

HOW THE DISMAL SCIENCE GOT ITS NAME: DEBATING RACIAL QUACKERY

BY

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I. INTRODUCTION

Here is a fact that seems to surprise many deeply learned scholars. The term “dismal science” was applied to British political economy as the 1840s ended *because* of its role bringing about the emancipation of West Indian slaves in the 1830s. This paper addresses the consequences that follow from our ignorance of the role of classical economic theory in the anti-racial slavery coalition of Biblical literalists and utilitarians.¹

I propose to fill two gaps in the common understanding of the debates between economists and their opponents in nineteenth-century Britain. The first gap is in our understanding of the British economic debates over market organization and hierarchy. That defensible hierarchy encompassed racial slavery became as clear as it could be in the 1849–1850 exchange between Thomas Carlyle and John Stuart Mill.² Carlyle morphed racial slavery into an idealized feudalism and bent the very language of American debates over emancipation. The second gap in our understanding is why the “scientific” racists of Britain in the 1860s found classical economics their natural enemy, just as the Biblical literalists had previously found it their natural ally.

I am obligated to the Huntington Library for permission to quote from its collection of Kingsley letters. Thanks are due to Denise Albanese, Timothy Alborn, Martin Bernal, John C. Bradbury, James Buchanan, George Caffentzis, Bryan Caplan, David Collander, Tyler Cowen, Stephen Darwall, Cynthia Earman, Stanley Engerman, David Fand, Andrew Farrant, Craufurd Goodwin, Christine Holden, Samuel Hollander, Ali Khan, Hartmut Kliemt, Wendy Motooka, Jerry Muller, Sandra Peart, Thomas Johann Prasch, Robert Tollison, Nicola Tynan, and Walter Williams for extraordinarily helpful comments on and support of my previous work on the conflict between economists and racists. I have been fortunate to be able to present early states of this work at the Kress History of Economics Seminar in Cambridge, at the York University–University of Toronto History of Economics Workshop, the 1997 History of Economics Society Conference and the Global Studies Institute at John Hopkins. The Economics Department at George Mason helped finance the trip to attend the 1997 American Statistical Association meetings in Anaheim and to visit the Huntington Library. Finally, the readers and editor of *JHET* hepled with comments and corrections. The remaining errors are my sole responsibility.

¹ The coalition details and their common universality is considered in Levy (2000b).

² Jones (1967), Persky (1990), and Smith (1994) are valuable discussions of the debate.

If we do not know this debate, we get the simplest things wrong. With modern economists of great distinction occupying much the same position on property as their classical forebears, scholars who do not know the Carlyle-Mill debate and its context all too often infer that since modern economists occupy a rightist position, the attack came on classical economics from their left. No. The attack on economics for which the term “dismal science” was coined a weapon came from their right. Imagine policy space along the single dimension of ownership of property. I take it is as completely non-controversial to make the following orientation. On the left tail we find such philosophers as William Godwin opposing all property, property in things as well as property in people. On the right tail we find those who defend the ownership in both things and people. While Mill’s attraction to socialism is well known, the classical British economists, generally speaking, favored property in things and opposed property in people. When slavery ended in America, and with it support for property in people, the classical economists moved right by standing still.

When Adam Smith and his followers took human nature as a fixed quantity and so attempted to explain all behavioral differences by appealing to variation in incentives and histories, they produced a theory of great use to Biblical literalists for whom black slaves were both men and brothers. Smith’s doctrine of human homogeneity and the universalization inherent in utilitarianism are consistent with *Genesis’s* revelation of ultimate human kinship. Proponents of racial slavery come to be “progressive” in secondary accounts because of the overwhelming importance twentieth-century scholars assign to the movement away from Biblical literalism and toward, among other things, the “scientific” study of racial differences. It is this “science” that authorizes some to be master and some to be slave. I read classical economics in two-fold opposition to both theories of natural slavery and to the “science” of racial anthropology.³

Theories of slavery tend not to be terribly complicated: the “better” always seem to be ruling the “worse.” Racial anthropology dovetails with this enterprise as it gives “scientific” testimony to who is “better” and who is “worse.” Although my focus is on the British debates, these might make less counter-intuitive the well-known correlation in late nineteenth-century American economics between “progressive” and “scientific” racists.⁴ These words are commonly used—not perhaps in the same text—to describe the critics of classical economics.

I find a theoretical commitment in the economic anti-racism in the British debates which scholars find lacking in the American debates. We are told the devastating fact that American economists in the late nineteenth-century would speak against racism only when they themselves had a personal stake.⁵ In the

³ The best study I know of the attack on economics from British anthropology is Rainger (1978). The importance of his focus on James Hunt, whose quarrel with the egalitarianism of classical economics is both explicit and persistent, will be brought out in the material below.

⁴ The important papers of Aldrich (1979) and Cherry (1976) are now easy to find. Darity (1995, p. xv): “The early AEA economists combined a peculiar mixture of progressivism . . . with scientific racism. Their enthusiasm for eugenics was consistent with their broad *anti-laissez-faire* posture.” The pro-racial slavery position of British literary “progressives” is documented in Levy (2000b).

⁵ Darity (1995, p. xx): “And while in America the defenders of the immigrants often were scholars who shared the immigrants’ ethnicity . . . no comparable coterie of intellectual defenders of ‘the Negro’ existed.”

earlier British debates, it was Mill himself who would speak for the Irish and the black. I see no reason to believe that Mill was a saint; he was just the best economist of his time. Why this put him in permanent opposition to racist theorizing needs to be explained.

Let me begin by noting an objection to my enterprise. Who could possibly defend racial slavery in Britain after emancipation? In fact many did.⁶ Even if they did, how could this have an impact? Part of the difficulty, I believe, is that Carlyle's December 1849 "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" ("ODNQ") is so vilely offensive to modern sensibilities that the natural tendency of many readers is to discard it as an outlier in the career of an otherwise creditable critic of market economics.⁷

For Britain the answer of influence is well-known to specialists—Carlyle helped turn a Jamaican racial massacre in the mid-1860s into a politically appealing cause.⁸ In spite of this ghastly triumph, Carlyle's influence on British policy, as I read the record, was bounded. Whenever he would thunder for slavery and racial extermination, we find the greatest economist of his time in opposition, speaking on behalf of those for whom Carlyle would prescribe enslavement or genocide. If the seriousness of a belief can be measured by how much one is prepared to pay, Mill's belief was very serious indeed.⁹

⁶ The sudden pro-slavery popularity in early 1850s Britain is noted in his open letter to Harriet Beecher Stowe and the attack on Charles Dickens' opinion of slavery by Lord Denman:

... in England there are symptoms calculated to mislead. First, the open defence of Slavery by some of our most popular and influential writers. For the unaccountable part they have been induced to take in the great process now going on between mankind and the owners of and traders in Slaves, we, the public, feel the deepest grief, but no alarm as to the ultimate result (1853, pp. iii–iv).

⁷ The article was enlarged and separately published as *Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question* [= *ODNQ*] in 1853. Because the pamphlet was published in Carlyle's *Works* with the assertion that it was the 1849 article, there has been confusion about the name; thus, the *OED* article "dismal" has the date right but the title wrong. Heffer (1995, p. 275) revives Wilson's (1927, p. 215) claim that the title was changed from "Negro" to "Nigger" in response to Mill's criticism. Neither Heffer nor Wilson consider the response to economists in "Present Time." On the contrary, I believe that Carlyle had this title in mind when he wrote it so it was *Fraser's* that suppressed it. The Appendix has my conjecture. Froude (1885, vol. 2, p. 17) quotes Carlyle's February 7, 1850 journal entry: "Nigger article has roused the ire of all philanthropists to a quite unexpected pitch. Among other very poor attacks on it was one in 'Fraser;' most shrill, thin, poor and insignificant, which I was surprised to learn proceeded from John Mill . . . He has neither told me nor reminded me of anything I did not very well know beforehand. No use in writing that kind of criticism." As we see below this is the line he takes in "Present Time."

⁸ A riot, which turned into an administrative massacre, initially inflamed British public opinion because George William Gordon, the Baptist minister—suspected of a having a leadership in the riot—after presenting himself to the authorities, was promptly hanged. Holt (1992) is a valuable account from the Jamaican side. Semmel (1963) remains definitive on the British debates. Scholars of the present day, Hall (1992) and Young (1995), who have started to wonder why murdering blacks is such a "progressive" cause, have gone back to the Carlyle-Mill debate of 1849–50. Prash (1989) gives useful background for the religious dimension of the debate. Olivier (1933) publishes Carlyle's statement on Eyre's actions.

⁹ Green (1975, p. 400): "The unpopular cause of the Jamaica Committee probably lost John Stuart Mill his parliamentary seat. He was the only Liberal defeated in metropolitan London in the election of 1868."

Carlyle had creative command of classical economic doctrine. Perhaps he found the idea in Edward Wakefield's commentary on *The Wealth of Nations*, or perhaps he thought it through himself, but he twisted a claim Smith had used to argue for the fundamental equality of all language users to one that would deny human status to blacks and Irish.

Carlyle, of course, is not the only one with an ideology of racial slavery to press. We shall consider two of his capable disciples, Charles Kingsley and James Hunt. Racism developed in Britain did not stay there. When one of founders of the AEA spouts Teutonic nonsense in the 1890s, it is useful to recognize that he is regurgitating what Kingsley was writing in the 1860s about the Teuton as natural master.¹⁰ Hunt, who is known mainly to students of "scientific" racism, was its public face in the 1860s. His persistent criticism of the anti-racist egalitarianism of classical economics helps contextualize the Carlyle-Mill exchange. By the strangest coincidence Kingsley and Hunt found themselves buying and selling a "cure" for stammering. This cure—and here we leave coincidence behind—had the property of never ever "failing." The label for such promissory medicine then was "quackery."

How does a theorist respond to factual counter-examples?¹¹ This is an aspect to the Mill-Carlyle debate that has an importance well outside of economics. An economist like Mill is aware that he theorizes about averages where individuals deviate from the average as a matter of course. The racists theorized with the assertion that the average is all there is. There is no difference between the average and individual. This procedure might be called "stereotypical" thinking when we understand that the stereotype is *not* allowed to change with evidence.¹² T. H. Huxley called James Hunt a "quack."¹³ While little seems made of

¹⁰ Cherry (1976, p. 17). Cherry quotes "Amasa Walker" but the references say "Francis A. Walker." Amasa Walker has a featured role in the Appendix about the morphing of "dismal science."

¹¹ Ali Khan asked how I propose to distinguish the quackery I evidently disapprove of from the sort of immunization strategies which make the utility-maximizing hypothesis little more than a law of logic (I defend *that* practice in Levy (1992)). Is quackery the same as specification search or exploratory data analysis [= EDA]? I see two issues: a technical one and an ethical one. Many econometricians have a technical problem with EDA. When formalized, the possibility of EDA implies that errors in a linear regression context are non-normal (Levy 2000a). I find this a more plausible outcome than the supposition that a finite model is fixed as the sample size goes infinite. The ethical issue for me about specification search is not that it is a biased estimation procedure—all sorts of widely used and plausible estimators are biased—but that the reader does not know how the procedure is biased (Feigenbaum and Levy 1996). If so, the researcher's hidden preferences, not the public data, can force the result. If the procedure is transparent—the reader knows all about the specification search—I see no ethical problem. An ethic of transparency is supposed in the statement of the American Statistical Association (2000). My membership on the Committee is duly noted.

Darity (1995, p. xvi-xvii) documents some racists' statistical claims that surely result more from their preferences than from the data they employ. Gould (1981) is a classic on this matter.

¹² The economic account of stereotypical thinking put forward in Phelps (1972) and Arrow (1972) supposes that new observations will change the stereotype. The procedure described in the text supposes that the stereotype is protected from revision. Phelps-Arrow consider a context in which an unrevised stereotype imposes personal costs on the one who makes a decision. The discussion in the text supposes that the stereotype functions as a perverse "public good," i.e., a public bad.

¹³ Huxley (1900, vol. 1, p. 295): "But don't have anything to do with the quacks who are at the head of the 'Anthropological Society' over here. If they catch scent of what you are about they will certainly want to hook on to you." This is discussed in Desmond (1994, p. 320).

Huxley's judgment than disapprobation, there is much more to it than that.¹⁴ This wholesome medical term of reproach suggests that a stereotype will be protected from revision by a bodyguard of *ad hoc* devices because in medicine we know a quack by his claim that the cure he hawks never fails.

But individuals are not averages and cures do often fail. How can the theory be maintained? The quack tells a story to distract us from the factual counter-example. The story Carlyle told is of such transcendent quality that, if we know how to listen, we can hear its echoes even today.

II. QUACKERY REQUIRES SCIENCE AND LITERATURE

Here is the problem facing a quack or the dispenser of racial stereotypes. How can one maintain a stereotype that all members of a group X have characteristic—that very characteristic which makes them destined to the role of slave—in the presence of the fact of a member of X lacking α ? The quack must persuade others that the individual is not a “real” X. To stereotype swans as white, we need a story in which the inexorable “black swan” becomes something else entirely, e.g., “elongated raven.” This transparent piece of silliness dramatizes the problem. One has to have a *credible* explanation of why we ought not to attend to this fact and such a pathetic story obviously will not do.

Facts have no compassion. Once admitted, they come in their remorseless way, bringing death to theory. Quackery needs a story, such as Scheherazade herself might tell, which will let the theory live just one more night. One night more is all we need. If we can tell a good story this night then there is no reason we cannot tell its equal tomorrow night. By such means death by fact can be postponed unto a time without ending.

Quackery needs both storytellers and scientists. Thus we must listen when those learned about Victorian British racism tell us of two communities of *racists*: one community is composed of storytellers and another one of scientists. Whether there are, therefore, two forms of *racism* is addressed below, but let us agree for now that their approaches separate along community lines. There is, for want of a better term, the “literary racism” associated with Carlyle, Kingsley, Anthony Trollope, *The Times*, and James Froude.¹⁵ There is also what is

¹⁴ Desmond (1994, pp. 320–25, 343–53) gives a biting characterization of the man and his influence without examining Hunt's line of argument in any detail. While Hunt's claims about scientific practice are discussed in Rainger (1978), Hunt's method of practice is not. Hannaford (1996, p. 278) confuses a book Hunt translated, Carl Vogt (1864), with something Hunt himself wrote. This is a mistake with the potential of a ghastly consequence. H. S. Chamberlain was Vogt's pupil (Baker 1974, p. 48), and Vogt is not himself cited by Hannaford. What confuses the influences on Chamberlain muddles the linkage to the Nazi regime.

¹⁵ Lebow (1976, p. 48): “*The Times*, truly representative of British opinion in this respect, heaped continual derision upon the Celtic character, which it assured its readers was the real cause of outrages in Ireland.” Trollope (1947, p. 110): “The view I took of the relative position in the West Indies of black men and white men was the view of *The Times* newspaper at that period; and there appeared three articles in that journal, one closely after another, which made the fortune of the book.” Useful work on Kingsley includes Waller (1963), Banton (1977), and Lorimer (1978). Racial aspects in Carlyle's writing are discussed most helpfully by Persky (1990), Vanden Bossche (1991), and Young (1995).

universally referred to as “scientific racism.” While the label “scientific” in an anthropological context traditionally meant “statistical,”¹⁶ “scientific racism” is today loosened from its statistical moorings to include the flamboyant Dr. James Hunt and, as he insisted upon calling himself, *The Anthropological Review*.¹⁷ While Hunt did no statistical work, he thrust himself and his self-proclaimed “scientific” cause much into the public eye.

Scholars who have looked into the matter judge that for ordinary British people, the literary influence was vastly more important than the scientific.¹⁸ This judgment is surely right if only because of Carlyle’s overwhelming importance. Mill responded so quickly to Carlyle for fear that the progression of abolition in America might be influenced. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle prepares the reader for Sherlock Holmes’ willful ignorance of the solar system by having him first confess ignorance of Carlyle.¹⁹ Hard as this is to appreciate from our distance, their contemporaries seemed to have been on a familiar, first-name basis with both Carlyle and Kingsley.²⁰

The scholarly distinction between literature and science supposes that in a vital sense these trades are different. A crude but serviceable distinction might

¹⁶ Barzun (1937, pp. 160–61):

The anthropologists of the later period pursued the quest for certainty in the science of man by means of Number. Anthropology became the science of measuring the parts of the human body, principally the skull, but also the features, the limbs, the genital organs, the stature, the diameter of the heart or of the buttocks. Logic required that the measurements be made on large groups of specimens in order to find the common characteristics of the races. This process yielded statistical data.

¹⁷ Montagu (1942, p. 22) points to Hunt’s influence. Haller, whose 1971 work made considerable use of publications in *The Anthropological Review*, does not mention Hunt himself, focusing on the statistical studies of Sanford Hunt and Samuel Morton (Haller 1971/1995, pp. 30–35). Gould (1981) also only considers statistical studies and consequently does not discuss Hunt. Hunt’s importance is stressed in Curtis (1968), Banton (1977), Lorimer (1978), Rainger (1978), Stepan (1982), Desmond (1994), and Young (1995). Spencer (1986, p. 154) reports that Hunt’s *The Negro’s Place in Nature* served as the “model for ‘scientific’ writing on the subject for the remainder of the century.” Peart and Levy (2000) argue that Hunt converted Francis Galton and so had an enormous, albeit hidden, impact on the discussion of race for the next fifty years.

¹⁸ Lorimer (1978, p. 160):

Scientific racism gave some weight to the belief in black inferiority, but the popular and literary sources were just as significant as scientific ones in the formation of the “nigger” stereotype, and the concomitant conviction of English superiority. The mid-Victorians viewed the Negro as a happy-go-lucky, singing, dancing simpleton, who was perversely indolent, at times even deliberately and obstinately stupid, and on occasion ferociously cruel. This image, the *Daily News* noted, owed less to refinements in craniology or the definition of species, than to Thomas Carlyle, Charles Kingsley, and other less notable spokesmen for the West India interest.

¹⁹ Conan Doyle (1930, p. 21): “Upon my quoting Thomas Carlyle, he inquired in the naivest way who he might be and what he had done. My surprise reached a climax, however, when I found incidentally that he was ignorant of the Copernican Theory and of the composition of the Solar System.” Barzun (1937, pp. 57) quotes the Holmes stories as providing evidence for attitudes toward phrenology.

²⁰ Using the *OED on CD*, we discover that “T Carlyle” is quoted 9 times; “Carlyle” is quoted 6618 times. “C Kingsley” is quoted 95 times; “Kingsley” is quoted 2959 times. “J Hunt” is by contrast quoted 16 times; none of the “Hunt” quotations are from his work.

be that in literature one can make everything up, but in science one cannot. Facts cannot be manufactured out of wishes. But in quackery, literature and science merge. Let the scientific hypothesis be as complicated as it may, what the quack does is make up a reason—he tells a story—why a fact does not bear against the theory. The “black swan” really is not a swan because . . . And Carlyle might just number among the greatest storytellers of his age. It was not that long ago that his opposition to utilitarianism was a set text in Victorian literature. Perhaps it still is.

In quackery we will find both real literature and real science. I am encouraged, therefore, that both Kingsley and Hunt publicly attest to Carlyle’s great scientific stature.²¹ Bringers of facts will find it perilous to laugh when Scheherazade begins her tale.

III. A MARKET FOR RACIAL STEREOTYPE

Carlyle cast American slave society as an instance of feudalism. Here is Froude’s defense of this position—the explanation of *ODNQ*—in his *Life of Carlyle*:

He did not mean that the “Niggers” should have been kept as cattle, and sold as cattle at their owners’ pleasure. He did mean that they ought to have been treated as human beings, for whose souls and bodies the whites were responsible; that they should have been placed in a position suited to their capacity, like that of the English serfs under the Plantagenets . . . (Froude 1885, vol. 2, p. 15).

To appreciate the role racial stereotypes play in the debates, it is helpful to consider Carlyle’s presentation of an idealized hierarchical society in the days before “*ODNQ*.”²² This will help prepare us for the importance of “*ODNQ*” in the American debates.

²¹ Kingsley (1866, p. 24):

Scientific method is no peculiar mystery, requiring a peculiar initiation. It is simply common sense, combined with uncommon courage . . . And let me say that the man whose writings exemplify most thoroughly what I am going to say is the present Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh, Mr. Thomas Carlyle. As far as I know, he has never written on any scientific subject. For aught I am aware of, he may know nothing of mathematics or chemistry, of comparative anatomy or geology. For aught I am aware of, he may know a great deal about them all, and, like a wise man, hold his tongue, and give the world merely the results in the form of general thought. But this I know, that his writings are instinct with the very spirit of science; that he has taught men, more than any living man, the meaning and end of science; that he has taught men moral and intellectual courage; to face facts boldly, while they confess the divineness of facts; not to be afraid of nature . . .

Hunt takes the events in Jamaica as the opening salvo in Knox’s permanent racial war (Hunt 1866a, pp. 25–26): “He would have that latest of all ethnological puzzles to some—the present ‘insurrection in Jamaica;’ an insurrection, however, which he, as we have already seen, foretold upon scientific principles which Carlyle, in his on ‘The Nigger Question,’ hinted at as probable on grounds of social economy . . .” Young (1995) has an extensive discussion of Knox and his doctrine that “race is all.”

²² A conversation with Bryan Caplan is responsible for this section. He asked why statistical racism of the modern variety would not have sufficed for Carlyle’s purposes

Although many things are obscure in Carlyle's exercise in metafiction, the 1833–34 *Sartor Resartus*, the claim that society is founded on obedience is as clear as can be:

Thus is there a true religious Loyalty for ever rooted in his heart; nay, in all ages, even in ours, it manifests itself as a more or less orthodox *Hero-worship*. In which fact, that Hero-worship exists, has existed, and will for ever exist, universally among Mankind, mayst thou discern the corner-stone of living rock, whereon all Politics for the remotest time may stand secure (Carlyle 1987, p. 190).

While Carlyle combats the notion of genetic equality,²³ his tribute to George Fox's anti-racial slavery crusade is as striking as anything he ever wrote.²⁴

In the 1839 *Chartism*, Carlyle proposes a feudal system—not of course *the* feudal system that actually existed—as an ideal to oppose to a market economy:²⁵

O reader, to what shifts is poor Society reduced, struggling to give still some account of herself, in epochs when Cash Payment has become the sole nexus of man to man! On the whole, we will advise Society not to talk at all about what she exists for; but rather with her whole industry to exist, to try how she can keep existing! That is her best plan. She may depend upon it, if she ever, by cruel chance, did come to exist only for protection of breeches-pocket property, she would lose very soon the gift of protecting even that, and find her career in our lower world on the point of terminating!—

For the rest, that in the most perfect Feudal Ages, the Ideal of Aristocracy nowhere lived in vacant serene purity as an Ideal, but always as a poor imperfect Actual, little heeding or not knowing at all that an Ideal lay in it,—this too we will cheerfully admit.²⁶

²³ Carlyle (1987, p. 72–73):

It is maintained, by Helvetius and his set, that an infant of genius is quite the same as any other infant, only that certain surprisingly favourable influences accompany him through life, especially through childhood, and expand him, while others lie close-folded and continue dunces. Herein, say they, consists the whole difference between an inspired Prophet and a double-barrelled Game-preserved . . . “With which opinion,” cries Teufelsdröckh, “I should as soon agree as with this other, that an acorn might, by favourable or unfavourable influences of soil and climate, be nursed into a cabbage, or the cabbage-seed into an oak.”

²⁴ Carlyle (1987, pp. 159–60): “Stitch away, thou noble Fox: every prick of that little instrument is pricking into the heart of Slavery, and World-worship, and the Mammon-god . . . there is in broad Europe one Free Man, and thou art he!”

²⁵ Thus, Carlyle's disciples can be seen as offering proposals to “reform” slavery in opposition to the abolitionist proposals from the anti-slavery coalition. Levy (2000b) discusses some episodes.

²⁶ Carlyle (1904, vol. 29, pp. 164–65). A similar argument is found in Carlyle (1987, p. 177):

“The Soul Politic having departed,” says Teufelsdröckh, “what can follow but that the Body Politic be decently interred, to avoid putrescence? Liberals, Economists, Utilitarians enough I see marching with its bier, and chaunting loud pæns, toward the funeral-pile, where, amid wailings from some, and saturnalian revelries from the most, the venerable Corpse is to be burnt.”

The argument that government is an exchange of protection for taxation is found in Whately (1832, p. 10; 1833, pp. 63–73). The reader who does not know Whately's argument that government is founded in exchange will have a hard time appreciating Carlyle's craft.

This is not to say that a market economy did not have its place:

—In those entirely surprising circumstances to which the Eighteen Century had brought us, in the time of Adam Smith, *Laissez-faire* was a reasonable cry;— as indeed, in all circumstances, for a wise governor there will be meaning in the principle of it. To wise governors you will cry: “See what you will, and will not, let alone.” To unwise governors, to hungry Greeks throttling down hungry Greeks on the floor of a St. Stephen’s, you will cry: “Let *all* things alone; for Heaven’s sake meddle ye with nothing.”

How *Laissez-faire* may adjust itself in other provinces we say not: but we do venture to say, and ask whether events everywhere, in world-history and parish-history, in all manner of dialects are not saying it, That in regard to the lower orders of society, and their governance and guidance, the principle of *Laissez-faire* has terminated . . . (Carlyle 1904, vol. 29, p. 157).

And who should be the master? Who shall rule and be ruled? Look around:

That *Laissez-faire* has as good as done its part in a great many provinces; that in the province of the Working Classes, *Laissez-faire* having passed its New Poor-Law, has reached the suicidal point, and now, as *felo-de-se*, lies dying there, in torchlight meetings and suchlike, that, in brief, a government of the under classes by the upper on a principle of *Let-alone* is no longer possible in England in these days . . . The Working Classes cannot any longer go on without government: without being *actually* guided and governed . . . (Carlyle 1904, vol. 29, p. 155).

That Carlyle’s proposal of domination is meant for English subjects is clear in his ringing tribute to the authors of the New Poor Law:

we are far from joining in the outcry raised against those poor Poor-Law Commissioners, as if they were tigers in men’s shape; as if their Amendment Act were a mere monstrosity and horror, deserving instant abrogation. They are not tigers; they are men filled with an idea of a theory: their Amendment Act, heretical and damnable as a whole truth, is orthodox and laudable as a *half-truth*; and was imperatively required to be put in practice. To create men filled with a theory, that refusal of out-door relief was the one thing needful: Nature had no readier way of getting out-door relief refused . . .

Any law, however well meant as a law, which has become a bounty on unthrift, idleness, bastardy and beer-drinking, must be put an end to. In all ways it needs, especially in these times, to be proclaimed aloud that for the idle man there is no place in this England of ours (Carlyle 1904, vol. 29, pp. 131–32).

In a joking metaphor Carlyle compares the workers to horses. The metaphor will remain as the jokes vanish, as we shall see later:

New Poor-Law! *Laissez faire, laissez passer!* The master of horses, when the summer labour is done, has to feed his horses through the winter. If he said to his horses: “Quadrupeds, I have no longer work for you; but work exists abundantly over the world: are you ignorant (or must I read you Political-Economy Lectures) that the Steamengine always in the long-run creates additional work? . . . Ah, it is not a joyful mirth, it is sadder than tears, the laugh Humanity is forced to, at *Laissez-faire* applied to poor peasants, in a world like our Europe of the year 1839! (Carlyle 1904, vol. 29, p. 142).

However, mixed in these stern words about the English, both upper and lower classes, are messages of another sort about the Other. Improve or face extermination.²⁷

The most systematic discussion of an idealized slavery is found in his 1844 *Past and Present*:

True enough, man *is* forever the “born thrall” of certain men, born master of certain other men, born equal of certain others, let him acknowledge the fact or not. It is unblest for him when he cannot acknowledge this fact; he is in the chaotic state, ready to perish, till he do get the fact acknowledged (Carlyle 1965, p. 249).

The point of life is to find one’s natural master, to be directed to one’s dynamic optimum:

Sure enough, of all paths a man could strike into, there *is*, at any given moment, a *best path* for every man; a thing which, here and now, it were of all things *wisest* for him to do,—which could he be but led or driven to do, he were then doing “like a man,” as we phrase it; all men and gods agreeing with him, the whole Universe virtually exclaiming Well-done to him! His success, in such case, were complete; his felicity a maximum. This path, to find this path and walk in it, is the one thing needful for him (Carlyle 1965, p. 217).

When it comes to that, one might have to be whipped to be free:

Liberty? The true liberty of a man, you would say, consisted in his finding out, or being forced to find out the right path, and walk thereon. To learn, or to be taught, what work he actually was able for; and then, by permission, persuasion, and even compulsion, to set about doing of the same! . . . If thou do know better than I what is good and right, I conjure thee in the name of God, force me to do it; were it by never such brass collars, whips and handcuffs, leave me not to walk over precipices! (Carlyle 1965, pp. 211–12).

In *Past and Present* we find a continuation of Carlyle’s complaint about the attention paid to other races far away and, something critical to the argument of “ODNQ,” an infallible method of distinguishing masters and slaves:

if I had a Twenty Millions, with Model-Farms and Niger Expeditions, it is to these that I would give it! Quashee has already victuals, clothing; Quashee is not dying of such despair as the yellow-coloured pale man’s. Quashee, it must be owned, is hitherto a kind of block-head. The Haiti Duke of Marmalade,

²⁷ Carlyle (1904, vol. 29, p. 139): “The time has come when the Irish population must either be improved a little, or else exterminated.” Carlyle makes a list of political issues which distract Parliamentary attention from the condition of the workers (Carlyle 1904, vol. 29, pp. 120–21), which contains the following items: Canada question, Irish appropriation question, West-Indian question, Queen’s bedchamber question, game laws, usury laws, African Blacks, Hill Coolies, Smithfield cattle, and dog-carts. Four “other” races, three animals and three other questions. One must note that Carlyle’s Hero crosses racial lines (Carlyle 1904, vol. 29, p. 164): “Society, it is understood, does not in any age prevent a man from being what he can be. A sooty African can become a Toussaint L’Ouverture, a murderous Three-fingered Jack, let the yellow West Indies say to what they will.” Since Carlyle proposes extermination as a policy option, presumably the reader ought not to read “murderous” as serious disapprobation. Oddie discusses Charles Dickens’ exterminationism (1972, p. 138).

educated now for almost half a century, seems to have next to no sense in him. Why, in one of those Lancashire Weavers, dying of hunger, there is more thought and heart, a greater arithmetical amount of misery and desperation, than in whole gangs of Quashees.²⁸

Consider Carlyle's problem as a supplier of the ideology of slavery. How does he go about persuading someone in a market economy—*LF* denotes that status quo—to favor the institution of slavery, *S*? As Carlyle explains, although the point probably did not require explanation, in slavery there are masters and there are slaves. Suppose further that the free worker believes that *his* hypothetical conditions could be compared to the status quo thusly:²⁹

$$U(S|\text{master}) > U(LF) > U(S|\text{slave}).$$

If acceptance of the ideology of slavery depends upon the expected utility of *S* relative to *LF*, then the problem is to persuade men to believe that they are destined to be masters.

When Mill responds to the “ODNQ,” he notes that Carlyle’s “Gospel of Labor” has been refashioned to make it more appealing to whites:

Your contributor incessantly prays Heaven that all persons, black and white, may be put in possession of this “divine right of being compelled, if permitted will not serve, to do what work they are appointed for.” But as this cannot be conveniently managed just yet, he will begin with the blacks, and will make them work *for* certain whites, those whites *not* working at all ... (Mill 1850, p. 27).

This is precisely the reading I should urge.

IV. CARLYLE'S ECONOMIC QUACKERY

In the late 1840s, the former slaves in the West Indies were devastated by a fall in the price of produce brought about by an abolition of protective tariffs.³⁰ Liberal philanthropy—which had been so important in the emancipation—raised money to help ameliorate the distress. Carlyle was persuaded that their unemployment was the result only of their refusal to work. From this refusal to work—a characteristic of both Irish and blacks—Carlyle attempted to prove their subhuman status. There are three important essays in the public Carlyle-Mill exchange. First, Carlyle's December 1849 *Fraser's* “ODNQ” in which he

²⁸ Carlyle (1965, p. 275). The £20 million is part of the price the British taxpayer absorbed for West Indian emancipation. Judging from my reading of the British debates, no one would miss the reference. It is somewhat harder to find in modern literary discussions of Carlyle, as JSTOR can verify.

²⁹ “His” is emphasized to note the sexual usage of slaves, (Levy 2000b). If married male masters use their slaves sexually but married female masters do not, there is no reason to believe that married female masters will be altogether as pleased with the arrangement as their husbands might be.

³⁰ A tariff was part of the emancipation deal. Denman (1853, p. 35): “The compensation for this loss was partly the money awarded by parliament to the slave-holders; much more, the pledge of the government that slave-grown sugar should be subject to a higher duty than that produced by free labour.”

proposed re-enslavement of Jamaicans.³¹ Second, is Mill's response in January 1850.³² Third, is Carlyle's reply in the February 1850 essay "The Present Time," the first of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*.³³

What Carlyle said about his command of economics on this occasion is correct: he had a firm grasp of the relevant line of thinking. The defining characteristic of the human race, in the classical economics of Adam Smith and Richard Whately, is that humans trade. Smith used this approach to argue for

³¹ Carlyle says:

... manful industrious men occupy their West Indies, not indolent two-legged cattle, however "happy" over their abundant pumpkins! Both these things, we may be assured, the immortal gods have decided upon, passed their eternal act of parliament for: and both of them, though all terrestrial Parliaments and entities oppose it to the death, shall be done. Quashee, if he will not help in bringing out the spices, will get himself made a slave again (which state will be a little less ugly than his present one), and with beneficent whip, since other methods avail not, will be compelled to work (1849, p. 675).

³² In response Mill puts forward the Afrocentric hypothesis:

It is curious withal, that the earliest known civilization was, we have the strongest reason to believe, a negro civilization. The original Egyptians are inferred, from the evidence of their sculptures, to have been a negro race: it was from negroes, therefore, that the Greeks learnt their first lessons in civilization; and to the records and traditions of these negroes did the Greek philosophers to the very end of their career resort (I do not say with much fruit) as a treasury of mysterious wisdom (1850, p. 30).

Testifying to how far Carlyle-Mill is from common knowledge, this statement was unknown to Bernal (1987). Young (1995, p. 128) sees it.

³³ "ODNQ" purports to be a report of a lecture at Exeter Hall. In "The Present Time" we are presented with (1850, p. 46) "*Speech of the British Prime Minister to the floods of Irish and other Beggars, the able-bodied Lackalls, nomadic or stationary, and the general assembly, outdoor and indoor, of the Pauper Populations of these Realms.*" After the speech goes on for some time we read what follows. Carlyle (1850, pp. 53–54):

[*Here arises indescribable uproar, no longer repressible, from all manner of Economists, Emancipationists, Constitutionalists, and miscellaneous Professors of the Dismal Science, pretty numerous scattered about; and cries of "Private Enterprise," "Rights of Capital," "Voluntary Principle," "Doctrines of the British Constitution," swollen by the general assenting hum of all the world, quite drown the Chief Minister for a while. He, with invincible resolution, persists; obtains hearing again:*]

Respectable Professors of the Dismal Science, soft you a little! Alas, I know what you would say, For my sins, I have read much in those inimitable volumes of yours,—really I should think, some barrowfuls of them in my time,—and, in these last forty years of theory and practice, have pretty well seized what of Divine Message you were sent with to me. Perhaps as small a message, give me leave to say, as ever there was such a noise made about before. Trust me, I have not forgotten it, shall never forget it. Those Laws of the Shop-till are indisputable to me; and practically useful in certain departments of the Universe, as the multiplication-table itself. Once I even tried to sail through the Immensities with them, and to front the big coming Eternities with them; but I found it would not do. As the Supreme Rule of Statesmanship, or, Government of Men,—since this Universe is not wholly a Shop,—no . . . But beyond and above the Shop-till, allow me to say, you shall as good as hold your peace. Respectable Professors, I perceive it is not now the Gigantic Hucksters, but it is the Immortal Gods, yes they, in their terror and their beauty, in their wrath and their beneficence, that are coming into play in the affairs of this world! Soft you a little. Do not you interrupt me, but try to understand and help me.

the analytical equality of humans.³⁴ The analysis was also used by Edward Wakefield and then by Carlyle to argue for the subhuman condition of some human-like races: if the members of a race will not trade, then they are not fully human.

Quackery enters when we observe members of a race X not trading in circumstance α , but when they trade in circumstance β we tell a story to distract attention from this fact.³⁵ Or it enters when we observe members of a race X “not trading” in circumstances but we tell a story to distract attention from the fact that members of race Y also do not trade in the same circumstance δ .

Commentary on the racial aspects of Carlyle’s work sometimes focuses exclusively on the Jamaican-centered debates ignoring the extensive Irish debate.³⁶

³⁴ We can find such a doctrine in his *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, e.g.:

“Whenever commerce is introduced into a country, probity and punctuality always accompany it. These virtues in a rude and barbarous country are almost unknown. Of all the nations in Europe, the Dutch, the most commercial, are the most faithful to their word. The English are more so than the Scotch, but much inferior to the Dutch, and in the remote parts of this country they [are] far less so than in the commercial parts of it. This is not all to be imputed to national character, as some pretend (Smith 1978, p. 538).

³⁵ Arguments for the subrationality of workers because they worked less when wages were higher were met by the classical economists who emphasized the importance of knowing whether the workers were really paid higher wages or not:

Some workmen, indeed, when they can earn in four days what will maintain them through the week, will be idle the other three. This, however, is by no means the case with the greater part. Workmen, on the contrary, when they are liberally paid by the piece, are very apt to over-work themselves, and to ruin their health and constitution in a few years (Smith 1976, pp. 99–100).

Ricardo emphasized that happiness is the goal of all people. Moreover, the worker had to be certain that extra wages would in fact be forthcoming for extra work:

Happiness is the object to be desired, and we cannot be quite sure that provided he is equally well fed, a man may not be happier in the enjoyment of the luxury of idleness than the enjoyment of the luxuries of a neat cottage, and good clothes. After all we do not know if these would fall to his share. His labour might only increase the enjoyments of his employer (1951, vol. 7, pp. 184–85).

(Sam Hollander provided me with this reference.)

³⁶ While Hall (1992, p. 288) is completely clear on the racial issue—in terms of black and white—between Carlyle and Mill, she attributes their debate to different conceptions of masculinity. Indeed, she has a “problem” whether Mill might not have a doctrine of “a natural division of labour between the races . . .” She seems not to be aware of the decade-spanning racial debates in a Celtic context. Curtis (1968, pp. 47–48) discusses an 1868 review in the *Quarterly Review* that:

pointed out that it was foolish for the political economists to prescribe remedies for the Irish question until the character of the Irish people had completely changed. J. S. Mill’s [1848] mistake, he maintained, was to treat Irish cottiers as though they were Englishmen. It was time Mill learned that the Irishman was “not an average human being—an idiomatic and idiosyncratic, not an abstract man.”

The author of the attack on Mill is W. R. Greg, one of the founders of eugenics (Peart and Levy 2000). It is in this context that one ought to read Nassau Senior’s 1841 *Edinburgh Review* discussion of the English Poor Law (1865, vol. 2, p. 98): “The redundancy [of population] vanished with its causes. The able-bodied pauper is the result of art; he is not the natural offspring of the Saxon race.” Please note: Senior is applying the “giggle test” to racism.

Mill's response to "ODNQ" was written in anger and in haste. Mill's attack on the "vulgarity" of racial explanations in the 1848 *Political Economy* is a technical set piece in which he walks the reader through a precise delineation of the quackery.³⁷ How can the "Celtic race" be the explanation for Irish poverty and unemployment? Only by ignoring the fact of the Irish working in America where they were actually paid for their work. If modern commentators do not know Mill's official position on the vulgarity of racial explanations, Carlyle certainly did. Mill gave him a copy of *Political Economy* and his marginal note on the "vulgarity" paragraph has survived.³⁸ If one does not know the science then it will be hard to understand why the story is told the way it is.

To see the science we must know *The Wealth of Nations*. For Smith the problem is to explain trade, and all things that result from trade. To this end he appeals to a language-linked instinct to truck and barter. This, he explains, a characterization of our race alone:

Whether this propensity be one of those original principles in human nature, of which no further account can be given; or whether, as seems more probable, it be the necessary consequence of the faculties of reason and speech, it belongs not to our present subject to enquire. It is common to all men, and to be found in no other race of animals, which seem to know neither this nor any other species of contracts (Smith 1976, p. 25).

The race of humans is set apart from the other races of animals by language because language, not physical differences, is the key to cooperation. Dogs have more physical differences than people, but lacking language in which to express the notion of "fair," they cannot trade (Smith 1976, p. 30). In 1831 Whately put Smith's point this way:

Man might be defined, "An animal that makes *Exchanges*:" no other, even of those animals which in other points make the nearest approach to rationality, having, in all appearance, the least notion of bartering, or in any way exchanging one thing for another (Whately 1831, p. 6).

³⁷ "... if he had not disdained to apply the same mode of investigation to the laws of the formation of character, he would have escaped the vulgar error of imputing every difference which he finds among human beings to an original difference of nature" (Mill 1850, p. 29).

³⁸ Mill:

Is it not, then, a bitter satire on the mode in which opinions are formed on the most important problems of human nature and life, to find public instructors of the greatest pretensions imputing the backwardness of Irish industry, and the want of energy of the Irish people improving their condition, to a peculiar indolence and insouciance in the Celtic race? Of all vulgar modes of escaping from the consideration of the effect of social and moral influences on the human mind, the most vulgar is that of attributing the diversities of conduct and character to inherent natural differences.

What race would not be indolent and insouciant when terms are so arranged? ... It speaks nothing against the capacities of industries in human beings, that they will not exert themselves without motive. No labourers work harder, in England or America, than the Irish; but not under a cottier system (1965, p. 319).

Carlyle in Baumgarten (1980, p. 87): "Yes, but what kind of 'race' is it that has *made* such arrangements?"

A rich source of information about the development of economics in the nineteenth century can be found in the commentary appended by successive editors to the nineteenth-century editions of *The Wealth of Nations*. In particular, the widely employed edition by Edward Wakefield challenges Smith's doctrine of human uniqueness. Wakefield argued that the sharp distinction between humans and animals which Smith and Whately supposed is actually fuzzy.³⁹ There are some races that will not trade and therefore are closer to animals than they are to the fully human. Here is what we shall call the Wakefield claim: "The savages of New Holland never help each other, even in the most simple operations; and their condition is hardly superior, in some respects it is inferior, to that of the wild animals which they now and then catch" (in Smith 1835, vol. 1, p. 27).

Having made this claim, it is not surprising that Wakefield objects to Smith's foundational claim that there is a language-linked human propensity to exchange. The New Hollanders are language users, so any language-linked propensity to trade would predict that they trade even if we do not observe it easily. Rather, he argues against Smith proposing that dogs don't trade because there is nothing they want which they do not already have:

The highly ingenious illustrations of the alleged principle, which it is the object of this chapter to establish, have kept out of view some considerations from which it will appear that, in truth, there is no such principle; that division of employments does not arise from a mere trucking propensity in man, but from certain human peculiarities which give occasion to the exchange itself.

The wants of every inferior animal are extremely limited. No inferior animal wants more than food and shelter; the quantity and kind of food, and the kind of shelter, being always the same with respect to each race of animals . . . The wants of man, on the contrary, are unlimited (Smith 1835, vol. 1, p. 59).

Thus, on Wakefield's argument, humans will trade because they are insatiable whereas animals are easily satiated.⁴⁰

At the center of classical economics, therefore, we have a test for the human status of a particular race. If they will trade they are human; if they will not trade they are not. The Wakefield claim removes language from the argument and substitutes unsatisfied desires. Dogs—and semi-humans—in Wakefield's account don't trade because they are not in want.

It is in this context that I suggest we read the Carlyle-Mill debate. In it Carlyle argues for the fundamental identity of the Irish, blacks and horses on the ground

³⁹ We know that Wakefield encountered Whately's doctrine of human uniqueness because he cites (in Smith 1835, vol. 1, p. 77) Whately's proposal, made on the same page, to change "political economy" to "science of exchange." Whately in fact proposed a Greek coinage—"katallactics." The Greek carries connotations of reciprocity. This proposal embodies the Smith-Whately doctrine of the uniqueness of human exchange and the analytical irrelevance of the isolated individual (Levy 1999). The importance of a norm of reciprocity for the evangelical-economic coalition is considered in Levy (2000b).

⁴⁰ In fact, the foundations of modern neoclassical economics are much closer to Wakefield's ideas than to Smith's. Nonetheless, the recent experimental work on animal economics ought to have shattered the illusion that animal preferences differ in structure from human. A reconsideration of Smith's argument in light of this research is undertaken elsewhere (Levy 1992, pp. 17–33 and 1999).

that neither horses, blacks, nor Irish will voluntarily trade leisure for wages. The Carlyle material will be read out of order so that we can separate, as much as we can, the Carlyle version of the Wakefield claim—the science required for the quackery—from the story Carlyle told to distract attention from Mill's facts. The story has two characters in it. After we see the science, we can appreciate what each character does in the story Carlyle tells.

For Carlyle, contractual relationships with horses is as promising as contractual relationships with blacks or Irish. The 1844 horses stood for all workers; indeed those with whom we were invited to sympathize, they have a new role to play. They are now the image of the Other. Here is the Carlyle version of the Wakefield claim: motivation by incentives will not work for the subhuman; they have no reason to exchange. Want not, work not:

West-Indian Blacks are emancipated, and it appears refuse to work: Irish Whites have long been entirely emancipated; and nobody asks them to work, . . . Among speculative persons, a question has sometimes risen: In the progress of Emancipation, are we to look for a time when all the Horses also are to be emancipated, and brought to the supply-and-demand principle? Horses too have “motives;” are acted on by hunger, fear, hope, love of oats, terror of platted leather; nay they have vanity, ambition, emulation, thankfulness, vindictiveness; some rude outline of all our human spiritualities,—a rude resemblance to us in mind and intelligence, even as they have in bodily frame . . . I am sure if I could make him “happy,” I should be willing to grant a small vote (in addition to the late twenty millions) for that object!

Him too you occasionally tyrannise over; and with bad result to yourselves among others; using the leather in a tyrannous unnecessary manner; withholding, or scantily furnishing, the oats and ventilated stabling that are due. Rugged horse-subduers, one fears they are a little tyrannous at times. “Am I not a horse, and *half*-brother?” . . . (Carlyle 1850, pp. 30–31).

What is the consequence of treating horses as if they were human?

So long as grass lasts, I dare say they are very happy, or think themselves so. And Farmer Hodge sallying forth, on a dry spring morning, with a sieve of oats in his hand, and agony of eager expectation in his heart, is he happy? Help me to plough this day, Black Dobbin: oats in full measure if thou wilt. “Hlunh, No—thank!” snorts Black Dobbin; he prefers glorious liberty and the grass. Bay Darby, wilt not though perhaps? “Hlunh!”—Grey Joan, then, my beautiful broad-bottomed mare,—O Heaven, she too answers Hlunh! Not a quadruped of them will plough a stroke for me (Carlyle 1850, pp. 31–32).

Attempting to contract with the subhuman has predictable consequences corresponding exactly with attempts to contract with two-legged subhumans.

Corn-crops are *ended* in this world!—For the sake, if not of Hodge, then of Hodge's horses, one prays this benevolent practice might now cease, and a new and better one try to begin. Small kindness to Hodge's horses to emancipate them! The fate of all emancipated horses is, sooner or later, inevitable. To have in this habitable Earth no grass to eat,—in Black Jamaica gradually none, as in White Connemara already none;—to roam aimless, wasting the seedfields of the world;—and be hunted home to Chaos, by the due watchdogs and due hell-dogs . . . (Carlyle 1850, p. 32).

The Wakefield claim is the science. Now the story. An unnamed speaker appears at Exeter Hall to tell the evangelicals ever-so-bluntly what they need to know. The voice speaks as if that of destiny itself.⁴¹ Here is the comparison of white and black claims on our compassion:

[T]he British Whites are rather badly off; several millions of them hanging on the verge of continual famine; and in single towns, many thousands of them very sore put to it, at this time, not to live “well,” or as a man should, in any sense temporal or spiritual, but to live at all:—these, again, are uncomfortable facts; and they are extremely extensive and important ones. But, thank Heaven, our interesting Black population,—equalling almost in number of heads one of the Ridings of Yorkshire, and in *worth* (in quantity of intellect, faculty, docility, energy, and available human valour and value) perhaps one of the streets of Seven Dials,—are all doing remarkably well. “Sweet blighted lilies,”—as the American epitaph on the Nigger child has it,—sweet blighted lilies, they are holding up their heads again! (Carlyle 1971, p. 3; 1849, pp. 670–71).

The “ODNQ” has been judged a great piece of comedy which readers are too humorless to grasp.⁴² I use a footnote to parse one of the jokes which indeed escaped the commentators.⁴³

Now, we met the first character, the black unemployed. Can anyone imagine that this character is related to the white unemployed? Why would one even think of making factual comparisons across such racial divides?

Sitting yonder with their beautiful muzzles up to the ears in pumpkins, imbibing sweet pulps and juices; the grinder and incisor teeth ready for ever new work, and the pumpkins cheap as grass in those rich climates: while the sugar-crops rot round them uncut, because labour cannot be hired, so cheap are the pumpkins ... (Carlyle 1971, p. 4; 1849, p. 671).

Possibly, it is unnecessary to belabor the point that this character in the story has lost some appeal. But behold, there is another character in the story, one who walks among the living. This is the economist who brings facts. This character, so enthralled is he by the satanic mills of the imagination, that he cannot tell the difference between the black and the white. And from this failure, he argues for emancipation for all:

Truly, my philanthropic friends, Exeter Hall Philanthropy is wonderful: and the Social Science—not a “gay science,” but a rueful—which finds the secret of this universe in “supply-and-demand,” and reduces the duty of human governors

⁴¹ Thus Mill opens his response with what would later become his official position in such a case, we would be under obligation to oppose the gods themselves. Mill (1850, p. 25): “If ‘the gods’ will this, it is the first duty of human beings to resist such gods.”

⁴² Heffer (1995, p. 276): “Carlyle constructs a brilliant parody of an Exeter Hall meeting, with an unnamed speaker spelling out unpalatable truths to an audience driven deeper and deeper into shock. Philanthropy in general he parodies ... Carlyle did not feel he was attacking the blacks; his targets were the liberals who were destroying them.”

⁴³ The modern editor of *The Nigger Question* could not find the reference to “sweet blighted lilies” (August in Carlyle 1971, p. 8). Carlyle’s friend Martineau visited America to confront slavery in person. She reports (Martineau 1837, vol. 3, p. 101): “Even in their ultimate, funeral courtesies, the coloured race imitate the whites. An epitaph on a negro baby at Savannah begins, ‘Sweet blighted lily!’” Martineau’s influence is everywhere; Craft (1860, p. 109) acknowledges her help.

to that of letting men alone, is also wonderful. Not a “gay science,” I should say, like some we have heard of; no, a dreary, desolate, and indeed quite abject and distressing one: what we might call, by way of eminence, the *dismal science*. These two, Exeter Hall Philanthropy and the Dismal Science, led by any sacred cause of Black Emancipation, or the like, to fall in love and make a wedding of it,—will give birth to progenies and prodigies; dark extensive moon-calves, unnameable abortions, wide-coiled monstrosities, such as the world has not seen hitherto!⁴⁴

How confident must one be to condemn a race to death for their failure to match one’s understanding. As was said long ago on a kindred occasion, one must be either a god or very wicked. Carlyle forces his readers to make this choice about who he is

—“Work, was I saying? My indigent unguided friends, I should think some work might be discoverable for you. Enlist, stand drill; become, from a nomadic Banditti of Idleness, Soldiers of Industry! I will lead you to the Irish Bogs, to the vacant desolations of Connaught now falling into Cannibalism . . .

To each of you I will then say: Here is work for you; strike into it with manlike, soldierlike obedience and heartiness, according to the methods here prescribed,—wages follow for you without difficulty; all manner of just remuneration, and at length *emancipation itself follows*. Refuse to strike into it; shirk the heavy labour, disobey the rules,—I will admonish and endeavour to incite you; if in vain, I will flog you; if still in vain, I will at last shoot you,—and make God’s Earth, and the forlorn-hope in God’s Battle, free of you . . .” (Carlyle 1850, pp. 54–55, emphasis added).

The bulk of Mill’s response deals with the normative questions raised by Carlyle’s assumption of heavenly form and his “Gospel of Labor”—which exempts whites from labor and Carlyle from doing more than providing “guidance”—but he takes the time to sketch the fact which Carlyle’s story must deflect:

I have so serious a quarrel with him about principles, that I have no time to spare for his facts; but let me remark, how easily he takes for granted those which fit his case. Because he reads in some blue-book of a strike for wages in Demerara, such as he may read of any day in Manchester, he draws a picture of negro inactivity, copied from the wildest prophecies of the slavery party before emancipation (Carlyle 1850, p. 27).

It is only by failing to compare workers in Demerara with those in Manchester that allows Carlyle to draw the conclusion that those in Demerara are unusual. If British workers are sometimes unemployed then it is quackery to argue from Jamaican unemployment to Jamaican subhuman status without making the parallel case for the British workers.

⁴⁴ Carlyle (1971, p. 8; 1849, pp. 672–73). The references to inter-racial sexuality are not only the imagination of the reader. The role of Harriet Martineau in making plain the hidden economy of the sexual usage of slaves is documented in Levy (2000b). After Martineau would follow *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

V. CARLYLE COMES TO AMERICA

While British pro-slavery opinions of the 1850s might surprise nonspecialists,⁴⁵ if Mill were correct one would expect that Carlyle's opinions would find an appreciative audience in the American South. Using the *Making of America* data set, we can document Carlyle's impact on America and test Mill's hypothesis that "ODNQ" would bend the debate.⁴⁶

Doing searches on "dismal science" and "Carlyle and emancipation" we find "ODNQ" reprinted twice.⁴⁷ First, in the June 1850 *Commercial Review* and second in the 1851 compendium *Negro-Mania*.⁴⁸ We find a massive review of *Past and Present* and "ODNQ" in the *Southern Quarterly Review* of 1853 under the illuminating head "British and American Slavery." We find pro-slavery voices seizing on the breaking of British anti-slavery hegemony:

We are able, however, to point with satisfaction to distinguished exceptions: to the London Times, the ablest newspaper in the world; and to Thomas Carlyle, the greatest, the wisest, and the bravest living English author, with whose words of deep and solemn import ... (1853, p. 410).

The *Making of America* data allows us to transcend mere reading and accomplish something more to the liking of modern economists: counting and testing. To this we turn.

The "ODNQ" in its forthright way emphasizes the important fact of the coalition between Biblical literalists and utilitarian economists. By framing his essay as a lecture at Exeter Hall—the London center of organized evangelicalism—Carlyle attempts to localize the opposition to slavery as that of a narrow sect. After all, Carlyle's opposition to Biblical literalism earned him the persistent label "progressive." "Exeter Hall" might be an odd reference to find in an American discussion of slavery.

Indeed, in the period 1800–1845, in the 987 works in which the word "slave*" appears, precisely two also contain "Exeter Hall."⁴⁹ In the period 1850–1865 in the 3970 works in which the word "slave*" appears, sixty-two contain "Exeter Hall." Conducting a simple test for the equality of the two proportions gives us a normally distributed test statistic of -3.38 . This allows us to reject the hypothesis of the equality of two proportions at any conventional level. While

⁴⁵ Scholars have yet to come to grips with the meaning of the fact that Dickens's 1854 *Hard Times* is inscribed to Carlyle. Consider Denman's (1853, p. 11): attack on what Dickens was publishing on slavery, "... unluckily we cannot disassociate her [Mrs. Jellaby] from some papers in the "Household Words," which appear to have been written for the taste of slave traders only." The *Household Words* papers are discussed in Goldberg (1972) and Oddie (1972).

⁴⁶ Cynthia Earman told me about the *Making of America* database (<http://www.umdl.umich.edu/moa/>). The searches were conducted October 1, 1999 through October 4. Only the Michigan site was then searchable; the Cornell site was not yet operational. I leave the Cornell site as an exercise for the reader.

⁴⁷ "Carlyle and emancipation" produced 42 hits when restricted to the same page and 171 hits in the same work. The immediate American reception of "ODNQ" argues for its importance relative to *ONDQ*.

⁴⁸ Variations on "Negro-Mania" turned up 23 hits with several large reviews mentioning Carlyle.

⁴⁹ The use of "*" allows us to catch "slave," "slaves," and "slavery" in one search.

correlation does not imply cause, what alternative is there to the conclusion that Carlyle bent the debate in America? Mill's hypothesis resists falsification.

Of course, Carlyle was not the only racist imported to America. Consider how attractive—in predictable parts of America—the words of Carlyle's disciple, Kingsley, published in 1864 were, identifying American slave owners with Teutonic knights, explaining how the condition of slave depends on the race of the master. Such words come from the center of the British intellectual world. They are found in the printed version of his lectures—*The Roman and the Teuton*—which Kingsley gave as the Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge:

Roman domestic slavery is not to be described by the pen of an Englishman. And I must express my sorrow, that in the face of such notorious facts, some have of late tried to prove American slavery to be as bad as, or even worse than, that of Roman. God forbid! Whatsoever may have been the sins of the Southern gentleman, he is at least a Teuton, and not a Roman; a whole moral heaven above the effeminate wretch, who in the 4th and 5th centuries called himself a senator and a clarissimus (Kingsley 1864, p. 20).

Kingsley in America? The early AEA Teutonic racism came from somewhere. Here?

VI. SPEECH AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL QUACKERY AS PRACTICED

We leave the realm of high art to consider two of Carlyle's capable thralls. Kingsley and Hunt were vigorous critics of contemporary economics. Kingsley's 1850 *Alton Locke* is cited even today as a substantial criticism of the condition of the "white slaves" of Britain.⁵⁰ The problem with capitalism, as Kingsley explains, is that Jews get to be masters. Unlike Teutons, Jews are not a race whom one trusts with mastership.⁵¹ Hunt proposed "anthropology" as a replacement for the egalitarian-influenced economics.⁵² Contemporary scholarship classes Kingsley and Hunt as belonging to different communities of racism. Here I propose to document quackery common to speech therapy and to racial anthropology.

⁵⁰ Interestingly enough, modern scholars prefer to use the term "wage slave" although it is rarely found in the *Making of America* Michigan data set: between 1800 and 1865 I count five usages of "wage* slave*." "White slave" is the common term employed in the debate. In the same 1800 and 1865 period I find 216 uses of "white slave*" in 119 works.

⁵¹ Levy (2000b) studies how the secondary literature, in which Kingsley's is "progressive" in the *Alton Locke* period, deals with the equation of Jew and wicked sweat shop owner.

⁵² Hunt's promotion of anthropology as the racists' economics is discussed in Rainger (1978). Here is a characteristic statement: "This assumption of human equality was first heard of in the latter half of the last century, and since then it has been industriously taught in our universities; and at the present day it has become a part and parcel of the systems of political economy on which we rear our legislators" (Hunt 1867, p. lix). One can date the open hostility to economics in *The Anthropological Review* to its October 1865 review of Henry Thomas Buckle's *The History of Civilization in England* in which Buckle quoted with approbation Mill's *Political Economy* doctrine that racial "explanation" was the height of vulgarity (Buckle 1914, p. 29). Then Hunt figured out who the real enemy was (Hunt 1866b).

I have used the market metaphor, the market for ideology, to describe Carlyle's recasting of slavery to make white men immune from the role of slave. However, the market for speech therapy is a real market. "Cures" are bought and sold with real money. We can, I propose, better understand the market metaphor by considering a real market transaction. In particular, we can observe the same argumentative strategy used in a context to persuade men to part with their money being used in another context to persuade men to part with their anti-slavery egalitarian beliefs.

Hunt's first book is a response to the *Lancet's* charge of quackery against his father's speech practice. Here Hunt quotes from the *Lancet* about quacks in general:

Nothing but perfect cure and unparalleled success is ever heard of in the practice of the empiric. Charles Lamb in the country churchyard, seeing the virtues set forth upon every tombstone, wondered "where all the bad people could have been buried" So we wonder where all the bad cases of the quacks can get to (Hunt 1854, p. 36, emphasis added).

This provides textual warrant for the assertion that in the judgment of the community we study, a "quack" practices without failure. When Kingsley reviews James Hunt's speech therapy for *Fraser's*, the perfect cure claim for average stammerers is put forward:

And now one word as to Dr. Hunt, son of the worthy old Dorsetshire gentleman, and author of the book mentioned at the head of this article. I could say very much in his praise which he would not care to have said, or the readers of *Fraser's* perhaps to hear. But as to his power of curing the average of stammerers, I can and do say this—that I never have yet seen him fail where as much attention was given as a schoolboy gives to his lessons. Of course the very condition of the cure—the conscious use of the organs of speech—makes it depend on the power of self-observation, on the attention, on the determination, on the general intellectual power, in fact, of the patient; and a stupid or volatile lad will give weary work (Kingsley 1859, p. 10).

Whatever failure there might be is only the failure of the patient. The story of the stupid patient—even when the patient is Kingsley himself—protects the therapy from fact.⁵³ How could the cure bear the responsibility for the stupidity of the patient? I return to the details of speech therapy in the following section when I report unpublished correspondence from Kingsley to Hunt. Because Kingsley will write about racial matters in which Hunt was involved, we should read the public debates before the private correspondence.

To this end we consider Hunt's *The Negro's Place in Nature*, presented in

⁵³ In a letter to Hunt of January 4, 1860, six months after the review, Kingsley reports that the stammering is worse and that he "can give no cause." In a letter of November 15, 1859 on the black-bordered paper announcing the death of his child, Kingsley writes about dining with the Prince Consort and his terror of stammering in front of his new pupil, the Prince of Wales. While Kingsley describes either heartbreak or tension, he continues to seek explanation of the worsening stammering elsewhere. *The Lancet*, cited in Hunt (1854, pp. 37–38), gives an interesting explanation of testimonials: "We hardly know which is the greatest puffer and charlatan, the writer of the puff, or the party who procures it to be written."

1863, republished in New York in the following year. Hunt asserts that blacks are their stereotype. The average is the individual:

In the negro race there is a great uniformity of temperament. In every people of Europe all temperaments exist; but in the Negro race we can only discover analogies for the choleric and phlegmatic temperaments. The senses of the Negro are very acute, especially the smell and taste; but Pruner Bey says that there has been much exaggeration as to the perfection of the senses of the Negro, and that their eye-sight, in particular, is very much inferior to the European. The most detestable odors delight him, and he eats everything (Hunt 1864, p. 11).

Now and forever, a people unchanging:

We now know it to be a patent fact that there are races existing which have no history, and that the Negro is one of these races. From the most remote antiquity the Negro race seems to have been what they are now. We may be pretty sure that the Negro race have been without a progressive history; and that they have been for thousands of years the uncivilized race they are at this moment (Hunt 1864, p. 13).

If this is so then observing one is the same as observing all. Literature is science:

In conclusion, let me observe that it is not alone the man of science who has discerned the Negro's unfitness for civilization, as we understand it. Here is Mr. Anthony Trollope, who is certainly quite guiltless of ever having examined the evidence of the distinction between the Negro and European, and yet truly says of the Negro:—"Give them their liberty, starting them well in the world at what expense you please, and at the end of six months they will come back upon your hands for the means of support. Everything must be done for them; they expect food, clothes and instruction as to every simple act of life, as do children" (Hunt 1864, p. 27).

One might think that, as defined, neither medical quackery nor racial quackery would be very long-lived. The first failure to cure or the first black who diverges from the stereotype provides a fact which falsifies the claim that the cure *always* works or the group is *nothing but* the stereotype. Here comes the story explaining why a cure seems to "fail." We have read Kingsley blaming the failure on the stammerer's lack of intelligence. The failure is the responsibility of the patient, not of the cure. The black who diverges from the stereotype is dealt with in exactly the same way. The story is told that he is not a real black, he is from some other race. Quoting Hunt:

The many assumed cases of civilized Negroes generally are not of pure African blood. In the Southern States of North America, in the West Indies and other places, it has been frequently observed that the Negroes in places of trust have European features; and some writers have supposed that these changes have been due to a gradual improvement in the Negro race which is taking place under favorable circumstances. It has been affirmed that occasionally there are seen Negroes of pure blood who possess European features. Some observers have assumed that improvement has taken place in the intellect of the Negro by education, but we believe such not to be the fact. It is simply the European blood in their veins which renders them fit for places of power, and they often use this power far more cruelly than either of the pure-blooded races (Hunt 1864, p. 12).

The three sentences next quoted each have a complicated context. The jibe at “philanthropists” is explained by Carlyle’s “ODNQ.” The importance of Hunt’s denigration of the ability to acquire languages in the third sentence will be clear immediately:

The exhibitions of cases of intelligent Negroes in the saloons of the fashionable world by so-called “philanthropists,” have frequently been nothing but mere impostures. In nearly every case in which the history of these cases has been investigated, it has been found that these so-called Negroes are the offspring of European and African parents. We admit, however, that the African Negro occasionally has great powers of memory, in learning languages ... (Hunt 1864, p. 16).

This quackery is responsible for one of Hunt’s least attractive public moments.⁵⁴ When the doctrine of uniform intellectual incompetence was publically challenged by William Craft—an escaped slave whose intelligence in his abolitionist lectures or in his writings (Craft 1860) ought to have been evident to the slowest anthropologist—his first concern was to provide evidence that he was “black enough” to count.⁵⁵ Hunt of course waved this off—since Craft was not a pure black, the evidence provided by his intelligence is irrelevant.⁵⁶ A later speaker who put forward a similar doctrine as Hunt’s, Henry Guppy—including the

⁵⁴ Montagu (1942, p. 22) discusses the rudeness of the “egregious and insolent Dr. Hunt” at this meeting without bothering to describe how his dismissal of Craft’s evidence works. Lorimer (1978, pp. 47–48) discusses Craft and the confrontation with Hunt. Desmond (1994, p. 353) and Young (1995, p. 136) comment on the “mixed blood” exclusion principle

⁵⁵ Craft (1863, p. 388):

Mr. Craft said that though he was not of pure African descent he was black enough to attempt to say a few words in reference to the paper which had just been read. Many scientific gentlemen present would probably dispute that; but at any rate, supposing Adam to have been the founder of a race of men, white men had no stronger claim to him as their father than black men, as it was admitted that owing to the climate in which he commenced his existence, he could have been neither black nor white, but copper coloured ... With regard to his not being a true African—his grandmother and grandfather were both of pure Negro blood. His grandfather was a chief of the West Coast; but, through the treachery of some white men, who doubtless thought themselves greatly his superiors, he was kidnapped and taken to America, where he (Mr. Craft) was born.

⁵⁶ Hunt (1863, pp. 390–91):

Dr. Hunt in reply said he was sorry that some speakers had attempted to draw away the attention of the audience from the great facts under discussion ... He would leave his scientific friends to judge of the value of Mr. Craft’s remarks. He was sorry, however, that the speaker had not confined himself to uttering exploded theories, but had accused scientific men of wasting their time when discussing this subject. He for one thought it was a great pity that scientific men in this country had so long delayed to bring these facts prominently before the public, and thus explode some of the popular delusions on the subject. It was not at all necessary for Mr. Craft to tell anyone at all acquainted with the subject that he was not a pure Negro, although there were many present who were deluded with the idea that he was. As to the statement that Britons did not make good slaves, he was quite ready to admit the fact; and he knew of no European race that would make good slaves. In this respect Negroes were certainly far superior ... All he asked was that scientific evidence of this character should be met by scientific argument, and not by poetical clap-trap, or by gratuitous and worthless assumptions.

critical exclusion of “the mixed race” (Guppy 1864, p. ccix)—seems to have realized that if Craft himself is ruled out as evidence of black intelligence, then his *argument* must be taken as seriously as any other “white” man’s.⁵⁷ No one telling the “mixed race” story seems to have responded to Craft’s point that American slavery was not restricted to the racially pure.⁵⁸

Hunt’s discussion of language acquisition is quackery of a more subtle variety that shows he was well aware of the defense of black intelligence on the basis of observed language acquisition. Not only could Africans acquire many inflectionally rich local languages but they could acquire the grammatically impoverished English.⁵⁹ Unlike Hunt’s *Anthropological Review*, the Anthropological Society was open to speakers of vastly different points of view.⁶⁰ Consider the account of the Bunu Tribe presented by Valentine Robins, in which he discusses a boy emancipated from slavery: “He is very intelligent, speaks the Hausa, Nufi, Bunu, and Igbirra tongues fluently, and these are not acquired by tuition, but through their unsettled state of life, being frequently sold from one tribe to another . . .” (Robins 1867, p. cxi). The first comment from the floor (in Robins 1867, p. cxii) asked the perfectly sensible question whether these four languages were closely related dialectics. The response to this was the withering, “Mr. Bendyshe observed, that as it had been stated by Mr. Robins that the boy could speak English, and sing English songs, it was evident that he was capable of learning different languages” (Robins 1867, p. cxiii).

With no one wishing to make the case that English and Igbirra are dialects of a common language, it was time for quackery to save the hypothesis of black inferiority. Here is the story, “Dr. Beigel said he should like to hear more particulars indicative of the intelligence of the boy. If it were proved that the boy was as intelligent as boys of his age generally are, then it would become a question who his father and his grandfather were, and whether there was any white blood in him” (Robins 1867, p. cxiii).

⁵⁷ Guppy (1864, p. ccxi): “In the discussion that ensued on the reading of Dr. Hunt’s paper, Mr. Craft observed that the agricultural labourers in England were bent (in figure) as well as the negro.”

⁵⁸ Craft (1860, p. 2): “It may be remembered that slavery in America is not at all confined to persons of any particular complexion; there are a very large number of slaves as white as any one; . . .”

⁵⁹ The quackery here is this: isolated languages would tend to be much more heavily inflected than English and it is easier for native speakers to move from a highly inflected language to a language with a lower inflectional dimension. Admitting that African languages are grammatically as complicated as Greek or Latin would expose the argument for exactly what it was worth. The link between grammatical complication and cross-language trade was developed by Adam Smith. Levy (1997) has the details of Smith’s argument. Baker (1974, p. 501) wonders at Smith’s ability to predict features of language two hundred years before they were observed by other professional linguists.

⁶⁰ *The Journal of the Anthropological Society* seems to give a perfectly fair account of the papers and the floor discussion of the Society’s meetings. Craft’s comments on Hunt’s paper are reported in the *The Anthropological Review*, owned and edited by Hunt, only, I believe, because it was floor discussion at the British Association. Galton’s comments on Hunt precede Craft’s (Peart and Levy 2000). Craft’s own paper was refused republication in *The Anthropological Review* (Young 1995, p. 199). Complications arose because the two magazines were part of a financial package to which one subscribed (*The Popular Magazine of Anthropology* is another Hunt venture. It lasted only for a year.) Rainger (1978) tries to sort out the relationship between Hunt and the Society. Hunt was charged with, but acquitted of, financial impropriety that took the form of cross-subsidization of his magazines.

After a speaker claimed to see webs between the boy's fingers" (Robins 1867, p. cxiii)—a silliness that puts the "elongated raven" story to shame—the racial purity story came back:

Mr. Mackenzie remarked upon the receding lower jaw of the boy. Though the brow and the face were well developed, he did not think he looked like a pure negro.

Mr. Mill said he had seen boys in Africa like the one then present. He considered he belonged to the Houssa tribe, which was a pure negro tribe, as far as that tribe were concerned. He had seen one of them who was six feet two inches high. They inhabit a country, the chief town of which is the head centre of Mohammedanism, and where the archives of the town were written in Arabic (Robins 1867, p. cxiii).

Hunt closed his comments with this story, "He should like to know whether there was any evidence of there being Arab blood in the boy's veins" (Robins 1867, p. cxix). Robins responded to the comments with claims that (i) the four languages were in fact different, (ii) the boy himself did not know who his father was, and (iii) "the boy was not more intelligent than other boys of his tribe" (Robins 1867, p. cxiv).

When presented with a young slave's ability to acquire languages that would do credit to a young John Stuart Mill, the story is told that the boy obviously is not a real black: he is partly white, perhaps partly Arab.

VII. THE KINGSLEY-HUNT CONNECTION

The Huntington Library holdings of the letters from Kingsley to Hunt allows us to more easily see how science and literature blend for quacks.⁶¹ The oddity that central members of the distinct racist communities knew each other professionally has been noted and important questions asked.⁶² These letters let

⁶¹ The letters date from September 1855 until Hunt's death in 1869. It also includes the letter of condolence which Kingsley sent to Hunt's widow. The extracts quoted below will perhaps suggest why these would repay study. The Hunt side of the correspondence is not at the Huntington. The report of Kingsley's correspondence with Hunt in Jutzi (1971) mentions only speech issues. Consequently, Harris (1981, p. 133) is silent on racial issues. Nevertheless, without Harris' meticulous scholarship I would not have visited the Huntington to read the letters. The Huntington's card catalog calls attention to the racial matters most helpfully.

⁶² Banton (1077, p. 77):

It would be interesting to learn how Kingsley's views about race were influenced by his relations with England's brash exponent of the theory of permanent racial types. For worries about his stammering took him to the leading authority on its treatment, none other than Dr. James Hunt, a young man of great energy who was soon to be the founder of the Anthropological Society of London. Kingsley seems to have consulted him in the mid-fifties. We are told that in January 1857 he spent ten days in London visiting "Hunt the stammering man" and that he passed a fortnight at Hunt's house in Swanage. Hunt became notorious for his views on Negro inferiority.

Lorimer (1978, pp. 154–56) discusses Kingsley's attitudes in terms of contemporary anthropology. Arthur Keith (1917, p. 18): "The Rev. Charles Kingsley joins [the Ethnology Society] at the same time [1856] as Hunt."

us see more clearly the link between quackery in speech therapy and racial matters. The first question we can answer is why did Kingsley contact Hunt? When on September 22, 1855, Kingsley first wrote to Hunt, he described his difficulty as stammering in private, "I am a clergyman; I never stammer in the reading desk or in the pulpit. I am, I suppose, superior in "elocutional" prowess to most of my brethren in the country." Then he explained why he was writing Hunt: "The true cause (& this fact sends me to *you*, from what I have seen of your papers) is anatomical. My lower jaw is much too narrow for the tongue os hyoides; and in speaking, I am always "*conscious*" of the os hyoides ... (HM 32205).⁶³

While Kingsley is completely candid about the mental aspect of his affliction, he stammers when he worries about stammering, and he describes his youth as filled with ridicule of his disability, he seeks a physical explanation. Why he thinks the relationship between tongue and jaw changes as he moves from private to public is not explained. Nonetheless, this letter sends us to Hunt's first published work in which he explains why the relation of teeth and jaw changes as we move from savagery to civilization:

It may appear strange to allude to civilization as increasing the number of stammerers, but the fact can hardly be doubted.

Savages do not stammer; in them the human animal remains unchanged. In the civilized world, on the contrary, refinement has materially altered the physical man. Robustness yields to delicacy, and the very structure of organs undergoes metamorphosis. The ample jaw of the wild Indian, for instance, has room for the full dentition of the species; whilst the contracted jaw, the result of civilization in the features of more elevated beings is insufficient for the reception of the numerical providence of the teeth. Hence the almost universally needed assistance of experienced dentists, to limit the number and train what are left to their necessary functions. Other organs have undergone similar changes, and the issue has been to render attention to the education and management of the voice at least as expedient and important as it is the preservation of the eyes or the cultivation and management of the teeth (1854, p. 25).

This made sufficient sense to Kingsley for him to risk therapy with Hunt.

The second question we can answer is whether Kingsley shared Hunt's racial quackery so evident in *The Negro's Place in Nature*. The critical document here is Kingsley's letter of September 20, 1863:

I have just been reading in the Reader a resumé of your paper on the negro ... If you said that the negro was as much a diff't species from us, as a donkey is from a zebra, you said what I as a [Darwinite] firmly believe. I believe that donkeys & zebras split off from each other ages since & that Whites & negroes did. I believe that they had common parents: but are 2 varieties & have become now fixed & that the White man is by far the higher. I believe that we both

⁶³ *Kingsley Collection*, HM 32205. I gratefully acknowledge help from (first) Christine Holden and (second) Nicola Tynan and Andrew Farrant in reading the manuscript. Words which we read with shaky confidence are enclosed in brackets; the addition of a "?" suggests there is more shake than confidence; empty brackets indicate no confidence whatsoever. The spelling is not "corrected" and the emphasis is in the original although we change underscore to italics.

spring from a common dark ancestor, with probably strait hair, & that the negro [sprouted] [wool] & also [st?] a stout [manly?] physique, without improving his brain.

As for bringing in Philanthropic & political practices it is a sham. Science really must not be meddled with & Mr. Kraft [has an] hiccup to set up []—confusing himself as instance, because he is *not* a pure black.

People cannot see that even if a negro here & there can be taught to *imitate* White civilization, that proves nothing—He has not *originated* the civilization or added elements? of his own to it. I don't doubt that something may be made of the negroes under European influence. & I [hold] that you are bound to the negro by the same Moral Laws as to the White—But to tell me that he is my equal, is to outrage fact—& *the negro himself knows it [well enough]* (HM 32247).

The signature of quackery—a perfect cure, a perfect fit of the stereotype and the group—is evident in Kingsley's dismissing Craft.⁶⁴ The jab at “Philanthropic . . . practices” is pure Carlyle. Quacks in correspondence echo their great master.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Carlyle's literary gifts have never been questioned. Although he claimed to know a good deal of the economic theory of his contemporaries, scholars tend not to take this seriously.⁶⁵ Nonetheless, his inference from an inability to exchange to the conclusion of subhuman status is warranted by either the Smith-Whately approach to economic foundations or the Wakefield approach. When this command over the theory is combined with an ability to tell a compelling story that distracts one's attention from the facts, we have a quack of the highest order.

We observe how much the Hunt-Kingsley “speech quackery” resembles their racial quackery. But the Hunt-Kingsley racial quackery is not such a work of art as Carlyle's. The story they tell to distract us is fairly transparent. Perhaps this why Hunt and Kingsley are remembered mainly by specialists while Carlyle bent the English language itself with his devastating and doubtless immortal characterization of economics as the “dismal science.” The fact that this occasion was for bringing forward facts which would make the black and white equals has somehow slipped out of memory.

APPENDIX: THREE PROBLEMS

1. Why the name change between article and pamphlet? Speculation about why Carlyle's article was called the “Negro question” and the pamphlet wasn't seem not to notice that, for someone as with a good an ear for language as

⁶⁴ On August 4, 1864, he discusses *The Anthropological Review* mentioning his belief that the Negroes' “chances of subsistence depended on their becoming more like the white man.” On January 28, 1865, he acknowledges receipt of Hunt's translation of Carl Vogt's lectures

⁶⁵ Who first called attention to the principle of consumer sovereignty? The reader—who must suspect what the answer will be—cannot be more surprised than I was at Carlyle (1987, p. 31).

Charles Dickens, the pamphlet would convey a lower-class Americanism. Here is Dickens discussing improving editions of the classics:

Imagine a Total abstinence edition of Robinson Crusoe, with the rum left out. Imagine a Peace edition, with the gunpowder left out, and the rum left in. Imagine a Vegetarian edition, with the goat's flesh left out. Imagine a Kentucky edition, to introduce a flogging of that 'tarnal old nigger Friday, twice a week. Imagine an Aborigines Protection Society edition, to deny the cannibalism and make Robinson embrace the amiable savages whenever they landed (Dickens 1853, p. 97–98).

Perhaps the editors of *Fraser's*—a journal of sufficient respectability that a decade later Mill would publish *Utilitarianism* in its pages—shied away from this breach of decorum in the title?

2. When did the “dismal science” become associated with Malthus? The earliest instance I find in *Making of America* is the following passage from Amasa Walker in 1866:

The question of population has been invested, by the treatment of British writers, with a great mystery and terror. The glut, famine, and death theories of Malthus have done much to impress upon political economy the shape it has today in the world's estimation. Rightly enough, if they are correct, is it called a dismal science. Malthus exhausted the direct horrors of the subject; but the effect was greatly heightened by the benevolent efforts of many subsequent writers to provide some way of escape from this fatal conclusion,—efforts which, as they resulted in palpable failure, made the outlook of humanity more dreary and hopeless.

The fact is, all this British philosophy of population is perverted and diseased from its root (Walker 1866, p. 452).

Waste not, want not. If the Civil War ended the popularity of the cause for which Carlyle opposed “the dismal science,” that was hardly reason to abandon such a useful slogan. It is worthy of note that Walker's son's views on race are notorious.

3. If any of which I write above is true, why were economists not told about it by our greatest teachers? The answer is that we *were* told: we just did not listen rightly. Consider Joseph Schumpeter, who from his Harvard position taught generations, his students and their students to follow, how to understand economics past. Listen how Schumpeter explains Carlyle's importance to the economist:

For economists [Carlyle] is one of the most characteristic figures in the cultural panorama of that epoch—standing in heroic pose, hurling scorn at the materialistic littleness of his age, cracking a whip with which to flay, among other things, our Dismal Science. This is how he saw himself and how his time saw and loved to see him . . . (Schumpeter 1954, pp. 409–10).

Schumpeter knows, but contemptuous of the reader, among others, will not mention that the “other things” Carlyle proposed to flay were black people. The joke is at the expense of a reader who cannot match Schumpeter text for

text.⁶⁶ If Schumpeter is right—that classical political economy came to share the strokes of lash with victims of the hierarchy for which it provided the opposition—and it was partly for this reason that classical political economy passed away—it was a good way to die.⁶⁷

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⁶⁶ Hayek (1967, p. 340–41): "This is not to say it is an easy book, or suitable for the kindergarten atmosphere in which so much college education proceeds. Nor is it in every respect a 'safe' book: the orthodox of any description must be prepared for constant shocks, and the literal-minded will miss much that is said only between the lines."

⁶⁷ The critical text in which the "Nigger-Philanthropists" are read out of the white race is Carlyle's *Shooting Niagara* (Carlyle 1867). It is more important than one might wish (Peart and Levy 2000).

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