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Social Status in Dublin:

Marriage, Mobility and First Employment

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Acknowledgements

Preface

THE studies which follow, like the one that preceded them,[1] are studies of social inequality, in certain of its aspects, among the population of the city of Dublin; and they therefore deal with a subject that may fall too easily the prey of emotional and moralist treatment. The difficulty of achieving objective treatment on such a topic is reinforced by a general, if at times theoretical, adherence in this country to ideas of egalitarianism—ideas which, in the face of inescapable evidence to the contrary, may culminate in the denial that distinctions of status or class are ever drawn in contemporary Ireland. In what follows, however, we have regarded distinctions of social status in their objective existence as real characteristics of Irish social organisation (as indeed they are); but we did not regard it as our task to arrive, in this context at any rate, at any moral or ethical evaluation of them. Our data, perhaps, lend little support to a view of independent Ireland as a classless society of free and equal men. Nor is this a view generally held by the majority of the people themselves, though it is held by some. But although to hold, as some do, that Ireland "has no class distinctions", while pointing with cynical relish to instances of their existence, may seem inconsistent, the conflict is perhaps more syntactical than real. It is tempting, indeed, to see here some parallel with that celebrated denial by the Trobrianders of their knowledge of the facts of physical paternity; and here as there an explanation must be sought in a recognition of the situation on which people think they are commenting. In Ireland the matter is sufficiently complex for this recognition to be sought at several levels. It is possible, for example, that in denying the existence of distinctions of status some are confusing the dream with the reality, or feel that the ideal of a classless society may recede further into the future the more one recognises the social imperfections of the present. Others, on the other hand, may hold that to admit the existence of unwanted class distinctions carries with it an implicit approval, or tolerance, of them, or of the criteria on which they are drawn. Others again, perhaps thinking in a historical context, define differences of class or status entirely in terms of a form of plural society which has now come to an end in Ireland; and having ended, has carried the old forms of such distinctions with it. But more likely than any of these is the possibility that two views of the nature of status dis-

[1] *Social Status and Inter-Generational Social Mobility in Dublin.* Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin, 1969.

tinctions are causing confusion. If Max Weber saw these as representations of the distribution of power in the community, Durkheim saw them as a form of "moral classification". The apparent inconsistency of Irish views on the matter can be resolved if we suppose that condemnation and denial is directed at the latter; recognition of their reality towards the former. That is, that the terminological confusion reigning in discussions of "class" and "status" has led, in colloquial discussion, to these notions being treated verbally as if they were interchangeable, thus concealing real popular distinctions.

Whether or not we are right in supposing the explanation to lie here does not affect the implications of the data presented in these papers. We have shown elsewhere that Dublin shares with other communities a failure to provide educational access equally to those of all status levels (or class origin); and that a man's future depends as much, and perhaps more, upon his origin as upon his potentiality of skill and intelligence. In these pages we show the same influences at work in other settings. The reader will be mistaken, however, if he applies too readily to the data the concept of a causal relationship, arguing that the differences and the handicaps they reveal are "caused" by membership of this social class or that status category. On the contrary, it is difficult to attach much meaning to the latter terms if they are stripped of the characteristics that accompany, or rather define, them. A man at the top of the social hierarchy will have a higher income, be better educated, exert greater power, have a certain type of occupation, speak with a certain accent, and so forth, compared with a man at the bottom of it. If we then argue that these things are the effect of their class or their status we cannot use them in the definition of the terms; and without their aid (and of other characteristics like them) only a conceptual blank remains. In other words, however, and at whatever level of abstraction these terms are defined, ultimately the definitions must depend upon observation of behaviour and its variation. For this alone is open to observation: "class" or "status" are not, for as the terms themselves make clear they result from a process of categorisation, are as a result abstractions, and, since abstractions, cannot exert influence (in the "causal" sense) upon events. It may be objected that in social life generally a man's status is estimated on first encounter, that he is treated accordingly, and that it is therefore apparent that status is an autonomous matter independent of those social handicaps or advantages that follow from it. The observation may be reliable, but the conclusion is not. For the interlocutor in such a situation is determining from certain behavioural clues (such as the man's speech, or his clothing, or his ease of manner) the social category in which the man should be placed. Depending upon the skill with which the interlocutor can do this with the few preliminary clues immediately available to him, subsequent observation (showing for example that he is poor or well-off, a manual worker

or a professional man) will confirm or modify the first allocation of status. But no amount of observation, however protracted and at whatever level of intensity, will be successful in detecting class or status as "things" in themselves. The temptation remains great, however, to utilise the logically unobservable and the abstract concept as links in a chain of cause and effect (to argue, for example, that a "working class" child receives less formal education than his "upper class" colleague *because* of his class membership) instead of as steps towards a more abstract level of generalisation. For the social reformer the lesson is clear. The way to social equity lies not in attack upon a chimerical class system, but upon specific inequities which, seen together, are given a class name.[2]

The data discussed in the following pages, therefore, must be regarded as descriptive of class or status categories, not as their consequences. In other words, when we demonstrate that a young man of low status origin takes full-time paid employment, on average, seven years before his upper status colleagues, these facts are regarded as illustrating the nature of social status rather than its outcome—that is, that differences in age at first employment are part of what we mean when we refer, in abstract terms, to differences in social status. To regard the data in this way, of course, is in one sense no more than a recognition that, in terms of social reality, allocation of status, or of social class, is based upon a system of accounting that discriminates far more minutely than a system based merely, for example, upon occupation, educational level or even income. Indeed, it might be argued that the mistaken tendency for social scientists to see as consequences of social status what are often no more than other characteristics of it, arises from the practical necessity, in field investigation, of employing a relatively simple unitary indicator of status. Other variables are then seen as dependent upon status instead of neglected characterising features of it. Closely allied with this whole problem (that of estimating social status or class membership) are difficulties arising from the lack of objectivity inherent in the categories we utilise in analysis. For we are in a different position from those concerned, let us say, with an analysis of birthplace or of income. A man was born in France or he was not; his income is £1,000 a year, or it is not: these are objectively ascertainable matters of fact. As we have seen, whether or not a man "belongs" to this or to that "class" depends upon the form of classification we use; and it follows, *a fortiori*, that estimates of social mobility (that is, of "movement" from one class to another) are largely dependent upon the number of classes distinguished and where their boundaries are drawn by the investigator.

[2] That distinctions of status, if not necessarily of "class", persist even in societies dedicated to their eradication, is evident from the studies of J. Krejčí, *Social Change and Stratification in Postwar Czechoslovakia*, London, 1972, and D. Lane, *The End of Inequality? : stratification under state socialism*, London, 1971.

The effects, or some of them, of variation in classificatory conventions are apparent, and are discussed in our first paper concerned with social class and other forms of homogeneity in mate selection in Dublin. They are less evident, but equally important, in the two papers following this, concerned respectively with age at marriage[3] and with age at first employment in their relation to social status and mobility. However, provided that we are aware of the conventions utilised, analyses of the type undertaken here offer at any rate a preliminary key to an understanding of a characteristic feature of the society we live in. A comprehensive understanding of the influence of social status and its ramifications in social organisation, and in individual lives, however, must await the outcome of an equally comprehensive investigation.

[3]With the exception of its class and status aspects, discussed here, this topic has been exhaustively examined by Brendan Walsh, "Trends in age at marriage in post-war Ireland", *Demography*, May, 1972, to which the interested reader should have recourse.

Class Endogamy and Mate Selection in Dublin

THE authors[1] of a recent study of Oxfordshire parishes, having calculated that "under the average social mobility patterns which have characterised the area from 1837 to 1967 the different social classes would come to share 95 per cent of their ancestry in sixteen generations", concluded that (since intermarriage alone produces the same effect in twenty generations) "the combined effects of social mobility and marriage would produce homogeneity in nine generations". The genetic effects of such a protracted, if measurable, process could well be considerable; the social, or sociological, effect possibly as great. We are concerned here with an examination of some similar endogamous and exogamous tendencies in a contemporary Irish population, particularly those tendencies that suggest a degree of class endogamy among married couples now resident in Dublin. We shall look for evidence, among data derived from a sample of married people, of restrictions imposed upon the choice of a mate by tendencies for persons of like social status to marry each other. We shall look also for evidence of class or status inter-marriage; and we shall examine how far certain other variables, such as birthplace and educational level, appear to be interwoven with, or perhaps over-ride, the influences of social class or status. In our concluding pages we make some comment upon the interpretation of the tendencies revealed by the descriptive analysis.

An American writer tells us[2] that: "Some 35 years ago sociologists discovered that not only are there widespread tendencies towards homogamy but also that a large proportion of people select their marriage partners from among those who live very near them geographically"; but most readers will not find it wholly unexpected that, in their own society, mate selection may show evidence of a preference for the familiar and the influence of propinquity. Scholars in the wider world context have long been aware that most societies (if not all) have rules of prohibition, or of injunction, governing marriage and the choice of a partner. Many such rules may be subsumed under the apparent dichotomy of endogamous and exogamous marriage—apparent

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[1] G. A. Harrison, R. W. Hiorns and C. F. Küchemann, "Social class relatedness in some Oxfordshire parishes", *Journal of Biosocial Science*, Vol. 2, No. 1, January, 1970, pp. 71–80. See also the same authors' subsequent paper, "Social class and marriage patterns in some Oxfordshire populations", *ibid.*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January, 1971, pp. 1–12.

[2] G. R. Leslie, *The Family in Social Context*, New York, 1967, p. 449.

only, that is, because endogamy and exogamy[3] (bearing in mind the different
social groups to which the rules may apply) are not necessarily mutually
exclusive. Some societies may differ from contemporary Western society in
retaining sanctions of some severity designed for the enforcement, as far as
possible, of the endogamy or exogamy rule. Among ourselves such sanctions
as remain are nowadays both few in number and largely non-statutory in
character—although there may be certain prohibited degrees of kinship whose
infringement leaves the offender open to prosecution. With the latter exceptions,
men and women in theory marry whom they will; choice is left to individual
volition. The notion of romantic love, at any rate in its ideal form, had as a
corollary the assumption that mate selection might set aside all obstacles to
marriage other than those imposed by the personal preference of one party
or the other. Social reality fails, as so often, to be consistent with romantic
theory, for there remain many informal, non-jural, social sanctions applied
to certain forms of assortative mating, to produce varying degrees of social
group endogamy. Social opposition to marriage between persons of different
colour of skin, between persons of different religions or different sects of the
same religion, of different nationality, education, social status, wealth, and
even age if the difference is defined socially as unacceptable—opposition on
all these and many other grounds in our society seeks to limit mate selection
to socially approved endogamous groups. It is true that the rules of endogamy
have never been as absolute as some of those governing exogamy have sought
to be; and there is evidence of a contemporary trend towards a further reduc-
tion in their efficacy. Nevertheless, the constraints have been considerable—not
least, perhaps, because they have often become auto-operative in the sense
that an individual's preferences have coincided, for reasons that are obvious,
with those of his reference group.

   Further limits to freedom of mate selection, beyond those established by
socially-sanctioned rules of endogamy and exogamy, are set by what may be
a general human tendency towards homogamy—that is, for bride and groom
to share many, if from society's point of view slighter, physical, psychological
and sociological characteristics. In other words, like tends to marry like even
in matters where no specific social regulation may exist. Thus, J. N. Spuhler,
in a summary article, lists fifteen characteristics ranging from stature, eye-
colour and weight, to neurotic tendency, intelligence and years of education,
that show a significant degree of correlation between husband and wife.[4] One
must suppose, therefore, that even in conditions of comparative freedom from

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[3]Readers unfamiliar with these terms may welcome their definition. *Endogamy* is the rule enjoining
marriage within a specified social group; *exogamy* is the rule prohibiting marriage within a specified
group. See *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*, 6th edition, London, 1951, pp. 115–116.

[4]J. N. Spuhler, "Physical anthropology and demography", in P. M. Hauser and O. D. Duncan
(eds.), *The Study of Population*, Chicago, 1959, Table 67, p. 736.

overt social control, mate selection is not a process whose resolution is entirely dependent upon individual idiosyncrasy; or, rather, what may seem idiosyncrasy in the individual case produces patterns of preference that, in varying degrees, are endogamic in their effect; and it is noticeable that many of the characteristics in terms of which homogamy occurs (though not all of them) are fairly closely associated with social class or social status. To the degree that this association persists, it may be argued, the greater the significance attaching to evidence of class or status endogamy, such as that to which we now turn.

I

During the late spring and early summer of 1968, we undertook a survey of the Dublin population, whose purpose was primarily that of studying the incidence and the processes of social mobility in the city. A sample, of all male residents of the urban area of the City and County of Dublin aged 21 years and over, was drawn from the currently revised Electoral Rolls. A total of 2,540 men was interviewed. In so far as the characteristics of this sample were open to checking against Census returns, it appeared satisfactorily, if not entirely, representative of the population from which it was drawn. We obtained, for example, a very reasonable fit when comparing the sample age distribution with that obtained from the 1966 Census of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire. However, the distribution by marital status, which more particularly concerns us in the present context, gave less cause for satisfaction. The proportion single obtained from the sample (16·2 per cent) was significantly below that derived from the Census of 1966 (24 per cent). The likely sources of this loss were various: that young unmarried men failed to register as electors; that institutions, army barracks, garda stations, and like possible concentrations of bachelors, were excluded from the sampling frame; and above all that unmarried men were more likely to be out of the house when an interviewer called upon them. But if the representativeness of the sample as a whole was thus rendered imperfect, that portion of it, composed of married men, with which we deal in the present paper was less likely to be affected. In a significant sense, indeed, for a given size of sample under-representation of the single has the unsought, but not unwelcome, advantage that it provides an ampler statistical basis when we come to a discussion of the married, whose total is consequently greater. It is possible that the final sample of married men was subject to some undetermined form of bias by a tendency for substitutes taken for non-contacted single persons (in order to maintain final

sample size) themselves to be married. How bias from this source might have operated upon the married sub-sample is not easy to ascertain, however; and we have no specific reason to fear that the sub-sample is not adequately representative of adult married males in Dublin.

In what follows, our main analytic variable, as in the main study from which our data were derived,[5] was that of social status. This was determined by means of a status-ranking of occupations along lines familiar from many earlier studies. Information was obtained from subjects as to their current main gainful occupation (or, in the case of one who was retired or unemployed, his last main occupation). Similar information was obtained about the subject's father: his present or last occupation, and his occupation at the time of his son's marriage. In addition, we inquired as to the occupation of the subject's father-in-law at the same period. These occupational data were then translated into terms of social status by means of the Hall-Jones scale, which marshals them into a seven-fold classification of status, thus:

Status Category	*Occupational Groups*
1 (highest)	Professionally qualified and high administrative.
2	Managerial and executive.
3	Inspectional, supervisory and other high-grade non-manual.
4	Inspectional, supervisory and other lower-grade non-manual.
5	Skilled manual and routine grades of non-manual.
6	Semi-skilled manual.
7	Unskilled manual.

We assumed that, as a key to the problem of marriage between persons of differing social status, the most significant data were those relating to the status of father and father-in-law at the time of the subject's marriage. We, therefore, examined the status *origin* of bride and groom (or inherited status), largely neglecting a subject's acquired status where this differed from that of his father. There were two reasons for this. As far as the groom was concerned, it seemed unlikely that the status he had acquired by the time of his marriage through his own employment would be, in most cases, as socially relevant to that event as his family origin. The first employment of more than half our sample was of a status lower than that inherited, though many were to attain higher status in the course of time.[6] Brides, in common with other unmarried women, were assumed to be dependent for their social status upon that of their father: only in recent times have women been regarded increasingly as

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[5] Cf. B. Hutchinson, *Social Status and Inter-generational Social Mobility in Dublin*, Dublin, Economic and Social Research Institute, 1969, Paper No. 48, where some further comment on sampling, and on the means of determining social status, will be found.

[6] See below, pp. 63–64.

capable of establishing independent status. To both assumptions on which our procedure was based exceptions are manifest; but the general rule remains. We therefore regarded as homogamous those marriages where father and father-in-law were of equal social status; as heterogamous where these were different.

Fathers and fathers-in-law[7] were two samples drawn from a population composed of all fathers. Their distribution by social status, therefore, should be closely similar, as Table 1 confirms. Neither differs greatly from the status distribution of the total sample (i.e., including the fathers of single men). This evidence is particularly welcome in that it shows that sample bias (in respect of social status) was not introduced through the necessity of discarding a number of married subjects because of incomplete data.[8] In effect, therefore, Table 1 may be interpreted as a picture of 1,233 grooms, together with an equal

TABLE 1: *Percentage distribution of fathers and fathers-in-law by social status category, compared with that for the total sample*

Status category	Fathers of grooms	Fathers-in-law of grooms	Fathers of all subjects, married and single
1 (highest)	2·5	2·4	2·8
2	3·8	4·4	4·9
1	7·9	6·8	8·6
4	16·2	17·1	17·0
5	36·3	36·9	35·6
6	12·1	12·9	12·2
7	21·2	19·5	18·9
N (100%) =	1,233	1,233	2,460
Mean status:	5·0	5·0	4·9
Median:	4·5	4·5	4·5

number of brides of identical social origins. Table 2 shows us what happened at marriage. Had like invariably married like, and social class endogamy thus made complete, only the diagonal cells of this table would have been filled, the rest remaining empty. This is, of course, far from being the case. The diagonal ratio (that is, the percentage of couples who were of the same status origin) was[9] no greater than 37·5. The apparent incidence of class endogamy suggested

[7] Unless otherwise stated, in this paper these relationships are uniformly as seen from the husband's viewpoint.

[8] The sample contained 2,129 married men. This total was effectively reduced to 1,233 by "no answers" to questions referring to the previous occupations of father and father-in-law, largely because of the subject's ignorance of, rather than a disinclination to provide, the relevant information.

[9] It will be evident to the reader that the size of the diagonal ratio, as of the individual diagonal percentages, is heavily dependent upon the number of categories employed. See below, p. 37–39.

TABLE 2: *Social Status origin of brides and grooms at marriage (percentages)*

Bride's status category	Groom's status category							All brides	Index of association
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
1	**38·7**	10·6	4·1	1·5	0·9	—	0·4	2·4	16·46
2	16·1	**29·8**	9·3	7·0	1·8	1·3	0·8	4·4	6·80
3	16·1	12·8	**24·7**	8·0	6·0	0·7	1·9	6·8	3·63
4	22·6	31·9	26·9	**32·5**	15·2	9·4	6·1	17·1	1·90
5	6·5	12·8	27·8	34·0	**45·1**	43·6	32·6	36·9	1·22
6	—	—	3·1	11·0	14·3	**21·5**	14·6	12·9	1·67
7	—	2·1	4·1	6·0	16·7	23·5	**43·6**	19·5	2·24
N (100%) =	31	47	97	200	448	149	261	1,233	2·36

by this figure varies according to the groom's status, as may be seen, from as low as 21·5 among men of category 6 origin, to as high as 45·1 among those from category 5. Much weight cannot be given to these variations, however, whose source lies partly in the overall distribution according to social status. This may be illustrated by an example. Of all brides in the sample, 36·9 per cent originated in category 5. Had men of the same origin selected their brides on a purely random basis, therefore, the same proportion of their wives must have been drawn from category 5. The observed proportion, as Table 2 shows, was 45·1 per cent—not greatly above that expected. The ratios of expectation to observation, or indices of association, were therefore calculated for each status category; and their range of values makes more evident, and more reliable, class differences in the endogamous tendencies hinted at by the diagonal percentages. From the calculated indices class endogamy appears greatest in the two highest status categories, 1 and 2, followed at some distance by category 3. Below this status level the endogamous tendency, though maintained, is less noticeable. There is a not uncommon reappearance of greater homogeneity among those of lowest social status (category 7). Indeed, the pattern of indices of association between status of bride and groom follows lines that are similar to those earlier laid down for inter-generational mobility;[10] and in combination the two sets of indices indicate a high degree of status maintenance through employment and intermarriage at the highest levels of the hierarchy, echoed, though less emphatically, among those of lowest social status and least economic privilege.

These, of course, are relative values: in fact nearly two-thirds of our husbands

[10]See B. Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, Table 25, p. 20.

had wives originating in a status level different from their own. This proportion was capable of variation from one status category to another, as Table 3 shows us; but these variations are less noteworthy than those associated with direction of movement. It was evident that whether a man took a wife from a level of status above his own seemed to depend partly upon his own origin, to the extent that the likelihood of this happening was inversely related to the groom's own social status. The lower a man's social origins, the more likely that he marry "upwards". The differences involved are quite large: brides of men at the bottom of the status hierarchy were approximately five times

TABLE 3: *Percentage of grooms whose brides were of equal, or different, status origin, related to status origin of groom*

Status origin of groom	Relative status of bride			N (100%)
	Higher	*Same*	*Lower*	
1	—	38·7	61·3	31
2	10·6	29·8	59·6	47
3	13·4	24·7	61·9	97
4	16·5	32·5	51·0	200
5	23·9	45·1	31·0	448
6	55·0	21·5	23·5	149
7	56·3	43·7	—	261
Total	31·4	37·5	31·1	1,233

as likely to be above them in status origin than were those of men towards the top. Marriages "downwards" seem to have been less affected by the converse relationship, a falling-off in the rate of such marriages becoming emphatic only amongst grooms originating in category 5 and below. Even so, a man at the top of the hierarchy was nearly three times as likely as his counterpart at the bottom (or near the bottom) to marry downwards. To some extent these phenomena can be discounted, on merely statistical grounds, in terms of opportunity.[11] It is obvious that if the population were equally divided between the seven status categories, the man at the bottom of the hierarchy would have more potential brides of status higher than his own than his colleague towards the top of it; and conversely. Other things being equal, therefore, the lower a man's status, the more it would be possible for him to marry upwards. This is simple enough. The matter is raised to a greater level of complexity, however, by

[11]One aspect of this problem has been treated mathematically by L. Henry, "Schémas de nuptialité: deséquilibre des sexes et celibat", *Population*, Vol. 24, mai-juin, 1969, pp. 457–486; and more recently by D. McFarland, "Effects of group size on the availability of marriage partners". *Demography*, Vol. 7, November, 1970, pp. 411–415.

the fact that a distribution of the population according to its social status is roughly pyramidal in shape. In other words, the higher the status category, the smaller in terms of total membership.[12] As one ascends the status hierarchy of men, therefore, one sees the possibility of a man's marrying upwards decreasing not only by the fact that the number of status categories higher than his own become fewer, but also by reason of their progressive reduction in size. Where marriage downwards is concerned, matters arrange themselves conversely; but, once again, not simply. As before, a man's position on the hierarchy would dictate (if all status categories were of equal size) the possibility of finding a bride of lower status than himself: the lower his own status, the smaller the possibility. However, a population distribution by status viewed in terms of downward movement becomes an inverted pyramid. In consequence, the lower down the status hierarchy a wife is sought, the greater the theoretical choice becomes; and it may be that the personal preferences of men from higher (and smaller) status categories can sometimes only be met by a search outside the limited resources of their own class. Much also depends upon the relationship between the varying size of the status categories and the proportion in each category that marries upwards. If we assume (for the sake of its illustrative value) the unlikely case that 10 per cent of all grooms originating in category 7 found brides for themselves at the top of the hierarchy, in category 1, then approximately 85 per cent of grooms born in category 1 would fail to find a wife of their own status, and would be obliged, if they married at all, to marry downwards. In other words, the pyramidal shape of the status distribution is such that a relatively small proportion of upward marriages from the large low-status categories forces a heavy proportional incidence of downward marriage from the upper reaches of the hierarchy. As may be readily computed from Table 3, in the marginal case it is necessary for only 16·5 per cent of grooms in categories 4–7 combined to find their brides exclusively from categories 1–3 for it to become impossible (in the absence of a large reservoir of single women)[13] for men at these higher levels to find wives at all, except from the four lower categories. Thus, in common with other forms of status mobility, the extent of class exogamy is limited, even before other forces come into play, by the very structure of the society in which it takes place.

As so often happens, however, the reality of social life is less dramatic than

[12]In some societies this relationship has been somewhat diluted by a progressive diminution in the relative size of the lowest status category as unskilled occupations have become less common. This has already happened in the United Kingdom, and the beginning of the process is visible in Dublin: see Hutchinson, *ibid.*, p. 5.

[13]That is, on the assumption that the total number of women marrying in each category remains unchanged. In the marginal case suggested it is of course possible that men in the highest status categories might ransack their own class for women who would have otherwise remained single, with a view to mitigating the effect of the situation we have described. On the other hand, such a search, if successful, would reduce the chances of marriage for women in the four lowest status categories.

abstract analysis may lead us to expect. It was very rare indeed in Dublin for a man to take a wife from a status category as many as six positions above his own—that is, from the other extreme of the hierarchy. Indeed, in less than 4 per cent of male upward marriages was the bride drawn from a status category more than three positions away from that of the groom. Among downward marriages the proportion was even less. As we may see from Table 4, the mean "distance", in terms of social status, between bride and groom was only slightly more than one and a half categories, whether the groom was marrying up or down; and in either case half these grooms had found their brides in categories only one remove from their own. Mean "distance" proved to be related to the groom's status origin, so that (among upward marriages) the lower his status the further removed, on average, was that of his wife; and conversely among downward marriages. There is some suggestion, though of dubious statistical significance, that men whose origin lay at higher levels of status yet who married "beneath" them, selected their brides from a level more removed from their own, compared with their counterparts marrying "upwards" from lower status origins. These tended to select a bride from a level somewhat nearer their own. In the absence of an obvious sociological circumstance that could be held to account for such a difference (assuming it a reliable one), we find ourselves seeking an explanation in terms of the varying availability of single women. It is possible, that is to say, that men of higher status find their choice of bride constrained by the small absolute size of the status category adjacent to their own, thus obliging them to extend the search to lower, but more populous, strata. But to consider the matter in terms of such a possibility in some measure prejudges the class endogamy issue. If mate selection were entirely unaffected by considerations of class or social status, brides selected by grooms of any given status origin would be distributed randomly over the status hierarchy, other things being equal. In such a case, observed mean "distances" in terms of the number of status categories separating man and wife would equal expected distances expressed in terms of the opportunities open to a man of a given status. Expressing this in more concrete terms, we may say that, from the viewpoint of a single man at a given position on the hierarchy of status, single women are distributed about him on the same hierarchy at a calculable mean distance from himself. If we, for the moment, assume mate selection to be unrelated to social status, then for any given male status category the theoretical mean distance must equal the observed mean distance between bride and groom. But we know that mate selection is *not* independent of status considerations. Any discrepancies between theoretical and observed means can, therefore, be regarded as a rough measure of the influence of status in mate selection, weighted for variations in availability.

In Table 4 the expected "mean social distance", computed for each male

TABLE 4: *Class-exogamous male marriages: number of status categories separating bride and groom, related to direction of exogamous choice (percentages)*

Father's status at informant's marriage	Men marrying UPWARDS									
	Number of status categories						N (100 %)	(a) Obs. mean	(b) Exp. mean	(a) / (b)
	1	2	3	4	5	6				
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	100	—	—	—	—	—	5	1·00	1·00	1·00
3	69·2	30·8	—	—	—	—	13	1·31	1·35	0·97
4	48·5	42·4	9·1	—	—	—	33	1·61	1·67	0·96
5	63·6	25·2	7·5	3·7	—	—	107	1·51	1·73	0·87
6	79·3	17·1	1·2	2·4	—	—	82	1·27	1·79	0·71
7	25·9	57·8	10·9	3·4	1·4	0·7	147	1·99	2·50	0·80
All:	51·9	37·2	7·2	2·8	0·5	0·3	387	1·64		

Father's status at informant's marriage	Men marrying DOWNWARDS									
	Number of status categories						N (100 %)	(a) Obs. mean	(b) Exp. mean	(a) / (b)
	1	2	3	4	5	6				
1	26·3	26·3	36·8	10·5	—	—	19	2·32	4·08	0·57
2	21·4	53·6	21·4	—	3·6	—	28	2·11	3·44	0·61
3	43·3	45·0	5·0	6·7	—	—	60	1·75	2·40	0·73
4	66·7	21·6	11·8	—	—	—	102	1·45	1·75	0·83
5	46·0	54·0	—	—	—	—	139	1·54	1·60	0·96
6	100·0	—	—	—	—	—	35	1·00	1·00	1·00
7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
All:	53·3	37·6	7·3	1·6	0·3	—	383	1·58		

status category, and for each direction of marriage (upward and downward), was calculated on the basis of the distribution, by status origin, of all married women. We may illustrate this with an example. A man originating in category 2 who married upward had only one status category above him. The mean "distance", therefore, between his own and any future bride's status was one status category. But had he married downward he would have found five status categories below him; and the mean distance between himself and a potential bride (weighting by size of category) would have been 3.4 status categories. There then arose the question of the relationship that the expected values of the mean bore to the observed values. It seemed reasonable to argue that, the more they differed, the greater the obstacle to unconstrained mate selection set up by differences in social status. We therefore computed the

observed-expected ratios, and these are set out in the final column of Table 4, values less than unity indicating that average differences of status between bride and groom had been influenced by factors other than availability—in other words, that mate selection had not been random in terms of relative social status.

Turning first to an examination of men who married upwards, we see that, as far down the status hierarchy as category 4, the mean observed "distance" between bride and groom virtually coincided with expectation; and category 5 thereafter diverged very little from it. Below these levels, however, upward marriages took place with women of a mean status closer to that of the men— closer, that is, than the overall distribution of women would lead us to expect. Unlike other men, those from categories 6 and 7 (and, to a minor degree, those from category 5) failed to obtain their due proportion of wives from more distant status levels. A similar picture, with the terms reversed, is discernible among male downward marriages. Categories 5 and 6 showed a close relation-ship between observed and expected mean distance; and thereafter the ratio declined until, at the top of the male hierarchy, it had fallen to 0·6, slightly below the corresponding extreme among upward marriages (0·7).

In short, then, the position appeared to be that status "distance" separating bride and groom was inversely related to the groom's own status origin: the more extreme his position (at the top of the hierarchy if he were marrying down, at the bottom if marrying up) the further he might move to find a wife. Nevertheless it seemed that constraint was felt particularly (but not exclusively) at these extremes of the hierarchy, since their members failed, despite the theoretical possibility of it, to obtain as often as statistically they should have done, wives from status positions very remote from themselves. In other words, where very large status differences between bride and groom were not involved, barriers to inter-marriage were less important. Where the differences were large, class barriers were sufficiently high as to ensure that the statistically-expected number of exogamous unions did not take place. Such barriers seem to have been more formidable where men were marrying downwards; some-what less so if marrying upwards. Our further analysis, therefore, suggested that availability of potential brides did not, after all, significantly affect "distance" between bride and groom, since mean distance fell short (though in varying degrees) of that theoretically possible at all but a few male status levels. Free choice in mate selection was constrained, not by the pyramidal shape of the overall status distribution of single women, but by barriers set up, quite simply, by differences in social status themselves.

The oblique approach offered by the method we have used is not wholly satisfactory, however. It was preferable to make use of a single measure of homogamy in whose computation various statistical constraints we have

mentioned are taken into account. Such a measure is offered by Gini's index of homogamy. In the computation of this index[14] it is necessary, as a preliminary, to reduce the data to a series of dichotomous classifications; and on this basis to prepare 2×2 contingency tables in which the groom's characteristic is related to that of the bride. The index is the quotient of the difference between the products of pairs of homogamous cells, over the square root of the product of the marginal totals. With a theoretical range of —1 to +1, the value of the index shows degree of heterogamy (in the negative case), independence (zero) or homogamy (positive). Thus, as the value approaches zero from either the positive or the negative extreme, so choice of marriage partner is increasingly independent of the factor (in the present case, relative social status) under examination.

We computed the indices of homogamy for each of the seven categories of social status (Table 5) in our sample of 1,233 couples, chi square in each case being significant beyond the 0·01 level. In no status category was the degree of homogamy suggested by the index particularly high (for purposes of comparison it may be remarked that values of 0·8 and above were not uncommon in a study of ethnic endogamy in urban Brazil)[15]—that is, when we consider marriage from a given status level with an individual of *any* other status. As we

TABLE 5: *Indices of homogamy, related to status origin of individual.*

Status category of origin	Index of homogamy
1	0·385
2	0·247
3	0·208
4	0·180
5	0·128
6	0·095
7	0·315

$N=$ 1,233. Chi square significant at the 0·01 level in each case.

[14]Cf. Bertram Hutchinson, "Some evidence related to matrimonial selection and immigrant assimilation in Brazil", *Population Studies*, xi, November, 1957, where extensive use is made of the index of homogamy. Reference is made in this article to earlier applications of the index, by F. Savorgnan, to marriage data from Buenos Aires and Boston, Massachusetts. Savorgnan in turn mentions the statistical derivation of the index to be found in the work of C. Gini and C. V. L. Charlier. L. Livi, *Elementi di Statistica*, Padua, 1948, pp. 344–350, also refers to it. However, the index is merely a special application of the phi coefficient, or the Yule ϕ: see J. P. Guilford, *Fundamental Statistics in Psychology and Education*, New York, 1956, pp. 311–315. It is worth noting that $\chi^2=N\phi^2$. C. A. Price and J. Zubrzycki discuss the index of homogamy in "The use of intermarriage statistics as an index of assimilation", *Population Studies*, xvi, July, 1962; and L. Broom and F. Lancaster Jones at the Australian National University, Canberra, are currently experimenting with its application to Australian marriage statistics.

[15]B. Hutchinson, *ibid.*, pp. 152–153.

shall see later, homogamy became more noticeable when intermarriage was related to specific single status levels. Here, as Table 5 shows us, homogamy is greatest at the extremes of the hierarchy—those born at the top or the bottom were more likely than anyone else to find a mate from within their own class. Yet its incidence, as indicated by index values of 0·30–0·40, remains unremarkable, though significant. If we look at the general pattern it is evident that from category 1 down to, and including, category 6, homogamy decreased regularly with declining status. Only the lowest, category 7, breaks the sequence. In other words, with this exception, the lower a man's status origin the more likely he was to take a wife of status differing from his own; and indeed mate selection among those originating in category 6 (with an index value of 0·095) approached independence of status considerations altogether. This generalisation again resembles the pattern of indices of association evident in intergenerational social mobility, to which we have already drawn attention, with the modification that level of class self-recruitment showed signs of rising at category 6, one status category earlier than the counterpart on the range of indices of homogamy.

As with social mobility generally, one of the chief barriers to class intermarriage was that presented by the boundary separating manual from nonmanual occupations (although it was by no means insuperable). If we collapse our seven categories of status to two, approximately equivalent to a manual/non-manual dichotomy, the picture is that suggested by Table 6.

Approximately two men out of three, if they were of non-manual origin, married within their own class. This was a somewhat smaller proportion than the equivalent among those of manual origin, four-fifths of whose marriages

TABLE 6: *Social status origin of brides and grooms at marriage: the manual/non-manual dichotomy (percentages)*

Origin of bride	Origin of groom		N (100%)
	Non-manual	Manual	
Non-manual	60·8 61·3	39·2 17·2	378
Manual	17·0 38·7	83·0 82·8	855
N (100%)	375	858	1,233

Diagonal Ratio: 76·2. Index of homogamy: 0·44.
Chi square significant beyond the 0·001 level. $C = ·40$ (max. ·866).

were class-endogamous. As the diagonal ratio shows, some three-quarters of all marriages were endogamous on the basis of the manual/non-manual dichotomy; and the index of homogamy reaches the highest value (0·440) we have so far encountered in the present analysis. Nevertheless, the position was less rigid than might be expected, for although class endogamy estimated on this basis was high in comparison with what we saw earlier, considerable residual intermarriage occurred. On the other hand, as our data on "distance" between bride and groom tend to confirm (as becomes more evident later), much of the intermarriage took place at the boundary of the two classes, high-level manuals marrying low-level non-manuals. A relatively small proportion was accounted for by marriages between persons occupying positions very remote from each other.

Something of the relationship existing between class exogamy and social mobility generally began to emerge when we related indices of homogamy to the husband's mobility history (Table 7). For this purpose, as before, we defined

TABLE 7: *Indices of homogamy, related to husband's social mobility history*

Husband's Status category of origin	Husband's present status relative to that of his father			All husbands
	Higher	Same	Lower	
1	—	0·601*	0·028	0·385*
2	0·019	0·114*	0·420*	0·247*
3	0·117†	0·161*	0·332*	0·208*
4	0·183*	0·254*	0·091	0·180*
5	—0·058	0·213*	0·152*	0·128*
6	0·072	0·137*	0·067	0·095*
7	0·389*	0·363*	—	0·315*
N:	422	501	310	1,233

*Chi square significant beyond the 0·01 level.
† „   „   „   „   „ 0·025 „ .

class exogamy on the basis of differences in the social status of the husband's father and father-in-law at the time of the marriage. In estimating a man's mobility history up to the time he was interviewed in the course of the survey, we compared his current social status with that of his father during the course of the greater part of the latter's working life. In Table 7 our sample of married men are classified according to whether they had maintained paternal status, moved above, or fallen below it; and cross-classified according to paternal status at the time of the subject's marriage (i.e., the latter's status origin).

The indices of homogamy related to this classification provided in this way some evidence of the inter-relatedness of class exogamy and general social mobility.

In interpreting Table 7 it is useful to regard as a basis of comparison those men without a history of social mobility, indices of homogamy for whom appear in the central column. We may then put the question: are men of equivalent status origin more prone to select a wife of a status differing from their own —do they, in short, display greater class exogamy—if they are socially mobile than if they merely maintain their paternal status? Is there evidence to support the view that class exogamy is a common accompaniment, perhaps also in some circumstances a means of furthering, more general social mobility (what may be called the "boss's daughter syndrome")? The pattern suggested by the indices set out in Table 7 offers an affirmative answer. With exceptions (to which we shall turn in a moment) indices of homogamy were higher among men without a history of social mobility than they were among men who, though of equivalent origin, moved away from their inherited status level. This remained true whether they gained or lost status. Although in general the differences are not large, they are consistent enough to make the tendency appear a real one. Notable exceptions to the trend, however, occur in categories 2 and 3 of the status origin hierarchy. It will be noticed that, in these categories, men who had descended to positions below their father's social status were more prone to class endogamy if we compare them to men of similar origin who had retained their inherited status. The differences here are large enough to suggest that they reflect some social phenomenon whose effect is felt particularly by these two status categories. As to what it might be we can do little more than conjecture.

It is plausible to suppose that special age and educational circumstances impinge on the status categories in question. Both categories contain, relatively to other categories (with the exception of category 1), a high proportion of technical and professional occupations which assume lengthy vocational training. But professional qualification may not immediately lead to an occupation of status equal to that of the subject's father, even if it may ultimately do so: a young, newly-qualified man may expect to step down a category or two at the outset of his career. Yet in view of the tendency, which we shall see, towards educational endogamy, and the subject's reasonable expectation (and the expectation of others) of rebounding, with the passage of time, to his former social status or above it, he may well successfully seek a wife from the status level at which he was brought up. A frequent repetition of such events will increase the homogamy rate among men recorded, in terms of occupational mobility, as downward mobile. In so doing it must simultaneously reduce the numbers of the homogamous among those retaining

their inherited status: and the relatively low values of the indices for these groups seem consistent with the hypothesis. For a given pair of generations, of course, the position of categories 2 and 3 will be a temporary one: sons later returning to paternal status levels with their wives will increase the value of the index in the "same" column, while reducing it in the "down". But in the population generally, paternal mortality, combined with a renewed outflow of newly-qualified third generation sons, will tend to its perpetuation.

The exceptions to the general pattern of indices in Table 7, then, may in a sense serve only to reinforce our conclusion that class exogamy is significantly interwoven with general social mobility: a conclusion, however, that does little more than lend systematic support to a familiar community belief. Marginal in novelty as the conclusion itself may be, our data provide us with a useful quantitative estimate of the frequency with which social ambitions are furthered (or accompanied) by judicious marriage—or with which the unambitious seal, or symbolise, their fate through the neglect of this possible means of social promotion. The percentages of Table 8, while more generalised than the indices of the preceding table, present the quantitative picture in particularly striking terms. The diagonal ratio of this table is 48·3—that is to say, nearly half the sample of men followed in their personal mobility history the events of mate selection. The socially static tended to marry women of their own origin, social ascenders to marry "above", and social descenders "beneath", themselves. Half the social ascenders married women of a status origin higher than their own; only one in eight married beneath them. In sharp contrast, slightly more than half the descenders took wives of status origin lower than their own; only a fifth married upwards. Among the socially static who did not take a wife from the same level as themselves, choice fell almost equally between wives of higher or lower status.

TABLE 8: *Relative social status of groom's father-in-law, related to groom's subsequent mobility history (percentages)*

Relative status of father-in-law	Groom's mobility history			
	Ascender	Static	Descender	All grooms
Higher than groom	49·0	27·8	13·2	31·4
Same as groom	32·0	44·7	33·6	37·5
Lower than groom	19·0	27·5	53·2	31·1
N (100%)	422	501	310	1,233

Chi square significant beyond 0·001 level. C=·34 (max. ·913).

We must now retrace our steps somewhat in order to look in more detail at our earlier evidence of class endogamy. In Table 5 we saw indices of homogamy relating to marriage to a spouse originating from *any* category of status other than the subject's own. We must now examine homogamy between specific *pairs* of status categories. For example, it may be that men originating in category 2 were less inclined to select a mate from category 3, compared with the inclination of men from category 3 to marry "into" the equally adjacent (for them) category 4. Such variations could mean that, although overall homogamy might be relatively low, there might be special circumstances in which it reached a much higher level—homogamy varying, that is, not only in relation to the subject's own origin, but also in relation to that of potential mates. We have already seen something of this in our discussion of "social distance" separating man and wife. Table 9 takes the matter a step further by providing a matrix of indices of homogamy that relate in turn the subject's status origin to each status category other than his own. In other words, each value of the index shows the strength of an individual's preference for a spouse of the same origin as himself when the alternative is a spouse selected from one other single specified status category.

TABLE 9: *Indices of homogamy*

Status origin	Status origin						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1		0·443	0·570	0·643	0·787	1·000	0·957
2			0·418	0·309	0·634	0·908	0·891
3				0·298	0·353	0·866	0·804
4					0·237	0·429	0·715
5						0·090*	0·304
6							0·225
7							
All:	0·385	0·247	0·208	0·180	0·128	0·095	0·315

*Chi square not significant at 0·01 level.

It is evident that the values of the indices, almost throughout the matrix, are greater than those computed earlier (reappearing in Table 9 as marginal total values). Values in excess of 0·40 are usual; those exceeding 0·80 are not uncommon. It seems, therefore, that our earlier analysis based upon Table 5 mistakenly assumed a unitary view of exogamy that is now apparently belied by the evidence of varying preferences. To a very considerable degree, of course, such variations must be a function of social distance, for the index of homo-

gamy increases steadily as the status of a potential spouse becomes increasingly remote from that of the subject. Thus, for an individual originating in category 1, the value of the index of homogamy relative to *all* other status categories is 0·385. But in relation to persons originating in category 5, the value rises to 0·787; and it rises virtually to unity in relation to persons from positions lower on the hierarchy. Among people born to positions in the middle reaches of the hierarchy (and who may be thought strategically placed to seek a mate from positions either above or below their own) the same principle applies, irrespective of the direction we look: homogamy increases the greater the distance, up or down from the subject's own origin. The more a potential spouse seems remote, from a status point of view, the more likely a man or woman will in the end marry someone from his own level. The persistence of the relationship is equally evident in the diagonals of the matrix, by whose means we may compare degrees of homogamy for socially equi-distant pairs of status categories. As before, the values of the indices increase with social distance; but we see also that the values of the index tend towards equality for a given social distance, whatever the point of origin.

So that what immediately strikes us about Table 9 is the cumulative evidence it provides that, in mate selection, it is social distance in status level terms that is closely associated with class endogamy. There is a very substantial tendency for a person occupying a status position more than two categories removed from one's own (whatever this may be) to be an unlikely choice as a spouse. There are few indications of any more specific, or caste-like, forms of discrimination through which certain assortative marriages are impossible or more than usually discouraged, though there may be a suggestion of something of the sort in the case of certain intermarriage pairs. It is perhaps worth commenting briefly upon these.

The intermarriage pairs in question (that is, pairs of status categories between which marriage is theoretically possible) are composed of categories 1 and 2, 1 and 3, and 2 and 3. Subjects originating in category 1 appeared more likely to display a preference for a spouse of their own origin when presented with the alternative of marrying into categories 2 or 3; and those originating in category 2 more disinclined to marry into category 3 than is usual for social distances of one or two categories. To this extent, therefore, the class endogamy of categories 1 and 2 appears to have been inflated beyond the "normal" dimensions imposed by social distance alone (as measured by status categories). The other special case, concerning the intermarriage pair composed of categories 5 and 6, differs from the preceding in that homogamy is virtually absent. Between these two categories there is little significant barrier, whether of social distance or of any other sort, to intermarriage—in other words, where marriage is concerned, the distinction between skilled and semi-skilled is not sharply

drawn, if it is drawn at all (perhaps because semi-skill is popularly regarded as an apprenticeship to skill). But these exceptions apart, the matrix shows clearly that class endogamy increased directly with social distance (rank-difference correlation showed that $\rho = 0.88$). It does not tell us, however, whether "distance" as such is the barrier, thus forming a caste-like system; or if "distance" is an abstraction concealing the true sources of discrimination which may lie, for example, in differences of social experience, education and values.

We may first turn, then, to an examination of the relationship, if there is one, between homogamy and birthplace. Are people prone to select a mate from a birthplace similar in general character, or perhaps identical, to their own—bearing in mind, in seeking an answer to this question, that such information as we possess refers to a sample of adults now resident in Dublin, whether or not their birthplace was elsewhere. It naturally seemed not unlikely that such a tendency existed; and Table 10 shows that there is some statistical evidence for

TABLE 10: *Groom's birthplace related to birthplace of bride (percentages)*

Bride's birthplace	Groom's birthplace					All brides	Index of homogamy
	Dublin	Other large city	Town	Village	Countryside		
Dublin	79·7	41·9	37·9	30·4	24·8	64·5	0·453
Other large city	4·1	18·6	11·7	4·9	6·0	6·0	0·136
Town	6·5	13·7	28·2	12·7	6·4	9·5	0·217
Village	2·2	4·8	8·2	24·5	4·6	4·4	0·227
Countryside	7·6	21·0	14·0	27·5	58·2	15·6	0·410
N (100%)	1,347	124	206	102	218	1,997*	

Diagonal ratio: 65·3.
*Cf. footnote 8 above, p. 17. Because of fewer non-responses to the present questions $N = 1,997$.

it. Overall similarity in birthplace, as indicated by the diagonal ratio, was considerable, two-thirds of our couples being natives of similar areas of the country. This is less evident in the indices of homogamy, which show us the likelihood that persons of a given birthplace chose a mate from within their own ranks—and, by implication, of course, the likelihood that mates were found outside them. None of the indices has a high value, and in only two cases does birthplace seem to exceed minor significance in mate selection. People who were born in the open countryside, on farms and the like, on the one

hand; and people born in Dublin, on the other—at these extremes of the rural-urban gamut, marriage partners were more than usually found from similar environments, the most rural and the most urban thus manifesting the highest levels of homogamy. But if, by and large, marriage was not unduly influenced by unrefined considerations of birthplace, their impact seems to grow more evident (Table 11) when we come to the consideration of more specific cases—or, in other words, to the incidence of homogamy when alternatives were specified. The values of the indices now become notably greater than most of those in Table 10; and there is considerable variation, for a postulated individual contemplating birthplace heterogamy, in the influence of local origin on choice of mate. Generally speaking, the more remote in character the birthplace of a potential mate from that of the subject himself, the less likely marriage becomes. Judging from the indices, therefore, intermarriage has been least common (i.e., the level of homogamy was highest) between villagers and natives of cities *other* than Dublin; and between the country-born on the one hand, and natives of country towns, or of Dublin on the other. Such results are, of course, readily understood as the outcome of lack of propinquity; but we are probably mistaken in assuming the whole explanation to lie here.

TABLE 11 : *Indices of homogamy, related to birthplace*

| | | Birthplace | | | |
| | | | | | |
Birthplace	Dublin	Other large city	Town	Village	Country
Dublin		0·253	0·342	0·423	0·559
Other large city			0·272	0·627	0·420
Town				0·422	0·592
Village					0·461
Country					

Differences in life-styles and, more particularly, in education, associated with birthplace may well be of equal, or perhaps greater, importance, expecially where social mobility is involved. Moreover, the influence of educational background is likely to be profoundly affected by the general tendency, in Ireland as elsewhere, for higher educational attainment to be typically accompanied by rural-urban migration.

In our sample of 1,867 marriages for which we had relevant information, 50 per cent of grooms had educational attainments similar to those of their brides, when we used (as we have done in Table 12) nine educational categories.

The proportion varies, however, from one category to another quite remarkably; and while part of this variation evidently arises from sampling error (for some of the marginal totals are small) much remains after making allowance for this. Among men who had received no education beyond the end of the primary cycle, more than three-quarters married women of similar attainments; but only slightly more than a third did the same if they had failed to complete the primary course. Half the men who had reached the end of the secondary cycle (but only a third of those who had given up before completing it) married women of similar educational level. In contrast, a very small proportion, about one in eight, of university graduates found wives of equal attainments.

It is not, however, merely personal choice that we see operating to produce these variations: differences in availability were at least of equal significance. Access to the several levels of education had differed between the sexes.[16] More men than women in our sample had had no formal education at all, or had failed to complete the primary cycle. The same was true of technical, vocational and university education, all of which were more common among men than

TABLE 12: *Groom's educational level related to that of the bride (percentages)*

Bride's educational level*	Groom's educational level*									Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
0	—	0·6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0·1
1	—	**38·8**	5·0	2·8	1·9	1·9	0·4	—	0·7	6·5
2	—	46·6	**78·7**	53·5	44·9	35·1	14·0	7·4	1·4	49·9
3	—	2·2	2·0	**7·0**	6·8	0·5	1·9	—	0·7	2·4
4	—	1·1	3·1	9·9	**15·0**	5·9	4·3	3·7	2·7	4·9
5	—	6·2	5·0	19·7	15·0	**35·6**	23·6	22·2	26·4	14·7
6	—	4·5	6·0	7·0	15·5	21·0	**50·4**	59·3	48·0	18·8
7	—	—	0·1	—	—	—	1·2	**3·7**	7·4	0·9
8	—	—	0·1	—	1·0	—	4·3	3·7	**12·8**	1·8
N (100%):	7	178	766	71	207	205	258	27	148	1,867

Diagonal ratio: 49·9.

*0: *no formal education;* 1: *primary,* incomplete; 2: *primary,* complete; 3: *technical and vocational,* incomplete; 4: *technical and vocational,* complete; 5: *secondary,* incomplete; 6: *secondary,* complete; 7: *university,* incomplete; 8: *university,* complete.

[16]The educational system and facility of access to it has undergone significant change during the past 50 years. In so far as this has affected the general level of women's education, the level of educational homogamy may be increasing.

women; yet secondary education, whether completed or not, was more usual among women. Such differences alone made parity of educational attainment impossible for all couples, even had they wished it. On the other hand, neither were educationally mixed marriages possible for a majority because (as we saw in our discussion of class exogamy) opportunity for this becomes increasingly attenuated as we move towards the upper levels of educational attainment. To take an extreme, but illustrative, example: of the 951 men whose schooling went no further than the primary level, only 40 could have taken as wives women with university education, for that is all there were (in fact, only two men from this educational category claimed to have done so). A like discrepancy was an evident obstacle to mixed marriages between men of primary-school level and women of secondary level and above: 65·8 per cent of the men fell into the former category; only 36·2 per cent of the women into the latter. In short, therefore, differences between the sexes in access to formal education, together with differences in the size of the various educational categories, themselves set insuperable limits to both endogamy and exogamy based upon educational considerations alone.

Their effect is further demonstrated in the lower part of Table 13 (based upon four educational categories, broader than those employed in Table 12) where the relevant matrix of indices of homogamy is set out. The picture suggested by this is by now familiar to us—the greater the social or, as in this case, the educational distance separating two individuals, the less likely was marriage between them to occur. Homogamy was greatest among the university-educated if the alternative before them was intermarriage with those of primary, vocational or technical education. It was at its lowest, again among the university-educated, in relation to intermarriage with those of secondary education. But in general, as may be seen, intermarriage was not infrequent between persons of adjacent educational status: it became less common as educational attainments became more diverse. The indices show, nevertheless, that of all educational categories those of primary level were least inclined to take mates of education differing from their own (the general index of homogamy for the category reaches a value of 0·568)—doubtless partly from preference, but also because mates of different education were simply not available for all members of this very numerous category.

What relationship, then does educational intermarriage bear to that degree of class exogamy on which we commented earlier? Do men who, from the viewpoint of their class origins, marry "above" themselves, tend also to marry their educational superiors? Or do they offer compensation, as it were, for their social shortcomings in the form of higher educational attainments? Are men who socially marry "beneath" them of lower educational attainment than their peers? The answers to such questions may reasonably be sought in

a table relating status origin to educational attainment for man and wife—that might show, for example, some degree of identity (or the reverse) in social status and educational levels. Such an analysis as that presented in Table 14, however, does not entirely fulfil such expectations. Only 244 couples, or 21 per

TABLE 13: *Groom's educational level related to that of the bride (percentages) based upon four educational categories; and indices of homogamy*

Bride's educational level	Groom's educational level				
	Primary	Technical and vocational	Secondary	University	Total
Primary	84·1	49·3	24·4	2·9	56·5
Technical and vocational	4·7	20·5	6·3	3·4	7·3
Secondary	10·9	29·5	66·3	75·4	33·5
University	0·3	0·7	3·0	18·3	2·7
N (100%):	951	278	463	175	1,867

Diagonal ratio: 64·1.

	Indices of homogamy			
	Primary	Vocational	Secondary	University
Primary		0·314	0·619	0·898
Technical and vocational			0·382	0·822
Secondary				0·245
All:	0·568	0·211	0·399	0·311

Chi square significant throughout beyond the 0·001 level.

cent, showed identity on both counts, that of class origin and educational attainment. But a much greater proportion (66·9 per cent) was matched on one or other variable—was, that is to say, either of the same class origin or of the same educational level—so that only a third of our couples manifested one or other form of heterogamy. When we turn to an examination of coincidence in "direction" of movement where class or educational intermarriage occurred, the data suggest a definite, if not a marked, trend. Men who were of a social origin inferior to that of their wives showed some tendency, on the other hand, to surpass them in educational attainment. Conversely, men marrying down-wards socially seemed somewhat more likely to be below their wives education-

TABLE 14: *Relative social status and relative educational attainment (percentages)*

Groom's social origin relative to bride	Groom's education relative to bride			Total	
	Higher	Same	Lower		
Lower	35·7	31·2	29·5		31·6
	23·4	50·2	26·4	367	
Same	36·1	41·2	29·8		36·9
	20·3	56·9	22·8	429	
Higher	28·2	27·6	40·7		31·5
	18·6	44·8	36·6	366	
Total:	241	592	329		1,162
	20·7	51·0	28·3		

Chi square significant beyond 0·001 level. $C = ·14$ (max. ·913).

ally. These results lend some support to the supposition that in mate selection social origin and educational attainment can be mutually compensating. Relatively few husbands (7·4 per cent) married upwards in both the educational and the class sense; and although the proportion who, in both senses, married beneath them is greater (11·5 per cent), it remains small. Nor, perhaps, are such results surprising when we note that although for Table 14 chi-square is significant beyond the 0·001 level, the low value of the coefficient of contingency (0·14) shows the overall relationship between relative class origin and relative educational attainment of man and wife to be after all quite slight, almost negligible (though undeniably statistically significant). Moreover, there was no significant difference in indices of homogamy related to educational attainment when these were calculated, respectively, for grooms whose brides were of a higher, or a lower, social origin. In short, therefore, there is little in Table 14 to support the view that, in mate selection, identity or diversity in social origin is normally accompanied by like or compensatory features in educational level.

II

Our data have therefore revealed a number of significant variations in the incidence of class and other forms of endogamy among the population of Dublin. In his study of Dublin, Humphreys tells us:[17]

> While artisan mothers are just as determined as their own mothers that a daughter should not "marry beneath her", today they are prevalently optimistic about their daughter's chance of improving her social position by marriage, and at the same time they are active in working towards that end. Where her own parents judged a daughter's suitor on his character as indicated to a great extent

[17] A. J. Humphreys, *New Dubliners*, London, 1966, pp. 168-9.

by his family background and on his ability to provide her daughter the same standard of living as their own, the artisan mother today prevalently desires the suitor to be a lad with a higher occupational and social position, either actual or potential, than her husband's. Character is still a basic qualification for eligibility, but of almost equal importance is class standing or opportunity . . . daughters prevalently outstrip their mothers in their marital ambitions.

While it is hard to be certain of the weight to be given to this conclusion, and even more difficult to know how far to extrapolate it to cover other sections of the population, nevertheless we have seen that in only slightly over a third of Dublin marriages were husband and wife of the same social origin. It has to be emphasised, on the other hand, that the size of this proportion is in part dependent upon the number of status groups that we distinguish—the greater their number, evidently, the fewer marriages will appear endogamous— with the result, for example, that when only manual and non-manual categories were distinguished, the proportion of endogamous marriages rose to more than 75 per cent. This is not to say that the more discriminatory classification necessarily failed to reflect social reality, for this is an issue on which we have little empirical data for Ireland; and it is a common observation that class and status distinctions are very often popularly drawn with more care and detailed discrimination than those usually employed (for practical reasons) by a social investigator. But neither is the manual/non-manual dichotomy an unreal one, for our data show that one of the bigger obstacles to class intermarriage was the barrier erected by this distinction. The fact is that individual decisions on mate selection appear to have been affected by so many considerations (whether acting directly, or at second or third remove through the operation of personal preferences, it is impossible to say) that overall rates of class endogamy and the like are quickly drained of meaning. It is for this reason that it appears possible to appeal to such global values as witnesses to the seeming contradiction that class endogamy characterises simultaneously a minority and a majority of the married population.

Reservations as to the value of overall proportions in the discussion of the incidence of assortative mating also undermine our faith in attempts at the estimation of the relative importance in mate selection of this factor or of that—whether, for example, class differences are more influential than educational differences; and like comparisons. On the basis of our data it is a simple matter to rank certain factors in the apparent order of their importance in bringing about endogamous marriage. In Dublin about 66 per cent of couples were natives of the "same" geographical environment: 50 per cent were of the "same" education; about 38 per cent were of the "same" origin. From such figures it seems natural to draw the conclusion that the importance of these three factors should be ranked in the same order—birthplace being

more influential than education, which is in turn more significant than
class origin, in mate selection. But apart altogether from considerations of
mutual intercorrelation (evidently important considerations where these
specific variables are concerned), we are effectively prevented from drawing
such a conclusion by the difficulties posed by problems of classification. By
dropping the earlier (Table 12) distinction drawn between complete and
incomplete courses at each educational level, the proportion of educationally
endogamous marriages is raised to 64 per cent (Table 13)—a proportion not
significantly different, statistically, from the corresponding proportion relating
to birthplace. A more discriminatory classification of birthplace than the one
we have used can be expected to reduce the latter proportion to a level below
that for education, or even that for social origin. It is therefore apparent
that different classificatory conventions could well modify, or reverse, the
rank order of importance that is suggested by the first set of proportions we
cited. Nor is it easy to imagine how this difficulty can be overcome, if com-
parisons of this sort are desired, except by the expedient of employing equal
numbers of categories in the classification of all variables. This expedient, it
is true, would ensure that the number of marriages recorded as endogamous
would not be affected differentially by merely procedural matters. However,
it would not ensure that we remained sufficiently in touch with a social reality
in which events might not be normally categorised in this convenient way.[18]

If we are precluded, for the reasons we have mentioned, from reaching a
conclusion on the relative importance of birthplace, education and social
origin in determining the incidence of homogamy, it remains true that a large
proportion of married couples in Dublin showed agreement on one or other,
or on a combination, of these characteristics. But while class and other forms
of homogamous marriage seemed on this basis common enough, the weight
of its incidence varied, as we have seen, from one category of the population
to another. Indeed, it is these group differences rather than doubtful estimates
of overall incidence that offer the more interesting outcome of our study;
and in considering them we have the advantage that they are less subject to
distortion arising from problems of classification. For example, our finding
that class endogamy in Dublin is more commonly found in the upper than
among the lower status categories is likely to be less affected by variations
in the number of status categories employed, even if variation may be expected
to result in fluctuation in the size of the differences.

[18]Blau and Duncan concluded that ". . . there is appreciable assortment with respect to parental
occupational status, but . . . a much closer approach to homogamy in the educational attainment of
the spouses themselves. . .": *The American Occupational Structure*, New York, 1967, p. 354. This is similar
to our own preliminary conclusion. However, the classifications on the basis of which these authors'
correlations were calculated (and on whose differences their conclusion is based) appear to have
been composed of 17 categories relating to occupation, but only 10 relating to education. The possibility
that degree of correlation could be affected by differences in classification is not discussed.

This may be true; but the doubts raised by differences in classification are not thereby entirely laid to rest. Much of the exogamous marriage that we observed took place between individuals who (on the scales employed), while they were not of identical, were of similar origin. Half the class-exogamous marriages involved people of adjacent status categories; only a tiny proportion concerned persons very widely separated on the scale of status. Indications of a similar pattern relating to educational attainment, though somewhat masked by sex differences in access, and by the dominance of primary education in the population generally, are nevertheless evident. It is easy, moreover, to imagine that marriage partners from geographical environments that, in terms of our classification, were diverse, were viewed locally as originating in adjacent sections of the "same" environment; or if not adjacent, may have been locally regarded as similar (as, for example, "Dublin" and "other large cities"; or "countryside" and "village"). In short, these doubts, together with those earlier ones concerning category boundaries, raise in an insistent form the question of how far a study of assortative mating based upon externally imposed classifications, however numerous these may be, can be held to reflect the reality of social life. How often are marriages, classified on such a basis as exogamous, so regarded by the participants, their relatives and friends? A negative answer to this question does not itself show the investigator to have been mistaken; just as a geneticist presumably may be justified, in terms of his own research interests, in classifying as exogamous a marriage between a brown-eyed groom and a blue-eyed bride that, in terms of the community in which it occurred, was self-evidently endogamous.

In considering the incidence of endogamy and its variations it is therefore essential to make clear what is at issue. Do our data reflect the community's own view of events, or result merely from certain externally-imposed conceptions that may not (and may not be designed to) coincide with reality as it is socially interpreted? On the answer to this question depends very largely the feasibility of offering an explanation of the data in terms, say, of social function and its change. The authors of a recent French study[19] showed that variations in homogamy in the area under examination flowed from changes in family function that were themselves the outcome of rural-urban migration, and the decline of a specialised local industry. Only among the farming population (*cultivateurs*) did they find endogamy retaining much of its traditional function of economic alliance and maintenance of family wealth. In reaching this conclusion, however, the authors had the advantage (which we do not share) of facts and interpretations accruing from earlier socio-demographic research in the same area, thus providing a basis from which

[19]M. Segalen and A. Jacquard, "Choix du conjoint et homogamie", *Population*, vol. 26, mai-juin 1971, pp. 487-498.

they could reasonably argue. As this is not our case, one might take the view
that the variables upon which our preceding analysis is established were, in
the sociological sense, chosen on an arbitrary assumption that it is in such
terms that Dubliners define assortative mating, misalliance and homogamy.
The argument draws our attention to the limits of interpretation that restrict
our data: for these do not necessarily illustrate the working of social rules of
prohibition or injunction governing marriage and the choice of partner. They
may suggest the form such rules may take in this society; but in the absence
of intensive studies of the community we cannot assert their existence. Our
data, on the face of them, do no more than demonstrate how far the variables
we selected are associated with the choice of a marriage partner; and the
fact that this association (as we have shown) is often quite high may be evidence
equally supporting the hypothesis of individual preference, according to which
like spontaneously prefers like, as the alternative hypothesis of the existence
of social regulation designed to prevent misalliance defined in terms of class
origins and educational attainment.

Observations on Age at Marriage in Dublin, related to Social Status and Social Mobility

THE years since the Second World War have been characterised by a general decline in mean age at marriage in the Western world: people are marrying at ages earlier than were usual in the immediate past. Ireland has proved no exception, for although this country has been (and indeed remains) outstanding in the European context for its high mean age at marriage, available statistics show that Ireland is following the general fashion for younger marriages. A comparison with the relevant figures for Denmark and the Netherlands (selected for comparison because of certain similarity to Ireland in population size and economic character) shows a decrease during the years 1959–1967, of roughly two years in mean age at marriage in all three countries. The roughly parallel rate of decrease has, of course, meant that Ireland has maintained her position as the country with the latest marriages in Europe. Yet, as will be seen (Table 1), Irish mean marriage ages in 1967 were approximating fairly closely to the Danish and Netherlands means of nine years earlier. However, it cannot be said (on the basis of these data) that, in Ireland, the decline in mean age at marriage has been accompanied by a marked change in unanimity of choice among the marrying population. While it is true that Irishmen marrying in 1967 were on the average 2·3 years younger than their counterparts in 1959 (and the women on average 1·3 years younger), there

TABLE 1: *Mean age at marriage: Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands, 1959–1967*

Year	Denmark		Netherlands		Ireland	
	Groom	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom	Bride
1959	28·4	24·7	28·2	25·6	31·2	27·1
1960	28·3	24·6	28·3	25·4	30·9	27·1
1961	28·0	24·4	28·0	25·2	30·7	26·9
1962	27·7	24·2	27·8	24·9	30·3	26·7
1963	27·4	23·9	27·6	24·8	30·2	26·5
1964	27·2	23·8	27·5	24·6	29·8	26·3
1965	26·8	23·7	27·1	24·3	29·4	26·0
1966	26·7	23·7	26·8	24·2	29·0	25·7
1967	*	*	26·5	24·0	28·9	25·8

*Not available.
Source: *UN Demographic Yearbook*, 20th issue, 1968, Table 27, pp. 526, 530–532.

was little apparent change over this period in dispersion about the mean.[1] In other words, although people were marrying earlier, there was by 1967 little indication obtainable from these figures that it was becoming more fashionable than before to select certain conventional ages for doing so. A conventional age had always existed (though subject to change); but it seemed that more were not adhering to it. Among the grooms, dispersion, from 1959 to 1964, remained almost unchanged at about 8·4 years, only thereafter showing a slight decline. Among brides even limited change is barely discernible (Table 2). In some other European countries, however, there was visible, by 1967, a tendency towards the concentration of marriage ages nearer the mean. In slightly more than half the marriages contracted that year in the Netherlands, Denmark, France, England and Wales, and Scotland, the age of the groom lay between 20 and 24 years (Table 3). In Ireland no such marked concentration is evident, age at marriage for grooms being more widely dispersed.[2]

TABLE 2: *Mean age at marriage: dispersion, and differences between mean ages of bride and groom (Ireland)*

Year	Mean age				Difference (years)
	Groom	σ	Bride	σ	
1959	31·2	8·4	27·1	6·7	4·1
1960	30·9	8·4	27·1	6·7	3·8
1961	30·7	8·3	26·9	6·8	3·8
1962	30·3	8·3	26·7	6·8	3·6
1963	30·2	8·4	26·5	6·6	3·7
1964	29·8	8·3	26·3	6·8	3·5
1965	29·4	8·0	26·0	6·6	3·4
1966	29·0	7·8	25·7	6·5	3·3
1967	28·9	8·0	25·8	6·6	3·1

Source: UN Demographic Yearbook, 20th issue, 1968, Table 27, pp. 530–1.

It appeared that, while Ireland was moving towards a modal age at marriage more in line with a general European pattern, she had not yet achieved it, still retaining a notable, if declining, preference for later marriages. We shall not be concerned further with this issue, however, nor with tracing the origins

[1]However, an examination of age at marriage by single years rather than by age-groups (on which the means in this paper are based) gives a rather different picture, from which it is apparent that dispersion shows signs of falling, and a new lower modal age at marriage in Ireland asserting itself. See Brendan Walsh, "Trends in age at marriage in post-war Ireland," *Demography*, May, 1972.

[2]Yet Ireland's legal minimum age for marriage (14 years) is the lowest in Europe with the partial exception of Spain. It is equalled elsewhere only by Swaziland, Cuba, Honduras and six or seven Latin American republics. But Scotland, for example (with a higher minimum age), had in 1967 four times the Irish proportion of grooms aged 15–19.

TABLE 3: *Percentage distribution of grooms by age group, 1967: Ireland compared with selected European countries.*

Age Group	Ireland	Netherlands	Denmark†	France	England and Wales†	Scotland
15–19	3·0	3·8	4·4	3·7	8·7*	11·6*
20–24	33·2	50·4	54·7	53·8	50·2	51·6
25–29	32·6	31·2	23·5	23·4	20·5	20·3
30–34	14·5	6·7	6·9	7·5	7·0	6·2
35–39	7·4	2·6	3·5	3·7	3·7	3·0
40 and over	9·3‡	5·3	7·0	7·9	9·9	7·3

†1966. ‡Including ages not known (0·4 per cent).
*16–19 years.
Source: *UN Demographic Yearbook*, 20th issue, 1968, Table 27.

of the Irish pattern of late marriage, which has been the subject elsewhere of much expert examination.[3] We shall be merely examining some data relating age at marriage to social status, and to movement (or social mobility) from one status position to another, among the population of Dublin. In so far as these data reveal significant relationships between the several factors they possess their own inherent interest. But we may go further. To the degree that the existing status structure in Ireland is undergoing change, it may be ultimately possible to foresee future trends in age at marriage. We naturally do not suggest that considerations of social status are unique, or perhaps even dominant, in their influence upon the age at which marriages are contracted; nor can status be regarded as in itself a "pure" factor (at any rate, not in the terms by which we have been obliged to define it). Many matters associated with social status, or forming part of the concept, may be equally or more crucial in influencing a decision to marry, among them level of income or of education—or, more generally, the prospect of an adequate means of livelihood.[4] The status categories we have employed in the analysis go somewhat beyond the simpler economic and occupational considerations, and include a

[3]Notably, of course by K. H. Connell, *The Population of Ireland, 1750–1845*, Oxford, 1950, and *Irish Peasant Society*, Oxford, 1968. References to the problem may be found in the *Report of the Committee on Emigration and other Population Problems*, Dublin, 1955. C. M. Arensberg, *The Irish Countryman*, New York, 1937, and A. J. Humphreys, *New Dubliners*, London, 1966, both comment upon it. In Europe the phenomenon of late marriage is not confined to Ireland. J. K. Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage*, Oxford, 1964, pp. 82–83, gives figures for a Greek peasant community that suggest a mean age at marriage in the early sixties of 29·7 years for grooms and 26·5 years for brides. These values are close to the Irish means for the same period. Williams also notes a pattern of late marriage among the population of Gosforth: *The Sociology of an English Village*, London, 1956, p. 45.

[4]". . . men marry late because they cannot 'afford' to marry young: they have to wait until they have a livelihood, a farmer until he acquires land, an apprenticeship and so on. It is tempting to see in this feature a key to the uniqueness of the European marriage pattern. . . ." J. Hajnal, 'European marriage patterns in perspective,' in D. V. Glass and D. E. C. Eversley, (eds.), *Population in History*, London, 1965, p. 133.

status (or so-called "social class") ingredient—although we cannot claim to
have isolated this, if it can be isolated, from the other factors with which it is
always so closely associated.

The data themselves are derived from a sample of male adult residents of
Dublin.[5] It is immediately evident that such a source sets limits to the analysis
that can be undertaken. The figures cited above are of marriages occurring in
single calendar years. Corresponding figures are beyond the means provided
by our sample of Dubliners. It follows, therefore, that when we find our data
showing that mean ages at marriage vary in relation to some aspect of social
status, we cannot accept such variations entirely at their face value. Since
status categories of the population vary in their composition by age, the values
of the means can be influenced accordingly. This arises naturally from the
likelihood that, the more remote the date of marriage, the older (as we have
seen (Table 2) for marriages in the years from 1959 onwards) the partners
will have been. We shall see that sampling limitations made control by subject's
age possible on the basis of only the broadest of age-groupings. Moreover,
in drawing our conclusions, we must bear in mind the source of the sample.
There is evidence of a marked urban-rural difference in modal age at
marriage—late marriage, as might be expected, being particularly common
in the rural, especially the farming, population of the country. Our sample
data, therefore, reflect a situation applicable to Ireland generally only to the
degree that the Dublin population contains a rural-born contingent whose
marriage patterns remain of a rural type. We shall have an opportunity to
examine more closely the effect of birthplace.

The influence of various factors may be seen at work in the overall dis-
tribution of age at marriage among the sample of Dublin males when we
compare this with the corresponding distribution for Ireland as a whole in
the year 1967. Somewhat unexpectedly we find the two distributions and their
means to be fairly similar. The mean age of marriage in Ireland generally
during 1967 was evidently somewhat higher than the mean calculated from
the sample of all Dublin men (though the statistical significance of this differ-
ence is somewhat vitiated by sampling error)—presumably because the former
figure is influenced by the rural population. On the other hand, the difference
was a small one, largely arising from an incidence of very late marriage (at
ages 40 and over) that was greater in Ireland generally than in Dublin. Table
4 shows that, with this exception, the components of the Dublin sample had
tended to enter into marriage at somewhat later ages than those marrying
in Ireland as a whole during 1967. This apparent anomaly is, of course,
immediately disposed of. The national figures refer exclusively to marriages

[5]For a description of this sample see, B. Hutchinson, *Inter-generational Social Mobility in Dublin, op.
cit.*, pp. 2–4.

contracted during 1967. The Dublin marriages cover not only those of that year, but also an indeterminate period going back to 1918, or earlier. In other words, the expected rural-urban difference is masked by differences in date associated with differences in modal marriage age. The Dublin sample contained a larger proportion of late marriages (compared with the national figures for 1967) because they took place in earlier years when they were more usual.

TABLE 4: *Percentage distribution of grooms by age at marriage: Ireland (1967) compared with a sample of Dublin male adults*

Age at marriage	Ireland† (1967)	Dublin sample
15–19	3·0	2·1
20–24	33·2	28·3
25–29	32·6	37·2
30–34	14·5	18·9
35–39	7·4	7·9
40 and over	8·9	5·4
Not known	0·4	0·2
Mean Age:	28·9 years	28·0 years
N (100%)	17,788	2,010

†*Source: UN Demographic Yearbook,* 1968, Table 27, p. 530.

For this reason the undifferentiated figures of Table 4 tell us little. Thirty per cent of the male adult sample had been born outside the city, however; and these we might expect to have maintained something of the rural tradition of later marriage, irrespective of their age. But they were also older than natives of Dublin—on an average, five years older; and there were (Table 5) far fewer of them in the youngest, and far more of them in the oldest

TABLE 5: *Current age of Dublin male adults: natives compared with immigrants to the city (percentages).*

Age group	Dublin born	Born elsewhere
21–30	26·4	15·9
31–50	42·6	39·5
Over 50	30·8	44·6
Mean Age	42·2 years	47·3 years
N (100%):	1,743	771

Chi square significant beyond 0·001 level. $C = ·15$ (max. ·913).

age groups. Other things being equal, therefore, we may expect the migrant population of Dublin to have married more commonly at an earlier date when later marriages were usual—thus manifesting the combined influence of rural tradition and the conventions of an earlier period. Their effect is vividly evident in Table 6. Looking at the male adult population of Dublin as a whole, and leaving aside the question whether or not they were natives of the city, we see that mean age at marriage increases consistently with the number of the groom's rural-born relatives.[6]

TABLE 6: *Mean age at marriage of Dublin males, related to degree of rural origin*

Number of rural-born relatives	Mean age at marriage (years)	N
None or 1	26·2	1,109
2 or 3	28·3	391
4 or 5	30·4	180
6	30·8	164
All Informants	28·0	2,010*

*The grand total is greater than the sum of the partial totals since the latter excludes subjects for whom information on birthplace, etc., is incomplete.

The same phenomenon is viewed from a different angle in Table 7, where marriage age-groups are related to number of rural-born relatives. From this table it is evident, for example, that among men marrying between the ages 16–25, three-quarters had no rural relatives, or only one; but that, in contrast,

TABLE 7: *Number of rural-born relatives of grooms related to ages at marriage (percentages)*

Number of rural-born relatives	Age at marriage				Total
	16–25	26–30	31–35	36+	
None or 1	74·7	57·5	43·8	38·2	60·1
2 or 3	16·6	24·2	24·1	24·5	21·2
4 or 5	5·2	10·1	13·9	19·6	9·8
6	3·6	8·2	18·2	17·6	8·9
N (100%):	730	636	274	204	1,844

Chi square significant beyond 0·001 level. $C = \cdot30$ (max. ·935).

[6]In ascertaining a subject's "degree of rural origin" we took into account his own birthplace, together with that of his wife, his parents, and his parents-in-law. For the purpose of this study he was regarded as entirely rural in origin if all six were rural-born; and as entirely urban if there were none. "Rural" birthplaces were those described by subjects as a "village", or "the country".

nearly two-thirds of the men marrying later (at ages 36 and above) had more numerous rural connections: nearly a fifth of these men, rural-born themselves, had relatives all of whom were of rural origin. These are the extreme cases drawn from a tabulation that shows, in its general tendency, that in Dublin the younger a man had been when he married, the fewer rural connections he was likely to have.

The matter is not a simple one, however. The blurring of a possibly direct relationship between place of birth and age at marriage, caused (among the sample survey results we are discussing) by differences in the periods when they occurred, has already been mentioned. When we begin to consider the effect of social status matters are complicated still further. We have shown elsewhere that in Dublin, a man's current social status is not independent of his birthplace.[7] Migrants to Dublin (including those born in other cities) are of a higher average social status than their Dublin-born colleagues. Among the rural-born, when these are separated out, the difference disappears: men born on farms or in villages do not differ significantly in average social status from the Dublin-born mean. Nevertheless, it remains true that four-fifths of the lowest status categories in the city are occupied by Dublin natives, who are correspondingly under-represented at the higher levels of the status hierarchy. We know from earlier studies based upon national samples (which consequently avoid the problems arising from an exclusively urban sample) that mean age at marriage bears some relationship to social status—upper status categories, for example, tending to marry later than lower categories.[8] Something of the same tendency is visible (Table 8) among the men who composed our sample. We have calculated mean ages at marriage according

TABLE 8: *Mean age at marriage of Dublin males, related to social status of the groom's father now, and at the time of the marriage, and to the groom's present social status*

Status category	Of father at son's marriage		Of father now		Of groom now	
I	27·3		29·4		28·9	
2	27·9		28·7		28·8	
3	28·2	27·4	30·1	29·1	28·7	28·5
4	27·3		28·6		28·2	
5	26·9		28·3		26·9	
6	26·4	25·8	27·1	27·5	26·5	26·9
7	25·4		26·4		27·2	

[7] B. Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 7–9.

[8] Cf., for example, R. Mukherjee, "Social mobility and age at marriage," in D. V. Glass (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain*, London, 1954, pp. 339–343. Historically, of course, the tendency has not always been present. For general reference to this see J. D. Chambers, *Population, Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial England*, London, 1972, pp. 44–50.

to three criteria of status: the status of the groom's father at the time of his son's marriage; the status of the father, and that of the groom, at the period the latter was interviewed. It was to be expected that, of these, the first would prove the most crucial, for if mean age at marriage is related to social status, it is more likely to be associated with a ranking contemporary with the event in question, than with one at that time veiled in the future. In Ireland, as elsewhere, status is not immutable (only 40 per cent of our subjects had remained of the same status as their fathers), so that inherited status is by no means an infallible guide to the future; equally, current status is not a reliable guide to the past. Moreover, a young man's social status, his habits, friendships and the like are likely to be more heavily influenced by his inherited status than by the individual status he is in process of acquiring. Age at marriage, if it is influenced by social status, is therefore likely to be most often affected by contemporary paternal status. Table 8 bears out this supposition; but it does so only marginally. Age at marriage falls with decreasing social status whichever of the three sets we look at; and the analysis by father's contemporary status does little more than point this tendency slightly more sharply. Differences between the means are not large, even when they are persistent and statistically significant; and they do not suggest, for example, that by themselves they could be expected to affect fertility to a notable degree.

There are many people, however, who in the course of their lives change their social status for a higher or a lower one than the status they inherited from their fathers. As we have said, of our sample of Dublin male adults only two-fifths had retained their inherited social status at the time of being interviewed. Much of this social mobility, we may assume,[9] took place subsequently to marriage. Social mobility in itself can therefore only infrequently be regarded as a possible "causative" factor determining or influencing age at marriage. On the other hand, if age at marriage cannot be affected directly by events that still lie in the future (although it might be influenced by one's expectation of them) the personal circumstances and the character of the socially ambitious, for example, may nevertheless lead to a postponement of marriage beyond the population average; just as the lack of ambition or social inadequacies of those "downwardly mobile" might encourage earlier marriage. In Table 9 we show mean ages at marriage related to father's social status for three categories of grooms—those whose present status was higher, those whose status was unchanged, and those whose status was lower than that of their father. The differences across the columns in the means by paternal status category are, as will be seen, neither great nor significant; nor do they appear to form a standard pattern. There is some suggestion that men subse-

[9]On the grounds that the longer the span of active life, the greater the opportunity for change; and that marriage typically occurs in early adulthood.

TABLE 9: *Mean age at marriage of Dublin males, related to paternal social status, and to subject's social mobility history*

Status category of father	Relative status of informant									All informants		
	Higher			Same			Lower					
	$\bar{X}$	σ	$\frac{100\sigma}{\bar{X}}$	$\bar{X}$	σ	$\frac{100\sigma}{\bar{X}}$	$\bar{X}$	σ	$\frac{100\sigma}{\bar{X}}$	$\bar{X}$	σ	$\frac{100\sigma}{\bar{X}}$
1 (highest)	—	—	—	28·3	5·4	19·1	30·7	5·9	19·2	29·4	5·7	19·2
2	30·9	5·9	19·2	28·2	3·7	13·2	28·3	4·5	16·0	28·7	4·8	16·5
3	29·7	5·4	18·1	30·2	5·5	18·1	30·4	6·1	20·0	30·1	5·6	18·7
4	28·7	5·5	19·1	29·2	6·0	20·5	27·8	5·8	20·7	28·6	6·0	20·8
5	28·5	5·2	18·2	28·1	6·6	23·5	28·5	6·2	21·6	28·3	6·3	22·3
6	27·1	5·0	18·3	27·3	5·4	19·8	26·7	5·6	21·0	27·1	5·4	19·8
7	25·9	4·5	17·3	27·0	5·9	21·9	—	—	—	26·4	5·2	19·6
All:	27·2	5·3	19·2	27·5	5·9	21·2	28·0	6·3	22·2	28·0	5·5	19·8

quently achieving a higher status than they inherited tended to marry somewhat younger; but the difference has little statistical significance. There are interesting differences in dispersion, however; and in combination, therefore, the two factors suggest that the upward-mobile may have married earlier, and may have been more of one mind in their choice of age at marriage. Men losing status married later and at ages less influenced by the mode. But as we shall see, the relationships between inherited status, mean age at marriage and dispersion about the mean, are in some respects more systematic than this, and considerably more interesting. Employing Spearman's rank difference correlation method, we correlated the three factors for the sample as a whole, and for each of the three social mobility categories. The coefficients are presented in Table 10. If we look at the sample as a whole, it is evident that there exists a high degree of positive correlation between male age at marriage and inherited social status: the higher the social status, the higher the age at marriage. There is also a substantial relationship between mean age at marriage and dispersion about the mean—but, it will be noted, the correlation is a negative one. In other words, in the sample as a whole, higher marriage ages tended to be associated with greater unanimity of choice; and this phenomenon may have had its origin in a maximum age beyond which, it was popularly believed, marriage was difficult to achieve. Dispersion is also negatively correlated with social status in the sample generally; but this may well be no more than a reflection of the probability of later marriages at the higher status levels.

From the classification according to social mobility history it may be seen that these overall tendencies are not necessarily repeated in all the mobility

TABLE 10: *Spearman rank-difference correlation coefficients*

	Social status				Dispersion (coefficient of variation)			
	Higher	Same	Lower	All	Higher	Same	Lower	All
Mean age at marriage	1·00*	0·67	0·71	0·89*	0·79	−0·39	−0·37	−0·57
Dispersion	0·79	−0·71*	−0·89*	−0·57	—	—	—	—

*Significant at 0·05 level.

categories, when these are viewed separately. Thus we find that the direct relationship between age at marriage and inherited social status is more reliable among men with a history of upward mobility ($\rho = 1 \cdot 00$) than among men who had lost status ($\rho = 0 \cdot 71$) or had merely retained the status of their father ($\rho = 0 \cdot 67$). That is, mean age at marriage rises regularly with each step in the hierarchy of inherited status only among grooms who were subsequently to show a history of upward mobility. The relationship is less marked among the remainder. We can only speculate as to the reason for this. It seems likely that the varying demands of education may partially account for it. We have argued elsewhere[10] that

> . . . it appears that in every status category those who ascend the status hierarchy have more, and those who descend it have less, education than those maintaining their inherited status . . . upward mobility from any level tends to be accompanied by an educational attainment superior to that regarded as sufficient in the class to which a man is born. In the same way, those who suffer loss of status tend to be those who have failed to attain their class educational norm.

A man in full-time education has not, until fairly recently, felt free to marry; and even today the tendency to postpone marriage until full-time education is completed remains common. A connection, therefore, between longer full-time education, upward mobility and later marriage seems a not unreasonable assumption.

The upward-mobile are atypical also in the degree of unanimity of choice of age at marriage. In the sample as a whole, as we have seen dispersion is inversely related to mean age at marriage, and to social status. Among the upward-mobile, this relationship becomes positive: the greater the mean age and the higher the inherited status, the more are actual ages at marriage likely to be dispersed about the mean. The negative relationship persists, however, among those maintaining inherited status, or falling below it. The

[10]Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

picture of marriage habits among social ascenders that emerges from our data, therefore, differs notably from our picture of the habits of other men. As a whole, the upward-mobile show a tendency towards earlier marriage, and towards less variation in the age at which they contract it. The classification of these ascenders according to their status origin (i.e., their father's social status) showed, on the other hand, that the age at which they married was more subject to influence from their inherited social status. While in the sample as a whole there was a tendency for marriage to be contracted later the higher the status of the groom's father, the relationship was particularly marked among social ascenders; and we have suggested that longer periods of full-time education might offer an explanation for this. Nevertheless, the data give the general impression that social ascenders may be less subject to convention in deciding when to marry; and this impression seems not inconsistent with certain psychological characteristics of the ascender described by Hart and O'Sullivan.[11]

TABLE 11: *Age of groom relative to age of bride, by groom's actual age at marriage (percentages)*

Age of groom at marriage	Relative age			N (100%)
	Older	Same	Younger	
Under 20	40·5	31·0	28·5	42
20–24	56·4	23·0	20·6	566
25–29	69·3	19·8	10·9	733
30–34	84·0	10·4	5·6	375
35 and over	86·4	7·4	6·2	257
All Grooms:	70·0	17·5	12·5	1,973

Chi square significant beyond 0·001 level. $C = ·26$ (max. ·935).

We now turn to a consideration of relative age at marriage, comparing, that is, the age of the groom with that of the bride. In only slightly more than a sixth of the marriages recorded from our sample were the ages of bride and groom the same;[12] and in only one in eight was the bride older than the groom. A majority preference for an age differential in favour of the groom, of course, was only to be expected. But as Table 11 shows, the size of this majority differed according to the husband's age at marriage. Indeed, among men marrying under the age of twenty only a minority (though a large one) was older than their brides. The proportion increased regularly, however,

[11] Ian Hart and Bernadette O'Sullivan, "Intergenerational social mobility and individual differences among Dubliners", *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. ii, No. 1, October 1970, pp. 1–18.
[12] Ages considered "the same" were those of equal total completed years. Incomplete years were not taken into account.

TABLE 12: *Percentages of grooms older and younger than, or of the same age as, their brides, by social mobility history (percentages)*

Mobility history	Groom was:			N (100%)
	Older	Same age	Younger	
Father and son both non-manual	71·9	16·6	11·5	487
Father and son both manual	69·6	17·6	12·8	1,089
Father non-manual, son manual	69·7	15·8	14·5	152
Father manual, son non-manual	68·2	20·0	11·8	245
All Grooms:	70·1	17·7	12·2	1,973

Chi square not significant at 0·10 level. C=·04 (max. ·926).

with increasing age, until at marriage ages of 35 and over it became rare for grooms to be of the same age as their brides; and even rarer for them to be younger. The percentages show little fluctuation (Table 12) in relation to social status and social mobility history, although it is possible that a connection has been veiled by the necessity to collapse the seven status categories to two, manual and non-manual. The absence of significant fluctuations was borne out by indices of association between age of bride and groom, which showed little significant difference between the four mobility categories. Significant variations become more evident in the data relating to the magnitude of the age differences (Table 13), the most evident feature of these data being the overall one that, if age of bride and groom differed, the difference was likely to be greater if the groom were older, than if he were younger, than his bride. The mean difference was 4·6 years in the former case; only 2·4 years in the latter. It will be noticed that the social status of the groom's father was not generally related to mean age difference (irrespective of whether the groom

TABLE 13: *Mean difference (years) between age of bride and groom, related to social status of groom and of his father*

Groom older			Groom younger		
Father's status	Groom's status	All	Father's status	Groom's status	All
	Non-manual / Manual			Non-manual / Manual	
Non-manual	5·03	4·69	4·93	Non-manual	2·05	2·64	2·38
Manual	4·66	4·23	4·41	Manual	2·28	2·54	2·41
All Grooms	4·85	4·46	4·58	All Grooms	2·17	2·59	2·39

was older or younger than his bride) if grooms were not further differentiated on the basis of their own status. There was one exception, however. Where a groom coming from a non-manual paternal background married a woman younger than himself, the difference was greater than the average: it did not occur if his bride were *older* than himself. The relationship with the groom's achieved social status is more marked. Where the bride was younger, the age difference was greater if the groom were of non-manual status. Where the bride was older, the age difference was greater if the groom were of manual status.

Our view of the influence of social mobility has been somewhat foreshortened by the necessity for working with no more than two status categories, though this disadvantage may be counter-balanced by the probability that a manual/non-manual dichotomy may record only the more emphatic changes in social status, which are as a consequence more significant. In any case, the implications of Table 13 are similar to those emerging from some other analyses of the influence of social mobility.[13] That is to say, some characteristics of the mobile population appear subject to influence from both inherited and acquired social status. It can be shown that in the case of fertility, for example, families of social ascenders are at the same time smaller than the mean size of families in the status category they vacate, yet larger than the average family in the higher category they attain. We find matters arranging themselves in a similar way here. Let us look first at grooms older than their brides. Among men of non-manual origin, the age difference between them is less if he subsequently falls to manual status than it is if he retains his inherited status. Among men of manual origin, the age gap is greater if he rises to non-manual than if he remains of manual status. The age gap is at its greatest if a man is born to non-manual status and retains it; least if he maintains an inherited manual status. The mobile fall between these extremes. Turning to grooms who were younger than their brides, we find the converse happening. The age gap between man and wife increases if a man falls to manual status; decreases if he rises to non-manual status. In brief, that is to say, the effect of upward mobility has been to increase the age difference between man and wife when the husband is older; to decrease it when he is younger than his wife. The effect of downward mobility has been the reverse. We may therefore inquire what the net effect of social mobility on marriage age differentials is likely to have been. In the male adult population of Dublin in 1968 the upward exceeded the downward mobile by slightly over twelve per cent.[14] We have seen that 70 per cent of grooms were older than their brides. Hence, we

[13]For example, J. Berent, "Fertility and social mobility", *Population Studies*, vol. v, No. 3, 1952. B. Hutchinson, "Fertility, social mobility and urban migration in Brazil", *ibid.*, vol. xiv, No. 3, 1961.
[14]B. Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, Table 20, p. 17.

would expect the net influence of social mobility to have been in the direction of a widening of the age-gap between older husbands and younger wives; and hence to have widened it in the majority of marriages. But the net effect is unlikely to have been large, and indeed may well have been compensated by other social influences tending towards a narrowing of the age differential.

First Employment, Social Status and Mobility in Dublin

IT is not uncommonly supposed that a young man entering the labour market for the first time may, if he wishes, take any job open to him, of whatever social status or degree of skill, confident that this will not affect significantly his subsequent career. On this view, that is, the character of first employment does not necessarily limit a man's reasonable hopes for his future. Opposing this, however, is the contrary belief that a man establishes his public *persona* largely through the employment he takes up; and that the manner of first entering the labour market must be, in consequence, the subject of careful consideration by a young man ambitious for his future. On either view, of course, the reference is more to the "nature" of the employment than to a position within it—to the differences, for example, between manual and non-manual, skilled and unskilled, "clean" and "dirty", occupations; less to the difference between operative and foreman, or junior and senior clerk.

Evidently such hypotheses are not readily tested by methods short of intensive case-study. Too many of the ideas whence they emerge are qualitative, imponderable ones not open, or at any rate not meaningfully open, to measurement. Nevertheless, in the course of the Dublin survey the opportunity presented itself to collect some preliminary data on first employment; and to pay particular attention while doing so to considerations of social status and social mobility. We defined first employment as "the first paid, full-time, employment" a man had taken. Such a definition, it will be noted, removed from our purview such unpaid or part-time occupations as a youth may choose, or be parentally obliged, to take up while still at school, or at a university. It does not exclude, on the other hand, temporary employment, for to have attempted this would have led to difficult, perhaps insoluble, problems of definition: a post taken "temporarily" may prove permanent. The contrary case is too familiar to require specification. On the whole, however, the residual category of occupations on which information was sought was composed of jobs we considered more likely to contribute significantly to a man's ultimate social status than juvenile employment on a paper-round, or unpaid boyhood assistance in the hayfield, would have done. We placed no lower limit to the age at which a job, to be considered "first employment", might be taken. Statements of informants to the effect that they had been in full-time employment at ages below fourteen years were accepted at their face value (the majority of such cases were of employment taken when the subject was thirteen years old), the number in full-time employment at

ages below this being small: 26 in a sample of 2,499; or slightly over 1 per cent. By the age of twenty, seven men out of eight had been in full-time employment, mean age at first job falling in the neighbourhood of 16·1 years (Table 1).

The significance of an overall sample mean is, of course, not particularly great, when we recall that the sample was drawn from a population varying in date of birth and, presumably (since convention may have changed) varying in the age at which the labour market was first entered. It is generally supposed that full-time employment is entered somewhat later nowadays than was the

TABLE 1: *Age at first full-time employment*

Age	Number	Percentage	
12 years or under	26	1·0	30·3
13–14	732	29·3	
15–16	705	28·2	
17–18	493	19·7	57·0
19–20	228	9·1	
21–22	160	6·4	
23–24	93	3·7	
25–26	39	1·6	12·6
27–28	11	0·4	
29–30	5	0·2	
31 and over	7	0·3	
Total:	2,499	99·9	

Mean=16·1 years.

case at the turn of the century. We must not fall into the error, therefore, of confusing the sample mean of 16·1 years with the mean age at which contemporary adolescents are today taking their first full-time job. Yet, while this confusion must be avoided, it will be seen that Table 2 reveals how limited after all has been the change in the average amongst Dubliners now of ages 20 and above.

Median ages are remarkably constant throughout the period; and while the means fluctuate somewhat more, only two five-year periods seem to reflect special historical cicumstances: that of 1903–1907, and that of 1913–1917, ten years later. The first of these constituted the natal period of men who were first to enter the labour market in the final year of the First World War, and in the years immediately following its conclusion. It was a period in which the demand for labour was simultaniously at a high level, and yet difficult to satisfy because of conflicting demand from the armed forces,

TABLE 2: *Age at first full-time employment, related to date of birth*

Date of birth	Age at first employment			N	Mean (years)	Median (years)
	14 and under	15–20	Over 20			
	per cent	per cent	per cent			
Before 1903	34·1	51·6	14·2	254	16·3	15·3
1903–07	39·2	54·1	6·7	154	15·8	15·4
1908–12	30·5	55·8	13·7	235	16·5	15·5
1913–17	18·0	66·5	15·5	233	16·8	15·3
1918–22	33·6	56·0	10·4	250	16·0	15·2
1923–27	31·7	54·5	13·8	268	16·2	15·4
1928–32	30·5	58·3	11·2	259	16·0	15·1
1933–37	33·1	57·0	9·9	263	15·7	15·2
1938–42	30·8	57·1	12·1	315	16·0	15·4
1943–47	26·2	66·4	7·2	263	15·7	15·3
Total:	30·5	57·9	11·6	2,494	16·1	15·3

Chi square significant at 0·001 level. $C = ·13$ (max. > ·949).

and the loss of manpower from military casualties. The response, as can be seen, was a tendency to take employment earlier. In the second period, covering those born between the years 1913–1917, matters were reversed—that is to say, mean age (but not the median) at first job reached an unusually high level. The divergence from the general average is more marked than that apparent in the other anomalous period ten years before. Nor is this surprising. Men born during the First World War were those who were to enter the labour market during the years of depression and high unemployment of the 'thirties. These two events, then, leave their mark on the record of first employment; otherwise the means are rather stable, and the medians notably so. Only amongst men born between the years 1943–1947, does the percentage distribution hint at change: fewer were entering at ages 14 and under. The median remains unaffected. This general impression of stability is unexpectedly inconsistent with the belief that age at first employment has been showing an upward tendency during the past half-century. Table 2 suggests that such a tendency, if it exists, is of recent origin: but, because of the possible effects of differential mortality, it does not demonstrate it. The earlier the date of birth, the more the cohort has been diminished by mortality. Other things been equal, the higher the social status, the greater the expectation of life. If age at first employment is also directly related to social status, then the figures in Table 2 may be progressively overestimating the mean as dates of birth become increasingly remote. In other words, men who first entered

employment at a later than average age were more likely to be interviewed because they were more likely to be alive.

When we come to examine our analysis of age at first employment in relation to social status, the assumed relationship is amply confirmed: the higher his father's social status, the older a boy when he took his first full-time job. If informants were ranked according to their present social status, a similar relationship became evident. Men now allocated to the lowest position on the hierarchy of status (category 7) had, on average, taken their first job at 14·8 years. Men allocated to the highest status category had first entered employment, on average, at the age of nearly 22 years. The relationship was consistent through the intermediate status ranks on the hierarchy; and, as we presently discovered, notably simple and inescapable.

As Table 3 shows, we classified each of the status categories of informants according to age at first employment. For each five-year interval we computed the "mean social status" of informants' fathers.

TABLE 3: "*Mean*" *status origin related to informant's age at first employment and to his present social status category.*

Age at first employment	Present status category of informant						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11–15	3·7*	5·0*	4·7	5·0	5·4	5·9	6·2
16–20	3·0	3·2	3·7	4·1	4·9	5·5	5·8
21–25	2·7	3·1	3·4	3·9	4·9	4·9	5·8*
26–30	2·4	—	3·3*	—	4·3*	—	—
All informants:	2·8	3·3	3·8	4·3	5·2	5·7	6·1

*N < 10.

The vertical columns of Table 3, therefore, show us the average social status of the fathers of our informants, classified first by the latter's present status, secondly by the age at first employment, so that, reading the means vertically, we can see how these vary in relation to the ages. Little weight can be given to the individual results, both because of limitations imposed by statistical error, and because of the unreality surrounding the concept of "mean" status. However, we are not concerned with them individually; and the vertical array of values in Table 3 shows a tendency that is unambiguous. It is that, whatever a man's social status may be today, the age he began employment remains directly related to his father's social status. Or, in other words, the lower a man's social origin, the earlier he was obliged to enter full-time paid employment in order to enjoy today a given level of social status. As a consequence,

we see, men in every category of current social status from the highest to the lowest who took their first job between the ages of 11 and 15 are of lower status *origin*, on average, than their colleagues who, although of equivalent current status today, were first employed at a later age.

This analysis draws our attention to the question of intergenerational social mobility, and to the possibility that changes in status as between father and son are in some way related to the age at which the latter begins his working life. We therefore calculated sets of mean ages at employment, specific to each of the seven status categories, in order to see how far the means differed when we compared the socially mobile with the socially static. Table 4 shows, for each current social status, the average age at first employment of men of the same status as their father, or of a higher or lower one. Once more the tendency is unambiguous. Social mobility appears strongly associated, in not unexpected ways, with age at first employment.

TABLE 4: *Mean age at first full-time employment, for each current status category, by relationship to father's social status*

Current status category	Current status related to father's			All
	Informant higher	Same	Informant lower	
1*	21·0	22·3	—	21·4
2	19·7	19·4	21·0	19·7
3	17·7	18·5	18·8	18·1
4*	15·8	16·8	17·6	16·5
5*	14·6	15·4	16·8	15·4
6*	13·6	14·5	15·2	14·6
7	—	14·0	14·5	14·3

*Chi square on original contingency table significant beyond 0·001 level.

For the sample as a whole the direct relationship between attained status and age at first employment is in evidence; and it is equally evident that the relationship persists in each of the social mobility categories (reading the columns vertically). The matter takes on a somewhat different cast if we compare mobility categories at single levels of attained status. Let us take, as an example, the group of subjects whose current or attained status is that of category 6. Mean age at first employment for the group as a whole was 15·1 years. Men whose fathers were, like themselves, also of category 6 tended to take a full-time job at about this average age. In contrast, men who had risen from the paternal category 7 to their present position in category 6 had begun full-time employment about a year earlier, on average. Men who had fallen to category 6 from higher paternal status levels had started work, on average,

some six months later. A horizontal reading of Table 4 reveals that the same pattern is repeated pretty consistently at all status levels. Each status category is partly composed of men who were born in some other category, some having moved down from a higher status, and others having moved up from a lower one. The latter group is notable in having begun working life, on average, one or two years earlier than men who had lost status; and this remains true whatever the status category ultimately achieved (except at the extremes where mobility is restricted to a single direction). Our results therefore seem consistent with a conventional picture of socially "successful" and "unsuccessful" men—the former keen, early birds in the labour market, getting the best opportunities and exploiting what they get; the latter undynamic procrastinators missing the best jobs. There may be, however, a less satisfying explanation for the variations apparent in Table 4, having its origin in levels of education.

A man's educational attainment is directly related to his father's social status; and a man's own status is similarly related to his educational attainment: adequate educational attainments comprise one of the most important qualifications for membership of a given category of social status. Downward social mobility tends to occur when educational qualifications suitable to an inherited status position are not obtained. Men who move to a status above that of their father tend to have had more education than necessary to maintain their hereditary status. Since one who is in full-time education cannot be simultaneously in full-time paid employment, it seems not improbable that relative educational attainment may have operated to produce the pattern we have noted in Table 4. If we analyse each of the mobility categories according to educational attainment, it should be possible to control the latter's influence upon mean age at first employment. In other words, if we hold educational attainment constant, does mean age at first employment still vary from one mobility group to another; and, if so, are the variations in the same direction as before? The limitations imposed by the size of our sample made undesirable the further subdivision, by educational level, of each of the seven status groups used in Table 4. We were therefore obliged to restrict analysis to a more general classification: men who, irrespective of their point of departure and of their destination, had risen above, fallen below or had remained in the status category to which they were born. This procedure reduced considerably the sensitivity of the subsequent analysis, for it neglected certain features of social mobility, such as "distance" moved, and departure and arrival points, that give each type of movement a special character. The tendencies apparent in Table 5 are perhaps less distinct than those that might have emerged from a more detailed analysis, had this been possible.

The columns show the expected variations in mean age at first employment related to educational level. These have little beyond a confirmatory interest.

TABLE 5: *Mean age at first employment, related to social mobility category, and to subject's educational attainment*

Educational attainment	Subject's social status relative to father		
	Higher	Same	Lower
Primary:			
incomplete	13·8 ⎫	13·9 ⎫	13·6 ⎫
	⎬ 14·0	⎬ 14·0	⎬ 14·6
complete	14·0 ⎭	14·1 ⎭	14·9 ⎭
Technical and Vocational:			
incomplete	15·1 ⎫	15·9 ⎫	15·8 ⎫
	⎬ 15·8	⎬ 16·4	⎬ 16·4
complete	16·0 ⎭	16·6 ⎭	16·6 ⎭
Secondary:			
incomplete	16·2 ⎫	17·3 ⎫	16·8 ⎫
	⎬ 17·5	⎬ 17·7	⎬ 17·6
complete	18·1 ⎭	18·0 ⎭	18·2 ⎭
University:			
incomplete	19·1 ⎫	19·7 ⎫	18·0 ⎫
	⎬ 21·5	⎬ 21·1	⎬ 20·3
complete	21·9 ⎭	21·5 ⎭	21·5 ⎭
All subjects:	16·4	15·8	16·0

Our chief concern here lies with a comparison of mean ages by educational attainment, for each of the three mobility categories. It cannot be said that in controlling the educational influence we have succeeded in eliminating the differences in age at first employment that were originally evident as between the three mobility categories; although some of the differences may have undergone transformation. In the general analysis we observed that ascenders tended to have started their working life a year or two earlier than the downward mobile. The tendency remains, as Table 5 shows us, among those with primary education (if completed), as also among men who had reached the technical and vocational level. The difference is somewhat reduced, it is true; but we seem justified in supposing that difference in educational attainment does not entirely account, at these levels, for the difference in age at entering the labour market. When we come to those of secondary education, however, the matter is more open to doubt. Indeed, if we look at secondary education as a single category (that is, if we do not ask whether the secondary course was completed or not) it is apparent that mean age at first employment differs little from one mobility group to the other. Only among men who embarked upon, but did not complete, a secondary course does the tendency persist for social ascenders to start employment earlier in their lives. At the next educational level, the university level, a further complexity is added by the apparent

reversal of the general trend: social ascenders of university level appear to enter the labour market later rather than earlier.

There is therefore some evidence that the overall variations in age at employment that became apparent in Table 4 had part of their origin in differences in educational history. As we have seen, some of the variations were reduced, others eliminated and another reversed, when we subjected educational attainment to control. Yet the relationship between social ascension and earlier employment by no means entirely disappeared as a result of this analytical procedure; and one seems justified in asking whether, had a more detailed analysis been possible, more definite and more interesting conclusions might not have been open to us. In particular, the assumption that all status movements in the same direction are the "same" phenomena (for example, that all men who have ascended the status hierarchy have undergone the same experience, sociologically speaking) really begs a very significant question in mobility studies. Indeed, some of the figures in Table 5 can best be explained on grounds that assume the nature of social mobility to be largely dependent upon a man's point of departure in combination with his destination. A man who moved up the entire hierarchy, from the lowest, unskilled manual status to the highest professional category experiences something entirely different from the experience of one who moves from the semi-skilled to the skilled manual level. In the preceding analysis both are nevertheless classified as ascenders; and some loss of sensitivity of understanding is to be expected as a result.

However, there is no reason to suppose that first employment lacks significance for a man's social mobility history. There is no strong association, except at the higher status levels, between inherited social status and that achieved through the first full-time job (for the sample as a whole the index of association is 1·74). Less than a third of our subjects entered employment at the same status level as their fathers: as was to be expected, a majority started at a lower one (Table 6). Indeed, the "mean" status of first employment proved to be 5·6, compared with a paternal mean status of 4·9. In other words, for a large majority of men first entry into the labour market proved to be simultaneously a first exercise in the process of social mobility—dominantly in the downward direction. There remains, it is true, some degree of class self-recruitment at all levels, as the indices of association demonstrate; but this is really notable only among men inheriting status category 1 from their fathers.

How far, then (to return to the question we raised in our opening paragraph), does the status of a man's first full-time employment determine his future career? Is he condemned, by and large, to remain at the level at which he finds himself at the dawn, as it were, of his employment history? Table 7 relates the status of first employment to the present social status of our in-

formants. Mean status has now risen to 4·8, equal, in fact, to the paternal mean; and in order to achieve such a rise in average status nearly three-fifths of the men had in the intervening period moved to employment of a higher status. A rough preliminary measure of the status-determinant effect of first employment may be seen in the proportion, nearly 45 per cent, who had failed to move up from their first level, or had even fallen below this.

We must not be deceived, however, into allowing too much weight to this figure: the incidence of social mobility depends initially upon the number of opportunities for a change in status that are open. An entirely rigid status structure, if it allows mobility at all, permits it only in the form of simple or multiple exchange of positions. The index of association (or ratio of observed to expected values in the "same" cells of the contingency table) is therefore a more useful indicator here. The overall index of association for the entire sample, 2·14, suggests a fairly low association between initial and subsequent social status. On the other hand, it will be noted that the index varies markedly according to the level at which first employment was taken: the relationship is in fact a direct one, higher status at first employment carrying with it a greater likelihood that subsequent mobility will not take place. A very high degree of status immobility is particularly evident among men whose first employment had taken them into the two highest status categories, 1 and 2. At the other extreme, men first employed at category 6 level (index of associa-

TABLE 6: *Status category of subject at first employment, related to paternal status*

Subject's status category at first job	Father's status category							Total	Per cent	Index of association
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
1	21	8	9	12	6			56	2·3	13·38
2	9	11	14	18	9			61	2·5	3·69
3	5	11	22	15	12	1		66	2·7	3·88
4	19	47	84	143	102	14	16	425	17·3	1·97
5	2	12	23	60	137	23	36	293	11·9	1·31
6	11	21	43	106	335	108	103	727	29·6	1·22
7	2	10	16	65	272	153	309	827	33·7	1·98
Total	69	120	211	419	873	299	464	2,455	100·0	1·74
Per cent	2·8	4·9	8·6	17·1	35·6	12·2	18·9	100·0		

	%
First employment status higher than father:	16·2
„ „ „ the same as father:	30·6
„ „ „ lower than father:	53·2

$N = 2,455$

TABLE 7: *Status category of subject at first employment, related to his present status*

Status category at first job	Present status category							Total	Per cent	Index of associa- tion
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
1	54	2						56	2·2	20·07
2	18	39	4					61	2·4	12·38
3	13	19	32	2				66	2·7	5·71
4	23	47	121	200	19	11	7	428	17·2	2·53
5	1	8	15	61	165	25	21	296	11·8	1·67
6	11	12	24	121	409	98	60	735	29·5	1·02
7		2	16	78	238	192	329	855	34·3	2·30
Total	120	129	212	462	831	326	417	2,497	100·0	2·14
Per cent	4·8	5·2	8·5	18·6	33·3	13·0	16·6	100·0		

%
Present status higher than at first job: 57·3
  ,,   ,,   the same as at first job: 36·7
  ,,   ,,   lower than ,, ,,   ,,   6·0
N=2,497

tion, 1·02) were almost entirely unaffected by this in their subsequent history. The marginal percentage distributions, showing heavy declines in the proportions of men in categories 6 and 7, suggest that these are in some sense "recruitment" levels in the labour market: levels that men enter in the expectation of leaving them as soon as possible; nor is this surprising since such levels of social status are accorded mainly to unskilled and semi-skilled occupations.

These differences are reflected in figures relating to occupational mobility (Table 8). Among the sample as a whole the average number of jobs taken

TABLE 8: *Mean number of jobs from first entering labour market related to social mobility history*

Social Status of first job	Subject's present status relative to paternal status			All Subjects
	Higher	Same	Lower	
1	3·3	2·9	—	3·2
2	3·0	2·8	2·3*	2·9
3	3·1	2·6	2·1*	2·9
4	2·9	3·2	3·1	3·0
5	4·3	4·3	4·0	4·2
6	4·4	4·5	4·5	4·5
7	5·3	5·5	5·5	5·5
All subjects	4·1	4·6	4·6	4·4

*N<10.

since first entering the labour market lay between four and five; but this was influenced by the social status of first employment. Those entering the labour market towards the top of the status hierarchy had changed their job less frequently than those entering at the bottom. Perhaps contrary to expectation, social ascenders (i.e., men who had risen above the status level of their fathers by the time they were interviewed) had changed their job, on average, less often than descenders or the immobile. But this overall sample mean is heavily weighted by the numerical dominance of men whose first employment lay in status categories 6 and 7. As we rise above these levels there becomes evident a tendency for the contrary to happen: ascenders change their jobs somewhat more often than descenders. But it is significant that the process of social mobility, whether in the upward or the downward direction, seems in many cases to begin very early in the occupational career. It is not by any means certain that changes in social status between one generation and another (comparing son with father) are the culmination of a lifetime's effort. On the contrary, Table 9 reveals that more than 90 per cent of subjects who had fallen to a status position below their inherited one made the descent with their first employment, and had apparently remained there. Of social ascenders, two-fifths made their initial movement upward as soon as they entered the labour market. It will be noted also that even the socially static show a more than average tendency to take up first employment of a status similar to their father's. In other words, the meaning of Table 9 appears to be that to a significant degree a man's future social status is reflected in the status of his first employment; and in the case of those fated to be social descenders, the first job is very highly predictive indeed of what his fate is to be.[1] More specifically, the majority of future social ascenders enter the labour market at a status level equal to or above that of their fathers; the majority of men who will remain socially static take first employment at the same level of status, or below, their fathers'; and future descenders enter employment almost unanimously, as we have seen, at a status level below the paternal one.

Summing up, then, it seems that the general tenor of our evidence supports the view that how a young man first enters the labour market has considerable relevance to his future. Among the adults making up our sample, mean age at first employment did not vary significantly with date of birth, except perhaps for those born during the 1940s, and those affected by special economic circumstances. However, there were factors associated with social status, such

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[1]The National Manpower Service of the Department of Labour operates a scheme of re-settlement allowances to induce workers to change where the interests of the national manpower policy make this desirable (for example, to get skills to a new project, or to correct maladjustment in the labour market). This scheme, initially little used, is said to be becoming more popular with workers. If such continues to be the case, one of its consequences may be an attenuation of the tendency noted here, since occupational mobility may be facilitated.

TABLE 9: *Subject's status at first employment relative to paternal status by subsequent mobility history (percentages)*

Status of first job relative paternal status	Mobility history			All Subjects
	Ascender	Static	Descender	
Higher than father	41·5	4·5	1·8	16·2
Same	36·2	42·1	6·5	30·6
Lower than father	22·3	53·4	91·7	53·2
N (100%)	825	972	658	2,455

Chi square significant beyond 0·001 level. C=·54 (max. ·913).

as differential mortality, that may have been partially responsible for this apparent stability. But uniformity did not extend to levels of social status: the higher a young man's inherited social status, the older he was when he took his first job; and social mobility also proved to be associated with age at first employment. Men whose later history showed them to have been social ascenders tended to have entered full-time employment earlier, and social descenders later, than the average. Some of the overall variations in age at first employment relating to status origin were accounted for by differing educational commitments; but some of the main differences by social mobility history remained after controlling by educational attainment. Indeed, for a majority of the sample, entry into the labour market meant at any rate a temporary fall to a level of status below the one they had inherited from their fathers, class self-recruitment becoming notable only at higher levels of inherited status.

Social mobility became less likely the higher the status acquired at first employment. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, it appears that much subsequent mobility history may be predicted from the nature of first employment: inter-generational social mobility often takes place, if it is to take place at all, at the beginning of a man's career.

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