

## CHAPTER 7

### *Utopia/Dystopia: Plantation, Factory, and City, 1820-1845*

The Myth of the Frontier offered one solution to the social divisions arising from economic expansion—the promise of abundant free land and resources for the great mass of the population. When it appeared that the supply of frontier land was approaching a point of exhaustion, the Frontier Myth became a prophecy of disorder, if not of disaster. So long as citizens of the republic were conceived in the terms established by the Myth—as active and ambitious pursuers of wealth and power—the closing of the Frontier would be seen as the clamping down of a safety valve, producing the intolerable internal pressures that are born of the competition of classes for limited resources. The qualities that made a Daniel Boone would be perverted into the predatory commercialism of a Simon Suggs or the outright criminality of a Murrell; and the only counter to a regime of Suggses would be one presided over by authoritative soldier-aristocrats, capable of overawing and disciplining the unruly multitude.

But the literary mythology of the period was not restricted to the vocabulary of the Frontier Myth, and it offered alternative ways of conceiving the character of the citizen and the social consequences of the Metropolitanization of the continent. The Metropolis was not in fact the obsolete survival of Old World decadence that Jefferson invoked in his darker moments. Cities and their immediate hinterlands were the focus of as much and more entrepreneurial energy as the West. Cities were places to which the ambitious artisan or the underemployed farmer's child could go to earn wages and better his or her condition. If Frontier expansion was checked, and the Simon Suggses of the Frontier ran rampant in the backwash, then the city was to be seen as the place in which America's future was being created. Even the South, whose Metropolis was no city but the old-plantation region of the Atlantic littoral, affirmed its version of Metropolitan culture in the exaltation of a "planter aristocracy."

A notable current in literary fiction during this period took a positive view of these developments and developed fictional microcosms that gave shape to fantasies and expectations about the new Metropolitan society. However, these fictions do not exclude the Frontier from their apprehension of reality; indeed, they embody the Myth of the Frontier as a necessary

dialectical opposite, and they deploy a similar symbolic language that links class, sex, and race. They even bear out the ideological premise of the Frontier Myth, which sees a regime of class subordination as the necessary consequence of the closing of the Frontier era. The new regime of the Metropolis is regarded as a positive and progressive development; but the literature does this with some awareness that it is abandoning belief in the traditional democratic ethic of aggrandizing and liberating the individual.

These fictions evade the problem of social order bequeathed by the Frontier Myth by obscuring or denying the bases of class conflicts. The Myth of the Frontier achieves a similar belief by imagining that the natural environment is so rich in resources as to render competition harmless, class conflict absurd, and monopoly almost impossible. But the Metropolitan alternative begins with the premise that such a Frontier environment is rapidly disappearing. It therefore bases its faith on a reconception of the character of the citizenry. The fictions of an idealized Metropolis reject the nation of land-hungry and ambitious men-on-the-make conceived in the Myth of the Frontier, and present instead a citizenry whose essential instincts are docile, dependent, and domestic.

In a sense, this fantasy is a restatement of the Jefferson/Cooper ideal of the yeoman farmer; but American society had of course changed since those myths were articulated, and so had the symbolism in which the social character of the citizenry was represented. As the mythical Jacksonian yeoman ceased to be the deferential subordinate of the squire and became the upwardly mobile farmer-speculator-entrepreneur, his abandoned characteristics of dependence, docility, and domesticity were projected onto subordinate races, classes, and sexes—Indians, blacks, women, and children. These were precisely the classes who were the first targets of the aggressive expansionism of the Jacksonian period, and of the industrialization that followed it. The 1828-35 period saw the completion of a massive project of Indian removal from the South; and at the same time, the expansion of plantation agriculture and textile manufacturing brought more black slaves and female or child workers into the nascent industrial system as a primitive proletariat.

In the ideology of social relations arising from these developments we can see the beginnings of a dangerous contradiction in American values. It first appears in the contrast between the active (male) white citizen of the Frontier Myth and the passive (female) nonwhite laborer of the Metropolis. If this is the imagery in which classes and productive roles are conceived, then it is apparent that a white man's acceptance of the status of proletarian (wage worker without property) is equivalent to accepting an unsexing and a racial "degradation." As long as the proletariat was predominantly female and black—with native-born white male workers enjoying the status of independent "mechanics" and artisans—this contradiction could be evaded. But as the mechanization of manufacturing processes proceeded, the class of independent artisans tended to split into entrepreneurial artisans (who made a successful transition to the status of capitalist) and proletarianized artisans (i.e., artisans compelled by necessity to work at wages they could not control, using tools or processes not their own). The demand for unskilled labor in the mechanized factories and the vital sectors

of railroad, canal, and house building, coupled with famines and revolutions in Europe, brought in waves of foreign immigrants from Ireland and Germany after 1846; and their employment at once confirmed the degrading character of proletarianization and obscured the symbolic sexual dividing line between "operatives" and "mechanics." The labor of proletarianized workers was now to be seen as "foreign," as well as "black" and "female"; but the foreign workers were as often men as women, and they proved that white masculine labor could indeed become degraded labor.

The literary mythology of the Jacksonian period thus presents a twofold representation of America, which juxtaposes "masculine" and "feminine" worlds. In the opposition of the virile Frontier and the effeminate Metropolis, this dualism finds its largest expression. But within the fictional microcosms of Frontier and Metropolis, a similar dualism appears. We have seen how in the Cooperian code the symbolic female acts as a goad to action and moral check on the virility of the Frontier hero. In the Metropolis a similar juxtaposition of masculine and feminine "characteristics" appears in the opposite imperative, masculine entrepreneurship and female resignation; but the resolution is somewhat different. This vision is elaborated in the literary mythology of the "Old South," and in the literature that celebrates the model industrial development of Lowell, Massachusetts. These works present a utopian vision of the social politics of the new order, and the relationship of Metropolis to Frontier. But as we shall see, this utopian vision was inadequate as a means of interpreting and justifying the new order of industrialization. It was challenged from within not only by the resistance of urban workingmen to the role assigned them, but by the refusal of blacks and women to fit the mythic mold established for them; and it was challenged from without by the renewal of Frontier expansion and the persistence of the values embodied in the Frontier Myth.

The central structure of this new ideology was the political arrangement of "paternalism," or (to use a more comprehensive term) "domestication." This involves the projection onto the social and political realms of the values and power relationships characteristic of a "traditional" (read "idealized") bourgeois family. The ruler of this microcosm is a benign but powerful father, whose moral authority and political legitimacy is authenticated by the "natural" sentiments of spousal and filial affection and respect. The father, for his part, mitigates the rigor of his authority by the essentially affectionate and protective attitude he takes toward his dependents; and the dependents, for their part, accept their place in his universe.

This ideology served to mask the changes that were in fact transforming relations between proprietors and dependents both inside and outside the family, as a consequence of economic development. The more problematic such relations became, the more the ideology of paternalism was invoked as a way of containing the resentments of those dependents from breaking out into political dissidence. Recent studies of the development of slavery and the plantation system in the nineteenth century have emphasized the peculiar importance of the paternalistic or domestic ideology as an organizing principle in Southern thought and behavior. Similar ideological formulations emerged at nearly the same time in the North, particularly in relation to the formation of the new mill towns of New England. This suggests that

despite the real differences between northern free labor and southern slavery, there were important similarities in the problems of planters and mill owners, and a tendency to resort to similar ideological solutions.<sup>1</sup>

## THE PLANTATION AS UTOPIA

The American South was an important "predictor" of what a post-Frontier society might become. Like other Americans in 1784-1820, Southerners had seen the vast territory between the mountains and the Mississippi as a grand field of economic expansion. The southern frontiersman, like his northern counterpart, could expect to gain land for farming and/or speculation by entering Indian territory and establishing his claim. But because his Metropolis was organized around slave labor, the southern pioneer had a different notion of the status to and the means by which he might rise. Slaves, seen by law as capital goods, offered the pioneer the chance to move from subsistence to commercial farming, and eventually to a plantation system that approached the industrial in its scale and organization. But the planter saw himself not as employer/exploiter, but as patriarch, as the baronial ruler of a small tribe enjoying the caste marks of aristocratic superiority.<sup>2</sup>

Southern pioneering was built from the start on the direct and explicit linkage between the cheap-land and the cheap-labor Frontiers—a linkage that was not so apparent in the rest of the nation until after the Civil War. If this situation doubled the kinds of resources available to southern pioneering, it contained a dual liability—the Southerner had to fear the closure of two Frontiers, not just one, and the termination of the African slave trade in 1808 did indeed close off the primitive reserve of black labor. The natural increase of the domestic slave population compensated somewhat for any shortage, but in its expansive phases the southern economy experienced an anxiety about the labor supply that echoed the fears of northern manufacturers.

The economics and agronomics of cotton culture also imposed different pressures on southern perceptions of the Frontier safety valve. Cotton profits encouraged the cultivation of large acreages, but at the same time the crop "mined" the soil. It therefore appeared that the South might be using up its land heritage more rapidly than the North. This situation gave a peculiar shape to the style and direction of southern expansionism. Where Northerners looked to "empty" lands like Oregon for agrarian expansion, Southerners as often looked to the populated regions of Latin America, where a large pool of domestic labor existed alongside undeveloped natural resources. If the yeoman farmer was a pious fiction in the North, in the South the military aristocrat was the Frontier hero—a chevalier, a conquistador, subduing and subordinating the masses of a savage race, the conscious agent not of individual ambition alone, but of corporate will.<sup>3</sup>

Southerners confronted the possibility of closed Frontiers in terms that directed their attention as much to Metropolitan conflicts as to the limitations of nature. It was not merely the intractability of the Great American

Desert or the power of Mexico they envisioned, but an opposing force located within the Metropolitan heart of American society. The boom-bust cycles of the cotton market and the dependence of southern capitalists on northern financial institutions—themselves tied to hostile economic and ideological interest groups among northern manufacturers—fostered a sense of beleaguering at the borders. Slavery could not expand northward, but free labor might well have a southern Frontier; and to the west, the expansion of slavery faced both the hostility of northern farmers and a climate inhospitable to most southern staples.

In the 1830s southern ideologists, of whom Vice President and later Senator John C. Calhoun was the most important, began transplanting the terms of Jeffersonian agrarianism into a political language appropriate to their new circumstances. They began with the premise that Jefferson's "natural aristocracy" was now a social reality: it was, in fact, the planter class of the older southern states, augmented by the traditional merchant and landowning elites of the North. The transformation of economic production by industrialization and plantation farming, coupled with the natural limits to Frontier expansion, had brought about a premature closure to the period of agrarian expansion prophesied by Jefferson. Whereas an equal access to resources had guaranteed both upward mobility and social peace, the new conditions threatened the peculiar balance of aristocracy and democracy that Jeffersonian policies had achieved. The problem was now one of protecting the power, status, and economic efficiency of the existing "aristocracy" of land, factory, and bank owners from the frustrated rage of masses doomed to eventual disappointment in their quest for upward mobility. How were the lower orders to be placated, without the carrot of expansion held before their eyes as an inducement to submit? How particularly was the southern system to survive, if it excluded poor whites from the laboring masses and the planter aristocracy alike?<sup>4</sup>

The growing financial and political dominance of the North was, as Calhoun saw it, the result of its shift from an expansive to an intensive pattern of development. Yet the commitment of Northerners to democratic ideologies prevented them from perceiving what a southern planter could not avoid knowing: that intensive exploitation depended on labor discipline, and hence was inimical to the infinite subdivision of power. The interest of the capitalist, like that of the planter, is the exploitation of the worker's labor for profit. At some point, the clash of interests will become real: perhaps when the Frontier carrot has been devoured. In the South, this situation was graphically revealed. The continuation of cotton culture required an ever greater reserve of territory. Yet at the same time, climate and soil requirements limited the potential locales of westward extension; and the presence of great numbers of smallholdings forbade its extension to the north. The dependence of the plantation on blacks made more graphic the distance between proprietor and laborer, and made the consequences of worker discontent seem all the more threatening.

Calhoun saw in the growth of northern industries—under that protective tariff which cut against his own section's interests—a threat analogous to Jefferson's fear of the growth of cities, landless urban populations, and unchecked immigration. Where Jefferson had simply correlated the Euro-

pean "city" with the attendant ills of class struggle and mob violence and sought to avoid Metropolitanization, Calhoun acknowledged the necessity of industrialization and concentration of wealth; but he foresaw how the spread of industrialism would inevitably tend to divide society into ever more powerless and impoverished workers, and ever more powerful and greedy capitalists. As the wages of laborers declined before the pressure of monopolized industry, discontent would intensify, and there would be "no want of leaders . . . to excite and direct" the poor toward social revolution.<sup>5</sup>

To forestall such an outcome, northern utopians like the Brook Farmers proposed various socialistic and agrarian nostrums; and the Jacksonian rhetoric about a "nation of small farmers" likewise "dealt" with the problem by proposing to ignore or circumvent the industrial process. What Calhoun (and his followers) proposed was an alliance of northern and southern conservatives. In such an alliance, the South might play two different roles. The first is that of providing a broad and stable base for conservatism. Her peculiar labor system and agricultural economy exempted her from the ills of the North: her lower classes were docile and contented because slavery guaranteed their lifelong nurture; her upper classes were therefore more stable, more firmly in control. The potential rivalry of the poorer whites could be minimized by allowing the slave states to expand to the west, and by reinforcing the doctrines of white supremacy. These measures would guarantee to the ambitious lower-class southern white a continually growing basis of land resources and a permanent class of exploitable slave laborers. It would then appear that there was open access to the future achievement of landed property and the quasi-aristocratic status of "planter," and in the present a politically privileged status that sharply distinguished even the poorest white citizen from the lowest class in society.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, the South offered a model for reform of the northern labor system, an alternative structure of organization. The central paradox of American society—the contradiction of agrarian and industrial values and modes of life and production—was reconciled in the plantation system (and its associated industries): reconciled in a way peculiarly advantageous to the existing holders of wealth. The planters themselves were increasingly conscious of this, and their political rhetoric took on the tones of a critique of northern industrialism from the viewpoint of a society that had achieved the utopian resolution the North sought. Lowell had its women and children, a docile and malleable work force, and yet management was compelled to exploit and repress them, and ultimately to replace them with an alien and sullen labor force. In the South the docility of labor under patriarchal rule was (so the myth said) traditionally established, and its black work force long since domesticated and reconciled to its station by the tutelary labors of the master class. The necessities of political argument required southern spokesmen to distort their claims by contrasting the protected black with the exploited mechanic, the rural plantation with the urban mill. But the direction of their argument was toward a clearer conception of what the whole society might look like after the period of Jacksonian competition closed and the distribution of resources was completed.<sup>7</sup>

Calhoun's ideological forays were supported by the novelists of the "plantation school," many of them Northerners, who saw in the southern plantation a utopian model of industrial relations in a Jeffersonian society. These fictions utilized all sorts of plot forms, from historical romance in the Fenimore Cooper vein to domestic novels-of-manners. What they have in common is a representation of the plantation as a model for civilized social relations. It is a social microcosm presided over by a benign patriarchal figure, whose values are entirely shaped by the need to care for those dependent on him. Women, children, and black slaves make up his large extended family. The particular worship of idealized femininity is the moral center of the microcosm; and the sympathetic and careful administration of the slaves extends the family metaphor into a model of social relations. The active, aggressive, masculine principle is vested in the chivalrous young Southerners who are or will be the inheritors of this microcosm. Their physical and moral lineaments are predicted by Cooper's "Virginians" and military aristocrats. However, the southern novelist is as much or more concerned to show this figure as potential paterfamilias as he is to reveal his capacity for heroic and violent exploits. Southern writers of historical frontier romances like William Alexander Carruthers, Robert M. Bird, and William Gilmore Simms rarely allow their aristocrat heroes to be subordinate to Frontier plebeians—even in the wilderness their superiority is clear. Moreover, there is usually a strong emphasis on the importance of the hero's return to civilization, and to a dominant social role. The hero of Simms's *The Yemassee* (1835) is none other than the royal governor of South Carolina and a British nobleman in disguise; the hero of Bird's *Nick of the Woods* (1837) abandons the Frontier and returns to Virginia as soon as he unmask the plot that has deprived him of his just inheritance.<sup>8</sup>

But the mainstream of plantation fiction centers on the plantation itself, and paints an idealized portrait of its pastoral pleasures, its familial social relations, its old-fashioned courtesies and deferences. The heroic qualities of the young men are abstracted into a special kind of "virility," which is offered as the special property of southern manhood. One of the conventions of the form is the projection of social and sectional rivalries into sexual politics, and the resolution of conflict in the marriage of a northern girl to the southern man. The sexual identities of the partners suggest that the reconciliation requires the submission of one to the other, with the virile or southern position dominant. The imagery of the plantation novel assimilates to the planter class an abstraction of those heroic traits which had been associated with various figures (and classes) in the Myth of the Frontier.

The language of familial relations masked the essentially exploitive character of the relationship between master and slave. The related concept of "tutelage" masked the real form of labor discipline, which had the character of regimentation. Even Andrew Jackson had invoked the government of the army as a model of the relations that ought to pertain between managers and subordinates in domestic life; and he saw no incompatibility between the aims and manner of military subordination and those of familial paternalism. Even when the setting of a plantation novel is not on or near the frontier, the planter-hero has the character of the Cooperian soldier-

aristocrat: breeding, virility, courage, chivalry, a strong sense of race, all the traits needed to identify and defeat the Maguas of the world, and to found dynasties with the Alice Munros.<sup>9</sup>

It is clear that the intention implicit in this imagery is that of representing the plantation as the ideal form of American society, and the final expression of those dynamic and progressive tendencies associated with our history of expansion and conquest. This seems a very optimistic mythology, and when we consider the expansive and prosperous character (despite cyclical depressions) of the cotton business between 1835 and 1860 we might consider it as the mythological expression of the ideology of a rising class.

But the fact is that both the ideology and the mythology of the plantation were anything but optimistic about the future. Most plantation novels are set in times of economic contraction, rather than boom times; and the threat of mortgage foreclosures is as much a part of the plantation scene as Indian raids in a Cooper novel.

Even more threatening was the resistance of blacks to their continued enslavement, and the potential for a division of interest and political commitment between planters and poor whites. The utopian image of the patriarchal plantation was only half of a schizophrenic division in the South's way of imagining its politics: the other half held that the planter was a lonely agent of civilization, living and working in a village of African savages, for whom civilized discipline was hard to learn, painful to suffer, and tempting to throw off. When actual slave revolts occurred (or were rumored to be in preparation), Southerners reverted to the traditional exterminationist presumptions of Jefferson, and to the mythology of Indian warfare which defined the course and objectives of a racial war. The Nat Turner Rebellion of 1831 produced just this sort of response: an identification of the rebels as savages bent on indiscriminate slaughter, even to the extermination of the white race in Virginia; and the evocation in the whites of the reciprocal Indian-hater response, tending toward the extermination of the black savages.<sup>10</sup>

The problem with the plantation myth was that the people who created and gave credence to it were no more capable than northern capitalists of rejecting the central tenet of the Myth of the Frontier—that economies and societies must continue to grow or they will perish in social cataclysm. The plantation microcosm could hold together only in a society in equilibrium, but equilibrium was economically impossible. The depletion of the soil alone was a guarantee that ultimately the plantation would have to grow, transform itself, or die. To improve plantation agronomy or productivity required capitalization, and that created the risk of failure through debt. To provide for the needs of all those ambitious and virile younger sons, let alone the more ambitious and capable of the poor whites, the sphere of plantation agriculture would have to grow. But this would bring the ambitions of planters into conflict with those of entrepreneurs and small farmers. To expand the plantation system, or to improve the productivity of existing land and labor, would require the derangement of the stable "family" of slaves and masters, either through the upgrading of a class of skilled blacks or through the breaking up of slave families via sale for removal to new

plantations. Either of these changes threatened the labor peace of the South from within.

In the end, Southern ideology failed to reconcile the contradictions between an ideology of aggressive expansion and an ideology of utopian stability. The proponents of slavery expansion had ultimately to challenge the sectional compromises of 1820 and 1850 by projecting an expansion of slavery into the Caribbean and western territories; while at the same time, they asserted a commonality of interest and technique between themselves and the northern conservatives in creating a politically subservient working class.<sup>11</sup>

### THE FACTORY AS PLANTATION

Despite the obvious differences between cotton plantation and textile manufacturing, and between a wage-labor and slave-labor force, the two types of enterprise shared important similarities of structure and iconography. Some important early forms of industrial enterprise had in fact been organized as "plantations," drawing the agricultural and mining activities of a whole district into the organization of the industrial "plant." Joseph E. Walker's 1966 study, *Hopewell Village*, describes such organization in an iron-making community in Pennsylvania. Mining communities in Pennsylvania likewise involved the development of a community of dependent laborers and tenants, engaging in a variety of economic production, centering around and dominated by the management of the mines. The use of "plant" to describe an industrial complex derives in part from "plantation"; and the word plantation itself was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries applied to all colonial enterprises.

If the chain of usage suggests anything, it is that the "plant" or "plantation" was to be conceived of as a kind of "colony," planted in a wilderness, in which the wild land and semibarbarous men were to be "developed" and disciplined to productive labor. Both were essentially "industrial" in character, combining large work forces and capital investment and engaging in intensive exploitation of both labor and natural resources, for large-scale commercial production. And both the plantation and the mill town were communities of "dependent laborers" organized around the work place, dominated respectively by the master and owner. The plantation had its infamous slave quarters, Lowell its famous company boardinghouses, where rigid parietal rules enforced industrial discipline outside the factory as well as in. To be sure, the female work force of Lowell was free and used its freedom to attempt to change its conditions; but so, in its own way, did the slave labor force of the South.<sup>12</sup>

The mythology of plantation and factory takes as its wishful premise the realization of a social order characterized by that harmony of classes and interests envisioned in the agrarian myth of Crèvecoeur and Jefferson. Both specifically invoke the myth's iconography. In the plantation and

factory, social positions were imagined as stable, divided between a paternalistic aristocratic figure—the Jeffersonian meritocrat in place rather than in potential—and a group of dependent and childlike plebeians, looking to the master for work, protection, and moral guidance. Although the myth lacked a coherent economic program, it did have a clear concept of the form of society most suited to natural law: a society in which the relationships between men are determined not by the cash nexus, but by organic or familial relationships, in which the strong nurture and protect the weak, and the superior rule with the consent of the inferior. In such a society, the absolute dependence of slave on master and worker on capitalist would be tempered and offset by paternalism, and class relations represented by an image of familial bonds (husband-wife, parent-child) rather than by images of conflict (Jacksonian competition, Indian wars). The owner-managerial elite, on plantation or in factory, sought to cloak themselves and their enterprises in the traditional imagery of the landed aristocracy. If the aristocrat was, as Cooper defined him, the patriarchal ruler of a pastoral domain, venerated as a moral superior by both dependents and civic equals, then this was the guise in which the parvenu exploiter of work gangs and assembly lines had to see himself and his operations.<sup>13</sup>

The image of factory and plantation as havens of benevolent and tutelary paternalism set those institutions apart from the rough-and-tumble world of entrepreneurial competition and the commercial exploitation of labor under the rules of *laissez-faire*. To the extent that rugged individualism was indeed the American ideal, this difference marked planter and mill owner as inimical to the American dream. However, as we have seen, Americans were ambivalent about the consequences and desirability of a regime of pure individualism from the start, and from Puritan times had proposed schemes of social organization making for greater solidarity, unanimity, and discipline.

This tendency persisted in the idealism of reformers before the Civil War, who proposed to confront the evils of commercial individualism by strengthening the family as a model of social relations; and to deal with specific evils by creating institutions set apart from the rough-and-tumble, in which paternalistic tutelage could work to convert the raw material of individual disorder into a set of truly social beings. This was the period of what David Rothman calls "The Discovery of the Asylum," in which models of life- and labor-discipline like those of plantation and factory were applied to (or proposed for) the reform of prisons, workhouses, schools, mental institutions, and Indian reservations—institutions dealing with the "dangerous classes," with fallen women, and with the underclasses, with children, with madmen, with savages. The association of these groups had been suggested in the mythic language of Cooper; but it was now becoming a more explicit and precise way of distinguishing social classes.<sup>14</sup>

In its earliest phase, factory labor was presented as a pathway to achieving the same status of proprietorship and independence that the Jeffersonian yeoman farmer was supposed to be aiming at. The architecture and iconography of Lowell emphasized the analogy and the connection between the idealized rural life of agrarian myth and factory life and

labor. If anything, factory work was an intensified and improved form of "cultivation," when compared with farming. Its productivity was higher, by certain measures; its techniques more modern and progressive; its return in wages was supposed to be higher. Even the moral economy of the ideal factory was an improvement on the freehold of Crèvecoeur's American farmer. The latter garnered homey moral truths from observing the bees and manuring his fields; the factory girl, said the Lowell panegyrists, was entering a "manufacturing college," where she could labor along with other young ladies of "good family," in a morally and intellectually "improving" atmosphere. Her labor would be temporary, not a substitute for the maternal role. Moreover, her wages would serve to pay off debts on the family farm, or to send a brother to professional school. Thus her work would exceed that of farm work in its financial and social effects, saving the farm and even providing for upward mobility in the family.<sup>15</sup>

There were, however, elements in the factory situation that undercut the agrarian imagery and Jacksonian pretensions. The labor itself removed workers from the farm, and linked them together in organized groups under the direction of foremen and supervisors. This hierarchical relationship also figured in the extra-factory life of the girls—Lowell was famous for the blue laws and regulations that restricted the socializing of the employed women for the sake of preserving their moral character. Seen in its best light, this relationship was analogous to the "tutelage" extended by the Jeffersonian patrician to his social and racial inferiors—a tutelage described in Crèvecoeur's account of Andrew the Hebridean, for example. The premise of tutelage was its temporariness, its transiency. The test of its validity as a form of American democracy was whether or not it issued in the creation of a new class of independent entrepreneurs. But the economics of the factory system were all against this. Manufacturing required a relatively stable, docile, and large supply of labor: the preference for women and children as workers reflects this need—it constitutes a deliberate selection of the least mobile sector of the population as the basis of industrial labor.

Yet even so there was labor strife at Lowell between management and a work force compelled by condition to set feminine docility aside. Even sympathetic observers noted that the girls were alienated from the healthful life of the open air, were sickened by or experienced psychological harm from their exploitation. The company boardinghouses that were so much a part of the moral-social order of Lowell were always contrasted with the "old country homes" from which the girls had come. As conditions in the mill towns changed, the requirements of industrial labor made the "manufacturing college" idea seem untenable as a vision of the factory. By 1846, on the eve of the great influx of Irish fleeing the potato famine, factory recruiters were combing the farthest reaches of New England for female labor, driving "a long, low, black wagon, termed a 'slaver.'" The "commander" of this vessel was paid by the head, and given premiums to bring girls from a distance, since the farther their home the less likely they would be able to leave the factory.<sup>16</sup>

This folk association of slavery and industrial labor is attested also in the written record. Rebecca Harding Davis's *Margret Howth* (1862) represents the factory as an insidious trap, the place where Davis's title character,

daughter of a fallen aristocracy of birth and breeding, comes to suffer her degradation. The power of the factory to degrade and distort is represented for Davis by the figure of a girl dwarf hunchback, who seems also to be a mulatto. The message is clear: the factory takes noble incarnations of all that woman means (Margret) and converts them into physically and morally ugly creatures, whose body and blood is "polluted."<sup>17</sup>

M. W. Tyler's *A Book Without a Title* (1855) carries an even more explicit message. Her heroine, Mira Dana, comes to the factories at Lowell to aid her brother's quest for a professional education. There she faces exploitation and a degrading factory discipline, against which she turns, defying both the mill owners and the male-oriented society that has made her labor merely a function of her brother's ambitions. She leads the mill girls on a strike, which is partly successful. This in turn leads to a brief marriage to a sea captain, who respects her for her independence and spunk. But after his death, she weds a southern planter; and it requires only a brief stay on the plantation to convince her that the life of wife to such a man is very much like the life of a Negro slave; and that life in turn compares at quite a number of points to the factory life she fled. Tyler's book is extraordinary, in that it attacks the Lowell-plantation myth at its root: the myth of female/black dependence. Still, despite its somewhat atypical and advanced ideological stance, it does draw on a similar body of associations—and shows how the same myth that could simultaneously give comfort to the planter and manufacturer could appear to the worker as the realization of nightmare.<sup>18</sup>

This "nightmare" was realized at Lowell with the shift to Irish immigrant labor in the 1840s and 1850s: at this point there was no pretense that Lowell was other than a factory town. If the earlier association of women and blacks had been readily made, that between Irish and blacks was still more dramatic. For one thing, both groups were perceived by native workers as alien in race and spirit; both groups were feared for their potential as reserve armies of the unemployed, acting to depress wages by increasing the labor supply. There was a tendency among upper-class New Englanders to associate the two groups. Hawthorne, for example, responded to both as if they were subhuman, and this was an association that increased with the passage of time. During the Civil War, abolitionists observing the conditions of plantation life at first hand liked to compare the blacks (with whom they were sympathetic) favorably with the Irish; and minstrel-show stereotypes of both groups emphasized similar qualities of shiftiness, stupidity, and brutality. The publication of *Miscegenation* (1864), a Democratic pamphlet designed to scare voters away from Lincoln and the abolition of slavery during the Civil War, drew on this connection in its setting forth of a hoax: a program supposedly being considered by Lincoln to amalgamate the Irish with the blacks, as the two lowest forms of humanity, to produce a large and subordinate work force. Herbert Gutman, in *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*, points out that northern and southern elites were alike in depicting the poorer classes of whites—"poor white" and Irish—as being childlike in their need for control and tutelage by the elite classes, as being without self-reliance and ambition, and as like "semi-savages" or mere "animals in search of a richer and fresher pasture."<sup>19</sup>

The portrayal of plantation and factories as utopias of successful and stable paternalism suggests a parallelism in the developing myth/ideologies of industrialism in the North and the South. But the social realities of both sections were such that these fantasies could not provide ideological antidotes for the causes of internal division and instability. The literature reflects not only the paternal values of the planter and the Lowell mill owner, but also the unreconciled elements of resistance from both the laboring classes and from persistent entrepreneurial ambitions in the rising classes. Southern fears of northern abolitionism and the uprising of "contented" slaves on their plantations attests to one form of this fear; and the gingerly substitution of slave for free labor in southern manufacturing enterprises attests to the slaveholders' respect for the resentments and the self-interest of the poor whites. The facts of mill town strikes and the literary insurrections of Margret Howth and M. W. Tyler attest to similar proletarian resistance in the North. Moreover, paternalism in both sections was imperiled by the ambitions of entrepreneurial adventurers, who would risk the stability of class relations and the North-South political balance in order to intensify their exploitation of mill labor, or would increase the supply of workers by importing immigrants or reviving the slave trade, or would seek new lands for plantations in the West or the Caribbean.

The bubble of paternalist utopianism was pricked by the persistence of the commitment to progress through economic expansion in the entrepreneurial mode, and by the persistence of the Jacksonian belief that economic mobility was essential to republican government. As Democratic journalist Frederick Robinson told an audience of workingmen in 1834, "The condition of the people can never remain stationary. When not improving they are sinking deeper and deeper into slavery." Given these values, the great mass of American farmers and artisans could not see the utopias of plantation and mill town in any terms but those of threat. Since they were not by nature dependent types—Negroes or women—they could accept the discipline of Lowell or the plantation only if compelled by force or by poverty at its most extreme. But their hostility to a system of labor that rendered them dependent and enforced their consent to be governed did not take the form of an unambiguous opposition to the degradation of all labor. They perceived the form of labor degradation in racial and sexual terms, and rejected it by affirming their own "innate character" as white males.

In so doing they rejected not only the master of slaves, but the slave as well, perceiving the plantation system as a peculiar marriage of unprincipled men and a race effeminate in its docility. They perceived those sections of the white race which did accept the terms of dependent labor as akin to blacks; or at least, they supposed that the sources of failure and of degradation into the ranks of dependent labor lay in racial, ethnic, or sexual character rather than circumstance. Although this language of class relations made artificial and ultimately destructive distinctions within the working classes, it also gave the cutting edge of racial feeling to the ideological rejection of Lowell and the "Old Plantation."<sup>20</sup>

### DYSTOPIA: THE LAST DAYS OF SODOM

This language symbolizing class by race and/or sex was deployed in the most vivid and sensational terms in the literature of urban crime. In its cheapest and most accessible form, this literature was a staple of the magazines edited by working-class politicians like George Wilkes and George Henry Evans, whose *Spirit of the Times*, as we know, was also—and not coincidentally—a primary vehicle for Southwestern fiction. But the most elaborate working out of the genre's premises was achieved by George Lippard, in his monumental and extraordinarily popular *The Quaker City; or, Monks of Monk Hall* (1844).

Lippard was an extraordinary character—a journalist and political figure associated with reform causes, and especially in movements asserting the rights of labor; and the author of sensational novels partaking equally of social criticism and Gothic pornography. *Monks of Monk Hall* is a phantasmagoric rendering of the hidden side of the great metropolis of Philadelphia, whose sobriquet of Quaker City—evocative of simplicity, virtue, and nonviolence—becomes bitterly ironic in the face of Lippard's "revelations." Modeling his work to some degree on Eugène Sue's *The Mysteries of Paris* (and other exposés in that vein), Lippard pretended to reveal the true state of affairs in the heart of a great urban center, and to link reportage of the poverty and corruption of city life with grander themes and myths, pointing toward an apocalyptic conclusion. In his Preface, Lippard says that the novel has been written to expose the full horror of the "crime of seduction," a crime akin to homicide; and he makes of the theme of seduction a symbolic key to the social relations that tie the corrupt Quaker City together.<sup>21</sup>

Seduction appears first as a moral crime, in which the unbridled sexual passions of an attractive and clever man lead to his unprincipled suborning of the will and passions of a pure virgin. The consummation of the seducer's lust leaves him puffed up with vanity and a sense of power; while the woman is ruined—morally the very wellsprings of her nature are polluted.

She knew not that in her own organization, were hidden the sympathies of an animal as well as of an intellectual nature, that the blood in her veins only waited an opportunity to betray her, that in the very atmosphere of the holiest love of woman, crouched a sleeping fiend, who at the first whisperings of her Wronger, would arise with hot breath and blood shot eyes, to wreak eternal ruin on her woman's-honor.

For this is the doctrine we deem it right to hold in regard to woman. Like man she is a combination of an animal, with an intellectual nature. Unlike man, her animal nature is a *passive* thing. . . . But let him play with her animal nature as you would toy with the machinery of a watch . . . and woman becomes like himself, but a mere animal. Sense rises like a vapor, and utterly darkens soul.<sup>22</sup>

Woman, then, is both purer than man, and less stable in her ability to keep the animal and intellectual natures separate: once arouse her sexually, and the animal defeats all else, and her degradation to the hellish and bestial becomes *total*. This is the pattern of destruction which seduction involves, even where the maiden herself is pure and innocent in her first love—even where, as here in the case of Mary Arlington, she is the victim of a false marriage and of rape.

Seduction is also a type of social crime, and the source of a similarly degrading and pervasive corruption in the body politic. Sex thus provides the metaphor through which class relations are defined. The metaphor of sex suggests the associated metaphor of race. Just as the ruined woman descends to the animal, so degraded man descends in the scale of existence, approaching the animal—and the alien races, the Indian and the Negro. Lippard here plays an American variation on a theme picked up by Sue and others. *London Labour and the London Poor* describes the itinerant laborers and peddlers of England as members of a “nomadic race” like African or Asiatic savages; and Sue’s own *The Mysteries of Paris* cites Cooper’s Indians as models for the Parisian underclass.<sup>23</sup> For Lippard, the urban savage is embodied in the figure of Devil-Bug, custodian of Monk Hall: a gross and misshapen cripple, deformed in mind as well as body; many times a murderer, a connoisseur of cruelty and injustice who delights at the public execution of innocent victims of injustice, and cooperates in the systematic seductions and rapes that go on in Monk Hall.

Yet even Devil-Bug has had his time of innocence, from which a corrupt world has thrust him. He too once loved a pure woman, only to have her ruined by a seducer. Lost as he is, he still worships the virginity of his long-lost daughter by this woman, and eventually rescues her from her seducer. Lippard pictures Devil-Bug standing over her unconscious body, “the Savage reared in the very centre of Quaker City civilization, kneeling at the fair and beautiful woman, wronged and injured by one of the professed Ministers of that civilization!”<sup>24</sup>

His daughter’s seducer is none other than her adopted father, the Reverend Algernon Pyne—a wealthy preacher who plays on the anti-Catholic prejudices of the city’s poor to provoke riots and distract attention from the manifold oppressions wealth puts upon poverty. The male impulse to arouse woman’s animal nature and corrupt her becomes a metaphor for the social processes by which the wealthy and powerful seduce and corrupt the innocent poor, degrading their racial endowment and driving them to crime or self-destruction.<sup>25</sup>

Seduction and rape are Lippard’s metaphors for the relationship of classes in the Quaker City; and he establishes the association through the continual reiteration of the seducer/victim theme, in every possible combination, throughout the interminable course of his rambling “plot.”

In one such example in the novel, we are introduced to a poor mechanic, “seduced” into depositing his savings in a bank, who loses it all when the bank fails. The mechanic appeals to the banker for his money back, even for a loan, to save himself and his daughter from starvation—and the daughter from the ruin that overtakes females amongst the poor. The

banker, protected by bankruptcy laws, still enjoys his carriage and fine house, and declines the loan:

“God!” [the mechanic] fiercely muttered between his set teeth. “Is there a God? Is he just? Then why have these people fine clothes and warm homes, when I, I, with honest hands, have no bread to eat, no fire to warm me?”

Your pardon, pious people, your pardon for the blasphemy of this starving wretch! Starvation you know is a grim sceptic, a very Infidel, doubter and a scoffer!

The banker, to be sure, will be blackmailed into suicide by the exposure of his villainies by someone equally as suspect. Our pity is for the mechanic: “Cut his throat because he had no bread to give his child? Can such a thing happen in pious and Protestant Philadelphia?”<sup>26</sup>

The class qualities of the seduction metaphor are crystallized in the characters of Gus Lorrimer and Colonel Fitz-Cowles. The latter is a swindler who poses as a southern planter-aristocrat, and who seduces the wife of the merchant Livingstone (her name is Dora) and defrauds the merchant of his money. The business thievery and the theft of the wife’s affections go together. Fitz-Cowles is linked with two representatives of alien and degraded races: a dim-witted Negro servant, and a Jewish forger (Van Gelt). The latter is an absolutely unprincipled anti-Semitic stereotype which represents the Jew as at once corrupt in a civilized mode, and primitive in his racial endowment: Van Gelt’s features (says Lippard) are those that would have been seen in Palestine thousands of years before, and are still unchanged. This linkage of race and moral status and class character becomes more than implicit when Fitz-Cowles’s father arrives, to reveal that he is the bastard son of a Creole slave. Nonetheless, he is the planter’s child, and hence a true product of southern aristocracy: corrupt in the love of wealth and power, and corrupt in the forbidden mingling of racial blood. Like the bestialized ruined woman and the degraded Devil-Bug, the evil corruption of the southern planter is figured as a racial degradation.<sup>27</sup>

Gus Lorrimer is the novel’s chief seducer: seduction is his profession, just as Indian hating is Moredock’s and hunting is Boone’s:

“Know me as I am! Not the mere man-about-town, not the wine-drinking companion, not the fashionable addle-head you think me, but the *Man of Pleasure!* . . . which, in plain English, means—Woman.

“Woman—the means of securing her affection, of compassing her ruin, of enjoying her beauty, has been my book, my study, my science, nay my *profession* from boyhood.”

And this profession is likewise a “business,” of sorts, albeit one in which speculation and consumption—rather than genuine production—is the aim; and the aim backed by a “capital . . . of one hundred thousand dollars.” The function of the earlier linkage of seduction with miscegenation is to allow us to perceive the extremity of “blackness” in the character of a man (and a class) normally seen as white and genteel.<sup>28</sup>

The victims of these two seducers embody the two poles of feminine nature. Mary Arlington, Lorrimer's victim, is pure and innocent, betrayed by her passion and her innocent trust into meeting Lorrimer at Monk Hall, where she is raped and ruined. Dora Livingstone, on the other hand, and to use Lippard's scheme, is a woman whose sensual powers have been aroused prior to her intellectual ones. She is dark where Mary is light, "a perfect incarnation of the Sensual Woman, who combines the beauty of a mere animal, with an intellect strong and resolute in its every purpose." Those purposes speak of her degradation: she has given herself willingly to Fitz-Cowles, and seeks through him to achieve the status of European aristocracy. Though she began life as a "cobbler's daughter" and once prided herself on her rise to be a merchant's wife, she now wishes to take the next step upward in the course of mobility: but in so doing she will not only have to betray democratic principles but also to commit murder. Beautiful as she is, Lippard paints her as possessed by demons. Symptoms of her degradation are her loss of femininity—she puts on man's clothes, symbolizing her loss of the feminine principle of virtue in the male power-drive; and she ultimately places herself in the power of the savage, Devil-Bug.<sup>29</sup>

Monk Hall is the place to which the seducers bring their victims. It is at once a brothel/gambling hell, and the locus of a secret society of "Monks"—evocative of Murrell's Mystic Clan, or of those other secret-society bugaboos that alarmed nineteenth-century political rhetoric—the Masons, Know-Nothings, Illuminati, etc. The hall itself is mysteriously buried in the alleyways of the Quaker City, and sits over a network of catacombs and sewers as elaborate as those of Paris. It was originally the residence of colonial magistrates and governors of wealthy Tories, then a Catholic monastery or cloister—a sinister note. So, linked with the corrupt ruling elites of the past, Monk Hall has become the conclave of a corrupted ruling elite: bribable judges and officers, banker-swindlers, hypocrites who preach the Gospel and support missionary work for the South Sea Islanders, while availing themselves of the corrupt delights of seduction and drink in Monk Hall—and grinding the face of the poor on workdays. Of this haven of elite corruption, the Devil-Bug—incarnating the lowest impulses of the mind and heart, the excesses of the body, the urban "savage"—is the proprietor.<sup>30</sup>

Lippard establishes a situation in which the captivity/seduction of woman is the moral key to interpreting events, and in which the racial guideposts that interpret moral character are used to define a virtuous class (the middle-class producers and their daughters) as against the evil poles of savagery (Devil-Bug) and artificial aristocracy (Lorrimer and Fitz-Cowles). There are even types corresponding to the heroes of Cooperian romance. Luke Harvey, a worthy man born poor who has risen by his merits to be Livingstone's partner, is the Leatherstocking type: he speaks in the vernacular, is the spokesman for a good deal of democratic ideology (it is he who most scathingly attacks Pyne's bigotry), is clever at finding out evil and tracking people to where they have been hidden or are hiding. Like Virgil Stewart, he is a kind of vigilante-detective, like Natty, a "tracker," though his sphere of operations is the city. There are also two semiaristocratic figures, potential romantic heroes of the Heyward/Mid-

dleton type: Byrnewood, the brother of the ruined Mary; and Livingstone the merchant, who is (it turns out) descended from true English nobility, where Fitz-Cowles's credentials are forged. In the Cooper model, there would be rescue for the captives prior to their ruin; and in the case of the suspect Dora, a death leaving no innocent parties compromised.

In Lippard's city, such a resolution is impossible. The women are corrupted from the very start: there is no long successful resistance, analogous to Cora's resistance to Magua. Once corrupted, there is no redemption. Even revenge is sterile: Livingstone kills Dora, and commits suicide while the house burns down around them. Lippard likens the scene to the Apocalypse, and to the burning of a church by an anti-Catholic mob. The corrupted sanctuary is destroyed, but nothing takes its place. Similarly, Byrnewood kills Lorrimer; yet Mary, as we learn in the very last line of the novel, remains in love with his ghost, falls in a passionate frenzy before his portrait.

Luke Harvey's capacity to act the rescuer-vigilante is fatally limited by the fact that he himself is in love with the sensual woman (Dora) and the inordinate impulses of ambition and violence she represents. His revelation of Dora's sin to Livingstone has the character of vengeance rather than a restoration of law; and it leads only to the hellish scene of destruction, from which Harvey flees. Harvey at first resists Dora's attempts to seduce him from his loyalty to Livingstone. When he surprises her in the clutches of the deformed savage, Devil-Bug, who is about to rape her, he acts as her rescuer, despite his knowledge of her character. But this action, which most closely parallels the rescue motif in Cooper, is not redemptive at all: it leads, in fact, to Luke's temporary seduction by Dora, and his implicit betrayal of his loyalties.<sup>31</sup>

One further possibility for redemption is offered by the mysterious figure Ravoni—a charismatic philosopher-scientist, who may be a charlatan, and who offers a new religion based on rationalism, perfectionism, and mesmerism. He claims he can raise the dead and cure disease, but only by possessing or dominating the souls of those he saves. Clearly he is not a democratic savior. Yet he may, Lippard suggests, have something genuine to offer—and then he is murdered by Devil-Bug, who suspects him of wanting to seduce his rescued daughter and steal her fortune. So the savage, living by a world view that admits of only sordid motives, strikes down the rationalist messiah.

In all of this, the West is only present by virtue of its absence. It is twice invoked, via pastoral imagery, both times ironically. Lorrimer seduces Mary with his imaginative depiction of the cottage in the mountains, to which they will retire; and it is in just such a sylvan setting that, at the very end, Byrnewood unveils the portrait of Lorrimer: a scene that shows the avenger taking a rather perverse delight in contemplating his victim, and the ruined girl still enthralled by the man who had ruined her.<sup>32</sup>

The climax of the novel—the murder of Lorrimer—occurs on Christmas Eve, ironically juxtaposing vengeance with the birth of the Prince of Peace. The irony is further extended by Lippard's explicit mockery of the hope in redemption through the Frontier. The section begins with the cry of "Land, there to the west—land!" from the masthead of a ship; but in-

stead of white doves from the shore, black ravens rise to greet the sailors. This odd scene, evoking both Columbus and Noah, says in effect that the land itself, like the women, has been permanently corrupted by the sins of Monk Hall. Apocalypse and judgment, not rescue, is the fate of the Quaker City.<sup>33</sup>

This vision of a possible future is realized in the horrific section describing Devil-Bug's dream, "The Last Day of the Quaker City." This is Lippard's modern version of Puritan clergyman Michael Wigglesworth's Day of Doom—the Second Coming brings Judgment for a society steeped in corruption and complacency. In Wigglesworth, this took the form of parents and spouses praising God for casting into Hell their impious children and helpmates. Lippard too has his vision of family relations destroyed in the Apocalypse, and of the casting down of those who, to worldly eyes, are "innocent."

But more than theology is working here. Lippard allows us to perceive the Apocalypse only through the eyes of Devil-Bug, the urban savage; and in his eyes, and the eyes of those like him, pure destruction is sweet. Then too, the sins of which the Quaker City is guilty are distinctly political and social. These are expressed in the differences of class which Devil-Bug initially perceives—"here was the Judge with his visage of solemnity and his pocket-book crammed full with bribes, and here hungry and lean, was the mechanic in his tattered garb, looking to the clear blue sky above, as he asked God's vengeance upon the world that robbed and starved him." Such a figure of destitution informs Devil-Bug that "the lordlings of the Quaker City . . . have turned the sweat and blood of the poor into bricks and mortar, and now as the last act of their crime, they tear down Independence Hall and raise a royal palace on its ruins." The bank directors and others of the corrupt ruling classes—the fellowship of Monk Hall—have now literally made themselves into aristocrats, and mean to replace the republic with a monarchy. This is the final intolerable act which brings the wrath of God on their heads—the republic and Independence Hall embodying, in Lippard's Jeffersonian theology, principles as sacred as Israel and the Holy Temple.<sup>34</sup>

To the juxtaposition of rich and poor a new contrast is added. The dead, past victims of the oppressions of the rich and ancestors dishonored by the treason of the "lordlings," arise and walk about the streets, unseen by all save Devil-Bug. The dead fight out a battle of Armageddon invisibly in the midst of a city that is preparing a festival to honor the coronation of the new monarch. "WOE UNTO SODOM," sing the dead, unheeded, as they pass doom on the Quaker City. The dead here speak for the oppressed poor, whose relationship to the rich parallels their own relation to the living; for so unbearable has life become in the new Quaker City that the poor prefer universal death and destruction to the continuation of life under these circumstances. Better that they and all should perish, than that any should survive under the regime of universal slavery.

This conception of the response of the degraded poor to the destruction of civilization echoes and exaggerates the Jeffersonian analysis of the consequences of class struggles, where one party represents property and

other represents its lack. If the poor, like the feudal serfs of France or the slaves of Haiti, should be utterly excluded from the rational hope of property holding, why in their struggles with the rich should they respect the concept of property? And why would they not in their day of revolution overthrow property itself—which Jefferson and his fellows assumed to be the basis of civilization and law—along with the tyrannous ancien régime? Lippard warns that if present tendencies continue—with the rich getting richer and the poor thrust closer to the condition of the propertyless—this calamity may be realized.<sup>35</sup>

The dangerous movement toward the proletarianization of the working class is presented by Lippard in terms apt to the political debates of the 1840s. He visualizes the process as one in which the condition of independent and propertied mechanics—skilled workers who might own their own tools and shops—begins to approach that of southern slaves as the owners of factories appropriate more and more of the wealth and force the independent mechanic into dependence. By "The Last Day of the Quaker City," this process has run its full course:

Then came the slaves of the city, white and black, marching along one mass of rags and sores and misery huddled together; a goodly tail to the procession of the King. Chains upon each wrist and want upon each brow. Here they were, the slaves of the cotton Lord and the factory Prince; above their heads a loom of iron, rising like a gibbet in the air, and by their sides the grim overseer. Hurrah, hurrah! This is a liberal mob; it encourages manufactures. The monopolist forever, they yelled, his enterprise gives labour to the poor, hurrah, hurrah! The slaves lifted up their eyes at the sound of that tumultuous hurrah, and muttered to each other, of glad green fields, and a farmer's life, and then they clanked their chains together, and gazed at the ruins of Independence Hall.<sup>36</sup>

The lords of the loom and the lords of the lash have become a single class, representing the concentrated power of "Capital and Trade"; and the workers too have become a single class, and slaves. Lippard directs sharply ironic barbs at the "liberal" notion that protectionist trade policies which sponsor manufactures are useful to the laborer—he sees these as fostering monopoly, and the degradation of labor. Nor do other political nostrums attract him: elsewhere he parodies the political slogans of Jackson and his successors, in the dialogue of two ignorant watchmen who blame the world's troubles on either the United States Bank, or the "Seminal Indians."<sup>37</sup> Yet neither the destruction of the "Monster Bank" nor the removal of the Indians resolves the contradictions of Jacksonian democracy.

Lippard offers—in the novel at least—no real solution of his own. His enslaved proletariat continues to dream of green fields and a farmer's life—the old yeoman dream even as the unheeded dead are chanting the preliminaries of their "Redemption." Here as elsewhere, the Frontier Myth appears as a delusion or a snare, rendered so by the corruption of man and society. Perhaps if Lippard's warning were heeded, there might be a return to the "green fields"—Lippard never tells us, though the note of nostalgia is

strong. Failing such a restoration, there is only the city, and the entrapment of an environment that is entirely owned, controlled, created, and polluted by society.

Lippard's final metaphor for this new condition is that of the pillar: in a kind of perverse allusion to Devil-Bug's daughter's fate, a pure young maiden stands with her father and her lover on a single pillar in the midst of the final destruction, and Devil-Bug joins them. All around them proceeds the horror of the Last Day, which Lippard terms "the Massacre of Judgment," in which—as in an Indian massacre—all are killed without regard to age or sex. The pillar of clay begins to sway and topple, and the coward lover seizes the maiden, tears her from her clutch on the father's knees, and tries to cast her into the pit, crying "Down . . . There is room for but one upon this isle—down!" The father temporarily rescues the maiden, and falls into the pit himself, locked in a murderous embrace with the false lover; the girl shrieks in despair and horror, and casts herself into the pit. Only Devil-Bug the urban savage survives, to overlook the universal carnage of the Quaker City, capering with glee and delight at the destruction of the rich, the beautiful—and of the innocent as well.<sup>38</sup>

Thus the American dream, moving toward nightmare, shifts from the vision of limitless green fields to the ultimate symbol of crowding and entrapment—a single pillar in the midst of an urban Apocalypse, on which a few survivors struggle for survival and place; and in struggling, they destroy all of the bonds of affection and kinship that make social life possible, ending in mutual murder and despair, leaving behind only the degraded and deformed Devil-Bug to gloat amid the wreckage of civilization.