Business Ethics and Social Responsibility

Essential Works of
Fr. Gerald F. Cavanagh, S.J.

Edited by

Joseph G. Eisenhauer, Ph.D. and Lawrence E. Zeff, Ph.D.

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Introduction: The Value of Values

Founding a New Academic Discipline

Although its intellectual roots date back to the ancient philosophers, business ethics only emerged as a distinct field of scholarly inquiry in the latter half of the twentieth century. The first professional journals devoted to publishing research in this area, for example, appeared gradually over a period of three decades: *Business & Society* in 1960, *Business & Professional Ethics Journal* in 1981, the *Journal of Business Ethics* in 1982, and *Business Ethics Quarterly* in 1991. Previously, such work had been largely dismissed by the likes of Milton Friedman (1970), who famously asserted that corporations were only responsible to their shareholders—not to their customers, employees, or the general public.[1] A significant milestone occurred in 1971, when the Academy of Management launched its Social Issues in Management (SIM) Division, where like-minded scholars could discuss the responsibilities of businesses to the broader society. Among those participating in these groundbreaking meetings from the outset was a Catholic priest who had completed a doctorate in business just a year earlier: Fr. Gerald F. Cavanagh, S.J.

Even as a doctoral student, Cavanagh had been attending Academy of Management conferences. He became more deeply involved with the new SIM Division, meeting regularly with what was, at the beginning, a mere handful of participants, and eventually chairing the division. As he would recall later, the creation of the SIM Division "was the real breakthrough. That probably was one of the major decisions that began to form the field."[2] For the next half century, those SIM members would work both individually and collectively to broaden and enrich our understanding of business ethics, addressing topics such as corporate social responsibility (CSR), diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), sustainability, equal rights and gender equality, fair labor practices, good governance, and more. They would produce scholarly treatises, journal articles, case studies, and textbooks; they would develop and teach graduate and undergraduate college courses; they would deliver presentations to academic, industrial,

and governmental audiences; and they would provide commentary on current events for news media. Over time, they would bring increasing numbers of academics, practitioners, and policymakers into the conversations. Without question, this work has permanently changed management practices in momentous ways. The very concept of a CSR Officer or DEI Director at a corporation, university, or government agency, for example, now quite commonplace, did not exist prior to the thought leadership of these original, farsighted scholars.

In the 1990s, a dozen of these early pioneers, including Fr. Cavanagh, were interviewed by their successors at SIM for posterity. Transcripts of the interviews would not be made public for nearly another quarter-century, but these "origin stories from the founders" were finally published by Wokutch, *et al*. (2018) to document the historic efforts by the founders of the field to establish an entirely new academic discipline.

The present volume focuses on the contributions of one of those pioneers: it collects many of the essential works from Fr. Jerry Cavanagh's illustrious career into a single, convenient reference book. The material presented here is of both historical value and current interest, given the enduring significance of the subject matter. The remainder of this introduction provides a brief description of his career and outlines the themes and importance of his major contributions to the field of business ethics.

A Dual Career: Priest and Professor

Having grown up in a suburb of Cleveland, Jerry Cavanagh earned a bachelor's degree in engineering at what is now Case Western Reserve University, and then worked briefly in industry, making landing gear for airplanes. But as a college student, he'd felt a calling to become both a priest and an educator, so he subsequently entered the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), often regarded as the *intelligentsia* of the Catholic Church for having founded hundreds of high schools, colleges, and universities throughout the world. During his Jesuit formation, he attended St. Louis University (along with his sister, Mary), where he earned an MBA, a licentiate in philosophy, and a master's degree in education. For the next two years, he taught mathematics and physics at Loyola Academy in

Chicago. Shortly before being ordained as a priest in Detroit and returning to Chicago to study theology at Loyola University, he wrote two brief essays entitled "The Popes View Technology" and "Toward a Theology of Technology". Quoting extensively from Pius XII and John XXIII, Cavanagh (1963, p. 25) reviewed both the inherent dangers and benefits of technology, noting optimistically, "Pope Pius XII was certain that modern advances would free workers from the monotonous, degrading work that once was characteristic of the assembly line and that they would be given more leisure, time for reasonable rest and recreation, reading, family life, and prayer." This belief, that efficient production could liberate workers to pursue intellectual, social, and spiritual concerns, would reappear throughout his future work.

Spirituality at work

His article, "St. Bernard and the Mechanized Monastery," published a year later, reveals both the young engineer's fascination with the use of machinery to make labor more efficient, and the young priest's appreciation of what Catholic Social Teaching calls the dignity of work. Here, one glimpses the sparks of ideas that would occupy his thoughts for many years. He notes first that Plato and Aristotle regarded manual labor as demeaning, whereas Christianity views labor, which contributes to the wellbeing of the community, as wholesome and virtuous. As Cavanagh (1964a, p. 116) put it, not only did such regard for the dignity of the worker eventually promote the decline of slavery, but in addition, "This increasing realization of the infinite worth of man resulted in an aversion to submitting him to work that required no intelligence or judgment." In the same article, he noted that by developing labor-saving devices, the monks of the Middle Ages harnessed the efficiency of capitalism, which allowed them sufficient time for prayer, thereby elevating their spiritual lives. Over the ensuing years, he would return to both of these topics—the responsibility of business for equitable and humanizing treatment of employees, and spirituality at work—several times. In his doctoral dissertation and subsequent papers, he would emphasize the importance of eliminating drudgery and providing opportunities for meaningful employment, professional development, and career promotion to people of all races. And in his 1976 book, *The Businessperson in Search of Values*, he

would discuss how the favorable Christian view of work became the Protestant work ethic, and eventually led to excesses of materialism far removed from their religious roots, engendering personal job dissatisfaction and demoralization as well as social ills such as pollution, resource depletion, and income disparities. As a first step toward a remedy, he would propose that managers undertake deep soul-searching (or in Jesuit terms, discernment) for personal values. In later years, he would further develop the theme of spirituality in the workplace, eventually arguing that a spirituality for managers should be engendered in faith-based business schools; that notion would lead to the theme of business ethics in the college curriculum. Indeed, Green (1999) credits Cavanagh, along with his fellow Jesuit and coauthor, Fr. Manuel Velasquez, S.J., as being among the initial leaders who brought the long tradition of Catholic social thought to bear on the emerging field of business ethics.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

His last year of Jesuit formation was spent in Europe, primarily in Dublin and Paris. Upon returning to the U.S., he attended Michigan State University, where he earned a Doctorate in Business Administration. During his final two years of graduate school, he was a research fellow at the Cambridge Center for Social Studies in Massachusetts. His dissertation, *Black and White Workers' Attitudes in Three Industrial Plants: View from the Grassroots*, was well ahead of its time, addressing what would today be called DEI in the workplace. Both its subject and its methodology—interviews with factory workers of different races, to ascertain their perspectives on workplace integration, promotions, racial justice, and related issues—were replicated in a conference paper, "Alternative Routes to Employing the Disadvantaged within the Enterprise" and his first book, *Blacks in the Industrial World: Issues for the Manager*, both of which were coauthored with another Jesuit priest, Fr. Theodore Purcell, S.J. Cavanagh would subsequently revisit the topic of DEI several times, in book chapters titled, "Short Versus Long Run Effects of the Introduction of Black Workers into the Firm" and "Humanizing Influences of Blacks and Women in the Organization". Admittedly, some of the racial and gender-specific terminology in these early works is now antiquated and even offensive to modern sensibilities. When read in context, however, it is clear that no

insult was intended; on the contrary, the papers reveal a freshly-minted scholar struggling to express new ideas using the language of the day. Indeed, the author shows a deep sensitivity to the need for more equal opportunities for those of all races and genders to obtain employment, professional development, and promotions, so as to satisfy the human need for fulfilling work and achieve greater efficiency in the workplace. Of course, the 1960s and early 1970s were times of unprecedented social unrest, marked in the United States by the Civil Rights movement, several high-profile assassinations (including those of John F. Kennedy, Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy), the Vietnam War, and the Watergate scandal. Inevitably, these historic events would help to shape the thinking of up-and-coming scholars of the period, so it is not surprising that racial justice, personal values, ethics, and social responsibility would become topics of interest to emerging leaders in business ethics, including Fr. Cavanagh.

Cavanagh's first academic position was at a public university, where, he later recalled, "I thought I would be a missionary…building bridges between the sacred and the secular."[3] He may have been influenced in this by Mary Perkins Ryan's book, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?* In a review of the book, Cavanagh (1964, p. 666) had noted the author's comment that "at Catholic colleges and universities, there are thousands of priests, sisters, and brothers…who could have a greater long-run effect for the Church on the secular campus." Unfortunately, "The difficult part was that people in the business school didn't understand why a priest was teaching business, and then I'd say Mass at the Newman Center and *they* couldn't understand why a priest was teaching in the business school either, so there was really a split life."[4] Additionally, he has noted, "Classroom discussion of ethics was difficult when I began teaching 'business and society' in the business school at Wayne State University in 1970. Students and many colleagues said, 'Whose ethics? My ethics are as good as yours or anyone else's.' Ethics was off limits. They thus rejected a rational, systematic way of morally examining actions and policies."[5] After nine years there, he moved to Santa Clara University, where he had been invited to establish a new Dirksen Chair in Business Ethics, one of the first of its kind. A year later, in 1980, he accepted a permanent position at what is now the University of Detroit Mercy, where he would serve in various capacities—including Trustee,

Provost, Assistant Dean, Interim Dean, and Charles T. Fisher III Chair of Business Ethics—over the next 42 years.

Ethics and Social Responsibility in Business

Like the older social science of economics, which had bifurcated into microeconomics and macroeconomics before giving rise to an array of sub-disciplines, the burgeoning field of business ethics can also be viewed as having evolved into two equally strong components. The micro side began examining personal morals and ethical norms within organizations, while the macro side investigated the responsibility of business to society at large. This is not to say that the issues they addressed were independent of one another or always clearly distinct, for they surely were not. Rather, as in economics, the micro components could be said to serve as the building blocks of the macro components. Individuals and firms with a strong sense of integrity might voluntarily work to reduce carbon emissions, for example, whereas executives in organizations that lack institutional values might be less likely to undertake initiatives for the common good unless pressured or forced to do so by fiat. Fr. Cavanagh's work has often straddled both the micro and macro segments of the field, and it is this nexus between values and actions that differentiates his perspective from that of strict profit-maximizers. Whereas some would contend that firms should behave ethically because it leads to higher profits, Cavanagh and his colleagues argued that firms should behave ethically because it is inherently the right thing to do—regardless of whether it leads to higher profits. Thus, basing organizational decisions on norms and values has intrinsic value in promoting the common good, and should, ideally, return financial value to the organization itself.

Ethical norms and organizational values

During his first year back in Detroit, Cavanagh and two colleagues from Santa Clara, Dennis Moberg and Fr. Manuel Velasquez, S.J., delivered a presentation at an Academy of Management conference which, after some revision, they published in 1981 as "The Ethics of Organizational Politics" in the *Academy of Management Review*. The article developed a model of behavior inside organizations that was rooted in theories of utilitarianism,

rights, and justice. It was the very first paper in the literature to apply a model of ethical norms to organizational behavior such as power-grabbing and backstabbing, and it would become a landmark of sorts, identified by Calabretta, *et al*. (2011) as one of the most widely cited papers in the early history of business ethics. It was soon followed by "Organizational Statesmanship and Dirty Politics: Ethical Guidelines for the Organizational Politician" with the same co-authors. As with most novel concepts, this "utility-rights-justice" model was both widely praised and critiqued. In 1995, the three authors published a revision to their basic model, addressing critics and incorporating feminist ethics in "Making Business Ethics Practical". Indeed, that title could serve as a description for much of Fr. Cavanagh's work, as he would consistently emphasize the importance of pragmatic applications over pure theory.

The theme of ethical norms and organizational values was extended in numerous works, including "Free Enterprise Values: Delayed Gratification or Immediate Fulfillment", "The Virtue of Courage within the Organization", "Political Counterbalance and Personal Values: Ethics and Responsibility in a Global Economy", "Pressures on the Manager in the Organization: Obstacles and Aids to Ethical Behavior", and a book with Fr. Art McGovern, S.J., entitled, *Ethical Dilemmas in the Modern Corporation.* It would continue to appear in Fr. Cavanagh's research into the third decade of the twenty-first century, including a recent paper with Fr. Oliver Williams, C.S.C. entitled, "Retrieving Aristotle's Phronesis: A Focus on Character and Practical Wisdom in the Selection of Business Leaders."

Corporate social responsibility

When Fr. Cavanagh began writing on corporate social responsibility (CSR), the very concept was so new that scholars were still wrestling with its definition; Purcell and Cavanagh (1972, p. 9) offered their own definition as follows.

> Corporate responsibility means a willingness on the part of the corporate manager (acting not only as an individual but as a decision-maker involving his firm) actively and with moral concern to confront certain social problems he deems urgent and to bend the influence of his company toward the solution of those problems

> insofar as the firm is able to do so. Such responsibility requires that the manager balance intelligently the needs of the many groups affected by the firm so as to best achieve both profitable production and the common good, especially in situations in which he is not required to do so by law or by external pressures which the company cannot easily resist.

Although it appears in his earlier work, this theme would become more prominent in later articles and book chapters such as "Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility: Educating Stakeholders and Virtuous Entrepreneurs". And over time, as business became more global, the focus of these manuscripts would evolve into a more worldwide perspective. By the turn of the century, his manuscripts would bear titles such as, "U.S. Business and Global Treaties: Lobbying as it Affects Multilateral Agreements", "Global Business Ethics: Regulation, Code, or Self-Restraint?", "Millennium Development Goals, Business Planning, and the U.N. Global Compact Management Model", and "Pope Francis and the United Nations: Planet Partners".

Teaching Business Ethics

Throughout his career as a professor, Fr. Cavanagh not only taught business ethics, he also championed service-learning among both undergraduate and graduate students. He insisted that students should engage with the less fortunate, provide services of real benefit to them, and write reflection papers on their experiences, as a way to gain the moral maturity needed to become true servant-leaders. He also served as the faculty advisor to a service fraternity, and for many years led backpacking trips through Shenandoah National Park so that students could commune with God and nature. Additionally, he was instrumental in founding the Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education Conference, served as a Board member and regular participant for conferences organized by Colleagues in Jesuit Business Education and the International Association of Jesuit Business Schools, and helped launch the Inspirational Paradigm for Jesuit Business Education, an initiative to reposition Jesuit business schools to better prepare students to address major global issues. This notion of values-based business education developing servant-leaders is

yet another theme that reappears throughout his published research, most notably in papers such as "Teaching with Mission: Personal Development, Team Building, and Social Responsibility", "Service-Learning and Leadership: Evidence from Teaching Financial Literacy", "What's Good for Business? The Ethical Legacy of Catholic Business Schools", "Higher Education for Business in the Jesuit Tradition", "Benchmarks for Jesuit Business Education: Lessons for Presidents, Provosts, Deans and Search Committees", a monograph called, *Ethics of Free Enterprise: Values in Jesuit Education*, and an encyclopedia entry titled simply, "Teaching Business Ethics". Certainly, his most significant contribution to the pedagogical literature was his textbook, *American Business Value*s, which saw six editions, was adopted as required reading at business schools around the nation, and was included in Harvard University's list of essential business books.

Synthesis

Several times throughout his career, Fr. Cavanagh suggested that farsighted scholars look to the future and contemplate issues that were then only beginning to emerge. In 1976, for example, he anticipated a more participatory future workforce with shorter and more flexible work schedules and greater social consciousness. Reading such work now provides an interesting retrospective view on what was then ahead of us. And just a few years ago, Fr. Cavanagh (2019) wrote a brief synopsis of the lessons learned up to that time, and pointed the way to the future. He noted that recent innovations like micro-lending and some forms of online retailing now permit lower-income individuals to participate in economic activities that were previously closed to them, while financial fraud and speculation that creates economic instability continue to threaten the market system. Looking ahead, he suggested (p. 1415), "Some of the challenging issues that will increasingly face all citizens are (a) the growing influence of the global corporation, (b) global climate change and the negative environmental impact of our lifestyles, and (c) the moral maturity or lack thereof of contemporary decision makers and citizens." While one could argue that many other social responsibility issues will be prominent in the near future, these three were identified through the wisdom of a lifetime spent contemplating both micro- and macro-level forces that

influence business and society. These, then, represent agenda items for the next generation of business ethics scholars to address.

Impact

While it is impossible to measure the influence that his teaching had on the lives and careers of several generations of students, Fr. Cavanagh received Detroit Mercy's first Distinguished Faculty Award in 1998, and there are objective measures of the impact that his research has had on the profession. According to *Google Scholar*, his works have collectively been cited more than 3,200 times by other authors, and the rate of citations has actually grown over time, exceeding 1,000 between 2016 and 2022 alone. According to *WorldCat*, more than 1,550 copies of his books—including his magnum opus, *American Business Values*—are carried at libraries throughout the world. He delivered some 90 invited presentations around the globe, in Australia, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, Mexico, Spain, and the United States, at universities such as Harvard and Stanford, as well as numerous Jesuit institutions including Georgetown University and Boston College, where he also served as a visiting scholar during a 1986-87 sabbatical. Several institutions awarded him honorary doctorates, and in 2023, the University of Detroit Mercy gratefully bestowed the title Professor Emeritus on him posthumously.

Selection of Entries

A reading of Fr. Cavanagh's work from start to finish reveals interesting networks of thought that this introduction has attempted to illuminate. In its entirety, however, his body of work, spanning more than half a century, is too voluminous for a single collection. The entries included here were selected to illustrate the development of his thinking on five major themes: spirituality in the workplace; diversity, equity and inclusion; ethical norms in organizations; the social responsibility of business; and the pedagogy of business ethics. The remaining sections cover these themes, and within each section, the entries are arranged (usually chronologically) to show the progression of the author's thought. The final section presents Fr. Cavanagh's own synthesis of the field, and the appendix provides a

complete list of his manuscripts, both those included here and those that have been excluded, as well as links to videos, interviews, and biographical sketches featuring Fr. Cavanagh. Because this volume reproduces previously published material, some occasional typographical errors that appeared in the original documents are retained.

Acknowledgements

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Joseph G. Eisenhauer
Lawrence E. Zeff
Detroit, Michigan

Endnotes

1. Friedman's argument, that the decline of profits caused by unethical practices will lead to a correction of such behavior, assumes instantaneous adjustment and an absence of market failures (such as information asymmetry). The empirical existence of questionable business practices indicates that those assumptions often fail to hold in practice, and provides a motivation for looking beyond short-run profit maximization as a self-regulating system. One might also contend that a philosophy of business ethics should apply more broadly to non-profit organizations as well.
2. Quoted in Wokutch, et al. (2018, p. 1641).
3. Interview of Fr. Gerald F. Cavanagh, S.J. by Mary Kate McNally, Jesuit and Mercy History and Spirituality in Detroit, University of Detroit Mercy Libraries, May 25, 2017:
https://libraries.udmercy.edu/archives/special-collections/index.php?collection Code=jesuitmercy_jesmer&record_id=4.
4. Ibid.
5. Cavanagh (2010, p. 717).

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Part One

The Dignity of Work, Morality, and Spirituality in the Workplace

St. Bernard and the Mechanized Monastery

Gerald F. Cavanagh

HISTORIANS OF TECHNOLOGY now recognize that the Rule of St. Benedict, and specifically St. Bernard's Cistercian monasteries of the twelfth century, were "a major factor in the development of machinery and in particular of the various applications of the water mill."[1] Lewis Mumford has even credited the monasteries as being "perhaps the original founders of capitalism."[2]

The Rule of St. Benedict was a radical departure from the classical attitude toward work. Plato, and even more so Aristotle, were not sympathetic to labor and the work of the master craftsman. According to these Greek philosophers, work deprives man of the necessary leisure, so that he is unable to contemplate the good, the true, and the beautiful; it hinders proper physical, intellectual and moral development. Work is "illiberal" because it is done for pay; and it is less perfect because its end is outside of itself.[3] Plato and Aristotle were aristocrats, freemen, and for them work was the job of slaves. The citizen was to devote himself to the arts and more intellectual pursuits.

Christianity has always been more favorable to work. Jesus and Joseph were carpenters (Mk. 6:3; Mt. 13:55). Paul was a tent-maker (Acts 18:3); and he is emphatic that the man who refuses to work must be left to starve (II Thess. 1:7-12). The early Christians ordained the first deacons to take care of the temporal needs of the faithful (Acts 6:1-6). And throughout the early years of Christianity the principal task of these ordained men of God was to work for the community.

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[1] *A History of Technology*, ed. Singer et al (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), II, 650.

[2] *Techniques of Civilizations* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1934), p. 14.

[3] See, for example, *The Laws of Plato*, tr. by A. E. Taylor (London, J. M. Dent & Sons, 1934), p. 234; or *Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. by Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), p. 1141.

But it remained for St. Bernard to see work not as a regrettable necessity, but as an integral and spiritually profitable contribution, not only to man's present, but also to his eternal life. Lynn White has called the Rule of St. Benedict "a high peak along the watershed separating the modern from the ancient world."[4]

The large number of monasteries (Mumford claims that at one time there were 40,000 under the Benedictine Rule), and the respect and reverence that the people had for the monks, did much to raise the value of labor and the self-respect of the laborer. Benedict left a permanent mark on western civilization; since his time almost every form of spirituality has had work as a highly respected basic element.

The fact that the monks lived together, and lived thriftily, enabled them to invest in productive machinery which aided them in their work. This is why some call them the first capitalists. Their ingenuity was utilized to design their own equipment whereby the monks could harness the natural energy of the water wheels to help them grind their corn and make their shoes. And this gave them valuable additional time for their common and private prayer.

It was this additional time for prayer that encouraged St. Bernard to lead his dozen followers to the valley of Clara Vallis on the Aube River in 1115. One of Bernard's explicit intentions in founding this new monastery was to restore manual work, not only field work, but all the arts and crafts, as Benedict had originally outlined in his Rule. And the white monks in all their later foundations looked for land far from the cities; in settling in outlying spots, they did the work of pioneers. They made new locations habitable, and encouraged new settlements.[5]

St. Bernard himself provides us with a description of this famous abbey at Clairvaux, and he spells out in detail how the stream and water wheels are ingeniously made to work for the monks.

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[4] "Dynamo and Virgin Reconsidered," *The American Scholar*, XXVII (1958), 188.

[5] Dom David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (Cambridge: University Press, 1950), p. 211.

The monastery is built near the base of "two mountains which are separated by a narrow valley."[6] Half of the monastery is on one side of one mountain and the other half is immediately across the stream passing through its center, so as best to take advantage of the power of the water. Before describing the water wheels, Bernard mentions that the water is first used to irrigate the fields of vegetables, which is no mean technical achievement in itself.

"The stream passes and repasses the many workshops of the abbey, and everywhere leaves a blessing behind it for its faithful service." The river is guided by "works laboriously constructed" by the monks so that water may be the greatest aid to the community. These works "which the labor of the brethren, and not Nature, has made, divides the valley into two, and goes on to throw half of the water into the abbey, as if to salute the brethren." If sometimes the stream is suddenly swollen by downpour, "it is stopped by a wall, under which is made to pass, and so is turned back upon itself, and thus meets and checks the roaring stream." The water that is allowed to enter "passes on at once to drive the wheels of a mill." There, lashed into a foam by the motion of the wheel, "it grinds the meal under the weight of the millstones, and separates the fine from the coarse by a sieve."

In the next building the water fills a boiler, "and is heated for brewing, that beer may be prepared for the brethren," just in case the vines should not provide the monks with good wine. The river's waters are next harnessed so as to raise hammers and to allow them to fall, aiding the monks in the traditional fulling operation (the laborious work of treading the raw cloth while it is lying wet in troughs). It "raises and lowers alternatively the heavy hammers or mallets, or to be more exact, the wooden feet of the fulling machines, and so relieves the monks of the heaviest part of their labor."

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[6] These words and those to follow are Bernard's own. See *Patrologiae Latinae*, ed. Migne (Paris: Garnier Press, 1879), CLXXXV, 570-4, and translation in *Life and Works of St. Bernard* by Samuel J. Eales (London: Burns & Oates, Ltd., n.d.), II, 460-7.

St. Bernard praises the ingenuity of his brothers and the value [of] the machines they have built:

> How many horses would this labor tire! Of how many men would it weary their arms! And the kindly stream relieves us from it altogether, although without it we should have neither food to eat, nor clothes to wear.

But the work of the stream is not yet finished; it still "has many wheels to turn in its swift flow." It is next guided into the workshop of the shoemaker where it "contributes its aid to the making of sandals for the brothers." Now the stream is divided into many small branches, and passes through various additional workshops. It "helps to cook the food, sift the grain, to drive the wheels and hammers, to damp, wash, soak and so to soften, objects; everywhere it stands ready to offer its help." Finally, "after having been made to revolve by its swift current so many wheels, the stream carries off the dirt and refuse of the monastery, and leaves all things clean behind it."

Meanwhile another part of the stream has been diverted "to wander in careless curves through the meadows, to penetrate into the earth and to refresh it." Thus the seeds and infant plants "will not be dried up for want of water; nor have they any need for the drops from the clouds," because of the generosity of the neighboring river.

Historians are indebted to Bernard for recording in so much detail this early engineering triumph. Nevertheless, it should be noted that he seems to sing the praises and value of the stream more than the water wheels or even the ingenuity of the brothers. He does not seem to appreciate the careful planning and work that went into building the canals and wheels as much as he values the stream itself. He sees God more clearly in the "natural" works of God, than in those that men fashion. Bernard stressed the omnipotence of God and the immediate manifestation of God in all material things.

It was over this view of the universe that Bernard did, in fact, clash with the Cathedral School of Chartres. William of Conches condemned Bernard and his followers for their lack of respect for secondary causes: Bernard saw

God in the trees, birds, and water, and did not give sufficient attention to seeds, heredity, and rain. Each new sunset is not a direct intervention of God even though He ultimately is its cause, claimed the scholars of Chartres. But Bernard had little patience for the intellectuals of Chartres; he considered them to be what we would today call naturalists or secularists. To Bernard men like Alain of Lille and William of Conches were somewhat irreligious, and their positions led ultimately to a denial of God. And in this Bernard was not alone; his attitude was characteristic of the mystical and diffuse faith of the neoplatonic schools stemming from Augustine.[7]

Monks Take Advantage of Time-Saving Devices

Nevertheless, Bernard and his followers knew what time and effort a water wheel could save, and it is to their lasting tribute that they developed these new power machines. And the monastery at Clairvaux was in no sense unique in its use of water power. In fact, one of the specifications for choosing a site for a future Cistercian monastery was the great desirability of a rapid stream that could be harnessed. Bertrand Gille in the monumental *A History of Technology* points out how some of the monasteries had various water-powered workshops in a single room, "as for example at the French abbey of Royaumount, near Paris."[8] Here the shops were built right over the river itself. The river passed under the entire

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[7] Bernard shared the world view of his contemporaries which is characterized by M. C. Chenu, O.P.: "In those days the diffuse faith of Christians was prescribed by the image of the universe put forward by St. Augustine, in which the omnipotence of God was declared to manifest itself equally in the flowers of spring and the budding of Aaron's rod, in the wine harvested from the vineyard and the miracle of Cana, in the infants born every day and the resurrection of a dead person. This religious confusion that devaluated the second causes obtained even in a symbolic view of the world, so that we find the explanation of phenomena by their immediate causes disappearing in favor of interpretations that, quite legitimately of course, could be given these phenomena in sacral or poetic terms within an overall reference to their supreme destiny. The many schools of neo-platonism then in vogue conferred on these interpretations a high degree of philosophical profundity notwithstanding the elements of naivete they may have contained." Chenu goes into further detail on the friction that arose between these two world-views. "Nature and Man at the School of Chartres in the Twelfth Century" in *The Evolution of Science*, ed. Metraux and Crouzet (New York; New American Library, 1963), pp. 226-7.

[8] Ed. Singer et al, *op. cit*., pp. 650-1.

length of the building through a high and narrow tunnel 92 feet long and 7.7 feet wide. The workshops of the abbey were located on both sides of the tunnel; these included the grinding, tanning, fulling and iron works. The abbey at Vaux de Cernay was designed similarly. Gille cites the abbey at Fontenay in Burgundy as still having its factory. "In the twelfth century Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire, an underground river passes through a series of tunnels feeding a brewery, a corn mill, and various workshops."[9] He says that most other early abbeys had a similar extensive water-powered system.

Several factors contributed to making the Benedictine monastery a favorable environment for the development of labor-saving devices. The Benedictine strict ordering of the day, punctuated by the canonical hours, helped to stimulate cooperative activity. Once men were beginning work at the same time, and in groups, the logical next step was to use their ingenuity in an attempt to ease the more strenuous work. Why turn a wheel by hand when you can get water to do it for you? This cooperation, plus the use of water-powered machinery, enabled the monks to increase significantly their industrial efficiency. As Lewis Mumford expressed it:

> In all these ways, the monastery provided a favorable medium, not only for capitalism, but for mechanical improvement; time measurement, labor saving, standardization, habituation to an orderly life of constant effort and application first took place in the monastery, before they were translated into the secular routine.[10]

Mumford goes on to show how the demand for the mechanical clock arose from a culture that had been influenced by the monastic need for accurate time keeping. Although a prior chain of technical improvements was a necessary prerequisite, it was the regularity of the monasteries that provided the cultural basis.

At about this time and even earlier, the monks had become scholars; they preserved much of our western cultural heritage for us. They were the same

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[9] *Ibid*., p. 651

[10] "History: Neglected Clue to Technological Change," *Technology and Culture*, II (1961), 235.