AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: A Puritan in Paris: A Study of Lambert Strether as Jonathan Edwards' Puritan Man of Free Will in Henry James' The Ambassadors

Abstract approved: Keith Denniston

Lambert Strether, the central character of Henry James' novel, The Ambassadors, must shed the unflinching moral code he learned in New England and replace it with a morality based upon the dictates of his conscience. Strether's change is influenced primarily by the amorality he discovers in Europe. He has been sent there as his wealthy fiance's ambassador to rescue her son Chad from a life of what she fears to be Parisian degeneracy complete with a woman of ill-repute. But while in Paris, Strether gradually learns that the unbending moral code of his home in Woollett Massachussetts is inadequate in light of the facts. In Woollett, his Parisian friends would be harshly judged for their amoral lifestyle. So, in order to adjust to the new way of life he finds in Paris, Strether must temper his moral code with the moral laxness he finds in Europe.

Strether does not adopt the amorality he finds in Europe as his new moral code, however. Instead, he bases the moral decisions he must make upon the result of the merging of the two views. Strether, at the climax of the novel, uses his conscience-based point of view not to judge the good-hearted but adulterous Madame de Vionnet, but the lying, hypocritical Chad Newsome.

Much critical discussion is devoted to Strether's change in moral point of view, and the critical consensus suggests that Strether wholeheartedly rejects the Woollett morality and accepts the moral freedom of Paris. Such an assumption is inaccurate, however, upon a close inspection of Strether's actions throughout the novel. His philosophy, based upon a reliance upon the conscience, can be compared to the teachings of a man who lived one-hundred fifty years before Henry James: Calvinist minister Jonathan Edwards.

The term puritan has been misused and misunderstood in recent times, and is often used to refer to the philosophies of various religious groups which corrupted Edwards' ideas. Puritanism, as taught by Jonathan Edwards, placed emphasis on introspection, and on examining one's own conscience. In his essay on free will, Edwards suggests that upon examining one's conscience, one develops a "moral inability" to act other than according to its dictates. Lambert Strether develops such a moral inability; he must first become introspective; he must

think about what his mission will accomplish instead of blindly doing what he thinks is his duty; next, he must evaluate, according to his personal moral standards, the rightness or wrongness of his duty. Then, upon arriving at the conclusion that Mrs. Newsome, and Woollett, both are morally wrong in their judgements, he must resign his position as their ambassador, and take up his new position as a Puritan man of free will.

Strether had the opportunity in Paris to find love, companionship, and freedom, but rejects his chance for happiness. He had determined not to gain anything for himself from his trip to Paris, and so he rejects his opportunity for happiness there, as well as his chance for security in Woollett. In exchange,he gains stature as a man of conscience and integrity, and takes his place as one of the greatest moral men in literature.

A PURITAN AN PARIS:
A STUDY OF LAMBERT STRETHER AS
JONATHAN EDWARDS' MAN OF FREE WILL
IN HENRY JAMES' THE AMBASSADORS

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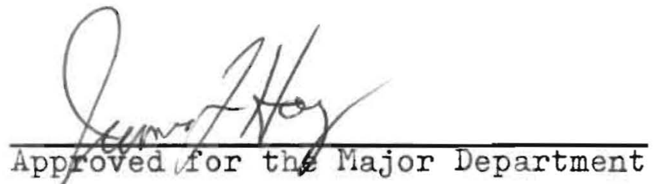
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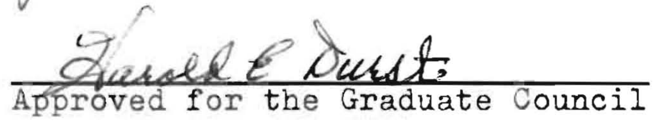
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CHAPTER I

LAMBERT STRETHER AS JONATHAN EDWARDS' MAN OF FREE WILL

In Henry James' novel, The Ambssadors, the central character, Lambert Strether, is a temperate man from New England who attempts to rescue a younger American from the clutches of European impropriety. In Europe, however, he learns that young Chad Newsome is not really being clutched at, and that the Europeans are not so vile as he had believed. Chad's family in America fears that he is in danger of being corrupted because of his living so far away from home, concluding that the force which has kept him in Paris so long must be a woman of less than desirable reputation. They urge Chad to return to Woollett and take over the family business, which endeavor will make him a wealthy man. But Chad does not return, and so Strether is dispatched by the family to bring back the wayfaring young man. But when Strether meets Chad in Paris, along with Chad's lovely companion Madame de Vionnet, Strether's sense of his mission begins to change. What began as an errand, clearly to result in Chad's homecoming, becomes now an effort to keep Chad in Paris, where his real responsibility lies. This responsibility is not to his family, but to the woman who loves him. Strether's mission had been to save Chad for family, friends, and prosperity in America. By the end of the novel, his position

is reversed; then, he must save Chad from these prospects. This reversal occurs, because what Woollett wishes for Chad is not the best for him in light of what Strether discovers about Madame de Vionnet's love for the young man. Strether does not simply reject the American view of his mission and accept the European view. Instead, he finds he must reject the European view of live-and-let-live, as well. After rejecting both points of view, he must replace them with what he finds inside his own conscience. This third point of view, a rejection of the unwavering rules of Woollett and the pragmatism of Paris, can rightly be called Puritanism. Not Puritanism as found in its corrupted state in Woollett, Massachussetts, but Puritanism in the stricter sense as taught by Jonathan Edwards.

Strether learns the lesson of following his conscience after many hours of study. His classroom, so to speak, is Europe, although much of his homework is done in America. There, Strether is ruled by the demands of his social position and by the demands of the imposing Mrs. Newsome, his fiancèe. A middle-aged widower and survivor of his only child, Strether is not a wealthy man, but educated, and, one assumes, of good family. He is taken up by Mrs. Newsome, who allows him the editorial position on her review, which, as he describes to his confindante Maria Gostrey, is "green."[1] But Mrs. Newsome controls the review, and the money, and she uses these tools

to persuade Strether. She, therefore, has the power to send Strether on this mission to Europe to act as her ambassador.

Strether learns the lesson of New England right and wrong. He studies New England morality from one end of the scale to the other, with sexual impropriety as the worst sin and outward respectability as the greatest virtue. He is armed with truth, he believes, just as if he were as church missionary. But this moral armour is weakened by the guilt he feels for the long past death of his son, whom he neglected after his wife's death. It is because of this vulnerable spot that he is able to remain open minded when he arrives in Europe. A man who knows he is fallible and reminds himself of it regularly, Strether does not place undue authority on his own opinions; therefore, he is able to discover new truths, not only about himself, but about those around him.

It is in Europe that Strether finds his best teachers. The first is Maria Gostrey, his friend and confidante, who constantly urges him to look more closely at what Strether has previously taken for granted. Then, there is Waymarsh, whom Strether has known for years, but sees increasingly from a new point of view influenced by the European sense of freedom. Waymarsh is perhaps as unseeing and unaccepting of change as Strether may have been if not for his more liberal point of view. Miss Barrace, a friend of Chad, is the type of teacher who delights in the obscurest kind of Socratic

method: her "oh oh oh's!" continually challenge Strether to make discoveries for himself(62). Little Bilham, Chad's artist friend, tells Strether no untruths, but Strether is too quick to jump to conclusions and to twist little Bilham's words to mean what he wants them to. Strether is unused to the European penchant for double entendre. He must develop skill in seeing everything there is to be seen, and this skill little Bilham helps teach him. All these instructors are supplying pieces of the same lesson which is completed when he discovers, late though on his own, that the relationship between Chad and Madame de Vionnet is not just a casual friendship, but an adulterous affair. He has mastered the material and the time for a test is ripe. Strether passes. He discovers the truth about the affair and reacts neither with Woollett intolerance nor with Parisian moral laxity. Instead, he follows his conscience and renounces Europe, in spite of the joy it gives him in making him feel young again.

Strether, then, returns to America but rejects his old restrictions of money and social conventions. Instead, he reaffirms an older tradition, that which his friends in America have rejected: the Puritanism of Jonathan Edwards. The Puritans of an earlier generation were the intellectuals of the time and represented rationalism, thereby bringing order to the new frontier.[2] According to Richard Hofstadter, " . . . they gave the new republic a coherent and fairly

workable body of ideas, a definition of its identity and ideals, a sense of its place in history, a feeling of nationality, a political system and a political code."[3] Nevertheless, with the passing of generations this Puritan class " . . . kept the manners and aspirations and prejudices of an aristocratic class without being able to retain its authority."[4] In terms of the novel, Strethers friends in New England, namely Mrs. Newsome and the Pococks, Chad's sister and her husband, are products of the age of disintergrating intellectualism. Though they are of the old Puritan stock, they have retained little of the energy and creativity of their predecessors. The tradition they did retain, Hofstadter says of their class, was not so much a "source of strength or a point of departure as a fetish."[5] The moral laws of Calvinism disintergrated into "conventional social morality."[6]

It is against this degeneration that Strether finally rebels. He acts as an individual in a society that views individuality as merely self-indulgence. He renounces the "correct taste" and "sound morals" of his New England friends in favor of independent thinking. In short, Strether's decision to give up his bright future in Woollett is an act of outright rebelliousness against the accepted order. Although this type of rebellion is frowned upon in Woollett, Strether is not influenced by anything other than his own conscience, as it is developed by the end of the novel. His final renunciation grows out of his initial attitude upon

arriving in Europe, his reactions to the strange way of life there, and his decision to return to America only to give up the social position and a future with the wealthy Mrs. Newsome, and tell the story of a Puritan in Paris.

Puritanism, as discovered by Strether while in Paris, was truly a recognition for him, because its fundementals had not been practiced in New England since the days of Jonathan Edwards, one-hundred fifty years earlier. In fact, Puritan doctrines had relaxed so much even during Edwards' career that the increasing backsliding caused concern in Edwards for the souls of his flock. Perry Miller gives an account of the rising contention in Northampton caused partly by political struggle and, to a greater degree, by disagreement over doctrine. The doctrinal dispute was one of Edwards' chief areas of concern because this division between Calvinists led to the formation of splinter groups like the Arminians.

The major rift between the conservative Edwards and this opposing group was the Arminian notion that man is, in part, responsible for his own salvation. To this doctrine, Edwards could never be reconciled. He fought bitterly against it from the pulpit as well as through published materials such as his essay on free will. He attacked the doctrine itself in a series of sermons, culminated by his 1734 lecture, entitled, "Justification by Faith Alone."[7] Vergilus Ferm says "for over a century the Puritan Calvinists had been calling faith the ' condition of justification'."[8] Ferm explains,

> Man can never justify himself by any goodness before God since he is enmeshed in sin which is infinite. Faith alone justifies not as a result of obedience or acceptance but because faith in involved in the act of union with Christ whose own obedience to God is alone acceptable Obedience is an expression of faith, not faith itself. 9

During the time of Edwards' attack on the Arminians, and partly because of it, he was leading what was to be known as the Great Awakening. Concerned by his parishoner's backsliding from fundemental beliefs and their interest in the modern theology of Arminius, Edwards stressed the sovereignity of God and the utter dependency ofman upon him. He warned parishoners that their destiny was in the hands of God and that nothing that man could do would ever change this fundemental truth. The people of Northampton were reminded of these facts in such sermons as "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," delievered in a neighboring church in 1741.[10] This return to conservative Calvinism with its reminders of mankind's hopeless state brought about a marked increase in public conversion. Ferm describes the atmosphere in the revival town: "Beginning in the Northampton church among people who experienced conversion, the revival spread in the village touching almost everyone, young and old. The whole climate of the town underwent change with public professions of faith."[11]

This period was the height of Edwards' career; soon the tide of public opinion would flow against him, stirred mainly by personal vendettas led by such men as Robert Breck, an

Arminian minister whom Edwards had publicly critisised. A controversy ensued in 1742 between the "New Lights," or the revivalist ministers, and the "Old Lights," a group of ministers who opposed the revivals as being too emotional in their methods. In a discussion of the philosophical relationship between Edwards and English philosopher John Locke, Morton White makes it clear that Edwards, while defending the role of the emotions in religion, balked against being what Locke called "enthusiastic," his term for those who "set reason aside and set up revelation without it."[12] Edwards fought hard to defend his views, but, as Ferm says, "chafed under the criticism of the revival," and in 1746 made his "noble last stand as an apologist of empirical religion and its worthy and essential characteristics."[13] This stand came in the form of the essay, "A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections," which, though it explains Edwards' philosophy of religion, did nothing to save him from his enemies.

These enemies were so numerous and strong that in 1750 they had him expelled from his pulpit in Northampton.[14] The cause of this expulsion was yet another doctrinal dispute, this time over the Half-Way Covenant, established by his grandfather, John Stoddard, a century earlier. This doctrine would allow the children of the original church members to be a part of the contract made with God, by virtue of their parent's participation. Ferm explains that Edwards found fault with

such laxation of the original rules and insisted that the new applicants to the church give a public demonstration of their conversion. His enemies and even some faithful parishoners found this view to be too reactionary, and Edwards' tight rule of the parish to be unacceptable.

Edwards accepted the decision made by a small council of ministers that he should leave his Northampton pulpit, but he never accepted their views which he considered too modern. He remained unwavering in his stand, and reaffirmed his position in his "Farewell Sermon," delivered July 1, 1750.[15] From Northampton, he went to an outpost at Stockbridge, where he would live in a rough and uncivilized environment as a missionary to the Indians there. It was in this new establishment that he wrote his masterpiece of theoplogical thought,"A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions that Freedom of Will which is supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, Vertue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame."

The method of this enquiry, as well as much else of Edwards' writing, has been compared to English empirisist John Locke. Scholar T.H. Johnson says of his studies that "the two authors Edwards most venerated were Isaac Newton and John Locke, and nothing they published escaped his notice."[16] Morton White adds to the discussion by noting that there was some influence by these thinkers on Edwards, " . . . at least

to the extent of encouraging him to apply the principle of universal causation to the will, that is to say, to treat all choices as having the same category as Lockeian ideas and Newtonian accelerations."[17]

Of the two, the comparison between Edwards and Locke is the greater, because both struggled with the question of free will, which Newton did not. The greatest similarity of all is both men's belief that the mind is at birth, in Locke's phrase, a <u>tabla</u> <u>rasa</u>, which White defines as a mind which,

> . . . comes to have ideas only through experience, and experience may take the form of sensation -- by which he meant the normal five ways of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling -- or reflection, by which he meant what we today call introspection or looking inward at the activities of the mind.[18]

Edwards, however, also believed in a sixth sense, by which we perceive the beauty of God, and which cannot be explained in terms of everyday understanding.[19] White says that this sixth sense was a ". . . very different understanding," and that the spiritual knowledge that Edwards regarded as the fountain of true religion was a very special kind of knowledge.[20] In spite of this departure from Lockeian thought, Edwards is still considered to be a religious empirisist and one of the greatest, and most intellectual and methodical, of American philosophers.

Edwards begins his logically sound argument on free will by defining some terms. The most important term in Part 1, section 1, is the term <u>will</u>, by which Edwards means "that by which the mind chooses or refuses anything."[21] One cannot will a thing to be one way and yet desire it to be another. The most important point he makes in this section is that in every act of will, or desire, there is a choice made by the sould. Edwards uses the writings of John Locke as a basis for his argument concerning the agreement between will and desire and concludes his discussion as follows:

> I trust it will be allowed by all, that in every act of will there is an act of choice; that in every volition there is a preference, or a prevailing inclination of the soul, whereby, at that instant, it is out of a state of perfect indifference, with respect to the direct object of the volition (483).

In part 1, section 2, Edwards assers that the will must be determined by something, that is the effect of some cause. This cause, he explains, is called the "motive," which he deines as "that which excites the mind to volition"(484). A motive can be strong or weak; this evaluation is always made by the mind perceiving the motive. This faculty for perception belongs to the understanding, which Edwards defines as the"whole faculty of perception or apprehension"(484). After all motives are perceived, the will chooses the stongest motive, or in other words, "the will always is, as the greatest apparent good is"(485). But the will, Edwards says, does not follow

a given course merely because it will provide the most immediate happiness, but applies reason to its choice and will select that act which is then considered the most agreeable.

Part 1 section 3 contains mainly Edwards' redefinition of such commonly used words as <u>necessary</u>, <u>inability</u>, and <u>impossibility</u>. His desire is that these terms be used specifically and be free from misuse. He is most concerned with defining <u>necessity</u>. He does so in many ways and at great length, and summarizes his description as follows:

> . . . when the subject and predicate of a proposition, which affirms the existence of anything, either substance, quality, act, or circumstance, have a full and certain connection, then the existence of being of that thing is said to be necessary in a metaphysical sense.(488-89).

Then, Edwards makes one of the major assertions of the essay saying that " . . . necessity is not inconsistent with Liberty" (489). The problem he must solve is: how can predetermination and free-will co-exist? He will continue to rely on Locke to help provide an answer to this most perplezxing question.

Before Edwards can answer the question, however, he must lay the groundwork by defining some additional terms. In Part 1 section 4, he writes about the two types of necessity, moral and natural. The first is the " . . . necessity of connection and consequence (between moral causes and effects) which arises from such moral causes, as the strength of inclination, or motives, and the connection which there is in many cases between these, and such certain volitions and actions."[22] The second

is the necessity from natural causes, such as, when one is injured, he necessarily feels pain. Both types, Edwards says, are absolute. "That is," he explains,"the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cause, as a natural necessary effect is with its natural cause"(490).

Edwards also explains in this section that, although one's will may be strong, sometimes a "motive or previous bias can be stronger than the will, which then cannot go against them" (490). This state is defined as "the oppostition or want of inclination"(490). He offers the example of the chaste woman's inability to prostitute herself, even in the face of great need. Although she may will to prostitute herself in order to provide for her family, she is morally unable to do so because of previous biases, or in other words, because of a stonger motive that says such actions are wrong.

In Part 1, section 5, Edwards demonstrates that a thing must have a will in order to have liberty, and begins to answer the questions asked in section 3. First, he defines three terms: <u>constraint</u> as " a person's being necessiated to do a thing contrary to his will," and <u>restraint</u> as " a person's being hindered, and not having power to do his will"(493). <u>Liberty</u> is defined simply as a thing's "power to do its will" (493). He says that a thing must have a will, and, therefore, the ability to either do its will or to be restrained from doing its will. Because a rock cannot will to stay on the ground

or to plop into the creek, if it is thrown into the air, it has not lost its liberty, because it had none to begin with. He is also careful to point out, here, that it is not the will itself which losses the liberty, but the man, or soul, with the will that does. He gives, as evidence, his belief that we are all linked to God through our "sixth sense."[23] This is his major departure from Locke's empiricism,(excluding Locke's somewhat mystical belief that some things can be understood because they are "self-evident") and is an idea that must be accepted through faith.

In Part 2, Edwards attacks the theory of free will as set forth by the Arminians. According to Morton White, they claimed that "man's past action was free only if two conditions were satisfied: first, that he did as he chose to do; and second, that his choice was free . . . ."[24] This claim led to their proposition which Edwards strongly attacked, dealing with self-determination. In Part 2, section 1, Edwards describes the error, as he sees it, that every act of will is caused by an act of will. When he traces an act of will and its causes back to the earliest act of will, he finds that the will is always determined by a previous act of will, and so on back into infinity. White says that Edwards found this view to be inconsistent and illogical, because, then, the will could never be truly free but must be pre-determined. Edwards rejects this notion and its Arminian originators. Instead, he presents the

argument, in the next section, that "nothing ever comes to pass without a cause"(500). He defines cause as that which has the "nature of a reason why some things are, rather than others; or why they are thus, rather than otherwise"(500). This definition brings Edwards to the synthesis of the two seemingly contradictory ideas of free will and predestination: there is a God who determined the first act of free will, and such a cause was necessary, because for every effect there must be a cause.

It is upon this point that Edwards launches a discussion in Part 2, section 3. He undertakes to prove that there is a God by necessity, because everything must have a cause, and God is the prime cause. If it be proven, he says, that things can come to pass without a cause," we should not only have no proff of the Being of God, but we should be without evidence of the existence of anything whatsoever, but our own immediate present ideas and consciousness"(501). He, then, proceeds to show how we do know there is a God, the proofs we follow being these:

> We first ascend, and prove a posteriori, or from effects, that there must be an eternal Cause; and then secondly, prove by argumentation, not intuition, that this Being must be necessarily existent; and then thirdly, from the proved necessity of his existence, we may descend, and prove many of his perfections a priori(500).

The remainder of the essay deals with the common man's ideas on free will and moral necessity. Even though they do not think of these ideas in a philosophical language, Edwards says that their common sense leads them to the same truths which many years of study have led the scholar. People who act freely, according to the common man, are those who are not prevented from doing what they want to do. As a result, whose who act wrongly deserve blame, and those who act rightly deserve praise. The common man's notions are expressed in an admirably simple manner, and are an apt summary of much of the essay. Although Edwards expresses his understanding of the common man's notions with great confindence, he had great difficulty understanding the sway of public opinion as it drifted away from his fundemental theology and towards modernism. He had to deal with people of his day who were changing rapidly in their religious belief, in their social organization, and in their political ideology. He strove to understand, but first to improve, a world which was at first adamantly in favor of him, and then, later, just as adamantly against him. The result was sometimes dogmatic, sometimes ruthless, but always intelligent, logical, and straighforward.

Because Edwards' ideas are basically uncomplicated, they are more easily applied to literature than are most other philosophical concepts. Much of Edwards' ideas of free will can

be applied to Lambert Strether, and by extension, to Henry James. Leon Edel's five volume biography of James details the period of his life while James was working on The Ambassadors and chronicles incidents in common between James and Strether. James even mentions similarities between himself and the hero of the novel in several of his letters. Both men are just beyond the prime of life with a past immersed in Puritanism as found in New England. Both James and Strether embarked at this phase of life upon a new career--James returning to the international novel by which he first earned his fame, and Strether going abroad and for the first time discovering what it is to live truly. Edel notes: "The novel he wrote about his middle-aged hero had a single primary message, for himself as well as for his readers: that one must be a source of what may be called 'excitement' to oneself."[24] Thus, even though Henry James is of course not Lambert Strether, many similarities can be found which may suggest how strongly James felt about his character's search for knowledge and eventual discovery that one must live all on can--"it's a mistake not to"(137).

Strether was torn between the Puritan-based ideas of New England and the more liberal moral code of Europe. James struggled against the rising scientism of the 1890's and longed for the simpler life, which culminated in his constant journeying between rural England and bustling London.[25] Edwards fought for fundemental Christianity and lost the battle to the

more liberal Calvinsists of the day. Eventually, his ideas were separated from their Lockeian origins and distorted by the Transcendentalists. His belief in the sixth sense became one of the major premises in the philosophy of such men as Ralph Waldo Emerson--but to them all men had this sense, not just the Protestant saints.[26] The truth of Edwards' message was learned by both Strether and James: the will always does according to the greatest apparent good; therefore, one should listen to the will, or the conscience, and act according to it always.

Strether follows this lesson consistently throughout the novel, although his knowledge of this truth comes to him gradually. He adheres to the pattern set forth by Edwards of perceiving the strongest motive and acting upon it, thus proving himself to be a creature possessed of a will. The desire to act upon the strongest motive grows so strong in Strether that it results in a moral inability to do otherwise. Strether knows in the end that following his conscience is right, because he possess the sixth sense described by Edwards, which allows him to see the truth.

CHAPTER II

THE AMBASSADOR COMES TO CALL

Champion of women and doer of good deeds, Lambert Strether arrives heroically in Europe. His mission, simply, is fo find young Chad Newsome and bring him home to his mother. This task, though it seems simple to Strether at first, becomes increasingly difficult as the novel progresses, until, at last, it becomes a complete impossibility. Many critics argue about why Strether fails at his mission and what Henry James intended to show by his character's apparent abandonment of women and good deeds. Whereas, the second most useful place to look for an answer to these questions is in scholarly journals, the most useful place is Henry James' "Project of the Novel."[27]

James wrote the "Project," a 20,000 word statement detailing the story of <u>The Ambassadors</u> for the publishing company of Harper and Brothers before the novel was begun.[28] In it, he charted the main characters, their motivations, thèir purpose in the novel, and their final outcomes. Some character's names would change before the novel was first published in a twelve-part serial form, and some characters would be added. Moreover, there were some scenes described in the "Project" which would not occur in the novel, as well as some crucial scenes in the novel which would not appear in the"Project." But what is consistent between the "Project" and the novel is the character of Lambert Strether.

James describes Strether as a man beyond the prime of life, a man of good breeding and education but with some financial difficulties. He says that Strether is a product of his New England upbringing, always "ridden by his New England Conscience."[29] James describes Strether's state of mind as follows:

> He feels tired, in other words, without having a great deal to show for it; disenchanted without having known any great enchantments, enchanters, or, above all, enchantresses; and even before the action in which he is engaged launches him, is vaguely haunted by the feeling of what he has missed, though this is a quantity, and a quality, that he would have been rather at a loss to name.[30]

A man of Strether's temperment and emotional state, when faced with the radically different way of life which he encounters in Paris, must undergo some kind of change. James could have chosen that his character should turn his back on all that was outside of the realm of his immediate mission and go home unchanged, though probably without Chad. Or James could have decided that Strether would openly embrace the more tolerant moral code of the Europeans, accept these new friends with both their faults and their strengths, and begin a new life abroad. But he rejects these two options. How Strether moves from his state of comparative innocence to his final understanding of self and the resulting renunciation of Europe is a matter worthy of consideration.

Lambert Strether is first discovered in Chester, England, where he has landed from his trans-Atlantic journey and from

where he will proceed to London, then on to his final destination of Paris. In Chester, he is to meet his old friend, Waymarsh, who has been several months in Europe. But, first, he makes an acquaintance with Maria Gostrey, an American woman in her late thirties, who immediately befriends Strether in the lobby of their hotel. The two quickly become friends, and Strether discloses more to her and grows fond of her in a shorter time than he ever has with a new acquaintance before.

His friendship with his old comrade, Waymarsh, meanwhile, is taken up in Chester and, then, in London and, later, in Paris, and the three become, for a time, close companions. In other words, Strether and Miss Gostrey become close; Waymarsh acts as their chaperon. Waymarsh is continually dissatisfied with Europe and somewhat shocked by Strether's increasingly informal behavior towards Miss Gostrey.

Strether feels comfortable around Miss Gostrey, and she soon becomes his confidante. He tells her about his mission and about Chad and Chad's family's speculation concerning the dreadful woman who evidentally has a hold over him. He tell Waymarsh about his mission, too, but his discussion of the subject with Waymarsh concerns only the external details of the mission. Waymarsh displays interest in Strether's relationship with Mrs. Newsome. But Strether tells Miss Gostrey the whole of the story, encouraged by her constant questioning. She understands the complexity of the situation; in fact, she un-

derstands more than Strether does, and arrives at realizations and conclusions about things that he only guesses. She continues in this role of seer and confindante throughout the novel, acting as a sounding board and a guide to Strether, but always allowing him to make discoveries for himself, even on occasions when she has long since ascertained the painful truth.

The character with whom much of the novel is concerned, Chad Newsome, does not appear until Book III, chapter 2. The threesome of Strether, Miss Gostrey, and Waymarsh, are attending a play, seated in Miss Gostrey's box, awaiting the arrival of a young artist named John Little Bilham. Little Bilham, as he is known,is a friend of Chad whom Strether discovered occupying Chad's apartment upon Strether's initial attempt to contact the wayfaring young man. Chad, at this point, has taken a trip to Cannes, and his date of return is uncertain, but in the meantime, Strether finds himself quite taken with little Bilham. On this particular evening, Strether has sent a theatre invitaion to the artist, but the curtqin time is fast approaching, and no little Bilham appears. Suddenly, as the curtain rises, the box door opens, and in walks a man of striking appearance--worldly, handsome, with a remarkable streak of grey through his thick dark hair. The young man is Chad.

Strether suffers through the performance, unable to speak to Chad or to formulate any plans about speaking to him alone.

Miss Gostrey, of course, knows immediately that the young man must be the one of whom Strether has spoken, and she discreetly commands the attention of Waymarsh for the rest of the play, leaving Strether free to adjust to the situation. But Strether can think of nothing to do but to sit obediently in the box until the performance ends; only then does he take Chad out of the theatre, leaving Miss Gostrey and Waymarsh to their own devices.

Over a drink in a quiet restaurant, Strether makes his move. He tell Chad of his mother's growing concerns over her son's well-being, aggravated by Chad's having not written for so long. It is revealed that the family suspects Chad of being involved with a dispreputable woman, at which Chad is greatly offended. He insists that the family is low-minded to suspect such a thing and states that, if he really wanted to go back, nothing, and certainily not a woman, could stop him. Strether implores Chad to say he will break off at once and return with him. Chad responds that he knows that the two of them will get along marvelously, and Strether, feeling a bit as though this was not what he had in mind, but trying to be hopeful, returns to his hotel for his nightly correspondance with Mrs. Newsome, and then on to bed.

Chad and his friends entertain Strether and his friends upon several occasions.after this initial conversation, the most momentous of which is the garden party at the home of

Gloriani, the esteemed artist. It is here that Strether expects to meet the two female friends whom Chad had insisted that Strether remain in Paris long enough to meet. He had earlier questioned little Bilham about the identity of the women and learned that they were two quite lovely ladies, mother and daughter. They are, Strether assumes, the"virtuous attachment" to which little Bilham had mysteriously referred a few days before(116). Strether and Miss Gostrey have speculated as to which of the two women the phrase applies to, mother or daughter. They realize, however, that they will not be able to guess, but will have to wait and "see it all"(120).

Strether begins to "see all" at the garden party. In the old walled garden, Strether finds all the magic of Paris--its charm, its romance, its history, its grandeur, and above all, its joy and exuberance. Here, Strether makes his grand declaration to little Bilham, described by James in the preface to the novel as being the seed of the story(1). Caught up in the flow of life and excitement of Paris, Strether has thought much about his own quite faded youth. He has also just been introduced to Chad's friends, the charming Madamed de Vionnet and her lovely young daughter, Jeanne, and has seen Chad smiling with them, happy and full of life. Strether, after they depart laughing, implores little Bilham not to miss any chances that youth offers him, as he himself has done. "Live all

you can; it's a mistake not to. It doesn't so much matter what you do in particular so long as you have your life. If you haven't had that, what <u>have</u> you had?"(137).

After this party, Strether has occassion to see Madame de Vionnet several more times, both alone and at social events. He finds himself quite taken by her, and increasingly convinced that she is quite good for Chad, if, indeed, it is she who is the "virtuous attachment." For it is she who has taught him manners, she who has given him polish and a worldly air, she who has taken a rough young American and turned him into an elegant European gentleman. In short, Strether no longer thinks it wise to return Chad to America; he considers it a crime to do so. For Strether discovers that she is in love with Chad, and Strether cannot bear the idea of Chad's abandoning such a beautiful and noble woman.

This change of attitude, needless to say, creates much excitement in Woollett. Strether has been communicating regularly with Mrs. Newsome about his progress. Too conscientious to withold the truth of his new convictions, yet unsure of the proper course to take, Strether gives the family in Woollett the impression that he needs, so to speak, fresh troops sent in. To this end, a new brigade of ambassadors is dispatched, namely Sarah Pocock, her husband Jim, and Mamie, Jim's pretty young sister, who the family hopes will someday become Chad's bride.

After the Pocock's arrival, he leaves his friends and takes a lazy leisurely trip into the French countryside. He departs with no plan, no schedule, but with simply a picture in his mind of a Lambinet landscape of the French countryside which he had seen long ago in a shop, but could not afford. When he finds a spot which resembles that view, he will disembark, have his picnic, his nap, and his walk through the countryside and its neighboring villages. He finds the splendid peaceful place and does these things: he finally has his Lambinet. Strether leaves the city of Paris but cannot get away from its people. For there, on the terrace of a rustic inn, where he sits awaiting his supper, he spies a small boat floating lazily down the river. Its occupants appear relaxed and intimate; its oarsman young and strong, his lady companion, blond and gentle. Then, it occurs to Strether: this couple, miles from home, dressed for vacationing, not travelling, is none other than Chad and Madame de Vionnet. At the moment that the two recognize him, it is apparent to Strether that they are quite embarrassed and would probably pass by without a sign had he not noticed them first. To ease the tension, Strether calls loudly to them, and they come ashore feigning delight at the coincidence while Strether finds himself making excuses for his presence at the inn. Although Madame de Vionnet and Chad do their best to hide the truth, it becomes clear to Strether that the two are not, not just for the day, but for the night, as well. They have an attachment that

may be virtuous in the sense that it has done them both good, but it is by no means innocent, as Strether has tried to believe all along. When the night grows cool and Madame de produces no wraps, Strether realizes that the garments, along with their other personal belongings, are at an inn, where the two, no doubt, intend to return for the night. Strether can no longer av id the truth: the two are having an adulterous affair.

They have their meal and make arrangements to return to Paris together that night. The next day,Strether receives a note from Madame de Vionnet asking him to call. He does so, and discovers her looking, for the first time, her age, which is her late thirties, but still beautiful and gentle and fragile. They talk, and he finds he cannot judge her as an indecent woman, as he was prepared to do when he first arrived in Europe, though he was ignorant of anything about her. He realizes, instead, how good she really is, and how completely wrong it would be for Chad to forsake her for the business and family in Woollett.

Strether meets again with Chad and tells him his opinion. Chad insists that he has not tired of Madame de Vionnet, although Strether feels that Chad protests too much. Strether can tell by Chad's adamant pledges to stand by his lover that he will not remain long with Madame de Vionnet, but will forsake her for his own selfish gain. Chad is the one with the lax moral code, with the insensitivity for the feelings of others, with the ability to form judgments based on constantly

changing principles: in short, Chad is Europe. Though Europe is also free, exciting, alive, unprejudiced, and responsible for such fine specimens as Madame de Vionnet, at its worst it produces men like Chad who will not follow their own consciences, or even acknowledge that they have one. It is not the love affair of which Strether disapproves; he has learned enough in Europe to know that there are crimes far worse than violating social norms. It is the rejection of true love for monetary gain of which Strether disapproves. The fact that this behavior would be accepted in Europe causes him to reject not just Chad, but Europe as a whole. Strether looks into his conscience, discovers that he cannot tolerate such behavior as Chad's and knows he must leave Paris, a place that condones such behavior, far behind.

Before he can go, he must have a final meeting with Miss Gostry. She has suspected, since early in the events, the love affair, and is not surprised by Strether's opinion that Chad will not be loyal for long. Miss Gostrey, who now realizes that Strether is preparing to leave Europe, makes one more attempt to persuade Strether to stay. She offers, in a discreet way, her love and companionship if he should choose to stay. Although he knows fully well what she means, he does not accept her offer; he cannot remain in Europe. He must go home again, even though he knows he has lost Mrs. Newsome and all that the loss means. He rejects comfort and security

in Woollett, he rejects love and excitement in Paris; he must cling to the only thing which is left: himself.

The plot synopsis varies in several instances from the "Project." The most important difference is that nowhere in the "Project" does James mention Strether's saving of Madame de Vionnet. Although Strether does determined to see Chad through, nowhere does he make the kind of commitment to Madame de Vionnet that he does in the novel. James states clearly that Strether is not in love with her, although she recognizes what could have been between them.[31]

Some minor discrepencies between the "Project" and the novel occur in the character names. For example, Waymark becomes Waymarsh, Glenn Burbage becomes John Little Bilhmam, and Miss Barrace is not mentioned at all. Strether's tour of Chester in Book I is not with Miss Gostrey, but with Waymarsh. Strether's background is somewhat different in the "Project," as well. It mentions a brief second marriage, as well as short periods of time in which Strether dabbled in tutoring, studying law, and working in journalism. His view of Chad is also somewhat different in the "Project." In this case, instead of agreeing with Mrs. Newsome on the lost state of her son, Strether accepts the wayfaring of the young man with the attitude of a man of the world, although he does consider to be something of a brute, something his own son would never have been.[32]

Other variations include Miss Gostrey's presence at the garden party, which she does not attend in the novel, and her knowledge of Jeanne's approaching marriage, which she conceals from Strether "for his own good."[33] Also different in Strether's showing Jim around Paris; in the novel, Jim spends much time exploring by himself, and even visits Madame de Vionnet alone. Further, Chad, Madame de Vionnet, and Strether do not separate after the fiasco in the country; instead, they ride quietly back to Paris together. Finally, the chronology of the last chapters varies. Strether goes to see Madame de Vionnet after the countryside scene, and then to see Sarah Pocock, who has not yet departed, according to the "Project," then to see Chad, then once again to see Madame de Vionnet, then, finally, to see Miss Gostrey. In the novel, of course, Sarah's departure is what inspires Strether's countryside visit, after which he visits Madame de Vionnet once, Chad once, and Miss Gostrey several times.

The preceeding synopsis is necessary to an understanding of Strether's attitudes as they begin to change and how he comes to be a Puritan man of free will. However, any attempt to arrive at conclusions by looking at plot alone would be useless.

In order to discover what prompted Strether's final renunciation, one must first understand the attitudes of the character when Strether first arrives in Europe. These initial

attitudes are important, especially in terms of how they change, and for the influences which affect these changes, because it is important to remember that the foregoing synopsis does not constitute the whole matter of the novel. Rather, it is what Strether thinks and imagines that makes the story. James lets one know that the story is an internal one, rather than one of concrete events by the very abstractness of the language. Ian Watt proves this idea to be true in his explication of the first paragraph of *The Ambassadors*, in which he details the various grammatical and syntactical patterns of the paragraph, and quantifies the abundance of intransitive verbs, relative pronouns, and abstract nouns. He shows the lack of concrete images, and demonstrates, by rewriting various sentences, how intrusive such sensory detail would be to the paragraph. Because the passage is narrative rather than expository, readers become immediately aware of the "multidimensional quality" of the narrative.[34] All of these dimensions are subjective, Watt says, and consists of the "character's awareness of events; the narrator's seeing of them; and our own trailing perceptions of the relation between these two."[35] Moreover, Watt believes that, by locating the narration in the mental world, James freed himself from the restrictions of time and place. He recognizes that this placement in the mind causes the novel to be more difficult, full as it must necessarily be of an abundance of pronouns, qualifiers, and abstractions. He explains James'

rationale for this subordination of event and setting to what James found most important:

> . . . the mental drama of the hero's consciousness which, of course, is not told but shown: scenically dramatised. At the same time, by selecting thoughts and events which are representative of the book as a whole, and narrating them with an abstractness which suggests their larger import, James introduces the most general themes of the novel. 36

Because the novel is so concerned with the hero's mental drama, James has gone to great lengths to show nearly every thought and perception which flits through Strether's mind. Sometimes James purposely omits Strether's thoughts, a technique which pulls the reader away from the action for a time. Thus it is with relative ease and great necessity that one must look as Strether's attitudes upon first arriving in Europe, through his initial meeting with Chad, and stopping just short of his momentous declaration at the garden party.

In general, Strether's attitude upon arriving in Europe is informed in part by his own background, and in part by the mission he has been sent forth to accomplish. But in Book I, chapter 1, his attitudes have begun to change subtly, even before the narrative begins. He spent the trans-Atlantic journey mainly alone, desiring not companionship, but rest. He even hopes to postpone the reunion with Waymarsh for as long as possible. Then, suddenly, he finds himself taken up by Miss Gostrey in the hotel lobby and thrust into conversation with her. Here occurs the first specific mention by the narrator of Strether's attitude. When their conversation first begins to

lull, "their attitude remained, none the less, that of not forsaking the board; and the effect of this in turn was to give them the appearance of having accepted each other with an absence of preliminaries complete"(19).

This immediate acceptance of another is uncommon for Strether, and cirtually unheard of in Woollett, where new acquaintances are made through formal introductions. The distinction of Europe has already begun to work on Strether as he drops his gaurd in front of this lady of European society whom he has never seen before. Strether only knows that he is entering into something "of which the sense would be quite disconnected from the sense of his past and whihc was literally beginning then and there"(20). His acceptance of the fact marks the beginning of his attitudinal change from the marrow-visioned man of Woollett to the Puritan man of vision he would become.

One characteristic of the man from Woollett is his reluctance to admit a woman's superior knowledge on any given subject, but he now not only accepts that Miss Gostrey knows things the he does not know; he does it "as good humouredly as if it lifted a burden"(22). His relationship with Miss Gostrey makes him feel somewhat guilty, a feeling fostered in its residents by "dear old Woollett"(25). Strether questions whether it is disloyal for him to encourage an acquaintance with Miss Gostrey, and thinks of the effect it would produce in a "cerain person" (23). This is one of Strether's earliest rebellions against Mrs. Newsome, and he thinks, "if it were 'wrong'--why then he

had better not have come out at all"(23). But Strether never completely sheds the feeling that Mrs. Newsome is watching him, and he later thinks that she "looms like a giant iceberg in a cool northern sea"(316).

The conversation between Strether and Miss Gostrey quickly shifts to Strether's home in America. Miss Gostrey perceives that Strether is doing something he feels he should not, namely, enjoying himself. Strether counters that any discomfort he feels is the fault of his Woollett background. "Woollett isn't sure it ought to enjoy," Strether explains(25). The chapter concludes with the couple's discovery of Waymarsh awaiting their arrival at the hotel. Strether's recognition of him causes "another of those responsive arrests we have had so repeatedly to note"(27). Only with difficulty can he respond instantly to any situation as he would have in Woollett. He can no longer react quickly, based upon the set of rules employed in Woollett, but must be independent in his thinking. Thus, the arrests in response while Strether thinks out the appropriate reaction to each unique experience in his new European world.

In chapter 2, the two men have a visit, which is not described in detail to the reader, and then Strether retires to his room. However, between the excitement of meeting Waymarsh again, and the symbolic enlargening of his vision after just one meeting with Miss Gostrey, his room now seems too small for him. Next, there is further information provided about Strether's

attitude towards Waymarsh: he is envious of Waymarsh's large income and ability to hold his tongue when appropriate. One also sees that Strether is uncomfortable talking to Waymarsh, both about the mission and about his relationship with Mrs. Newsome. His discomfort will have later repurcussions when one sees him sharing this coveted information with Miss Gostrey. Though Strether has known Waymarsh a good many years and likes him, he begins to see him critically at the end of Book I, chapter 2. Strether is reminded of a "big, snubbed child" when Waymarsh asks what Strether is going to do with Waymarsh. Strether had earlier posed this same question to Miss Gostrey concerning himself, and he wonders if he, too, sounded like a child.

Strether and Waymarsh grow further apart in the novel, partly because of Strether's desire to learn, and Waymarsh's refusal to do so. Strether learns from Miss Gostrey such things as how to order a proper European breakfast, where to buy the best clothes at the best prices, and how readily to identify the various "types" one sees on the street or at the theatre. The narrator poses this question about the shifting relationships: "Was what was happening to himself then, was what already <u>had</u> happened, really that a woman of fashion was floating him into society and that an old friend deserted on the brink was watching the force of the current?"(38).

Book I is concerned with Strether's changing attitudes toward Waymarsh, Miss Gostrey, and himself, as well. He confesses to Miss Gostrey his feelings of guilt and confusion

concerning his growing friendship with her in contrast to the abyss he feels opening up between himself and Waymarsh. He goes on to say that Waymarsh is a success, but that he himself is a "perfectly equipped failure"(40). He compares his idea of freedom to Waymarsh's, and sees that they are quite different. Waymarsh's notion of freedom is to be able to spend money, and he does so across Europe, demonstrating a grand kind of freedom which Miss Gostrey and Strether refer to as a "sacred rage"(41). But for Strether, the price of freedom is higher than for Waymarsh, who pays merely with money, which he has in abundance. His freedom is the forsaking of his past as he spends an unprecedented amount of time in the company of a Parisian socialite. He tells Miss Gostrey she has cost him. She enquires about the price, and he replies "Well, my past--in one great lump. But no matter, . . . I'll pay with my last penny"(41).

He has evidentally given a sizeable first installment, for in Book II, freedom manifests itself in his "uncontrolled perceptions" of the city around him(43). His past, namely Woollett and his mission, are briefly forgotten as he takes in the city of Paris and visits the theatre with Miss Gostrey. But the forboding presence of Mrs. Newsome is too strong for him, and he is constantly reminded of home. He sees a character in a play, a young man in evening clothes, and wonders if Chad, too would "also be in perpetual evening dress"(44). The dialog tag of this line is, "Strether stared before him." Symbol-

ically, he has blinders on, and responds, as of old, without independent thinking. He becomes the mouthpiece of Woollett, and must stare straight ahead in order to do so, lest he see anything which would cause his perceptions to run ahead uncontrolled.

He continues speaking for Woollett on the subject of the business owned by Mrs. Newsome, which Chad will inherit. He hints to Miss Gostrey that the family's wealth was gained dishonestly, and she surmises that perhaps Chad does not want to return to the shame. Strether sees no shame, however, in light of the morality of the modern world. After all, Chad's ancestors were not doing anything that everyone else was not doing, also. One is reminded, here, of Hofstadter's comment in Anti-Intellectualism in America on the de-emphasis of the individual, here leading to the approval of anything if practiced by the majority.

Strether's changing attitude toward himself is further demonstrated in Book II. He describes Mrs. Newsome's review to Miss Gostrey, of which he is the editor. In reference to the placement of his name on the cover, he says he puts it there for his own edification:

> Its exactly the thing I'm reduced to doing for myself. It seems to rescue a little, you see, from the wreck of hopes and ambitions, the refuse heap of disappointments and failures, my one presentable little scrap of an identity(52).

In accord with this sober note, he describes himself as a

sinner by Woollett standards. Miss Gostrey suggests from this estimation that perhaps Chad is better off in Paris than in Woollett. He weighs her suggestion, but the scale tips in favor of Woollett. However, because of her suggestion, his imagination is captured. The engagement of Strether's imagination is always the first step towards his shedding of old notions and his donning of new ones. In this instance, he listens to what Miss Gostrey suggests, but he is not yet ready to accept such a radically different conception. The seed has been planted, however, and the idea that perhaps Chad is better off in Paris will grow in his mind and will later be fertilized by Chad's manners and appearance. In the meantime, he explains to Miss Gostrey why Woollett would be willing to accept Chad at home, even if he were no longer "blameless"(56). "Woollett too accomodates itself to the spirit of the age and the increasing mildness of manners"(56). This "increasing mildness" is what Jonathan Edwards strenuously objected too, although Strether, here, does not disapprove of it. Such an amoral attitude, along with all other attitudes brought from home, will change.

Book II, chapter 2 begins with Strether eager to begin his duties, but unable to do so until he receives instructions from home. Then, he does receive a packet of letters from Mrs. Newsome, and peruses them in the Luxembourg gardens,while seated on a penny chair, on a sunny Paris morning. Relaxing in the sun, he realizes how different Paris is from Woollett

and how young it makes him feel. Sitting with the packet of letters on his lap, he thinks of this difference and of the great freedom he has found. It was thanks to Mrs. Newsome that he has this freedom; she had provided him with the funds for the trip so that he would have nothing to worry him but the immediate cause of his mission. She has only herself to thank, he thinks, for the,

> . . . image, at best, of his own likeness--poor Lambert Strether thankful for breathing-time and stiffening himself while he gasped. There he was, and with nothing in his aspect or posture to scandalize: it was only true that if he had seen Mrs. Newsome coming he would instinctively have jumped up to walk away a little. He would have come round and back to her bravely, but he would have had first to pull himself together(61).

Even though Mrs. Newsome is the provider of the freedom, Strether still feels guilty about enjoying it. However, he realizes that he is relaxed and happy and is harming no one. He reminds himself that it was, in part, because of his exhaustion that Mrs. Newsome sent him out, and that she would be glad to see him resting. Therefore, Strether resolves to do his duty for Mrs. Newsome, but, seeing himself as an elderly man capable of little harm, decides to find diversion, as well. "He was so distinctly fagged-out that it must serve precisely as his convenience, and if he could but consistently be good for little enough he might do everything he wanted"(62).

Strether spends much time at this early point in the novel reflecting on the first trip he made to Paris years ago with his young wife. His reminicences are an aging man's

reflections on his past, though without the futalistic acceptance another man might exhibit. Instead, he treats the bitter loss of his wife and senseless death of their son as something to regret forever and to never forget. Sorrow had ". . . slowly given way to time; yet there remained an ache sharp enough to make the spirit, at the sight now and again of some fair young man just growing up, wince with the thought of an opportunity lost"(63).

Perhaps, the guilt her feels over the death of his son is partly responsible for his seeing his planned rescue of Chad as a "work of redemption"(65). Perhaps, by saving Chad from the ills of a Parisian bohemia, he can reconstruct the life the had hoped for his son. At any rate, StretherIs mind turns from his son to the more immediate young man, and he wonders how much he will have to give up "in the name of propriety" of his own enjoyment of Paris(65). "Was he to renounce all amusement for the sweet sake of that authority? and would such renouncement give him for Chad a moral glamour?"(65). He is torn between his desire for youth and his duty to Mrs. Newsome. This inner battle is complicated by his envy of Chad's romantic "privelege" to enjoy his own full youth(67).

Still pondering these questions, Strether proceeds from his penny chair towards Chad's home, hoping for their first encounter. On the way there he passes a book sale where we see that the influence of his correspondance from home is strong. He walks past the book, but touches none, for " he

wasn't there to dip, to consume--he was there to reconstruct" (68-9).

Upon arriving at Chad's apartment building, however, he realizes the truth about Paris, that"wherever one paused in Paris the imagination reacted before on could stop it"(70). Here is the pattern again: the engagement of Strether's imagination leading to a change of attitude,this time, about Chad and Waymarsh. Strether sees a young man, not Chad, on the balcolny of Chad's apartment, and decides to go up and make the stranger's acquaintance. Either do that, he thinks, or go back and find Waymarsh at the bank. When Strether enters Chad's house, he symbolically enters Chad's world and leaves Waymarsh's world behind. Ironically, the narrator informs us, Strether would "tell him all about it"(71).

He does tell him all about it in the opening scene of Book III, chapter 1. Strether is full of enthusiasm in his description of little Bilham, who was the stranger on the balcolny, to Waymarsh. Waymarsh is so incredulous that Strether is excited over the meeting because all he gained from it was the realization of how little he really knows about Chad. The young man's home proved to be beautiful and stylish, and his friend charming and warm. In short, Strether is positively giddy over having made his new friend, and is pleased to tell Waymarsh that they have been invited to luncheon with this interesting young man.

Waymarsh, true to form, is none too thrilled about the news, and has no desire to meet little Bilham. This is a prime example of the growing difference between the two men. Strether has a new experience and is excited by it; his imagination begins to run away with him, and he conjures up many wonderful images of what the new evidence may mean. Waymarsh, on the other hand, is reluctant to imagine any such scenes, and only at the last minute decides to accompany Strether to lunch the following day. Strether's now-stimulated imagination is ready, in spite of Waymrsh, for anything, or so he thinks.

What the two encounter at the luncheon engagement is the mild, friendly form of little Bilham, and his bubbly, amusing Parisian friend, Miss Barrace. The conversation is pleasant but unexceptional, the company enjoyable but not unique, yet Strether finds himself overwhelmed by the newness of the occasion. The circumstance of Miss Barrace's cigarette smoking gives him great pleasure; he had hever smoked, he realizes, because he had never before had a lady to smoke with. Waymarsh, on the other hand, declined to smoke, although he once smoked heavily, " . . . but Waymarsh did nothing now, and that gave him his advantage over people who took things lightly up just when others laid them heavily down"(80).

Strether is enjoying himself as he has not for years, and is almost childlike in his expression of it. He feel collapsed

in comparison to Waymarsh, whose "errectness affected him as really high"(81). Overall, Strether feels out of control, but glad to be so. He finds himself "blindly, almost wildly, pushing forward"(80).

Strether's feeling of elation lasts beyond the hour of the luncheon party--is still present when he pays his first visit to Miss Gostrey in her Paris hom, opening Book III, chapter 2. He and Waymarsh arrived in Paris ahead of her, and it is a week after his introduction to little Bilham that she arrives. What Miss Gostrey finds is a somewhat altered Strether; he seems to be relaxed, and even jokes about his mission. He tells her about little Bilham, whom he wants her to meet; she says she will do so, but only on one occassion.

If Miss Gostrey recognizes a change in Strether, his recognition is even clearer. He finds it remarkable that he should underst nd her comment about little Bilham, when she first meets him, "Oh, he's alright--he's one of us!"(85). This ability to understand shades of meaning and inside information strikes Strether as an "acquistion positively new"(85). This new aquisition is hard at work, when, later in the chapter, he, Waymarsh, and Miss Gostrey attend the theatre, expecting little Bilham to join them at their invitation. Miss Gostrey, before the play begins, has been mildly teasing Waymarsh about what it means to be a true American. Waymarsh seesms displeased by the joke, and Strether, meeting his eyes across the box, senses that "something queer and stiff . . . passed in

silence between them"(90). The enstrangement is very apparent to both friends in this scene, and is in part due to Strether's enlargening imagination and desire for knowledge.

Strether's imagination runs away with him a moment later, when Chad, and not little Bilham, enters the box. He is overcome by the feeling of not knowing the proper way to behave. He has to control his wild imaginings. "'If I'm going to be odiously conscious of how I may strike the fellow,' he reflected,'it was so little of what I came out for that I may as well stop before I begin.'" The narration continues, "This sage consideration, too, distinctly, seemed to leave untouched the fact that he <u>was</u> going to be conscious of everything but what would have served him"(93).

He was conscious of Chad's altered appearance; of his manner of appearing at the extraordinary hour of ten o'clock. He was conscious of his inability to speak or think or decide what to do. He was conscious of the communication he would send to Woollett about the moment; his imagination reeled with telegraphed messages and the result each would have. He was most conscious of the fact that the "necessity of the first order was not to lose another hour, nor a fraction of one; was to advance, to overwhel,, with a rush"(96).

His chance to do so arrives immediately at the opening of Book IV, chpater 1. Over a drink in a quiet restaurant just beyond the theatre, Strether blurts out, "I've come, you know,

to make you break with everything, neither more nor less, and take you straight home; so you'll be so good as immediately and favourably to consider it!"(97). Chad's reaction to this outburst is not what Strether expects; he does not argue or protest; instead, he smiles shyly and remains quietly patient. Strether talks on, explaining his position and that of Chad's family. During this encounter, Strether's attitudes toward Chad undergo a drastic change. He expected a coarse young man; instead, he finds a sophisticated adult, an individual who appears to be much improved. At one point in the conversation, his imagination pegs Chad as a pagan, and he wonders drolly how such a personage would fit in at Woollett. He arrives at this somewhat ridiculous idea while recognizing that Chad is mannerly, polished, perhaps deserving of his respect, perhaps, even, of his envy. As soon as Strether lights upon this title, he takes it up readily, gratefully, eagerly, as a label which will fill the gap left in his thwarted expectations.

But this category must be replaced by something else when Strether realizes that the description does not hold. The conversation turns to the suppostition at home that Chad is being coerced by a woman into staying in Paris. When Chad is shocked that the family would suppose such a thing, Strether is so impressed by the young man's apparent virtue, that he wonders if Chad is perhaps not a pagan, but a gentleman.

This change in attitude towards Chad necessitates a questioning of the Woollett principles. Woollett, which considered Chad coarse, low, and unprincipled, though still worth saving, has been proven wrong. "Chad had at any rate pulled his visitor up; he had even pulled up his admirable mother; he had absolutely, by a turn of the wrist and a jerk of the far flung noose, pulled up, in a bunch, Woollett, browsing in its pride"(105). Strether is left, in short, uncertain of that which he had believed in so firmly when he arrived. The unwavering hero of the novel is now a bewildred hero; groping for clues to this new unexpected mystery. The clues are dropped one by one by Chad himself, and Strether, without the aid of any of his friends, must piece together the evidence.

In Book IV, chapter 2, Strether begins his task. First, he feels he must clarify to Chad his relationship with Miss Gostrey, so that Chad cannot mislead Mrs. Newsome about the pair. Strether once again imagines himself sending written messages, and this time the messages appear as headlines in a Woollett newspaper. "He says there's no woman," they announce, to the great disbelief of their readers(109). The greatest disbeliever of them all, he knows, will be Sarah Pocock, who has faith only is Strether's ineptitude. He realizes hopelessly that it will be impossible to convince Woollett of the facts, and that he alone of those concerned will recognize the truth. His attitudes toward the people at home have changed;

no longer do they represent the right course and Chad the wrong course. This realization has been sparked, as usual, by Strether's great imagination, which leads him to such thoughts as these, concerning the fate that awaits each individual. "Call it then life--call it poor dear old life simply that springs the surprise. Nothing alters the fact that the surprise is paralysing, or at any rate engrossing--all, practically, that one sees, that one can see"(110). Miss Gostrey, taking in this strange new idea of Strether's warns, "If you don't look out you'll have them straight over"(110). And, ultimately, she is right.

Although Strether begins to feel that he is enlightened about Chad's real state, there is much he does not understand. He confesses his confusion to Miss Gostrey concerning the identity of Chad's presumed woman friend. Since Chad is so fine, Strether's previous assumption that the woman is of low character no longer holds. Miss Gostrey declares that the woman is not only not a "mere wretch" nor is she merely good, but instead, she must be really excellent to have performed such a "miracle"(110). But why, Strether wonders, if she is so excellent, does Chad deny her? Miss Gostrey's answer to this query is simply, "Because she's too good to admit!"(111). She prompts Strether to try to like the woman in question should they meet, but he wonders if liking her were really what he came out for. She admits that it is not, but urges Strether to

remain open-minded about the woman, and to consider the possibility that Chad is not so good as he appears to be.

Strether is having difficulty seeing Chad objectively, so taken is he by the young man's charm, so Miss Gostrey's advice is wise. Strether spends most of his time with Chad and his friends, and even Waymarsh becomes part of the group, for a time.

> Waymarsh, himself . . . was drawn into the eddy; it absolutely, though temporarily, swallowed him down, and there were days when Strether seemed to bump against him as a sinking swimmer might brush a submarine object. The fathomless medium held them--Chad's manner was the fathomless medium; and our friend felt as they passed each other, in their deep immersion, as if with the round impersonal eyes of silent fish(112).

But Strether feels uncomfortably that he is on display before Waymarsh, who is waiting for him, Strether feels, to perform some sort of act by way of persuading Chad to return home. Strether is annoyed by Waymarsh's expectations, for he has done all he could do; he has made his speech, presented the family's argument, and now can only sit and wait.

Wait he does, but not alone. He enjoys the company of Chad's friends and the lively discussions in Chad's home. He recognizes that one difference between Paris and Woollett is the quantity of ideas which are available to anyone who listens. He notes to himself that,"There were opinions in Woollett, but only three or four"(113). Strether is becoming more fond of Paris and seems not to miss Woollett. He constantly compares the two cities and finds he enjoys Paris more.

Strether, although he is becoming more familiar with Parisian ways, is still naive. For example, when little Bilham tells him that the attachment between Chad and his woman is a virtuous one, Strether takes him literally. He will learn later that in Paris, appearances and reality are the same thing. More emphasis is place on people's homes, on their art collections, and on how they appear to live than on anything concerning their characters. Since the attachment between Chad and Madame de Vionnet appears to be virtuous, then that is how little Bilham, being a gentleman, refers to it. Strether will discover the emphasis on appearances for himself later in the novel, when he encounters the couple together on the river. Meanwhile, he accepts with Woollett literalness the evasive ways of Paris.

Miss Gostrey, however, tries to prepare Strether for the lesson he will learn. He doubts her belief in little Bilham's assertion that the attachment is virtuous, and she answers, "I don't pretend to know anything about it. Everything's possible. We must see"(122). Strether asks whether she thinks little Bilham has lied, and she responds, "Wasn't that what you came out for to find out all?"(122).

Find out all, he does, not only about Chad and Madame de Vionnet, but about the contrasting moral codes of Woollett, Paris, and himself. Strether finds out all, eventually,

about himself, and as has been demonstrated, him imagination affects his old attitudes, which causes a gradual and subtle change, and produces new attitudes based on his own values.

The final change of attitude will produce a man of free will, a Puritan man, a type described by Jonathan Edwards. The pattern has been established in the first four books of the novel and will be completed in the last eight. In order to follow his conscince, Strether must, first, rid himself of the false assumptions he has held about morality and respectability. The bright light of Paris has illuminated his unenlightened Woollett mentality, but Strether will eventually see that the bright light is a false one and will reject both the light and what it illuminates. In order to operate according to his own will, Strether must discover what his will is, and this he will begin to do, beginning with Book V, including his battle with the next set of ambassadors, and culminating just before his realization of the truth about Chad and Madame de Vionnet. By then, he will have realized his own will, and, in Edwards' term, will have a moral inability to act other than according to its dictates.

CHAPTER III

THE AMBASSADOR ENJOYS HIS PARIS

Lambert Strether's knowledge increases as the novel unfolds. Each new person he meets, each new event he experiences, each new insight he gains, works on his imagination to create a deeper understanding of the moral perversity of his mission. This knowledge comes gradually, however, and throughout this section, Books V-X, its slow development must be carefully observed in order to understand its culmination.

In Books I-IV, Strether starts out very much as a man from Woollett, Massachussetts, with its preconceptions and prejudices. He starts to change, however, as he begins to see the difference between Woollett and Paris, and this Parisain pragmatism affects his way of thinking. Now, in the second section, he develops a second moral measuring stick to help him understand the people around him, especially Chad and Madame de Vionnet. His friends from Woollett never develop this alternative point of view and can never see Chad or Strether himself outside of their old frame of reference. Eventually, Strether develops beyond this point; he learns to accept Parisian pragmatism and almost to practice it for a time, but he must go beyond the amoral point of view of his friend in Paris, of whom he later wonders if they have any moral sense at all, and lea ve both sets of friends behind.

This long journey must be prepared for, however, and Strether begins to do so in Book V, chapter 1. The scene is Gloriani's garden party and describes Strether's blossoming infatuation with Paris. His exhilaration over Paris is an indication of the change in attitude towards his mission. Christopher K. Lohmann explains that,

> The fundamental change in the purpose of Strether's mission is, of course, a result of his changing perceptions of Paris. What he had assumed to be horrid, evil, and corrupt gradually is perceived as charming, wonderful, aesthetically pleasing, and rich in the tradition of high civilization.37

This description applies to, not only Paris, but to Madame de Vionnet herself. Strether meets this lady in Book V, chapter 2, in the company of the ever-present Chad. His first impression, remarkably enough, is not that she is "horrid," or even charming, but that she is simply a person, and no more outstanding or exotic than the ladies at home. Instead, he feels simply her "common humanity"(135). After his brief chat with her in the garden, when she leaves him to visit with some other guests, Strether feels as if he has no need to talk to anyone else ever again.(136). Apparently, she has more impact on him than the Woollett ladies, for, upon hearing that she and Chad are not free to marry due to her marriage with her estranged husband, Monsieur de Vionnet, he feels quite sorry for her. It is at this point that Strether gives little Bilham his great advice--to live while he is still young--and expresses his deep regret at not having done so himself.

The speech is so passionate and eloquent that one wonders how long he has kept these feelings inside. He implores little Bilham to live as he himself did not, whether the young man believes in freedom or not. He explains,

> Still, one has the illusion of freedom; therefore, don't be like me, without the memory of that illusion. I was either, at the right time, too stupid or too intelligent to have it; I don't know which. Of course at present I'm a case of reaction against the mistake; and the voice of reaction should, no doubt, always be taken with an allowance. But that doesn't affect the point that the right time now is yours. The right time is *any* time that one is still so lucky as to have (138).

He concludes this speech feeling a bit ridiculous at having been so serious in such a happy setting, but, nontheless, the thing has been said, and Strether, almost in spite of himself, realizes the value of his own advice.

Since the change in Strether is gradual, it is natural that, early in the novel, he may be the "mouthpiece of Woollett" one moment and speak for the youthful freedom of Paris the next. The first point of view is a set one, and the second point of view is developing, so his opinions are mixed during much of the novel. Lohmann interprets Strether's thoughts about Gloriani as indicative of the vacillation withiin the hero's mind, and asks, " . . . is Strether to be guided by his sense of vision and accept the charming appearance of things, or should he follow his moral perceptions and judge the sinister reality he suspects behind the appearances?"[38]

Strether has a chance to decide between these two options, in Book V, chapter 3, and unwittingly chooses the former. The scene is between Strether and Chad, and the discussion concerns Madame de Vionnet and the anticipated breaking off of the relationship. Strether is surprised to learn from Chad that there will be some sacrifice on Chad's part when he just leave her and return to America. Strether concludes that this sacrifice must be because of all she has done for him, and, in turn, how much he owes her. He is quite proud of Chad's modesty and apparent concern for Madame de Vionnet. This good feeling leads to a moment of guilt on Strether's part for all the wrongs he has suspected of Chad. But upon being reminded of these opinions, he pauses, before agreeing to call on Madame de Vionnet, to ask if her life is above reproach, that is, if she is "good" or "bad." Chad seems not to understand these distinctions, and Strether seems a bit confused, also. "What indeed was he talking about?" the narrator asks(150). In contrast to the scene in which he parrots the Woollett adjectives for Madame de Vionnet and looks straight before him, this time, "His stare had relaxed; he looked now all around him"(150). He has shed his Woollett preconceptions about Chad and replaced them through the Parisian ability to judge by appearances. He now accepts Chad for what he appears to be, and becomes closer to the young man whom he views less as a lost soul and more as a comrade.

Book VI shows Strether looking all about him, at Madame de Vionnet, at her daughter, at Chad, and at everyone and everything in Paris. He sees things by now, according to Christof Wegelin, from the eyes of a pragmatist, a trait which he picked up from his Parisian friends.[39] This claim is true; he virtually never employs his Woollett perspective, and his own conscience-based perspective is not yet developed enough to be tested.

Book VI, chapter 1, concerns Strether's first visit to Madame de Vionnet. Chad accompanies him and then shortly leaves them alone together, pleading a prior engagement. Strether escapes embarrassment at being left alone with this lady because "he had grown used by this time to thinking of himself as brazen"(151). He is overcome, instead, by the air of respectability in her home "that was a strange blank wall for his adventure to have brought him to break his nose against" (151).

The two discuss the most pertinent topic open to them: his mission and subsequent duty to Mrs. Newsome. "I don't think you seriously believe in what you're doing, but, all the same, you know, I'm going to treat you quite as if I did"(153). With these words, Madame de Vionnet opens the rather delicate topic, to which Strether replies with nothing less than directness and integrity. During the conversation, Strether finds himself feeling that Madame de Vionnet is a vulnerable woman and one, the care of whom, is worth a great deal of

effort. He is so overcome by protective feelings that, in the end, he finds himself aligning himself with her, pledging his allegiance, as it were, with the words, "I'll save you if I can"(159).

If Strether finds this declaration remarkable, it is only because he does not know what is yet in store for him. How could he have suspected that he would align himself with the woman from whom he was supposed to save Chad? He makes this promise to save her in a moment when Woollett was out of his thoughts, a moment when he realizes that "the world was wide, each day was more and more a new lesson"(157). His newfound comradeship with Madame de Vionnet also leads him to agree, for her, to find out if Jeanne is in love with Chad, as her mother suspects she is.

Strether gets his opportunity in chapter 2, in which Chad gives yet another dinner party which the de Vionnets, little Bilham, Miss Barrace, Gloriani, Waymarsh, himself, and others, attend. He gets a chance for a chat with Jeanne, and her beauty, charm, and innocence make Strether regret the loss of his youth. His conscience will not allow him to tamper with such a creature, to defile her by his unwarranted prying. He decides it is none of his affair to pry open her mind and heart, nor is it any business of her mother's. Later in Book VI, he will make Madame de Vionnet promise not to interfere in Jeanne's life. She promises to obey him, a promise which Strether, unfortunately, accepts as he would have

accepted the word of a lady from Woollett. He has not yet learned enough lessons about Parisian "moral codelessness."[40]

He and Miss Barrace also have a chat together at the party, and, as usual, he learns something from her, although it comes to him through clouds of ambiguity. This time the knowledge involves the reason Madame de Vionnet will never divorce to marry Chad. To Strether's comment that it seems to him that she should want to marry Chad, in light of all she has done for him, Miss Barrace asks, "Well, then, how could she do more? Marrying a man, or a woman either, is never the wonder, for any Jack and Jill can bring that off. The wonder is their doing such things without marrying"(164).

The subject of the lesson, Madame de Vionnet, enters the scene at the opening of the next chapter, and is dressed beautifully for the occassion. She is so striking, in fact, that Strether cannot adequately describe her to himself, because,"she had taken all his categories by surprise"(168). In other words, she has dispelled his Woollett facility for making instant judgements. She and Strether find a moment to talk alone, and she wants to know if he regrets his promise to save her. He responds that he must first understand himself what he had meant by the promise. He seems to have recovered from the spell she had cast over him during their first visit, but the recovery is short lived. Before he knows it, he feels more connected to her than ever, instead of

detached from her, as he had intended:

> In the very act of arranging with her for his independence he had, under pressure from a particular perception, inconsistently, quite stupidly, committed himself, and, with her subtly sensitive on the spot to an advantage, she had driven in by a simple word a little golden nail, the sharp intention of which he signally felt(171).

If his Woollett friends could have followed him around invisibly, they would have been shocked to see this allegiance. But they would have been equally shocked by further developments in this chapter. Strether, who had once been careful, if not compulsive, about reporting to Woollett everything he sees and learns which may be even remotely related to the case, now promises little Bilham that he will not report that which the later is about to disclose to him. That piece of information is this: ". . . she does now care more than he" (175). He will keep the news to himself even though it is directly connected with what he came out to learn. Clearly his Woollett mindset has been left far behind, and has been replaced by a standard of judgment which relies on the changing situation. One indication to the reader that this standard is not the right one for Strether is that, while relying on it, as well as on the Woollett morality, Strether arrives at wrong conclusions. He emphatically sums up the state of affairs between the couple as such:

> She's wonderful, wonderful, as Miss Barrace says; and he is, in his way, too; however, as a mere man, he may sometimes rebel and not feel that he finds his account in it. She has simply given him an immense moral lift, and what that can explain is prodigious(176).

Symbolically, as he makes this speech, his eyes are not on little Bilham, to whom he is speaking, but instead, "Strether, with his head back and his eyes on the ceiling, seemed to lose himself in the vision of it"(176).

The last line of BookVI, chapter 3, marks the exact center of the novel and the pivotal point in Strether's changing attitudes. He, who has strived to bring about the return of Chad Newsome, now believes that Chad must stay and face the future with Madame de Vionnet. If Chad gives her up, Strether announces to little Bilham, "he ought to be ashamed of himself"(177). It is striking that James planned Strether's reversal of attitude for the middle of the book, making the novel remarkably well balanced. Strether's change does not occur all at once, however; it fills the whole book, and he is halfway to becoming the Puritan man of free will at the book's halfway point.

Book VII, chapter 1 finds Strether sitting alone in a large cathedral--a place he frequents not for spiritual reflection so much as for the opportunity to be alone and to relax. Resting there in the dark, he observes a lone woman, not "prostrate--not in any degree bowed," but sitting near

the shrine, she "had lost herself, he could easily see, as he would only have liked to do"(180). After observing the woman, it is relevant to note, he sat again absorbed in his own thoughts and "was trying with head thrown back and eyes aloft, to reconstitute a past, to reduce it in fact to the convenient terms of Victor Hugo"(180). A few days before, in fact, Strether had given in "for once.in a way to the joy of life," and had purchased a seventy volume bound set of this author's works. This purchase marks an important change in Strether, for in contrast to the earlier scene at the book-seller's in which Strether does not allow himself even to touch the books, lest such an action interfere with his duty, here he affirms the positive aspects of life. He affirms life, youth, pleasure,spontaneity, and rejects the guilt ridden, rule clad existence of Woollett.

Strether is deep in thought about these volumes when the woman he noticed earlier rises from her place and turns to leave the church. Turning, she notices Strether and moves towards him. The woman is Madame de Vionnet. After a few moments of chat about the coincidence of their both being at the church, he spontaneously invites her to dine with him at a cafe first introduced to him by Chad as one which is known only by those most intimate with Paris.

This inviation creates several surprises for Strether, the first being that Madame de Vionnet has never been to the coveted place. She explains, upon his enquiry, that she and

Chad do not go about together in public. The next surprise is his realization that " . . . he had travelled far since that evening in London, before the theatre, when his dinner with Miss Gostrey, between the pink-shaded candles, had struck him as requiring so many explanations"(184). He is surprised by the fact that now his dining alone with a lady needs no explanation. He enjoys his surprise, and, according to Thomas J. Bontly, "One of the things that Strether admires most about Parisian society is the approach to life--sophisticated, charming, and yet deceptive--which makes him feel that, really, there is very little one needs to feel ashamed of in anything."[41]

Strether will continue for a time to enjoy this carefree attitude, but will eventually become disenchanted by the lack of moral direction in the lives of his Parisian friends. Meanwhile, he is dining with Madame de Vionnet, and their conversation turns to the topics of Strehter's promise to save her, and what that promise means. At the dinner party, Strether had said that he did not know what he meant by the pledge; now he confesses he has known all along. His promise manifests itself in a course of action: he wrote to Mrs. Newsome and told her all about Madame de Vionnet, including a full report of how charming and respectable the Parisian woman is. Neither one can be sure of what the effect of this communication will be: they can only anticipate. Strether only knows that he is trying to save her "by thus letting her know that I consider you worth saving"(187). Whatever the

result of the letter may be, Allen F. Stein believes that Strether's resolution to stand by Madame de Vionnet tests his ability to "maintain a vision of personal idealism."[42] However, as Madame de Vionnet explains to Strether, "You're not saving me, I take it, for your interest in myself, but for your interest in our friend. The one's at any rate wholly dependent on the other. You can't in honour not see me through, because you can't in honour not see him"(190). Strether realizes that this statement is true, and the little golden nail is driven in further. If Stein's idea of personal idealism is involved here, it denotes Strether's desire to have done his duty, then to have an opportunity to enjoy his vacation until he is ready, with Chad, to go home. Madame de Vionnet, however, does not believe Strether is ready to go home at all.

Waymarsh, on the other hand, not only believes Strether is ready to go, but thinks the departure is long overdue. Strether senses Waymarsh's feeling to that effect, but never actually confronts him with the subject after their earlier conversation in Book II, but in Book VI, chapter 2, Strether receives a telegram from Mrs Newsome, urging his immediate return, with or without Chad. The message includes an ultimatum: if he does not immediately start for home the Pococks will start for Paris.

Though neither man ever broaches the subject, Strether strongly suspects Waymarsh of having written to Woollett in

alarm over Strether's recent conduct. Strether has been dining alone with women; Strether has been sojourning into neighboring towns alone; Strether has been mixing with Parisian socialites and enjoying every minute of it. As a result, Waymarsh must wave in the reinforcements from across the sea: the Pococks must come.

Strether, meanwhile, wanders around, telegram in hand, speaking to no one, alone with his thoughts. It is interesting to not that the narrator does not reveal Strether's thoughts, here; one is kept in the dark about the contents of the telegram, and Strether's reaction to it, until Chad goes to see him the next morning and notices the telegram, having been crumpled and then straightened out again, lying on Strether's bureau.

Upon learning Mrs. Newsome's messages, Chad declares he is ready, has been ready for some time, to return to Woollett. But Strether, it seems, has been reconsidering, and now believes that returning is not the best step. Because he has not had his fill of Paris, and to a lesser degree, because of his new commitment to Madame de Vionnet, Strether wishes to remain, and wishes for the Pococks to come out.

Strether also wants the Pococks to come out that they might see the change in Chad and the woman to whom Chad is indebted. But Strether has doubts about Chad's sincerity where Madame de Vionnet is concerned, and expresses these doubts to Chad. Chad, being charming as ususal, convinces Strether, for the moment, of his loyalty towards her, saying

that he will never tire of her. From this avowal, Strether concludes that Chad is not afraid to stay, a turn of events which surprises Chad. " The young man looked brightly amazed. 'You want me to 'stay'?"(195).

Strether begins arguing for the delay by painting a picture of the Pocock's arrival in a positive light,pointing out to Chad how long it has been since he has seen his sister, and how long she has been wanting to see him. Chad counters that she could have come long ago if she had wanted to see him that badly, and Strether points out that her pending excursion to Europe is by no means soley on account of Chad, but on account of himself.

The question of Mrs. Pocock's excursion led the two to the inevitable next topic: Madame de Vionnet. This lady, according to Chad, believes she could make Mrs. Pocock, and even Mrs. Newsome, like and accept her, but Strether fears the task is even above Madame de Vionnet, though he challenges Chad to "risk it if you like!"(196). Chad clouds the issue by mentioning Miss Gostrey, but Strether does not let Chad deter him from his course. His course is to get Chad to remain in Paris because, in Chad's words, Strether feels "the charm of life here"(197). On Chad's inquiry about what Strether hopes to gain by delaying their stay in Paris, both are aware of their reversed positions. The narrator comments, "The change of position and of relation, for each, was as oddly betrayed in the question that Chad laughed out as soon

as he had uttered it--which made Strether laugh"(197). Moreover, Strether answers Chad's enquiry with, "Well, to my having a certitude that has been tested--that has passed through the fire"(197).

The fact that Strether has enjoyed himself in Paris and wishes to continue to do so is well established. The next question, posed by Chad, concerns the possibility of his going to Woollett without Strether long enough to visit his mother, then to rejoin his friends in Paris. To this suggestion, Strether has a one-word response: "Grotesque!"(197). Chad protests that it is because of Strether that Chad now realizes how much he misses his mother. Strether responds that, if missing his mother is really his motive in wanting to return to Woollett, then he should leave immediately, and that he, Strether, will follow. Strether advices, "The only way to keep me here is by staying yourself"(198). But Chad points out the awful truth. "Why if she sends out the Pocooks it will be because she doesn't trust you, and if she doesn't trust you, that bears upon--well you know what"(198). All the more reason, Strether explains, for Chad to stand by him.

The main importance of this scene is the reversal of attitudes between Strether and Chad. Strether, once loyal to Mrs. Newsome and anxious to please her, now schemes against her by anticipating her every move. Furthermore, he feels that his mission has been completed ever since he presented Woollett's ideas to Chad. By explaining the family's position

he has done all he was sent to do; now his time is hiw own. Chad was once the object of his duty, and now Strether has enlisted his aid to defend himself against Mrs. Newsome. This is an example of Strether's developing personal moral code.

Next, Strether enlists the aid of another person, Miss Gostrey. However, unlike his previous talks with her, he does not require her advice or depend on her to help him see situations more clearly. Instead, he visualizes truths for himself, and informs Miss Gostrey of them. Even though in Book VII, chaper 3 he tell her that he has received the cable from home and feels he will still be needing her, she replies, "Well, I promise you not again to leave you, but it will only be to follow you. You've got your momentum and can toddle alone" (199).

Strether relates to Miss Gostrey the details of his latest conversation with Chad, and their decision to remain in Paris. She asks Strether to explain why he wants to remian in Paris; what he hopes to accomplish. He states that he does not want Chad to succumb to the plan.

> I'm thinking of the plan of which I was the mouthpiece, which, as soon as we met, I put before him as persuasively as I knew how, and which, was drawn up, as it were, in complete evidence of all that, in this last long period, has been happening to him. It took no account whatever of the impression I was here on the spot immediately to receive from him--impressions of which I feel sure I'm far from having the last(201-02).

It comes out between them, here, that Strether is staying more for the Pococks than for the sake of his enjoyment. He is staying so that the Pococks may see Chad and realize how wrong they have been about the whole affair. Mrs. Newsom too will receive the knowledge, Strether hopes, and must reject her previous motives in wanting Chad to return. They must come up with new reasons to argue for Chad's return. Stret er somewhat innocently believes that, when faced with the truth, Chad's family will react the way he did, which was to alter his old position and accept freely all new information.

While awaiting the Pocock's arrival, Strether continues to write regularly to Mrs. Newsome. "It was a practice that continued, oddly enough, to relieve him, to make him come nearer than anything else to the consciousness of doing something"(203). Although Mrs. Newsome never appears in the novel, "It struck him that he had never so lived with her as during this period of her silence; the silence was a sacred hush, a finer clearer medium, in which her idiosyncrasies showed"(205). In order to his mind off his "obsession," he often seeks the company of Miss Gostry(205). She, of course, continues to be loyal and helpful, and at the end of Bool VII, chapter 3, hints to Strether that she would like to be more to him than just the friend she is now. If, as she says, he should meet with disaster upon the Pocock's arrival, she will allow him to render her a particulat service, which she will for the present leave unamed. She makes this statement following his protest

that she does so much for him and he does nothing for her. When he asks for clarification of the offer, she responds, "You shall hear only if your smash takes place. As that's really out of the question, I won't expose myself" (207-08).

Miss Gostrey hints a few more times at the possibility of a future for Strether and herself, but each time Strether lets the subject drop. At the end of the novel, her hint is the strongest, and his refusal the most definite. Christof Wegelin offers three possible reasons as to why Strether rejects Miss Gostrey's love.[43] His first suggestion is that he wants Woollett to have no cause to suspect Strether's motives for remaining in Paris. This possibility is substantiated by Strether's assertion in the final book that he wants to be able to say he got nothing out of the trip for himself. Secondly, Wegelin suggests that James uses Strether's integrity as a foil for Chad's egotism, thereby giving the reader a fuller conception of Chad than what Strether has, until, of course, the end of the novel. Wegelin believes most strongly in his third proposal, however, which is the notion that Strether rejects Miss Gostrey because he feel more strongly for Madame de Vionnet that he realizes. But, as Wegelin says, no matter which explanation one accepts, James' explanation in the "Project" is quite self-explanatory: "He has come so far through his total little experience that he has come out on the other side--on the other side, even, of a union with Miss Gostrey"(390).

Whatever Strether's motivations may be, however, they are ambiguous. What is clear is that, at the end of the novel--and the pattern begins mid-way through the novel--he is alone: without Waymarsh; without the Pococks; without Mrs. Newsome; without Chad, whom he never really had; without Miss Gostrey; and without Madame de Vionnet. He stands alone as an individual, and not as a part of society, as Allen F. Stein points out, making him a subject of disapproval in American communities such as Woollett, where individualism is frowned upon, and "social animals" such as Strether hoped Chad would be, meet with approval.[44]

Book VIII, chapter 1 opens with a reminder of Strether's solitude; the first words of the chapter are: "Strether rambled largely alone during these few days. . . "(209). The chapter include's Strether preparation for the Pocock's arrival, and his deepening suspicion that Waymarsh sent the letter which instigated their being dispatched. He knows Waymarsh thinks he is being frivolous, but also notes that the latter has put on weight and is looking more fit and relaxed than when they first reunited at Chester. At any rate, Strether never confronts Saymarsh about the letter, but continues to dine with him on a regular, though infrequent, basis.

During one of his many hours spent without Waymarsh, Strether finds himself, during the course of a long walk,

outside Madame de Vionnet's home. He decides to go in and visit, but unhappily learns from the porter that she will be out of town for several days. It never occurs to Strether that there may be something suspicious in the fact that she is away, and so, too, as he learned earlier, is Chad. Susanne Engstrom accounts for Strether's failure to put the facts together as being the fault of inexperience reinforced by his increasing realization that in Paris his "knowledge is incomplete."[45] Because he is lacking the knowledge that adulerous relationships do occur in Paris between such charming people as Chad and Madame de Vionnet, his imagination is never sparked to the idea that the two may be involved in such an affair.

The rest of bhapter 1 contains Strether's and Chad's conversation about the new arrivals. Strether mentions the fact that Mrs. Pocock is coming as a representative of her mother, to which Chad protests that his mother is worh fifty of Sarah. Strether more than agrees: "A thousand; but when you presently meet her, all the same, You'll be meeting you're mother's representative--just as I shall. I feel like the outgoing ambassador, doing honour to his appointed successor" (214).

It is brought out that Sarah will, no doubt, want to meet Madame de Vionnet, to see the type of person that Chad, not to mention Strether, is involved with. The effect that

Strether gets from Chad in this scene is the presence of an easy, comfortable companionship between the two men. and an understanding about not just Woollett, but about Madame de Vionnet, as well, Chad confides to Strether, upon the latter's comment that she is "wonderful," "You don't know how wonderful" (215). From this remark, Strether senses the "unconscious insolence of propietorhip" of Madame de Vionnet by Chad, which causes him to ask Chad's permission to visit the lady in question more often.

Strether's request makes him think of what Chad refers to as his "extraordinary ideas," and he "felt both how they had possessed him and how they had now lost their authority" (216). He is left rather confused in the void which his former ideas once filled, but at the end of the chapter, the answers to his questions arrive. The Pococks are in Paris.

The Pococks arrive smiling and it is with great relief that Strether realizes the family still likes him, and the "manner of his response to it expressed for himself how little he had enjoyed the prospect of ceasing to figure in that likeness"(218). Friendly as they are, the Pococks keep him in suspense concerning their true feelings about the situation, with Chad and his own truancy from Woollett. Strether wants to get to the heart of the matter and learn where he stands with Mrs. Newsome, and hopes to get some clue during his ride to the hotel with Jim. But Jim is full of innuendoes about how Strether has been occupying himself in this fast paced city, and how he himself hopes to find amusement. In short,

Jim is crass and almost entirely without integrity. Strether finds himself wondering, during the ride, what had happened to Jim to make him the boorish man he is. Was is Woollett? the business? marriage? And might not he, a future married Woollett business man, be as much "out of the question" as Jim is now(223)?

Not only does he question his future, he doubts his own perceptions of Chad: "Was he, on the question of Chad's improvement, fantastic and away from the truth? Did he live in a false world, a world that had grown simply to suit him . . . . Had they come in short to be sane where Strether was destined to feel that he himself had only been silly?"(223). In short, Strether displays clearly his multi-dimensionalness as a character. One knows he is perceptive, intelligent, and a man of integrity. But one also sees him lacking in knowledge, sometimes bewildered and confused, sometimes completely wrong. But as Susanne Engstrom argues, James expected the reader to accept Strether's reliability and his moral validity, that is, how far readers "can accept the thoughts and actions of the narrator as morally valid."[46] Therefore, Strether, though lacking in sufficient knowledge in many areas, is a character who, when he questions his own perceptions, will eventually come to his senses and regain trust in his own instincts.

Strether must use his perceptions to sift through the glut of gossip from Woollett, and discover what is the "real word" from Mrs. Newsome. Jim says that Sarah and Mrs. Newsome

are both "prostrate" over Strether's case, and are now ready to act. "It's when they're prostrate they most sit up," Jim comments. Strether worriedly queries if they are sitting up. Jim responds, "'All night, my boy, for you!' And Jim fetched him, with a vulgar little guffaw, a thrust that gave relief to the pictue. But he had got what he wanted. He felt on the spot that this was the real word from Woollett. 'So don't you go home!' Jim added. Strether wondered if that were the real word too"(228).

The "real word" does not come from Sarah's lips until later, but in Book VIII, chapter 3, she gives Strether some indication of what the word will be. In this chapter, Strether goes to visit Sarah, and finds her already in the company of Madame de Vionnet. He enters the room and senses something "awkward" and tense, and indeed, there is "something fairly hectic in Sarah's face"(238). Then, Strether realizes there is another visitor in the room; Waymarsh, with his back to the room, sits gazing out the window. The two women greet Strether and the conversation moves to the subject of Sarah's being guided through Paris. This is a task for which Madame de Vionnet presents herself, and she offers to show Sarah the best shops, best retaurants, and other marvels of Paris. Sarah, however, refuses the offer, on the grounds that she has her brother to show her around, beside the fact that she has been

to Paris once before. "'I know Paris,' said Sally Pocock in a tone that breathed a certain chill on Strether's heart" (229).

Madame de Vionnet remains undaunted by this cool rejection and continues to insist that it would be beneficial to Sarah to allow her to assist. In doing so, she tries to make light conversation which will interest everyone, and chooses as topics Chad and Strether himself. Her desire to lessen the tension backfires, however; she seems always to say the thing which will cause Sarah, already of a narrow mind, to think the worst. Madame de Vionnet is assuming that Sarah is like Strether, who is willing to learn and to remain open minded, but her comments only reinforce Sarah's negative attitude about Madame de Vionnet, Chad, Strether, and Paris.

Madame de Vionnet's conduct before Sarah makes Strether marvel at her bravery, and she becomes even more wonderful in his eyes. He almost cannot help but flinch, however, at one of her attempts at civility. As she graciously allows Sarah's independence from her guidance, Madame de Vionnet remarks that she probably would not be needed anyway, since Sarah has Strether at hand. Who, she wonders, has learned to love and enjoy Paris as much and in so short a time as Strether. In addition, she makes Strether look even more degenerate in Sarah's eyes with this comment: "The great thing, Mr. Strether will show you, is just to let one's self go!"(231) Strether wastes no time in responding, "Oh, I've not let myself go

very far." Upon answering, he felt "quite as if he had been called upon to hint to Mrs. Pocock how Parisians could talk" (231). The conversation continues along this vein, and one is given, in no uncertain terms, Sarah's opinion of Madame de Vionnet. When the lady invites Sarah to visit herself and Jeanne, she agrees, but as the narrator explains, "Mrs. Pocock looked her invader well in the eyes"(233).

Strether, meanwhile, has realized that he must either disassociate himself from Madame de Vionnet or join her all the way. It would satisfy Sarah if he were to disclaim Madame de Vionnet in fromt of her, but Strether cannot abandon the Parisian woman whom he sees as behaving so beautifully. The narrator explains, "She seemed to ask him permission to say these things, or seemed rather to take softly and happily, with the ease of intimacy, for granted, and he had quite the consciousness now that not to meet her at any point more than half-way would be odiously, basely, to abandon her"(233). His loyalty to her began almost in spite of himself, and now it comes before his loyalty to almost anyone else.

The conversation becomes more and more tense for Sarah as Madame de Vionnet becomes more charming and even manages to involve Waymarsh in a discussion of, of all things, the ladies whom he and Strether have met in Paris. Waymarsh had stayed out of the conversation before while Strether became more and more reckless on Madame de Vionnet's behalf. But now on the

obviously awkward subject of Strether's friendship with Miss Gostrey, broached by Madame de Vionnet, Strether visibly blushes. Waymarsh's eyes meet his in this uncomfortable moment, and "Something deep--something built on their old relationship--passed in this complexity, between them; he got the side wind of a loyalty that stood behind all actual queer questions" (236).

As Strether stands behind Madame de Vionnet, so Waymarsh, for a time, stands behind Strether. He will later join the side of Sarah Pocock, but not out of a lack of loyalty or fondness for Strether. He evidentally feels that Strether's laughing it up with Madame de Vionnet in Sarah Pocock's parlor is not fitting behavior for an aging American gentleman, so he will try to bring Strether home again.

Meanwhile, Strether is anxious to hear the "real word from Woollett" from Sarah herself. No word comes, however, and he speculates about the reasons, while visiting with Madame de Vionnet in Book IX, chapter 1. "The difficulty is that I can't surprise them into the smallest sign of his not being the same old Chad they've been for the last three years glowering at across the sea"(240). Madame de Vionnet expresses her appreciation to Strether for the way he stood by her at Sarah's salon, and he modestly states that he was looking after his own best interests, as well. The two discuss the Pococks, although Strether cannot bring himself to ask her her opinion of

Sarah. They also talk about Chad, and her plea to him to be kind to the Pococks. Upon hearing of this, Strether is stuck with the "mixture of lucidity and mystery" in her character. The duplicity of her nature is revealed by the narrator: "She spoke now as if her art were all an innocence, and then again as if her innocence were all an art"(243). She will always be a mystery to Strether, just as he will never solve all the mysteries of Paris. His lack of total knowledge about Madame de Vionnet becomes clear at the end of this chapter, at the conclusion of the discussion about the visitors from Woollett.

She confides in him, as he stands at the door preparing to leave, quite suddenly,"We're marrying Jeanne." The narrator continues,"It afftected him on the spot as a move in a game, and he was even then not without the sense that that wasn't the way Jeanne should be married"(249). She informs him that the arrangement was Chad's doing; that he had noticed the young man, made an acquaintace with the family, and arranged the marriage plans. Strether is confused and asks questions concerning Monsieur de Vionnet, and particularly about Jeanne's feelings towards the young man. She answers his questions; Monsieur de Vionnet must accept the decision, and Jeanne is pleased by her fiance. But Strether, who had been so touched by Jeanne's innocence, who had pleaded with Madame de Vionnet not to interfere with her daughter, cannot be pleased by the plan. At the moment she mentionsher husband to him, he felt intimacy with her; now he cannot understand her at all

> Vaguely and confusedly he was troubled by it; feeling as if he had even himself been concerned in something deep and dim. He was prepared to suffer--before his inner tribunal--for Chad; he was prepared to suffer even for Madame de Vionnet. But he wasn't prepared to suffer for the little girl. So now having said the proper thing, he wanted to get away(251).

She asks if he thinks her awful, and even is denying it he knows he has committed his biggest insincerity. He is stunned at her concern for his approval of the plan, and feels as if he were on longer "in her boat"(252). He is even more stunned when he realizes the full implications of Chad's arrangements. By arranging a marriage for Jeanne, which Monsieur de Vionnet was incapable of doing, he has eased Madame de Vionnet of any financial worries she may have had. He has also done his duty by her, fulfilled the role of husband, father, and provider. Moreover, though the arrangement between Chad and Madame de Vionnet is left unstated, it is clear that Chad has bought his freedom. Strether earlier declared to Miss Gostrey that he must pay for his freedom by disclaiming his past; Chad has bought his freedom by satisfying the requirements of appearances; Jeanne's marriage equals the appearance of respectability for both mother and daughter. For Strether, freedom is something that comes from self-realization. For Chad, it takes the form of denial; of self, of love, and of the feelings of others. The narration describes Strether's reaction to Madame de Vionnet's story,

> Her face, with what he had by this time grasped, told him more than her words; whether something had come into it, or whether he only read clearer, her whole story--what at least he took for such--reached out to him from it. With the initiative she now attributed to Chad it all made a sense, and this sense--a light, a lead, was what had abruptly risen before him(252).

Strether leaves, promising Madame de Vionnet he will not tell anyone of the arrangement until it is official, carries away with him the refined disguised supressed passion of her face" (252).

Many critics have tried to prove that Strether is in love with Madame de Vionnet. Thomas J. Bontly, for example, says that "There is little doubt that Strether has fallen in love with Madame de Vionnet, and that he takes a vicarious satisfaction in Chad's affair."[47] Christoph Lohmann goes so far as to say that she is his savior, and not in need of salvation, as he had thought Chad's mysterious woman would be.[48] These critics, among others, seem to forget Strether's shock and disillusionment upon learning that Madame de Vionnet is for sale, as it were. Mildred Harstock mentions that Strether is probably distressed by the European way of arranging marriage.[49] Judith Chernaik makes a stronger statement which follows the text more accurately than the other interpretations. In her discussion of Strether's learning process, she mentions the truth he learns about the unfairness of Mrs. Newsomé's demands, the truth about Chad's real character, and the truth about Madame de Vionnet's marrying off of Jeanne.

"Yet it is Madame de Vionnet who is planning for her own child the crime to which Strether's eyes have been opened, the horror of the arranged marriage contract."[51] If Strether was ever in love with Madame de Vionnet, he cannot be in love with her now--he has lost the innocent illusion he once had about her and knows she is not Parisian goddess, but once again must recognize her common humanity.

In Book IX, chapter 2, Strether pays a call on his old friend, Miss Gostrey. They gossip about the frequent evenings Sarah has spent with Waymarsh and speculate about where they go and what they talk about. Strether declares that Sarah, for this brief time in Paris, has let herself go and has fallen in love with Waymarsh. The fact that her husband Jim is along only makes the intrugue, though harmless, that much more exciting. He remarks that the Pococks seem to be happy, but that he is not. Miss Gostrey seems surprised at this revelation, in light of what she refers to as his "constant tribute to the ideal"(254). She means by this comment his constant enjoyment of all Paris has to offer, especially youth. He explains that they are now having their fun and he is now just waiting while they do so. Sarah, too, makes a tribute to the ideal; she has fallen in love. Strether's ideal and Sarah's ideal are two very different things, because implicit in Strether's is the ideal of learning about one's self and following one's conscience. But Sarah is too myopic to see outside her Woollett morality to learn about herself or anyone around her.

The last words of the chapter are Strether's, "But there--as usual--we are!"(259). These words refer to the seeming inconsequence of Mamie's knowing about Jim' ulterior motive for coming to Paris: not for Chad and Strether, but for fun. Mamie is also the focus of Book IX, chapter 3, in which Strether pays a call on Sarah and finds no one home. While alone in the room, Strether discovers a letter addressed to Sarah from Mrs. Newsome, and realizes that the two have been corresponding and is reminded that he has been ignored by Woollett for some time. It renders in him a fresh worry of "whether he weren't already disinherited beyond appeal"(259). Strether now realizes that no one is in the room, and turns to leave thinking that the porter has erred in admitting him, when he discovers someone standing on the balcony. Believing the person is Sarah, he girds himself for an encounter. The figure then moves into view and Strether perceives that the person is not Sarah, but Mamie. But instead of approaching and announcing his presence, Strether retreats to a position in which he can see her, but remain unseen. He is struck, upon observing her, that perhaps something he had sensed between them could now be brought into the open. The "something" between them "represented the possibility . . . of some communication baffled by accident and delay--the possibility of some relation as yet unacknowledged"(261).

After thus contemplating her, Mamie steps in from the balcony, upon hearing someone's puropseful steps in the room.

She discovers Strether and greets him. The two talk about the whereabouts of her family and other light matters, and then the aforementioned untapped resevoir of communication opens up between them. The subject of this communication is something which has been a great deal on Strether 's mind: Jeanne's pending marriage. The subject is broached, hesitantly, by Strether, but the touchy subject is received so casually by Mamie that he knows he need not feel uncomfortable. They discuss the new fiance and Jeanne's feelings towards him, which Mamie reports are favorable. But, she says, Jeanne does not know if she really loves him or not. She only knows how to do her duty, first to her mother, and then to Chad. This confidence "was as near as they came to saying that she was probably in love with Chad"(266). Though unspoken and ambiguous, the delayed understanding has come to pass, and Strether now understands more deeply the condition in which Chad and Madame de Vionnet have placed Jeanne and each other. He alone sees the situation for what it really is; Madame de Vionnet sees only the beneficial side of the plan and accepts being bought by Chad; Miss Gostrey knows what Strether has told her but does not know what he has just learned from Mamie; he is clearly the solitary man, an individual, not part of society, who must form his individual opinions and judgments based not on society's laws by on his own.

Strether's solitude is now primarily an internal one, for externally he still socializes with people, such as in Book X, chapter 1. He is, once again, at a dinner party at Chad's and, once again, occupied in conversation with little Bilham. The main difference between this dinner party and the last is that Sarah is in attendance and seems to be greatly enjoying herself. He wonders how long she will continue in this relaxed way, and the narrator observes that "there were moments when she felt the fixed eyes of their admirable mother fairly screw into the flat of her back"(270). At any rate, he realizes, when she does return to her former duty-bound self, she will descend upon him; " it would be appointed to him, unquestionably, to receive her entire weight"(270).

Sarah's presence at the party has attracted the observation of some of Strether's friends, which fact accounts for little Bilham's being in close conversation with Strether at the opening of the scene. The former explains to Strether, as an objective observer, what Sarah's enjoyment of the party means: " . . . she's pleased with it as with his capacity to do this kind of thing--more than she has been pleased with anything for a long time. But she wants him to show it <u>there</u>. He has no right to waste it on the likes of us"(271). Strether's response to this observation is important in terms of his attitudes about the people from Woollett and from Paris. Little Bilham says that Sarah wants Chad to move his charm and cleverness to Woollett and place them before people

there, who are really just as good as the people in Paris. Strether agrees, but adds, " . . . such an occasion as this. . . isn't the people. It's what has made the people possible"(271).

Little Bilham and Miss Barrace, Miss Gostrey and Madame de Vionnet, are all basically good, well meaning characters, all of whom Strether comes to esteem. But Judith Chernaik points out an important quality of many of James' "good" characters:

> James' 'good' characters, and there is no mistaking them in their desire to love, to do good, in their generosity of impulses, are not necessarily tempered by knowledge; they are more likely killed by it, or transfigured, made magnificent, but magnificent in error. The compositional design allows them full freedom to hold onto their illusions, to perpetuate their mistakes, just as it allows their darker counterparts the freedom to confirm themselves in evil. 51

The thing that makes the good characters in Paris "possible" is their lack of concern for established rules. However, their goodness is tempered by what Mildred Harstock calls "moral codelessness."[52] They have knowledge of things that Strether comes to learn only gradually, but their knowledge does not make them right. Instead, it makes them "wonderful," as Miss Barrace refers to nearly everyone in the novel, but often wrong. Strether is glad for the opportunity to meet such people and learn about them, although he is often wrong about people himself, being no exception to the rule.

Right or wrong, Strether begins to feel the need to reaffirm his loyalty to his friends at home. He tells little Bilham, "I've been sacrificing so to strange gods that I feel

I want to put on record somehow, my fidelity--fundamentally unchanged after all--to our own. I feel as if my hand were embrued with the blood of monstrous alien alters--of another faith altogether"(273). He is undoubtedly referring to his having been so long in another country and having been so freely participating in its society. But his use of "blood" and "monstrous alien alter" images seems to go beyond his simply having taken a prolonged vacation. Where there is an altar there is a sacrifice, and where a sacrifice, a sacrificial lamb. The lamb is Jeanne, and the sacrifice is ultimately to the god of Chad's egotism. Strether sees the sacrifice as monstrous, and this vision will eventually cause him to abandon Paris and the accesory to the sacrifice, Madame de Vionnet.

Before the chapter's end, another of Strether's well-meaning friends arrives to see with him the spectacle of Sarah's enjoyment. Miss Barrace is the person, and one of her first enquiries concerns Miss Gostrey's whereabouts. He says, she is "only sitting up for me at home," and these ill-chosenn words elicit Miss Barrace's perenial "oh oh oh!"(28?). He explains, without embarrassment, that he meant "sitting up in suspense and prayer"(277). Miss Barrace knows many of the circumstances behind the Pocock's arrival, and gleefully describes the wonders of Mrs. Pocock. The only person more wonderful, in Miss Barrace's eyes, is Strether, whom all of

Chad's circle are viewing interestedly, to see what he will do next. "We know you as the hero of the drama, and we're gathered to see what you'll do!"(280).

Not only is Strether under the scrutiny of the Parisians, he is under Waymarsh's watchful eye as well. In Book X, chapter 2, his friend arrives to announce that Sarah is coming to visit this very morning and wishes to find Strether in. His reaction is to feel that the time is quickly approaching when the real word from Woollett will come from Sarah herself and that if he is not prepared for the encounter, it is no one's fault but his own. Nevertheless, he is a bit nervous at the thought of the pending climax and jokingly asks Waymarsh, "What is she coming for--to kill me?"(286). Waymarsh admonishes him, "She's coming to be very very kind to you, and you must let me say that I greatly hope you'll not be less so to herself"(286). Waymarsh clearly believes he is acting in Strether's best interests by providing a means for Strether to be gently led back home. Waymarsh goes on to explain that, after so long a stay, the Pococks are planning to depart. He disagrees with Strether's feeling that the departure is sudden, and explains that "The purpose of Mrs. Pocock's visit is to explain to you in fact that it's not"(286).

Strether accepts Waymarsh's explanation of Mrs. Pocock's purpose, but comes to suspect, once again, that he knows

more about Sarah's correspondance with her mother than he lets on. Waymarsh is offended by such an implication, but something in his manner makes Strether believe that Waymarsh is lying. The conversation continues, with the bad feeling between the two men getting more marked and unpleasant. But Waymarsh shows a note of vulnerability, to which Strether cannot be hardened. Waymarsh reveal his plan to journey into Switzerland with the Pococks before returning home, and says, "I don't know as I really ought to go." The narration continues:

> It was the conscience of Milrose in the very voice of Milrose, but oh it was feeble and flat! Strether suddenly felt quite ashamed for hem; he breathed a greater boldness. "Let yourself, on the contrary go---in all agreeable directions. These are precious hours--at our age they mayn't recur. Don't have it to say to yourself at Milrose, next winter, that you hadn't the courage for them(289).

Waymarsh leaves the room, and the chapter ends, but not before he has a chance to reiterate his words from Book I: "Quit this." "But it lacked its old intensity; nothing of it remained; it went out of the room with him"(289).

Sarah conveys fully the idea that Waymarsh's words could only feebly express. Book X, chapter 3 begins _in media res_, with Sarah having already arrived at Strether's hotel and the confrontation already in full swing. Strether finds himself complimenting Sarah on the wonderful job she has done on

Waymarsh; Strether has never seen him more fit and relaxed since Sarah took him up. This effort at conversation leads nowhere, as Sarah simply stands waiting for Strether to say something pertinent:

> Doubt ceased to be possible from the moment he had taken in that she had arrived with no proposal whatever; that her concern was simply to show what she had come to receive. She had come to receive his submission, and Waymarsh was to have made it plain to him that she would expect nothing less(291).

Unfortunately, for the sake of peace, Strether has no intention of giving himself up to Sarah.

The prevailing image in this section is that of light; Strether paces in the light-flooded courtyeard awaiting Sarah's arrival, now that the mention of Waymarsh's name brings up the subject of Mrs. Newsome, "Light became indeed after that so intense that Strether could doubtless have but half made out, in the prodigious glare, by which of the two the issue had been in fact precipitated"(291). This bright light, symbolically, is what Strether needs fully to illuminate the character of Sarah Pocock and the power she represents.

These before unknown powers are illuminated clearly for both Strether and the reader, and Sarah Pocock's own words are what flip the switch, as it were. She demands Strether's promise to return to Mrs. Newsome, stopping only with the Pococks on their brief sojourn into Switzerland. He questions what will happen if he were to refuse. "Are your instructions

from Mrs. Newsome that you shall, even at the worst, absolutely and irretrivably break with me?"(292). Sarah responds that her instructions are none of Strether's concern, and as she defends her mother's dignity, becomes increasingly angry and self-righteous. She accuses Strether of choosing a wicked woman and a degenerate way of life over a fine woman and the ideal existence Mrs. Newsome could offer him. She is indignant that Strether can even consider for a moment Madame de Vionnet to be worthier of his attention than her own mother.

Strether protests that if only Sarah would be open-minded, she would agree with him about Madame de Vionnet's charm. This is clearly the wrong thing to say, as it makes Sarah explode: "You can sacrifice mothers and sisters to her without a blush, and can make them cross the ocean on purpose to feel the more, and take from you the straighter, <u>how</u> you do it?" (293). Strether can only answer that he never planned to offend anyone, and that, after all, isn't Chad much better in Paris than when she last saw him in Woollett?

This question incenses Sarah, and it is clear to the reader at this point that she knows, or suspects, something of which Strether is unaware. The light of knowledge has not yet illuminated all for him, and for Sarah the knowledge has only deepened the narrow-minded side of her character. For she evidentally guesses about the adulterous relationship. This is the main reason she is so shocked by Strether's attitude

and why he believes Sarah is over-reacting to the situation. At the end of the chapter, though, over-reaction or not, Sarah's stand is irreversible.

He asks her if she does not consider Chad's improvement "fortunate"; she responds that she finds it "hideous"(296). Silence reigns all about the courtyard as Strether acknowledges her opinion,"Oh, if you think _that_--!" She finishes the thought for him, "Then all's at an end? So much the better. I do think that!"(296). Sarah spits out these words as she stalks out of the courtyard and towards her carriage without looking back. The light imagery appears again, and the last piece of narration of Book X, chapter 3 reads, "Sarah passed out of sight in the sunny street while, planted there in the comparitively grey court, he continued merely to look before him. It probably _was_ all at an end"(296).

By placing Sarah in the light of knowledge and Strether in the gloom of ignorance, James evidentally wanted us to know that Strether still has much to learn and that knowledge is something that Sarah has already gained. But Strether is looking before him, not staring straight ahead as before, but looking, waiting for something to shed light over his incomplete knowledge. Sarah's knowledge does not necessarily mean that she is better than Strether, for her knowledge only works to perpetuate her prejudices. The knowledge that Strether gains though not as extensive as it will be prpares him for the time when he must ultimately search his conscience for his own

conceptions of right and wrong. Just as Jonathan Edwards' man of free will must first come to an understanding, so must Strether. James has organized Strether's accumulation of knowledge in such a way that the reader is often aware of certain facts before Strether is, and at other times, Strether learns things which the reader does not know until he discloses it to a confidante. In the first case, the reader gets to see how Strether's problem solving ability operates. In the second case, emphasis is placed on the result of these abilities; at these moments, Strether takes action. We can see that Strether is nearly to the crucial point of understanding and is approaching the critical state: the moral inability to act other than according to his own enlightened conscience.

CHAPTER IV

THE AMBASSADOR IS RECALLED

Although Lambert Strether has lost his ambassadorship, he is not ready to leave Paris. He has not yet reached full knowledge; he sees through the self-righteousness of the Pococks, and in turn, Mrs. Newsome, but has not yet learned the truth about Chad and Madame de Vionnet. If Strether were to depart at this point in the novel and the story were to end with his departure, the novel would not be about a man's struggle for inner knowledge. But Strether does not leave; he is not ready, and he stands firm against Woollett's attempted manipulation. He wants to see Paris in the summer; he wants to enjoy the company of Miss Gostrey; he wants to see more of Chad and Madame de Vionnet, if, that is, they decide to stay in Paris. The result of his fulfilling these desires is his being forced to accept the fact of the adulterous relationship between two people he likes and respects. His acceptance, unlike that of little Bilham and Miss Barrace, who accept without question,comes after judging Chad's behavior, but not Madame de Vionnet's, as immoral. Although Strether judges Chad, he does not interfere with him, a fact which shows the difference between himself and Chad's family in Woollett. Only by finally accepting the reality can he completely shed his old Woollett rules of behavior as well as his newfound Parisian lack of morality. His own inner values

must completely emerge and operate to make him the Puritan man, and they do so in the last two books of the novel, showing fully the significance of Strether's final days in Paris.

Book XI, chapter 1, concerns itself with a conversation between Strether and Maria Gostrey. He tells her of the Pocock's departure and the departure with them of little Bilham and Waymarsh. The image of Strether as a solitary man outside of society recurs, here, with him all alone with the exception of Miss Gostrey, and, of course, Chad and Madame de Vionnet. Miss Gostrey confronts Strether with the question of whether or not Strether is in love with Madame de Vionnet. He replies, "It's of no importance that I should know. It matters so little--has nothing to do practically, with either of us"(309). This response may seem strange coming from a man so concerned with learning. But often in the novel he is reluctant to learn, and he will later tell Madame de Vionnet that he avoids truth whenever possible. Here is one example of the truth being within the grasp of Strether's mind, but he does not press for discovery. Whether or not he is in love with Madame de Vionnet is irrelevant, for it does not inform upon his mission, nor, in a larger sense, does it advance his self-knowledge. The "us" to which he refers is ambiguous; it could refer to himself and Miss Gostrey, or to himself and Madame de Vionnet. It is not

stated whom he means, perhaps, to reinforce the fact that the matter is not important in terms of Strether's personal growth.

One matter of importance to Strether is the real reason that Miss Gostrey disappeared so suddenly a few months earlier, just about the time of the garden party. She says that her reasoning was that if Madame de Vionnet said something to her detriment, she would be far away and would not have to return. Strether believes this excuse and though the reader may be a bit sceptical; the true reason for her departure will be revealed to both reader and Strether in the final book of the novel.

Another topic of importance in the conversation is Miss Gostrey's further implication that she hopes Strether will stay on in Paris to be with her, which remark Strether parries and turns the conversation to the instance of Sarah's departure. She asks how he now feels about Mrs. Newsome, after all that has passed with Sarah. He acknowledges that Sarah acted the way he expected her to in light of her disappointment with him. He tells her that Chad has asked if he does not regret the loss of the future that his mother could have provided for him. He never answers the question because Miss Gostrey does not ask. Strether sums up his estimate of Mrs. Newsome's disappointment and the reason for it.

> That's just her difficulty--that she doesn't admit surprises. It's a fact that, I think, describes and represents her; and it falls in with what I tell you--that she's all, as I've called it, fine cold thought. She had, in her own mind, worked the whole thing out in advance, and worked it out for me as well as for herself. Whenever she has done that, you see, there's no room left; no margin as it were, for any alteration. She's filled as full, packed as tight, as she'll hold, and if you wish to get anything more or different out or in . . . . What it comes to, is that you've got morally and intellectually to get rid of her(315).

Strether remarks that he has not only not gotten rid of her, he has not touched her. This is indeed true, for he has not tried, beyond the last meeting with Sarah, to get Woollett to change its mind. He simply trusts Mrs. Newsome to be fair and reasonable and learns that these are attributes which she does not possess.

The chapter concludes with Strether's speculations about Paris in the summer. Miss Gostrey warns that he may be left with her as his ony companion if Chad and Madame de Vionnet should leave town. Strether hopes to clarify her warning by asking if they would leave in order to get away from him. She answers abruptly, "Don't find me rude if I say I should think they'd want to"(318). She gives him every chance to realize that they want to be alone together because of the nature of their relationship. Her straightforwardness causes him to have an "intensity of thought under which his colour changed"(318). But he brushes off her implications with a smile and a joke, and she lets it go at that.

Book XI, chapter 2, concerns Strether's visit to Chad's later that same evening. Because Chad is not at home when Strether first arrives, he fills the time by thinking of how far he has come since he first arrived in Paris and briefly mistook little Bilham for Chad as the young artist leaned over the balcony of Chad's apartment many months ago:

> He had heard, of old, only what he could then hear; what he could do now was to think of three months ago as a point in the far past. . . . He felt, strangely, as sad as if he had come for some wrong, and yet as excited as if he had come for some freedom. But the freedom was what was most in the place and the hour; it was the freedom that most brought him round again to the youth of his own that he had long ago missed(298).

Strether no longer questions the validity of his desire to relax; he no longer feels guilty for enjoying himself. He has changed during his months in Europe, and what is more, he is aware of the change. If Strether were unaware of the change in himself, perhaps he would not arrive at the same state of self-awareness which he achieves by the novel's end. But he is acutely self-aware,and this awareness becomes a dominant feature of Strether's personality during the following conversation with Chad. Strether's newly-developed self-awareness allows him to make moral analysis of those around him and to compare himself to who he analyzes. Thus it is that he thinks that Chad, in contrast to himself, knows how to live. He applies to Chad that term which has been applied by his European friends to nearly every character in the novel: "wonderful"(300). The two discuss Strether's patience and

integrity in not insisting that Chad do anything; neither that he return to Woollett nor that he remain in Paris.

At this point in the conversation, the reader is given a visual description of Strether. As the two men stand on the balcony smoking, "It was as if their high place really represented some moral elevation from which they could look down on their recent past"(301). Strether's level of vision is no longer a stiff-necked stare, but a reflective gaze, from a vantage point recently gained, on a past left far behind.

Strether's new sense of awareness allows him to judge not just Chad, but Mrs. Newsome, as well. He says that she had her chance to see Chad for what he really is, but did not take it. The irony is that Mrs. Newsome and her new delegation indeed do see Chad for what he really is, an adulterous boor, and judge him accordingly, by Woollett standards. Strether sees him as a dashing,promising young man and judges him accordingly, but by standards increasingly developed from his own conscience. Although Strether is much closer to being the Puritan man of free will than he was when he first began, he is still ignorant of the facts he needs to temper fully his new moral code.

The two men discuss Strether's relationship with Chad's mother, now clearly a failure, and Sarah Pocock's contribution to the couple's downfall. Sarah, Chad speculates, would triumph if she could bring Chad home. He believes she hates his

being in Paris and would revel in being the victor over Madame de Vionnet, whom both men realize she really hates.

The conversation turns to the subject of Chad's feelings for Madame de Vionnet, for whom he says he cares, but does "not want to"(305). He evades Strether's question of whether or not he wants to return to Woollett, and gives Strether the impression that he is tiring of Madame de Vionnet, and is considering leaving her. Chad says that Strether should not be surprised if he has begun to care less about Madame de Vionnet. "'You shouldn't be surprised,' the young man easily went on,'when you yourself set me on it. I was indeed,' he added,' already on it a little, but you set me harder'"(305). The chapter ends with Strether gravely commending Madame de Vionnet to Chad for all the good she has done him, and scolding Chad for having "no imagination, don't you see? at all"(307). Chad counters that Strether has too much, to which Strether would probably agree. He wishes sometimes that he did not have to imagine so much, that he did not have to use his imagination to achieve the knowledge and moral growth he does achieve. It is his imagination which separates him from Chad and Mrs. Newsome; it is his imagination which allows him to see beyond the scope of his own perceptions.

In Book XI, chapter 3, Strether's excursion into the country is described. It begins with his train ride and ends with his spotting of something, the reader knows not what,

on the river behind the inn where he has stopped to dine. Strether, in this chapter, is reliving a dream, experiencing in reality the scene depicted in a Lambinet landscape he saw but could not afford to purchase in his youth. If Europe to Strether is exciting and glamourous, it also is the memory of his past, the early days of his marriage, and his youth, now gone forever. So Strether decides to live his dream, to sojourn alone into the country, to relax, and to realize his day dream. Such wide-eyed, innocent illusion cannot be sustained, however, in a man who must soon shed innocence and become accepting of the more physical side of life.

The river along which Strether walks,"a river of which he didn't know, and didn't want to know, the name," becomes a symbol for the facts he must face about the relationship between Chad and Madame de Vionnet(319). While in the vicinity of the river,he thinks of Madame de Vionnet and what perhaps she could have been for him had not the relationship been out of the question. He realizes that their "time together slipped along so smoothly, mild but now slow, melting and liquifying into his happy illusion of idleness"(322). The water imagery ties together the idea of illusion, his fleeting feelings of guilt over this short vacation, and the river. For on this river he finds the couple on a boat and must learn the name, symbolically speaking, of the river on which they float.

The fourth chapter contains Strether's comprehension of the facts. After Strether spots Chad and Madame de Vionnet

and they see him and decide to acknowledge his presence, they come ashore and feign delight at his being there. He realizes that they are not dressed as they would be if they intended to be gone for just the day. The reader gets the impression that much will be left unsaid, for Strether is doing all the talking almost apologizing for being at the inn. Later in the chapter we see Strether alone in his hotel room, as he, " . . . sat back on his bedroom sofa and stared straight before him. There had been simply a lie in the charming affair--a lie on which one could now, detached and deliberate, perfectly put one's finger"(329). Strether is stunned at what he has discovered and must decide how to act. It is to his credit that the shock of the realization does not cause him to snap back to his Woollett mindset and instantly judge the couple as evil sinners. But on the other hand, he cannot accept, with European ease, the appearance of the scene as Madame de Vionnet tries hard to depict it, and ignore the reality. So Strether must stare before him, because, symbolically, he is in the dark; neither Woollett nor Europe can provide the proper answers. He must now rely upon his own conscience to understand the "quantity of make believe involved and so vividly exemplified that most disagreed with his spiritual stomache"(331). We as readers finish Book XI, chapter 4 knowing that Strether does not so much disapprove of the adulterous affair, but the lies

surrounding it. And we ask, along with Miss Gostrey in Strether's imaginary meeting with her, "What on earth--that's what I want to know now--had you then supposed?"(331). The marrator continues, "He recognized at last that he had really been trying all along to suppose nothing. Verily, verily, his labour had been lost. He found himself supposing innumerable and wonderful things"(331).

Book XII is the last of the novel and contains five chapters, making it the longest of all the books. It consists in part of the accounts of Strether's farewells to Madame de Vionnet, Chad, and Miss Gostrey, in that order. But it is first concerned with Strether's coming to terms with what he has learned, through his now fully developed and active Puritan consience, and the resulting renunciation of Paris, Woollett, and of hapiness with Miss Gostrey.

The reader is prepared for this final renunciation early in chapter 1. Strether goes to see Madame de Vionnet, but spends many hours in reflection before the hour of their appointment arrives. He wonders why he had agreed to see Madame de Vionnet at her home, instead of gravely calling her before him in some sterner setting. "This would give a sense--which the spirit required, rather ached and sighed in the absense of--that somebody was paying something somewhere and somehow, that they were at least not all floating together on the silver stream of impunity"(334).

Strether's reflections return to his old views of morality and remind one of Edwards' concepts of praise and blame:

> He reverted in thought to his old tradition, the one he had brought up on and which even so many years of life had but little worn away; the notion that the state of the wrongdoer, or at least that person's happiness, presented some special difficulty. What struck him now rather was the ease of it--for nothing in truth appeared easier(334).

Strether is considering here the fact that in his past Madame de Vionnet's adultry would put her in some moral danger, in his eyes. Now he is struck with how little he sees her in moral danger at all. If this situation seems like a rejection of all moral sense, it is because the reader assumes that the "ease" Strether takes has to do with his adoption of the European amorality. Instead, the "ease" he feels has to do with the fact that he did not leap to judge Madame de Vionnet by Woollett standards, but will go to see her again, impartially, knowing fully well that he cannot judge the morals of others because "they are no worse than he, in short, and he no worse than they"(333).

The time for Strether's meeting with Madame de Vionnet arrives, and he goes to see her, and the early part of the visit is taken up in small talk, for which nonchalance Strether greatly admires her. Her room is described in great detail and conjures up the sense of all that is old, formal, and rich in tradition. There is nothing tawdry or cheap that a traditional Woollett mind would associate with an adulterous. Instead, Strether finds that,

> The light in her beautiful, formal room was dim, though it would do, as everything would always do; the hot night had kept out lamps, but there was a pair of clusters of candles that glimmered like the tall tapers of an altar(335).

At the beginning of chapter 2 she tells Strether how she feels about Chad and the nature of their relationship. She reveals that she hates herself for being vulgar, for taking from others in order that she can be happy. That is why, she explains, she prefers to give, and she has chosen Chad to be the recipient of her gifts.

Strether reassures her that she should not hate herself. "You've been making . . . the most precious present I've ever seen made, and if you can't sit down peacefully on that performance, you are, no doubt, born to torment yourself"(340). After he makes this comment, Strether realizes that she is mortally afraid that Chad will leave her and that she is clinging to him, Strether, for support. Another major realization is that Chad, though polished and charming, is still "nonetheless only Chad"(341). The last realization for him in this chapter is that Madame de Vionnet is more vulnerable than he had ever thought, and in that state, "she was older . . . visibly less exempt from the touch of time; but she was as much as ever the finest and subtlest creature, the happiest apparition, it had been given him, in all his years, to meet" (342).

The two continue to discuss briefly what Strether had thought about Chad and herself before the scene in the country.

Strether is evasive, and finally responds, "I didn't think anything. I never think a step further than I'm obliged to" (342). Madame de Vionnet does not believe that Strether is speaking the truth, but the reader never will know, because of James' use of point of view, exactly how much Strether suspected but repressed in his own mind. But he knows the truth now and must say goodbye to the charming lady, not because she is an adulteress, but because she has taught him, partially, to judge with his own values. He has done so, found her "wonderful";he has passed the test and cannot linger on the old subject matter, lest he cease to view the material objectively. He still desires, as he tells Miss Gostrey in the final chapter of Book XII, to have gotten nothing for himself. Nothing, he may have added, but the wisdom to think for himself.

Book XII, chapter 3 begins with Strether's thwared desire to see Chad; the young man, it seems, is never at home when Strether calls on him. So he spends many days with Miss Gostrey, whom he has not yet told about the events in the country. We learn that Strether is planning his departure, but cannot go until he has put a certain question to Chad, of which the reader remains ignorant throughout the chapter. The more time passes, however, the more suspicious Strether becomes about Chad's long absence. He thinks to himself, "'You've been chucked, old boy. . . .' It would have sickened him to feel vindictive"(346). This comment harkens back to the last conversation between Strether and Chad in which Chad remarked

that people who hate want to triumph, thus Sarah's desire to remove Chad from Paris and Madame de Vionnet.

Madame de Vionnet is the subject of another conversation between Strether and Miss Gostrey. Madame de Vionnet has come to call on Miss Gostrey, and Miss Gostrey tells Strether about their talk. Madame de Vionnet has informed Miss Gostrey about the scene in the country. He realizes that Miss Gostrey was fearful that the shock of the realization of the truth might result in ". . . an arrest of independence and a change in his attitude--in other words a revulsion in favour of the principles of Woollett"(347). He also realizes what a rupture between himself and Mrs. Newsome may mean for Miss Gostrey, and although she could have tried to coerce Strether into abandoning Mrs. Newsome much earlier, she had not interfered at all. "She had held herself for months with a firm hand; she hadn't interfered on any chance--and chances were specious enough--that she might interfere to her profit"(348).

Strether thinks these thoughts but does not share them with Miss Gostrey, who continues to talk about her visit with Madame de Vionnet. As it happens, Madame de Vionnet herself does not know where Chad is and asked Miss Gostrey if Strether might know. He does not know, of course, and shares his suspicion that Chad's absence may have something to do with the recent events. The re-introduction of the subject spurns Miss Gostrey to confess the real reason she left so suddenly a few months earlier. Her explanation at the time was that

she was needed by a sick friend; her explanation in Book XI was that she did not want to be near if Madame de Vionnet should say something unpleasant about her. Now we, and Strether, learn the real reason for her departure. "I didn't want you to put it to me . . . . The question of what you were at last--a week ago--to see for yourself. I didn't want to have to lie for her"(349).

From this explanation, Strether demonstates his virtuosity in European customs: he says that he realizes that little Bilham was behaving like a gentleman when he was ambiguous about the "virtuous attachment." "That was a view for which there was much to be said--and the virtue of it came out for me hugely. There was of course a great deal of it. I got it full in the face and I haven't, you see, done with it yet"(349). When Miss Gostrey mentions that Madame de Vionnet has requested to see him again, in hopes that the two may become friends, he remarks that that is why he must go, and will not see her again.

He does see Chad again, however, although not until chapter 4. On his way up the steps of Chad's apartment, Strether thinks of the affect Chad's life has had on him.

> Strether paused anew at this final rather breathless sense of what Chad's life was doing with Chad's mother's emmisary. It was dragging him, at strange hours, up the staircases of the rich; it was keeping him out of bed at the end of long hot days; it was transforming beyond recognition the simple, subtle conveniently uniform thing that had anciently passed with him for a life of his own(353).

Strether thinks of how happy he has been in Europe, how much he has learned, how kind Chad is to him, and pictures himself being kept til the end of his days in Chad's warm apartment being visited and entertained by Chad's interesting friends. But Strether shakes off these comforting images and confronts Chad with what he must know before he leaves Europe: does Chad plan to leave Madame de Vionnet? "You'll be a brute--you'll be guilty of the last infamy--if you ever forsake her" (354). Strether utters these words, and feels as if they are the real message he has all along had to give Chad, not the message to return to Woollett which he first brought from Mrs. Newsome.

Chad reassures Strether, or at least attempts to reassure him, that he is content with Madame de Vionnet, that he will not forsake her, that he is not tired of her. But Strether gets the feeling that whatever Strether said, Chad would agree to, in fact, be "too keen to agree to everything"(355). However, Strether was beginning to suspect that Chad, though verbally agreeing to go along with Strether's wishes, really has no intention of doing so. It was nothing he could prove, but it made him feel uneasy about Madame de Vionnet's future.

If Strether is disconcerted over Chad's over-zealous protests, he is positively distressed over Chad's abrupt statement that he has just been to England, where he has learned

about the art of advertising. He goes on to explain with enthusiasm that reminds us of Jim Pocock that a good advertising man could really make a differnce in the world of sales. Strether feels faint during this discourse, and occaionally interupts with comments about Madame de Vionnet, and with questions about where Chad sees himself fitting into the advertising scheme. He finally asks Chad squarely, "Shall you give up your friend for the money in it?"(360). Of course, Chad protests that he is merely speculating, and has no intention of leaving Madame de Vionnet. Strether sees through Chad's dishonesty and comments,"You're restless"; but Chad returns, as they part,"You're exciting"(360). Strether leaves Chad wishing he could kick him as Chad had kickedaway in a gesture for Strether the chances in advertising that Chad swears he will not take.

Exciting or not, Strether must still face Maria Gostrey for their final goodbye in Book XII, chapter 5. He has renounced a friendship with a glamorous, although vulnerable, woman of the world; he has renounced Europe in the form of an egotistical, amoral young man; and now he must reject the love and companionship of the least selfish, and therefore most deserving of all his companions, Maria Gostrey.

He describes to her his talk with Chad and the wariness he feels over Chad's true intentions. She agrees with Chad's evaluation that Strether is exciting, for, as she explains, "I'm distinctly restless"(361). She offers to make her home

a "haven of rest" for him. He replies, after some hesitation, that he cannot remain in Europe, for, " it makes a fool of me" (361). He visualizes his time in Europe in terms of figures on an old clock. "They came out, on one side, jigged along their little course in the public eye, and went in on the other side. He too had jigged his little course--him too a modest retreat awaited"(362).

She takes in this explanation and shortly after asks if he means to propose again to Mrs. Newsome; a marriage between that couple is impossible, now, they both realize, because what he has done to Chad is a direct contradiction of what his mother had wanted her ambassador to do. Miss Gostrey stops just short of proposing marriage to Strether herself, remembering that Mrs. Newsome had done so. But Strether knows what is on her mind and explains that although her offer is beautiful and tempting, and he feels "stupid" for not clinging to what she offers, he can not remain. "I must go . . . to be right. That, you see, is my only logic. Not, out of this whole thing, to have got anything for myself"(365).

Miss Gostrey, although understanding, does not let it go yet. She wants to know, as does the reader, why Strether must always see the right thing and act accordingly. Strether explains, "I just can't do anything else"(365). This is another way of saying, "I have looked inside my conscience, found my own ideas of right and wrong, and now have a moral inability

to act other than according to what my conscience tells me." As if to summarize such a revealing speech, Strether concludes the novel with the words, "Then there we are!"(365).

Many critics seek to explain The Ambassadors, and most focus their interpretations on the last two books of the novel, specifically Strether's renunciation of Europe and denial of Miss Gostrey's love. None, however, consider Strether's return to the true Puritanism of Jonathan Edwards. The following is a brief summary of some of the more typical interpretations of the ending of the novel.

One popular area of critical study is the theme of the novel as displayed in the last book. Dorothea Krook discusses the common idea that the novel's theme is that although one may always learn, for some it may be too late to act upon his new found knowledge.[53] But she recognizes Strether's enlargening self-awareness, and says that the "too late" theme is "virtually annhilated by the redeeming power of the consciousness."[54] Wegelin does not consider the "too late" theme, but believes that Strether's "story amounts to a moral reconsideration of civilization."[55] Andreas also considers the international theme of the novel, as follows:

> The Ambassadors is not a story of a provincial American receiving a Parisian education late in life but a study of any man at any time and in any place feeling his way through a delicate situation which is morally unfamiliar to him. 56

Andreas' statement concerns not only the novel's theme but also the question of what Strether learned by the final books. Thomas Bontly says that by his trial and error effort to learn European rules of conduct and by his final rejection of both that and his previous Woollett patterns of behavior, he has become his own man.[57]

> He has reaffirmed, at least, for himself if for no-one else, the rightness of his own approach to life. Vision, freedom, and a new-found ability to love--these are Strether's recompense for the sacrifices he has made. The sucess of the novel rests with James' ability to persuade us that it has been an adventageous exchange. [58]

Joan Bennett makes much the same point, summing up what Strether has learned: that life is not something to be protected from, as Woollett wishes to do for Chad, but something to enjoy.[59] Joseph Warren Beach compares Strether's education in Europe against what he knew in America, where, "He has never found intelligence made sociable."[60]

In America, instead, Strether found women like Mrs. Newsome, of whom Andreas believes his opinion changes by the end of the novel.[61] "He sees Mrs. Newsome now for the shallow and inadequatly civilized moralist she is, and his newly won, conscious mental grasp on essential values is more precious to him than anything Mrs. Newsome could have given him."[62]

The women Strether meets in Europe are of a different type, and even though both Miss Gostrey and Madame de Vionnet are both good women, Strether must reject them. Bontly discusses his interpretaions of why Strether gives up both

women, and says that, " . . . his reasons seem--given his love for Madame de Vionnet--clear enough. He has too high a regard for Maria, and for his own dearly won intergrity, to use this all-too-willing woman for a consolation prize."[63] F.O. Mattiessen agrees with Bontly that Strether is in love with Madame de Vionnet, in spite of James' explanation in the "Preface" that he is not, and in spite of her abominable sale of Jeanne for Chad, which sickens Strether.[64] F.W. Dupee does not mention the possibility of Strether's love for Madame de Vionnet, but does imply, at least, that Strether does not love Miss Gostrey. Neither does he renounce her; however, "he is only conceding frankly to the actualities of his mind, heart, and time of life."[65]

These critical views are representative of the range of scholarly opinion. The question of Strether's Puritanism is also raised, and because the term puritan is used in so many general and loosely defined ways, these critic's opinions will be examined in the following chapter. Strether the blind "puritan" ambassador and Strether the youthful European pragmatist are not characters whose morals are worthy of such close analysis. But Strether the Puritan, the man patterned in the tradition of Jonathan Edwards, is a character who demands a place among the greatest characters of introspection and moral growth in literature.

CHAPTER V

THE AMBASSADOR BECOMES A PURITAN MAN

Strether started out his ambassadorship doing his duty to his native country, in this case embodied by Mrs Newsome, but soon became less certain of what his mission actually should be. His confusion came from two main causes: his enjoyment of the leisure he had in Paris, of which he knew Mrs. Newsome would disapprove, and his discovery that Chad, whom he had come out to rescue from a life of Parisian degeneracy, was doing well in Europe. These two factors are both present at an early point in the novel, and although he has much more to learn about the Parisians he enjoys and about Chad's true nature, both are influential in his relinquishing his ambassadorship staying in Paris much longer than expected, or approved of, by Woollett, and vowing to save not Chad, but Madame de Vionnet.

Strether's enjoyment of Paris and liking of Chad, however, are not sufficient reasons for an aging gentleman to give up a future with a well-to-do woman, to give up financial security and social position, to give up family and friends, to give up his old familiar way of life and his old familiar way of thought. But this is precisely what Lambert Strether does. He has given up an old way of thought, the familiar, rule-clad rule of thumb morality of Woollett, and replaced it with something else. He does not betray Woollett by replacing it with

the pragmatic amorality of his new European friends. He replaces the moral code of Woollett with the town's past heritage; the heritage which, before the corruption altered it almost beyond recognition, Jonathan Edwards tried to teach his followers.

Edwards tried to instill Calvinism, as he believed it was originally intended, into his followers, and he worked at that effort until his death. His people were beginning to stray away from the old ways, being lured by more modern, less rigorous, religions. Edwards knew that he must fight back against such religions as Arminianism, as well as the new scientific and philosophic writings of Newton and Locke.[67] As was presented in chapter 1, Locke was a great influence upon Edwards, who adopted the Englishman's methods of argument and philosophical stance almost entirely. The main exception, of course, was Edwards' extension of Locke's five-sense empiricism to include a sixth sense--that by which we know God. Perry Miller says that Edwards knew Calvinism would need to be restated and revived if it were to survive in this mechanistic cosmos.[68]

Edwards did restate Calvinsism in many essays and sermons, including his essay on free will. He also revived Calvinism, for a time, through the Great Awakening, in which public conversions were a common place. The restating and revival recalled for a time the ". . . inward analysis of spiritual

The Woollett system of judgment while on the surface appearing to be based on a specific set of reasonable rules, must have come to seem blindly arbitrary to Strether, who eventually learns to use his conscience as a standard of judgment. He judges Chad as immoral but takes no action against him other than a strong urging that he not leave Madame de Vionnet. The only person he judges, and acts upon the judgment of, is himself.

Edwards would have been proud of Strether, who not only realized all that the minister taught, but underwent, in a sense, a Great Awakening of his own. His conversion was public; it occured in view of all his friends, both in Woollett and Paris. Miss Barrace makes light of the fact that they, the Parisians,are waiting to see what he will do next, as though his life were a theatrical performance. He makes no secret of his conversion, even under the harsh and persecuting eye of Sarah Pocock, a Woollett crusader, who has come to claim Strether back to the fold of New England Protestants. But he will not go; his conversion is complete; his Awakening is made public; he will never be anything but a true Puritan man again.

In contrast to the specific usage of the term puritan in this thesis, many critics use the term loosely, without any clear meaning, often to express something negative. The term is usually enveloped by the critics to designate the rigid,

unbending moral codes embodied by Mrs. Newsome. In turn, the inaccurate meaning also blankets Woollett, New England, and Strether's entire background and society. The popular critical view of the novel is that Strether, a "Puritan" in his thinking, goes to Europe, meets people of a less rigid and judgmental nature, and due to his capacity for imagination and love of knowledge, is converted to all that is good in Europe. But as has been demonstrated, Strether accepts neither the so-called Puritanism of Woollett nor the lack of moral code of the Europeans, but true Puritanism, as Jonathan Edwards intended it to be.

The following are some examples of the term puritan as it is used incorrectly or carelessly by critics. Most of these examples combine the misuse of the term with the error of assuming that Strether rejects his past in Woollett and accepts all he finds in Europe.

Strether is referred to as "Strether the Puritan" in Bontly's account of the scene in which Strether is deciding to visit Madame de Vionnet after his trip to the country.[70] It is true that Strether thinks it appropriate that he feel that "somebody was paying something somewhere," but Bontly's assumption that "Woollett, then, has its last word" is incorrect.[71] If he were still ruled by Woollett, he would never have consented to see Madame de Vionnet. He does consent to see her, however,

after determining, by consulting his conscience, that Madame de Vionnet is a good woman, even though she is an adulteress. Bontly's reference to Strether as a Puritan is meant to show his as being judgmental and rigid; instead, this scene demonstrates a major breakthrough in the development of his Puritan conscience.

Elizabeth Stevenson writes in the same vein when, in reference to the theme of contrast between Europe and America, she says that Strether exchanged "Puritanism for a sense of joy."[72] Here, once again, is the implication of Puritanism being all things negative. Further, concerning the European-American contrast, Joan Bennett writes of Strether's reaction to Miss Gostrey's home, which she refers to as "the puritan conscience wincing at the pagan richness of Miss Gostrey's taste."[73] The implication, of course, is that a puritan, whatever her use of the term may mean, cannot enjoy rich furnishings and art collections.

Mildred Harstock is another who links Puritanism with Strether's past, although she does recognize that he makes an intellectual and moral break with Woollett and Paris.[74] "His decision to go back to Woollett is a total and uncomprimising repudiation of Puritanism and safe harbous and moral formulas."[75] She further expresses the same idea here: "He cuts loose not merely from Puritan Woollett, but also from the human propensity to live by unexamined codes or by unexamined codelessness."[76]

Another use of the term puritan is found in reference to how one should read James. For example, Judith Chernaik warns that "we should be wary of reading a bleak Puritanism" into another James novel, The Golden Bowl.[77] Although she is not referring to The Ambassadors, the fact that she modifies the term puritan with the word "bleak" suggests that she, too, considers Puritanism as negative.

Christoph K. Lohmann makes one of the most intelligent references to Puritanism when he uses the term to define one tenant of the religion.[78] In his explanation of the incongruity between the initial lavish, sensual description of Madame de Vionnet's apartment, and the words used by Strether to describe it, such as "respectibility," the term puritan is mentioned. "It suggests . . . the Puritan tradition of his heritage, in which worldly accomplishment was deemed to be an important indication of a virtuous life that pleased the Lord."[79]

Any discussion of the diverse meanings of the term puritan leads one inescapably into a discussion of Strether's moral nature, which is more often than not characterised as "puritan" by the critics. Some refer to his Woollett heritage, which gives Strether, according to Bontly, a "Puritanical point of view."[80] Or they may contrast Woollett and Paris, quite intelligently, as in this passage from Lohmann:

> Again and again, James stresses that it is primarily knowledge that distinguished Paris from Woollett, knowledge not only of facts (such as the real nature of the attachment) but knowledge in the sense of insight, understanding, wisdom, experience. 81

But many critics discuss Strether's moral view apart from his Woollett background, and these warrant some discussion, as well.

Susanne Engstrom, in her discussion of Strether's morality, gives him a great deal of credit for being an individual, not merely a product of either Woollett or Parisian society.[82] She explains,

> Throughout the novel he is pursued by moral scruples, which are dictated partly by his fear of enjoyment, partly by his sense of duty. Gradually he is released from his qualms about enjoying himself in Paris, but still he retains the scruples dictated by his sense of duty, and this we are undoubtedly meant to respect. He has a never-failing sense of the complex subtleties of right and wrong, which contrast favourably with the unjust suspicions they entertain about him in Woollett. 83

Richard P. Blackmur also views Strether, as a moral man, in a favorable light.[84] He uses the phrase "conscience out of consciousness," to describe the proccess of Strether's moral growth as it arises from his acceptance of new information.[85] It is interesting to note that most critics do accept Strether as a moral man when he reaches the end of his stay in Paris, but most begin by tracing his development from the same point, the den of negativism known as Puritanism. Mildred Harstock traces his development and asserts that "Strether is not the complete moral man until after the encounter at the river."[86]

Bontly focuses on the final point of the arrival: Strether's attempt to make Chad commit himself to Madame de Vionnet.[87] He refers to the attempt to make Chad commit himself to Madame de Vionnet as Strether's "one decisive act--his one effort to influence the course of events in accordance with his own moral convictions--is an act which Woollett could consider nothing short of monstrous and criminal."[88]

Allen F. Stein also discusses the point in Strether's moral development in which he faces the truth about Chad and Madame de Vionnet.[89] Stein sees the whole novel as a quest ritual, and Strether's quest for an"improved conception of his identity as culminating in the final books.[89]

> , . . in the process of making a moral evaluation of Chad and Madame de Vionnet' behavior in using him, he must inevitably come to judge himself . . . and thereby achieve the self awareness which is the prerequiste for attaining the healthy sense of identity towards which, all unawares, he has really been striving. 90

Stein shows how factors from Strether's Woollett past and his European present combine to help shape the moral man he will become, though he will renounce both contributors.[91] Lohmann also shows Strether's recognition of truths in Europe and their impact upon him in terms of his background.[92] He, however, shows that the recognition, while in the end beneficial to Streher's development, is nonetheless very painful.

> Everything in the novel, then, moves toward th climactic revelation that art, beauty, manners, morality, human relationships, in short, that the constiuent elements of civilization are inseparably intertwined with sexuality, even guilt, since the relationship here is evidentally adulterous. For Strether, whose highest ideals--"respectability" and "private honour"--have always been defined in terms of sexual purity, this revelation is extraordinarily painful." 93

Lohmann seems to forget, however, that Strether does not see Madame de Vionnet as guilty,for adultery, but instead sees Chad as guilty for his infidelity. Painful as the realization was for Strether, the discovery of sexual impropriety is not what disturbs him the most, as it would have early in the novel, when those ideals, which Lohmann describes as being dearest to Strether, still are strong in him. When he makes the discovery about Chad and Madame de Vionnet, however, his ideals seem to have shifted, or at least been qualified. His desire for respectability no longer implies outward virtue, but self-respect. Self respect is what Strether gains by not being intimidated by Sarah Pocock, and what he hopes Madame de Vionnet will be able to retain, no matter what Chad does to her. He "saves" Madame de Vionnet--not her life, but her self respect. He also "saves" himself.

In contrast to the view that Strether accepts Madame de Vionnet's sexualtiy, and the sexuality which is part of civilization, is this comment by Maxwell Geismar.[94] He believes that Henry James thought that passion was not only destructive, but "cheap" and "vulgar."[95] Therefore, James, the author found it necessary to punish Madame de Vionnet, through her breakdown in Book XII, because she was a sexual creature.

Dorothea Krook's argument vastly differs from Geismar's in that she cites passion as a prime source of good in James' novel.[96] She believes that James meant to demonstrate, not only in The Ambassadors, but in The Portrait of a Lady , "The Beast in the Jungle," and in other works, that,

> . . . passion, with all its dangers, is the sacred fount of all creative endeavor, and that to deny or sacrifice it in the name of any kind of ideal however noble, is a delusion which only succeeds in defeating the noble end for which the denial or sacrifice was made. 97

Some critics write about the morality of the novel in a more general way. It was widely accepted for a time that James was an amoral writer because he presented characters who clearly behaved in amoral or immoral ways, yet made no moral judgments of these character. This view, incidentally, is quite a contrast to Maxwell Geismar's view presented above. Typical of the school of thought which characterizes James as amoral is Yvor Winters' statement that since James' plots are about morality, he should judge his character, specifically Chad and Madame de Vionnet. Winters finds the novel unsatisfactory because James makes no such judgment. [98]

Judith Chernaik addresses the issue and suggests that although the "treatment of moral doctrine, as of intelligence, as a function of character denied the possibility of fixed rules of conduct," it "therefore suggests an uncommitted moral relativism."[99] She does find, however, a concrete moral stance

in James' works. She argues that people are moved by "some inner principle."[100] Such a notion is extremely similar to the Puritan principle of being guided by one's own conscience, as opposed to an outside set of rules based on appearances. Chernaik's suggestion takes the view of Strether as a moral man one step further than the other critics. True, Strether is on a quest to find his identity; true, his imagination and desire for knowledge do separate him from the typical representative of Woollett; true, he is a bit naive and does find the truth about the attachment hard to accept; true, he is a bit of a New England "prude" when he first arrives in Paris, but gradually becomes more accepting under the influence of his European friends; true, he does tend to reject his Woollett rules of thumb and replace them with more pragmatic attitudes. But he does not stop there. He uses his newly discovered identity, self respect, and above all, free will, to create a third and totally independent moral view. He returns to the old order, not as a reactionary or as an aging man who longs for the "good ol' days," for the ways to which Strehter turns were long before his time, and no longer exist in the memories of anyone at home in Woollett. He returns to the mid 1700's, to the days of Jonathan Edwards, and seems to hear the great minister say, "Use your God-given free will to the best of your ability." And Strether responds wisely, "I can't do anything else."

Lambert Strether the ambassador grows and changes and emerges at the end with the moral capabilities which make him worthy of the name Puritan, and worthy of the heritage of Jonathan Edwards.

Notes

[1] Henry James, The Ambassadors, Leon Edel, ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960), p. 51. All subsequent references to this work will be found in the text.

[2] Richard Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life (New York: Knopf, 1963), p. 399.

[3] Hofstadter, pp. 399-400.

[4] Hofstadter, p. 400.

[5] Hofstadter, p. 402.

[6] Hofstadter, p. 402.

[7] Vergilus Ferm, Puritan Sage; Collected Writings of Jonathan Edwards, with an introduction by Vergilus Ferm (New York: Library Publishers, 1953).

[8] Ferm, p. xix.

[9] Ferm, p. xix.

[10] Morton White, Science and Sentiment in America: Philosophical Thought from Jonathan Edwards to John Dewey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 31.

[11] White, p. 25.

[12] White, p. 26.

[13] Ferm, p. xxi.

[14] White, p. 24.

[15] White, p. 24.

[16] T.H. Johnson, "Jonathan Edwards' Background of Reading," Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachussetts, vol. xxviii (1930-33), p. 210.

[17] White, p. 34.

[18] White, p. 11.

[19] White, p. 39.

[20] White, p. 51.

[21] Jonathan Edwards, "A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions that Freedom of Will which is Supposed to be Essential to Moral Agency, Vertue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame," from _Puritan Sage; Collected Writings of Jonathan Edwards_, with an introduction by Vergilus Ferm (New York: Library Publishers, 1953). All subsequent references to this work will be found in the text.

[22] Edwards, p. 490.

[23] James relies for the basis of his argument in "The Art of Fiction" on the same kind of loose acceptance of a premise. He says that the moral sense and the artistic sense are almost one, and that "the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer." Thus, both men accept the unproveable at the root of their deepest arguments. No sound argument can be given to prove either point, but both men accept their beliefs as being proof enough. See Henry James, "The Art of Fiction," _The Norton Anthology of American Literature_, vol. 2 (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1979), p. 498.

[24] White, p. 37.

[25] Leon Edel, Henry James The Master, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1972), p. 79.

[26] White, p. 38.

[27] Henry James, "Project of the Novel," from The Ambassadors, S.P. Rosenbaum, ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1964).

[28] James, "Project of the Novel," p. 377.

[29] James, "Project of the Novel," p. 377.

[30] James, "Project of the Novel," p. 377.

[31] James, "Project of the Novel," p. 384.

[32] James, "Project of the Novel," p. 380.

[33] James, "Project of the Novel," p. 383.

[34] Ian Watt, "The First Paragraph of The Ambassadors: An Explication," from The Ambassadors, S.P. Rosenbaum, ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1964), p. 472.

[35] Watt, p. 472.

[36] Watt, p. 481.

[37] Christoph Lohmann, "Jamesian Irony and the American Sense of Mission," Texas Studies in Language and Literature, vo. 16 (1974), p. 343.

[38] Lohmann, p. 340.

[39] Christof Wegelin, The Image of Europe in Henry James (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1958), p. 92.

[40] Mildred Harštock, "The Dizzying Crest: Strether as Moral Man," Modern Language Quarterly #3, 26 (1965), p. 420.

41 Thomas J. Bontly, "The Moral Perspective of The Ambassadors," Wisconsin Studies in Literature 6 (1969), p. 111

42 Allen F. Stein, "Lambert Strether's Circuitous Journey: Motifs of Internationalized Quest and Circularity in The Ambassadors," Emerson Society Quarterly vol. 22 (1976), p. 249.

43 Wegelin, pp. 101-03.

44 Stein, p. 246.

45 Susanne Engstrom, "Epistemological and Moral Validity in Henry James' The Ambassadors," Language and Literature 1, (1), 1970, p. 55.

46 Engstrom, pp. 52-53.

47 Bontly, p. 113.

48 Lohmann, p. 343.

49 Harstock, p. 423.

50 Judith Chernaik, "Henry James as Moralist: The Case of the Late Novels," Centenial Review vol. 16 (1972), p. 117.

51 Chernaik, p. 114.

52 Harstock, p. 420.

53 Dorothea Krook, The Ordeal of Consciousness in Henry James (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1962).

54 Krook, p. 322.

55 Wegelin, p. 322.

56 Osborn Andrews, Henry James and the Expanding Horizon: A Study of the Meaning and Basic Themes of James' Fiction (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1948), p. 140.

[57] Bontly, pp. 106-17.

[58] Bontly, p. 116.

[59] Joan Bennett, "The Art of Henry James: The Ambassadors," from Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Ambassadors, Albert E. Stone, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 57.

[60] Joseph Warren Beach, "Full Prime," from Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Ambassadors, Albert E. Stone, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p.41.

[61] Andreas, Henry James and the Expanding Horizon.

[62] Andreas, p. 122.

[63] Bontly, p. 116.

[64] F.R. Leavis, from The Common Pursuit from Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Ambassadors, Albert E. Stone, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 35.

[65] F.W. Dupee, from Henry James: His Life and Writings, from Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Ambassadors, Albert E. Stone, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2969), p. 33.

[66] Dupee, p. 33.

[67] White, Science and Sentiment in America.

[68] Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, The Puritans (New York: American Book Club, 1938).

[69] Miller, p. 84

[70] Bontly, p. 114.

[71] Bontly, p. 114.

[72] Elizabeth Stevenson, from _The Crooked Corridor: A Study of Henry James_, from _Twentieth Century Interpretations_ of The Ambassadors, Albert E. Stone, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1969), p. 31.

[73] Joan Bennett, p. 60.

[74] Harstock, _The Dizzying Crest_.

[75] Harstock, p. 423.

[76] Harstock, p. 420.

[77] Chernaik, p. 114.

[78] Lohmann, pp. 329-47.

[79] Lohmann, p. 342.

[80] Bontly, p. 109.

[81] Lohmann, pp.343-44.

[82] Engstrom, pp. 50-65.

[83] Engstrom, p. 60.

[84] Richard P. Blackmur, "The Loose and Baggy Monsters of Henry James," from _Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Ambassadors_, Albert E. Stone, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), pp. 49-56.

[85] Blackmur, p. 50.

[86] Harstock, p. 417.

[87] Bontly, pp. 106-17.

[88] Bontly, p. 115.

[89] Stein, pp. 245-53.

[90] Stein, p. 245.

[91] Stein, p. 250.

[92] Lohmann, pp. 329-47.

[93] Lohmann, pp. 344-45.

[94] Maxwell Geismar, "The Achieved Life à la Henry James," from Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Ambassadors, Albert E. Stone, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), pp. 96-105.

[95] Geismar, p. 102.

[96] Krook, The Ordeal of Consciousness in Henry James.

[97] Krook, p. 369.

[98] Yvor Winters, from Maule's Curse: Seven Studies in the History of American Obscurantism, from Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Ambassadors, Albert E. Stone, ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 29.

[99] Chernaik, p. 112.

[100] Chernaik, p. 112.

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