"Chronometricals and Horologicals": The Key to a Basic Theme in the Fiction of Herman Melville

James Llewellyn Thorson
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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"CHRONOMETRICALS AND HOROLOGICALS"
THE KEY TO A BASIC THEME
IN THE FICTION
OF HERMAN MELVILLE

by
James Llewellyn Thorsen

A THESIS
Presented to the Faculty of
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Department of English

Under the Supervision of Dr. James E. Miller, Jr.

Lincoln, Nebraska
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This thesis springs primarily from a suggestion by Dr. James E. Miller, Jr. that the Plinlimmon pamphlet in *Pierre* might be the key to an important theme in several of Melville's works. After doing some research into the problem, I found that Melville's fiction had not been systematically explored from this point of view, and indeed that some critics said any such exploration would be invalid. After a careful analysis of Melville's fiction, I believe that the pamphlet is the key to a basic theme in Melville's fiction.

I am very grateful for the help which Dr. Miller has given me in the preparation of this thesis, and for his constant encouragement. His own extensive work on Melville's fiction has been of considerable aid to mine. I also wish to thank my wife for her moral support and for the many hours which she spent reading my manuscripts and offering helpful suggestions.
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The following is a list of the works of Herman Melville which have been used in this thesis. References for quotations taken from these volumes appear in parentheses immediately following each quotation. The large Roman numeral within the parentheses refers to the volume number of the work, and the Arabic numerals refer to the page in that volume. For instance: (III, 26) refers to page twenty-six of Redburn. A list of specific editions cited and used for all quotations appears in the bibliography at the end of this thesis. The volumes are listed here in chronological order, and the date is that of first publication.

I. Mardi, Volume I (1849)
II. Mardi, Volume II (1849)
III. Redburn (1849)
IV. White Jacket (1850)
V. Moby Dick (1851)
VI. Pierre (1852)
VII. Billy Budd (1924)
I. THE PROBLEM

It is with a slight feeling of trepidation that I approach such a well-harvested field of scholarly speculation as the fiction of Herman Melville. Since the rebirth of critical interest in Melville, usually dated from the publication of *Herman Melville: Mariner and Mystic* by Raymond M. Weaver in 1921, there has been a flood of books and articles on this author and his work. Regardless of the amount and calibre of the scholarship, both by literary scholars and by psychologists, there is still no definitive critical work on Melville's fiction, and it is certainly not my aim to provide such a work. It is my aim to study several of Melville's major works of fiction in the light of a pamphlet called "Chronometricals and Horologicals" which purports to be by one Plotinus Plinlimmon in Melville's novel, *Pierre; or The Ambiguities*. In my view of Melville's work, this pamphlet is as near a statement of the author's philosophy (as dramatized in his works) as can be formulated. I do not maintain that a study of the relationship of the pamphlet to the works will reveal the whole "truth" about the "meaning" of Melville's works, but I do think that it will show a significant thematic pattern.

The pamphlet and the novel in which it appears are both subject to a great deal of critical controversy. As William Braswell says, "Of all the works of Herman Melville *Pierre; or The Ambiguities* (1852) has been perhaps the greatest
I plan to give a detailed analysis of the pamphlet in Chapter II where I will deal with it and with *Pierre;* but before discussing the divergent critical opinions of the pamphlet it is necessary to give a short outline of its contents. Briefly, it is a philosophical treatise based on the conceit that chronometers are clocks which keep Greenwich time, and these are equated to absolute (divine) standards. Horologes are clocks which keep the local time, and these are equated to relative (human) standards. Since man is not divine and therefore is separated from God (Greenwich), it is senseless, and in fact immoral, for man to attempt to conform to absolute standards. From this view, the pamphlet draws the practical ideal that the best that man is able to attain in the world is a "virtuous expediency," rather than any absolute good.

Lawrence Thompson represents the most extreme view of the pamphlet, as he does in most questions of Melvillian interpretation. Thompson says, "*Plinlimmon's utterances on 'Chronometricals and Horologicals' are the high-water mark of Melville's stylistic rascalities in *Pierre,* and should be picked up as delicately as one seizes a porcupine. Artistically, these utterances were designed to be both dangerous and treacherous, . . . many interpreters of Melville have misunderstood this Plinlimmon hoax and then have used their misinterpretations as support for their misinterpretations of Billy Budd!" Thompson bases his reading of the pamphlet as a "hoax" on his total interpretation of Melville's work, an interpretation arrived at by some mystical divination of
when Melville is writing ironically and when his writings are to be read as direct statement. According to Thompson, "Melville gradually formulated a complex variety of stylistic and structural methods for expressing himself in such a way as to protect himself from heresy hunters." The position which Thompson would have Melville expressing is a belief in a God who has attributes of "tyrannous harshness and cruelty and malice." Melville's attitude toward this God is one of defiant rebellion. Thus, in Thompson's view, Ahab's defiance in Moby-Dick is a direct expression of Melville's defiance of God.

Milton R. Stern takes a somewhat less extreme view than that of Thompson, but he also believes that the Plinlimmon pamphlet is not valid in terms of the action of the novel. Stern says, "At first glance, this pamphlet, highlighting Pierre's plight as it does, would seem to be the very doctrine that Melville calls for in all his books. Yet, by a moment's reflection shows that it is the pamphlet's standards that Glen Stanley, the Reverend Mr. Falsgrave, and Mrs. Glendinning gauge their own actions." Stern proceeds to interpret the actions of these characters in terms of the "virtuous expediency" extolled by the pamphlet. Interpreting the actions of these characters in these terms requires a heavy emphasis on "expediency," and almost no reference to "virtuous," an emphasis which I believe is faulty. Stern also relies heavily on the later actions of Plinlimmon, the purported author of the pamphlet, to vitiate its strength.
Among those who attempt to create a biography of Melville by studying his fiction, opinion is divided on the pamphlet. Henry A. Murray is a practising psychologist who edited the Hendricks House edition of *Pierre*, which includes a long introduction and voluminous notes. Murray admits that "in substance and style this provocative pamphlet is one of the plateaus of the novel and is very pertinent to the main plot." Further, Murray says that "'Chronometricals and Horologicals' is first of all an able, though unfinished, critique of Christianity as an operating force in the evolution of society . . . More covertly the pamphlet is an indictment by Melville of Plinlimmon in particular and of society in general." The argument for the indictment of society seems well-founded, but except in the sense that Plinlimmon is revealed as a pure relativist in moral questions by the pamphlet, I cannot find any evidence that this constitutes any indictment of him by Melville. According to Murray, "The pamphlet is unfinished because it presents no elevating substitute for Christian ethics. Plinlimmon's egocentric, non-benevolent, prudential morality is patently inadequate." It is informative to note that all of the adjectives applied to the *morality* in Murray's evaluation are obviously taken from a study of the *character* of Plinlimmon rather than the pamphlet. While there is a relationship between Plinlimmon and the pamphlet which carries his name, it is not necessarily as direct as Murray seems to assume. It is necessary to remember that the pamphlet is not written by Plin-
limmon himself, who neither reads nor writes, but by followers of the philosopher. Also, the character of Plinlimmon is not all as black as Murray paints it. Another basic problem is that Murray's reading of *Pierre* is "as a psychological document rather than as a novel" which seems to deny Melville to some extent his artistic responsibility and make the novel more of a symptom of a sick psyche than a conscious literary creation. Finally, Murray views the Plinlimmon pamphlet as a statement of Hawthorne's philosophical views, and sees the struggle between Plinlimmon and Pierre as a formulation of the philosophical difference between Hawthorne and Melville. The chief problem with this identification is that the pamphlet does not represent in any way Hawthorne's views. Hawthorne was not a relativist, and would be on the side of the "chronometricals" with some reservations, rather than professing that man was capable only of "virtuous expediency."

Perry Miller maintains that Pierre's quest is not wrong, either in the eyes of the author, or "even in the Plinlimmon pamphlet." He says that it appears to some to be wrong in those terms because the pamphlet "deceives those who do not understand what Carlyle meant by the boundless imbroglio." Miller does not clear up this misinterpretation for the unenlightened but goes right ahead to the conclusion that *Moby-Dick* and *Pierre* "are, to the end, implacably, defiantly, unrepentantly Transcendental."

While this is certainly an ingenious reading of the books,
I do not believe that it is supported by the action in the novels.

Richard Chase takes this view: "Every work of art is the product of a mind disburdening itself of its own potential insanity." It surprises me that with this attitude he arrives at as many worth-while conclusions as he does. Chase sees Pierre as a combination of a false Prometheus and Christ, and in some ways this seems helpful, though his psychological reading of the book does not.

Newton Arvin, who is among those who attempt to analyze Melville from his work, says that in writing Pierre, Melville was "all too evidently shaken, confused, uncertain of his stroke." Arvin does say that the pamphlet means "just what it says," but that Melville was not too sure of his own acceptance of the moral. I cannot argue about Melville's personal acceptance of the moral, but I will maintain that the action of the novels shows at least an artistic acceptance of it.

William Braswell is another critic who makes a virtual one-to-one relationship between Pierre and Melville; that "Melville presented in symbolical form what had happened to him spiritually." He perceptively points out that "in Pierre he [Melville] indicts the principles of Christian ethics by telling in great detail how a high-minded youth brings disaster on himself and several others by trying to live by the ethical teachings of Christ." Braswell also notes that "If Pierre had thoroughly comprehended and had
acted in accord with the teachings of Plinlimmon's pamphlet . . . he would have escaped disaster."²⁰ In other critical articles, Braswell has pointed out that Melville must have had some satirical intent in writing Pierre,²¹ a discovery which will aid in the interpretation of the novel, particularly the early chapters.

Charles Moorman has written that the fall of Pierre from "Eden" (Saddle Meadows) is a "fortunate fall" from grace into knowledge and ultimately into greater grace.²² The idea may have some merit, but it does not explain enough of the actions of the novel to help much in its interpretation.

Of the earlier criticism on Melville, Raymond M. Weaver uses Pierre only as a part of Melville's biography.²³ Lewis Mumford calls the pamphlet a member of "the heap of fragments in Pierre that mark the thrust and power of Melville's mind, . . . that remains embedded in the memory."²⁴ Unfortunately, as Robert Forsythe points out,²⁵ Weaver has made so many errors in summarizing the plot of Pierre that the validity of his findings is sorely in question. E.L.G. Watson puts forth an early opinion that Pierre is "a work of surprising loveliness, of most accurate and delicate perception"²⁶ but that is definitely a minority opinion, as is his final evaluation of Pierre: "it will be found to be the greatest of Melville's books."²⁷ George C. Homans argues that the three "unautobiographical novels (Mardi, Moby-Dick, and Pierre), are "a regularly developed action, complete in the three novels and completed with the
catastrophe in the last." He perceives that the "main level scheme of all three novels depends on the contrast of the truth of heaven with the truth of earth, most clearly analyzed in the 'Chromometricals and Morologicals' fragment in Pierre." The trilogy idea seems extremely difficult to defend in the face of the apparent catastrophe at the end of each of the three novels, and the continuation of the basic theme in previous and in later novels, but Homans has noted the thematic relationship which it will be the task of this study to explore and extend. I will go first to Pierre, where the theme is stated directly in the pamphlet, and then examine the relationship of the theme to the action of the novel. Then I will examine "chronometrical" characters in novels from the early Mardi, through Redburn and White Jacket, Moby-Dick, and Billy Budd, Melville's last novel. The last step will be to analyze the actions of the followers of the "virtuous expediency" in the same novels.
NOTES


3. Ibid., p. 7.

4. Ibid., p. 5.


7. Ibid., p. lxxii.

8. Ibid.


13. Ibid., p. 574.


17. Ibid., p. 221.


19. Ibid., p. 76.
20. Ibid., p. 81.
23. Raymond M. Weaver, Herman Melville: Mariner and Mystic (New York, 1921).
27. Ibid., p. 232.
29. Ibid., p. 705.
II. PIERRE ; THE DIRECT STATEMENT

Since the direct statement of the theme of these several novels is in Pierre; or the Ambiguities, it is appropriate to start there. I will give a short synopsis of the plot of the novel, then analyze the pamphlet itself, and show how the pamphlet, though only indirectly related to the action of the novel, sheds a great deal of light on the events.

The novel opens with a lengthy description of the life of Pierre Glendinning in Saddle Meadows, his ancestral home. He has an extreme affection for his widowed mother. A suitable wife for the young heir-apparent has been chosen for him, a Miss Lucy Tartan, when a mysterious dark woman, Isabel Banford, arrives on the scene, and professes to Pierre that she is his half-sister, the daughter of his father and a French woman. Pierre accepts her story without substantiation and decides that in order to protect his father's public reputation and still fulfill his self-imposed obligation to Isabel, he should tell everyone that he is married to the dark stranger. Thus he can live with her and provide her with the protection and affection which she has never properly received. He does so, causing his mother to disown him and his fiancee to collapse from the shock. He takes Isabel and Delly Ulver, an unwed mother who lost her child and is being cast out, to the City to start a new life. He expects to earn the living for the
little "family" by writing. After much travail in his thwarted attempt to relate the "truth" in his novel, Lucy reappears, writing him that she feels that he needs her. She travels to the City to live with them. Glen-dinning Stanley, a cousin of Pierre's and Lucy's suitor, along with Fred Tartan, Lucy's brother, fail in an attempt to thwart her plans, but they do manage to provoke Pierre to fight them in the end. Pierre kills Stanley and is jailed. When Lucy and Isabel come to visit Pierre, Lucy dies from the shock of discovering that Pierre and Isabel are brother and sister. Pierre poisons himself, and Isabel takes the last drops of the poison and dies on Pierre's lifeless body.

The Plinlimmon pamphlet appears in the story as the "family" travels toward the City from Saddle Meadows. Melville places the pamphlet after his own comment that "I confess, that I myself can derive no conclusion from the lecture which permanently satisfies those peculiar motions in my soul, to which that lecture seems more particularly addressed. For to me it seems more the excellently illustrated re-statement of a problem than the solution of the problem itself." (VI, 246) I believe that this statement must be taken ironically, because the pamphlet does provide a solution, though it is a practical compromise rather than an absolute solution to the problem presented.

The pamphlet opens by setting the purely relative nature of the conclusions which will be drawn. "Few of
us doubt, gentlemen, that human life on this earth is but a state of probation; which among other things implies, that here below, we mortals have only to do with things provisional. Accordingly, I hold that all our so-called wisdom is likewise but provisional." (VI, 247) Plinlimmon's first step, after establishing this preamble, is to note the existence of "a certain most rare order of human souls, which if carefully carried in the body will almost always and everywhere give Heaven's own Truth, with some small grains of variance." (VI, 247) These are the truly chronometric (to use Plinlimmon's term) or Christlike souls. The only example of such a character is Christ himself, as all other humans are not capable of chronometric behavior because they are not of such high descent ("peculiarly coming from God" [VI, 247]). There are no true chronométricals in Melville's writings.

Plinlimmon then develops the trope of chronométricals and horologicals. The chronometer which keeps Greenwich meridian time is compared to the soul which keeps the absolute standard of heavenly truth, and the horologe which keeps the local time is compared to the brain of a man which keeps the relative standard of earthly truth. "Bacon's brains were mere watch-maker's brains; but Christ was a chronometer." (VI, 248) says Plinlimmon. Further, "the reason why his [Christ's] teachings seemed folly to the Jews was because he carried that Heaven's time in Jerusalem, while the Jews carried Jerusalem time
there." (VI, 248) The same folly of Christ's teachings in His times persists today, according to Plinlimmon. "Because, in all that interval his bequeathed chronometer has still preserved its original Heaven's time, and the general Jerusalem of this world has likewise carefully preserved its own." (VI, 248) The trope is further extended to point out the effect of a contradiction between local time, in China for instance, and Greenwich time, and to draw the conclusion that "though the earthly wisdom of man be heavenly folly to God; so also, conversely, is the heavenly wisdom of God an earthly folly to man." (VI, 249) Plinlimmon's conclusion to this section of the argument is that God does not expect men to follow a chronometric standard, but only to maintain an accurate horologe.

Plinlimmon maintains that the only reason that God sends an occasional chronometer into the world is to demonstrate to men that their horological morals are not universal.

From this argument, any person who attempts to impose chronometrical morals on earth is doomed to fail, and such a person "will but array all men's earthly time-keepers against him, and thereby work himself woe and death." (VI, 249) Plinlimmon uses Christ as his primary example, showing Christ's fate and the present state of the religion he founded as proof of the impossibility of success in such a scheme, even though He was of a superior order of being, and did manage to remain free of folly and sin. (The present
sad state of Christ's teachings comes in for considerable
critical comment in Melville's earlier books, Typee and
Omoo, with particular reference to the missionaries in
the South Pacific.) The intrinsic dangers of a chronomet-
rical course are vastly extended when the person attempting
to impose heavenly morals in earthly situations is of less
stature than Christ. In fact, Plinlimmon says "almost
invariably, with inferior beings, the absolute effort to
live in this world according to the strict letter of the
chronometricals is, somehow, apt to involve those inferior
beings eventually in strange, unique follies and sins,
unimagined before." (VI, 249-50) This is the warning
which Pierre and the other chronometrical characters
should have heeded but did not.

Plinlimmon quickly adds that relativity in morals
"does by no means involve the justification of all the acts
which wicked men may perform," (VI, 250) because one can
sin against relative standards as well as against absolutes.
This system stipulates only that absolute righteousness/
for most men "is not only impossible, but would be entirely
out of place, and positively wrong in a world like this."
(VI, 250) No man is expected to give all to the poor, as
no man can return good for evil, but every man "gives with
a certain self-considerate generosity to the poor; abstains
from doing downright ill to any man; does his convenient
best in a general way to do good to his whole race; takes
watchful loving care of his wife and children, relatives,
and friends, is perfectly tolerant to all other men's opinions, whatever they may be; is an honest dealer, an honest citizen, and all that; and more especially if he believes that there is a God for infidels, as well as for believers, and acts upon that belief; then, though such a man falls infinitely short of the chronometrical standard, though all his actions are entirely horologic; --yet such a man need never lastingly despore, because he is sometimes guilty of some minor offence." (VI, 251) The foregoing is Plinlimmon's definition of the "virtuous expediency" which that philosopher maintains is "the highest desirable or attainable earthly excellence for the mass of men." (VI, 252) There are some places where this practical goal is apparently susceptible to attack. This course of action entails a "self-considerate generosity" which can be interpreted by a hostile critic with the emphasis on the "self-considerate," leaving the "generosity" a hypocritical sham. In fact, many nominal Christians are not willing to give all to the poor, and indeed are willing to part with precious little of their earnings for the needy; but this is not the intention of the pamphlet. The pamphlet wishes that men should give with a certain generosity but one which will have sufficient self-consideration to keep the giver and his dependents from hardship. It is worth noting the "generosity" of some of the characters of Pierre, such as Glen Stanley, who refuses to allow his almost desperate cousin the use of a house which would deprive the city
cousin of nothing. This is not self-consideration, but cruelty. Similarly, when Reverend Falsgrave and Mrs. Glendinning prepare to cast Delly Ulver out, her most pressing needs are not provided for. This is not "self-considerate generosity," but a vindictive enforcement of Old Testament morality without the softening influence of the New Testament Law of Charity. When Plinlimmon encourages men to "abstain from doing downright ill to any man;" he is certainly asking less than the positive precepts of Christianity which asks men to do good to others. The point is that if men would stop doing positive ill to others, there would be much less suffering in the world than there is. The "convenient best in a general way" is a little more difficult to fit into a positive moral system than the two previous qualifications, but the use of the superlative "best" seems to carry more weight than the conditioning "convenient," and even though the good is to be in the vague "general way," it is "for the good of all mankind." I think that the "and all that" in the section on business and practical ethics can be explained by admitting that Plinlimmon (or the follower who transcribed the pamphlet) does harbor an ill-concealed contempt for the subject, but it is not the ethics for which the contempt is held, but the business and practical matters in which the ethics is involved.

Plinlimmon warns "that certain minor self-renunciations in this life his own mere instinct for his own every-day
general well-being will teach him to make, but he must by no means make a complete unconditional sacrifice of himself in behalf of any other being, or any cause, or any conceit." (VI, 251) Again this warning seems to apply directly to Pierre.

Plinlimmon states that men have been taught too long to seek and reach heavenly perfection on earth which results too often in "moral abandonment, self-deceit, and hypocrisy" (VI, 252) when the mortal despairs of reaching this perfection. The alternative, says Plinlimmon, is "he openly runs, like a mad dog, into atheism." (VI, 252)

The philosopher points out the general ineffectiveness of "the only great original moral doctrine of Christianity (i.e. the chronometrical gratuitous return of good for evil, as distinguished from the horological forgiveness of injuries taught by some of the Pagan philosophers)." (VI, 252)

Plinlimmon's pamphlet ends on a kind of peroration, claiming to "lay down . . . what the best mortal men do daily practice; and what all really wicked men are very far removed from," (VI, 252-3) and asking earnest but despairing men and vicious men to follow the doctrine of "virtuous expediency." Another abortive paragraph starts out "Moreover: if--" but the pamphlet is torn. Although leaving an "untidy termination," the pamphlet has ended on a proper note of moral fervor and a call to action.

From the pamphlet, there are three distinct kinds of characters: those who are true chronometricals, as Christ;
those who attempt chronometrical action but, because they are "inferior beings," fall into unique sins and follies; and horologicals who are moral and practice "virtuous expediency." There is of course, another large class of characters not mentioned in the pamphlet except by inference, the people who are not chronometricals, nor truly followers of the "virtuous expediency." These are the people who generally follow the expedient which benefits themselves the most, whether that involves application of chronometricals or not, but, though these characters appear in the novels, they are not the leading characters. There are none of the true chronometricals in Pierre, nor are there any true horologicals, but the title-character is a clear example of the type who attempts to live chronometrically, but fails.

Plotinus Plinlimmon is carefully described as "non-benevolent" and having an air about him of "Inscrutableness." These characteristics of Plinlimmon, and the obvious ridicule of his followers, the believers in the "Transcendental Flesh-Brush Philosophy," are somewhat difficult to resolve with my interpretation of the pamphlet. That such a "non-benevolent" man could discover the truth of life is implausible on the surface, but tenable upon more careful consideration. First, there is nothing in the pamphlet which would require that Plinlimmon go from door to door spreading good works and joy wherever he goes. Second, throughout the novel, God is seen as being inscrutable. So there is
no incongruity in having the philosopher who discovers the truth of life inscrutable also. The novel insists, as does Plinlimmon, that the knowledge of the world is incom- municable. Plinlimmon neither reads nor writes, and the pamphlet which falls into Pierre's hands fails to com- municate its meaning to Pierre, the one character in the novel to whom it is most applicable. Third, the wisdom which Plinlimmon has discovered is very patently of the world, and since the world of Melville's novels is strictly non-benevolent, it seems appropriate that the discoverer of such wisdom should also be non-benevolent. Fourth, there is an element of satire in the novel, and most romances of the period had kindly old gentlemen to dispense the wisdom of the benevolent world to the innocent young hero; so the character of the philosopher may be planned for an antidote for the homely philosopher type, as the novel is an antidote for the romance which found a happy ending for every situation. Fifth, though the followers of Plinlimmon are ridiculed for their deprecation of their bodies, (VI, 351-354) Plinlimmon blandly asks for some Curacoa as a gift, saying that he has his own dispensation for this abrogation of the rules of his followers. (VI, 342-3) Sixth, and most important, the actions of the novel support at every turn the wisdom of the pamphlet. If no other evidence existed, the support of the action of the novel would convince me that the pamphlet is true, regard- less of its author. Last, Plinlimmon's face gives Pierre
a message while the younger man is writing on his "deep book" to reveal the chronometric truth to the world. The message is "It is foolish and vain not to quit" and this is exactly the message which the pamphlet tries to communicate to Pierre.

As several critics have pointed out, the opening section of Pierre is written in a style which is so bad that it defies any but a satiric interpretation. The satire is probably on romances which were current at the time. One good reason for this satiric vein is that this novel starts like a conventional romance, but will ultimately reverse the happy ending of the romance for the stark ending of a tragedy. This does not mean that the first section of the book is to be disregarded from the standpoint of plot. It is important that the ambiguous lover-like relation between the boy, Pierre Glendinning, and his mother, Mary Glendinning, dramatically prefigures the later incestuous relationship between Pierre and Isabel, his half-sister. In this early action of the book Pierre "though now arrived at the age of nineteen, had never yet become so thoroughly initiated into that darker, though truer aspect of things." (VI, 80)

Even in the early Eden-like surroundings of Saddle Meadows, Pierre has what Melville significantly calls "one little uncelestial trait." (VI, 17) Though the trait is only a hearty appetite, the language used emphasizes that it is an earthly fault. This is the first indication that Pierre is an "inferior being."
There are some presentiments of "invisible agencies ... plotting treasons" (VI, 43) against Pierre and Lucy's love, including a "dark-eyed, lustrous, imploring, mournful face" that has appeared to Pierre. He sees Isabel at a sewing session, and is immediately struck by her beauty in some ambiguous way. Even this first obscure meeting with the object of his attempt at chronometrical life provides a "motive, which, for the first time in his recollection, had impelled him, not merely to conceal from his mother a singular circumstance in his life ... but likewise, and superaddedly, to parry, nay, to evade, and, in effect, to return something alarmingly like a fib, to an explicit question put to him by his mother." (VI, 58) This is a foreshadowing of the deceit which Pierre will later perpetrate in his all-out attempt at chronometrical living.

Pierre receives a mysterious letter and seems "distinctly to feel two antagonistic agencies within him; one of which was just struggling into his consciousness, and each of which was striving for the mastery; and between whose respective final ascendancies, he thought he could perceive, though but shadowly, that he himself was to be the only umpire." (VI, 73) The new entry is the one which he calls the "good angel" which "defined itself clearer and more clear, and came higher and more nigh to him, smiling sadly but benignantly." (VI, 73) This angel symbolizes the call to chronometrical action, "to dismiss all mis-
givings; not because there was no possible ground for them, but because to dismiss them was the manlier part, never mind what might betide." (VI, 73) To dismiss any suggestion that the impulse was too strong for Pierre to withstand, there is his own shadowy perception that he "was to be the only umpire." The angel smiles sadly because it can foresee the ultimate folly of the course of which the reading of the letter is the first step. The "bad angel" who has been advocating destruction of the letter loses, and "forth from the infinite distances wonderful harmonies stole into his heart; so that every vein in him pulsed to some heavenly swell." (VI, 73) The harmonies are not from the local zone (horological) but from infinite distances and are heavenly (chronometrical).

In the letter, Isabel couches the question of the course Pierre will follow in most significant terms when she writes "art thou an angel, that thou canst overleap all the heartless usages and fashions of a banded world, that will call thee fool, fool, fool! and curse thee, if thou yieldest to that heavenly impulse which alone can lead thee to respond . . ." (VI, 74) To answer the call, Pierre must attempt chronometrical conduct, and indeed, the world does call him "fool, fool, fool" for his attempt. (At any rate Plinlimmon calls him exactly that. [VI, 345])

The effect of the letter on Pierre is immediate and far-reaching. As Pierre sits "as if some assassin had stabbed him," Melville comments "Ay, Pierre, now indeed
art thou hurt with a wound, never to be completely healed but in heaven; for thee, the before undistrusted moral beauty of the world is forever fled . . . Truth rolls a black billow through thy soul!" (VI, 75) This is absolute truth which has destroyed his youthful illusion of his father as the "personification of perfect human goodness and virtue." (VI, 79) The problem is that Pierre has been judging his father perfect by chronometrical standards, and now, when an apparent flaw in his moral life appears, the whole illusion crumbles. The image was probably essentially accurate by horological standards, for though one sin may have been committed, there is no evidence of any other "positive ills" done by the older Glendinning, and in the rest of the qualifications he seems faultless. Pierre does not stop to consider the still high human character of his father, but only believes that he is not of celestial stature and therefore not worthy of any honor. Pierre says, "Myself am left, at least, . . . Henceforth I will know nothing but Truth; glad Truth or sad Truth; I will know what is, and do what my deepest angel dictates."

(VI, 76) This is commitment to the chronometer of his own "deepest angel" which will not, if Pierre can help it, be jarred by the earthly morals of the people around him.

Immediately on the heels of this oath to know truth, Pierre, on the basis of no earthly evidence, states flatly, "This letter is not a forgery. Oh! Isabel, thou art my
sister; and I will love thee, and protect thee, ay, and own thee through all. . . . Here I swear myself Isabel's" (VI, 76) This is the decision which will change Pierre's life completely, and it is arrived at by a chronometrical intuition that "God demands me for thy [Isabel's] comforter." (VI, 76-79)

Pierre's relationship with his mother, changed at the first appearance of Isabel, undergoes a profound change after Pierre has made his vow. Before the revelation she "had ever seemed to Pierre not only as a beautiful saint before whom to offer up his daily orisons, but also as a gentle lady-counsellor and confessor," (VI, 104) but now he can confide in her no longer. "She well might have stood all ordinary tests; but when Pierre thought of the touchstone of his immense strait applied to her spirit; he felt profoundly assured that she would crumble into nothing before it." (VI, 104) Pierre has measured his mother by his newly-discovered chronometrical standard and found her lacking. He "felt that deep in him lurked a divine unidentifiableness, that owned no earthly kith or kin." (VI, 105) This refers to his chronometrical soul attempting to act in an earthly body. The new standard is reflected in the language as Pierre asks himself, "Loveth she me with the love past all understanding?" (VI, 105) in an obvious use of the Biblical standard. She fails the test, for she is not a chronometer. Pierre blames the world for robbing him of his mother, but it is
his own perseverance in applying the chronometrical standard to actions which causes the loss of his mother.

Melville makes this comment just before Pierre's first visit to Isabel. "But Pierre, though charged with the fire of all divineness, his containing thing was made of clay." (VI, 126) This emphasizes the earthliness of Pierre and the heavenliness of the chronometrical spirit which will lead him to his downfall.

The author delves into the mind of Pierre, finding these ideas; "Was not the face—though mutely mournful—beautiful, bewitchingly? . . . so bewilderingly alluring; . . . Thus, already, and ere the proposed encounter, he was assured that, in a transcendent degree, womanly beauty, and not womanly ugliness, invited him to champion the right." (VI, 126-7) This is the first direct suggestion from Melville that there may be some reason beyond the chronometrical call which may have influenced Pierre's choice. Apparently sexual attraction has had some part in the choice, though probably only subconsciously. After barely suggesting that an ugly girl might not have received the same answer that Isabel received, Melville exclaims "—Ah, if man were wholly made in heaven, why catch we hell-glimpses? Why in the noblest marble pillar that stands beneath the all-comprising vault, ever should we descry the sinister vein?" (VI, 127) The "hell-glimpses" and the "sinister vein" both refer to the sexuality that eventually overcomes Pierre, the "noblest marble pillar."
As Pierre draws near his first meeting with Isabel, "Infallibly he knows that his own voluntary steps are taking him forever from the brilliant chandeliers of the mansion of Saddle Meadows, to join company with the wretched rush-lights of poverty and woe!" (VI, 131) This is echoed in the pamphlet which says, "What man who carries a heavenly soul in him, has not groaned to perceive, that unless he committed a sort of suicide as to the practical things of this world, he never can hope to regulate his earthly conduct by that same heavenly soul?" (VI, 250) The only difference is that Pierre does not groan, for "his sublime intuitiveness also paints to him the sun-like glories of god-like truth and virtue." (VI, 131) Pierre still thinks that he can reach this "god-like truth and virtue," because he does not realize that he is an "inferior being" and will consequently be led into sin.

In the period between Pierre's first and second interviews with Isabel, Pierre plunges into the woods to meditate on his responsibility for his actions. He lies in a hollow at "that spot first menaced by the Terror Stone should it ever really topple." (VI, 157) From this precarious position, Pierre asks whatever powers that may be to crush him under the stone "if indeed our actions are all fore-ordained, ... and virtue as unmeaning and unsequeled with any blessing as the midnight mirth of wine." (VI, 158) After receiving no answer, Pierre emerges and stands "haughtily upon his feet, as he owed thanks to none." (VI, 158) This is Melville's dramatization of Pierre's
freedom of will, and that character's own belief in it at this point in the story. God either cannot or will not answer.

Pierre turns over some of the strange, incomprehensible facts of their possible relationship in his mind, "and yet, at the same time, persuaded, strong as death, that in spite of them, Isabel was indeed his sister; ... how could he fail to acknowledge the existence of that all-controlling and all-permeating wonderfulness, which ... is so significantly denominated The Finger of God? But it is not merely the Finger, it is the whole outspread Hand of God; for doth not Scripture intimate, that He holdeth all of us in the hollow of His hand?—a Hollow, truly!" (VI, 163-4) This passage reiterates that Pierre's decision is completely intuitive and non-rational, which he feels comes directly from God, but Melville shows by his last comment that there is no communication between God and men, for God is "a Hollow, truly!" The promptings come not from God, but from Pierre's own chronometrical soul, aided subconsciously by his sexual attraction for Isabel.

Pierre is firmly fixed in his error, for "He saw that human life doth truly come from that, which all men are agreed to call by the name of God; and that it partakes of the unravelable inscrutableness of God." (VI, 166) He is correct in recognizing the inscrutableness of God, but incorrect in terms of the pamphlet and in terms of the action of the novel, in assuming that there is a direct
connection between life on earth and God. Pierre sees Isabel as "wholly soared out of the realms of mortainess, and for him she became transfigured in the highest heaven of uncorrupted Love." (VI, 167) But this hero is a container of clay and will not avoid his unique sin after he commits himself to the chronometrical cause of Isabel. He is free to choose his course, but after the choice is made, the sin is virtually inevitable.

Melville makes a pertinent comment on the situation as Pierre ponders his decision about the future. A man following the trail of truth is compared to a man seeking the magnetic pole of the earth. The man following truth too far loses the directing influence of his mind as the man drawing near the pole loses the directing influence of his compass according to Melville. Pierre fulfills the analogy by condemning himself for his thoughtlessness in approaching Falsgrave for advice, "But this last distrust was not of the heart; for heaven itself, so he felt, had sanctified that with its blessing; but it was the distrust of his intellect." (VI, 196) Pierre is called an "enthusiast," because he receives a direct call to action which he believes is from God, and now distrusts the reason, which is of the earth and therefore undependable in the view of enthusiasts. Pierre comes to the conclusion that the "two grand resolutions—the public acknowledgement of Isabel, and the charitable withholding of her existence from thy own mother,—these are impossible adjuncts." (VI, 201) The conclusion is cor-
rect, but the two choices form a false dilemma in horological standards. No public announcement of his love for Isabel is necessary; in fact, their true relationship is never revealed, even though Pierre does follow a chronometrical course.

Pierre's decision is "to assume before the world, that by secret rites, Pierre Glendinning was already become the husband of Isabel Danford--" so that he can remain in the constant company of his half-sister without revealing his father's sin. His mother and fiancee will immediately suffer the loss of Pierre under rather shocking circumstances, with no particular benefit to anyone. This "pious imposture, which he thought all heaven would justify in him, since he himself was to be the grand self-renouncing victim," (VI, 203) is chronometrical, as Pierre attempts to undo all of the wrongs which Isabel has suffered by one self-sacrificing act. Pierre pictures himself as a martyr to right the wrongs which the world has inflicted on the dark, beautiful girl.

Melville points out that "There is an inevitable keen cruelty in the loftier heroism. It is not heroism to stand unflinched ourselves in the hour of suffering; but it is heroism to stand unflinched both at our own and at some loved one's united suffering; a united suffering which we could put an instant period to, if we would but renounce the glorious cause for which ourselves do bleed, and see our most loved one bleed. . . . So Pierre turned round and tied Lucy to the same stake which must hold himself, for
he too plainly saw, that it could not be, but that both their hearts must burn." (VI, 209-10) Even Lucy will be sacrificed to the chronometrical cause. If Pierre did not distrust his reason so completely, it would tell him that there is a less painful, horological solution. He could provide Isabel with a comfortable living secretly and never be forced to reveal his father's sin, but he feels that he has to right all of the wrongs done to her by publicly embracing her. Isabel does not ask for a public announcement, but only that he provide her with some affection. To Pierre there is no reasonable solution, "one only thing remained to him;-- this all-including query--Lucy or God?" (VI, 213)

Pierre tells Lucy and his mother that he is married, thereby producing a profound effect. He leaves Saddle Meadows, "but as he crossed its threshold, his foot tripped upon its raised ledge; he pitched forward upon the stone portico, and fell. He seemed as jeeringly hurled from beneath his own ancestral roof." (VI, 217-8) The step had been taken, and already the world is jeering Pierre for his chronometrical behavior.

Pierre affirms his faith in his own standards as he says "I believe to God that I am pure, let the world think how it may." (VI, 224) He "hath consulted heaven itself upon it, the plan of the assumed marriage and heaven itself did not say Nay." (VI, 226) Again, Pierre thinks he is performing the will of God, but has no assurance
other than the enthusiast promptings of his own chronometric soul. Pierre and Isabel will live together and "reach up alike to a glorious ideal!" (VI, 226) But the ideal is not to be reached on earth.

During their brief stay at an inn, Pierre burns the portrait of his father, his family letters, and "all sorts of miscellaneous memorials in paper." (VI, 233) This ritual symbolizes the putting off of the old man and the assumption of the new. Pierre throws off his paternity, or his original sin, and considers himself "free to do his own self-will and present fancy to whatever end!" (VI, 234) Melville again insists that Pierre is responsible for his own actions.

During the trip to the city Pierre's first slight misgivings appear; "for a space there was rebellion and horrid anarchy and infidelity in his soul." (VI, 240) Melville gives the story of a priest to whom the devil appeared during mass. The devil "propounded to him the possibility of the mere moonshine of the Christian Religion. Just such now was the mood of Pierre; to him the Evil One propounded the possibility of the mere moonshine of all his self-renouncing Enthusiasm." (VI, 240) The priest had vanquished the devil with the help of the Catholic tradition, the Bible, and the intuition of the truth of Christianity, but Pierre has no such firm anchor. His thoughts turn rather to Isabel's first request for acknowledgement, and this is sufficient to drive the devil
back, but the doubts do not completely disappear. He rec­
calls the unhappiness that he has already strewn about his path, and says to himself, "Corpses behind me, and the last sin before, how then can my conduct be right." (VI, 241)
The "last sin" is apparently the sin against the Holy Ghost in Pierre's eyes, but it also seems to prefigure the incest and murder which will follow. It is at this juncture, just after Pierre, "in obedience to the loftiest behest of his soul, . . . had done certain acts which had already lost him his worldly felicity, and which he felt must . . . work him some still additional and not-to-be-thought-of woe," (VI, 244) that the pamphlet appears in the story, but Pierre fails to understand it.

Melville reinforces the theme that earth and heaven have different moral systems by describing how a young soul filled with the fervor of the Sermon on the Mount turns to the world and is overcome with the feeling that it is full of over-powering falsity. (VI, 243-4)

The wayfarers arrive in the city on a dark night, expect­ing to find a light in a house which Pierre's cousin Glen­
dinning Stanley has supposedly prepared for them, but they find that no preparations have been made. Only dark, closed houses greet them, as the world presents only a dark facade to the chronometrical man. Pierre leaves Delly and Isabel to seek a cab and finds himself near the home of his cousin. He forces his way in and confronts his false cousin. Stanley refuses to recognize Pierre and says,
"This is very extraordinary: --remarkable case of combined imposture and insanity; (VI, 281) and this is an accurate, though unwitting observation. As the Plinlimmon pamphlet said, "the heavenly wisdom of God [is] an earthly folly to man," (VI, 249) and the folly which Pierre commits is virtual insanity. Pierre is an imposter because, though a mortal, he attempts to play the perfect part of Christ, by following a chronometrical course of action.

In the new home, the "Church of the Apostles," Pierre sleeps in the portable camp-bed of his grandfather, a general in the Revolution. Melville comments that it is fitting for Pierre to be sleeping in a warrior's bed, for he is a warrior too. "The wide world is banded against him; for lo you! he holds up the standard of Right, and swears by the Eternal and True!" (VI, 317-8) But Pierre does not reach the stature of his ancestor because the fight has less glory than Revolutionary battles, "For more glorious in real tented field to strike down your valiant foe, than in the conflicts of a noble soul with a dastardly world to chase a vile enemy who ne'er will show front." (VI, 318) Pierre is doomed never to meet his adversary in direct combat, for it is the whole world that opposes him.

Pierre's self-doubts come to the surface again soon after they settle in the Church of the Apostles. He again calls to the heavens; "If to follow Virtue to her uttermost vista, where common souls never go; if by that I take hold on hell, and the uttermost virtue, after all, prove but a
betraying pander to the monstrousest vice,—then close in
and crush me, ye stony walls."..." (VI, 321) He tells Isabel,
"Call me brother no more!" (VI, 321) This indicates that
the sexual attraction which Isabel holds for Pierre has
risen into Pierre's consciousness. He now wishes to con-
vince her (and himself) that they are not brother and
sister in order to remove the stigma of incest from their
contemplated relations. This is the monstrous vice into
which he fears his "following of virtue to the uttermost
vista," (his attempt to undo the wrongs done to Isabel)
has led him. He half sees "that the uttermost ideal of
moral perfection in man is wide of the mark... and Virtue
and Vice are trash." (VI, 321) This is the same Pierre who
started his quest with such optimism.

The conventions of literature and society in his time
prevented Melville from presenting the relations between
Pierre and Isabel in anything but the most ambiguous terms,
but the suggestion is that they have sexual relations. If
they do not indulge in intimacies, the sensual embracing
and kissing indicates that the desire was present. Pierre's
attempt to convince Isabel that they are not related reveals
his guilt about his desires. This desire is sinful in itself,
even without fulfillment.

News arrives that Pierre's mother is dead, that the
estate has been left to his cousin, Glen Stanley, and that
Glen is a suitor of Lucy Tartan. Pierre partially con-
vinces himself that "his grief was but natural, or if there
existed any other, that must spring—not from the consciousness of having done any possible wrong—but from the pang at what terrible cost the more exalted virtues are gained." (VI, 337) Pierre still feels that he has progressed toward virtue by his attempt at chronometrical behavior. He sometimes falls into moods of rage at the thought of Glen usurping his place, and at these times "Pierre cursed himself for a heartless villain and an idiot fool;—heartless villain, as the murderer of his mother—idiot fool, because he had thrown away all his felicity; because he had himself, as it were, resigned his noble birthright to a cunning kinsman for a mess of pottage, which now proved all but ashes in his mouth." (VI, 340-341) This is about the same condemnation which the pamphlet would impose on him. He hides these "unworthy pangs" from Isabel, showing that he can still control them.

Pierre now feels that he has discovered the truth for all mankind, and he wishes to convey it to them in the novel which he is writing. The face of Plinlimmon warns him of his folly and vanity, particularly "in his moods of despair; when . . . black doubts as to the integrity of his unprecedented course in life would most malignantly suggest themselves." (VI, 344) These periods of self-doubt seem to follow no particular pattern of recurrence, but the first one did not appear until they had embarked for the City. Pierre remembers detached sentences of the pamphlet, "sentences before but imperfectly comprehended, but now
shedding a strange, baleful light upon his peculiar condition, and emphatically denouncing it." (VI, 345) He tries to secure another copy of the pamphlet or to relocate the one he read, but he cannot. Pierre curses himself for losing it and adds "more cursed, that when I did have it, and did read it, I was such a ninny as not to comprehend; and now it is all too late!" (VI, 346) Ironically, the pamphlet is lodged in the lining of his coat so "all the time he was hunting for this pamphlet, he himself was wearing the pamphlet." (VI, 346) Melville comments that "Possibly this curious circumstance may in some sort illustrate the self-supposed non-understanding of the pamphlet, as first read by him in the stage. Could he likewise have carried about with him in his mind the thorough understanding of the book, and yet not be aware that he so understood it? I think that, regarded in one light, the final career of Pierre will seem to show, that he did understand it. And here it may be randomly suggested, . . . whether some things that men think they do not know, are not for all that thoroughly comprehended by them; and yet, so to speak, though contained in themselves, are kept a secret from themselves? The idea of Death seems such a thing." (VI, 346) There are several elements in this statement which lead in the wrong direction if quoted out of context. The first notable aspect of the comment is its profound tentativeness. "Possibly," "may in some sort," "could;" "I think," and "it may be randomly suggested," are introductions to his remarks. In the common sense of under-
standing, the first comments are rather enigmatic. How could Pierre understand and yet not be aware that he understood it? The only way to allow this is to find the "one light" in which we must regard Pierre's final career. This light is found in the "random suggestion" that something can be "contained in themselves," but "kept a secret from themselves." Melville apparently means that Pierre will exemplify the pamphlet, thus containing the idea though not understanding it. Similarly, men have the idea of death latent within them, but do not understand it. At the end of their career they exemplify it as Pierre exemplifies the unique follies and sins mentioned in the pamphlet for those mortals who try to follow a chronometrical course.

Pierre's doubts become more profound. Melville says that humanity had deserted him when he chose his chronometrical path, but he felt a far higher support;" but now, writing the book, "he began to feel the utter loss of that other support, too; ay, even the paternal gods themselves did now desert Pierre." (VI, 349)

Melville comments on the waste of Pierre's physical vigor while slaving on the novel, saying "Civilization, Philosophy, Ideal Virtue! behold your victim!" (VI, 355) This echoes not only Pierre's discomfort because of his decision to reveal all truth in his book, but also foreshadows his ultimate victimization by the pursuit of ideal virtue.

In Pierre's book, "he seems to have directly plagiarized
from his own experiences, to fill out the mood of his apparent author-hero, Vivia, who thus soliloquises: "A deep-down unutterable mournfulness is in me... Hopelessness and despair are over me, as pall on pall." (VI, 356) Melville comments that "From these random slips, it would seem, that Pierre is quite conscious of much that is so anomalously hard and bitter in his lot, of much that is so black and terrific in his soul. Yet that knowing his fatal condition does not one whit enable him to change or better his condition. Conclusive proof that he has no power over his condition." (VI, 357) Taken out of the context of the novel, this would imply that Melville's universe is a deterministic one, but, as I pointed out above, Melville emphasizes that Pierre had freedom of choice when he decided to follow the chronometrical standard. Now that the action has progressed to the point where he is about to get the rewards for his own free choice, he is powerless to stop the process.

Lucy writes Pierre that she is coming to live with them. She believes that he is pursuing truth, saying, "Ah! thou too noble and angelical Pierre, now I feel that a being like thee, can possibly have no love as other men love; but thou lovest as angels do; not for thyself, but wholly for others." (VI, 364) Lucy ascribes to Pierre the attributes of a true chronometrical, not realizing that he is in reality one of the "inferior beings." She is correct as to his original intent, but she fails to
realize that his feet of clay have led him into incestuous love rather than angelic love. Lucy thinks that her long period of sickness after Pierre's abrupt departure "was fitting me for a celestial mission in terrestrial elements," (VI, 365) with Pierre.

Lucy arrives and moves in. She is described almost completely in angelic terms. She is "a slight, airy, almost unearthly figure;" (VI, 382) "She felt no pain for her own condition; her only suffering was sympathetic." (VI, 384) and Isabel says, "methought she was that good angel, which some say, hovers over every human soul." (VI, 370) Pierre has totally committed himself to the chronometrical cause, and Lucy, as an angelic character, intuitively recognizes the fact, and returns to him.

Pierre is forced by poverty to commit the first pages of his novel to the printer before the conclusion is done. In his vision of truth, he is alone in the world. "He felt as a moose, hamstrung. . . He seemed gifted with loftiness, merely that it might be dragged down to the mud. Still, the profound wilfulness in him would not give up." (VI, 398) He remains in part dedicated to his chronometrical soul, and still tries to tell the world the truth as he sees it. He defies the world and nature by defying storms, feeling "a dark triumphant joy."

Pierre has an attack of "a combined blindness, and vertigo, and staggering." (VI, 401) He realizes that he should avoid deserted streets for fear of perishing in some
lonely spot, "But if that terrible vertigo had been also intended for another and deeper warning, he regarded such added warning not at all." (VI, 401) The deeper warning which Melville alludes to is the warning that Pierre is attempting the impossible task of living chronometrically, and that his too-human body cannot take such a strain.

Pierre falls into trances, and his dreams or visions are concerned with a mountain near Saddle Meadows, the Mount of Titans, and Enceladus, a rock formation which resembles that mythical Titan in the process of throwing his armless torso toward the mountain, though he is partially buried. Pierre dreams that the Titan has Pierre's own face as he hurls himself at the mountain. Enceladus is especially fitting as a symbol for Pierre since first, he is organically related to incest, as is Pierre. Second, Enceladus was attempting to storm the heavens, as Pierre is attempting to live the heavenly ideal. Third, Enceladus is stopped short of heaven by earth, (the mountains Pelion and Ossa to be specific) as Pierre is stopped by his own earthliness. Melville emphasizes the analogy by saying, "So Enceladus was both the son and grandson of an incest; and even thus, there had been born from the organic blended heavenliness and earthliness of Pierre, another mixed, uncertain, heaven-aspiring, but still not wholly earth-emancipated mood." (VI, 408)

Pierre, Lucy, and Isabel visit a gallery of paintings where a painting reawakens Pierre's doubts of his relation-
ship to Isabel. Pierre now feels that his original mystical and transcendent persuasions that Isabel was his sister were "originally born . . . purely of an intense procreative enthusiasm: --an enthusiasm no longer so all-potential with him as yore." (VI, 416) This is quite a self-revelation, and shakes his belief that she is his sister. Corroboration of part of Lucy's story comes when they board a boat, and she feels the rolling motion of the boat again. Isabel suddenly calls herself "a vile clog to thee [Pierre]; dragging thee back from all thy felicity," (VI, 419) and attempts to drown herself. She realizes that she has changed in his view from the lure to chronometrical conduct to a reminder of his very earthliness and wishes to destroy herself.

When they return home after calming Isabel, Pierre finds two letters awaiting him. The first is from his publisher who calls Pierre a swindler and threatens immediate court action to recover the money that they have advanced him on the book. They say the book is "a blasphemous rhapsody, filched from the vile Atheists, Lucian and Voltaire." (VI, 420) This is another indication that the truth of life, when misunderstood, can no more be communicated than when it is understood, as Plinlimmon had. The other letter is from Glen Stanley and Fred Tartan which "conveys the lie" to Pierre and reviles him. Pierre puts the two letters beneath his heels and says, "These are most small circumstances; but happening just now to me, become indices
to all immensities. For now I am hate-shod! On these I will skate to my acquittal!" ... World's bread of life and world's breath of honour, both are snatched from me; but I defy all world's bread and breath." (VI, 420) Pierre has received the last blow from the world that he will take. Denied bread by his publishers and honor by his cousin, he defies both and says that he will go to his acquittal. He must mean an acquittal in the sense of a discharge of his chronometrical duty because the legal sense of the term is inapplicable. His standards are still chronometrical, calling for a heroic action, but the action is not good in either chronometrical or horological terms. He leaves the apartment with these words, "--the fool of Truth, the fool of Virtue, the fool of Fate, now quits ye forever!" (VI, 422) Pierre is the fool of Virtue and Truth, for in trying to exceed his human limit of virtue and truth, he has been led into folly and sin, but he is not the fool of Fate, for he chose his own fate.

Pierre gets two pistols from a neighbor's room, and goes into the street seeking Glen and Fred. He finds them and kills Glen, saying, "'Tis speechless sweet to murder thee!" (VI, 424) Though Glen is not a very respectable character, he is Pierre's cousin, and the murder is a crime, despite Pierre's good intentions at the beginning of his quest. The killing is one of the unique sins that Pierre commits and the incestuous relationship with Isabel is another. The attempt to live by heavenly standards is in
itself dangerously close to the unforgivable sin which Hawthorne's Ethan Brand commits, the breaking away from "the magnetic chain of humanity."\(^2\)

The story ends in jail with the violent deaths of Lucy, Pierre, and Isabel, Pierre's suicide acting as his final sin.

The Plinlimmon pamphlet has accurately forecast the outcome of the novel in which it appears. The pamphlet predicts that any mortal who insists on attempting to live by absolute (chronometrical) standards must in the end commit unique follies and sins, and will array "all men's earthly time-keepers against him, . . . work himself woe and death." (VI, 249) This is exactly the outcome of Pierre as analyzed above. Throughout the novel, Melville has utilized imagery, his own comments, and most specifically, dramatic action, to make the novel a demonstration of the truth contained in the pamphlet.
NOTES


III. THE CHRONOMETRICALS

Chronometrical characters appear in Mardi, Redburn and White Jacket (treating these two novels as one story), Moby Dick, and Billy Budd. In the terms of the Plinlimmon pamphlet, Taji, in Mardi, is a chronometrical character. In Redburn and White Jacket, Redburn and White Jacket before his fall into the sea are the devotees of absolute standards. Ahab pursues the absolute course in Moby Dick, and in Billy Budd, the title character best exemplifies what Plinlimmon would call chronometrical behavior. These characters are all mortals (inferior beings in the terms of the pamphlet) and if the pamphlet is correct, they will fall into "unique follies and sins." The action of each of the novels shows this pattern and thus tends to prove the accuracy of Plinlimmon's observations.

Mardi is the tale of a vagabond sailor who eventually takes the demigod name of Taji, as he sets off in search of Yillah, a girl who represents absolute perfection to him. The quest takes Taji to various islands of the tropical archipelago of Mardi. He arrives at last at Screnia, where men have reached a sort of earthly perfection, but Taji refuses to stay and sets off again in further search of Yillah. He finally sails on into the chartless sea on his search for perfection.

The action preceding the appearance of Yillah is of little significance to the character of Taji with the
exception of the reasons for his desertion of a whaler in mid-ocean; Boredom is an important factor, since "There was no soul a magnet to mine; none with whom to mingle sympathies."

(I, 3) There were no persons of sufficient stature to associate with the idealist Taji. He says "Ay, Ay, Arcturion! I say it in no malice, but thou wast exceedingly dull."

(I, 4) A more important factor is the captain's decision to hunt right whales in the North rather than the cachalot, or sperm whale along the equator, "For there was something degrading in it."

(I, 5) The chronometrical whaleman cannot stoop to such prosaic work as hunting right whales, but will only hunt the noble cachalot. This symbolizes Taji's unwillingness to stoop to practical matters or to compromise with the necessities of life. He insists on nobility in all things, even if it means risking his life in a small boat far at sea.

As soon as Taji learns that there is a maiden in the tent on the boat of Aleema, he says "stirred was my soul toward this invisible victim; ... hotly I swore, that precious blood of hers should never smoke upon an altar. If we drowned for it, I was bent upon rescuing the captive. But as yet, no gentle sign of distress had been waved to us from the tent." (I, 152) Thus Taji is even more of a self-appointed protector than Pierre, since he has received no request for aid. The first clash with the other boat results in Taji's killing Aleema. The murderer soon feels the twinges of a guilty conscience. As the attackers return
to the grieving sons of Aleema, Taji says "As I gazed at this sight, what iron mace fell on my soul; what curse rang sharp in my ear! . . . Remorse smote me hard; and like lightning I asked myself, whether the death-deed I had done was sprung of a virtuous motive, the rescuing a captive from thrall; or whether beneath that pretense, I had engaged in this fatal affray for some other, and selfish purpose; the companionship of a beautiful maid. But throttling the thought, I swore to be gay." (I, 156-157) Already Taji is questioning his originally chronometrical motives, and wondering if there is a sexual undercurrent in them, as Pierre wondered what the response to Isabel would have been had that damsel been ugly. He soon conceals his motives from himself with a "gracious pretence," a procedure which he follows quite often in the novel. Taji opens the tent, and as he stands in the doorway which he cuts into it, "the maiden . . . was wholly screened from all eyes but mine [Taji's]." (I, 158) The maiden is the beautiful, blond Yillah, who "declared herself more than mortal." (I, 159) The symbolic significance of her being seen only by him is that he considers only himself capable of looking on such heavenly perfection. Yillah tells a fantastic story, that she is a goddess from "Oroolia, the Island of Delights," (I, 159) and had been changed into a flower before Aleema saved her. Taji attempts to convince her that he is "some gentle demigod, that had come over the sea from own fabulous Oroolia." (I, 162) He says that the
deception is the best way to calm her misgivings (I, 165) much as Pierre's deception was to provide a means to make Isabel happy.

Taji decides to remain at sea rather than return to land, for "Was not Yillah my shore and my grove? my meadow, my mead, my soft shady vine, and my arbour? Of all things desirable and delightful, the full-plumed sheaf, and my own right arm the band?" (I, 168) The divine Yillah is everything to Taji, without exception; she is the ideal from Oroolin. As they drift, Taji learns a little more about her, but "So mystical, however, her revelations concerning her past history, that often I knew not what to divine." (I, 178) Ideal happiness, which Yillah represents, cannot be successfully explained, and is indeed mystical. During this drifting period Taji says "no happiness in the universe like ours. We lived and we loved; life and love were united; in gladness glided our days." (I, 185)

The rescuers and Yillah have to go ashore and do so at Odo, in a chapter significantly called "World Ho!" (141) The sea has been a symbol of their mystical happiness during their wanderings, but now they must return to the world. Taji assumes his demigod character and he strives "to look every inch the character he had determined to assume." Regardless of his efforts, Taji is only a mortal.

In a chapter called "Taji Retires from the World," (I, 220) Taji tries to remove his happiness from the earthly sphere, but the best he can do is a small islet
a few yards off the coast of Odo. Though "To look at, and to roam about of holydays, Odo seemed a happy land," (I, 224) it is not perfect, so Taji tries to separate himself from it.

The retreat is not far enough from the world, for "one morning I [Taji] found the arbor vacant." (I, 226) Yillah is gone! the divine happiness has fled or been driven from the earthliness of the world, and from Taji. Taji's own lust has destroyed her innocence, and she cannot exist in a less than perfect form.

Taji decides to seek Yillah, his lost happiness. He is joined by Media, the king of Odo; Mohi, the historian; Babbalanja, the philosopher; and Yoomy, the poet. Yoomy and Media entertain high hopes of finding the lost Yillah, but Taji notices "that both Mohi and Babbalanja, especially the last, seemed not so bouyant of hope concerning the lost Yillah." (I, 231)

The travels, which make up over two-thirds of the book, are a tremendous grab-bag of Melville's social and philosophical ideas, but little of it concerns this study. The travels reveal that wherever there is evil, Yillah is not to be found, and evil is mixed into all the societies which they visit. Even in Maramma, where the religion of Alma (a Christ figure but not exactly Christ) is professed, there is far too much evil for Yillah's presence.

They finally arrive at Serenia, where Alma's precepts are truly followed, and life is as good as is possible on earth. But even in Serenia the social state "is imperfect;
and long must so remain." (II, 367) Serenia represents earthly perfection, but this is not enough for Taji. Since Serenia is imperfect, Yillah, being perfect happiness, is not there. Babbalanja remains at Serenia "Not because what we sought [Yillah] is found; but that I [Babbalanja] now possess all which may be had of what I sought in Mardi."

(II, 380) Taji still insists on his quest for absolute happiness, and pushes off again on the search, leaving the wiser philosopher on the shore.

Queen Hautia, who represents fleshly love and the senses, has sent mysterious messengers bearing flowers to Taji since the early interlude with Yillah. This symbolizes that even in Taji's period of happiness, sexual lust had appeared to him because he was a mortal. Now, after leaving Serenia, he follows Hautia's messengers in the hope that perhaps, though he despises and fears Hautia, she can reunite him with Yillah. Taji feels "in some mysterious way seemed Hautia and Yillah connected."

(II, 386) This is true, for as long as Taji is a mortal, some sensuality must exist, even in his purest relationships. Hautia tries to seduce Taji and partially succeeds, despite the warnings of Media, Mohi, and Yoomy. A bird falls from the sky as Taji's hand touched Hautia's, symbolizing the fall of his aspirations to the sensual level, but Taji is unable to substitute the sweets of life with Hautia for the divine happiness of Yillah. Taji's companions rescue him from Hautia and they set sail for Serenia, but
Taji takes the helm and sails to sea. He continues his pursuit of the chronometrical perfection of Yillah, even to suicide. Suicide is the unique sin to which Taji's mortality has led him when he tried to follow his chronometrical soul. When he seizes the helm, Yoomy says "Nay Taji: commit not the last, last crime!" which is suicide, and Mohi says "eternity is in his eye!" (II, 400) Taji commits himself irrevocably to death in his quest and says "Now, I am my own soul's emperor; and my first act is abdication! Hail! realm of shades!" (II, 400) Taji's chronometrical quest is abandoned by Mohi and Yoomy, and Taji goes to his death alone.

The chronometrical character in Melville's thematically linked novels, Redburn: His First Voyage, and White Jacket: or The World in a Man-of-War, (accepting the hero of the latter as a continuation of the title character of the former) is the title character in both books. The significant difference between this chronometrical character and Pierre and Taji is that at the end of White Jacket, the hero has a change of character and comes to terms with evil in the world rather than continuing the quest for perfection to death.

Redburn is a narrative of a young man who ships aboard a merchantman to Liverpool and back, and the adventures of the cruise, his first. Wellingborough Redburn sets out on his first experience in the world wearing a shooting jacket given to him by his elder brother. The jacket is a symbol of his isolation from the general run of mankind, which is
beset by evil, by his adherence to chronometrical standards. He consistently holds himself above his shipmates.

The jacket's apparent sufficiency symbolizes the self-satisfaction which Redburn's previous isolation from the evil of the world has led him to feel. The jacket will certainly shelter him from the cold blasts ("it's quite warm"), will always stay with him ("stout horn buttons"), and will provide him with everything he might need ("plenty of pockets"). (III, 1) But as Redburn gains some experience with the evil storms of the world, he finds that the jacket is shrinking and becoming too small for him, indicating that his old self-assurance is not enough to weather the new experiences. Finally, after Redburn forms a friendship with Harry Bolton, the jacket is discarded. It might be assumed that this would be the end of the story; that after finally breaking out of his original isolation, Redburn is ready to meet the world on its own terms, but such is not the case. Redburn finds a kinship with Bolton, but it is a kinship of superior souls in Redburn's view, and he has some reservations.

In Redburn's early encounters with the rest of the crew of the Highlander, the young sailor continually reveals a self-assumed superiority over the rest of the crew. He has a higher (chronometrical) standard of conduct than they, and will pursue it in the face of ostracism and ridicule. He is shocked by their language, and says "... they could never have gone to Sunday School; for they swore
so, it made my ears tingle, and used words that I never could hear without a dreadful loathing," (III, 42) implying that Redburn thinks his advantage of Sunday School places him above even hearing such language. He boasts of membership in the "Juvenile Total Abstinence Association" and its adjunct, the "Anti-Smoking Society."

Redburn arrives in Liverpool equipped with an old guide-book to the city which had belonged to his father. Upon comparing the city as the book shows it, and the actual city, Redburn discovers the alarming fact that the guide-book is of no help whatsoever, because it is far out of date. He says to himself "Guide-books, Wellingborough, are the least reliable books in all literature; and nearly all literature, in one sense, is made up of guide-books. . . But there is one Holy Guide-Book, Wellingborough, that will never lead you astray, if you but follow it aright." (III, 201) Thus Redburn, though he realizes the relativity of temporal things from his experience, fails to grasp the Plinlimmon idea that morals are also relative.

He forms his first friendship in the world with Harry Bolton, but the bond fails to break down all of his reserves. This is because the friendship with Harry, "... a handsome, accomplished, but unfortunate youth," (III, 278) is based on a recognition of a similarity of circumstances between himself and the young Englishman. Redburn admits that he is "... all eagerness to enjoy the society of this incontrovertible son of a gentleman-- a kind of pleas-
ure so long debarred me." (III, 279) The two young men take a frantic and mysterious trip to London at Harry's insistence. Though Redburn is enthusiastic at the prospect of a visit to the city, he fails to see any of it, and spends most of his brief visit in a gaudy den of iniquity called "The Palace of Aladdin." While there he tells Harry that he fears for the sobriety of the young Englishman. Bolton responds, "Hear him now, . . . a parson 'pon honor!" (III, 301) This indicates that Redburn's chronometrical standards have been noticed. Redburn would have given the world had he been safe back in Liverpool, fast asleep in his old bunk in Prince's Dock." (III, 301) Redburn is in the world but not of it, and longs for the oblivion of sleep rather than to have to recognize and come to terms with the world and the evil in it. Redburn successfully evades coming to terms with evil, or even facing it directly, and the two young men return to Liverpool with Redburn little richer in experience than when he set out on the trip.

At the end of the cruise Redburn and Bolton, still kindred spirits, wait together until the rest of the crew leaves. Thus, though Redburn has one friend, it is one friend against the rest of the evil, worldly crew. Though Harry apparently knows more about the world than Redburn, the young American views his English friend as a chronometrical character, and is attracted to him as such. Though his jacket, the symbol of his original isolation,
is gone, the devotion to the chronometrical standards which isolates him from mankind still remains. In this way, though Redburn might justly be called a novel of initiation, the initiation is far from complete at the end of the book.

Thematically, White Jacket picks up at about the point where Redburn stops. White Jacket is about the cruise of a Navy frigate from the South Pacific to Boston, and the adventures of the hero, known only as White Jacket, on the cruise. The book opens with an American sailor making himself a jacket out of a white duck shirt, quilted with various patches of material to make it warm, though by no means waterproof. As is Redburn, the jacket is a symbol of the chronometrical soul which sets a man off from the rest of mankind. "For some time after completing my jacket, and getting the furniture and household stores in it, I thought that nothing could exceed it for convenience... Yes: I fairly hugged myself, and revelled in my jacket." (IV, 45-46) White Jacket feels completely self-sufficient. Later, pickpockets pillage his valuables, and he is forced to sew up the pockets, but this reversal does not deter him from keeping and wearing his jacket. This action symbolizes the loss of some of his self-confidence of isolation by travelling through the world, though not truly of it. White Jacket retains his basic isolation by remaining devoted to his chronometrical ideals.

White Jacket has some friends aboard the Neversink; the
noble Jack Chase; the poet Lemsford; Nord, a reader of good books; and Williams, a laughing philosopher. The sailor considers all of them vastly superior to the common run of humanity aboard the NeverSink, so he can still be considered as a member of an isolated group, though the other members may not be isolated. Of the group with whom he eats however, he says, "... there had never been a very cordial feeling between this mess and me; all along they had nourished a prejudice against my white jacket. They must have harbored the silly fancy that in it I gave myself airs, and wore it in order to look consequential." (IV, 77) He is finally told "... to seek out another club, as they did not longer fancy the society of myself or of my Jacket." (IV, 78) This indicates that the wall of isolation kept up by the white jacket is noticed by those being shut out by it though its builder is not so conscious of it. White Jacket is shocked by the "want of tact and delicacy" of the sailors, which shows that he still puts himself above the commonness and frankness of his shipmates.

At one point the jacket "comes near to being the death" of the hero. Musing in the tophamper of a dark night, he is mistaken for a ghost, and the watch drops the yard out from under him. He tears off the jacket and swears that he will dye it rather than die for it, but he is denied the paint to make it more nearly resemble the coats of the other sailors. Rather than discard it and have nothing, White Jacket retains the symbol of his
isolation, preferring the risk of being set off from the rest of the crew to walking in the world with no protection at all. The sailor seems to realize that his setting himself off from mankind may result in death, but he remains devoted to his chronometrical soul.

An important image is developed in the chapter called "How They Sleep in a Man-of-War." Though part of Melville's reason for writing this chapter is obviously to voice his complaint against living conditions in the Navy during the period, White Jacket's attempts to find a comfortable sleeping arrangement in the berth-deck of the Neversink have a symbolic analogue in the attempts of a human being to find the right living arrangement in life. The average level, where all of the hammocks are slung, is too crowded and breezless for any comfort. The eighteen inches allowed per hammock is a comment on the latitude of action which a man is allowed if he is to be considered a member of average humankind. White Jacket tries first to lower his hammock nearer the deck, at a "separate and independent level" but soon finds that this leads to extreme discomfort, as does raising his hammock above the general level. Trying to maintain oneself above the mass of humanity results in a deathlike feeling of rigidity, foreshadowing the death of Pierre, who insists on living at a higher level. White Jacket himself draws the moral, "So at last I was fain to return to my old level, and moralise upon the folly, in all arbitrary governments, of striving to get either below
or above those whom legislation has placed upon an equality
with yourself," (IV, 102) but he does not live up to this
moral himself, as he continues to hold himself above the
level of the rest of the crew.

"Frequently, I meditated giving it a toss overboard;
but I had not the resolution. Jacketless at sea! Jacket-
less so near Cape Horn! The thought was unendurable. And,
at least, my garment was a jacket in name if not in utility." (IV, 151) This indicates that White Jacket was dubious of
the practical use of his devotion to absolute standards,
but was fearful of facing the world without a barrier to
protect him from evil and lower humanity.

White Jacket is arraigned at the mast for failing to
be at his station and is about to be flogged when Colbrook,
a marine and not a particular friend of the sailor's, takes
the lead in defending him. Jack Chase then chimes in, and
the sentence is lifted. It is a significant chink in the
walls of isolation around White Jacket that he has to admit
indebtedness to a person not of his little clique.

White Jacket remains aloof until very near the end of
the novel. He gives up smoking rather than to restrict it to
a certain time and to a certain area in accordance with the
ship's regulations. Still looking down on the crew, he says,
"But there were others of the crew not so fastidious as my-
self." (IV, 488) He mentions the close bond from man to man
among the smokers, a bond from which he withholds himself.

The jacket itself causes White Jacket's fall from the
yardarm into the ocean. The wind whips its skirts over his head, and he mistakenly assumes that it is the sail and grabs it for support but finds it no help and falls. The chronometrical standard cannot support a man in the heights of life for long. Jack Chase warned White Jacket to remove the garment before going on the yard, but with characteristic fear of being caught without his standards, he refused the friendly advice. White Jacket plunges deep into the water in a sort of baptism, and in effect dies. Since his rebirth belongs more properly in the chapter on the horological characters, I will leave him at the bottom of his plunge and move on to Moby-Dick.

It is generally agreed that in Moby-Dick, Melville reached the peak of his creative achievement. It is my belief that in this novel he also created his most memorable chronometrical character, Ahab, the maimed captain of the Pequod. The novel tells the story of Ahab’s pursuit of the white whale, Moby Dick, who represents all evil to him, to the ultimate destruction of himself, his ship, and its crew.

Ahab is mysterious and unseen during the opening section of the book. When the narrator, Ishmael, signs on the crew of the Pequod, one of the owners says, "He's a queer man, Captain Ahab --so some think --but a good one... He's a grand, ungodly, god-like man." (V, 79) Even to observers before his quest begins, he is "god-like."

The ship has been at sea for several days before
Ahab appears to the crew. Physically, "He looked like a man cut away from the stake, when the fire has overrunningly wasted all the limbs without consuming them, or taken away one particle from their compacted aged robustness. His whole high, broad form, seemed made of solid bronze, and shaped in an unalterable mould, like Cellini's cast Perseus." (V, 120) This is a man capable of defying the gods and earth, and that is what he will do. As Ahab peers forward, Ishmael says, "There was an infinity of firmest fortitude, a determinate, unsurrenderable wilfulness, in the fixed and fearless, forward dedication of that glance." (V, 121-122) This wilfulness is dedicated to the chronometrical pursuit of absolute standards, and Ahab will continue the pursuit to his death.

Ahab lost his leg in a battle with a tremendous white whale, Moby Dick, and now that he has recovered physically, he visualizes the whale as the evil of the world personified. He vows to kill the evil brute: "all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in Moby Dick." (V, 181)

In an early scene, Ahab casts his pipe into the ocean because it "is meant for sereneness," (V, 126) and Ahab cannot be serene until evil is destroyed. This is reminiscent of White Jacket's remaining aloof from the smoking group of the Neversink because of his chronometrical standards.

In a scene of almost hypnotic power, Ahab welds the crew into a weapon for the pursuit of the white whale. He
has all hands drink a toast to the chase, and the harpooners drink from the sockets of their harpoons to the death of Moby Dick. In the calm after this violent storm of emotion, Ahab soliloquizes: "Gifted with the high perception, I lack the low, enjoying power; damned, most subtly and most malignantly!" (V, 165) He considers himself set above other men by his ability to see that all evil can be destroyed, a chronometrical and dangerously incorrect vision. He continues "They think me mad... but I'm demoniac, I am madness maddened! That wild madness that's only calm to comprehend itself! The prophecy was that I should be dismembered; and —Aye! I lost this leg. I now prophesy that I will dismember my dismemberer. Now, then, be the prophet and the fulfiller one. That's more than ye, ye great gods, ever were. I laugh and hoot at ye, ... ye've knocked me down, and I am up again; but ye have run and hidden. Come forth... Ahab's compliments to ye; come and see if ye can swerve me." (V, 166) Ahab not only believes that he can attain absolute standards, but he also accuses the gods of running from him. This is an egotism far more immense than that of Pierre, who thought that he alone could attain perfection; or Taji, who expected perfect happiness on earth; or Redburn-White Jacket, who merely tried to stay above mankind.

Among the several ships which the Pequod/ encounters is the Samuel Enderby of London. The Captain of the English whaler has lost an arm to the white whale, so the two officers
have much in common, but the Englishman says "I've lowered for him once, and that has satisfied me. . . . he's best let alone." (V, 439) Ahab agrees, but adds, "But he will still be hunted, for all that." (V, 439) Though Ahab seems to understand the folly of pursuing the white whale, since he agrees that "he's best let alone," he persists in the quest because of the proddings of his chronometrical soul.

As the end of the chase draws near, Ahab defies the sun by smashing his quadrant. He vows henceforth to set his position by his own means. This emphasizes that he follows only his own chronometrical soul and denies any allegiance to any higher being, even nature as symbolized by the sun. On another level, the pursuit has carried Ahab so far that now he must ignore celestial rule to continue it.

When a typhoon blows up from the direction of the intended pursuit, and the masts light up with St. Elmo's fire, Ahab takes the links of the lightning rods in his hands. He thus defies the powers of nature and gods as he says, "I own thy speechless, placeless power; but to the last gasp of my earthquake life will dispute its unconditional unintegral mastery in me." (V, 500) Starbuck, his first mate, insists that God is against Ahab's hunt, but the Captain rallies the crew to the chase.

Starbuck, who is described as having "mere unaided virtue or right-mindedness" (V, 184) has the chance, and even the impulse to stop the insane chase in a chapter
called "The Musket." While on his way to report an apparent change in the wind during the typhoon, Starbuck notices a loaded musket on the bulkhead, and "there strangely evolved an evil thought" (V, 506) from his heart. He takes the musket in his hands and thinks, "I come to report a fair wind to him. But how fair? Fair for death and doom, --that's fair for Moby Dick." (V, 507) He senses the disaster inherent in Ahab's quest, and thinks, "Yes, it would make him the wilful murderer of thirty men and more, if this ship comes to any deadly harm; and come to deadly harm my soul swears this ship will, if Ahab has his way." (V, 507) Starbuck ponders and realistically admits that he could not seize control of the ship from the monomaniac Captain. He comes to the horological conclusion that to kill Ahab is the only solution, but his "mere unaided virtue" will not allow him to follow the horological course of action: to commit the murder for the good of the men of the ship. At the moment of decision "Starbuck seemed wrestling with an angel; but turning from the door, he placed the death-tube in its rack, and left the place." (V, 408) "Mere unaided virtue" must be helped by horological will if it is to prevent a terrible wrong. Starbuck cannot compromise his own concept of what constitutes sin.

The electrical phenomena during the typhoon have the disconcerting effect of reversing the poles of the ship's compass. To the superstitious sailors, this is a bad omen,
and Ahab decides to awe them with a demonstration of his power over mysterious forces by an experiment in elementary physics. He magnetizes a sail-makers needle by striking it with a hammer and replacing the transpointed needle with the newly-made one. He crows to the crew "Look ye, for yourselves, if Ahab be not lord of the level lodestone!" (V, 511) Though even nature tries to deter Ahab from following the track of Moby Dick, he forces all things to yield to his chronometrical pursuit.

Immediately before the chase, Starbuck tries to convince Ahab that the best course would be to turn for home and stop the chase. Ahab replies, "What is it, what nameless, inscrutable, unearthly thing is it, what coozening, hidden lord and master, and cruel, remorseless emperor commands me; that against all natural loavings and longings, I so keep pushing, and crowding, and jamming myself on all the time; recklessly making me ready to do what in my own proper, natural heart, I durst not so much as dare?" (V, 536) Ahab's chronometrical soul has taken over direction of his will, and though the rational faculty warn that it is folly to continue, the soul will drive him on. As Ahab turns away from the advice of Starbuck, he looks over the side of the ship and sees the evil face of Fedallah reflecting back at him. He is now utterly committed to the unique folly and sin which is unavoidable when one follows the chronometrical course too far.

The Pequod catches up with Moby Dick and the final ad-
venture begins. The first day's encounter results in Ahab's boat being cut in two by the whale, but with no loss of life. The ship drives the whale away from the floating Ahab, and they resume the chase. After this first attack on Moby Dick, the whale is content to escape without attacking his tormentor, but Ahab refuses to stop the quest.

The second day of the chase ends much as the first, with Ahab's boat again smashed by the whale, but this time one man is missing, Fedallah, the evil harpooner. Ahab swears again to follow Moby Dick to the death, though Starbuck again points out that this chronometrical course is impiety and blasphemy in the face of all the warnings to desist.

The third day brings the chase to its violent conclusion. The whale, driven to distraction by the harpoons and the continuing attacks, turns on the Pequod and sinks it by ramming it. Ahab sinks his last harpoon into the whale and is subsequently caught in the line and carried overboard to his death. His unique folly of pursuing the absolute standard of destroying all evil, as he saw the whale, has led Ahab to the unique sin of causing the deaths of himself and the crew of the Pequod, the innocent and guilty together. Symbolically, a sky-hawk is trapped by the blow of a hammer and goes down with the ship "which, like Satan, would not sink to hell till she had dragged a living part of heaven along with her." (V, 566) This parallels Ahab's monomania which leads to his death, carrying
the crew to death with him. There is only one survivor, Ishmael, and he will be discussed in the next chapter.

Billy Budd has been widely acclaimed as one of Melville's greatest works, but has received many different interpretations. It is the story of a handsome young sailor, Billy Budd, who is innocent of all evil. He is impressed to serve aboard a British man-of-war, the Indomitable, where an evil master-at-arms, Claggart, falsely accuses him of plotting a mutiny. Unable to answer the charge verbally because of a speech defect, he lashes out at Claggart, killing him with one blow. Billy is tried and hung for his crime. While it may seem strange to consider such a meek, innocent character as Billy in the same category as the defiant monomaniac Captain Ahab, both characters exemplify a devotion to chronometrical ideals, the principle of classification of this chapter.

Billy Budd is described as the ideal manifestation of the "Handsome Sailor." (VII, 135-6) "He was young; and despite his all but fully developed frame in aspect looked even younger than he really was," (VII, 144) but the most striking aspect of the young sailor is his complete innocence. When he leaves the merchant ship, the Rights of Man, with the press-gang, Billy turns to the craft and says "And good-bye to you too, old Rights of Man!" (VII, 142) Though the comment can easily be construed as satiric, Melville adds, "To deal in double meaning and insinuations of any sort was quite foreign to his nature." (VII, 142) Billy's
fine features seem to indicate that he is of noble descent, but "For the rest, with little or no sharpness of faculty or any trace of the wisdom of the serpent, nor yet quite a dove, he possessed that kind and degree of intelligence going along with the unconventional rectitude of a sound human creature, one to whom not yet has been proffered the questionable apple of knowledge. . . Of self consciousness he seemed to have little or none, or about as much as we may reasonably impute to a dog of St. Bernard's breed. . . Billy in many respects, was little more than a sort of upright barbarian, much such perhaps as Adam presumably might have been ere the urbane Serpent wriggled himself into his company." (VII, 146-7) In all of the foregoing description the emphasis lies heavily on Billy's innocence, his almost absolute avoidance of contact with or knowledge of evil. He is an almost true chronometer. Still, there is also a repetition of his humanity; he has not the characteristics of the dove; he is a "sound human creature;" and he is like Adam, that fallible human.

The problem is that he is an inferior being. Though he says, "God knows," (VII, 146) when asked about his place of birth and his father's identity, it is all too apparent that he has human forbears and has inherited their weakness for sin. Melville says, "Though our handsome Sailor had as much of masculine beauty as one can expect anywhere to see; nevertheless, like the beautiful woman in one of Hawthorne's minor tales, there was just one thing amiss in him. No
visible blemish, indeed, as with the lady; no, but an occasional liability to a vocal defect." (VII, 148) This one blemish is said by Melville to be "a striking instance that the arch interferer, the envious marplot of Eden still has more or less to do with every human consignment to this planet of earth. In every case, one way or another he is sure to slip in his little card, as much as to remind us --I too have a hand here." (VII, 149) It is this "calling card" which leads directly to Billy's sin and downfall.

Billy Budd maintains his innocence throughout the story, and it seems to be because of a will to hold himself above the evil which besets others. When Billy witnesses punishment by flogging aboard the Indomitable, "He resolved that never through remissness would he make himself liable to such a visitation or do or omit aught that might merit even verbal reproof." (VII, 175) This is obviously a vow to be more than human, to be a chronometrical character in the terms of the Plinlimmon pamphlet.

When Billy receives a vague threat from one of the "ship's corporals of the lower decks" for slight discrepancies in his hammock and the stowage of his bag, which seem to be the result, not of negligence, but rather of tampering, he seeks out an older, more experienced sailor for advice. The old "Dansker" who represents the world of experience, recognizes Billy for the innocent that he is and thinks that "such innocence as man is capable of does yet in a moral emergency not always sharpen
the faculties or enlighten the will." (VII, 177) This sailor is the appropriate person for Billy to go to for explanation and advice, but when the old salt accurately surmises "'Baby Budd, Jemmy Legs' (meaning the master-at-arms) 'is down on you,"' (VII, 178) Billy does not heed the explanation. Billy cannot understand the duplicity of the master-at-arms who calls him "the sweet and pleasant young fellow," (VII, 178) and so refuses to believe his wise informant.

"Jemmy Legs," better known as Claggart, the master-at-arms of the Indomitable, is indeed "down on" Billy, but for no rational reason. He represents natural depravity of a most elemental type. Melville writes of him "Claggart, in whom was the mania of an evil nature, not engendered by vicious training or corrupting books or licentious living, but born with him and innate, in short 'a depravity according to nature'" (VII, 187) The only inkling of a reason for his hate for Billy is that he is envious of Billy's personal beauty, and the action which he takes against the young sailor is completely out of rational proportion for such a jealousy.

Billy is sleeping, not in the berth-decks with the general run of the crew (as in White Jacket,) but above decks, in a superior position, when he is wakened by an "after-guardsman," apparently the emissary of a mutiny plot. Melville points out another of Billy's weaknesses by noting that he has "almost an incapacity of plumply saying
no to an abrupt proposition not obviously unfriendly, nor iniquitous." (VII, 198) When he joins the man in the forechains, Billy is enraged to hear an obscure proposal which seems evil to him, and tells the after-guardsman to leave in no uncertain terms. His reaction is so sudden and impulsive that he does not learn exactly what the proposition is. He senses that it may be evil and drives the fellow off in a fit of anger at even being exposed to possible evil, and wishes to know nothing about it.

After the mysterious encounter, though Billy wants to forget this first direct experience with evil, he cannot help but be curious about it. He approaches the old "Dansker" again, and receives the same explanation which he had earlier heard, "Why, *Jemmy Legs* is down on you," (VII, 203) but Billy again refuses to consider Claggart as the root of his troubles.

Claggart approaches Captain Vere with a trumped-up story of Billy's acting as the leader of an incipient mutiny. Vere doubts the tale but decides to confront Billy with his accuser. Claggart recites his charges, which stun Billy with their monstrosity, and revive his speech impediment. Vere tells Billy to speak, but his attempts are pictured as "an agony of ineffectual eagerness to obey the injunction," (VII, 226) which seems to characterize Billy quite well. He is ineffectual because he has held himself above the evil associated with mankind, and cannot cope with it. The devil's calling card has appeared at the crucial
moment to remind the reader that Billy is only a human and therefore constitutionally incapable of chronometrical behavior. Billy finally lashes out with his fist and kills Claggart with one blow. Captain Vere defines the action when he says "Struck dead by an angel of God. Yet the angel must hang!" (VII, 229) Billy has been trying to live like an angel of God, but being a fallible human, he committed the sin of murder. This sin is truly folly, for any explanation would suffice to convince Captain Vere of his innocence, but his human frailty leads him into sin, just as it did Pierre.

At his trial before a court-martial, Billy fails to reveal the approach of the emissary because of his "innate repugnance to playing a part at all approaching that of an informer against one's own shipmates ... with the blind feeling now his, that nothing really was being hatched." (VII, 239-240) Billy still relies on his chronometrical soul, which gives him "feelings," rather than on intelligence, or the experience which he so sorely lacks.

Billy is convicted as a result of Captain Vere's addresses to the court and sentenced to hang though innocent of any malice or intent. Vere points out that Billy's lack of intent will acquit Billy "At the Last Assizes," (VII, 247) but on earth, other considerations convict him.

Billy is hanged, and his last words are "God bless Captain Vere!" (VII, 265) He is chronometrical to the end,
turning the other cheek even in the face of death, but death must come, because the world cannot long tolerate an inferior being trying to live by chronometrical standards.

The characters studied in this chapter share a devotion to chronometrical standards with each other and with Pierre. Taji pursues his quest of Yiliah, his symbol of perfection, into the chartless seas and suicide. Redburn—White Jacket attempts to hold himself above the common run of mankind aboard ship and finally plunges from the heights to a virtual burial in the depths of the sea. Ahab takes his ship and its crew to destruction while attempting to destroy the white whale which personifies evil to him. Billy Budd remains innocent of evil until he is unavoidably faced with it. At that time, he cannot cope with it and dies for his efforts. In every case, the earthliness of the character causes the ultimate failure of his quest for the absolute.
NOTES

1. James E. Miller, Jr., develops the argument for such a treatment quite convincingly in "Redburn and White Jacket: Initiation and Baptism," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, XIII (1959), 273-293.

2. James E. Miller, Jr., gives a brief but complete review of the varying critical opinions on Billy Budd in "Billy Budd: The Catastrophe of Innocence," Modern Language Notes, LXXII (1958), 168 n.
IV THE HOROLOGICALS

As the chronometrical characters in Melville's novels betray a moral similarity beneath their external disparity, so the horological characters show a deep relationship beneath their superficial differences. They share one characteristic, a desire to pursue a horological course of action, a willingness to compromise with the evil which is omnipresent in the world of men. In other words, these men depend on relative (horological) standards, rather than on absolute (chronometrical) standards.

In Taji's long quest for Yillah, it is the philosopher, Babbalanja, who best personifies the horological character. It is in his decision to remain at Serenia, where the best Mardian (earthly) approximation of Yillah (perfection) is to be found, that Babbalanja best reveals his horological standards.

Babbalanja has a very rational view of the universe: "if not against us, nature is not for us." (I, 244) The earthly life is the important consideration to Babbalanja, for there may be no afterlife. He takes a distinctly relative view of life when he says "Ah gods! in all this universal stir, am I to prove one stable thing?" (I, 277) Again noting the relativism of the world, he says, "The knave of a thousand years ago seems a fine old fellow full of spirit and fun, little malice in his soul; whereas, the
knave of to-day seems a sour-visaged wight, with nothing to redeem him." (I, 314)

When the seekers visit Maramma, the island where Alma is professed but not truly followed, Babbalanja again reveals his wisdom. He says, "Yillah may have touched these shores; but long since she must have fled." (I, 30) The philosopher is the first to realize that there is too much evil in the priest-ridden country of Maramma for such perfect innocence and happiness as Yillah represents to long exist there.

Commenting on Alma and his worship as practiced on Maramma, Babbalanja says, "The prophet came to do away all gods but one; but since the days of Alma, the idols of Maramma have more than quadrupled. The prophet came to make us Mardians more virtuous and happy; but along with all previous good, the same wars, crimes, and miseries, which existed in Alma's day, under various modifications are yet extant. Nay: take from your chronicles, Mohi, the history of those horrors, one way or other, resulting from the doings of Alma's nominal followers, and your chronicles would not so frequently make mention of blood. The prophet came to guarantee our eternal felicity; but according to what is held in Maramma, that felicity rests on so hard a proviso, that to a thinking mind, but very few of our sinful race may secure it." (II, 32) This commentary echoes almost exactly the criticism of Christianity found in the Pinlimmon pamphlet. Like the philosopher in the later novel, Babbalanja sees the tremendous disparity between the teachings
of ideal religion and the world as it is, and cannot resolve the difference.

Babbalanja finds an ancient book called "A Happy Life" during their travels and finds much in it that pleases him. He reads, "I would bear the same mind, whether I be rich or poor, whether I get or lose in the world. I will reckon benefits well placed as the fairest part of my possession, not valuing them by number or weight, but by the profit and esteem of the receiver; accounting myself never the poorer for any thing I give... I will live and die with this testimony: that I loved a good conscience; that I never invaded another man's liberty; and that I preserved my own." (II, 78)

Though the ideas are more nearly absolute than the Plimmon pamphlet, Babbalanja insists that it is not a religion. These thoughts make Babbalanja very happy, but he says "I am not content. The mystery of mysteries is still a mystery." (II, 80) The mystery will not be resolved for the philosopher until he arrives at Serenia, where virtuous expediency is practiced in the name of Alma.

When the travelers draw near Pimmines, the land of the Tapparians who pay a great deal of attention to the trivial details of social life, Babbalanja says, "no Yillah is here," recognizing that perfection cannot exit where trivia is considered important. They land anyway, and after observing the many foibles of these social people, Babbalanja comments, "They are the victims of two
incurable maladies: stone in the heart, and ossification of the head." (II, 106) The philosopher recognizes these pompous people for what they are.

Babbalanja discourses learnedly on the question of philosophical necessity and comes up with this conclusion: "I sometimes see but two things in all Mardi to believe: that I myself exist, and that I can most happily, or least miserably exist, by the practice of righteousness. All else is in the clouds; and nought else may I learn, till the firmament be split from horizon to horizon. Yet alas! too often do I swing from these moorings." (II, 125-126) Babbalanja's philosophy is closely related to that of Pinlimmon in its earthly relativism of practice. He later says "Our souls belong to our bodies, not our bodies to our souls," (II, 214) again emphasizing the earthly nature of his philosophy.

Serenia is an island where virtuous expediency is the rule of life. The residents treat every man as a brother because Oro (God) is the father of all, and because Alma commanded it. (Alma's name is taken from the Faerie Queene of Edmund Spenser and is more nearly an earthly figure than a Christ, though the residents of Maramma interpreted his teachings in a chronometrical way. As in Spenser, Alma represents the reason, and also the rule of temperance over the body.) Alma, in this practice of the Serenians, would please Pinlimmon, for "This Mardi, to which loved Alma gives his laws; not Paradise." (II, 366) Along the same
line of thought, the Serenians believe that "were the turf our everlasting pillow, still would the Master's faith answer a blessed end; --making us more truly happy here. That is the first and chief result; for holy here, we must be holy elsewhere." (II, 366) The Serenians follow the teachings of Alma and make a pointed distinction between the teachings of Alma and the practice of those who profess his faith. They adopt the fatherless and help the poor on the island. Dissenters are tolerated and the Serenians will not say that people of other beliefs are wrong, "for this we know not, absolutely." (II, 365) Though Alma is worshipped, "He who hourly prays to Alma, but lives not up to world-wide love and charity --that man is more an unbeliever than he who verbally rejects the Master, but does his bidding." (II, 365) Plinlimmon says that Christ's unique contribution to morals, the return of good for evil, is the part of the moral system that fails to work. The Serenians say, "All that is vital in the Master's faith, lived here in Mardi, and in humble dells, was practiced long previous to the Master's coming. But never before was virtue so lifted up among us, that all might see." (II, 366)

There is no king in Serenia, but the people do not naively believe in the perfection of man. They believe that there is some germ of good in the heart of every man, and that is their starting point. The social system is admittedly imperfect and must remain so because of the
imperfect state of the men who form it. Equality is not attempted, but those who are better supplied with goods keep the needy from absolute want. They have legal machinery to deal with crime, by making those who commit crimes live apart from the rest of the population until they repent of their crime. Babbalanja, upon hearing these idealistic claims from an old spokesman of the Serenians, recalls that the claims sound like those of the residents of Maramma, and Media says that they must be impractical, for "men are men." (II, 367) Their informant answers with some rhetorical questions which reveal his faith in the practicality of Alma's teachings: "And are not these things enjoined by Alma? And would Alma inculcate the impossible? of what merit his precepts unless they may be practiced?" (II, 367) Alma's precepts, contrary to Christ's, (at least in Plimlimmon's view) are ultimately practicable according to the Serenian.

Babbalanja finds himself strangely attracted by the talk of the old Serenian, and if there is not much in their faith which goes against reason. The answer is "Right-reason, and Alma, are the same; else Alma, not reason, would we reject." (II, 370) As the Serenian gives a sort of peroration to his explanation of the faith practiced by the Serenians, Babbalanja recognizes the teachings as truth and is converted to this new practice. Yoomy, Mohi, and Media follow suit, but it is Babbalanja who first sees the light.
As a result of Dabbalanja's conversion, he is granted a vision. An angel visits him and asks what he has learned, Dabbalanja answers, "This have I learned, oh! spirit! --In things mysterious, to seek no more; but rest content, with knowing naught but Love." (II, 374) Dabbalanja has reached the point at which he realizes the inadequacy of reason to learn the secrets of the universe. Love must suffice.

The angel replies that Dabbalanja is blessed for his knowledge and his humility, and "That which thy own wisdom could not find, thy ignorance confessed shall gain." (II, 374) The angel takes Babbalanja far above earth to look at the world. There the angel tells Babbalanja "But as perfect wisdom can be only Oro's; so, perfect holiness is his alone. And whoso is otherwise than perfect in his holiness is liable to sin." (II, 375) These words echo the Plinlimmon pamphlet. Babbalanja asks the ultimate question of why are men created, but the angel cannot answer it, for it is "the last mystery which underlieth all the rest." (II, 376) Upon the return from the dream trip, the guide explains that the philosopher should know "that heaven hath no roof. To know all is to be all. Beatitude there is none. And your only Mardian happiness is but exemption from great woes--no more." (II, 379)

Taji prepares to depart, but Babbalanja, with his new wisdom, remains in Serenia, "Not because what we sought is found; but that I now possess all which may be had of what I sought in Mardi." (II, 380) He warns Taji that his Yillah
will not be found, but the chronometrical seeker insists on continuing the quest. Taji leaves the horological Babbalanja in the horological society of Serenia and sails to his death.

In the Redburn-White Jacket narrative there are three horological characters. The first of these, Harry Bolton, from Redburn, unsuccessfully attempts to live by virtuous expediency, but he shares enough good characteristics with Jack Chase, an undoubted horological in White Jacket, to be a more youthful and immature sketch of the same character. The third horological character in these novels is White-Jacket himself, after his rebirth in the baptism of his plunge into the ocean.

Harry Bolton is the least defensible of the horological characters, but he shares many characteristics with "matchless and unmatchable Jack Chase." (VI, 501) Like that sailor, Harry is intelligent and quite handsome. They both have fine singing voices. The major difference is that Harry is still an impetuous youth, rather than a thinking man. When Redburn first meets the young Englishman, he is completely taken in by the fabrications which Harry erects to protect himself from the world, but as they become friends, he feels "ill at ease for my bosom friend's conscience." (III, 363) Bolton has come to terms with the world to the extent that he can ease his way in it by assuming a mask, but does not know enough to realize when the mask must be removed. In London Harry conducts himself knowingly, but loses his money to the evil because he lacks wisdom.
Bolton is able to charm the wicked sailors of the Highlander with his singing much as Jack Chase charms the sailors of the Neversink with his recitations of verse. Harry, however, is taken in by the manipulations of the slick Captain Riga, while Jack is never fooled aboard the Neversink.

Harry is always described with the effeminacy of youth. "His complexion was a mantling brunette, feminine as a girl's; his feet were small; his hands were white; and his eyes were large, black, and womanly." (III, 278) On the other hand, Jack Chase, the "noble first captain of the top," (IV, 13) is always a man. "He was a Briton, and a true-blue; tall and well-knit, with a clear open eye, a fine broad brow, and an abounding nut-brown beard." (IV, 13)

At the end of Redburn, the author recounts what little he has been able to gather about Bolton's life after the arrival in New York. Unable to find employment in the city, Bolton shipped aboard a whaler out of desperation and was accidentally killed. He was too young and effeminate to exist in the world as he was, but his good characteristics reappear in Jack Chase of White Jacket.

Jack Chase is a handsome, masculine man, and "no man told such stories, sang such songs, or with greater alacrity sprang to his duty." (IV, 13) Only once does he act contrary to the rules of naval discipline, and that is when he deserts his ship. White Jacket explains "He went to draw a partisan blade in the civil commotions of Peru, and befriend, heart and soul, what he deemed the cause of the Right." (IV, 19) His break with society's rules of conduct,
as symbolized by naval discipline, is not to attempt to live a perfect life, but to strike a practical blow for the good of the Peruvians. When he is apprehended by his old ship, Jack does not attempt deception, nor does he ask his Peruvian shipmates to fight for him in a defiant gesture. He sees that the best course for the most people is to give himself up to the Americans and leave the Peruvians with his blessing. He will not pursue what he thinks is right, fighting for Peruvian freedom, to the point where improper means are required to continue the good, the improper means being either deception or a futile fight with the Americans. His decision in this situation is a perfect illustration of virtuous expediency in action.

When the Neversink spends a period in the beautiful port of Rio de Janeiro, Jack Chase decides that his good standing with the Captain and his position as a petty officer enable him to do some good for the whole crew; to wit, to get them all a day's liberty in Rio. His abilities as an orator and practical psychologist are put to the test of facing both the Captain and The Commodore, but he succeeds in obtaining the privilege of a day ashore for all hands. This is, in one sense, the good for all humanity (at least on the ship) which Pinlimmon wants accomplished.

When White Jacket is arraigned at the mast for his failure to be at an assigned post during a seamanship evolution, Jack Chase does not take the lead in championing the cause of his friend. The sailor has already been ordered
to the gratings for flogging when a marine steps forward to defend his integrity. When this sudden, astounding action causes the Captain to hesitate, Jack Chase also rises to the defence, and White Jacket is spared. It appears that Chase was not willing to risk his standing with the officers of the ship by defending a man in an apparently indefensible position, but when it looks as though White Jacket may be spared, he immediately acts. The general usefulness of his good offices with the officers to the rest of the crew was demonstrated by his action in the liberty incident recounted above, and Jack is not willing to sacrifice the future good which might result from this position to a hopeless cause.

Just before White Jacket suffers his memorable fall from the heights, Jack Chase warns him to remove his jacket, the ultimate cause for his fall. This warning symbolizes that Jack is the one person who recognizes that a stubborn clinging to chronometrical standards (the jacket) is senseless in the face of the evil of the world.

Since I left the old chronometrical White Jacket at the bottom of his plunge into the sea in Chapter III, I must now return to the rebirth of the new horological White Jacket at the moment between life and death. As he descends, he reaches a calm acceptance, "Purple and pathless was the deep calm now around me, flecked by summer lightnings in an azure afar. The horrible nausea was gone; the bloody, blind film turned a pale green; I wondered..."
whether I was yet dead, or still dying." (IV, 497) The sailor does not seem to care for life, "But of a sudden some fashionless form brushed my side --some inert, soiled [or coiled] fish of the sea; the thrill of being alive again tingled in my nerves, and the strong shunning of death shocked me through." (IV, 497) The physical contact with a fish arouses his earthly senses, and they call him compellingly back to life. When he rises to the surface, he feels restricted by the jacket, which has filled with water. This symbolizes his new realization that his chronometrical standards are keeping him from life. He cuts the jacket off, "as if I were ripping open myself," (IV, 498) emerging at last from his cocoon of chronometrical standards to join mankind. As the jacket slowly sinks, the sailors on deck mistake it for a white shark and harpoon it, speeding it on its way to the bottom, forever freeing White Jacket of its restrictions. Symbolically, the bystanders are better able to recognize its evil than he is, though they are not able to understand the nature of the evil. The last chapter of the book is filled with a benevolent spirit as the reborn White Jacket bids goodbye to all of the crew of the Neversink. He has become a full-fledged member of mankind only at the last possible moment, but he is saved.

The last view of the ship at the end of the novel has "ever-noble Jack Chase" (IV, 501) reciting poetry to what is now a unified group of men. White Jacket has shed his chronometrical standards, and now he stands hand in hand with
Ishmael, the narrator of most of the story, is the horological character in *Moby Dick*, though his introduction seems to be more fitting for a chronometrical. At the outset, Ishmael says, "it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul," (V, 1) and that he has decided to go to sea because of his feelings against mankind. This sounds like a chronometrical character, as does his egotistical tone when he says that he goes to sea as a common sailor in preference to any other position. Though the coupling of Commodore, Captain, or Cook as Ishmael's other possible positions and the sandwiching of "Whaling Voyage by one Ishmael" (V, 5) between a presidential election and a battle in "Afghanistan" on "the grand programme of Providence" (V, 5) may be considered as examples of Melville's sometimes whimsical humor operating through Ishmael, they nevertheless smack of egotism.

Ishmael is stranded at New Bedford on his way to Nantucket, and there meets his salvation in the form of a cannibal harpooner named Queequeg. He passes up two inns because they are too jolly (and expensive) for him and ends up at the "Spouter Inn," run by "Peter Coffin," and ominous connection, as Ishmael himself notes. (V, 8) When the landlord informs him that the only bed available is half of the one occupied by a harpooner, Ishmael responds that he does not like to sleep two in a bed, but if the harpooner is not decidedly objectionable, and nothing else is available, he will share the bed. This is the action of a horological
character, willing to compromise his ethical stand in the face of reality. On reflection, however, Ishmael decides that perhaps his standards need not be compromised. He tries to work out an arrangement on the benches in the public room, but even with the aid of the innkeeper's plane on the pine slab, no comfort is possible. Again the situation forces Ishmael back to his compromise, but he wants to know more about his prospective bed-mate before committing himself irrevocably to the communal bed. He loses his temper with the innkeeper because of his own confusion at the story about the absent harpooner, but the situation is clarified to Ishmael's satisfaction and he goes to bed. He observes his roommate come in and prepare for sleep. Though it takes some time, Ishmael finally realizes that the harpooner, whose name turns out to be Queequeg, is a native of the South Seas, but this knowledge offers Ishmael little consolation. The pagan extinguishes the light and jumps into bed with his tomahawk-pipe clenched between his teeth before he realizes that the bed has another occupant. Considerable confusion results, and Ishmael calls to the landlord in fear for his life. Coffin comes and explains the situation to Queequeg, thus bringing peace. These early events reveal that though Ishmael shows some readiness to compromise his standards, he also reveals some reluctance. This reluctance will shortly disappear as Ishmael forms a close, unreserved bond of friendship with Queequeg and becomes a true horological. This reluctance may also
be interpreted as symbolizing that a horological character need not give up all of his standards, a level of meaning which may be operative, though it is not the primary meaning of Ishmael's reluctance.

After Coffin restores peace to the premises, Ishmael thinks: "the man's a human being just as I am: he has as much reason to fear me, as I have to be afraid of him. Better sleep with a sober cannibal than a drunken Christian." (V, 24) Despite the early indications of a chronometrical character, Ishmael establishes himself quite firmly as a horological by this reasoning.

Ishmael makes the first advances of friendship toward Queequeg. "I'll try a pagan friend, thought I, [Ishmael] since Christian kindness has proved but hollow courtesy." (V, 50) Like Plinlimmon, Ishmael recognizes the mockery of Christian principles by its followers, and broadens his criteria to include non-Christians among his friends. The advances are accepted, and very soon Ishmael proposes a social smoke, which they share from the pagan's pipe. "If there yet lurked any ice of indifference towards me [Ishmael] in the Pagan's breast, this pleasant, genial smoke we had, soon thawed it out, and left us cronies." (V, 51) Smoking is the same friendly, relaxing activity which White Jacket and Ahab scorned, and here it seals a bond of friendship. The bond is quickly formalized, and Queequeg proclaims that they are married, "meaning, in his country's phrase, that we were bosom friends." (V, 51) Queequeg asks Ishmael to join him in the worship of a little ebony idol named Yojo,
a request which causes some momentary consternation in the Christian's mind. Ishmael resolves the problem for himself in this manner: "How then could I unite with this wild idolator in worshipping his piece of wood? But what is worship? thought I. Do you suppose now, Ishmael, that the magnificent God of heaven and earth--pagans and all included--can possibly be jealous of an insignificant bit of black wood? Impossible! But what is worship?--to do the will of God--that is worship. And what is the will of God?--to do to my fellow man what I would have my fellow man to do to me--that is the will of God. Now, Queequeg is my fellow man. And what do I wish that Queequeg would do to me? Why, unite with me in my particular Presbyterian form of worship. Consequently, I must then unite with him in his; ergo, I must turn idolator." (V, 51-52) Though this reasoning would fail to convince any chronometrical character, the horological Ishmael is content with the results and joins the pagan in his ritual. Thus Ishmael also meets Plinlimmon's requirements that a good man "is perfectly tolerant to all other men's opinions." (VI, 251)

It is necessary to draw a distinction here between the friendship of Redburn with Harry Bolton and that between Ishmael and Queequeg. The former relationship was largely based on a mutually recognized attitude of superiority. Thus, it failed to break down Redburn's feelings of superiority over mankind, and failed to compromise his chronometrical standards. Bolton shares the same characteristics on which Redburn prides himself; intelligence,
high birth, and high standards, but even with the Christian, white Englishman, Redburn has reservations. When Ishmael seals his friendship with Queequeg, the pagan, dark-skinned islander, he does so with no reservations. The basis for the attraction is not a similarity of superiority or intelligence, of high birth, or of high standards, but a very basic similarity of humanity. Ishmael compromises all chronometrical standards to enter the relationship, and he forfeits any claim to superiority.

Since the friendship between Queequeg and Ishmael is formed early in the book, there may be a temptation to treat it as merely introductory, as the story of Samoa and Anatoo in Mardi. But Melville places reminders that the friendship is still present throughout the novel, and also allows Ishmael to continue the expression of his horological standards.

When Queequegfasts and sits in a torturingly uncomfortable position for a day, in his worship of Yojo, Ishmael says "I have no objection to any person's religion, be it what it may, so long as that person does not kill or insult any other person, because that other person doesn't believe it also. But when a man's religion becomes really frantic; when it is a positive torment to him; and, in fine, makes this earth of ours an uncomfortable inn to lodge in; then I think it high time to take that individual aside and argue the point with him." (V, 85) He does argue the point with Queequeg, but his criticism
is not just aimed at the "Ramadan" which the pagan has just been celebrating, but also at self-injuring practices of religion in general.

When the owners of the Pequod question Queequeg's church affiliation, Ishmael says that the savage is a "born member of the First Congregational Church," and adds the explanation "I mean, sir, the same ancient Catholic Church to which you and I, and Captain Peleg there, and Queequeg here, and all of us, and every mother's son and soul of us belong; the great and everlasting First Congregation of this whole worshipping world; . . . in that we all join hands." (V, 88) This theology agrees exactly with Plinlimmon's view that a good man must "believe that there is a God for infidels, as well as for believers." (VI, 251)

Later, in a chapter called "The Monkey-Rope," the bond of friendship existing between Ishmael and Queequeg is symbolized by the monkey-rope which is stretched between the harpooner on the whale being cut up, and the sailor on the deck, to insure the safety of the former. Ishmael says, "So strongly and metaphysically did I conceive of my situation then, that while earnestly watching his motions, I seemed distinctly to perceive that my own individuality was now merged in a joint stock company of two. . . --still further pondering, I say, I saw that this situation of mine was the precise situation of every mortal that breathes; only, in most cases, he, one way or another, has this
Siamese connexion with a plurality of other mortals."
(V, 318) Man is thus integrally connected with other men and must come to a horological compromise with their good and evil if he is to survive.

One day Ishmael is put to the task of squeezing slightly congealed spermaceti back into its liquid form. During this task he feels an almost mystical relationship with humanity. He feels like expressing this: "Oh! my dear fellow beings, why should we longer cherish any social acerbities, or know the slightest ill-humor or envy! Come; let us squeeze hands all round; nay, let us all squeeze ourselves into each other; let us squeeze ourselves universally into the very milk and sperm of kindness. Would that I could keep squeezing that sperm for ever! For now, since by many prolonged, repeated experiences, I have perceived that in all cases man must eventually lower, or at least shift, his conceit of attainable felicity." (V, 414-415) Ishmael has learned the lesson of brotherhood and of compromise with standards and he expresses it in almost the same terms that Pinlimmon uses.

After the disaster at the end of the chase, Ishmael alone survives. He has compromised as Ahab did not, and he is saved by his compromise. Queequeg's coffin rises to the surface and bouys Ishmael up until he is picked up by another ship. This incident symbolizes that Ishmael has joined the brotherhood of men by his application of horological standards, and that his bond of friendship is his salvation.
Captain the Honorable Edward Fairfax Vere (or "Starry Vere" as he is popularly known) from *Billy Budd*, is one of Melville's most completely defined horological characters. His most important decision is to commit a sin according to absolute standards, to hang Billy Budd, the innocent sailor, but it is to avoid repercussions which could cause great harm to many men.

The rebellious mutinous spirit abroad in the world, and particularly England's situation relative to the Spithead and Nore mutinies is carefully set out by Melville in the "Preface" to *Billy Budd*. The story is set in 1797 to bring it into closer relationship to those events than the affair on which it seems to be based, the Somers mutiny in 1842. In the "Preface," Melville first applauds the French Revolution for rectifying some of "the Old World's hereditary wrongs" but he immediately condemns it for becoming "a wrongdoer; one more oppressive than the kings." (VII, 131) The same progression is applied to the unrest in the British Navy; an uprising against real abuses at Spithead, but leading the sailors "afterwards at the Nore to make inordinate and aggressive demands." (VII, 132)

As soon as Billy has been ushered aboard the *Indomitable*, Melville again emphasizes the seriousness of the mutinies to England, and their proximity to the time of the story. He says "To the British Empire the Nore Mutiny was what a strike in the fire-brigade would be to London threatened by general arson." (VII, 151) Later, Melville points out
that all of the grievances had not been redressed and comments, "Hence it was not unreasonable to apprehend some return of trouble sporadic or general." (VII, 158-159)

Melville carefully presents all of the foregoing warnings of the dangers inherent in the situation before Vere is introduced as a character to insure that the reader will realize that the danger is real and not just a figment of Vere's imagination. In fact, when Vere first appears, Melville makes the point that "nothing obvious in the demeanor of the officers could have suggested that the Great Mutiny was a recent event," (VII, 160) and goes on to say that the officers take their "tone" from the commanding officer.

Vere is described in almost glowing terms. He is "a sailor of distinction even in a time prolific of renowned seamen. . . He had seen much service, been in various engagements, always acquitting himself as an officer mindful of the welfare of his men, but never tolerating an infraction of discipline." (VII, 160) He had "a certain unaffected modesty of manhood sometimes accompanying a resolute nature, a modesty evinced at all times not calling for pronounced action, and which shown in any rank of life suggests a virtue aristocratic." (VII, 161) "Aside from his qualities as a sea-officer Captain Vere was an exceptional character. . . He had a marked leaning toward everything intellectual. . . His settled convictions were as a dyke against those invading waters of novel opinion social political and otherwise, which carried away as in a torrent no few minds in those days, minds by nature not in-
inferior to his own." (VII, 163-164) It seems obvious that Melville sees Vere as an almost perfect officer and gentleman.

When Claggart approaches Captain Vere with his charge against Billy, Melville carefully interjects that Vere had little chance to know Claggart personally, as the master-at-arms arrived aboard just before the events of the story, but the captain does feel vaguely repelled by the sailor. Vere recognizes Claggart's attempt to alarm him and discredits much of his testimony, insights which reflect to the credit of Vere. When Claggart names Billy as the object of his accusations, Vere is astounded, for he has an accurate estimation of the "handsome sailor's" character.

Though Vere is suspicious of Claggart, he feels that it is necessary to inquire further into the accusation because of the seriousness of the charge in the light of the recent mutinies. Budd and Claggart come to his cabin where Claggart rehearses his charge. When Billy's vocal impediment reappears, Vere, though he has no prior knowledge of it, quickly comprehends the defect. He treats Billy with fatherly gentleness, but in spite of all, Billy still strikes Claggart.

On examining Claggart's body, Vere sinks into a short, but profound meditation. Then "Slowly he uncovered his face; and the effect was as if the moon emerging from eclipse should reappear with quite another aspect than that which had gone into hiding. The father in him man-
ifested towards Billy thus far in the scene, was replaced by the military disciplinarian." (VII, 227) Vere has evaluated the situation and realizes that there is no alternative but to hang Billy, and he must keep up a stern facade to be merciful to Billy. Vere exclaims "Struck dead by an angel of God. Yet the angel must hang." (VII, 229) This indicates that already the course of action has been decided.

Though the chronometrical course would be to free Billy because he is blameless, the best course, the horological course, is to hang him to prevent the possibility of further mutiny.

The surgeon and the other officers are of the opinion that any action on the matter should be postponed until the Indomitable, which is on detached duty, rejoins the fleet, in order to consult the admiral. Vere overrules their objections and decides on quick action, "Feeling that unless quick action were taken on it, the deed of the foretopman, so soon as it should be known on the gun-decks would tend to awaken any slumbering embers of the Nore among the crew, a sense of the case overruled in Captain Vere every other consideration." (VII, 226)

The court meets and the testimony is quickly concluded. The blow is admitted by Budd, though he denies any malice toward the victim. When the court asks Billy why Claggart would lie about him, Vere interrupts to direct the court to "confine its attention to the blow's consequence, which consequence is to be deemed not otherwise than as justly
the striker's deed." (VII, 241) Vere believes that they must not consider the absolute morality of the situation, but must only be concerned with the practical effect of the blow.

Billy Budd is removed from the court and Vere moves to address the members of the court, "climbing the slant deck in the ship's lee roll; without knowing it symbolizing thus in his action a mind resolute to surmount difficulties even if against primitive instincts strong as the wind and the sea." (VII, 243) The instincts are his feelings toward the innately good Budd, and the naturally evil Claggart, but by an act of intelligent will he forces himself to deal with the situation as a practical matter of naval discipline, and he tells his court to do the same. He refuses to let his feelings betray him into an action which might well bring on a breakdown of discipline on the ship, which in turn would cause much strife and grief for all concerned. The damage could possibly spread to the whole country, for if the ship were lost from the English fleet at such a crucial time, the consequences might be catastrophic. Vere will not allow chronometrical standards of right and wrong to prod him into taking such an enormous risk or the life of one man, regardless of how good that man may be. Vere must take the initiative to do the virtuously expedient act, and he does. He admits that Budd will be forgiven in the Last Judgement but insists that he must be convicted in this temporal court.
He also forbids clemency as being prejudicial to good order in such extreme times.

Billy is convicted and sentenced to hang. Captain Vere communicates the sentence to the young sailor with Melville's "conjecture" the only idea that the reader is given of the scene. Melville says that Billy suffered less than Vere in the proceedings, an effect which stems more from Vere's humanity than from any twinges of conscience.

The end of Vere's career is recounted briefly at the end of the story. The Indomitable becomes involved in an engagement with a French ship, the Atheist, and Vere is mortally wounded. To the end, Vere tries to prevent anarchy and forestall revolution, to bring virtuous expediency into practice. His last words are "Billy Budd, Billy Budd," (VII, 275) but they are not uttered in remorse for his act. It was the action which had to be taken, and Vere did not back away from it.

Babbalanja, the rational philosopher of Mardi, realizes that the society of Serenia, where virtuous expediency is practiced, is the best that man can expect in this world. Jack Chase acts always in the way which in his view will benefit the most people. White Jacket joins hands with his fellow men after his baptism at the end of White Jacket. Ishmael accepts a savage friend by applying broad humanitarian principles to his selection of friends and is spared from the disaster which meets his shipmates. Captain Vere must make a difficult decision to condemn an innocent
man, in order to preserve order. Each of these characters acts out his part in the novels in accordance with Pliny's doctrine of virtuous expediency, and each of them is admirably fitted to live in the world as a result.
NOTE

1. John W. Nichol has pointed out that *coiled*, rather than *soiled*, is probably the correct reading of the word. See "Melville's "Soiled" Fish of the Sea," *American Literature*, XXI (1949), 338-339.
V CONCLUSION

There is a great deal of critical controversy about the place of the Plinlimmon pamphlet in Melville's work, and his artistic intention in writing it. This controversy extends to the applicability of the pamphlet to Melville's work, and even to the novel in which it appears, Pierre. Since there is a question about what the pamphlet means and whether or not it is complete, and also how it illuminates Pierre, if it does so at all, I made a fairly detailed analysis of the pamphlet itself, and then showed precisely how this interpretation of the pamphlet applies directly to Pierre. Pierre's death at the end of the novel and the woe which he suffers throughout come as direct results of his failure to understand the exhortation of the pamphlet and to apply it to his own conduct. Some of Melville's earlier work is also susceptible to interpretation in this light. Mardi contains Taji, an early character who tries to follow what Plinlimmon would call a chronometrical course of conduct. The pamphlet makes Taji's quest more understandable and his suicide at the end of the novel more predictable. In Redburn and White Jacket, two novels which make up one continued narrative, the title character (treating the two as one person) attempts to live by an absolute standard by setting himself above the common lot of mankind as represented by the crew of the ship(s). This narrative has a somewhat less dis-
astrous end than **Pierre** or **Mardi**, because **White Jacket** manages to cast off his chronometrical soul, but it is only after that soul, symbolized by his white jacket, has led him to the very verge of death in the plunge into the sea. **Ahab**'s monomaniacal quest for the white whale in **Moby Dick** becomes easier to understand when the maimed captain of the whaler is viewed as a chronometrical character. He believes that all evil is personified in the whale and that, by acting in a godlike manner, he can destroy the whale and thus free mankind from evil. But **Ahab**, like **Pierre**, **Tajji**, and **Redburn-White Jacket**, is only a mortal and falls into folly and sin for his heroic efforts. **Ahab**'s death is the reward which he reaps for his attempt at chronometrical behavior. **Billy Budd**, **Melville**'s last work, is also illuminated by the Plistimmon pamphlet. **Billy** is more nearly perfect in his innocence than any of the other chronometrical characters, but he still carries the "calling card" of Satan, and it proves to be his undoing. This story again dramatizes the moral of the pamphlet: that woe and death are the rewards for a mortal who attempts to live according to heavenly standards.

**Melville**'s heroes, if they can be called that, are the horological characters. Though they fail to be as spectacular as the chronometrical characters, they do succeed in living in the world. There is no horological character in **Pierre**, but such characters are found in the rest of the novels which contain chronometrical characters.
In Mardi the philosopher, Dabbalanja, chooses to remain in the horological society of Serenia rather than continue the quest for perfection. Dabbalanja realizes the imperfections of the Serenian society, but knows that compromise with imperfection is necessary for earthly existence. His compromise and the compromise with evil which the Serenian society makes are both more meaningful in the light of the "virtuous expediency" required of a horological character by the Plinlimmon pamphlet. In the Redburn-White Jacket narrative Harry Bolton is a fledgling horological character, but he fails to effect a workable compromise with life and dies. The actions of Jack Chase, a more mature Harry Bolton, are consistent when measured by horological standards, though they may be puzzling by an absolute standard. Ishmael is saved from the ultimate disaster of the Pequod in Moby Dick because he arrived at a compromise with absolute criteria of right and wrong. His savage friend, Queequeg, who is the means of Ishmael's salvation from absolute standards, also provides the means for his salvation from drowning, the coffin which keeps him afloat. Captain "Starry" Vere's action in condemning Billy Budd to death in the work of the same name becomes more understandable and sympathetic when viewed as an action of "virtuous expediency" to prevent possible mutiny.

The chronometrical characters in the novels have received slightly more attention in this thesis than the horologicals but their stature justifies this emphasis to
me. The horological characters are far from dull in Melville's work, but the mortals who dare to attempt chronometrical action do rise above them in heroism. The chronometrical men may be wrong, but they rise to heroic action in their errors.

The Plinlimmon pamphlet, "Chronometricals and Horologicals" does provide the key to a basic theme in Melville's fiction, and the fiction can be better understood in the light of this unusual pamphlet.
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