

The Crisis in Soviet Economic Planning

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IT WAS IN 1920 that Ludwig von Mises first presented his critique of socialist economic planning. Without the private ownership of property, and without a free market in which consumption goods and especially production goods can be exchanged, it is impossible to achieve rational economic calculation of costs. The entrepreneur needs to know the marginal cost of his methods of production, and this means that he must know the possibilities for profit by employing his capital in other ways. Without a free market, it is impossible to make this calculation, and socialism, by definition, cannot permit such a market to exist, since it requires the state ownership of the means of production.¹

This argument has never made much of an impression on the socialists. Oskar Lange, whose supposed "refutation" is quoted in countless textbooks as "having answered Mises," acknowledges the importance of the criticism, but since no socialist country has ever put Lange's theory into practice (probably because the state planners sense that the plan is unworkable, giv-

en the political and economic goals of socialism), socialists can be said to have simply ignored Mises.² The claim is still made that socialism is more efficient than capitalism, and more moral.

I shall bypass the question of morality in this essay, and focus instead on the very concrete case of the Soviet planning. If centralized state planning is to equal the efficiency of a decentralized free market economy, certain features of the free market's mechanism should be present within the planning bureau. First, planning should be based on a full *knowledge* of each product, including its true cost (i.e., its marginal cost, or "cost-of-the-most-important-use-foregone"), its market, the productive apparatus necessary to create it, and the local environment in which it is produced (transport difficulties, availability of labor, and so on). This knowledge must be at least comparable to that provided by the market's pricing mechanism under capitalism.³ Second, the planners must be able to *integrate* all these data into a working plan, and supplies and demands must be matched

with a smoothness comparable to that of the open market, with its use of the profit and loss guidelines to direct production into its most important uses. Third, the planners must be able to *foresee* the effects of new processes and products in each of the prospective markets. Errors in foresight should be registered (and compensated for) as forcefully as they are when they occur in a free market. All this involves the fourth, and perhaps the most important problem of knowledge, the measurement of *profit and loss* in an economy without a market. This is Mises' point against the rationality of socialism. Finally, the socialist must assume that there is such a thing as *economic law*, and that these laws can be known and used by planning agencies in their activities.

Alexander Gerschenkron, one of the foremost experts in the field of Russian economic history, has summarized the issue as well as anyone could desire:

The official view of the Soviet economy is premised upon the assumption of unrestricted knowledge and foreknowledge on the part of the central planners. Needless to say, this assumption is far from realistic. The stream of paper reports that flows from the plants to the central authorities may belittle the majesty of the Volga River, but it provides no assurance of real insight into the conditions within the individual plant. The fundamental ignorance of the central authorities restricts their ability to enforce their will. Obversely, it is the knowledge of the manager that assures for him his area of freedom.⁴

In other words, the central planning of supply assumes the omniscience of the central planners. Without this omniscience, the system is faced with overwhelming difficulties. The main one is that which Gerschenkron alludes to: How can the on-the-spot knowledge of the local manager be integrated into the overall central plan? Will not

the freedom to allocate scarce economic resources at one level interfere with the planning activities of the other? This is the inescapable, inevitable, perpetual problem of the USSR's economic planners.

Despite the grandiose claims of the proponents of central planning, the Soviet Union carries on only the most general aggregative planning at the center. Gosplan, the central planning agency, coordinates the production of a few major products and services. In a frequently quoted article, Herbert Levine has estimated that between eight hundred and fifteen hundred commodities are planned totally at the center.⁵ He outlines the planning process. The complexity is staggering. *First*, a statistical analysis of the base period is made in the first half of the planning year (in preparation, of course, for the plan for the following year). A survey of the previous year is made to gain at least a superficial aggregate estimate of what will be needed (and possible) in the plan. As Paul Craig Roberts has added, the individual firms present these forecasts to the central planners, and therefore "the initiative lies essentially with the enterprises since they have better knowledge of their productive capacity. . . ."⁶ *Second*, control figures are drawn up for a dozen or so of the chief products and investment targets. These serve as guideposts for economic units at lower levels. *Third*, and most important, is the confirmation of the plan by the political hierarchy, and as might be imagined, a great deal of political maneuvering takes place at this point. The maneuvering appears at all levels of the economy and in every local district. An extremely complicated and often varied process of surveying begins: local plants are supplied with forms relating to forthcoming production goals and supply needs; these forms, when completed, are sent to the Gosplan board for confirmation or revision. The ocean of data

is then coordinated at the top into some kind of hopefully workable plan. *Fourth*, the detailed plan is returned to the firm for implementation.⁷ Unfortunately for the managers in the local firm, though quite understandably, these final plans too often arrive late, a constant complaint of enterprise directors. Theoretically and ideally, this delay should never happen, but it does. Managers cannot always wait for plan figures to arrive, so they begin on a tentative production plan. Naturally, it frequently needs drastic revisions once the official plan is delivered. (There is, I suspect, a good prospective market for DiGel in the Soviet Union.)

Politics, rather than economics, has dominated Soviet production plans for decades. Naum Jasny has argued that the very planning units—the Five Year Plans—were originally propaganda devices, and that the annual and quarterly plans were the real basis for planning; this, he says, prevailed until the advent of the Seven Year Plans, which came in the mid-1950's.⁸ For most of the history of Soviet planning, in other words, the long range plans were irrelevant for economic purposes. The goals of the 1930's were set so high that it would have been impossible for any regime to have reached them; this resulted in what Jasny calls "bacchanalian planning." Planning for long term goals was a function not of economic realities but rather of oratory. In a very real sense, Soviet planning in these years was, in Mises' provocative term, "planned chaos."

The magnitude of the statistical problem in centralized planning is inconceivable. Victor M. Glushkov, the head of the Soviet Union's research program in cybernetics, has warned that a radical revamping of present methods of planning is vital if the economy is to survive. Without such a reform in the near future, Glushkov estimates that the planning bureaucracy will have to

grow thirty-six-fold by 1980, requiring the services of the entire population!⁹ If the central planners should hold as an ultimate ideal the idea that every nail and screw of every factory under construction must be known to the planning board in advance, there will be no hope for them. Glushkov has estimated that even if high speed computers were used, performing thirty thousand operations per second, it would require one million computers working without interruption for several years to plan the entire economy. The total economic relationships within the Soviet Union approach several quintillion. And the economy is forever changing, meaning that the data fed into the computers would be revised continually. They could never catch up.¹⁰

As an economy develops, the planning task becomes progressively less manageable. Professor G. Warren Nutter has put it this way: "Centralized planning becomes less and less efficient as the number of products multiplies."¹¹ Gosplan implicitly recognizes this, and the board plans only about eighteen thousand products even indirectly, less than one-tenth of 1 percent of total Soviet output.¹²

At this point, the reader may detect a problem. If as few as eighteen thousand products are considered at the top of the planning hierarchy, and only about a tenth of these are fully co-ordinated there (Levine's estimate, cited earlier, of from eight hundred to fifteen hundred), then how can we say that the Soviet economy is a socialistic command system? In a fascinating article, "The Polycentric Soviet Economy," Paul Craig Roberts has dealt with this issue with considerable insight. He argues that "a more productive way of viewing the Soviet economy might be to see it as a polycentric system with signals that are irrational from the standpoint of economic efficiency."¹³ The Soviet system, in other

words, is not an operative hierarchical system in practice, though socialist theory requires that it should be. It is instead a system which tries to follow a whole host of mutually conflicting directives. Roberts quotes Tibor Liska, a Hungarian economist, who has made one of the most profound observations concerning central planning that I have ever encountered. Liska says that

as the number of directives to be observed increases, the more detailed and the stricter they become in a most intricate economic life hardly lending itself to standardization, the greater the liberty of individual planners and economic managers. The intricacy of economic life follows, namely, primarily from the fact that hosts of contrary tendencies must be brought into harmony with optimum efficiency. The stricter and more rigid the regulations proscribing the enforcement of such contrary tendencies, the more contradictory the directives must become. One receiving the directives has but a single choice: *not to observe all the directives.*

The freedom here is not the freedom of the free market economy, because the operation of a flexible price mechanism is absent in the Soviet Union. The freedom of the Soviet factory manager is the freedom to be economically irrational for the sake of political survival. The attempt by the Soviet planners to create a unitary system of economic coordination by the state has resulted in increasingly fragmented economic units at the bottom of the economic pyramid.

The careful observer of the Soviet economy must understand what planning is in the Soviet Union. It is not a totally integrated system directed by an omniscient central planning bureau. When, earlier in this essay, I used the term "planning," I was using it in the restricted sense of the

specification of inputs, product mix, quality controls, output, and so forth. The central planners attempt this only with the key industries such as steel, armaments, power, and education, and even here the planning is not really total. The direction given for most production, therefore, is provided in the form of *arbitrary prices* established by the planning agencies. This leaves managers "free" to achieve or exceed their firms' goals (selected out of a multiplicity of conflicting, though required, goals) as best they can, but always within a framework of prices established by fiat. The ideology of full socialist control has been sacrificed on the altar of quasi-market efficiency.

The central planners, whether they know it or not, are involved in an enormous sham. Roberts' question is well taken: "What then is the function of the planning bureaucracy?" His answer is ingenious: "Whatever the intention might be, in effect the primary function of the planning bureaucracy is to act as supply agents for enterprises in order to avoid free price formation and exchange on the market so that productive inputs will not have the appearance of [capitalistic] commodities. This satisfies the ideology underlying the whole effort at the expense of notorious failures of supply."¹⁴ To the extent that the planners allow local autonomy—sometimes almost autarky—of firms, because they must rely on data supplied by those firms, they sacrifice full socialism and the accompanying ideology; yet they avoid implementing a free pricing system, i.e., the only means available to integrate the local firms into a rational aggregate, in order to give the illusion of maintaining the ideology. They achieve neither ideological consistency nor economic efficiency. Peter Wiles and Leon Smolinski have drawn the necessary conclusion:

It is thus obvious from the administrative point of view that planning must

be decentralized if it is to exist at all. It always has been and still is: the center draws up a general skeleton and the subordinate bodies put flesh on the bones. . . . Confining ourselves still to economics, it is plain that such technical planning desiderata as consistency and punctuality are compatible with, even possibly favored by, decentralization.

One planning function, however, is very seriously disfavored: the rational allocation of resources. From this point of view decision-making should be *either* central *or* peripheral; a mixture is bad.¹⁵

We see the inevitable, inescapable problem in operation: the constant tension between centralized, ministerial planning and localized decision-making. The Soviet economic planners constantly shift the locus of planning back and forth in their attempt to discover a solution to their problem of administrative balance. As Gregory Grossman says, "To put it schematically at the risk of oversimplification: overcentralization, imbalance, and autarky are the three corners of a triangle of hazards within which the Soviet-type economy seeks to find an organizational solution."¹⁶ One Sovietologist, Z. M. Fallenbuchl, has pinpointed the issue: "Hence the perennial dilemma of the Soviet economic organization: how to decentralize some economic activities without losing control over the economy and the possibility of central planning."¹⁷

The crisis has grown steadily more critical. "The authorities that hand down plans," writes Alec Nove, "are often unaware of the tasks already given that enterprise by other authorities." He quotes a statement made by I. Borovitski, a disgruntled enterprise manager, which appeared in *Pravda* (Oct. 5, 1962):

The department of Gosplan which drafts the production program for *Sovnarkhozy* [regional economic councils] and enterprises is totally uninter-

ested in costs or profits. Ask the senior official in the production program department in what factory it is cheaper to produce this or that commodity? He has no idea, and never even puts the question to himself. He is responsible only for the distribution of production tasks. Another department, not really concerned with the costs of production, decides on the plan for gross output. A third department or subdepartment, proceeding from the principle that costs must also decline and labor productivity increase, plan costs, wages fund and labor on the basis of past performance. Material allocations and components are planned by numerous other departments. Not a single department of Gosplan is responsible for the consistency of these plans.¹⁸

In short, too many blind cooks are spoiling the soup. All of these problems are compounded by the constant meddling of Communist Party officials at all levels of the economy. This interference naturally leads to irrationality in planning. "The problem is not, of course, new; it is inherent in the separate existence of party and state hierarchies."¹⁹ The Soviet planning system, in the words of Wiles and Smolinski, is "a crazy quilt of agencies organized according to several principles."²⁰ It should not be surprising that the economic puzzle in the aggregate never seems to fit together in the particulars.

The preceding discussion has been based on the presupposition that the choices of the planners, if only they could be coordinated, would be rational. That assumption in itself is highly suspect. Socialists would have us believe so, of course. Peter Wiles has asked whether or not we should believe them. "The possibility of the private consumer being irrational is of course an accepted cliché of Western economies. But none of this makes planners' preferences rational. It is astonishing that people with

an intimate knowledge of how the Soviet system works should consider the possibility of operating on the assumption that planners' preferences are in fact rational in a Communist country."²¹ Those who would construct a system of production with as many built-in irrationalities as the Soviet system contains can certainly be questioned with regard to their overall rationality.

The almost incredible bureaucratization of Soviet planning is evidenced by two frequently encountered examples. In one case, a plan for the production of ball bearings had to go through so many agencies for approval that a staggering (literally) total of 430 pounds of documents was generated.²² In another instance, one "autonomous" Republic, the Tatar ASSR, had its investment plan changed almost five hundred times in 1961.²³ Under these conditions, the task of enterprise management would be impossible if it were not for some ingenious (and often illegal) solutions worked out by factory managers.

The basic solution has been the creation of a vast network of "independent" supplies—a black market. This is the phenomenon known informally as "*blat*." Joseph S. Berliner, in his valuable study, *Factory and Manager in the USSR* (1957), has described this process. Since supply channels are often exasperatingly slow and frequently deliver the wrong or inferior goods, managers must turn to alternative sources of inputs if their production quotas are to be met (and their bonuses and promotions received). For example, a plant may have a surplus in any given year; this, in turn, is probably due to the fact that the manager overstated his supply needs and understated his plant's productive capacity in the previous year, when the central plans were drawn up. These additional goods may be traded to some other firm for some future service or present luxury from that firm. This aids not only those smaller firms that

are on a lower priority list for supplies, but it also helps the high priority industries during periods of crisis.²⁴ Certain "middlemen" with informal connections are employed, usually under a bogus administrative title, as the agents for the *blat* operations. They are "pushers" whose activities coordinate the underground facilities of supply and demand. They are called *tolkatchi*. Some firms employ only part-time *tolkatchi*, especially the smaller ones. In recent years, the government has wisely removed the criminal sanctions that were once imposed upon such activities of unauthorized exchange or resale of supplies. In addition to this softening, the procedures for obtaining official authorization to purchase extra supplies have been eased.²⁵ The state planners have, in effect, recognized the necessity of these "capitalistic" practices. Production goals are sometimes more important than official ideology. These practices go on as long as the conditions of inefficient production and distribution remain. As Berliner says, "The *tolkatch* thrives in an economic soil watered by shortages and fertilized by unrealistic targets."²⁶

At this point, it would be wise to quote Alec Nove's summary of the "centralization-decentralization" antinomy in the Soviet production system:

While centralized planning overburdens the organs charged with carrying it [the plan] out, decentralization—the obvious remedy—proves completely unworkable so long as planners' instructions are the principle criteria for local decisions. The modest attempt to dissolve authority to territorial economic organs, in 1957, was inevitably followed by renewed centralization. Within the system as is, only the center is in a position to know the needs of industry and society at large, since these are not transmitted by any economic mechanism

to any territorial authority. The latter is therefore unable to foresee the effects of its decisions on the economy of other areas, and, in the circumstances, decentralized decision making must lead to intolerable irrationalities. . . . Thus decentralization is both indispensable and impossible.²⁷

In the final analysis, the theory of Mises, Hayek, and other free market advocates appears to be justified, or at least hardly disproved, by Soviet economic practice. Most non-Marxist commentators are willing to admit that in terms of economic efficiency as such—low production costs, higher output, allocation according to demonstrated consumer preferences—the free market economies out-perform the Soviet system. It must be borne in mind, of course, that the goals of the Soviet hierarchy have seldom been consumer preference oriented; the goal has been the establishment of rigid, total, centralized political power. Waste has always been a less important consideration than the strengthening of the Party and the Soviet state. There has been economic growth, to be sure, especially in the areas of heavy industry and military armaments. In terms of economic growth as such, Abram Bergson's restrained conclusion seems damaging enough: "As it has turned out, the outstanding example of socialism that has yet come into existence has distinguished itself not so much for effective use of resources as for the novel and strange ends imposed on a great state."²⁸ But Jan Prybyla's comment comes closest to the mark:

What the Russians have shown is that cockeyed economic growth at rapid rates can be achieved without economists and without economic science; but that after the economy outgrows its teenage crisis, elusive and subtle problems of resource allocation among an increasing number of competing "priority" ends demand

an economic science for their solution.²⁹

That is precisely the problem; the USSR has never been able to create a science of socialist economics. It is indicative of the political attitude toward economics in the Soviet Union that from 1928 until 1954—the years of Stalin's planning and the years of the country's most rapid economic growth—it was found necessary to cease teaching all classes in economics in the institutions of higher education, and not one general textbook in political economy appeared!³⁰

How they propose to solve these problems remains to be seen. It seems clear that without a decentralization based upon the rational coordination of a flexible price mechanism, and without the advent of a consumer economy based upon the private ownership of the means of production, the basic issues will remain unsolved. The so-called Liberman reforms have not yet fundamentally altered the structure of the Soviet economy, and the limited decentralization and production-for-profit techniques of those reforms have been restricted to less than 150 industries, carrying small weight in the aggregate economy.³¹ If these reforms should become basic to the Soviet system, then the entire structure of ownership and control of the firm will have to be revamped in order to permit entrepreneurs to gain access to their share of the total value of output.³² It is unlikely that such a restructuring is likely; it would be impossible within the framework of a traditional socialist ideology. Therefore, we can expect the Soviet economy to shift back and forth between centralized planning and local autarky, mediated primarily by a black market supply system, and growing more and more irrational as the complexity of the planning task grows ever greater. The system, in good Marxian terminology, contains the seeds of its own destruction.

¹Ludwig von Mises, "Economic Calculation in the Socialist Commonwealth," (1920), in F. A. Hayek (ed.), *Collectivist Economic Planning* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1935).

²Oskar Lange and Fred M. Taylor, *On the Economic Theory of Socialism* (New York: McGraw-Hill, [1938] 1956). Paul Craig Roberts has put it well: "Lange refutes Mises by utilizing the market mechanism and the value criteria it generates—precisely the mechanism and values that were to be replaced under socialism by a planning mechanism, the impossibility of which was the contention of Mises." Roberts, "The Polycentric Soviet Economy," *The Journal of Law and Economics*, XII (April 1969): 166n. Cf. T. J. B. Hoff, *Economic Calculation in the Socialist Society* (London: Hodge, 1949), for a thorough discussion of Mises' theory and the supposed refutations of it.

³On the whole question of economic knowledge and planning, see Hayek's essay, "Economics and Knowledge," in his *Individualism and Economic Order* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

⁴Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard-Belknap Press, 1962), p. 287.

⁵Herbert S. Levine, "The Centralized Planning of Supply in Soviet Industry," *Comparisons of the United States and Soviet Economies* (Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the U.S., 86th Cong., 1st Session, 1959); reprinted in Wayne A. Leeman (ed.), *Capitalism, Market Socialism, and Central Planning* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963), p. 55.

⁶Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

⁷Levine, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-58.

⁸Naum Jasny, *Soviet Industrialization, 1928-1952* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 25-27.

⁹Reported by Leon Smolinski, "What Next in Soviet Planning?" *Foreign Affairs*, XLII (1964); reprinted in Morris Bornstein and Daniel R. Fusfeld (eds.), *The Soviet Economy* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, 1966), p. 329.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 335.

¹¹G. Warren Nutter, *Growth of Industrial Production in the Soviet Union* (A Study by the National Bureau of Economic Research, published by Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 64.

¹²Peter Wiles and Leon Smolinski, "The Soviet Planning Pendulum," *Problems of Communism*, (USIA), XII (Nov.-Dec. 1963), p. 21. As they say, "the complexity of planning grows also with

the square of the number of establishments..." Planning today is some 1600 times more complex than in 1928.

¹³Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 177.

¹⁵Wiles and Smolinski, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁶Gregory Grossman (ed.), *Value and Plan: Economic Calculation and Organization in Central Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), pp. 7-8.

¹⁷Z. M. Fallenbuchl, "How Does the Soviet Economy Function Without a Free Market?" in Bornstein and Fusfeld (eds.), *The Soviet Economy*, p. 35.

¹⁸Alec Nove, *The Soviet Economy: An Introduction* (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. 207.

¹⁹Alec Nove, "Revamping the Economy," *Problems of Communism*, XII (Jan.-Feb. 1963): 15.

²⁰Wiles and Smolinski, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

²¹Peter Wiles, "Rationality, the Market, Decentralization, and the Territorial Principle," in Grossman (ed.), *Value and Plan*, pp. 186-87. Cf. Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness*, pp. 287-88.

²²Abram Bergson, *The Economics of Soviet Planning* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 150.

²³Alec Nove, "Prospects for Economic Growth in the USSR," in Bornstein and Fusfeld (eds.), *The Soviet Economy*, p. 318.

²⁴Joseph S. Berliner, *Factory and Manager in the USSR* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), ch. 11, 12.

²⁵Berliner, "Blat Is Higher than Stalin," in Abraham Brumberg (ed.), *Russia Under Khrushchev* (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 173.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 175.

²⁷Nove, "Perspectives," Bornstein and Fusfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

²⁸Bergson, *Economics of Soviet Planning*, p. 358.

²⁹Jan S. Prybyla, "Soviet Economic Growth: Perspectives and Prospects," (1964), in Bornstein and Fusfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

³⁰Nove, *The Soviet Economy*, p. 282.

³¹Marshall I. Goldman, "Economic Controversy in the Soviet Union," *Foreign Affairs*, XLI (1963); in Bornstein and Fusfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 339-51. Cf. Ludwig von Mises, "Observations on the Russian Reform Movement," *The Freeman* (May 1966).

³²Svetozar Pejovich, "Liberman's Reforms and Property Rights in the Soviet Union," *The Journal of Law and Economics*, XII (April 1969): pp. 155-62.

Not a Great Divide

FELIX MORLEY

THE YEAR 1869 witnessed the publication of two very different books, still famous, which have been highly influential in their separate ways. One was Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*, an epitome of the bucolic romance that still lingers in our hillbilly and cowboy ballads. The other was Trollope's *Phineas Finn*, the first and best of the parliamentary novels which Allen Drury, among others, continues to adapt for modern dress. But 1869 was *annus mirabilis* for other reasons than the almost simultaneous appearance of these two books. It was the year that saw the opening of the Suez Canal and in America saw the completion of a trans-continental railroad system, two engineering triumphs of vast historic import celebrated in Walt Whitman's rhapsodic poem, *A Passage to India*, with its prevision of an ultimate passage through space.

Passage to more than India!
O secret of the earth and sky! . . .
O day and night, passage to you!
O sun and moon and all you
stars! . . .
Passage to you!

Again 1869 was the exact midpoint of the Victorian era. Just thirty-two years earlier, in 1837, the slim young Princess had ascended to the throne. Just thirty-two years later, in 1901, death claimed the resolute old empress, and the Anglo-German bonds which she had exemplified began perceptibly to loosen. Lytton Strachey tells us that: "The death of the Prince Consort was the central turning point in the history of Queen Victoria," and that had occurred at the end of 1861. I shall not speculate on the extent to which the change in the Queen affected the body of literature to which her name is given; but to ourselves at least in retrospect a literary change becomes evident at the close of the decade of the sixties, exactly one century ago.

The shift of characters on the stage is of course a part of the explanation. By 1869 Thackeray had gone and Dickens had finished all his work except the never completed *Mystery of Edwin Drood*. From the great women writers of the period there was only one outstanding novel—George Eliot's *Middlemarch*—still to come. Kingsley closed his writing in 1866. By then