Much that has been published about Bertrand Russell has done more to stimulate than to satisfy our curiosity. Ronald W. Clark’s *Life of Bertrand Russell* is a massive book of 766 pages, but it is in some ways a dossier rather than a biography, a collection of data held together by a faintly unsophisticated commentary. No one who reads Mr Clark could imagine what Russell was like to be with, even for a mere acquaintance, such as I was. Fortunately there is other testimony, notably the memoirs of Russell’s second wife Dora, and a very good book about him by his daughter, Lady Katharine Tait. These help us to acquire perhaps some glimmerings of understanding.

Bertrand Russell’s life falls, in a curious way, into two halves. Until he was over forty, he was a scholar and a puritan; all his most important work as a philosopher was done when he was young. In the second half of his life he became a publicist, a social reformer, a political radical, and a womaniser. It is as if his life had been lived in reverse: the years of tranquil achievement coming first, and the years of adventure and fun and irresponsibility coming last. And of course he lived an uncommonly long time: brought up in the home of a grandfather who had met and remembered Napoleon, Byron, and Talleyrand, Russell did not die until February 1970. He was nearly thirty when the reign of Victoria ended, and he remained an irreproachable Victorian for at least another decade. Then after he had undergone his change of character, he battled against the whole Victorian ethos with unfaltering energy; and he continued to do so long after Victorianism had disappeared from Western society.

Since he was the grandson of Lord John Russell and of Lord Stanley, the son of Viscount Amberley, and himself inherited an earldom, Bertrand Russell is naturally often spoken of by his various biographers as an aristocrat, especially when they are at a loss to explain anything about him. Yet one striking peculiarity of Russell’s history is that he was not brought up like other children of the 19th-century English nobility, but by a Unitarian grandmother from Scotland who carried to an extreme form that puritan belief in austerity and self-denial which was much more characteristic of the middle than of the upper class.

Russell’s father, Lord Amberley, had been a friend of John Stuart Mill, and the champion of advanced ideas in politics (including the enfranchisement of women and the use of contraceptives to solve the problem of unwanted pregnancies). He was an agnostic in religion, as was his wife, who died a year before he did, when their younger son Bertrand was aged only two. They had chosen J. S. Mill as an agnostic’s equivalent to a godfather for the boy, and in his will Lord Amberley appointed two fellow agnostics as guardians. But when Lord Amberley died, Earl Russell contested the will on the grounds that it was unthinkable for unbelievers to be allowed to bring up an English nobleman’s sons. The courts upheld the plea; and that was how Bertrand Russell came to grow up with his grandparents. In his *Autobiography*, Russell says his grandmother was secretive about his father and mother, and that it was not until he was 21 years old that he learned anything about his parents’ unconventional lives and opinions; and later he began to realise that he was very like the father he could not remember.

“After his father’s death [writes Lady Katharine] my father went to live with his grandmother Russell at Pembroke Lodge, a house of shadows and hushed voices, of age and anxiety and invalidism...
Frank, who was seven years older, rebelled bitterly and was sent away to school, but dear little Bertie was gathered into the sentimental austerity of his grandmother's house, and showered with her destructive love. She believed that plain food, uncomfortable living and unceasing moral exhortation mixed with reproach were good for boys... All through his childhood, my father submitted humbly and gratefully to her reproofs and admonitions, and regretted sadly his inability to live up to her high expectations. From the age of four until he was almost ready for the university, he lived as the only child in that house of melancholy adults.... Though his childhood was probably not quite as bad as his memory painted it, nevertheless it was bad enough to burden my father with a lifelong sense of sin and a sad feeling of isolation.

This upbringing also left Bertrand Russell with a temperament which his daughter is almost alone in seeing as being essentially religious, and remaining essentially religious behind the worldly persona which Russell assumed in the last fifty years of his life. After being educated by tutors at home, Russell always looked back on his experience as a Cambridge undergraduate as one of liberation and joy. "The university", he wrote, "opened to me a new world of infinite delight.... For those who have been young since 1914 it must be difficult to imagine the happiness of those days." Yet Russell as an undergraduate was in no sense a hedonist. He remained a strict teetotaller, frugal in all his habits; and although he fell in love at seventeen with a girl he determined to marry, that girl was an American middle-class Quaker, Alys Pearsall-Smith, as much a Puritan as was his grandmother (it is curious to note that Russell and Alys always addressed each other in the old Quaker style, as "thee").

Russell's upper-class relations, disliking the idea of his marrying into the American bourgeoisie, sent him to France as an unpaid attaché at the British Embassy in the hope that the distractions of Paris might teach him that there was more than one woman in the world. Although he obtained from Alys her consent to his drinking wine on social duties in France, he spent most of his time at the embassy deciphering codes or writing love letters (two a day) to Alys. He never went out on the town with his colleagues; his only pleasure was riding his bicycle in the Bois de Boulogne. Paris in the belle époque had no other charm for him.

"In Paris", he wrote solemnly in one of his letters from the embassy, "everybody is wicked and every time one looks around one sees some blasphemy against love—they make me quiver with disgust.... I should be delighted if the whole French nation were sunk under the sea, and believe the whole world would be vastly the better for it."

This last remark throws a certain light on Russell's attitude to the events of 1914. He stayed only a few months at the Embassy; on his returning to England, and coming of age, he married his Quaker sweetheart. As he had an income of £600 a year and she had money of her own, he felt no great urge to seek a job; nor did the academic world at the time show any impatience to employ him. In mathematics at Cambridge he had been bracketed seventh wrangler, a commendable but not an outstanding achievement. Thus at the age of 22, Russell set off with his bride to Germany with no clear purpose, apart from investigating the German Social Democrats in action and possibly writing a dissertation on the philosophy of mathematics for a prize fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge. In the event he did both things. The continental trip produced Russell's first published book, German Social Democracy, and the thesis which earned him in 1895 a Fellowship of Trinity. Only his wife disappointed him by the discovery that she could have no children.

His years as a young Cambridge don were the most fruitful in Russell's career as a
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pure philosopher. It culminated in the publication of his mammoth work, the three-volume *Principia Mathematica*; and even though that book was written in collaboration with an older don, Alfred North Whitehead, it is not disputed that Russell was the leading partner and originator. Russell changed his views in philosophy throughout his life, but he always remained the same kind of philosopher and that was not a typically English kind. The philosopher of the past he most resembled was Leibnitz, about whom he published in 1900 a remarkably sympathetic essay. Like the 17th-century German rationalist, Russell approached philosophy with a mind trained in and formed by mathematics; and like Leibnitz, he tried to give philosophy the purity and rigour which is characteristic of mathematics. And this is not the traditional English approach, which tends to be empirical, like Bacon's, or commonsensical, like Locke's, or sceptical, like Hume's. The truth of the matter, as Russell himself recalled in his book *My Philosophical Development*, was that he turned to philosophy in the hope of discovering “that something could be known with certainty.” It is just this demand for certainty that sets Russell in the company of the continental rationalists and outside the mainstream of English philosophy: a unique and in many ways a lonely figure.

This passion for certainty moreover not only prompted his philosophical activity, but also, in a more devious way, stimulated all his campaigns for “rational” solutions to human, social and political problems, generated even his atheism. His daughter’s judgment on this subject is surely a very shrewd one:

“I believe myself that his whole life was a search for God, or, for those who prefer less personal terms, for absolute certainty. Indeed he had first taken up philosophy in the hope of finding proof of the existence of God, whose childish reality had vanished before the pressing questions of his adolescent mind. He needed certainty; he loved clarity with a passion, and he could not bear any kind of muddled thinking. . . . Somewhere in the back of my father’s mind, at the bottom of his heart, there was an empty space that had once been filled by God, and he never found anything else to put in it.”

Russell in his autobiographical writings recalls several occasions when he experienced a sudden change of belief or a sudden change of feeling. In metaphysics, he moved abruptly from Hegelian idealism to logical atomism. In moral philosophy he switched from the watered-down Platonism of G. E. Moore to ethical subjectivism, holding thereafter that all judgments of value are strictly utterances of personal taste. In politics it was the same. One sudden change happened during the Boer War, as Russell later recalled:

“At the beginning of the war I was an imperialist, more or less. In the middle of it, for other reasons, I had a sudden ‘conversion’, a change of heart, which brought with it a love of humanity and a horror of force, and incidentally made me a pro-Boer.”

This was the end of Russell’s Fabian phase; for many years he insisted that socialism was only worth having if it could be united with liberty; then towards the end of his life he suddenly turned from anti-Communism to become a fervent champion of Ho Chi Minh. Unfortunately for those concerned, Russell’s heart was as changeable as his head. Recalling the collapse of his first marriage, Russell wrote in his *Autobiography*: “I went out bicycling one afternoon and suddenly as I was riding along a country road, I realised that I no longer loved Alys. I had had no idea until this moment that my love for her was even lessening. . . .”

Russell’s daughter says, “I have never been able to believe this story.” Indeed there is evidence that Russell’s attachment to Whitehead’s wife Evelyn was becoming gradually more important to him emotionally than his marriage to the Quaker Alys. But according to Russell’s own account it was his falling in love with Lady Ottoline Morrell that really revolutionised his life. Having fallen out of love with Alys, his honesty compelled him to tell her of it, while his kindness forbade him to leave her without more cause. “So”, as Lady Katharine puts it, “they continued together for nine years, sharing a house and a misery but nothing more.” However the day came when Russell declared his love to Ottoline, and finding that she returned his feeling, he mounted his beloved bicycle again and rode away from Alys for ever.

“According to my father [Lady Katharine continues] Ottoline began his transformation into the man I remember. He came to her puritanical, priggish, self-righteous, convinced that only his iron self-discipline kept his natural wickedness under control. She laughed at him. She surrounded herself with beautiful objects and delicious perfumes which worked strongly on his senses once he had got over his disapproval of them. He began to believe that life contains other pleasures besides the rewards of virtue. But there were appalling complications. Alys and her brother [Logan Pearsall Smith] continued to rage, while Ottoline would not leave her husband and child, so there was rarely a chance for the lovers to enjoy their affection in peace.”

Apart from standing as a Parliamentary candidate in 1907 at Wimbledon on a “Woman’s Suffrage” ticket—something which his father, Lord Amberley, and his “godfather”, John Stuart Mill, would have been proud to see—Russell did not give much of his attention to politics and social questions in the years before 1914—he was too preoccupied with the problems of pure philosophy.
The abilities to think and to use language are not independent of one another. Only in this century has it come to be seen that an acceptable account of the nature of this interdependency must be primarily philosophical. The issues surrounding the question are thus among the most important of philosophy today, and these essays—by G. E. M. Anscombe, Donald Davidson, Michael Dummett, D. Fellelsdal, P. T. Geach, and W. V. Quine—provide a useful starting point for its solution. £4.25

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The author attempts here to establish a conceptual bridge between evaluations as studied by philosophers and evaluative behaviour as described by social scientists and historians. The system of analytic concepts he proposes is intended to render the philosophy of value, not axiologically neutral, but useful in analysing and justifying a choice of values: to help men in becoming aware of the knowledge they possess. Paper covers £4.50
Three volumes of Principia Mathematica were published between 1910 and 1913. The purpose of this work was "to show that all pure mathematics follows from purely logical premises and uses only concepts definable in logical terms." In the division of labour between the two authors, it was Whitehead who concentrated on the mathematical problems and Russell who worked on the philosophical ones. Principia Mathematica is arguably the greatest single work on logic since Aristotle, and became the starting point for all subsequent work in the field. As Brian Carr points out in a book which will serve henceforth as an admirable introduction to the several existing introductions to Russell's philosophy, the project which Russell set himself in Principia Mathematica required three steps: the development of a wholly new form of logic; the definition of mathematical notions in terms of this new logic, and, lastly, the derivation of mathematical propositions such as "two plus two equals four" from the non-mathematical logical ones such as "either (some proposition) p is true or not true." As Mr Carr remarks, "though this third step, that of derivation, took most of the seven years needed to complete the project, the first two steps demanded the inventiveness and insight that makes the book a classic of modern thought."

Nevertheless it was a classic which was read only by a very tiny public; and Russell made his name as a philosopher before the First World War largely as the author of a short popular book entitled The Problem of Philosophy. This book begins with a question:

"Is there any knowledge which is so certain that no reasonable man could doubt it?"

The demand is quintessentially Russellian. What he wanted was certainty on the basis of experience, or more exactly, of sense perception. Russell had begun by regarding perception as a two-term relation between subject and object; that is, in the case of "a man seeing a table", a relation between the subject, a man, and the object, a table. But he soon forsook this naive realism for something more complicated. He was troubled, for one thing, by the argument from illusion. Sometimes people think they are seeing a table, when a table is not there: they have the sensation of seeing one, but their sensation may well be illusory; they may be imagining, or dreaming. And even in the case of authentic perception, a table which is revealed by thorough investigation to be circular, for example, looks elliptical. Appearance in this sense differs from reality; and what Russell argued in The Problems of Philosophy is that what we actually perceive, when we speak of seeing an object such as a table, is not a table but a sense-datum. The problem which remained was that of passing from knowledge of sense-data to knowledge of physical objects themselves, knowledge of "the real table", as Russell put it, "supposing there is such a thing." Such a knowledge of the real was something which Russell spent his whole life as a philosopher trying to establish, and it was something which he was never able to do to his own satisfaction.

Three arguments are central to Russell's position as pure philosopher. The first is that the entities which occur in mathematical physics are not part of the stuff of the world, but are constructions composed of events and taken as units for the convenience of the mathematician. The second is that the whole of what we each perceive belongs to our own private world: "the starry heaven that we know in visual sensation is inside us. The external starry heaven we believe in is inferred." Russell's third point is that the causal lines which enable us to be aware of a diversity of objects are apt to peter out like rivers in the sand.

Russell always believed in the unity of philosophy and science. It is not simply that he wanted philosophers to be interested in science: he wanted the imagination of the philosophers to "be impregnated with the scientific outlook." He held that the main activity of philosophy was analysis, but he did not approve of that school of philosophy which came to flourish under the influence of his former pupil, Wittgenstein, and which concentrated on the analysis of language. Russell had an immense admiration as well as affection for the Wittgenstein who wrote the Tractatus; but for the Wittgenstein of the later writings, he had no sympathy. The disapproval was mutual. "Russell", said Wittgenstein, "cannot even see the problems."

The fact is that Russell had come to be interested in other problems: problems of a practical, as opposed to an abstract kind. It is these which dominated Russell's mind during the second half of his life. This is not to say that he ceased to be a philosopher: indeed he became more of a philosopher in the sense that that word is taken to mean a sage or teacher of practical wisdom, as opposed to a master of abstract thought. The two trades are in a very fundamental sense distinct, and it is hardly amazing that Russell's later work in pure philo-
sophy should be less good than his earlier work: such books as The Analysis of Matter (1927), An Outline of Philosophy (1927), Meaning and Truth (1940), and Human Knowledge (1948) are disappointing and his best-selling History of Western Philosophy (1946) is in part inexcusably bad. But Russell's achievement in the second part of his life must be judged by other standards: for the heir of Leibnitz had been transformed into the successor of Voltaire.

That transformation was not only the deliberate work of Lady Ottoline; there was also the impact of the first World War.

"I should have remained mainly academic and abstract but for the War [Russell recalled]. When war came I felt as if I had heard the voice of God. I know that it was my business to protest, however futile protest might be. My whole nature was involved. As a lover of truth, the national propaganda of all the belligerent nations sickened me. As a lover of civilisation, the return to barbarism appalled me."

Russell’s feelings against the War were shared by Lady Ottoline, and also by another mistress who entered his life at this time, Lady Constance Malleson, a beautiful actress better known by her stage name as Colette O’Neil. As Russell was 42 in 1914, he was personally unaffected by recruiting and conscription, and could easily have opposed the War discreetly as did Lytton Strachey and Philip Morrell and Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, and scores of others like them. But the new Russell, liberated from his old repressions by Ottoline, was a fighting pacifist: and with a courage which his most bitter critics must admire, he spoke out against the War with an aggressive provocative anger which matched the emotions of such civilian jingos as Lloyd George and H. G. Wells and Milner, and which landed him, predictably, in prison. Prison had much the same effect on Russell that it had on Voltaire: it purged him of solemnity. Russell wrote afterwards that he had found life in prison rather agreeable.

"I had no engagements, no difficult decisions to make, no fear of callers, no interruptions to my work. I wrote a book Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy and began the work for Analysis of Mind. I was rather interested in my fellow prisoners, who seemed to me in no way inferior to the rest of the population."

Russell also recalled that he experienced in prison one of the less pleasing consequences of sexual liberation: the agony of jealousy which was provoked in him by the thought that Colette was favouring another man. He insists in his memoirs that this did not prompt him to revise his new views on sexual freedom; it only made him the more convinced that jealousy was a base

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passion over which reason should be made to prevail.

**Before he had been sent to prison,** Russell had tried to collaborate with D. H. Lawrence in a series of public lectures on ethics and social reconstruction, but Lawrence had broken angrily with him. In a letter to Lady Ottoline, Lawrence said that Russell was 

"vitaly, emotionally much too inexperienced in personal contact and conflict for a man of his age and calibre. It isn't that life has been too much for him, but too little."

In a published short story, Lawrence depicted Russell in the guise of "learned dry Baronet of fifty who was always making witticisms and laughing at them heartily in a harsh horse laugh." And to Russell himself, Lawrence wrote: "The enemy of mankind, you are, full of the lust of enmity... Why don't you own it?"

Russell had good reason to feel a deep melancholy in the War years, however bright the mocking face and the "harsh horse laugh." He told Lady Ottoline that the idea of suicide had never long been out of his thoughts since he was a boy, but he assured her that while he still had work to do "it is not a thing to be taken seriously."

And was not Russell right to be depressed by the War? After the death of all those millions of men, Europe was left in an infinitely worse condition than it was in 1914: far from saving liberty and democracy, the War directly opened the way for Communism, Fascism, and Nazism, and made yet another war inevitable. Mr Carr is less than fair when he says that Russell's Wartime writings were "in favour of capitulation to the Germans." Russell specifically distinguished between "submissive pacifists", who were rightly decried by their critics, and "active pacifists", who were driven to stand out against the war by "an impulse for life." Russell did not propose "capitulation", but a negotiated peace which would lead to the "permanent ending of war" by a world federation.

"So long as there are many sovereign states, each with its own army, there can be no security that there will not be war [he wrote in *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916)]. There will have to be in the world only one army and one navy before there will be any reason to think that wars have ceased."

Utopian this proposal undoubtedly was: yet at least it must be distinguished from Russell's political position in the years before August 1914, when his general liking for Germany and dislike of France had made him to some extent "pro-German" in his views on foreign policy. To think of him as "pro-German" during the War itself is to vulgarise his argument. What is undoubtedly true is that Russell did not think out all the political implications of his pacifism: either in 1915 or at any later time.

**But in the years which followed the 1918 Armistice,** when the public became disillusioned with the fruits of victory, Russell became a popular intellectual leader. He was even restored to the Fellowship at Trinity, from which he had been removed because of his pacifist activities. There was, however, an impediment to his resuming the life of a Cambridge don: a divorce, and people often forget today what a scandalous thing divorce then was.

Having thrown off the puritan morality of his youth, Russell might have been expected to adapt himself to the sexual code of the aristocracy, in which the utmost liberty was combined with discretion, especially as both his mistresses belonged, as he did, to that same class. Indeed much of the gospel of "sexual freedom", which Russell henceforth propagated, was really only a "democratisation" of the idea of upper-class privileged indulgence. But Russell had no patience with the elements of secrecy and hypocrisy which the upper-class code demanded. What he did want to preserve of that code was the Family: he wanted children, and he wanted the children in his family to be his own children. So while he considered that women had almost the same right to freedom in sexual activity as men had, he did not think a wife had the right to foist on her husband a child she had by another man. All this meant that Russellian sex ethics were more complicated in practice than in theory.

So far as his own life was concerned, he wanted to divorce the childless Alys in order to remarry, and to remarry in order to have legitimate children: there was no doubt that he had special feelings about the perpetuation of his own family, the Russells, as well as ideas about the family as an institution. Friends who wished well for him hoped that Russell might settle down with Colette. Ottoline was too bound by family obligations for an elopement with Russell to be favoured; but Colette, with a marriage already broken, was free. Besides Colette was an exceedingly attractive, intelligent, desirable girl; a marriage to Russell would be, they thought, the perfect romantic match.

But it seems there was something wrong with Russell which spoiled his chances of happiness with Colette as it did with Ottoline: there was a curious void between his heart and his head. Russell was incapable of loving either Ottoline or Colette in the way that both desired. Russell himself recalled late in life:

"My more profound feelings have remained always solitary and have found in human things no com-
companionship. The sea, the stars, the night wind in waste places mean more to me than even the human beings I love best, and I am conscious that human affection is to me at bottom an attempt to escape from the vain search for God."

Russell's affair with Colette stopped, and started up again, at intervals throughout his life. Mr Clark records that she never forgot to send him red roses on his birthday—but he always turned away from her to someone else.

"I can remember Colette [writes Lady Katharine] from occasional visits she made to us during the years at Beacon Hill School. She wore glamorous trailing clothes, strings and strings of long beads and quantities of perfume, and she always brought exotic gifts. When she and my father first met, she was a young and beautiful actress, passionately against the war. They clung to one another in desperation, feeling themselves an island of love in a sea of hate."

But, Lady Katharine goes on to say, her father "never gave his whole heart to anyone, though he tried."

Colette gives us a glimpse of her experiences with Russell in a novel, The Coming Back, when she describes the character "Gregory" (i.e., Russell) as "a man exhausting other men by his intellect, exhausting women by his intensity, wearing out his friends, sucking them dry, passing from person to person, never giving any real happiness—or finding any." Or, as Lady Ottoline wrote of Russell in her diary:

"He is so lonely, and tortured by his brain incessantly working, and he cannot be sympathetic in the things that so much affect me. His body and mind seem to have a huge gap between them. His hands are like the paws of a bear; no feeling in them, only force. His intellect is so immense but en l'air not en rapport with the things of this sensual life. No visionary power or imagination in that direction, or what there is very arctic or bare. No fancy. He is not narrow, only shorn."

The woman for whose sake Russell went through the public scandal of divorce, and sacrificed his academic post, was, paradoxically, a tough, radical, liberated female intellectual who did not believe in institutional marriage, and who was more than willing to live with him as his mistress and bear his children. But, yielding to Russell's desire to found a family of legitimate offspring, Dora Black of Girton became Russell's second wife.

She, too, has published her reminiscences of it all in The Tamarisk Tree, and although this lacks the literary distinction of her daughter Lady Katharine’s book—and sometimes even passes from prose into embarrassing verse ("A poem I wrote at the time")—Dora Russell comes through

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as a frank and likeable person, as constant by nature as Russell was fickle; Dora provided most of the moral backbone for the enterprises in which they were engaged together, and many of the ideas. What she lacked was money.

Deprived a second time of the possibility of an academic job, Russell could hardly afford henceforth to pursue the interests of a second Leibnitz, even if he had wished to; so, with a family to provide for, he had to follow Voltaire's example in combining the promotion of political and social change with the earning of a livelihood. Lecture tours of America, and a regular stream of articles for the popular press poured forth from his pen: "Should Socialists Smoke Good Cigars?", "Is Modern Marriage a Failure?", "Who May Use Lipstick?", potboiling, undoubtedly, but all good knocking copy against the Victorian ethos, and all read by an audience of many millions.

Where Russell falls short of Voltaire is in having any really systematic positive alternative to the traditional values he mocked. It is unlikely indeed that anything wholly coherent could have emerged from his collaboration with Dora: because she, who had been thrilled with joy at the Soviet Union when she followed him there in 1920, was a dirigiste fellow-traveller and he, who had been nauseated by Bolshevism, was a libertarian. What they both agreed about was the need to produce a new kind of human being by a new means of education. Russell had little hope of doing much good through politics, though he did stand twice as a Labour candidate in Chelsea.

The Russells not only wrote books and articles about education: they opened in 1927 a school of their own, one of their motives being to provide an acceptable education for their son, John (now Earl Russell), born in 1921, and their daughter Katharine, born in 1923. They could not approve of any existing schools, since these were either traditional, and imposed what the Russells considered the wrong values, or progressives, and imparted neither discipline nor instruction. Russell was never (as he so often was supposed to have been) a progressive educationalist in the style of A. S. Neill or Neill's disciples who flourish in the state schools of today. Russell never advocated complete liberty for children, but wished only to diminish the element of force in education; and while he would let children do as they liked in inessentials, he put great emphasis on the introduction into the young both of knowledge and of what he held to be true moral values. He believed that natural desires should be retrained instead of being suppressed, and his methods were stern. His second wife was even more a natural disciplinarian:

"My mother [Lady Katharine writes] wanted all the children in the school to grow up healthy and tough, able to live rough and eat plain, so that they would be adaptable soldiers for reform in a world much in need of change. She offered us her own kind of freedom, a freedom from comfort as well as from restrictions."

Beacon Hill School was not a complete success: partly because it consumed an immense amount of money, and Russell had to keep going to America to earn enough to pay the bills, which made him neglect the administration of the school. He enjoyed teaching, and was popular with the children: he was also, less fortunately, popular with the pretty young teachers. Dora Russell tells a story of a cook who was so alarmed by the knowledge of Russell being in bed with a governess that she gathered his children into her arms in the kitchen, and protested forcefully to their mother. Of course it was the cook who had to be sacked.

Russell's temperament led him to exercise his sexual freedom in the form of numerous adventures. He was a born seducer: he instinctively conquered women by showing an intense interest in their minds, rather than their bodies. He listened and he flattered, and within a record time he was in bed with them. But his interest was as short-lived as it was genuine; and the curtain rang down with a cruel bang. Dora, on the other hand, being tenacious and maternal, went in for lasting affairs—with young American Marxist journalists and such persons who were not, at that time, to Russell's taste. Since continued affairs tend to produce offspring and since Russell was firmly determined not to have another man's child passed off as one of his, Dora's affairs did not get the same toleration that she extended to his. In effect they ruined the marriage.

For their children Beacon Hill School was hell. Lady Katharine tells us that their early childhood in Cornwall in a house by the sea at Land's End had been on the whole very happy. She pays tribute to the love and interest which their parents, and especially their father, lavished on them then. But even at that stage she notes a certain doctrinaire approach of her parents towards the upbringing of children. Believing that the future needed "a generation educated in fearless freedom" Russell held that the cries of babies should be ignored (so the child should learn that crying does not pay); he believed that fears should be reasoned with, not assuaged. When his son John betrayed fear of the dark, he
was made to put up with it; when they found that he was frightened of water, they "plunged him up to the neck in the sea in spite of his struggles and cries." In Russell's kind of progressive education (as in Rousseau's Emile) there are elements of blatant cruelty; but they are elaborately veiled. And Russell himself found great happiness in being a father; with his young family in Cornwall, he could relax and enjoy himself.

In the larger community of Beacon Hill School, he could not relax. He forbade himself to show any special favours to his own children lest it seemed unfair to the others. Lady Katharine writes:

"Emotionally, the school was a bad experience for all the Russell family. John and I felt turned adrift in a hostile world, unable to go to our parents for help, and that feeling remained with us always... Our parents also suffered, feeling themselves cut off from the children they loved so much... The great outpouring of parental love, which had made the Cornish years so happy, was stopped, damned up by worries and overwork and the obligation to be just. My summer Santa Claus did not survive the school years. Neither did the love of my parents for each other.

"They came from Cornwall, full of joy and hope, to start a school in which their children would blossom into the finest flower of mankind. At the end of seven years, they had lost each other, their children's confidence, their money and much of their hope. Those years shattered the crystal of our happiness and left us like jagged splinters, unable to touch one another without wounding. All of us longed for a give and take of love not possible in that public environment. Old pictures of my father with me on his knee or putting an arm around me, strike me as fakes. That is not the way I remember the school years; they were all duty and loneliness and being just one of the children, while all the time my father and mother kept working, night and day, to preserve the school and their separation from us."

Russell himself found solace in the arms of a pretty research assistant from Oxford named Patricia or "Peter" Spence. But Dora broke what Russell considered to be the rules of the game by having a child by an American left-wing journalist named Griffin Barry. At first Russell seemed to accept the situation. "I tried to endure the new child, and behave towards her as if she were my own", Russell wrote many years later. "But the resulting strain of daily and hourly insincerity was intolerable, and made family life a torture."

The baby girl was first registered in Russell's name, then, when he found her listed in Debrett five years later, he began legal action to have the birth certificate altered. Inevitably his marriage to Dora ended in divorce. There were disputes, no less predictable, about money and the custody of the children. In the end, John and Kate were sent as boarders to Dartington, with their free time carefully divided between their mother and their father. Their mother kept on the school; Russell
married "Peter" and settled down again to writing books.

Judging by his daughter's testimony, his children got on well with their step-mother, who had worked as a holiday tutor and governess to them before she married their father. She provided an elegant domestic environment, which was a marked contrast to Dora's bohemian scene. She was also gay and worldly and young. Lady Katharine tells us frankly she much preferred the company of her step-mother to that of her mother:

“All through the Dartington years I disliked and despised my mother. I cringed when she came to visit us and tried to hide her from my friends. She used to buy old secondhand cars for ten pounds or so and drive them till they died, sitting at the wheel in her shabby and eccentric clothes, squatting through the smoke of a lipstick-stained cigarette whose ashes dropped into her lap as she drove, and laughing her hearty, raucous laugh as she made light of conventional manners and morals. She would sit through God Save the King in cinemas, sing the Internationale in public places, march in Communist demonstrations, while I shrank into myself and tried to pretend I didn’t know her. With the harsh intolerance of childhood, I despised her and shut her out of my life, which was happily filled with my love and admiration for Peter and my father. I am ashamed of my unfairness.”

RUSSELL'S THIRD WIFE helped him with his writing, not as a collaborator in pamphleteering as Dora had been, but as an assistant who provided an element of historical scholarship which Russell himself lacked. Freedom and Organization, which is perhaps the best book he wrote in the 1930s, owes a great deal to her, since it is largely an exercise in the history of ideas designed to illustrate what Russell thought of as an anti-Marxist argument, namely that the thoughts of individuals govern, and are not governed by, historical trends and structures. The interest of this book rests largely in Ideengeschichte rather than “philosophy of history.”

RUSSELL REACHED A WIDER AUDIENCE with such books as The Conquest of Happiness and other writings in the field of morals. One can, of course, write about morals at different levels, and Russell was unusual in having the professional competence to be in turn a moral philosopher, a moralist, and a moral legislator. The trouble is that there are contradictions and incoherences between his different writings.

As a moral philosopher, Russell subscribed to the more or less standard emotivist view that no moral utterance is true or false but is merely the proclamation of a personal preference. As a moralist, he put forward a form of utilitarianism according to which “good” means that which promotes happiness (or what he sometimes called, vaguely, “value”): the merit of an act thus being judged in terms of consequence. The analysis of “right” (a word Russell did not care for) was reduced to the explanation of “good.”

As a moral legislator, Russell asserted that every man should be willing to put the happiness of others before his own happiness. As a political polemicist he even invoked a doctrine of natural law. What he said with one voice was at odds with what he said with another. It may be added in his defence that he was aware that something was wrong. As late as 1957, Russell wrote to The Observer in reply to a review by Philip Toynbee of his Why I am Not a Christian, saying:

“What Mr Toynbee says in criticism of any views on ethics has my entire sympathy, I find my own views argumentatively irrefutable, but nevertheless incredible: I do not know the solution.”

Russell's views on politics, and especially on what was for him the central problem of war, became after 1930 no less paradoxical. For although Russell wrote pacifist pamphlets, and joined Dick Sheppard, Middleton Murry, and Aldous Huxley in supporting a pacifist movement, his confidence was less based on the efficacy of non-violent resistance than on reconciliation with Germany (his old 1914 line), something very like the policy promoted by Chamberlain and Halifax under the name of Appeasement. Hitler's refusal to be appeased left Russell in an even more awkward predicament than it left the appeasers: in the sense that having called upon England to disarm, Russell naturally hesitated to call upon England to fight—especially as he had already evacuated himself and his family by 1939 to California.

His daughter says that while she herself was convinced at the time by the arguments of Russell's pacifist book Which Way to Peace? (written in 1936), her father was not. “He never allowed Which Way to Peace? to be reprinted, feeling that it was insincere. He had no objection to reprints of books maintaining views he had since abandoned, but this one maintained a view he had not really had even while he was writing it.”

At all events, Russell in America lived very uncomfortably with himself when the Second War broke out; and his family found no joy in their refuge. “We were all unhappy in Los Angeles,” writes Lady Katharine, “and we all meant to help each other, but what we understood by helping was not to complain about our personal troubles to others.” She found herself growing more distant from her father.

RUSSELL HAD OBTAINED a university post at UCLA, which was in many ways uncongenial; he
resigned in 1940 to take what promised to be a more attractive post at City College in New York, and it was this appointment which was annulled by the Courts because of Russell’s “immoral publications.” A celebrated, and unpleasant case in the history of academic freedom, it left Russell stranded in America, in the middle of a War, with no money and no job, but with several dependents, including two children of college age. No university dared, and few editors desired, to employ him. And although by this time Russell had decided to come out publicly in support of the War against Hitler, the British Government showed no eagerness to offer him war work. His third marriage was beginning to show signs of failure. Then, when his luck was at its lowest, he was offered a very generous contract to work for the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, where, surrounded by a magnificent collection of French Impressionist paintings, Russell gave popular lectures on the Great Philosophers of the Western Tradition. Judging by the book which came out of them, The History of Western Philosophy, they cannot have been very good lectures. Albert Barnes, who was never easily pleased for long, began to grumble. When Russell gave lectures at other places, and broke what Barnes considered Russell’s gentleman’s agreement to lecture for his Foundation alone, Russell was dismissed. Russell sued Barnes successfully; but his dismissal prompted him to quit America and return to England. His son, having by this time joined the Royal Navy, found somewhere for him to live in London. Then Trinity College restored him to his Fellowship; his daughter left Radcliffe to work for the Ministry of Information in Bloomsbury; and the family was reunited on native soil.

It was at this stage in his life that Russell entered for a time the British Establishment. He was never in demand as a Wartime propagandist because he was too open in declaring his disapproval of “the great ally”, the Soviet Union: but once the War was won, the way was clear for him to become a star of the BBC, a Nobel Laureate, and an O.M.

His political opinions then went through a series of transformations which are not always easy to record, partly because it was difficult at the time to understand exactly what he was thinking. Immediately after the War, he suggested that the United States might use its monopoly of nuclear weapons to impose a World Government on any regime, such as the Soviet Union, which might resist the idea. Mr Clark, who is always very fair and thorough in his treatment of Russell’s politics, says that nowhere
“did Russell urge the starting of preventative war... nevertheless emphasis on the obvious fact that a war before Russia had nuclear weapons would be less disastrous than a war afterwards was perilously close to it.”

I myself remember a conversation with Russell at this time. He denied that he was advocating “preventive war”, he said he simply wanted the Americans to make the utmost use of their nuclear monopoly to thwart Communist aggression. The Rooseveltian policy of appeasing Stalin seemed to him idiotic in the light of past experience of appeasing Hitler; and at that time Russell felt that Stalinism was almost as bad as Hitlerism. I also remember the bitter contempt with which he spoke then of Kingsley Martin and other such champions of “friendship with Russia.” Russell said unambiguously then that nuclear war would be preferable to world domination by the Communists. What he would not say plainly is whether he favoured using the American superior force to drive the Communists out of the positions they then held.

The next time I saw Russell he had changed his mind completely. The Russians then had the Bomb, and “nuclear war” no longer meant nuclear bombs being used by the Americans against the Soviet Union without the risk of nuclear retaliation, but the almost certain use of nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union against Western Europe. Russell argued from the middle 1950s onwards that the possession of nuclear weapons by Great Britain provided no defence for that country against Soviet bombs, but only served to make Great Britain a defenceless target for such bombs. For a time, at any rate, he held that the American bomb was an effective deterrent: only he claimed that the British bomb added nothing to that deterrent power. He said it simply put the British Isles in line to receive the first strike: if Great Britain had no bomb, one of the two super-powers would receive the blow instead. British safety was to be found in some sort of nuclear neutrality. This thought led Russell to play a leading part in the Nuclear Disarmament Campaign, first in a popular legal protest movement and then in a smaller, and very unpopular, organisation which advocated civil disobedience in the furtherance of its ends.

Thus it came about that Russell ceased toward the end of his life to be the Establishment figure he had become, happily resumed his old role of champion of dissent, and actually landed himself once more in prison. Russell’s association with fellow-travellers in the nuclear disarmament movement fairly quickly produced a change of heart towards Communism. Turning bitterly against America, he became a fervent champion of Ho Chi Minh and the cause of the Viet Cong in the Viet Nam War. A fourth marriage—once again to an American Quaker—had brought to his house a certain tranquility becoming to his age, but Russell put a stop to that by taking on an aggressive young left-wing secretary named Ralph Schoenmann, who organised his life for him, kept his friends away from him, and endeavoured to press advice upon the rulers of the world in the name of the nonagenarian sage. Mr Schoenmann was so maladroit in all he did that he was widely believed in left-wing circles to have been planted by the CIA in Russell’s household in order to bring his activities into disrepute. The War Crimes Tribunal which Russell instituted with the aid of Jean-Paul Sartre to investigate alleged offences against natural law committed by the forces of the South (but not the North) in the Viet Nam War was wholly counter-productive, making it harder, not easier, for the real atrocities of that war to be disclosed. In his last months, Russell repudiated his secretary: but he did not live long enough to banish fully the shadow which that unfortunate connection has cast upon his image.

Even so, the failure of Russell as a peace-maker cannot simply be blamed on Schoenmann. Russell’s efforts were vitiated by his own fickleness of character. The “dovish” side of his nature wanted to be a mediator, but the “hawkish” side was eager for battle. In the frontier war between China and India he made serious efforts to make himself acceptable to both sides. Indeed at a certain critical moment of relations between Soviet Russia and America, he was able to persuade both Kennedy and Khrushchev to read his letters; and Khrushchev even brought Russell into the picture when he decided to step back from the brink in Cuba. But Russell simply could not sustain the role of the impartial broker. Having attacked Russia in uncompromising terms in the 1940s, he began in the 1960s to attack America and the NATO allies with even more intemperance: “Kennedy and Macmillan are more wicked than Hitler”, he said at a CND meeting.

“We cannot obey these murderers. They are wicked and abominable. They are the wickedest people that ever lived in the history of man.”

With words such as these Russell disqualified himself as a peace-maker; and in the Viet Nam War he did not even propose mediation between the parties, but fully supported the invasion of the South by the North, and looked forward to seeing the Communists achieve a total victory. To anxious scientists, and others who worked for
nuclear arms limitations by agreement between the super-powers, Russell's activities were more of an embarrassment than an aid: the champion of Reason was undermining reasonableness, even as the founder of a Peace Foundation was encouraging war.

UNTIL HIS EARLY NINETIES, at any rate, Russell remained extraordinarily youthful and lively, and he was marvellously good company. His conversation was even more heavily spiced with malice. I remember his being especially unkind in words about such people as Gilbert Ryle (chiefly, I suspect, because he realised that Ryle was a much better philosophical stylist than he was), about T. S. Eliot (Russell feeling guilty, no doubt, because he had seduced Eliot's first wife and added to her miseries), and Cyril Joad (whose decline into a potboiling hack was a fate Russell once feared awaited himself). But in his deeds Russell was a model of kindness to one and all, except perhaps to those who felt themselves entitled to more than kindness.

His daughter pays tribute to his generosity. After her conversion (one might have predicted it) to Christianity, Lady Katharine decided to train to be a missionary. Russell had the wry pleasure of paying for her theological college fees out of the royalties of his anti-Christian writings.

"This prompted me to write to him [Lady Katharine writes] that I thought God must be amused by the irony of the situation. He wrote back to say that he didn't know about God, but certainly the officials of the Bank of England, whose permission he needed to send me money, had been very much amused."

UNTIL A VERY LATE AGE, Russell continued to publish books in the field of pure philosophy, but they were marginal works and added little to what others were doing. Even so, it must be remembered that those other men were continuing work which Russell had initiated. If he was no longer the central figure in European philosophy that he had been as a younger man, it was because he had been upstaged by the achievements of his pupils and his juniors, and not only because his own work in the field had diminished in quality.

It is much more difficult to judge the contribution Russell made to the reform of morals and politics—or to "peace", a concept he understood in a variety of ways. But he was undoubtedly what is known as a "personality" in the theatre of public controversy for 56 of the 98 years he spent in this world. The limelight was one thing that kept him from the darkness of his inner solitude, where God was dead and mere mortals had no place.
IN PSYCHOLOGY, the last twelve months have seemed rather quiet. Publishers continue to flood the market with texts that parcel the subject up from every conceivable point of vantage. But the chances of learning anything exciting from these seem more slender each year. Even when the title page bears a famous name, you cannot help suspecting that, once again, the text has been cobbled together for the great man by his research students; and that the driving impetus behind its production has been commercial rather than conceptual.

Here and there, it is true, significant encroachments have been made on our ignorance about human nature; but the most interesting development over the last 18 months or so has been the publication of evidence about what gifted psychologists themselves are like—about what happens when one human being sets out to make systematic sense of his neighbours. Two books have been especially illuminating. Both are critical, and have even been construed in certain sensitive quarters as destructively so. They deal, in other words, with what can go wrong as well as what can go right; but have light to shed none the less.

The first is Paul Roazen's *Freud and his Followers*. Let me say at once that, in my judgment, this is an important work rather than a particularly distinguished one: worth reading for the nest of unexamined presuppositions it breaks open rather than for the precision or fastidiousness with which it does the breaking. What Roazen attempts is to write the first history of Freudian psychoanalysis that is not conceived in Freud's own terms; and he does this on the basis of interviews with the many survivors, and of a scrutiny of the papers of Freud's official biographer, Ernest Jones.

Freud emerges from Roazen's pages—as he emerged from Jones's—as a great man: someone of prodigious force of personality, and blessed with a speculative intelligence of a very high order indeed. But Roazen also makes it clear, as Jones did not, that the growth of orthodox Freudian psychoanalysis was an intensely political process; a struggle to impose one reading of appearances at the expense of all others. To make sense of the passions that coursed around that group of explorers in Vienna, we have to conceive of the growing body of psychoanalytic belief as though it were a living body—a body of precious insight that had to be defended against the depredations of the confused and perverse. It also had to be defended from defectors: men like Jung, Adler, Stekel, and Rank, originally within the fold, but whose views eventually diverged from those of Freud himself.

There is much that is impressive in Roazen's account; but much, too, that is shocking. I was shocked, for instance, by the passage in which Roazen describes Freud's establishment of a secret committee, as early as 1913, comprising Sachs, Rank, Ferenczi, Abraham, and Jones, which had the expressed purpose of purging the movement of unorthodox belief: that is to say, of the beliefs of Jung, Adler and Stekel. The idea seems originally to have been Jones's, but Freud's response was enthusiastic, stressing that the committee would have to be "strictly secret in its existence and in its actions." After the War, he wrote to Jones: "your intention to purge the London Society of the Jungish members is excellent"; and in private he continued to complain—apparently without justice—of Jung's "lies, brutality, and anti-Semitic condescension" towards him.

Of course, it is a prediction from Freud's theory of infantile sexuality that the theory itself will generate profound resistances. If the doctrine is true then the history of schism within the psychoanalytic movement is itself further evidence of that truth. Such secret committees, such purging and impugning, may in any case be part and parcel of revolutionary thought in any sphere. But the spirit rebels at the thought of such machinations in the establishment of a body of knowledge that aspires to the status of impersonal truth.

The attack of the orthodox—notably Jones and Abraham—on Rank's eventual deviation from the Freudian line seems particularly revealing in this respect, Jones putting it about that Rank was suffering a form of psychosis. The reason for Rank's expulsion lay in his theory of birth trauma,

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1 *Freud and his Followers*. By Paul Roazen. Alfred A. Kropf, $17.95; Allen Lane, £10.