"Is the present moment the portent of a new epoch of history, a new age of humanity, a new sort of humanism, a new type of man?" The question is John Courtney Murray's concerning the future of humanistic education; and from his question, I have taken the New Humanism of my title. Any person with a background in the humanities—indeed, most persons trained in what we have called the liberal arts—will recognize that I have deliberately chosen to speak of the classics in relation to a concept whose ultimate definition is likely to rest with the individual. The pluralistic nature of our educational system may justify this intentional vagueness, but, even more, the scope of any concept developed on the root human- demands it. I have therefore resisted the temptation to use the term humanities for the compelling reason that within the framework of higher education we are in a continuing crisis of definition of the humanities and their place in that framework. The educational humanities will not be far from my thinking, as you will see, but the concern will be more with their implication than with their curricular position.

An additional prefatory note will reveal where some early thoughts were leading. I first submitted as a title "The Classics as the New Humanism," and then modi-
fied my intent by shifting from as to and under a clutch of pressures among which can be discerned practicality, candidness, reasonable doubt, and some timidity.

We are witnessing the emergence of a New Humanism as perhaps the most vital educational force in our present experience. It is educational because it emanates in good part from those whose age places them within or just beyond our years of formal education, or from those who play some role in formal education. It is educational because it seeks to define, analyze, and make persuasive and finally effective a set of ideas and accompanying data designed to improve our performance as members of society. It is educational because in its very emergence it is teaching us something about ourselves, our institutions, and our future.

The New Humanism is no single force attributable solely to a simplistic credo, a uniform group of doctrines, an accepted body of texts, or one articulate and persuasive spokesman, although it benefits from, or is hampered by, all of these at times. It is, rather, an attitude, a concern, a questioning, a criticism, a searching, a determination. Although many of its origins are in education, it has roots in, and surely now pervades, politics, religion, business, and society—in fact, defying such compartmentalization, all parts of our lives. If any one thing unites it, it would be a central issue throughout that puts the focus on man, social and individual, as he relates to his environment, physical and social (taking this last word as inclusive of all the man-made systems that affect the individual in his living). New? Certainly not. Humanism? By any broad definition. New Humanism? If it succeeds, as it has dramatically in the past decade, in requiring two generations to pause, to take stock of themselves and their attitudes, to revise their
relationships one to the other, and to affirm the humanity of their goals. Yes, New Humanism.

In 1972 I need do little to fill in the outline suggested above, for we are all affected by this force and are inescapably a part of it. Because of this involvement, however, the historical portion of Father Murray's question must be approached with caution; and the observer must recognize that he looks from within, even as a part of, a series of events. He must therefore content himself with the role of reporter, denied the advantage of perspective and the possibility of objectivity essential to the historian. John P. Roche, warning against the "instant historians" of the Kennedy-Johnson years, reminds us impressively of the limitation imposed by our very contemporariness:

To be specific, I doubt that any historically valid treatment of the Kennedy-Johnson era can emerge for at least another decade, if then. I confess that when I emerged from the White House I signed up to do an "insider volume," but sober, professional second thoughts have led me to put that project on ice until at least 1980. The problem is that I simultaneously know too much, but not enough. I know what I thought was happening, what others on the staff thought was happening, what the press thought was happening. But I cannot fully document what happened. And I have seen enough highly classified documents to know that what most of the observers thought was happening was at best half-right.²

And yet, like the political strategists, those of us in education who are observers and participants in recent developments have not the choice to wait "at least another decade" to assess what is happening and then make the appropriately wise decisions. We are a part of
a process that has generally prospered by a self-imposed
and self-regulated slowness to change and that has prided
itself on a conservative attitude because of confidence in
what it was preserving. Suddenly (as time has been
understood in our world), our process of change must be
accelerated and probably altered. And how ill-equipped
we are for either acceleration or alteration is demon­
strated by the frustrations besetting the efforts of ad­
ministrative and curricular bodies in all our institutions.

Because we must recognize the force of the New Hu­
manism and use its criticisms and its suggestions in pro­
viding a current education that does not ignore the past
and does prepare for the future, in some way we must
again be convinced of the validity of now and of what we
do now, despite our inability to assess its consequences.
Perhaps Hannah Arendt has described our time in a
comment that seems also to respond to Father Murray,
when she notes the circular movement from thought to
action and back to thought that has dominated the earlier
generations of this century:

Whereby it would be of some relevance to notice that the
appeal to thought arose in the odd in-between period which
sometimes inserts itself into historical time when not only
the later historians but the actors and witnesses, the living
themselves, become aware of an interval in time which is
altogether determined by things that are no longer and by
things that are not yet. In history, these intervals have shown
more than once that they contain the moment of truth.8

Many who are critical of education today would be
happy with the formulation “things that are no longer”
and would be glad to grasp “things that are not yet” as
an immediate goal, say, for tomorrow. But to some ex­
tent our generation of educators may best be able to play
the activist role being forced upon it by accepting Miss
Arendt’s “odd in-between period” as descriptive of our time. The fact that our predecessors often must have felt justified in seeking similar solace or stimulus in the face of their seemingly overwhelming obstacles should not deny us our brief moment of assumed uniqueness.

The call to us for action has been loud, often raucous, usually uncompromising, and too frequently violent. It has been dismissed as immature, illogical, irrational, impossible, and unwise, and yet for whatever reasons, and some of them may be less than admirable, we and our institutions are responding to the call for change in structure, and our academic bodies are beginning to accelerate the metamorphosis that has been their natural continuing state, no matter how the critics may assume that for their generation change has stopped or is too agonizingly slow. We are far enough into this process to see at work some of the stabilizing tensions, a polarization between those for whom no change can be fast enough and those for whom any change is at the least questionable, and the emergence, at least for a while, of a kind of progressive conservatism that may, if given the opportunity, bring about the necessary changes. Acceptance of criticism has been remarkable—indeed, I consider it the most remarkable and least appreciated part of the whole unsettling process. The need for change and the recognition that much in our system is subject to legitimate criticism have now become canonical first statements for spokesmen of nearly all parts of the spectrum. Only after these axiomatic professions do the differences in substance, method, or degree reveal a continuing state of perplexity.

Let me narrow our consideration to the process of liberal education to which our colleges of arts and sciences in American higher education have addressed themselves. Assessing the qualities of leadership in an
academic speech of 1913, Viscount Haldane, then Lord Chancellor, provides a remarkable condensation of the goals of liberal education as we have understood them. Noting that “youth, with its elasticity and boundless energy, is the time to lay the foundations of wide knowledge and catholic interests,” he says:

Every man and woman is, after all, a citizen in a State. Therefore let us see to it that there is not lacking that interest in the larger life of the social whole which is the justification of a real title to have a voice and a vote. Literature, philosophy, religion, are all widening interests. So is science, so are music and the fine arts. Let every one concern himself with these or such of them as he thinks can really appeal to him. So only will his outlook be wide enough to enable him to fill his station and discharge his duties with distinction. He ought to be master of much knowledge besides that of his profession. He must try to think greatly and widely.4

Some of us who have tried to write catalog statements about the purpose of a liberal education and the goal of the bachelor of arts degree could have profited from Lord Haldane’s presence. This is what we have professed as our goal and have hoped we were accomplishing in liberal arts training. The motto of my own university, which scarcely limits itself to the liberal arts in its offerings, says it simply: Disciplina in civitatem.

But apparently we have not succeeded in providing our educative goals with a structure or an attitude that insured their accomplishment by our students. So we are being told, and large numbers of us are accepting the criticism as valid. Arland F. Christ-Janer, president of the College Board, encapsulates the indictment in an examination of future priorities for the board:

The harsh reality is that people are fed up with abstractions which cannot be seen as relevant to intellectual, spiritual,
and visceral needs. Right for the role of education is the enhancement of the future and mankind’s place in it. The future is filled with unsureness. Too often it cannot be adequately perceived.

At the present, the educational system is thought of as inadequate to the necessary preparation for a future which contains the marvelous and sometimes overwhelming constant of rapid change. In reaction to criticisms we have become preoccupied with the present moment, and we are overlooking the unavoidable insistence of the future. As a result, the educational institutions are living with too short and narrow a perspective as they develop their programs of study and education. To be sure, there are those who insist that it is only the present that matters. These voices must be resisted, for they tend to prevent the educational institutions from their larger mission, which is to chart the way into the future and in some sense to live in that future.5

If that future is to be shaped by our current awareness of our dilemma, as it is thus bluntly set down, what kinds of modification can we envision? I use modification pointedly, and I am well aware that it may seem to some to be an inadequate response, for it may imply little adjustment and guarantees only some degree of change. It is not a revolutionary word, and there are those who feel sincerely, and express forcefully, the need for such sweeping educational change that only revolutionary aptly describes it. To justify such an apparently bland word, I would suggest two reasons. The first is practical: the mass is too large to tolerate quick, drastic changes without repercussions in the development of several student generations. The second is perhaps emotional, but I prefer to think of it as intellectual as well: the system has worked and has such a weight of soundness in it that I believe those student generations need not be disrupted. My generation and those before mine have benefited almost beyond conception from the American commit-
ment to education. And this is more than middle-aged complacency; it is frank admiration for a system that has through educational opportunity achieved for a nation of immigrants much more than the most visionary shaper of its beginnings could have imagined. Lest I sound inanely starry-eyed, I am well aware that American education has had to endure enormous strain to accomplish its charge, which Henry Steele Commager phrases thus:

The story is familiar, how, especially in the nineteenth century, we required our schools to train citizens competent to govern themselves (a requirement not urgent in the Old World), to absorb and Americanize millions of newcomers from the Old World and elsewhere, to encourage and strengthen national unity, and to teach the habits and practices of democracy and equality and religious tolerance.  

If the charge now requires a different emphasis, and Commager develops the theory that our schools may be a victim in the twentieth century of their success in the nineteenth, I am not prepared to accept that the whole fabric must be scrapped and a new one substituted. Education, after all, combines a fiduciary with a hermeneutic role, and these are particularly qualities of the liberal arts. In fact, they are the primary qualities of the educational humanities. Part of the trust implied is historical and part is strikingly contemporary. A provocative reminder of this mixed trust is set down by R. J. Kaufmann:

Humanists seem to me most authentic when they resist being exhausted by mere historicity. There is something balky about us; a brand of holy stupidity obliges us to ask questions about what has been left out of persuasive social syntheses. We are frequently off to one side giving artificial
respiration to qualities of experience which, being under-valued in the contemporary ethos, slip into a limbo where all those things not easily "conceived" undergo the pragmatic equivalent of historical death. . . . Bluntly, humanists are people delegated to articulate and service an ecology of survival values. 7

I like the abrasiveness of these qualifying remarks on humanists, and they seem to me to strike just the right note of stimulation to those professing the humanities. Much of the strength of our position will lie in the historical experience of which we are both guardians and purveyors, but our worth is to be found in our success in offering the values engendered by that experience to the generations of the future. Since the classics have long been central to humanistic learning and teaching, and since Kaufmann's remarks could be read by some as a justification for the sidelining of the humanities, the classicist in particular should recognize in these remarks the limitations they suggest and the very positive results implicit in their conclusion.

At least four facets of this century's educational trend provide useful perspectives to the present position of the classics. In large part they are factors of the years following World War II, but the longer view is more pertinent. First, education has extended upward and outward to embrace incredible numbers of students and to take a spiraling percentage of them to its upper levels. Second, the liberal arts, which were traditionally dominant in the curricula of secondary and higher education, survived the impact of the land-grant institutions but have had to share the field increasingly with technical, vocational, and professional programs. Third, the scientific explosion has provided a major impulse toward the scientizing of all disciplines, and the humanities have
worked hard to develop scientific structure and method. Finally, and perhaps as a direct result of all the above, specialization has for some years shaped the curriculum, the preparation of the teacher, and the preoccupation of teacher and student alike at the higher levels of the system. These facets of substance, size, method, and approach have become our facts of life; they represent defensible—in part, admirable—developments. The greater proportion of students educated reflects much credit on our democratic system; we have much need for the product of the more practical educational programs; systematization of knowledge, implied in “scientizing,” is a practical aid to the analysis and presentation of that knowledge; the specialist should be more equipped to command and present his material than the person less specialized. But a part of the criticism I have attributed to the New Humanism asserts that much of the resulting education now fails to meet the needs of present and future generations. Part of the complaint is that the factors of size, substance, method, and approach as shaped by these trends have effected a dehumanizing of the process, the goals, and the results. And it follows that, if education is neither humane nor human, then the system that offers it must be wrong and much be changed.

If change is thus posited as a necessity, and we seem to be accepting that it is in some degree, what of the classics? How are they to assist in that change to assure the best results for the student, the most promising route to the broader goals of humanistic education?

We have already begun to take the first mandatory step as agents for this change and in response to the curricular imperatives that have in part anticipated it. In the years since the classics relinquished their absolute hold on higher education, we have begun to find ways to offer the experience of the classics to many students for
whom the approach is made only through their own lan-

guage. Although the classicist had long recognized that

new translations of the classics were needed for new gen-
erations of readers, and although distinguished new ver-
sions of Homer and Vergil made these classics available
to the general reader as masterworks, defenders of the

traditional curriculum came late to the acceptance of
the classics in translation as a legitimate part of the
formal educational experience. That acceptance was
mainly a pragmatic one. With a few exceptions it came
in the aftermath to the academic revolution that saw the
elimination of requirements in the ancient languages
as the foundation for an undergraduate liberal educa-
tion, and the development of the broad areas of human-
ities, social sciences, and physical, or natural, sciences
as the new structural basis for that education. The history
of that modification is well documented, as is the com-
pensatory modification in our offerings. I would only
note that the modification in classical offerings con-
tinued apace during that remarkable period of numerical
expansion in higher education that followed World War
II, and at a time when students were electing the lan-
guages in gratifying numbers if in less gratifying per-
centages. As classicists, we applied the benefits of our
unexpected status as a defense-oriented discipline to the
professional levels of our work, and perhaps thereby set
back the effectiveness of our general education, to which
we clearly felt less commitment, even at times when de-
mands on general classics courses seemed often beyond
our ability to meet.

Statistics are available to show that at most levels of
instruction in the classical languages, numbers are static
or decreasing (such pleasant exceptions as rising elec-
tions in beginning Greek cannot counter this). At the
same time, there is healthy interest in our courses that do
not require the languages, courses in the literatures in translation, in civilization, in mythology, and the like. The local status of language requirements and of general distribution requirements that include a humanities segment is a significant factor in the assessment of these fluctuations, but it should not conceal the continuing recognition by succeeding generations of students that the classics provide a stimulating and productive educational experience.

An obvious concurrent shift is now suggesting itself in response to the concern about specialization. In his personal and professional commitment, the classicist is having to realize that he has been almost too successful in that trend toward specialization and systematization of his discipline, which I have called "scientizing." So successful, in fact, that he has come dangerously close to professing his subject in ways that justified the charge of dehumanization. All too often we have become specialists in a narrowing fashion, have found our best teaching experiences in the technically oriented course of restricted and usually advanced material, and have gained our rewards from the scholarly development of such specialization. The resultant imbalance, both in the individual scholar and in the presentation of the classics to students, has been recognized for some time; in distorted form it became an issue in the postwar controversy dubbed "publish or perish." In outcome, however, our constituents began to feel that we thought it more important to stress the language and its technicalities or its variations than to consider what was being said in that language and what it might mean to them. An overgeneralization, perhaps, but the fact remains that we classicists shared in this criticism to an unfortunate degree with our fellow disciplines in the liberal arts. Always excepting the personal intellectual rapport between
teacher and student, we seemed to be inviting commitment to a science and not a culture, to structural analysis rather than communication, to systematics rather than an appreciation of our intellectual ancestry, and to institutions devoid of the people who created them or whom they served.

Gerald Else, one of our most able and balanced of classical spokesmen among educators and politicians, recently noted that even into our century the humanities were the classics as we think of them. The change in outlook just mentioned can be highlighted with his interpretation of the aims of the old humanities, the classics, beyond the verbal study:

Yet language was not the be-all and end-all of the old humanities, at least in their best periods. I will assert that they had three modes or points of impact, each with its own educational purpose: first, they worked in and through language, aiming to develop educated taste; second, they worked with and on the mind, aiming to develop educated judgment and persuasiveness; and third, they operated in and upon the whole man, aiming to make him a moral person and a responsible citizen or political leader—in other words, a free man.8

Else is saying here that the classicist's role as humanistic educator is essentially the role described by Lord Haldane. Horace summed it up most neatly in his comment on the role of poets in *Ars Poetica* 333: *aut prodesse volunt aut declectare poetae*.

In his essay *De officiis* Cicero, one of the great humanists, dwelt on a philosophical distinction not new to him but characteristic of ancient and modern value systems alike: *quid utile* and *quid dulce*, what is useful and what is pleasant. So also the Roman concerned himself much with what he ought to do, *quid decet*, and what was
morally (that is, by divine sanction) right or wrong, fas or nefas. Ethical systems from Socrates in Plato to Alfred North Whitehead and Paul Tillich have sought such understanding of man’s social responsibility to himself and to his fellow, and have questioned social, political, or educational structures that seem to have eschewed that responsibility in their pattern of growth or success.

The best of the questions we are being asked by our students now are certainly moral questions. They stem from a vital concern for personal identity, for consciousness of self, and for self-in-society. This concern is not new. What is new, and hence the concept of New Humanism, is that young people now are transferring that self-searching to an intensive look at the system, whatever manifestation of it they may see, and asking how it aids or hinders the human values they seek in themselves and for others. In their own way they have espoused a form of Roman humanitas, looking for that combination of moral and intellectual excellence and that breadth of personal viewpoint fundamental to the Roman ideal. They are saying what we as classical humanists have been saying but perhaps not practicing convincingly: that technical skills are essentially mnemonic, and that thought and character are developed only through broad experience; that human relations may well be fostered by technical skills, but they can survive only if moral and intellectual excellence and commitment show the way. Young people question that such a goal can be achieved in education through the course distribution or general requirements and ask for a near-total permissiveness in the curricular package as their prescription for its achievement. In the end they resent the normative tenor of the older generation and criticize the essentially descriptive limitations we have placed on the process of education. Despite the rhetoric of the individual that has
recently been dominant, there is clearly a moral thrust in the New Humanism that should respond to a liberal education, if that education can reassert the values that shaped it to the present generation. The militant critics have forced these considerations; but we have noted widespread support and acceptance of their criticisms and concern for a reassessment of priorities, of moral values, of courses of public action and private activity, and, ultimately, for a redefinition of individual and corporate responsibilities and goals. The whole educational system stands accused, but if the humanistic attitudes of present students shape the accusation, then those disciplines most surely endowed with humanistic potential and tradition must look to themselves and face what O. Meredith Wilson has written of as "The Dilemma of Humanistic Education": "Humanistic education has been engrossed with the problem of how best to sharpen the intellect. By what means do we help our child to fulfill his "human potential"?"  

Let me juxtapose two ideas mentioned earlier, the fiduciary and hermeneutic qualities of education—and, in particular, of humanistic education—when brought to bear on what Professor Kaufmann called the humanist's delegated task, articulation of an ecology of survival values. Appreciation of this confluence should remind the classicist of the quality of his subject, its incredible breadth, its proven value-oriented potential, and its claim on the meaning of the adjective that describes it, *classicus*. I need not rehearse the canon of what we have to offer in the way of idea, literary form, cultural and social institution, humanity and inhumanity, logic and faith. The list is long, exciting, varying, and universally useful. Yes, Cicero's *utile* happily combines with his *dulce*, as does Horace's *prodesse* with his *delectare*, if we remember that we are dealing with the values of our
heritage. Those values cannot be allowed the luxury of somnolence or burial even in an era when we are bom-
barded daily with such an overwhelming number of new facts and interpretations that yesterday and tomorrow
have to fight for attention. If we as classical humanists are trustees and interpreters of the past, then we must
not let the present’s seeming unwillingness or inability to hear obscure the universal values that we are trans-
mittling. These works “of the first class” have not only created our ideas and our vocabulary for their use, but
they have taught us how to develop, warp, or reject them. Their values are those by which we live, or, if you will,
those against which we rebel. The manner by which our instruction imparts this concept will vary. Because of
the vitality of the cultures of antiquity and the unceasing pertinence of what they have given us, there is a natural
danger in the process of interpretation, as noted by David Porter:

I have much sympathy for the demand of our students that
their education be relevant to their lives, but the problem is
far more complex than they sometimes realize. Nothing is
easier, to take an obvious example, than to make the Trojan Women relevant to American involvement in Vietnam, and
few classes do not respond to such a treatment. The difficulty
is that by making this connection, provocative in itself, we
may suggest to our students that this alone is significant
about the play, whereas the fact is that the Trojan Women
is still with us precisely because its significance transcends
any one time or place, be it 415 B.C. or 1970 A.D. Thus, the
real danger is that by stressing the particular relevance of the
Classics to our time we may unintentionally obscure the even
more important fact of their general relevance to all times
and places.10

The relevant is so often not recognized at the time,
perhaps in part because its importance is essentially
individual and only by educated transferal is it applicable to broader social concerns. The humanist must constantly rethink his teaching with this in mind, return constantly to the great issues and suppress all but the necessary deviations therefrom that may form the current excitement of his research and therefore should breathe life into his teaching. The scientized humanities can become the trivialized humanities. But we must also remember that relevance, real value, cannot in the flowering of man’s mind be confined to those areas that allow immediate and practical application. Relevance, if it is to strengthen the culture that can improve itself, must allow for the detailed and seemingly narrow examination of man’s accomplishments and mistakes, putting the puzzle of man’s human strengths and weaknesses together. Then can the humanist contribute to the self-understanding students seek, and then can he satisfy both the urge to know and to understand, in which ethical choice is always at question, and the responsibility to serve, whether in the transmission of knowledge and the interpretation of principles or in the extension of a helping hand to a staggering individual or society.

Loren Eiseley, a marvelously sensitive interpreter of the human experience and an able anthropologist, has some sensible words about the misconception of academic relevance. He is speaking of one of his professors, whose own awakening to the field of anthropology he has just described:

I absorbed much from him, though I hasten to make the reluctant confession that he was considerably beyond thirty. Most of what I learned was gathered over cups of coffee in a dingy campus restaurant. What we talked about were things some centuries older than either of us. Our common interest lay in snakes, in scapulimancy, and other forgotten rites of benighted forest hunters.
I have always regarded this man as an extraordinary individual, in fact, a hidden teacher. But alas, it is all now so old-fashioned. We never protested the impracticality of his quaint subjects. He was an excellent canoeman, but he took me to places where I fully expected to drown before securing my degree. To this day, fragments of his unused wisdom remain stuffed in some back attic of my mind. Much of it I have never found an opportunity to employ, yet it has somehow colored my whole adult existence.\footnote{11}

Loren Eiseley is one whose career and talents might well guide us in relating the classics to the world of education in which we now live and the direction of which we hope to influence. Eiseley fits, as well as any person I have known, the definition of a modern Renaissance man, one who has broad interests and has been able to develop his knowledge in a number of areas well beyond the superficial. He is a scientist and a humanist, and he has found a medium for expression of each capacity that denies the individuality of neither and demonstrates that there is no mutual exclusion in either. His literary competence is of the highest order, his scientific accomplishment matches it, and his books combine the two admirably. His whole career has been academic, and yet he has managed to talk of the ordinary experience of growing up and wondering about nature and people in terms that combine philosophical and anthropological depth with poetic beauty.

I dwell on Eiseley for two reasons. First, he demonstrates in his own personal achievement and in his intellectual qualities what I believe we should have in our educational thinking: the retreat from the exclusiveness of specialization into the more productive climate wherein the specialist recognizes his responsibility to the general needs of society and works toward the reuniting of the disciplines to that end. Second, if we in the classics
are to profess our field fairly in such a climate, we must alter our training patterns in such ways as to produce a modern Renaissance man of Eiseley's type as the classicist for the future. These two assessments are not necessarily to be separated. They seem to me to be extensions of what the academic classicist has been doing in the past, from which he has allowed the climate and the pressures of mid-twentieth-century education to distract him.

Lord Snow's celebrated "two cultures" have in recent years been subjected to much scrutiny. Few question that one "does" science and the arts in different ways, but there is much question about the artificiality of the self-imposed separation between the scientist and the artist or the humanist. Werner Heisenberg has recently attempted to demonstrate the humanistic milieu in which he and such scientists as Bohr, Planck, Fermi, and Einstein evolved the physics that has so deeply affected our lives. In another area, the chemist Roger Williams pleads for a closer relationship between biology and behavioral science by arguing from a biological standpoint that "the recognition of the uniqueness of human minds is essential to human understanding." And yet only a short time ago, as I prefer to view it, when in 1941, I was a freshman at Berkeley, there was still amusement that psychology had been legitimized by being inscribed in monumental letters on a building completed less than a decade earlier to house the life sciences. How many of us remember psychology as a life science within our educational experience?

The New Humanism, I believe, has challenged us to remember that education has become overcompartmentalized, that these separations, though potentially valuable for the isolation of fact and the securing of technological advance, run the risk of failing the student and
the society that he represents by neglecting the reintegra-
tion of knowledge thus achieved for the individual and
social good. Cannot science and the humanities reunite
in education to achieve again something of the common
sense that would not separate them in antiquity? Surely
the reason for the remarkable preference shown for the
social and behavioral sciences by students these days is
not the joy they find in quantified data but their belief
that these areas of study are humane in the best sense
of the word and that they have the ultimate interest of
individual and social man as their purpose. Have we in
the humanities not lost our purpose if that degree of
humaneness is not pellucid in our teaching?

If we are too compartmentalized, is interdisciplinary
activity a remedy? In part it surely is, and the classics
have long been interdisciplinary in their offerings. The
classicist who is not at least a cultivated amateur in
history, archaeology, art, and philosophy is not whole.
Although literature has been central to our discipline,
we, as interpreters of civilizations and cultures, have
been led into a variety of neighboring disciplines and
have been required to speak with at least modest ex-
pertise as we look at, say, economic or technological
aspects of the ancient world. But perhaps we have been
too hesitant in advancing beyond the frontiers of the
humanities as we have looked for interdisciplinary rela-
tionships to which our insights might contribute. The
University of Michigan’s Center for Ancient and Modern
Studies has certainly shown the way in expanding
the interfacing of the classical humanities with the social
and behavioral sciences. Studies of ancient science and
technology are becoming more frequent, and they are
not limited to the admirable aegis of the historian of
science; many are written by classicists drawn to them
from literary problems. The political scientist is surely
as natural a colleague for the interdisciplinary classicist as is the philosopher or the specialist in another literature. The excited response of the engineer or the premedical student or the physicist or the sociologist to the newly discovered world of antiquity in a course in Greek or Roman civilization has offered us the challenge. As strict constructionists, we have been cautious in reminding ourselves that “interdisciplinary” suggests and even demands solid disciplines among which the relationships can be explored, and rightly so. But experience has bred increasing confidence in our ability to define the curricular content of such courses and to recognize that the gray areas of overlap are not devoid of color content. Interdisciplinary explorations will continue to play an increasing part in our impact on liberal education.

“Education,” says Charles Silberman, “is becoming the gateway to the middle and upper reaches of society, which means that the schools and colleges thereby become the gatekeepers of society.” 14 This remark is made in a context that points to the inevitable politicizing of educational institutions in this role, but it should remind us as well of our responsibility as the shapers of the consciousness of that society. The student trying to define for himself whence his New Humanism derives and where it should lead has instinctively expected the humanities—D. L. Stevenson’s “culturally defining arts” 15—to show him how to approach the problems that he and his society face. The humanist as “ecologist of survival values” has his task set for him, and it must not be interpreted to mean that the survival is his alone.

You will remember that we once believed in committing to memory great passages of literature or noble sayings from the past as guides to our own emerging values or as items of pleasure or comfort for moments when either was needed. Literature, the classics, whether
the works of the first order from antiquity or from later cultures, provided to the educated or even to the partially educated person rich entertainment for his spirit, stimulation for his mind, precepts for his choice of action, and examples for his daily life; the classics shared with religion the larger part of his intellectual and spiritual activity. Cicero caught the importance of literature in a world we still struggle to understand in a few lines of his speech for Archias. Those over forty will have learned them and have been moved by them:

Nam ceterae neque temporum sunt neque aetatum omnium neque locorum; at haec studia adulescentiam acuunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solacium praebent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur. (Arch. 16)

We are being advised here, of course, of the value of the *studia litterarum* both for the formation of character and the pleasure of the mind, of which they are, Cicero assumes, *remissio humanissima ac liberalissima*—words of a Roman consular in a dubious defense of a Greek poet in a world that can mean little to the now generation.

But the classical humanist knows that Cicero's words are words that are normative to the culture of the West and have established what we have been, what we might have been, who we are, and who we might be. It matters little that few of us are directly descended from that Roman culture or from the Greek that informed it. The fabric of what we are as a multiracial, many- or single-classed, pluralistic society has been prepared—sometimes misguidedly, more often with inspiration—from the continuing reinterpretation and expression of the ideas that were shaped in the millennium centered on the birth of Jesus and of the Roman empire. Much of antiq-
uity has only historical value for the present, though much of it is as pertinent to us now and for the future as ever before. Thus the questions asked, the perceptions offered, the pleasures and horrors chronicled, the searching for self and society in a rapidly expanding world, move far beyond the historical and the limits of the practical as they speak to the individual who seeks them out.

May I illustrate by two short quotations from a statement by Christine Philpot Clark, a black student of the classics as an undergraduate at Bryn Mawr and now a lawyer in New York City with an impressive record in civil rights and civic concerns:

I fought back thoughts about how irrelevant to my later life my studies were, noting such thoughts were common to everyone seeking a liberal arts education. I now think that had I pursued the racial roots for my particular uneasiness about the relevance of my studies, I would have felt absurd and would probably have never finished college, Bryn Mawr or anywhere else. But the College helped me through the crisis. And I'll never forget it. As a result I work free for only two efforts: black liberation and Bryn Mawr College.

Mrs. Clark concludes her remarks with a comment of shattering pertinence:

Bryn Mawr did give me much of my capacity to cope, joy in discipline, and strength in gaining knowledge. The College led me to past worlds and hopes about future ones. It taught me to spot weak motivation (including my own), to question fallacious reasoning and to devise rational alternatives. These gifts are not only nice words; they are useful in destroying racism.16

The New Humanism is an uncompromising force. Its proponents have the same task their elders had, self-
knowledge and understanding of the environment in which that self must function. But they are angry with what they are learning of themselves and of how the environment, physical and social, falls short of the human and technological potential that they have seen surrounding them as they have grown to adulthood. They are totally committed to rectifying the shortcomings, human and technological. Their commitment should be catching, as Henry Hewes suggests in his review of the play *The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*:

To attend this play is to go to the Good Shepherd-Faith Church on West 66th Street and make a token atonement for the incompleteness of our commitment. We do not even have to be in political agreement with these radicals. We only need to feel that whatever it is we believe, we believe it too half-heartedly.¹⁷

We cannot believe half-heartedly in the value of the classics as a continuing source of individual and social advantage in education, both formal and informal. They have something to say of value to the New Humanist, whose newness consists of his commitment with its sense of human urgency. To it we can respond with the flexibility allowed by quality and the conviction that real values transcend importunities even for those importuning. If we redirect our own commitment, it will speak to that of others.

*Nil desperandum*, Horace has Teucer advise his companions (*Odes* I.7.27 and 30–32):

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o fortès peioraque passi
mecum saepe viri, nunc vino pellite curas;
cras iterabimus aequor.¹⁸
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