against the corrupting elements. Rather than spiritual strength, the ministers saw nothing but the worship of Mammon and a pursuit of worldly pleasures. That the church was quite aware of the causal relationship between the gospel of success and the decline of religion in New England becomes evident when during the Great Awakening John Wesley discussed the dilemma of declension which resulted from materialism:

I fear, wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride,

anger, and love of the world in all its branches. How then is it possible that Methodism, that is, a religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionately increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away. Is there no way to prevent this--this continual decay of pure religion? We ought not to prevent people from being diligent and frugal; we must exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich.⁵⁵

Though Wesley emphasized that people should grow rich so as to give their possessions away to attain heavenly riches, he clearly illustrated the issue which Mather raised in his Magnalia. The Puritan church was quite aware of the divergent interests of wealth and religion, a divergence characterized by the multitude of sermons that decried New England's greed for worldly pleasure.⁵⁶

Though Cotton Mather's substantial body of publications proves sufficiently that he, like his colleagues, preached the gospel of wealth, there is even more evidence that Mather tried to counteract the corrupting influences that were the by-product of the religious success story. Mather assured his congregation that "to Desire Wealth, to Pursue Wealth, to be Thankful for Wealth, will not fix upon us the Brand of Coveteousness" as long as the Puritans "keep within Rules prescribed . . . by the GOD, who gives us power to get Wealth." Yet when the pursuit of wealth becomes the

primary aim, Mather warned, "when Wealth is more unto us, than the Creator of all our Wealth; Here, Here is the Criminal Covetousness" (NC, pp. 9-10). When man makes his business his God, when, like the Spaniards in Mexico, he engages in a mad pursuit of silver and gold, then he will abandon his God and with him all the wholesome "Works and Laws of Religion, rather than abate of his raging pursuit after these things" (DR, p. 12). If New England would only abide by God's principles, then God's City upon the Hill would be a "Strong City with Golden Streets" and "there will be no Complaining in our Street" (TA, p. 41).

Instead, man sinned to get riches, neglected his duties, and became indifferent toward prayer because covetousness had completely corrupted him. Those who did not subordinate their cursed hunger for wealth to the glory of God would fall prey to covetousness and Mammon. "Of all the sad sights which we have to disturb us," Mather complained, "there is none more usual, than this. Good Men are in Adversity, while Bad Men are in Prosperity." What was even worse and what had become "almost as usual" was "For the Godly to Covet, and Envy the Prosperity of the Wicked" (U, p. 64).⁵⁷ This obvious contradiction of precepts was usually solved easily: God allowed these wicked men to prosper, Puritan divines argued, so as to make their hearts even harder; in a sense, God had given them up to their material appetites, which made repentance almost impossible.⁵⁸ There were even some people who exchanged their

worship of Jehovah for the worship of Mammon but used religion to advance themselves in society:

The man will fall in, with such Opinions, and such Practices of Religion, because the Road of doing his Estate a Kindness, lies that way, [which was] the Real Reason, why he Conforms to this or that way of Religion. . . . Is not the reason for thy Conformity this; Because Employment and Preferment is this way to be obtained, and not from any Satisfaction in thy Conscience, that it is the way of God?" (NC, pp. 22-23)

Mather here touched a sensitive subject. No doubt many apostate Puritans were desirous of attaining the best of both worlds. Caught between a long tradition of regular church attendance and the desire to advance themselves in the world, these "wolves in sheeps clothing" were forced into hypocrisy. Whereas their heads cleaved to the truths uttered from the pulpit, their hearts were in their own coffers. In this light, Mather's concern that their interest in acquiring wealth was valued higher than church membership appears reasonable. Covetousness had become, Mather wailed, an "Epidemical Mischief," and the workers of lawlessness had set up "idols" in God's "Temple":

'Tis the SIN of the LAND; A Sin which Threatens my own Countrey as much as any one sin that can be mentioned. . . . the very Interest of New-England become[s] a meer Worldly Interest. It was Originally a Noble Interest; but it seems to be mightily Changed. All things grow more subordinated unto a Worldly Interest. . . . Ah, New-England! If thou wilt Chuse New Gods, thou shalt have War in thy Graves!" (NC, pp. 43, 50, 51, 53)

That Mather's concern with New England's growing worldliness was justified is evident in contemporary seventeenth-century accounts of merchants from neighboring Maine and Rhode Island. Since almost all of the New England trade was conducted through Boston, the merchants in Massachusetts were at liberty to charge their dependent merchant colleagues from neighboring colonies whatever price the Bostonians deemed appropriate. In 1664 a group of Maine merchants approached the visiting royal commissioner with a request to establish a harbor in Maine which would allow the local merchants to transact their trade with Europe and the West Indies without dependence on their Boston intercessors. Frequently, Puritan merchants asked horrendous prices by

keeping here and there fair Magazines stored with English goods, but they set excessive prices on them, if they do not gain Cent per Cent, they cry out that they are losers, hence English shooes are sold for Eight and Nine shillings a pair, worsted stockins of Three shillings six pence a pair, for Seven and Eight shillings a pair. . . .⁵⁹

In like manner, Rhode-Island merchants in 1658 vented their hostility, complaining about the abuses incurred from their dependence on Massachusetts' merchants. Their indictment of the Puritans' auri sacra fames, their cursed hunger for gold, is apparent in the complaints of the General Court of Rhode Island:

wee cannot have any thinge from them for the

suply of our necessities, but in efect they make the prices, both of our comodities, and their own also, because wee have not English coyne, but only that which passeth amonge these barbarians, and such comodities as are raised by the labour of our hands, as corne, cattell, tobacco, and the like, to make payment in, which they will have their own rate, or else not deale with us. Whereby (though they gaine extraordinarily by us), yett for the safeguard of their own religion may seem to neglect themselves in that respect; for what will men doe for their God.⁶⁰

In the light of this outcry, the merchants' complaints about the greed of their Puritan colleagues appear to be justified and give added meaning to Mather's own outcry.

Rather than showing their gratitude for God's blessings, they had become obstinate and said, "Cast off the fear of God, and live without God in the World, because they are accommodated with so many Benefits," Mather mocked. Their "Prosperity does not afford Fuel to their criminal Appetites. They grow but the more Proud, the more Worldly, the more Sensual, for the Shines of God upon their Tabernacles. Their fullness of Bread causes them to wallow in the Crimes of Sodom. They wax fat, and for it they do but kick the more, and throw off the Golden Yokes of Religion. These are the Fools, who do yet more Sin away their Enjoyments, and are destroyed by their own Prosperity" (TC, pp. 20-21).

Despite his lamentation of man's unrestrained pursuit of wealth for its own sake, Mather--like his colleagues in the jeremiads before--did not instill shame into his audience without leaving some hope of recovering God's

favor. If only his flock repented of its wickedness, if only his brethren returned to the principles of their forefathers, if only they put God to the test--God would willingly accept his people's prayers and bless them all the more: "And He says unto you, Prove me now, by Divising Liberal things," Mather urged his congregation, "Whether I do not pour out a Blessing upon you." And in his function as a mediator between God and his congregation, Mather exhorted, "Unto His Blessings I now Commend you; and beseech Him still to Multiply His Benefits upon you; That you may Praise Him yet more and more" (TC, p. 43).

Except for a few orthodox Puritan merchants such as Sewall, Hull, and Scattow, the merchant community, by the middle eighties, had turned its back on religion and had liberated itself from the fetters of Puritanism. With the institution of the New Charter of 1691, church membership had lost its importance, and Restoration England increasingly became the model for New England's genteel society. By the time the third generation had reached maturity, the merchant society had become a vast family of interrelated businessmen who had successfully intermarried their sons and daughters with those of the Puritan clergy.⁶¹ The larger towns along the coast of New England, in particular, mirrored the transition from Puritan society to a trading community whose members were guided by the stylish life of Restoration England rather than the old dogmas of their New England cradle.

Though Mather gives much good advice on how to be successful in one's personal calling, he is also quite aware that men fall prey to their weaknesses and indulge in a mad pursuit of earthly riches. Mather quite explicitly warned his audience not to set its heart too much on the estates below, especially when the wealth had been accumulated by dishonest means. "There is a secret Blast from GOD" on all things that have been gathered dishonestly, Mather pointed out (IL, p. 60; see also DR, p. 11); it is an abomination that will incite God's wrath.

Business could be carried on throughout the week, yet on Sabbaths man was required to abstain from any business activity so as not to profane the Lord's Day. All business had to rest, and man should pay particular attention to his general calling, his devotion to God. If man would only engage in the experiment to keep the Sabbaths whole-souled, Mather asserted, "you would ordinarily find that you prosper all the week in your Occupation according to your Strictness in keeping the First Day of the Week" (CC, p. 68). Here, the Puritan is blessed with prosperity in his business to the same degree that he is willing to make devotional sacrifices on the Sabbaths.

In all their business, Mather recommended, men should be guided by the principles of Christian love and should apply the "Golden Rule": "I am to Deal with every other man, as I would have another man to Deal with me" (LM, p. 10). If a merchant could not honestly pray over a

certain business transaction, then he had disregarded the Golden Rule and had set his heart on dishonest gain. In a variety of sermons, Mather warned repeatedly to refrain from dishonest business practices. Over and over again he catalogued the unfair dealings to which merchants were commonly exposed: "Fish that is naught . . . Oyl . . . not well made . . . Dirt & Stone, instead of Turpentine . . . thick layes [sic] of Salt" where there should be merchandise, "Lumber [which] has a False Number upon it . . . [and] Bundles [that] are not as Good Within, as . . . Without" are practices all too common to New England (LM, pp. 34-35; see also TZ, p. 19 and IL, pp. 45-46). Another dishonest gain of which Mather warned would arise when a man purchased goods which he suspected to have been stolen (CC, pp. 57-58), when he withheld wages from his employees, and when he ran into debt fully aware that he would be unable to repay it or that he repaid it unpunctually (LM, p. 21, 22). Usury was another dishonest gain Mather attacked:

I conceive, there are some of them, in certain Extortions, used by some of them, who let out Money upon Interest. I mean when they make People pay Interest, for a Sum, that really never was in their Hands; As it is, when the Usurer immediately takes into his own, the whole first years Interest, at the Instant of his Letting out the Money. (TA, p. 24)

Equally sinful was a man who took advantage of his fellow brother by charging him unnecessarily high rates when his neighbor was in dire need of certain commodities (IL,

p. 44; see also LM, pp. 19, 20). All these practices were an abomination to Jehovah, and He would visit them with "secret Blasts." When losses did occur, Mather pointed out, they were commonly "the fruit and the sign of God's Quarrels" (DR, P. 7). Many times losses also occurred although the merchant had not engaged in any specific dishonest practice. Mather explained that "when Riches do without any Interruption flow in upon us, we grow but the more Hungry, and Craving after them." Then Jehovah, who would watch over his people, "orders now and then a Loss for us: 'tis to make us think" that the Puritan did not rely on his own achievements too much (DR, p. 23). Although Mather attributed losses to God's displeasure with his Servants, he assured his audience that despite the punishment, God would not be too far off and would be willing to receive the penitent sinner back into His protective arms:

What ever may be our Losses, Let us not be too Discouraged by those Losses, nor Loose our Spirits under them. Though your Daily Bread seems to be Failing of you, do not now Eat the Bread of Sorrows, but Sleep as quietly and as pleasantly as ever; for you may be still, The Beloved of God. . . . Fear not, I am with thee; and I will never Leave thee nor Forsake thee. 'Tis One consolation for you, That God is Able to Retrieve all your Losses. (DR, pp. 18-19)

By attacking the breach of covenant, the clergy instilled a sense of guilt in their congregations, and therefore moved them to repentance, humiliation, and restoration of the old principles. Seventeenth-century jeremiahs, like

those of later periods, threatened their congregations with the withdrawal of their Federal God when New England incurred His displeasure. It is important to realize that no matter how serious the breach of covenant was, the clergy, while they brandished the sword in one hand to pass Jehovah's judgment, never failed to offer the dove of peace in the other. God was ever willing to forgive if his people were willing to return to the divine laws of their forefathers.

The eighteenth century, apart from inheriting this jeremiad tradition, also fell heir to the peculiarly sensitive Puritan conscience. "What the great religious epoch of the seventeenth century bequeathed to its utilitarian successor," Weber pointed out, "was, however, above all an amazingly good, we may even say a pharisaically good, conscience in the acquisition of money, so long as it took place legally. Every trace of the deplacere vix potest has disappeared."⁶² As long as the merchants stayed within the legal frame of Lex Mercatoria, they could be at ease and follow their enterprise.⁶³ Thus, when the interest in religion had been reduced to a mere subconscious component, unrestrained pursuit of wealth as an end in itself was acceptable as long as businessmen did not resort to unethical means. But apart from each individual, who or what was to determine what was unethical?

XI

"I take an unspeakable Pleasure in all Manner of

Beneficence," Mather jotted down into his Diary at the end of April 1706. "If I can see Opportunities to do good unto any, I need no Arguments to move me to it; I do it naturally, delightfully, with Rapture. I seek for such Opportunities. I am ambitious of nothing so much as to be universally Serviceable" (D, I, p. 560). In fact, the doing of good became the primary focus of Mather's sermons toward the turn of the century, when he had realized that the jeremiad sermons had lost their intended impact on New England's churchgoers.⁶⁴ "The grand Intention of my Life is," Mather continued roughly seven years later, "to Do Good" (D, II, p. 263). Looking for any opportunity to make himself useful, Mather was much concerned with the progress of Boston's societies for the indemnification of evil tendencies:⁶⁵ "On this Day of the Week," he scribbled in his Diary on Nov. 5, 1713, "when I am not thinking on what Good may be sett for ward in the several Societies, to which I stand related, I think, what Good may I excite other Men unto the doing of" (D, II, p. 263).

At the turn of the century, it had become clear that Puritanism, regulated by a voluminous body of doctrines, had lost the sectarian fervor with which the first generation had distinguished itself. To revive the zest of this once so powerful creed, Samuel Willard, Thomas Prince, Thomas Foxcraft, William Cooper, and above all, Cotton Mather--influenced by the successes of August Hermann Francke's practical pietism movement in Halle, Saxony--

preached practical piety, the living of one's faith by doing good to one's fellow man.⁶⁶ Piety suddenly seemed to have become the panacea for all religious strife among the steadily increasing numbers of non-congregational creeds in New England. Without embarking on any controversial issue of doctrine, without negating any of the orthodox principles of the Puritan Fathers, without establishing any new creed, Puritans and non-Puritans alike wrought what Perry Miller called a "revolution"; Practical piety, Miller continued, "was not enacted in the sphere of ideas, it did not challenge creeds or raise doctrinal heresies--it was staged in the heart and among the affections, and stressed old morals in new ways."⁶⁷ Pietism, which revitalized that spirit of old, appealed to the heart of the individual; it enlivened the Puritan fervor which had been smothered by dogmas and formulas that appealed to reason rather than to the heart, the seat of motivation. And it was Cotton Mather's pioneering work entitled Bonifacius, Essays upon the Good that is to be Devised and Designed by those Who Desire to Answer the Great END of Life, and to DO GOOD While they live which kindled the flame of the New England pietist movement.⁶⁸ Bonifacius, extremely popular among Mather's contemporaries and republished eighteen times by the nineteenth century, was not simply a tract that struck a respondent chord, but an "engine of pietism";⁶⁹ Bonifacius, as its popular counterparts that swept Old England at about the same time period, seemed to recapture "moral territory lost in the

Restoration";⁷⁰ Bonifacius, as its English models, embodied the spirit of Mather's reform societies which were to snatch New England's renegades out of the clutches of moral degeneration.

Though Mather had elevated the personal calling to the level of the general calling, he returned, at the beginning of Bonifacius, to the old ideals of the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace. Interestingly, in his sermons on man's calling, Mather emphasized the harmonious union between God's spiritual election and man's vocation, his secular employment, which, it seems, received more attention than its theological counterpart. In Bonifacius, Mather once again stressed the important relationship between Grace and Works. Man, in his endeavor to fulfill his Christian obligations, should not have any ulterior motives; he should not disregard the covenant of grace and "look upon an opportunity to do good, as a thing that enriches . . . [him], and to look upon . . . [himself] as enriched, and favored of God, when He does employ . . . [man] to do good" (B, p. 20). He should "lay the book aside" rather than to see Bonifacius as an encouragement of works that were motivated by reasons other than God's grace. In fact, works could only be acceptable to God if man were justified before Him and were led to do good works as a demonstration of his germinating faith through his acceptance of Christ. To make sure that his readers did not mistake good works in themselves as a sign of their election and evidence of saving faith, Mather

counseled that "justifying faith . . . may be counterfeited. But now the marks of a faith, which is no counterfeit, are to be found in the good works," which were a result of his faith through God's saving grace. Faith alone, however, was not enough since "a workless faith is a worthless faith" (B, p. 29). A Christian's faith, in turn, derived its justification from the fruits which his faith brought forth. Good works, in turn, were to be considered "as the way to . . . as a part of, the great salvation To be saved without good works," Mather made sure to point out, "were to be saved without salvation. Much of our Salvation lies in doing good" (B, p. 30). Nevertheless, a man could not ascribe salvation to his works.⁷²

In his different callings and functions within society, man could exercise his faith through good works in his specific vocation. The rich, as stewards of God's wealth, had been blessed not only with the powers to get wealth, but also with the opportunity to do greater good to their fellow men. All riches were but a loan, a blessing with which God "has favored and obliged and enriched them" (B, p. 107). The riches we have, Mather continued, are but "the Gift of God, so it must be all used for the Praise of God. Know we not, that our Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and Silver, and Gold, is to be Laid out only so as may be for the Glory of God?" (DR, p. 15; see also CC, p. 29; AP, p. 8). As stewards of God's wealth, rich men were not entitled to squander the money for personal pleasure; rather, through alms and

tithes, they were to dispose of God's gift.⁷³ In giving their tenths for pious uses, rich men were showing themselves worthy of their stewardship, the proper use of which would be "rewarded with a strange success, and increase of their estates;⁷⁴ even in this world" (B, p. 110). Those who had voluntarily disposed of some of their riches had proven their worthiness to receive greater talents; their pious usage of money would be rewarded with "a Recompence in This Life, which the Liberal man is made partaker of. . . . Thus 'tis said in Prov. 11.25. The Liberal Soul shall be made Fat. God will give a Thriving, Flourishing, Comfortable Soul unto him. . . . Thus 'tis said in Prov. 3.9.10. Honour your Lord with thy Substance; and so shall thy Barns be filled with plenty" (DR, p. 24). If man but "cast his bread upon the water," God would lay up riches in man's earthly and heavenly barns.⁷⁵ Relieving the poor was acceptable to God, who had endowed the rich with wealth that they "might have the honor and pleasure" to provide for the poor (B, p. 113). Mather advised that to be more effective in using their talents, the rich should keep lists of the poor, a roll that would make for wholesome conversation among their rich friends who might be incited to do good works, also. Mather even recommended that a friend, possibly a minister, should advise the rich how to employ their affluence in pious uses. This friend should become the rich man's monitor in his liberal dispensations: "Let him advise you from time to time, what good you may do.

Cause him to see, that he never gratifies you more, than by his advice upon this intention" (B, p. 118). Mather also recommended that ministers keep lists of the poor so that in talking to the rich, the minister may make mention of people in need of alms, which should be given along with pious instructions.

In doing good to the poor, the well-to-do would draw blessings upon their own estates through the thankful prayers of the poor: "Tis an excellent thing to have, the blessing of them that have been ready to perish, thus coming upon you," Mather observed.⁷⁶ "Behold, a surprising sense in which you may be praying always. You are so, even while you are sleeping, if those whom you have so obliged are thus praying for you!" (B, pp. 114-115; see also AP, pp. 4-5). He encouraged the rich to do good with their wealth while they were alive, and at their death, they were at liberty to endow the public with a generous donation that they "may embalm . . . [their] name[s] to posterity in this world" and the next (B, p. 112). It was particularly unwise to postpone their charity until death,⁷⁷ Mather thought, because it might be said that those who were tardy in doing good during their lifetimes willed it away "because they can't any longer Keep what they Had" (DR, p. 19).

Robert Keayne gives evidence of this concern in his Apologia. In this last will--sixty years before Bonifacius--he justified his tardiness in giving to the poor:

If any shall wonder or demand why I have let alone all these gifts and good deeds mentioned in this will till I die and have not done somewhat in my lifetime . . . I answer, the prayers of the faithful is much to be desired and prized-- to have the loins and backs and bellies of the poor to bless a man while he lives is a comfortable thing. . . .[Yet] I was not in a capacity to do it before, though God was pleased to give me a comfortable estate. But as soon as the Lord was pleased to carry me through my engagements, then God put it into my mind to think what I might do in acknowledging my thankfulness towards Him, not only in words but in some real actions or deeds. . . . And these are the true reasons why I durst not adventure before upon such works as these: not for want of affection or desire but for want of convenient opportunity and ability to do it.⁷⁸

Nevertheless, Keayne assured us that during his lifetime he had always kept funds for the poor, invested these funds for them, and added money to it in the same proportion as his business transactions met with success. Likewise, Keayne felt compelled to dispense of a substantial part of his wealth for public use because his family was not particularly large. A large inheritance would not only seduce children into becoming idle drones but also serve as a sign of ungratefulness to God, Who had blessed Keayne with a large estate:

I look at it as a great oversight and evil to give all of the most part of a large estate only to wife and children to make them great or rich in the world and to leave little or nothing to friends or to any public or charitable use [even] though there be great occasion and necessities of it and some poor afflicted Josephs that cry for help. For it is the Lord out of His free bounty that gives us our estates, be they more or less (for it is not our own hands' diligence or wisdom but his blessing only that makes rich) so He may justly challenge a part and interest in the same;

and also the commonwealth or place where we live and where we have got more or less of that estate is also to be considered.⁷⁹

Despite his obligation toward society, the Puritan was expected to look after his family first so that he did not sin against his own offspring.

Keayne's will is an outstanding testimony to the conscience of a Puritan merchant at work. Keayne's substantial donations to the poor, the church, and the city of Boston show Puritan benevolence at its best.⁸⁰ His will exemplifies the generous spirit which Mather, decades later, tried to instill into rich Bostonians in an attempt to combat materialism and the showy display of their means. The rich derived the justification of God's gift from their function as benefactors within society. The doing of good thus seems to have been Mather's cure to fight corruption; doing good, on the other hand, was not only a means to channel the prevailing acquisitiveness among New England's merchants into acceptable paths, but also to show eighteenth-century Puritans a way to salvation, a path that--when rightly trodden--was garnished with rich rewards in this world and that which is to come.

Bonifacius, as Perry Miller asserts, did not quite attempt to barter the covenant for the gospel of wealth. Though it "did not blame people for doing what they had to do, and so relieved their anxiety. . . . it was not quite a surrender of pity to business: it did not pronounce a

a blessing of heaven upon millionaires while leaving the poor to die in the gutter. It was a social gospel, not a gospel of wealth."⁸¹

XII

Cotton Mather's reputation has undergone manifold fluctuations in the 253 years after his death. Even during his lifetime, Mather frequently encountered opposition from contemporary critics who begrudged the Puritan power in New England or who simply had developed a personal dislike for Cotton Mather and the class for which he stood. That Mather's image as a writer, clergyman, politician, and social worker has suffered for so many years is largely due to his early involvement in the witchcraft trials of 1691/2. Though Mather and his father Increase opposed the use of spectral appearances as the basis for judgment of the afflicted ones--in fact rescuing many a life by keeping names of accused persons secret--Cotton Mather was asked by the Massachusetts magistrates to write a defense of the judges and the trials to appease their English colleagues. When this defense appeared in 1691, Wonders of the Invisible World was subject to instant attack. Robert Caleb's More Wonders of the Invisible World (1700) mocked Mather for his credulity and accused him of lascivious motives during the public exorcisms performed on two teenage girls in Mather's home. Not long after the ensuing pamphlet war between both parties had died down, Mather was involved in another

controversy during which an outraged Bostonian made an attempt on his life by throwing a bomb through Mather's window. During the small-pox epidemic of 1721/22, Mather, by introducing inoculation in America, infuriated the medical profession, which accused the Mathers of spreading the small pox all over Boston. In fact, Mather's highly advanced studies of inoculation practices in Asia and Africa, at that time still untested in Europe, earned him the scorn of William Douglass--the only physician in Boston with an M.D. degree--who closed the lines of physicians behind him and attacked Mather for meddling in medical science of which Mather supposedly knew nothing. Despite the attacks on Mather's person and the charges of his orthodoxy and backwardness, it was Mather, supported by the clergy, whose extremely advanced and farsighted position on introducing small-pox inoculation in Colonial America--at a time when Western Europe was too afraid to heed the accounts of successful inoculations in Turkey--saved hundreds of lives. While the medical profession resorted to the Bible for help to prove that the inoculation practices of Mather and his colleagues were ungodly, the ecclesiastics defended themselves by resorting to medical accounts and the Bible for proof that God welcomes progressive innovations. Nevertheless, Douglass' propaganda successfully stirred sentiment against Mather and left a lasting blemish on his reputation.

Later historians such as George Bancroft, Charles W. Upham, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, and such literati as

Washington Irving, Whittier, and Longfellow perpetuated the Mather of ill repute. Not until the mid-twentieth century did historians and biographers attempt to reassess Mather's position in New England. Such historians as Wendell, Morrison, Miller, and--to mention the latest examples-- Kittredge, Murdock, T. J. Holmes, and David Levin have taken a fresh look at this controversial clergyman.

Cotton Mather's Magnalia, the ecclesiastical history of New England, is retrospective in his approach, providing future generations of New Englanders with a source book of their cultural and religious beliefs. The Christian Philosopher and Bonifacius, however, point toward the enlightenment in that they influenced eighteenth-century men like Benjamin Franklin. In fact, Franklin in a letter to Mather's son Samuel, acknowledged his indebtedness to Cotton Mather's Bonifacius, an inspiration visible in Franklin's "Silence Dogood Papers":⁸²

When I was a boy, I met with a book, entitled 'Essays to do Good' It had been so little regarded by a former possessor, that several leaves of it were torn out; but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking, as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a doer of good, than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantages of it to that book.⁸³

With Bonifacius, Mather aimed at guiding the Christian to an appreciation of God's blessings in his benevolent actions. In this book, Mather endeavored to bring ordinary

men in touch with their daily practice of Christianity in anticipation of the millennium for which New Englanders seemed but ill-prepared. Good works, Mather made sure to point out in the introduction to his Bonifacius, were not a means for the redemption of one's soul but only signs of one's possible election. Works simply were an embodiment and consequence of one's faith. Although actions counted more than words, works that did not flow from one's saving faith were as dead as saving faith without fruits. Here, the Puritan's dilemma arose: How was an ordinary man to distinguish between works that flowed out of his superabundant faith? Was the danger of attaining some peace of mind, some certainty of one's election, some assurance of saving faith not all too imminent? Could the line between right and wrong motivation easily be drawn when even ministers themselves had to double check their motivation so as not to fall into the snare of false security? Certainly not. The conscientious Puritan was driven by desire and fear, by a longing to find evidence of his salvation in his works and the fear that his works of faith were a delusion after all.

Unmistakably, Mather, like his black-robed colleagues, preached the Gospel of Wealth, yet always emphasized moderation so as not to overreach one's fellow man. Mather's reputation as a progenitor of rugged business individualism is also based on studies such as A. W. Griswold's "Three Puritans on Prosperity" (1934).⁸⁴ Unfortunately, Griswold shows only one side of the coin to prove his point.

Griswold neglects to illustrate Mather's role as a Boston social worker, who--apart from continuing the Gospel-of-Wealth tradition--emphasized the social responsibility of the rich and condemned the pursuit of money for its own sake. Mather's involvement in the establishment of a number of Boston societies for the improvement of mankind also repudiates Griswold's picture of Mather. That Mather was aware of this implicit teaching and that many parishioners abused religion so as to advance their businesses is evident in his sermon, A Very Needful Caution:

The man will fall in, with such Opinions, and such Practices of Religion, because the Road of doing his Estate a Kindness, lies that way. The Real Reason, why he Conforms to this or that way of Religion; . . . Is it not the reason of thy Conformity thus; Because Employment and Preferment is this way to be obtained, and not from any Satisfaction in thy Conscience, that is the way of God? (NC, pp. 22, 23).

Clearly, Mather was not blind to the hypocrisy of his parishioners who were wolves in sheep's clothing.

It is true that Mather, like almost any Puritan clergyman in the seventeenth century, is an easy target for those who try to prove that Mather preached what during the age of the robber barons became to be called rugged individualism. In fact, Mather did preach the Gospel of Wealth. Claiming that Mather preached the unlimited pursuit of wealth, however, is telling only half of the story; the other half shows that Mather's primary concern was to incite the latter-day Puritans to do good with their God-given wealth. In

his Bonifacius, as in those sermons which seem to prove his success ethic, Mather explicitly pointed out for which end he urged his congregation to exert itself in their businesses, namely to do good to others. Thus, Mather advocated, at best, a moderate Gospel of Wealth.

Throughout his life, Mather had been preaching the moderate Gospel of Wealth, not simply condoning, but even conjuring up God's blessings for success in business. The ecclesiastical teachings which associated wealth and property with God's favor and election were cordially welcomed by all; yet with increasing prosperity, with franchise no longer restricted to church members, and with the modes of Restoration England becoming more and more popular in New England, the ecclesiastics could not prevent New Englanders from abandoning the ways of their forefathers. While New England's merchants eagerly received the clergy's justification of the Gospel of Wealth, the warnings of prosperity's inherent temptations were generally ignored. By the turn of the century, selfishness had gained supremacy over congregational ethics. Steadily increasing numbers of immigrants of non-Puritan denominations, increasing mobility among the colonists, drastic economic and social changes giving rise to the pursuit of wealth for selfish ends, enhanced possibilities of investments of excess money--all these factors finally reduced the Puritan concept of calling to nought. What remained was an ethic that had lost its religious antecedent; what remained was a work ethic

that lingered on as a moral duty devoid of its religious foundation. Nathaniel Clap of Connecticut, complaining about the general decline of the concept of calling as a religious duty, stated that "Persons may be Diligent about their Business, without being real Christians, but they cannot be Real Christians, that have no Care about their Business."⁸⁵

As the eighteenth century continued, New Englanders viewed their occupation in a completely secular, utilitarian way, leaving their ancestral God completely out of the picture. Franklin's Autobiography and essays on business success embody this Puritan legacy, which carried on the tradition of a Protestant Ethic devoid of its religious undercurrent.

NOTES

Abbreviations used in Notes:

- (AP) Some Seasonable Advice unto the Poor (Boston, 1726)
- (B) Bonifacius, Essay upon the Good, David Levin, ed.
(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966)
- (BC) Some Considerations on the Bills of Credit (Boston, 1691)
- (CC) A Christian at his Calling (Boston, 1701)
- (D) Diary of Cotton Mather, 2 vols. (New York: Frederick
Ungar Publishing Co., n.d.)
- (DR) Durable Riches (Boston, 1695)
- (FD) Fair Dealing between Debtor and Creditor (Boston, 1716)
- (HP) Honesta Parsimonia (Boston, 1721)
- (IL) Instructions to the Living (Boston, 1717)
- (LM) Lex Mercatoria (Boston, 1705)
- (M) Magnalia Christi Americana, 2 books, ed. Kenneth B.
Murdock (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University
Press, 1977)
- (MS) A Good Master Well Served (Boston, 1696)
- (NC) A Very Needful Caution (Boston, 1707)
- (SS) Sober Sentiments (Boston, 1722)
- (TA) Theopolis Americana (Boston, 1710)
- (TC) The Thankful Christian (Boston, 1717)
- (U) Utilia (Boston, 1716)

¹ Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Introduction by Anthony Giddens (1958; fpt.

New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), p. 53.

² See Weber's Discussion of the doctrine of calling chapter III, pp. 79-92 and Robert S. Michaelson's "Changes in the Puritan Concept of Calling or Vocation," NEQ, 26 (1953), 315-36. Michaelson traced the origin of the doctrine of calling and shows its changes during the eighteenth century from a theocratic dogma to a moral ethic. J. E. Crowley's chapter "The Legacy of Calling" in This Sheba SELF: The Conceptualization of Economic Life in Eighteenth-Century America (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974) like Michaelson and Weber showed the development of this doctrine in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in America.

³ William Perkins, "A Treatise of the Vocations or Callings of men, with sorts and kinds of them, and the right use thereof," Puritan Political Ideas, 1558-1799, ed. Edmund S. Morgan (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965), pp. 52-3, voiced Protestant sentiment toward monastic life: "Hereby is overthrowen the condition of Monkes and Friars: who challenge to themselves that they live in a state of perfection, because they live apart from the societies of men in fasting and prayer: but contrariwise, this Monkish kind of living is damnable; for besides the generall duties of fasting and praier, which appertaine to al Christians, every man must have a particular & personal calling, that he may bee a good and profitable member of society and body. And the auncient Church condemned all Monkes for theeves and

robbers."

⁴ CC, pp. 37-38. Subsequent quotations from Mather's works are rendered in abbreviated form in the text. See "Abbreviations Used in Notes."

⁵ Perkins, p. 56; the same ideas and values expressed by Perkins still held true for Congregational New Englanders roughly one-hundred and twenty years later. See Nathaniel Henschman, A Holy and Useful Life, Ending in Happy and Joyful Death . . . (Boston, 1721), p. 7.

⁶ See the sermon by Mather's grandfather John Cotton, "Christian Calling," The Puritans, 2 vols., eds., Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, pp. 319-27. Like his colleagues, Cotton emphasized that a person is to follow his calling for the public good.

⁷ Richard Baxter in his Christian Directory: Or a Summ of Practical Theology and Cases of Conscience . . . (London, 1673), pp. 375-6, pointed out that "It is action that God is most served and honoured by The public welfare or the good of the many is to be valued above own." See also Weber, p. 280, #9.

⁸ Benjamin Franklin, "The Way to Wealth" (1758), Benjamin Franklin: Representative Selections, eds. Chester E. Jorgesen and Frank Luther Mott (New York: Hill and Wang, p. 1962), p. 282. Subsequent quotations from Franklin are rendered parenthetically as (WW) for "The Way to Wealth," (AT) for "Advice to a Young Tradesman," and (HR) for "Hints for those that would be rich."

⁹ Irvin G. Wyllie, The Self-Made Man in America (New York: The Free Press, 1954), p. 13.

¹⁰ John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. John Allen, 7th American ed. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, n. d.), II, 179-80.

¹¹ Arthur Hildersam, Lectures on the Forth of John (London, 1629), p. 311. See also Edmund S. Morgan's discussion of false assurance in Visible Saints (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1963), p. 69. Similar accounts of anxiety are evident in Katherine Mather's deathbed struggle in which she voiced her fear to have succumbed to false security. See Cotton Mather's funeral sermon on the death of his daughter in Victorina (Boston, 1717), pp. 73-78 and William Perkins' relation of John Knox's deathbed account in Salve for a Sicke Man (London, 1597). The fear of false assurance played an important part in sermons as late as the First Great Awakening as evidenced in Jonathan Edwards' A Faithful Narrative (1737), reprinted in C. C. Goen, ed., The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. IV (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 186. See also "Death and Childhood," and "Death and Dying" in David E. Stannard's The Puritan Way of Death (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

¹² See Weber's discussion of the Calvinist's search for assurance, pp. 110-115.

¹³ Weber, 114.

¹⁴ This conflict and the resulting anxiety is apparent in John Cotton's "Hypocrites and Saints," Puritans, pp. 316-318.

¹⁵ Weber, p. 60.

¹⁶ Weber, p. 63.

¹⁷ See Weber's discussion of "traditionalism," pp. 69-73.

¹⁸ Martin Luther, "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," Works of Martin Luther (Philadelphia, 1915), II, 241.

¹⁹ Calvin, I, 791.

²⁰ John Cotton, like his grandson Cotton Mather, illustrated this point: "Bee thy calling never so meane and homely, and never so hardly accepted, yet, if thou hast lived by faith in thy calling, it was a lively worke in the sight of God, and so it will be rewarded when thy change come 'Christian Calling,'" Puritans, p. 326.

²¹ Perkins, p. 57.

²² See Baxter, pp. 375-66.

²³ See also Leonard W. Labaree, et al. eds., The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 144.

²⁴ Mather was most likely influenced by Perkins as is evidenced in Perkins, p. 42: "Every man must doe the duties of his Calling with diligence: & therefore Salomon saith, Ecc. 9.10. Whatsoever is in thine hand to do, do it with al thy power. . . . Of this diligence there be two reasons: first of al, the end why God Bestowes his gifts upon us,

is, that they might be employed in his service, and to his glory and that in his life. Therefore Paul saith, Redeeme the time: and Christ, Walke while ye have light. And againe, I must do his work while it is day: For we see trades men and travellers rise early to their businesse, lest night overtake them."

²⁵ See Matthew 25.14-30; The biblical account of the good servant increasing his master's talents and that of the bad servant who is lazy seems to be alluded to.

²⁶ Baxter, I, Chap. X,i,9; see also Weber, pp. 162-63.

²⁷ Baxter, I, 375-6.

²⁸ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance," Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. Frederic I. Carpenter (New York: American Book Co., 1934), pp. 106-107.

²⁹ Cotton Mather, "Preface," Bonifacius, p. 9. See also John Danforth's The Vile Profanation of Prosperity by the Degenerate of the People of God . . . (Boston, 1704) and J. E. Crowley's discussion of the Puritan attitudes toward the vice of idleness in This Sheba SELF, pp. 2-3.

³⁰ Apparently, Perkins inspired Mather. See Perkins' A Treatise, p. 43: "And indeed, idleness and slouth are the causes of many damnable sinnes. The idle bodie, and the idle braine, is the shop of the divell. The sea, if it mooved not, could not but putrifie, and the body if it be not stirred and mooved, breedeth diseases. Now the idle and slouthful person is a sea of corruption; and when he is most idle, Satan is least idle, for then is he most

busie to draw him to manifold sinnes." Hard labor also was recommended as an antidote to carnal lust. Since sexual intercourse was only permissible for procreative purposes, hard work was seen as the only means to overcome the desire of the flesh; see Weber, pp. 263-64, #2.

³¹ See Baxter, II, 16, and Weber, pp. 157-60.

³² John Cotton in "Christian Calling," Puritans, pp. 325-26, was quite outspoken and denounced those idle rich who lived on their wealth and contributed nothing to society: ". . . if thou beest a man that lives without a calling, though thou hast two thousand to spend, yet if thou hast no calling, tending to publique good, thou art an uncleane beast."

³³ See Baxter, I, 108 ff.

³⁴ Perkins, p. 52: "it is a foule disorder in any Common-wealth, that there should bee suffered rogues, beggars, vagabonds; for such kind of persons commonly are of no civill societie or corporation, nor of any particular church; and are as rotten legges, and armes that drop from the body. Againe, to wander up and downe from yeere to yeere to this end, to seeke and procure bodily maintenance, is no calling, but the life of a beast; and consequently a condition or state of life flat against the rule; That every one must have a particular calling."

³⁵ Bernard Bailyn, ed. The Apologia of Robert Keayne

(Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1970), p. 73. Subsequent quotations from this book will be rendered as Keayne, Apologia.

³⁶ Weber, p. 158; see also Baxter, I, 79.

³⁷ Baxter, I, p. 378: "If God show you a way in which you may lawfully get more than in another way (without wrong to your soul or to any other), if you refuse this, and choose the less gainful way, you cross one of the ends of your calling, and you refuse to be God's steward, and to accept His gifts and use them for Him when He requireth it: You may labour to be rich for God, though not for the flesh and sin."

³⁸ That Puritan merchants in fact acknowledged God in their business transactions is evident in the following shipping list of the Boston merchant William Davis, 1650: "Shipped by the grace of God in good order and well conditioned by mee Wm Davis of Boston in and upon the good shipp called the George Banaventure . . . now rideing at anchor at Marblehead and by Gods grace bound for Bilboa" in A Volume Relating to the Early History of Boston Containing the Aspinwall Notarial Records from 1644 to 1651 (Thirty-second Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston, Boston, 1903), pp. 313, 418; see also Barnard Bailyn, The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 80.

39 Keayne, Apologia, p. 82.

40 Weber, p. 172.

41 Mather expressed the same idea in FD, p. 16: "Men ought often and nicely to Examine the State of their Business, if they would not find themselves irrecoverably Plunged into Debt, before they are aware, but it comes in unexpectedly like a Traveller upon them; and then holds him like an Armed Man.

It is a very Dangerous, and therefore a very Culpable thing, for People to let their Business go on from year to year, in Muddy Uncertainties. There are no wise People, but what will be found of often seing where-abouts they are in their Business. It was directed: Prov. XXVII,23. Be thou diligent to know the state of thy Flocks, and look well to thy Herds; For Riches are not for ever. People should use much Diligence, frequently Enquiry, exact Inspection, into the State of their Affairs. For some Rich Men have soon come to nothing by their Inadvertency. Dealers of the Best Fashion among us, have used constantly Once a year, to Settle their Books of Accompts, and find their Account in doing so. And for want of it, there may be some of whom we may shortly say, as Paul to the Shipwrecked Mariners; Ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have gain'd the Harm & Loss, which you are like to suffer by your Negligence.

But if upon the Scrutiny Men find, That they Over-trade their Stock; and if they find, That they run behind hand;

Or in a word, if they find, that their Expences do exceed their Revenues; they ought Seasonably, I say Seasonably, to take all due Measures, and Early Enough, put a Stop to the Torrent of Debt which else like Waters at a Beach, is breaking.

⁴² Mather seemed to give a parallel account of Winthrop's "A Model of Christian Charity," Puritan Political Ideas, p. 81: What rule must wee observe in lending? Ans.: Thou must observe whether thy brother hath present or probable, or possible meanes of repaying thee, if ther be none of these, thou must give him according to his necessity, rather than lend him as hee requires; if he hath present meanes of repaying thee, thou art to looke at him, not as an Act of mercy, but by way of Commerce, wherein thou arte to walke by the rule of Justice, but, if his meanes of repaying thee be onely probable or possible then is hee an object of thy mercy thou must lend him, though there be danger of looseing it Deut: 15.7."

⁴³ See Bailyn, NE Merchant, p. 181.

⁴⁴ See Bailyn, NE Merchant, p. 182-88.

⁴⁵ The bibliographer of Cotton Mather, Thomas James Holmes, Cotton Mather: A Bibliography of his Works (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940), III, p. 1000; item 363-C argued that although Mather's writing on the currency supply of New England is an "unusual" topic for the Puritan divine, "The literary style of Some Considerations is that of Cotton Mather, and the ideas and

attitude of the pamphlet find parallels in at least a portion of two others of his works; Serviceable Man, 1690 . . . and the first half of Section 12 of Pietas in Patriam, The Life of Sir William Phips, 1697"

⁴⁶ See Mather's "Pietas in Patriam," in Magnalia, pp. 307-309; also, for a good summary of the colonies' chronic shortage of currency see Crowley, pp. 86-91.

⁴⁷ For Mather's position on inoculation see Otho T. Beall, Jr.'s and Richard M. Shrylock's Cotton Mather: First Significant Figure in American Medicine (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1954) and John B. Blake's, "The Inoculation Controversy in Boston; 1721-1722," NEQ, 25 (1952), 489-506. Both publications show that Mather was the first Colonial American to introduce inoculation practices against the small-pox at a time when European and Colonial American physicians either rejected the practice as unworkable or knew nothing about it at all.

⁴⁸ Wyllie, p. 10.

⁴⁹ See Wyllie, p. 11.

⁵⁰ Sacvan Bercovitch, The Puritan Origin of the American Self (New Haven: Conn.: Yale University Press, 1975), p. 3.

⁵¹ Cotton Mather, Magnalia, I, 143.

⁵² Weber, p. 174.

⁵³ Weber, p. 157.

⁵⁴ Bailyn, NE Merchant, p. 44.

⁵⁵ Weber cited Wesley's sermon from Southey's Life of Wesley (no publ., not dated) chapter XXIX (Second American Edition, II, p. 308); see Weber, p. 280, # 95.

⁵⁶ See David Levin's helpful "Introduction" to Bonifacius in (B) in Abbrev. used in Notes.

⁵⁷ Perkins seemed to be echoed here, p. 56: "They profane their lives & callings that imploy them to get honours, pleasures, profits, worldly commodities, & c. for thus wee live to another end then God hath appointed, and thus we serve our selves, & consequently, neither God, nor man."

⁵⁸ Mather, again, described the prevailing attitude among New Englanders who had come to rely on themselves for profits rather than God's providence: SS, pp. 7-8: "We usually presume upon This; That the Busineß wherewith we fill out Lives, will go on Prosperously. We fancy to our selves, that we can manage our Busineß wisely enough, and that our own Wisdom will secure the Succeß. We are very prone to fall into that Fault; Hab. I. 16. They Sacrifice unto their own Nett, and burn Incense unto their Drag; because by them their Portion is Fat, and their Meat Plenteous. We fancy that our Prosperity lies very much within the reach of our own Projection. As if we need no more, but only to Contrive and Prosper, only to Pursue and Prosper. We fancy that our Schemes being laid, Prosperity must wait upon them; The Schemes must go on and Prosper, and meet with no Rubs in their way; How can they but Prosper!

We propound Wealth; we foresee fine Conveniencies attending of it. We are so charmed with the Foresight, that we have greedily devoured it in our Wishes. We fancy ourselves already in the Possession of what we have set our Hearts upon. As if Riches must increase, because we set our Hearts upon them!" See also LM, pp. 32-33; see also Weber, p. 270, # 54.

⁵⁹ Province and Court Records of Maine, ed. Charles T. Libby et al. (Portland, Maine, 1928-1947), I, 206. See also Bailyn, NE Merchant, p. 98.

⁶⁰ Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantation in New England, ed. John R. Bartlett (Providence, 1856-1865), I, 398; see also Bailyn, NE Merchant, p. 99.

⁶¹ Bernard Bailyn summarized New England's stratification in the second half of the seventeenth century in NE Merchant, p. 138: "Not only had membership in a Puritan church ceased to be a criterion of social acceptability among the merchant families, but by the third generation the interrelated merchant group showed signs of moving toward the still officially anathemized Church of England. Outspoken Anglicans like Wharton married freely into the group, and there is no indication that that outstanding entrepreneur felt discomfort in being related by marriage to Reverends Thomas Shepard and Samuel Willard. Marrying the heiress daughter of a nonconformist colonial seems, in fact, to have been a normal procedure for ambitious young Englishmen making careers for themselves

in American trade, and their eligibility was not diminished by their Anglicanism. On the contrary, by the mid-seventies they seem to have had the balance of social influence with them."

⁶² Weber, p. 176.

⁶³ See Weber, p. 281, # 101.

⁶⁴ See also Everett Emerson, Puritanism in America, 1620-1750 (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977), p. 132.

⁶⁵ In his entry of Febr. 12, 1710/11, Mather, reflecting on the question of "What shall I render to the Lord?" henceforth resolved to do good for his fellow man. Starting with this entry, Mather initials each "Memorial" with the abbreviation G.D., "Good Divised," to indicate any beneficial deed he had accomplished or planned for the future. (Diary, II, 4) For his reflections on societies to improve the "conduct" among his fellow men, see D, II, pp. 42, 54, 478; for the "Society for Propagation of Christian Religion," see D, I, pp. 419, 499, 531; for the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel" see D, II, pp. 120, 212, 412, 691; and for the "Society for Suppression of Disorders" see D, I, pp. 418, 500, 517, 523, 531, and II, pp. 27, 42, 77, 110, 114, 123, 131, 150, 207, 235, 767.

⁶⁶ See Ernst Benz, "Ecumencial Relations between Boston Puritanism and German Pietism: Cotton Mather and August Hermann Francke," HR, 54 (1961), 159-93 and Kuno Franke, "The Beginning of Cotton Mather's Correspondence

with August Hermann Francke," PQ, 5 (1926), 193-5.

⁶⁷ Perry Miller, The New England Mind: From Colony to Province (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 409.

⁶⁸ See Richard F. Lovelace, The American Pietism of Cotton Mather (Washington, D.C.: Christian University Press, 1979), and Virginia Bernhard, "Cotton Mather and the Doing of Good: A Puritan Gospel of Wealth," NEQ, 49 (1976), pp. 225-41.

⁶⁹ Perry Miller, p. 410.

⁷⁰ Perry Miller, p. 411.

⁷¹ See the following selection of Mather's sermons of reform societies, servants, and family life and the chapters in B, pp. 63-68: A Good Master Well Served (Boston, 1969); A Family Well-Ordered (Boston, 1699); Christianus per Ignem (Boston, 1702); Methods and Motives for a Society to Suppress Disorders (Boston, 1703); The Negro Christianized (Boston, 1706); Family Religion (2nd. ed.) (Boston, 1707); Rules for the Society of Negroes (Boston, 1714); The Servant of Abraham (Boston, 1716, no copy extant); Christianity Demonstrated (Boston, 1710); The Rules of a Visit (Boston, 1705); Private Meetings Animated and Regulated (Boston, 1706); The Best Ornament of Youth (Boston, 1707); Religious Societies for the Revival of Religion (Boston, 1724).

⁷² Robert Keayne, in true Puritan Manner solved the inherent problems of the Covenant of Works and Grace,

Apologia, pp. 1-2: "I do further desire from my heart to renounce all confidence or expectation of merit or desert in any of the best duties or services that ever I have, shall, or can be able to perform, acknowledging that all my righteousness, sanctification, and close walking with God . . . is all polluted and corrupt and falls short of commending me to God in point of my justification or helping forward my redemption or salvation They are good fruits and evidences of justification. Therefore renouncing though not the acts yet all confidence in those acts of holiness and workes of sanctification performed by me, I look for my acceptance with God and the salvation of my soul only from the merits or righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and from the free bountiful, and undeserved grace and love of God in Him."

⁷³ That Mather's view of the rich as stewards of their wealth and its ensuing responsibility to the public did not die with him or the centuries in which he lived is evident in such nineteenth-century examples as Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie, a self-made millionaire who struck it rich in the steel business, acknowledged the responsibility of the rich toward the public, saying, "the millionaire will be but a trustee for the poor, intrusted for a season with a great part of the increased wealth of the community, but administering it for the community far better than it could or would have done for itself," in Andrew Carnegie; The Gospel of Wealth, ed, Edward C.

Kirkland (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 28.

⁷⁴ Obsessed with justifying each action, Keayne jotted down in his Apologia, p. 20: "This course I have constantly kept above this 40 years. And I now mention this the more particularly not in any way of boasting for any good work that I have either done or can do (for I know if God should enter into judgment with me for any or the best of them all He might justly reject both me and them as abominable), but that all that know it or may hear of it may take notice of the blessing of God upon such a free and voluntary course."

⁷⁵ See Mather's play on the word usury DR, pp. 22-23: "I will not here dispute about the Lawfulness of Usury; but I will tell you of an Usury, that I am sure is Lawful; and yet it is an Usury so far exceeding that of Six in the Hundred, as that it is an Hundred for Six, yea, 'tis far more than Hundred for One. Let a man be Liberal upon Pious Uses . . . [and] as in Mark 10.30. He shall Receive Hundred fold now in this Time; and the World to come, Eternal Life."

⁷⁶ Similarly, Mather encouraged the poor: AP, pp. 4-5: "Be sure to Pray unto his GOD, very particularly and importunately for him and his; that in the Recompence of both Worlds, he may reap the Harvest of his Bounty. Yes, you may and should pray by Name for him if you know his Name, if it was the Intention of the good Man, that one

Method of his praying always, it should be, by his dispersed Bounty, to engage a Variety of obliged People, to be one or other praying always for him."

⁷⁷ A case in point for the nineteenth century may be found in Carnegie, who encouraged his contemporary nabobs to donate money for public charities betimes so that they would not fall into public disgrace at their death. In his The Gospel of Wealth, Carnegie advised, "the day is not far distant when the man who dies leaving behind him millions of available wealth, which was free to him to administer during life, will pass away 'unwept, unhonored, and unsung' no matter to what uses he leaves the dross which he cannot take with him. Of such as these the public verdict will then be: 'The man who dies thus rich dies disgraced.'" (pp. 28-29).

⁷⁸ Keayne, Apologia, pp. 26, 28.

⁷⁹ Keayne, Apologia, pp. 75-76.

⁸⁰ See the discussion of large donations in Weber, p. 74.

⁸¹ Perry Miller, p. 416.

⁸² Franklin's title "Silence Dogood Papers" is a humorous attempt to make fun of Cotton Mather, whose Bonifacius, Essays upon the Doing of Good, appeared anonymously though its authorship was an open secret.

⁸³ Franklin, "To Samuel Mather" (1784), p. 471.

⁸⁴ Griswold provided a good analysis of Mather's A

Christian at his Calling; unfortunately, Griswold looked only on one side of the medal. While he showed how Mather advocated the acquisition of wealth, Griswold neglected to illustrate Mather's emphasis on the social responsibility of the rich and the pastor's condemnation of the pursuit of money for its own sake.

⁸⁵ Nathaniel Clap, The Duty of All Christians Urged, in a Discourse on 1 Cor. XV. 58 . . . (New London, Conn.: 1720), p. 26.

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