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Social Status and Inter-Generational Social Mobility
in Dublin

by

BERTRAM HUTCHINSON

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Social Status and Inter-Generational Social Mobility
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SOCIAL STATUS AND INTER-GENERATIONAL SOCIAL MOBILITY IN DUBLIN

Bertram Hutchinson^{1*}

In Western society the idea is commonplace that a man may seek to "better" himself, in the sense not merely of increasing his real income, but also in that of "raising" himself and his family to a "higher" social position. Yet the ease with which a man may do this differs from place to place and from time to time (thus, a caste system may render such social mobility virtually impossible). Moreover, the circumstances encouraging social mobility are not always as obvious as might be supposed. Earlier attempts to relate rates and patterns of mobility to various indicators of economic growth have not been generally successful, although such relationships might well, on *a priori* grounds, have been expected. And while this lack of success may have resulted, as Lipset and Bendix suggest, from methodological weakness, the results seem seriously inconsistent with a view linking social mobility closely with economic growth.² Whether the basis for this view was ever as substantial as we have sometimes supposed is another matter. There seems little reason, *a priori*, to believe that economic growth necessarily entails widespread reallocation of social status in the population generally. It might well entail reallocation of occupations, but such a process is by no means always accompanied by the acquirement of new positions on society's scale of social prestige, or changes in status (which is, briefly, what we mean by social mobility). Indeed it could well be argued that a modern industrial economy, for its functioning, demands a status distribution of the population that is approximately the same wherever it is established.³ There is some evidence lending support to such a theory. On the other hand, it is clear that, even if this were true, there would be a period, perhaps recurrent periods,

during which a more or less general re-deployment of labour resources would be necessary. Obvious examples of a gross type are periods of change from a dominantly rural to a dominantly urban economy; from domestic to factory manufacture; from production organised on a basis of a high labour ingredient, to one organised on high capital investment. In many economies (including the Irish, although here the trend is slower) there is today a tendency for unskilled labour to be substituted by mechanical aids—a trend which, if it continues, will contribute entirely new features to the structure of the occupation-social status hierarchy.

We must therefore distinguish two forms of social mobility, each having its origins in different aspects of society. The primary form is the familiar one in which no individual rise in status can occur without concurrent loss or losses in status elsewhere in the system. This we call exchange mobility, and its existence reflects social class permeability in the general and semi-permanent sense. In other words in a static system the absolute number of status positions at each level is fixed (or a fixed proportion in a growing population); and movement in one direction along the hierarchy is impossible without compensating movement in the other. Some societies have been organised in such a way as to encourage this process, or to permit it with varying degrees of tolerance, or to discourage it as far as possible. Contemporary world trends are away from class impermeability, away from ascribed in the direction of acquired status; and it is probably in this sense that it is frequently asserted that, since Independence, there are "no social classes in Ireland". But although subject to gradual change, degree of class permeability (reflected in the quantity of exchange mobility taking place), may be regarded as a semi-permanent feature with which a society's organisation and structure are closely associated.

The secondary form of social mobility, however, is transitory, if not necessarily brief. It arises from occupational changes within the economy, which are

¹Bertram Hutchinson is a Research Professor with the Economic and Social Research Institute. The paper has been accepted for publication by the Institute. The author is responsible for the contents of the paper including the views expressed therein.

²The author is greatly indebted to his colleagues at The Economic and Social Research Institute for their criticism of an earlier version of this paper.

³The references are to S. M. Lipset and R. Bendix, *Social Mobility in Industrial Society*, Berkeley, 1960, pp. 11-75; S. M. Miller, "Comparative Social Mobility: a trend report", *Current Sociology*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1960; S. M. Miller and H. Bryce, "Social mobility and economic growth and structure", *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, Vol. 13, 1961; N. J. Smelser and S. M. Lipset, *Social Structure and Mobility in Economic Development*, Chicago, 1966, pp. 20-21.

⁴Of course, even if there were such a basic status pyramid, educational, social and income levels are not thereby made immutable: provided differentials are maintained, all of these may rise—or fall.

in turn the outcome of technological innovation, of industrial and commercial development. One effect of these innovations is to reduce the demand for certain types of labour while increasing the demand for others. Since social status is closely related to occupation, it is likely that such changes in the demand for labour will modify significantly the system of stratification of the society in which they occur. In other words, some sorts of job (and hence status) opportunities will disappear, while others open. It will be seen, therefore, that in such circumstances social mobility can take place without the necessity for reverse compensatory movements. The phenomenon may be relatively short-lived if the re-marshalling of job-status categories is ultimately completed, and a new form of equilibrium established within which only exchange mobility will be possible. But it is noteworthy that social mobility of the structural type we have just described is associated with periods of economic growth. It is perhaps because earlier studies have not distinguished the two forms that, as we have seen, it has proved impossible to demonstrate the overall relationship.

It is against this background that the present inquiry into inter-generational social mobility in Dublin must be understood. We have attempted to measure the incidence of social mobility, in both the upward and the downward direction, among male adults now living in this city; and we have calculated the relative proportions that should be allocated to exchange and to structural mobility. In this part of the report on the inquiry we shall be discussing some aspects of the aetiology of social mobility (though "causation" is another matter), in the sense that we examine differences in social mobility rates associated with age, with place of birth, with ancestry, religious adherence, education, size of family of origin and the subject's place in it, relative status of the subject and of his father, age at first employment, and the like. Other matters, that may be regarded as "consequences" of social mobility, have been relegated to a later report.

Method

Even in Western societies that have moved nearer the goal of women's emancipation than is yet the case in Ireland, it remains true that, generally speaking, it is the man who secures his family's ranking on the hierarchy of social status. Whatever the pattern may ultimately become, and despite exceptions to the rule to which it is possible to point, by and large the daughter is dependent on the father, the wife upon the husband, for her social status. Her case will doubtless have an increasing sociological interest as the stage of transition through which we are passing is left behind. Nevertheless, status remains male-dominated; and it was for this

reason that, in common with others who had studied social mobility, we have restricted our inquiry to the male population. For similar reasons the study is confined to adults.

During the late Spring and early Summer of 1968 a sample was drawn of all male residents of the urban area of County Dublin, aged 21 years and over. The currently revised Electoral Rolls were used as a sampling frame. Males resident in institutions (e.g. monasteries, hospitals, garda stations, etc.) were excluded. A final sample size of 2,500 was decided upon, with a reserve of 500 to serve as substitutes for non-contacts, deaths, removals and refusals. As interviewing proceeded, however, it became evident that losses from such sources were proving unusually high, and the drawn sample had to be increased to 3,603 names in order to complete the required total of 2,500 interviews. The relative importance of the several sources of loss may be seen in Table 1, whence it may also be noted that 5 per cent. of men actually contacted refused to be interviewed. In comparison with a refusal rate of 14-15 per cent. incurred by non-professional interviewers during an earlier pilot survey using a similar questionnaire, the final rate seems fairly satisfactory, though exceeding that normally tolerable in such an inquiry. It is perhaps worth noting that a total of 6,685 calls by field interviewers was required in order to complete the final total of 2,540 interviews.

TABLE 1: SOURCES OF SAMPLE LOSS, DUBLIN, 1968

	Number	%
Returns completed	2,540	70.5
Non-contacts (never at home) ..	319	8.8
Refusals	182	5.1
Deceased, removed, wrong names, etc.	541	15.0
New addresses outside Dublin ..	21	0.6
TOTAL (names selected and issued) ..	3,603	100.0

The entire field-work procedure was organised and conducted by the then newly-established Survey Unit⁴ of The Economic and Social Research Institute, which employed for this purpose a body of experienced professional interviewers. In so far as the characteristics of the final sample are open to checking against Census returns, it appears satisfactorily, if not entirely, representative of the adult male population. Table 2 shows the sample distribution by age, compared with that of the 1966 Census of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire. It will be seen that the fit is very reasonable.

⁴To whose Head, Mr. Keith Wilson, and Field Supervisor, Mrs. E. Colbert-Stanley, and to their staff, we are in consequence deeply indebted.

TABLE 2: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE COMPARED WITH 1966 CENSUS OF DUBLIN AND DUN LAOGHAIRE

Age Group	%	
	Census (1966)	Sample (1968)
21-24	9.8	8.3
25-29	11.9	12.4
30-34	12.4	11.4
35-39	11.5	9.8
40-44	11.0	11.1
45-49	9.9	9.4
50-54	9.0	10.2
55-59	7.4	8.6
60-64	5.8	6.7
65+	11.2	11.6
No information ..	—	0.5
TOTAL ..	100.0	100.0

However, the distribution by marital status gives somewhat less cause for satisfaction: the sample proportion of 16 per cent. (± 2 per cent.) single is significantly smaller than that obtained from the Census of 1966 (24 per cent.). Some parts of the information we obtained may therefore be biased accordingly. On the other hand, it has to be borne in mind that the sample population (registered voters) was not identical with that of the Census, since not all adult males enumerated have electoral rights in Ireland. Some part of the sample bias can possibly be attributed, therefore, to a tendency for disenfranchised male residents of Dublin to be unmarried. This is likely enough among the young student population, enumerated in the Census but not forming part of the sample population. However, such an explanation cannot account for the whole of the observed discrepancy. The remainder can be ascribed, more simply, to the fact that single men are more likely to be away from home when an interviewer calls; and to the exclusion from the sample of institutions, army barracks, garda stations, and the like. Nevertheless, although this failure to obtain complete representativeness in the sample, like those less serious discrepancies in the age distribution, must be noted, there seems little reason to suppose that the data discussed on subsequent pages are as a rule significantly affected.⁵

The general theme of the inquiry was social mobility. The meaning of this term is not self-evident, however. Its definition is based upon the assumption that a society is organised on the basis of strata or layers arranged in a hierarchy of what is often colloquially referred to as "prestige", or in

⁵In order to put the preceding paragraphs in some perspective it is worth noting that, in the classic study of social mobility in England and Wales (1954) similar discrepancies in sampling were observed. On the other hand, the total response rate appears to have been somewhat better than in Dublin, and the proportion of the sample refusing to co-operate notably so (3.4 per cent. compared with 5.1): D. V. Glass (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain*, London, 1954, pp. 79-93.

sociology by the term "status" (in its restricted rather than general sense). Thus, in the context of society as a whole the "prestige" or status of a street-sweeper is assumed to be "lower" than that of a Judge of the High Court. Every member of a population may thus be allocated his place in the status hierarchy if we have to hand a quick and reliable method of determining it. Fortunately a number of variables, such as income, education, occupation, and the like—concerning which information is easily obtained—are each closely related to social status, which in an important sense may be said to be the outcome or the effect of them. Of these variables, occupation has proved in earlier studies (of which there is now a great number) undertaken in other countries, to be the most convenient and on the whole the most indicative. In the absence of empirical confirmation, however, to use occupation, or any other variable, as an indicator of social status may seem arbitrary: what evidence have we that the community under examination itself ranks occupations on a scale of social status? There is, of course, a good deal. Many field studies, in which samples of the population were asked to rank selected occupations according to social prestige, have been carried out in diverse parts of the world. The ratings that resulted from them showed considerable consensus, both overall and as between the several social layers making up the samples. Summing up the matter in 1956 (though there have been numerous studies of the same sort since that year) Inkeles and Rossi wrote: "Although the sub-populations studied—urban as compared with rural, manual as compared with non-manual, etc.—have ranked particular occupations differently, such differences have been greatly overshadowed by the agreement as to the general rank order in the group of occupations being rated. The ratings or rankings given to occupations also appear to be stable over time. Each subsequent research has confirmed the general outlines of the occupational prestige hierarchy as obtained by previous studies."⁶ We therefore decided, as we had done in similar studies elsewhere, to employ occupation as an indicator of social status, despite the lack of empirical studies referring specifically to

⁶A. Inkeles and P. H. Rossi, "National comparisons of occupational prestige" *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 61, 1956, pp. 329-339. Their conclusion is based upon a comparison of occupation prestige ratings from the United States, Great Britain, New Zealand, Germany, Japan and Soviet Russia. See also, B. Barber, *Social Stratification*, New York, 1957, pp. 100-111. For particular studies: National Opinion Research Center: "Jobs and occupations: a popular examination". *Public Opinion News*, Vol. 9, 1947, pp. 3-13; J. Hall and D. C. Jones, "Social grading of occupations," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 1, 1950, pp. 31-55; A. A. Congalton, "Social grading of occupations in New Zealand," *ibid.*, Vol. 4, 1953, pp. 45-59; M. Young and P. Willmott, "Social grading by manual workers," *ibid.*, Vol. 7, 1956, pp. 337-345; B. A. Hutchinson, "The social grading of occupations in Brazil," *ibid.*, Vol. 8, 1957, pp. 176-189.

the Irish situation. This seemed unlikely to hamper our conclusions more than marginally, for when so many diverse communities are in unison as to the ranking of occupations, we need not suppose Ireland to be significantly different. Indeed, as we shall see, the results of the inquiry themselves appear to justify the assumption.

We therefore considered social mobility to have occurred wherever the level of status of the informant differed from that of his father. More precisely, we considered it to have occurred where the informant's status at the time of interview differed from his father's current status or (if his father was already dead, or had retired from work) his usual status during his working life. Such a definition, of course, is a compromise. It is evident that since a person's social status may vary from one period of his life to another, the selection of a certain period for examination introduces an element of arbitrariness. This is unfortunate; but it is inevitable if an inquiry has to be kept within prescribed limits of size and complexity. We were unable, that is, to follow throughout his life the history of a subject's social status (desirable though it would be to do this); but we have taken into account periods in his career other than that at which he was interviewed, thus adding a certain perspective to what would have been otherwise an entirely two-dimensional view.

The procedure adopted in determining social status by means of a subject's occupation is probably familiar to most readers, and need not be described here in great detail. Information was obtained from the subjects of the inquiry as to their current main gainful occupation (or, in the case of the unemployed or the retired, their last main occupation). Similar information was obtained for the subject's father. In addition, the same information was recorded for the subject at the beginning of his full-time employment, and for his father and father-in-law at the time of the subject's marriage. All these items of information were recorded, not for the purpose of examining changes in occupation, but of changes in social status. They had therefore to be translated into terms of status. To do this we employed the Hall-Jones scale that formed the basis of the classic British study of social mobility,⁷ and which we ourselves have used, with some modification, in similar work elsewhere. Occupations are marshalled in accordance with a seven-fold classification, each class or category bearing a certain social status, thus:

<i>Status Category</i>	<i>Occupational Groups</i>
1 (highest)	Professionally qualified and high administrative.
2	Managerial and executive.
3	Inspectional, supervisory and other higher-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.

The seven status categories should not be read as an occupational classification, but as a hierarchy of social status. It so happens that a man's occupation is a particularly convenient *indicator* of his status; but the two are not identical. The point is particularly significant in clearing up two matters which, left unexplained, may cause confusion. The first of these, of special relevance to Ireland, concerns the social status of farmers—an occupational group which, in some classifications, is retained as a separate entity. This we did not do. Farmers were allocated positions on the status hierarchy in the same way as other occupations; and in any given case a farmer's actual status depended not merely on his occupation, in a restricted sense, but also upon the size of his farm and the number of his employees, if he had any. The second point concerns the apparently anomalous status of routine clerical occupations. These, as we have seen, were allocated the same social status (category 5) as skilled manual occupations. So heterogeneous a category would have been an occasion for justifiable scepticism had we been concerned with the simple classification of occupations. However, as we are concerned here with levels of social status (to which a man's occupation provides us with a clue); and since the empirical studies of occupation-ranking show that people normally give to the routine clerk a social status equivalent to that of the skilled carpenter and the fitter—the heterogeneity of Category 5 proves to be of occupation, not of social status. The two special cases, farmer and routine clerk, are therefore adequately accounted for in the seven status categories. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that both cases have characteristics or live in such circumstances that merit special study. We hope in a future report to subject the two occupations to a more detailed examination.

Social Status among Dublin Men

By the method described earlier we classified, on the basis of their occupations, the entire sample, and their fathers, according to the seven Status

⁷D. V. Glass (ed.), *op. cit.* Those interested in inspecting lists of occupations allocated to each of the status categories may have recourse to A. N. Oppenheimer, *Questionnaire Design and Attitude Measurement*, London, 1966; or, for another classification, to A. J. Reiss, *et al.*, *Occupations and Social Status*, New York, 1961.

Categories. In what follows we shall usually employ the terms "social status" and "status category" rather than social "class", in the hope of avoiding the controversy that use of the last term so often stimulates. The categories, in short, merely reflect positions on an assumed continuous scale of social status. Table 3 sets out the two distributions, fathers and sons, for Dublin, and compares these with similar distribution for England and Wales (1954). The general similarity of the four distributions, although drawn from different populations, is fairly striking. It must naturally be borne in mind in comparing Dublin with England and Wales that, apart from differences in date, the Irish sample is an entirely urban one (though about a third of subjects' fathers were of rural origin—higher than in England and Wales). It thus differs from the British, which was a national sample. Such differences in the nature of the sampling frame may account for some of the differences visible between the two samples of subjects (despite their overall similarity), though they will not account so readily for the differences between the two samples of fathers. Among our subjects, the higher proportion of Dubliners allocated to Categories 1 and 2 can be plausibly accounted for on the assumption of a concentration in the Capital of professional and higher administrative occupations carrying with them high social status. Other notable differences visible in the comparison with England and Wales probably reflect a relatively smaller degree of industrial development in Dublin, resulting in fewer skilled and semi-skilled (Categories 5 and 6) but more unskilled occupations (Category 7). Beyond the immediate impression of close similarity in the two distributions, Irish and English, lies therefore a less

distinct picture of a Dublin male population occupying with somewhat greater frequency the extreme positions on the hierarchy of status. It will be noted, however, that the mean is not significantly affected, average social status being almost identical. The pattern is largely, if not entirely, repeated in the two samples of subjects' fathers—an older and rather heterogeneous group, an appreciable part of which is already dead. Dublin fathers, unlike their sons, fail to outnumber proportionally their English counterparts allocated to the highest status category (perhaps partly because of the rural origin of so many of the former). Combined with a higher proportion of Dublin fathers in the lowest Category (possibly due to an earlier influx of sons of farm origin) this produces a slightly lower mean status in the Dublin sample. But the differences visible in Table 3, small as they are, seem consistent with what we know of the later industrial and commercial development of Dublin, and of a persistent shortage here of skilled and semi-skilled workers, coupled with an over-supply of the unskilled. The limited change in the shape of the status distribution from one "generation"⁸ to another, reflecting small economic change (from the viewpoint of occupational structure) during the period in question, suggests that the amount of social mobility attributable to changes in structure may prove relatively small—although, as we shall see, it is greater than in England and Wales.

⁸The term "generation" is used here, of course, in the purely biological sense, not in the demographic meaning of a group of persons born in the same year or years (cf. B. Benjamin, *Elements of Vital Statistics*, London, 1959, p. 69). The mean age of the fathers of a sample of living male adults must be higher than that of their sons, but actual ages overlap considerably. Hence, some sons will be older than some fathers, as some fathers will be younger than some sons.

TABLE 3: STATUS DISTRIBUTION OF A SAMPLE OF THE ADULT MALE POPULATION OF DUBLIN, AND OF THEIR FATHERS, COMPARED WITH ENGLAND AND WALES (1954)

Status Category	Dublin Sample (1968)		England and Wales (1954)*	
	Subjects	Fathers	Subjects	Fathers
	%			
1 (highest)	4.9 ± 0.9†	2.8 ± 0.8	2.9 ± 0.7	3.7 ± 0.7
2	5.2 ± 1.2	4.9 ± 1.2	4.5 ± 0.8	4.3 ± 0.8
3	8.6 ± 1.5	8.6 ± 1.5	9.4 ± 1.2	9.9 ± 1.2
4	18.6 ± 2.0	17.0 ± 2.0	13.1 ± 1.4	14.8 ± 1.5
5	33.1 ± 2.4	35.6 ± 2.5	40.9 ± 2.0	43.2 ± 2.1
6	13.0 ± 1.8	12.2 ± 1.7	17.0 ± 1.5	13.1 ± 1.4
7	16.6 ± 1.9	18.9 ± 2.1	12.1 ± 1.3	11.1 ± 1.3
N =	2,460‡	2,460	3,497	3,497
Mean status	4.75	4.90	4.84	4.73

*Source: D. V. Glass (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain*, London, 1954, chap. viii, Table 2, p. 183.

†Confidence limits at 1% level.

‡Excluding 80 subjects for whom occupational data were incomplete.

TABLE 4: STATUS DISTRIBUTION OF ADULT DUBLIN MALES, RELATED TO AGE

Status Category	Age-Group					N	Mean Age (years)
	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+		
	%						
1 (highest)	14.9	18.2	15.7	27.3	24.0	121	48.9
2	26.4	24.0	17.1	16.3	16.3	129	43.3
3	23.7	23.7	21.8	20.9	10.0	211	42.9
4	24.7	18.0	26.8	16.5	14.1	462	43.4
5	25.5	22.6	19.0	18.0	14.9	832	43.0
6	22.8	19.8	21.3	18.2	17.9	324	44.8
7	17.3	21.3	19.2	21.1	21.1	417	47.1
All Subjects	24.0	21.2	20.8	19.1	16.5	2,496*	44.3

*Excluding 44 cases for whom age or status information was lacking.

There were, nevertheless, interesting differences in the age composition of the status Categories (Table 4), their nature suggesting the combined effect of individual histories, of changes in Dublin's occupational structure, and of internal migration. The mean age for the total sample was 44.3 years; and from this value the status categories 2 to 6 do not diverge significantly. It is at the extremes of the status hierarchy, categories 1 and 7, that significant differences occur, both, as it happens, in the same direction, with the result that people of highest and of lowest status in the community tend to be older than average. This need not surprise us. Since we are concerned here with achieved, not with ascribed status, it is to be expected that the highest positions in the social hierarchy tend to be achieved only in later life. Thus we see that the proportion of men aged over 60 is fifty per cent. greater in category 1 than in the adult male population as a whole. The proportion aged 21-30 years is some forty per cent. smaller. The higher average age of category 7 (based, it will be remembered, on unskilled occupations) can be partially accounted for by, as it were, the mirror image of the considerations that lead to the age characteristics of category 1. For unskilled occupations form a repository for the elderly

retired man, the older semi-skilled worker demoted by his employers, and the man too old (or considered too old) ever to have learnt new technical methods demanded by modern industry. As Table 4 shows, category 7 is by no means wholly occupied by the elderly—indeed the contribution of ages 31-60 is very close to average. But the significant falling-off in the proportion of youngest men will be noticed, reinforcing, in its effect upon the mean, the above-average proportion of over-sixties. The importance of these age differences must not be exaggerated, however, for the overall picture is one of general consistency in the age composition of the several status categories.

In contrast, an analysis by religious adherence showed, as might be expected, a notable difference in the status composition of the Catholic and non-Catholic (i.e., Protestant, Jewish and other denominations) sections of the Dublin community. While some two-thirds of Catholic men are to be found in the three lowest status categories, three-quarters of non-Catholics are in categories 1 to 4 (Table 5). There is four times the proportion of non-Catholics as of Catholics in the highest status, yet less than half the proportion of non-Catholics in the lowest. The dimension of the relationship is obvious enough;

TABLE 5: SOCIAL STATUS OF DUBLIN MALE ADULTS, RELATED TO RELIGIOUS ADHERENCE

Status Category	Religious Adherence		All Subjects
	Catholic	Non-Catholic	
	%		
1 (highest)	3.9	16.2	4.8
2	4.5	13.5	5.2
3	7.8	16.8	8.5
4	17.7	28.1	18.5
5	34.7	16.2	33.3
6	13.9	2.2	13.0
7	17.5	7.0	16.7
N =	2,309	185	2,494*

*Excluding 46 cases lacking information either on social status or on religious adherence.

but the data give us grounds for pointing to the effect of history rather than of religious belief on economic success and its social rewards. If we glance back at the status distribution (Table 3) of men in England and Wales, of course dominantly non-Catholics, we see that it approximates far more closely to that of Dublin Catholics than of non-Catholics. In other words, if it is true that history had secured to non-Catholics in Dublin some inherited advantage, this no longer works appreciably to the disadvantage of the Catholic majority, who heavily outnumber Protestants in *all* status categories. Thus, of the entire category 1 in Dublin, three-quarters are Catholics—still much smaller than the expected proportion, but large enough to suggest that an erstwhile social dominance enjoyed by non-Catholics is drawing to a close.

What the position may be in other parts of Ireland, of course, is another matter. A large minority of Dublin men, approximately a third, was born elsewhere, and from the status viewpoint (Table 6) appear to be better-off than their Dublin-born colleagues. This is particularly true of men whose birthplaces had been urban areas other than Dublin, whose mean status is markedly higher than average. But the relationship between birthplace and social status is altogether a fairly close one, to the degree that the Dublin-born become more numerous the more we descend the status hierarchy—or, to state the matter in a positive sense, migrants to the Capital on the whole are of higher status than the Dublin-born themselves. The origins of such a relationship are, of course, not simple; and the relative weights to be allocated to each of the several factors difficult to ascertain. It can be assumed that the position reflected in Table 6 is the outcome of two selective processes impinging, respectively, upon the rural and semi-rural population on the one hand, and Dublin natives on the other. We may suppose—Damian Hannan's recent work⁹ in County Cavan lends support to the

⁹A report on this work is shortly to be published.

supposition—that in general migrants to the Capital are largely selected on the basis of education and personal ambition. To these must be added employees of local branches of firms promoted to Dublin head-offices, sons of the provincial well-to-do with contacts in Dublin, University students from the provinces who have stayed on in Dublin after graduation, etc., all of whom are likely to enter higher-status occupations. None of these factors are of a sort to impinge with much force upon people born in the country (as distinguished from small towns and villages)—and indeed the mean Dublin status of men born on farms or otherwise away from population nuclei does not differ significantly from the Dublin average. In other words a number of pressures and influences at work on the provincial population of Ireland operate in the direction of securing for the migrant status positions somewhat above average. Moreover, in respect of category 1 (and perhaps also of category 2) a number of Irish firms, and Irish branches of foreign firms, are in the habit of recruiting their higher-level executive and administrative staff from abroad.¹⁰ Such a tendency itself serves to raise the non-Dublin element in the higher categories.

Our results, therefore, are the opposite of those reported for the USA by Lipset and Bendix¹¹ who (summarising the conclusions of an Oakland study) state, "the larger a man's community of orientation (the community in which he spent his teens), the higher the status of the job he holds is likely to be. . . . Of those who spent their formative years on farms, only 41 per cent. achieved non-manual positions; of those who spent them in small urban places, 53 per cent.; and of those who grew up in large cities, 65 per cent." In our case, slightly less than half the entire category 1 in Dublin is composed of the Dublin-born although the latter make up

¹⁰See *Investment in Education*, Dublin, 1965, pp. 178-179 where it is shown that up to 20 per cent. of administrative executive and management positions in Ireland are filled by people born outside the State.

¹¹*Op. cit.*, pp. 204-213.

TABLE 6: SOCIAL STATUS OF DUBLIN MALE ADULTS RELATED TO PLACE OF BIRTH

Place of Birth	Mean Status	Subject's Status Category							N
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
		%							
Dublin ..	5.0	3.4	3.0	6.8	17.2	35.7	14.5	19.3	1,711
Other large city	3.7	12.1	18.1	14.1	21.5	18.8	6.7	8.7	149
Town ..	4.0	9.9	9.1	13.6	23.1	30.6	5.4	8.3	242
Village ..	4.3	4.1	11.5	10.7	21.3	32.8	12.3	7.4	122
Country ..	4.7	5.8	5.4	10.1	19.5	28.9	14.1	16.2	277
All Subjects ..	4.75	4.9	5.2	8.6	18.6	33.1	13.0	16.6	2,501*

*Excluding 39 cases for whom status information was lacking.

68.3 per cent. of the male adult population of the city. In contrast, nearly four-fifths of the two lowest categories are natives of Dublin. Are the factors we have suggested as operating on the provincial population enough to explain so marked a difference? Might we not expect Dubliners' greater familiarity with the urban scene and its potentialities largely to counter-balance the possibly greater ambition and push of provincial migrants? Are avenues to social mobility closed to Dubliners that are open to new arrivals? It is certainly true that the selective forces of ambition impinging on the migrants may place the Dublin-born at something of a disadvantage in the competition for limited higher status positions in the community, but the consequences appear more drastic than might have been foreseen. A more probable explanation may be sought on the assumption that, like the provincial migrants themselves, Dublin-born aspirants to the higher status levels combine social with geographical mobility. In such a case they will not appear in our sample because they are no longer in the City, but in Great Britain or in the United States. Indeed, some of them may well have moved to provincial Ireland, whence have come complaints that local avenues to promotion are blocked by the appointment to higher positions of migrants from the Capital. Some slight confirmation of the general hypothesis is given by the age distribution (Table 4) showing a higher mean age in the lowest category, although this offers us very little support. The whole matter, indeed, remains a subject for conjecture to which our sample inquiry cannot make any contribution of fact. On the other hand, the position is clear enough as far as the contemporary male population of Dublin is concerned: the migrant part has been more successful in securing higher positions of social status than the Dublin-born, and contribute to the upper status categories to a degree notably greater than their contribution to the total adult male population of the city. We shall see later how far migration to Dublin is associated with inter-generational social mobility. It is worth mentioning at this point,

however, that the social status of migrants does not appear significantly related to their age at arrival in Dublin—though the sampling error associated with the relatively small total of migrants encountered discourages definite assertion. Nevertheless, a comparison of Table 7 with Table 6 readily reveals that some social mobility must have occurred among migrants to Dublin. It will be noticed that the subject's current social status is almost as markedly associated with his father's birthplace as with his own, subjects whose fathers were Dubliners being represented beyond the expected degree in the lower status categories, and under-represented in the upper. Country-born fathers are over-represented among subjects now in category 1, and under-represented among the fathers of category 7. The same is true of village-born fathers, and to a considerable extent of other non-Dublin fathers. There is therefore a strong suggestion emanating from a consideration of these two Tables that a man's social status may be as much a function of his family origins—and not necessarily merely in the sense of status inheritance—as of simpler considerations of his own birthplace, and the like. Such a conclusion is consistent with other data, to which we turn later (such as those relating to educational achievement), suggesting the importance of the subject's relative rather than absolute characteristics, as it were, in determining social mobility. At this stage, however, we might seem justified in supposing that a male Dubliner whose father, and he himself, were born in the Capital is more liable than anyone else to be doomed to a low social status. Naturally, it cannot be supposed that place of birth alone has such an effect: in this sense the relationship is spurious. There must be, in other words, other factors associated with birthplace, as for example access to education, "modernity" of outlook, acceptance of change and social approval of personal ambition, that can be more plausibly regarded as causative in the situation we are discussing. The majority of such factors fall outside the scope of the present inquiry, although we are able to show that educational level is closely

TABLE 7: SOCIAL STATUS OF DUBLIN MALE ADULTS, RELATED TO FATHER'S PLACE OF BIRTH

Father's Place of Birth	Mean Status (subject)	Subject's Status Category							N
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
		%							
Dublin ..	5.2	2.4	2.0	5.4	15.3	36.9	16.7	21.3	1,230
Other large city ..	4.1	12.2	9.6	14.1	19.9	24.4	8.3	11.5	156
Town ..	4.4	5.4	11.4	9.0	21.9	32.9	7.5	12.0	334
Village ..	4.4	6.8	5.9	11.7	19.5	36.6	9.3	10.2	205
Country ..	4.4	7.5	6.7	12.7	22.7	26.2	11.5	12.7	520
Others ..		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9
All Subjects ..	4.75	4.9	5.2	8.6	18.6	33.1	13.0	16.6	2,454*

*Excluding 36 cases lacking information as to subject's status.

TABLE 8: SOCIAL STATUS OF DUBLIN MALE ADULTS, RELATED TO AGE AT COMPLETING EDUCATION

Age at Completing Education	Subject's Status Category							All Subjects
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	%							
Under 16*	1.7	3.4	7.6	22.9	37.1	69.2	82.8	40.9
16-20 ..	13.7	27.0	52.8	61.1	42.0	27.1	15.1	37.7
Over 20 ..	84.6	69.6	39.6	16.0	20.9	3.7	2.1	21.4
N = ..	117	115	197	450	814	321	418	2,432†

*Including subjects with no formal education.

†Excluding 108 cases lacking information either on social status or on age at completion of education.

associated with social status in Ireland as elsewhere. We will be dealing with the matter in some detail in our discussion of social mobility: here it is sufficient to show that even the fairly rudimentary measure of educational achievement provided by the age at which formal education ended is highly related to status (Table 8).

We are forced to the conclusion that the Dublin-born, on the whole, are less educated than migrants from other parts of the country now resident in the Capital. And while other factors are certainly significant in creating differences in social status between the two sections of the population, Table 9 shows fairly conclusively the importance of education. It is noticeable moreover that although the line of separation is most clearly marked between native Dubliners and Dublin residents born in other cities or towns (the latter group having continued their education beyond the age usual among Dubliners), it is perceptible also between native Dubliners and the rural-born. It is not reasonable to suppose that the Capital offers fewer educational opportunities at all levels than the rest of the country.¹³ We must therefore assume that migration to Dublin is selective of education, in the sense that it is the better-educated of the provincial-born who move

¹³However, the report, *Investment in Education*, pp. 156-168, shows that at the immediate post-primary level Dublin in fact does not offer more educational opportunities than the rest of the country.

to the Capital; and this, as we have said, is consistent with Hannan's study of migration from County Cavan (as also with numerous studies of migration in other parts of the world).¹³ As we shall show below, upward social mobility also is somewhat more common among provincial migrants.

But in the sample as a whole, whatever the birth-place, there was a general belief that they were better (or at any rate no worse) off than their fathers. In the interpretation of these answers, however, we are faced with certain difficulties: for although we were concerned to discover, if we could, whether a subject considered himself of the same or of a different social status from his father, to ask the question too brusquely might have been regarded, with some justification, as an error of taste. The form in which the question was finally framed,¹⁴ compromise as it was, did not sufficiently steer the informant in the direction of an answer in terms exclusively of social status. In other words, some informants may have answered, either wholly or partially, in terms of material well-being; and this

¹³In a personal communication Dr Hannan points out that it is also likely to be true that the poorly-educated rural-born, like the better-educated Dubliner, tend to emigrate, and are thereby lost to the present sample.

¹⁴The question asked of informants was: "Now, comparing yourself with your father and how well he did (his position, way of life and so on), do you think you yourself are about the same as he, rather better, or rather worse?" Preceding questions had discussed social "class", factors involved in "getting on in the world", and the like.

TABLE 9: SUBJECT'S BIRTHPLACE, RELATED TO AGE AT COMPLETING EDUCATION

Age at Completing Education	Subject's Birthplace					All Subjects
	Dublin	Other City	Town	Village	Country	
	%					
Under 10 ..	3.1	7.9	4.9	4.0	3.2	3.6
10-15 ..	44.9	19.7	21.2	31.5	33.9	39.2
16-19 ..	29.8	28.9	35.5	33.1	39.3	31.5
20-25 ..	18.9	30.9	29.8	26.6	18.9	21.0
Over 25 ..	3.3	12.5	8.6	4.8	4.6	4.6
N = ..	1,727	152	245	124	280	2,528*

*Excluding 12 cases lacking information either as to age or to birthplace.

TABLE 10: SUBJECT'S VIEW OF HIS "POSITION, WAY OF LIFE, ETC." COMPARED WITH THAT OF HIS FATHER, RELATED TO SUBJECT'S ACTUAL SOCIAL MOBILITY HISTORY

Self-appraisal relative to father	Subject's Current Status Relative to Father				All Subjects
	Higher	Same	Lower	Not Known	
	%				
Better	74.8	56.6	43.3	35.9	58.8
Same	16.9	29.4	32.4	16.7	25.8
Worse	4.6	10.1	20.5	10.3	10.9
Doubtful	2.3	2.2	2.3	6.4	2.4
No Answer; Don't know, etc. ..	1.4	1.7	1.5	30.8	2.2
N =	828	976	658	78	2,540

would account for the considerable overall discrepancy visible in Table 10. There was some degree of association between the answers to this question and actual mobility history. This suggests that many informants were in fact thinking of relative social status in making their answers, as we had hoped, and were aware of the social mobility process in their personal lives, although the evidence for this is no more than indirect. Not that the process of upward mobility is widely regarded as an easy matter, slightly more than one man in every two thinking of this as "rather difficult", almost irrespective of whether his own social status differed from his father's. Nor was his estimate of the difficulty of upward mobility related significantly to the result of the comparison of his own with his father's position and way of life: those who thought their conditions had improved did not, as a consequence, think upward mobility any easier. There were interesting differences, on the other hand, in subjects' views as to the factor they regard as "most important" in facilitating upward mobility:¹⁵ that is, of the alternatives suggested to them. Of the

entire sample of men a large minority (40.8 per cent.) were of the opinion that "a good education" is the main factor in success (Table 11). Consonant as such a view is with contemporary opinion, we shall show later that education *in itself* in fact bears a less simple and direct relationship to inter-generational social mobility than might be supposed. Nevertheless, it is a view held fairly consistently at all levels of social status. It thus differs from the other suggested factors in achieving success, preference for which tended to vary according to the subject's status position. The general sense of Table 11 appears to be first, that the rational virtues of education and hard work are together seen as of major importance by about two men out of three. These, however, become somewhat less popular as we descend the status hierarchy, to the degree that while these virtues are supported by some three-quarters of the two highest categories, the figure drops to something over half the men in categories 6 and 7. Secondly, the less ponderable factors, good luck and knowing the "right people", were selected increasingly with decreasing social status, being twice as popular in the lowest as in the highest category. We can, if we wish, see these differences as reflecting an inverse relationship between rationality and social status; but is this justified? Could it not be held just as reasonably that a sense of social realism increases as we descend the status hierarchy?

¹⁵Subjects were asked the following question: "to get on in the world and for someone to move up to a higher class in the way we have been talking about, what do you think is most important—to have good luck? to have a good education? to get to know the right people? to work very hard? or don't you know?" A prompt card showing the five alternatives was handed to the subject to facilitate his answer.

TABLE 11: VIEWS OF DUBLIN MALE ADULTS AS TO THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN LIFE "SUCCESS", RELATED TO CURRENT SOCIAL STATUS

Main factor in "success"	Subject's Status Category							All Subjects
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	%							
Good education	45.5	45.0	45.8	41.3	39.7	39.0	38.5	40.8
Work hard	25.6	31.8	28.3	27.0	20.8	19.6	17.2	22.6
Good luck	5.8	3.9	4.2	8.9	6.6	9.2	10.8	7.7
Knowing right people ..	14.9	16.3	19.8	20.7	31.0	31.3	32.1	26.8
Don't know	8.3	3.1	1.9	2.2	1.9	0.9	1.4	2.1
N =	121	129	212	463	833	326	418	2,502*

*Excluding 38 cases lacking social status information.

The relative importance of the several factors in success varied, to a minor degree in accordance with the informant's mobility history, with the exception of "good luck", which remained stable. Men who had gained a higher social status than their fathers were slightly more inclined to regard education and hard work as chiefly important, compared with men who had lost status. The latter were more ready to give importance to "knowing the right people". Either tendency might be interpreted as a protective device for the ego; but attractive as the pursuit of such a hypothesis appears, the minor differences we have mentioned scarcely justify the digression. From the figures available to us we are far more justified in concluding that, generally speaking, mobility history has little significant effect on the matter.¹⁶

Class Self-Assessment

Although the preceding paragraphs give us a picture of the distribution of social status among the male adult population of Dublin, and relate this to a number of key variables, we cannot tell directly from that discussion how far it reflects people's own view of themselves. It is true that, as we have seen, the status hierarchy employed is well-founded empirically from work carried out in other countries, and that we have no reason to suppose that it does not apply with equal validity to Ireland. Yet what relationship do our categories bear to people's own ranking of themselves on a hierarchy of social "class" or social "status"? The question has particular significance in Ireland, where a belief in a classless society is widely and sincerely held. For it can be readily understood that a society that does not display distinctions of class or status cannot undergo the process of social mobility as we have defined it. The entire basis of our inquiry would therefore be seriously undermined. It follows that, if we find that the population after all do rank, or can rank, themselves according to some form of hierarchy of "prestige" or "standing", we need no longer fear that we have embarked upon a study that, in the Irish social context, has no meaning. We therefore decided to put the matter to the test.

The decision did not fail to produce its difficulties. Many members of any Western stratified society

have only a very general knowledge of the system of social stratification or of their place in it. The greater the influence of an egalitarian ideology, as in Ireland, the less conscious thought will ordinarily be given to the matter, and the less meaningful an attempt at self-classification. Moreover, the more widespread this ideology, the greater the proportion of respondents who can be expected to refuse or be unable to classify themselves. Even were this not to occur, and a large majority willing to classify themselves (as in fact occurred in the present case), the results tell us nothing about class consciousness, how important class distinctions are thought to be, and in what types of situation. To say, when one is asked, that one is a member of the "middle class", for example, cannot be understood as meaning that one necessarily shares conventional middle class values, or feels any identification with the middle class as a group. In addition, earlier studies have shown that class self-assessment can be influenced by the form in which the question is put:¹⁷ though this must be regarded, not as an indication that social stratification is necessarily non-existent or unimportant, but as a reflection of the fact that assessments may vary according to the frame of reference that is suggested.

Though aware of such problems, and of the limits these would impose upon the value of our results, we nevertheless persisted in the inquiry. The concept of social classes, and of an individual's allocation to one or other of them, was briefly explained to the subjects interviewed.¹⁸ They were then asked to allocate themselves to one of the three classes suggested to them, working, middle or upper class. Whatever their self-assessments may have "meant", and whatever the degree of seriousness with which our subjects regarded their answers to the question, few appear to have had difficulty with it (Table 12).

It will be noted that only a very small proportion of the sample was unable to attempt a self-assessment on the grounds that "there are no class distinctions in Ireland". In general, the distribution of self-

¹⁷For a useful summary of the effects of question-form on class self-assessment see B. Barber, *Social Stratification*, New York, 1957, pp. 208-212.

¹⁸The introduction to the question, and the question itself, were as follows: "Many think that people can be 'placed' according to their 'class' or 'social position', so that they say, for instance, 'Mr. So and So is a different class from us', and so on. People also talk of 'upper class', 'working class', the 'middle class'. Suppose, then, there are three main classes in Dublin: working class, middle class and upper class. If this were so, where do you think you would fit in: In the middle class? In the working class? Or in the upper class? Or don't you know?" The alternatives were set out on a card which was handed to the informant, who was also given the opportunity to answer "There are no class distinctions in Ireland", if he wished. Informants were subsequently asked whether they considered they fell within the upper or the lower half of the class to which they had allocated themselves. The sample was thus self-assessed according to six "social classes".

¹⁶F. M. Martin, "Some subjective aspects of social stratification," in D. V. Glass (Ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 73-75, discusses the results of a more elaborate examination of subjects' views on the factors associated with social mobility. The results obtained from samples of the adult populations of Greenwich and Hertford, in so far as they are comparable with our own, had certain features in common. Non-manual groups placed more emphasis upon hard work and strength of character. Lower manual groups referred to "influence" and "contacts" more frequently than other groups. But the reduced emphasis in the lower status groups on psychological characteristics was balanced by a higher respect for the role of education and training—a tendency not evident in our results. In contrast to Dublin, lower status groups placed less emphasis on "good luck".

TABLE 12: SUBJECTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO THE INITIAL THREE "CLASSES"

Upper class	%
Middle class	2.4
Working class	48.2
Don't know	44.9
No class distinctions in Ireland	2.6
N =	1.9
	2,537

assessments according to the initial three classes is closely similar to those obtained from earlier rather similar inquiries in Great Britain and the United States.¹⁹ Nevertheless, it is necessary to recognise that, as we have said, self-assessments may be influenced profoundly by the form in which the question is put. Even were this not the case, we cannot learn from the self-assessments themselves how seriously they are taken by our respondents and how far they result from a polite acquiescence in a frame of reference proposed by a field interviewer, though secretly regarded as socially unreal. On the other hand, informants' self-assessments, as may be seen in Table 13, correlate fairly closely with the objective estimates of social status made by ourselves on the basis of the seven Hall-Jones categories.

Although dispersion is considerable, "mean" status²⁰ as calculated on the seven categories, falls consistently from "upper" to "working" class. The

¹⁹A British study of 1948, quoted in G. D. H. Cole, *Studies in Class Structure*, London, 1955, found that 46 per cent. of its sample identified with the "working class", and 47 per cent. with some section of the "middle class". N. Gross, "Social class identification in the urban community," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 18, 1953, pp. 398-404, reports a similar distribution in response to much the same question in Minneapolis: see B. Barber, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-212. In a later study in two English boroughs, 45.6 per cent. assessed themselves as "working class" and 42.5 per cent. as "middle class": F. M. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

²⁰"Mean" status is a merely notional if useful summary concept arrived at by allocating the values one to seven, in descending order, to the categories set out in Table 13. It has little sociological value, begging as it does the whole question of whether categories are discrete, or arbitrary subdivisions of a continuous scale. But it has an operational use in summarising the various distributions in question. We have adopted a similar method in dealing with the social "classes" obtained from self-assessments.

TABLE 13: SUBJECTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO THREE "CLASSES", RELATED TO THEIR SOCIAL STATUS (HALL-JONES SCALE)

Subject's "Class" self-assessment	Subject's Status Category							N	"Mean" Status
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	%								
Upper class ..	40.4	7.0	10.5	17.5	15.8	3.5	5.3	57	2.93
Middle class ..	7.6	9.0	14.2	27.6	26.5	7.5	7.7	1,200	4.10
Working class ..	0.2	0.7	2.0	8.6	41.1	19.7	27.7	1,131	5.60
Don't know, etc.	4.4	7.9	11.4	21.9	36.0	9.6	8.8	114	4.41
All Subjects ..	4.8	5.2	8.5	18.5	33.3	13.0	16.7	2,502	4.76

P < 0.001

relationship between self-assessment and social status is statistically highly significant (P < 0.001). A similar relationship was observed between self-assessment and the social status of the subject's father (P < 0.001).

Having made this preliminary assessment of themselves according to the three classes suggested, subjects were then asked to say whether they felt they belonged to the upper or the lower half of the class they selected. The outcome is shown in Table 14. It will be noted that the proportion unable or not prepared to answer now increases from 4.5 to 12.9 per cent. of the sample (the latter figure including those who, having made no self-assessment at the first stage, were not asked the second). That is, more subjects felt it difficult to assess their position within their selected class than had found difficulty in selecting their class in the first instance. Among the rest there is evident a preference for the upper rather than the lower half of the class. More opted for "upper upper" than for "lower upper"; more "upper middle" than "lower middle"; more "upper working" than "lower working". In each class the percentage preferring the upper moiety is roughly double that preferring the lower.

TABLE 14: SUBJECTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT BY "SOCIAL CLASS"

Class	Per cent.
Upper upper	1.3
Lower upper	0.8
Upper middle	27.6
Lower middle	15.8
Upper working	29.3
Lower working	12.4
Don't know	12.9
N =	2,502*

*Excluding 38 cases for whom information was incomplete.

There were few age differences in class self-assessment, "mean" class and degree of dispersion (as estimated by average deviations) remaining constant from one age-group to another. This

general unanimity was only slightly marred by a heavier incidence among the youngest (21-30 years) and middle (41-50) age-groups of subjects who "did not know" whether they fell in the upper or lower half of the social class to which they had allocated themselves. That this indecision was most common at these ages may have been determined by a disharmony between ascribed and achieved status: younger men born to a certain status failing as yet to have achieved it for themselves; middle-aged men undecided whether to claim a status only recently attained, yet unwilling to underestimate themselves. But such matters are of relatively minor importance compared with the overall degree of unanimity in the distribution of self-assessments. Yet the general consistency cannot be taken as an indication that informants gave us, through their answers, a glimpse of the real class structure of Dublin that the objective methods employed in the remainder of this inquiry cannot provide. On the contrary, the fact in itself that class self-assessment was not related to age tends, as it were, to give the game away: for from an objective viewpoint such a relationship ought to have been evident. For if, as we must assume, a man's status is prone to change between the beginning of his working life and the end of it, age differences in class distribution should be visible even in a static economy. Moreover, in an economy in process of change, new class/status positions are thrown open, while others disappear. Dublin, and indeed Ireland generally, is presently undergoing such a process, already of some decades' duration; yet there is no indication of it in the age class distributions. These considerations could well, by themselves, be deemed sufficient to throw doubt upon class self-assessment as a means of obtaining information about social class in Dublin that is objective in any but a very limited sense.

We must therefore inquire how far the self-

assessments coincided with the status categories derived from occupational data in the manner described earlier. In making use of the distributions by status category at this point it is of course necessary to anticipate somewhat our later discussion; but the interest of the digression justifies it. In Table 15 we have set out the class self-assessments of each of the status categories. What is perhaps the most immediately striking characteristic of the table is the large variation in the proportion unable to make a self-assessment at all. This failure—or refusal—was least common in the two lowest categories, among whom it is slightly less than ten per cent., appreciably below the average for the sample as a whole. In contrast, the middle categories display a noticeably more frequent diffidence which rises to almost a quarter of subjects we allocated to category 2. As we shall see later, these differences may be related to social mobility. On the other hand, the fact that proportionally almost nine times as many men in Dublin as in the Rio de Janeiro study²¹ cited earlier failed to classify themselves is at any rate consistent with the belief that class distinctions, except of the broadest categories, are rejected by many in Ireland. On the general point, however, it is clear from the diagonal tendency of Table 15 that self-assessments are fairly closely related to our own status categories; and any lack of coincidence will have been reinforced by the greater number of categories. There are some fairly wide discrepancies as, for example, those members of our highest category who allocated themselves to the lower working class, and the unskilled workers who assessed themselves as upper middle or upper upper class. Yet in general it may be said that the

²¹The forms of the questions were not identical in the two studies, however; and that employed in Rio de Janeiro (involving the subjects' pointing to divisions on a visual scale) may have been easier, or more agreeable, for informants to answer.

TABLE 15: SUBJECTS' CLASS SELF-ASSESSMENT RELATED TO THEIR STATUS CATEGORY AS DETERMINED FROM OCCUPATION

Class Self-Assessment	Status Category							All Subjects
	1 (highest)	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	%							
Upper upper	9.9	0.8	1.9	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.0	1.3
Lower upper	5.8	1.6	0.5	0.9	0.5	0.3	—	0.8
Upper middle	60.3	56.6	53.3	40.0	19.1	15.9	8.6	27.6
Lower middle	9.1	13.2	17.9	24.0	16.2	9.5	12.4	15.8
Upper working	1.7	3.1	8.5	16.2	43.1	39.9	34.7	29.3
Lower working	0.8	1.6	0.5	2.2	9.2	23.9	33.5	12.4
Don't know	12.4	23.3	17.5	16.0	11.2	9.8	9.8	12.9
N =	121	129	212	463	833	326	418	2,502*

*Excluding 38 cases lacking information as to social status.
P < 0.001

lower the status category, the lower the class self-assessment. The whole matter has been summarised in Table 16, from which it will be seen that mean social class (by self-assessment) varies directly with the social status both of the subject and of his father—the double association, of course, largely reflecting the tendency for men to retain their ascribed, or inherited, status.

Nevertheless, this tendency is not absolute, as we shall show. The absence of significant differences between equivalent status categories in mean self-assessments (or in the average deviations), whether the sample is marshalled according to its own status, or according to that of the fathers' generation, is unexpected, except perhaps on the assumption that subjects took both their ascribed and their acquired status into account in assessing themselves (as some may well have done). Dispersion of self-assessments appears to increase as we descend the status hierarchy; yet this is combined with a seemingly inconsistent tendency for willingness to undertake a self-assessment to increase in the same direction. In short, the lower the subject's social status, the more willing he was to estimate his social class, but the less his estimate was likely to be in unison with his fellows of similar status.

There were some interesting differences, of minor

importance, associated with religious adherence, the mean class self-assessment of Catholics being markedly lower than that of non-Catholics (4.28, compared with 3.65). This was accompanied by a far greater degree of unwillingness, on the part of non-Catholics, to undertake the exercise. The sample was too small to permit a reliable attempt to isolate the "effect" of religion from that of other associated variables. The apparent relationship is almost certainly spurious, however, resulting from the different status composition of the two religious categories.

It seemed not unlikely that self-assessment might be associated in some way with a subject's social mobility history. A detailed analysis of the relevant data from this viewpoint being out of place in the present context we must confine our examination to the occurrence, or not, of mobility, and to its direction. It cannot be said that the results of such an examination are particularly significant or conclusive (Table 17). Indeed, what is most remarkable is not the difference but the consistency of self-assessment evident in Table 17. Nevertheless, compared with subjects who had retained their inherited status, self-allocation to the middle class was somewhat more common among the upward-mobile, as it was less common among those who had

TABLE 16: MEAN CLASS SELF-ASSESSMENTS RELATED TO THE SOCIAL STATUS OF THE SUBJECT AND THAT OF HIS FATHER

Subject's Status Category	Mean Self-Assessment	Average Deviation	Percentage "don't know's"	Father's Status Category	Mean Self-Assessment	Average Deviation	Percentage "don't know's"
1 (highest) ..	2.83	0.57	12.4	1	2.81	0.57	30.4
2 ..	3.27	0.50	23.3	2	3.32	0.68	20.0
3 ..	3.39	0.63	17.5	3	3.42	0.69	15.6
4 ..	3.72	0.77	16.0	4	3.79	0.87	13.9
5 ..	4.44	0.86	11.2	5	4.56	0.92	12.0
6 ..	4.77	0.86	9.8	6	4.68	0.88	5.7
7 ..	5.00	0.74	9.8	7	4.76	0.85	12.5
All Subjects:	4.24	1.01	12.9	All Subjects:	4.24	1.01	12.9

TABLE 17: CLASS SELF-ASSESSMENTS RELATED TO THE SUBJECTS' SOCIAL MOBILITY HISTORY

Class self-assessment	Subject's Status Relative to his Father			All Subjects
	Higher	Same	Lower	
	%			
Upper upper ..	1.6	1.6	0.6	1.4
Lower upper ..	1.2	0.6	0.5	0.8
Upper middle ..	34.3	25.2	23.9	27.9
Lower middle ..	17.4	15.9	13.3	15.7
Upper working ..	25.6	31.5	30.7	29.3
Lower working ..	7.0	13.8	16.2	12.4
Don't know ..	12.9	11.4	14.8	12.9
N = ..	828	974	654	2,457*

*Excluding 83 cases for whom information on one or other count was incomplete.

P < 0.001 C = 0.17

lost status. The reverse tendency appears to hold among subjects who assessed themselves as working class. But these facts tell us little about the effect of social mobility, for the differences are small enough to be explained as largely factual descriptions of the two mobility groups: just as the downward mobile may be found more frequently in the working class (as estimated objectively), so the socially promoted may have found their destination more often in the middle class. There was no significant difference in the dispersion of self-assessments between the three mobility categories. In other words, we have no evidence to support the possibility that social mobility affected subjects' estimate of their current class position, even to the extent of encouraging a significant increase in the proportion of refusals.

Where then do these results leave us? Humphreys, in his somewhat over-criticised study of Dublin people, came to the conclusion that his subjects had "an acute sense of class". To this he added the rider that "people perhaps have the tendency to consider that the class system is much less complex and more open, and that class distinction is much less marked, not only than it was twenty-five years ago in Dublin, but also than it is in England and the United States today . . . (but) the sense of class remains strong among Dubliners and there is some evidence that class lines are congealing."²² As far as they go—and it cannot be claimed that they go very far—our data seem consistent with Humphrey's conclusion. There were informants who, because they believe class distinctions do not exist in Dublin, were unable to assess their social class; but the proportion was negligible. On the preliminary assessment (according to the three major classes) only four and a half per cent. claimed, for this reason or another, not to know their class. Of the remainder, one in twelve was unable, it is true, to decide whether he fell within the upper or lower half of his class. Together, these two groups of "Don't knows" make up a very much larger proportion of the sample than was obtained in Great Britain (1954) or Rio de Janeiro (1963) in response to a somewhat similar question. This suggests the possibility that class distinctions are in fact less distinctly felt in Ireland than in Britain or in Brazil. On the other hand, it may merely mean that in Ireland distinctions are more easily drawn on the basis of a three-class system, where inability to answer was much closer to the Brazilian level.

All in all, however, approximately one man in eight was unable or unwilling to choose between six social classes. In general it might be thought that this deals a serious blow at Humphreys', and our own,

belief that despite protestations to the contrary, class distinctions continue to prevail in Dublin. But it will be remembered that the incidence of unwillingness is inversely related to social status. That is, it seems that very commonly assessments failed to emerge because of indecision between alternatives, not because the concept itself was misunderstood, unfamiliar or disagreeable. Moreover, against this we have the counterbalancing and remarkable unanimity in the distribution of assessments among the various categories (though not, of course, status categories) into which we divided the sample. Indeed, this very unanimity by appearing also in the analysis by age, where we would not have expected it, raises the question of the basis on which our subjects made their assessments: how objective are they? Did we, by asking the self-classification question, oblige our informants to respond in our terms—terms of which, perhaps, they had heard before and so understood, but which mean little to them as far as their daily life is concerned? We can offer no direct answer as to the state of subjects' minds when they answered the question. On the other hand, had they been answering entirely at random the resulting distribution of self-assessments would presumably have been more dispersed than it was. Nor would there have been so close a relationship, perhaps no relationship at all, with the classification of the sample according to our own method. Yet, as we have seen, the association between the two rankings is fairly close. Our own method of determining social status through occupation gives distributions similar to those provided by the informants themselves. Where the two estimates do not coincide we are usually inclined to accept our own rather than the informant's, especially when the discrepancies are unreasonably large—in the sense that in the light of our understanding of Irish society we believe that, for example, claims of members of the liberal professions to belong to the "working class", or of unskilled labourers to be of the "upper upper" class, are not likely to be upheld in the community generally.

Social Mobility—General Incidence

What, then, do our results suggest to be the general incidence of inter-generational social mobility in Dublin? Our chief material is made up of a comparison of our subjects' status (at the moment of interview) with that of their fathers—paternal status also being based upon current or last main occupation, as we have already noted. Clearly there are certain difficulties of chronology in such a procedure. Unfortunately, although these are easily recognisable they are not so readily overcome within the limits imposed by practical considerations. In the present case, however, we have available certain

²²A. J. Humphreys, *New Dubliners*, London, 1966, pp. 195-196.

TABLE 18: SUBJECT'S SOCIAL STATUS BY FIRST FULL-TIME OCCUPATION RELATED TO HIS FATHER'S STATUS

Subject's Status in Relation to Father	Father's Status Category							All Subjects
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	%							
Higher	—	6.7	10.9	10.7	14.8	12.7	33.4	16.2
Same	30.4	9.2	10.4	34.1	15.7	36.3	66.6	30.6
Lower	69.6	84.1	78.7	55.2	69.5	51.0	—	53.2
N =	69	120	211	419	873	300	464	2,456*

*Excluding 84 cases lacking information on either subject's or father's status, or both.

data relating to the subject's status at the beginning of his career; and it may be interesting to examine these before passing to a consideration of the central material on social mobility.

It may be assumed that a man largely ceases to be dependent on his father for his position on the status hierarchy at the moment he first takes up full-time paid employment. Such occupation as he then obtains carries with it a personal status-ranking. Naturally, to the degree that status has a tendency to rise with increasing age, it is to be expected that for many men such initial independent ranking will be below that of their fathers. In Dublin this has been true of more than half the men interviewed (Table 18). Yet a man's fortunes in this regard depend fairly heavily on his father's own status: that is, certain levels of status origin give him greater opportunities to escape immediately from his inherited social status, once he enters employment. On the whole, however, it is movement in the downward direction, especially among the three higher categories. Immediate upward mobility at the beginning of full-time employment is most common among men of category 7 origin, a third of whom obtained a higher status than their fathers

with their first job; and indeed, apart from this group, upward mobility was comparatively rare at this stage. With increasing age the matter is so much remedied that, by the time our sample was interviewed, only six per cent. were of a lower status than their first jobs and significantly more than half had by this time achieved a higher one. Yet behind the picture of ambition and opportunities seized that these results offer to the imagination there exists (as was evident from another analysis of the data) a "hard core" of men, one sixth of the sample, with a record of marked status immobility. These are men who retained their father's status from the beginning of their employed life until the time they were interviewed during the present inquiry; and 43 per cent. of them are members of the lowest status category, more than three times the expected proportion. It is clear, therefore, from the two special cases we have mentioned—initial independent status, and continued retention of inherited status—that the incidence of social mobility varies according to social origin; and with this we pass to an examination of our main material on social mobility in Dublin.

For this purpose the chief relevant data are those

TABLE 19: SUBJECT'S SOCIAL STATUS RELATED TO THAT OF HIS FATHER

Subject's Status Category	Father's Status Category							N
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	%							
1 (highest)	26.7	16.7	23.3	21.7	10.8	0.8	—	120
2	7.8	21.1	24.2	34.4	10.9	0.8	—	128
3	6.6	11.8	25.0	22.6	26.9	4.2	2.8	212
4	1.5	6.8	12.9	34.6	30.9	5.5	7.9	457
5	0.4	1.3	3.9	13.3	51.9	13.3	16.0	815
6	0.3	0.9	1.8	5.9	36.6	26.9	27.5	320
7	0.5	0.7	0.7	3.9	27.2	16.9	50.0	408
All Subjects	2.8	4.9	8.6	17.0	35.6	12.2	18.9	2,460*

*Excluding 80 cases lacking information on either subject's or father's status, or both.

presented in Table 19, setting out subjects' current social status as related to that of their fathers. As a preliminary it may be useful to mention that, of the entire male sample, 40.0 per cent had retained their inherited status, 26.4 per cent. had fallen below it, and 33.6 per cent. had moved to a higher status (Table 20). That is, of every ten adult men interviewed in Dublin, six were no longer of the same social status as their fathers: somewhat fewer than the proportion for England and Wales in 1954.²³

It is immediately evident, from the diagonal tendency of Table 19, that Dublin men tend to remain at or near their father's level of social status. Half the men now in category 7 were born into it, and less than six per cent. of them were recruited from status positions above category 5. Similar, though less extreme, examples of the same tendency can be seen among men now in categories 4, 5 and 6, the bulk of whom had their origin either in their current status or in categories adjacent to it. The four lowest categories, in other words, are dominantly recruited from among themselves, and do not by any means make up a cross-section by origin of the entire population, as would happen were opportunities for social mobility equal for all. Unexpectedly, this appears to be more nearly the case among men now in the two highest categories, 1 and 2, whose status origins are more generally spread over the hierarchy (though few such men were recruited from the lowest status groups). Indeed, more than 70 per cent. of men now in categories 1 and 2 have been recruited from below (Table 19)—considerably more than at any other level of the status hierarchy. The overall impression of a population enjoying a career partially open to talents is reinforced, not only by the global figures for status movement referred to earlier, but by the

²³In England and Wales 64.9 per cent. of males interviewed were of a social status different from that of their fathers. D. V. Glass (ed.) *op. cit.*, Table 3, p. 184. It is perhaps worth remarking that in a study of eight Brazilian cities with which the writer was concerned the corresponding percentage was in nearly every case close to the 60 per cent. level.

corresponding percentages for each of the subject status categories (Table 20). While for the sample as a whole 40 per cent. of subjects, at the time they were interviewed, had not moved from their father's status category, when we look at the individual categories it is clear that in most of them the percentage is nearer 25: it is men in skilled and unskilled occupations that most frequently maintain their inherited status. Although when we come to consider the effects of structural change we shall have to qualify this conclusion considerably, it nevertheless remains true that all status levels in Dublin contain many men who have acquired a new status since taking up paid employment. Upward movement somewhat exceeds movement to lower levels of status (a difference to which we shall return later); and it is clear (Table 20) that the incidence of social mobility is directly related to current status—that is, the upward-mobile ingredient increases as we ascend, and the downward-mobile ingredient as we descend, the status hierarchy. The latter phenomenon is somewhat dubious in the absence of further qualification, in that it may seem at least partially explicable on the purely logical grounds that, in a discrete hierarchy, the higher the status position, the fewer positions above it and hence

TABLE 20: SUBJECT'S SOCIAL STATUS RELATED TO HIS FATHER, BY CURRENT STATUS

Subject's Status Category	Subject's Status Relative to Father			N
	Higher	Same	Lower	
	%			
1	73.3	26.7	—	120
2	71.1	21.1	7.8	128
3	56.6	25.0	18.4	212
4	44.2	34.6	21.2	457
5	29.2	51.9	18.9	815
6	27.5	26.9	45.6	320
7	—	50.0	50.0	408
All Subjects	33.6	40.0	26.4	2,460*

*Excluding 80 cases lacking information on either subject's or father's status, or both.

TABLE 21: FATHER'S SOCIAL STATUS RELATED TO THAT OF HIS SON

Subject's Status Category	Father's Status Category							All Subjects
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	%							
1 (highest)	46.4	16.7	13.2	6.2	1.5	0.3	—	4.9
2	14.5	22.5	14.6	10.5	1.6	0.3	0.2	5.2
3	20.3	20.8	25.0	11.5	6.5	3.0	1.3	8.6
4	10.1	25.8	27.8	37.7	16.1	8.4	7.7	18.6
5	4.3	11.0	15.1	25.8	48.3	36.1	28.0	33.1
6	1.4	2.5	2.8	4.5	13.4	28.8	18.9	13.0
7	2.9	2.5	1.4	3.8	12.7	23.1	43.9	16.6
N=	69	120	212	419	876	299	465	2,460

(assuming conditions of perfect mobility²⁴) the smaller the possibility of recruitment from above. The same argument applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to lower status positions in respect of recruitment from below. Only category 5, the largest single status group, has a roughly similar number of positions above it as below.

We have so far looked at the current composition of the status categories from the viewpoint of "inflow"—from the point of view, that is to say, of the hereditary status of the present incumbents of the categories. Table 21 examines the matter from the opposite viewpoint: that of the subsequent status history of men born to specific status levels. We have seen, for example, that a quarter of the men now in category 1 are the sons of category 1 fathers. What proportion are these of all men originating from this level of status? It is evident from Table 21 that they make up slightly less than half (46.4 per cent): that is, that a slight majority of all category 1 sons fell to a lower status. The discrepancy (particularly marked in the case of category 1), is due to the marked expansion, in Dublin, of this status—2.8 per cent. of fathers were of category 1, compared with 4.9 per cent. of sons, an increase of seventy-five per cent. A comparison of the diagonals of Table 20 and 21 shows such a divergence to be quite exceptional: and this, as can be seen from the marginal totals, results from the relatively small changes in the sizes of the status categories, comparing father with son. In short, it appears that, apart from category 1, men maintaining their inherited status form approximately the same proportion of the filial as of the paternal distributions.

The impact of these and other factors on the incidence of social mobility will, of course, partly depend upon the "distance" that individuals

²⁴For a discussion of the concept of perfect mobility, see D. V. Glass, *op. cit.*, p. 188 ff. Put briefly, the concept is that of the existence of equal probabilities of status movement for persons of all social origins.

normally move from their ascribed status position.²⁵ If movement is no further than an adjacent status category, up or down, the restricting effect will be less than that felt upon movements to remote positions. In fact rather more than half the mobile men moved no further than the category lying adjacent to that of their fathers, either higher or lower. There is a suggestion, apparent in the percentage distributions, for distance of movement to be related to the subject's status origin: men born at the bottom of the hierarchy tend to move further up (if they move at all), and men born at the top tend to move further down, than men who inherited an intermediate status. The mean distances between fathers and sons in the hierarchical scale (Table 22) do not fully confirm this, however: only the latter tendency is apparent. The close similarity in mean distances in Dublin and in England and Wales is striking, as is the corresponding relationship between paternal status and distance fallen. Commenting on this relationship, Glass and Hall seek an explanation on the grounds that "there is then a greater number of categories through which the fall can proceed"²⁶ and this appears not unreasonable. However, if no factor other than this were intervening, the converse should also be true, and be evident in a relationship between paternal status and distance risen: yet this is not the case. We must therefore assume that other factors affecting differentially upward and downward movement are operating. Their nature is at the moment a matter for speculation. It seems clear that we should regard upward mobility as differing from downward not merely in the direction of movement, but also in its character. Naturally the two phenomena feel different subjectively: but are their causes to be sought in something more complex than mere

²⁵But, as with "mean status", already discussed, "mean distance" is calculated on the assumption, possibly if not probably unjustified, of equal intervals between categories.

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 184-185.

TABLE 22: MEAN DISTANCE BETWEEN FATHERS AND SONS IN THE HIERARCHICAL SCALE (DISTANCE IN TERMS OF NUMBER OF CATEGORIES): DUBLIN COMPARED WITH ENGLAND AND WALES (1954)*

Father's Status Category	Son's Status Relative to Father							
	Higher				Lower			
	Mean Distance				Mean Distance			
	Dublin	N	England	N	Dublin	N	England	N
1 ..	—	—	—	—	2.38	37	2.46	85
2 ..	1.00	20	1.00	16	2.01	73	2.10	94
3 ..	1.48	59	1.26	47	1.53	100	2.00	233
4 ..	1.81	118	1.47	89	1.36	143	1.40	319
5 ..	1.55	225	1.65	304	1.48	228	1.42	447
6 ..	1.35	144	1.40	246	1.00	69	1.00	71
7 ..	1.86	261	1.90	281	—	—	—	—
Total ..	1.60	827	1.62	983	1.52	650	1.62	1,249

*Source: D. V. Glass (ed.), *op. cit.*, chap. viii, Table 5, p. 185.

reversal of effort? On the one hand upward movement can be conceived—and indeed usually is so conceived—as the outcome of deliberate effort, just reward of a reasonable ambition; while loss of status is seen as flowing from lethargy or from a loosening of grasp. It is easy to see how in such a case average movement could differ in the way suggested by Table 22. For the obstacles in the path of a man losing his hold on his inherited status are few; but the ambitious man struggling upwards faces competition, jealousy, snobbery and other social handicaps making his progress difficult. The unsuccessful man finds few to help him retain what he had: the successful finds many to hamper his progress. But in addition we have to remember that a significant if small proportion of the socially unsuccessful will be those who are physically, psychologically or intellectually handicapped to a degree making them inadequately equipped for any occupation but the lowest in status. It is difficult to imagine characteristics of the same order, but of socially positive value—remarkable physique, rare psychological balance, even outstanding intelligence—that would propel a man irresistibly to the top in the way that under-endowment may send him to the bottom of the hierarchical scale.

However, to restrict our view to “average distances” exposes us to the risk of exaggerating these differences, and to the construction of a complex theory for which there is little empirical justification. There is little evidence, for example, of headlong decline in status from the top to the bottom of the hierarchy. In our entire sample only two men had inherited from their fathers a position in category 1 but had subsequently fallen to category 7. Indeed, only 18.8 per cent. of men inheriting this status fell beyond category 3; and of all born to category 1 who subsequently moved out of it, nearly two-thirds moved only to the adjacent category or to the one below this. In other words, downward mobility in the higher or non-manual status categories tends to occur internally: there is little crossing of the line separating them from the lower mainly manual categories. Similarly it is comparatively rare for the upward-mobile in the lower categories to succeed in crossing the same frontier to occupy a position at the higher non-manual status levels. Generally speaking crossing the manual/non-manual boundary occurs most frequently among men born into the middle status categories, where, of course, the event is less dramatic. If we look at the mobile part of the sample, moreover, we see that only 11 per cent. moved to positions as remote as three or more categories distant from paternal status. Summing up, therefore, the relationship between paternal status and distance fallen that is apparent in Table 22 is

a partial one; and it is due very largely to the fact that downward-mobile men of category 1 and 2 origin very often drop two categories to the upper and lower grade clerical levels.²⁷ Moreover, given our status hierarchy composed of four non-manual and three manual categories, together with the difficulty of crossing the border between the two groups, the odds are significantly loaded in favour of “long distance” movement (i.e. two or more categories distant) by the downward mobile of non-manual origin. For men moving up from lower manual levels, the odds are correspondingly loaded against them. The relationship, in other words, is largely an arithmetical artifact, to the explanation of which psychological or sociological hypotheses are inappropriate. The more interesting phenomenon is the apparent influence of the manual/white-collar frontier; and we shall have occasion to examine this further at a later stage.

The incidence of social mobility in the sample is only slightly if at all related to subject's age. Such noticeable differences as there are occur in foreseeable directions (Table 23).

TABLE 23: SUBJECT'S SOCIAL STATUS RELATIVE TO HIS FATHER, BY SUBJECT'S AGE

Age-group of subject (years)	Subject's Status Relative to Father			N
	Higher	Same	Lower	
	%			
21-25 ..	30.2	38.4	31.4	258
26-30 ..	37.8	37.8	24.4	304
31-35 ..	34.9	44.1	21.0	261
36-40 ..	32.2	42.2	25.6	258
41-45 ..	37.2	39.5	23.3	266
46-50 ..	36.7	38.0	25.3	245
51-55 ..	31.9	44.1	24.0	229
56-60 ..	36.3	35.4	28.3	237
61-65 ..	34.0	35.3	30.7	153
66+ ..	26.7	44.4	28.8	243
Total ..	33.6	40.0	26.4	2,460*

*Including 6 cases lacking information as to age.

If loss of status occurs with slightly more than average frequency among the young and the elderly, this is readily explained by the special circumstances surrounding those at the beginning, and at the end, of their working lives. But the confidence limits are such that (reading Table 23 vertically) none of the visible differences between percentages are statistically significant. We are therefore obliged to conclude that these data provide us with no reliable basis to suppose that opportunities

²⁷The data from England and Wales (D. V. Glass, *op. cit.*, p. 185, Table 5) which show a similar relationship between paternal status and distance fallen are based upon similar phenomena, though the authors do not mention it, as may be seen from an examination of the basic contingency table (*ibid.*, p. 183, Table 2).

for gaining, or the risks of losing, status have differed from one age-group to another. It will be recalled that the Glass study reached much the same conclusion.²⁸

Hitherto we have confined our review largely to the mobile component of the several status categories of the subjects interviewed: that is, to the contemporary status composition of the male adult population. We have learnt little as to differential opportunities for social mobility related to the subject's status origin. Does paternal status influence a man's chances for "success" or "failure" in life in any important degree, or is social mobility equally possible for all, whatever his inherited status? Table 24 sheds light on this question, and leaves us in little doubt as to the answer.

TABLE 24: SUBJECT'S SOCIAL STATUS RELATIVE TO HIS FATHER, BY PATERNAL STATUS

Father's Status Category	Subject's Status Relative to Father			N
	Higher	Same	Lower	
	%			
1	—	46.6	53.6	69
2	16.7	22.5	60.8	120
3	27.8	25.0	47.2	212
4	28.2	37.7	34.1	419
5	25.7	48.3	26.0	876
6	48.1	28.8	23.1	299
7	56.1	43.9	—	465
Total	33.6	40.0	26.4	2,460*

*Excluding 80 cases lacking information either on subject's or on father's status, or both.

As we noted earlier, maintenance of paternal status (or class self-recruitment) is high among sons of skilled, and of unskilled fathers, categories 5 and 7. To these we must now add the sons of professional and higher administrative fathers, category 1. But this is not the chief conclusion to which an examination of Table 24 leads us. There is a manifest tendency, on the one hand, for the likelihood of upward mobility to be inversely related to paternal status: the lower a man's inherited status, the more likely he is to have moved to a higher one. Conversely, the higher the status to which a man was born, the more probable that he falls to a lower one. We might suppose that, because of the rarity of remote status destinations and the tendency for mobility to halt within one or two categories of inherited status, these interesting conclusions cannot be explained away on the quasi-statistical grounds that the nearer a man is to the extremes of the hierarchy the more the odds are in favour of mobility. Owing to the narrow limits within which mobility tends to occur, differential odds of this sort would be largely irrelevant, assuming equal numbers

²⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 185-188.

of openings at each status level. If average movement is no more than one or two places, all inherited status positions would provide, in these circumstances, the same opportunity for movement (with the minor exceptions of category 2, from which upward movement is possible to only one higher position, and category 6, with only one lower position.)²⁹ But in fact, since the size of the categories varies, opportunity for movement is weighted accordingly, this phenomenon thus explaining a large part, but not all, of the inverse relationship we have noted.

The issue is made more complex, however, through the impact of changes in the occupational structure affecting the several status positions differentially. An expanding society, or at any rate one whose occupational distribution is, for whatever reason, undergoing change, while it offers new opportunities, does not appear to do so equally to all. An expansion at the level of skilled manual work is attractive to those struggling to escape from the level of the unskilled: but it will hold few attractions for those whose status derives from employment in the liberal professions.³⁰ If we are interested in deciding as to the effect of the accident of birth at a given level of status upon "life chances", we need to be able to control the influence of changing occupational structure, as we need simultaneously to control the influence of differential birth rates and similar demographic factors. This control we obtain through the concept of perfect mobility, and its application in the statistic known as the index of association (i.e. the ratio of the observed to the expected distributions), both familiar to us since the publication in 1954 of the Glass study to which we have already so frequently referred. The relevant indices for the Dublin sample may be seen in Table 25, where their equivalents for England and Wales are set out for comparison. Since the more the

TABLE 25: INDICES OF ASSOCIATION, BY SUBJECT'S STATUS CATEGORY, COMPARED WITH THOSE FOR ENGLAND AND WALES (1954)

Status Category	Indices of Association	
	Dublin	England and Wales*
1	9.507	13.158
2	4.324	5.865
3	2.901	1.997
4	2.030	1.618
5	1.458	1.157
6	2.211	1.841
7	2.645	2.259
Total	1.920	1.440

*Source: D. V. Glass (ed.), *op. cit.*, chap. viii, pp. 198-199.

²⁹Persons born to categories 1 and 7, of course, are also restricted as to direction of movement, but not as to distance moved on the hierarchy of status.

³⁰Except perhaps, *faute de mieux*, in a situation of contracting opportunities in the professions.

index of association exceeds unity, the greater the degree of class self-recruitment, the values provide us with the means of estimating, if only approximately, how far differences in inherited status influence a man's acquired status. Are the probabilities of movement, in other words, the same for persons of all social origins? We have already seen from our first analysis that they are not. What we now observe is that, after abstracting for structural and demographic differences, self-recruitment still varies from one level of status to another. It is now clear, however, that level of self-recruitment (contrary to what is apparent in the data in Table 24) is notably greatest at the highest level of status. But in this respect, as in a number of others, the array of indices for Dublin differs little from that for England and Wales—or, indeed, from similar arrays obtained from studies in other parts of the world. We may with justice echo the conclusions of Glass and Hall, that is, "that the highest intensity of association between parental and filial status is found among subjects in categories 1 and 2, and the lowest among subjects in category 5. Subjects in other categories show an intermediate position. . . ."³¹ Similar indices calculated for five-year age-groups of the sample showed (as had Table 23) that mobility, or its reverse, self-recruitment, is not significantly related to age. In this respect also our results follow closely those obtained in other similar studies.

In general, then, on the evidence of these figures, it can be assumed that Dublin differs little from England and Wales in level of class-self-recruitment: that is, in the degree to which birth dictates the status position a man is able to achieve for himself. There is little comfort here for those who believe Ireland to be a classless open society, except for the dubious satisfaction to be found in the fact that self-recruitment of category 1 appears even more intense in England than in Dublin. Moreover, the absence of any downward trend by age in the intensity of self-recruitment suggests that here, as elsewhere, the system is far from being in danger of dissolution, despite easier access to formal education. We shall turn in a moment to a consideration of social mobility in relation to educational level. Before doing so, however, it will be well to look briefly at the dimensions of the contribution that structural change has made to the current incidence of social mobility.

It will be recalled that, on an early page of this report, reference was made to the existence of two types of social mobility. The first of these, and the one most commonly brought to mind by the term, results from mutually compensating gains and losses of social status. Exchange mobility of this sort has a duality of character imposed upon it by the fact

³¹*Op. cit.*, p. 199.

that no man may gain status unless one of his fellows has lost it. The second form of mobility, however, is limited by the number of new status positions thrown open by changes in the occupational structure. Depending upon the phase through which an economy happens to be passing, the numerical importance of structural mobility can vary widely. In Dublin, as it happens, its contribution, in comparison with that common in extremely rapidly developing cities elsewhere in the world, is fairly small. We have described elsewhere a procedure for the computation of the relative importance of exchange and structural mobility;³² and we applied it to our Dublin material. There were 1,477 members of the sample known to be of a social status different from that of their fathers. Of these, 84.5 per cent. had exchanged positions among themselves, those moving up taking the places of those moving down and vice versa. The remainder moved without any compensatory movements visible in the matrix (Table 19). These figures are set out in Table 26, where the corresponding values for England and Wales are also given for comparison. Their similarity is remarkable. There is the suggestion of a greater incidence of structural mobility in the Dublin sample; and indeed this might have been expected in view of Dublin's accelerated development in recent decades. The differences between the percentages command little confidence, however, and in fact are not significant statistically. In this respect, as in several others we have noted earlier, Dublin appears to differ little from Britain; and this similarity is reinforced when it is seen in relation to the very large contribution made by structural change to social mobility in some developing countries.³³ These

TABLE 26: PROPORTION OF OBSERVED SOCIAL MOBILITY DUE TO STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND THAT DUE TO EXCHANGE OF POSITIONS: DUBLIN COMPARED WITH ENGLAND AND WALES (1954)*

	Dublin		England and Wales (1954)	
	%	N	%	N
Positions exchanged	84.5	1,248	87.7	1,990
Not exchanged ..	15.5	229	12.3	279
All mobile men ..	100.0	1,477	100.0	2,269

*Source: D. V. Glass (ed.), *op. cit.*, chap. viii, p. 183. Computed from Table 2.

³²B. Hutchinson, "Structural and exchange mobility in the assimilation of immigrants to Brazil," *Population Studies*, vol. xii, No. 2, 1958.

³³In the Brazilian city of São Paulo (1956) structural change accounted for 46.7 per cent. of all mobility, calculated on a six-category scale of status. A later (1960) study of seven other Brazilian cities confirmed a rate of structural mobility varying between 40 and 50 per cent., also based on six categories. B. Hutchinson (ed.) *Mobilidade e Trabalho*, Rio de Janeiro, 1960. In Buenos Aires and Montevideo the proportion is somewhat lower than this; but at 30-31 per cent. is of course considerably greater than in Dublin or in England and Wales (B. Hutchinson, "Social Mobility rates in Buenos Aires, Montevideo and São Paulo," *América Latina*, vol. v, No. 4, 1962, pp. 3-19).

global figures, on the other hand, conceal rather interesting differences related to the direction of movement, for our data show that the numerical importance of structural mobility is not always the same for those moving up as for those moving down the hierarchy. It will be seen from the relevant analysis (Table 27) that a quarter of all status promotion in Dublin was possible only because new opportunities had arisen in the employment structure of the Capital. These developments barely affected the men who lost status, of whom less than five per cent. moved down to new employment openings. In other words, the effect of recent economic development in Dublin has been to raise the social status of those able to profit from it. Such a common-sense conclusion may cause little surprise: yet it is the reverse of the levelling-down process evident in the corresponding figures for England and Wales. It will be noted that although the overall incidence of structural mobility differed little, if at all, from that of Dublin, it affected downward almost to the exclusion of upward mobility. In short, while in Dublin economic development and political independence opened up opportunities for men to add to their status, in Britain changes in the occupational structure had resulted (in 1954) largely in status loss. That is, if we assume (as Table 3 gives us some justification for doing) that the populations of Dublin and of England and Wales are moving towards the same type of status distribution: then, this re-arranging demands an overall rise in average status in Dublin, but an overall fall in England and Wales. How this comes about is evident from Table 28, which shows that while in Dublin the proportion of currently-held status positions made available by changes in occupational structure tends to increase as we ascend the hierarchy of status, the contrary happens in England and Wales. For example, of Dublin men now in category 1, three-fifths are occupying status positions that were not

available to their fathers. In Britain the proportion is less than one in seventeen. Only two per cent. of Dublin men who have moved into category 7 occupy new positions, but in Britain this rises to nearly twenty per cent. These are the extremes of the hierarchy; but it is evident that in Dublin all the four highest categories have offered new opportunities far in excess, proportionally, of their equivalents in Britain. We seem, therefore, to have posed by implication the question of why there persists so heavy a rate of overseas migration from the Republic, if opportunities present themselves so relatively lavishly in Dublin. It seems readily answered, not least because we have no evidence of new but *unfilled* occupational opportunities in Dublin. We cannot assume, that is, that overseas migrants would have found a situation as advantageous as that presenting itself to men who stayed behind. Secondly, there are motives for migration other than the search for higher status: higher pay is an obvious reason, and British pay is higher than Irish at most levels of status. Finally, and perhaps most cogently, only 5 per cent. of Irish immigrants to Britain entered professional, managerial and clerical occupations (compared with well over 50 per cent. of Australian and New Zealand immigrants); nor does the majority of the remainder seem educationally equipped to do so.³⁴ The bulk of Irish migrants to Britain, in other words, enter unskilled and semi-skilled occupations which have undergone a greater expansion there than in Dublin.

The Role of Education

It is generally assumed that, even if opportunities for social mobility are available, little advantage can be taken of them if candidates fail to have the education necessary for their exploitation. Such an assumption has commonsense to support it, and indeed that of common observation. Yet the matter is more complex than, at first view, it appears.

TABLE 27: PROPORTION OF OBSERVED SOCIAL MOBILITY DUE TO STRUCTURAL AND TO EXCHANGE MOBILITY, RELATED TO DIRECTION OF MOVEMENT: DUBLIN COMPARED WITH ENGLAND AND WALES (1954)

Subject's Status Relative to to that of his Father	Dublin	England and Wales (1954)*
	%	
<i>Higher :</i>		
Positions exchanged	75.5	97.0
Not exchanged	24.5	3.0
N (all upward mobile) ..	827	1,026
<i>Lower :</i>		
Positions exchanged	96.0	80.0
Not exchanged	4.0	20.0
N (all downward mobile) ..	650	1,243

*Source: D. V. Glass, *loc. cit.*

TABLE 28: PERCENTAGE OF SOCIALLY MOBILE MEN IN EACH STATUS CATEGORY OCCUPYING NEW STATUS POSITIONS: DUBLIN COMPARED WITH ENGLAND AND WALES (1954)*

Subject's Present Status Category	Dublin		England and Wales	
	%	N	%	N
1	60.2	88	5.7	53
2	21.8	101	9.2	119
3	19.5	159	5.3	265
4	23.4	299	2.3	349
5	4.8	392	7.1	715
6	12.8	234	30.0	450
7	2.0	204	17.9	318
Total (all mobile men)	15.5	1,477	12.3	2,269

*Source: D. V. Glass (ed.), *op. cit.* Computed from Table 2, p. 183.

³⁴On these points see: *Studies on Immigration from the Commonwealth*, No. 4, "The employment of immigrants". The Economist Intelligence Unit, London, n.d.

TABLE 29: SUBJECT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, RELATED TO THE SOCIAL STATUS OF HIS FATHER

Subject's Educational Level	Father's Status Category							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	%							
No formal education	—	0·8	—	—	0·6	0·3	0·9	0·4
Primary—incomplete	—	1·7	1·4	4·1	9·7	15·8	17·9	9·6
Primary—complete	2·9	10·0	12·3	19·1	42·7	51·9	63·1	38·5
Technical and vocational—incomplete	—	0·8	1·9	4·3	5·7	6·1	4·7	4·6
Technical and vocational—complete	4·3	10·8	9·0	12·9	14·8	13·8	6·5	11·8
Secondary—incomplete	2·9	10·8	16·5	17·9	12·0	7·4	4·7	11·1
Secondary—complete	32·8	35·0	31·1	28·1	10·4	4·0	2·2	14·7
University—incomplete	4·3	5·8	5·2	3·1	1·0	0·7	—	1·8
University—complete	52·8	24·3	22·6	10·5	3·1	—	—	7·5
N =	69	120	211	419	873	300	464	2,456

Elementary logic soon disposes of any belief that the better the educational facilities provided, and the wider popular access to them, the greater the incidence of social mobility will be. For the advantage that education gives to one ascending the social hierarchy (and the handicap entailed by its lack) is pre-eminently a relative one. Not all recipients of a University degree rise above the social status of their parents, nor do all illiterates fall below it: for if a man's status is closely related to his educational level, the latter largely depends on the social status of his father. This is as true of Dublin (Table 29) as it is elsewhere.

The markedly diagonal tendency of Table 29 is, of course nothing new; nor are we obliged for our present purposes to decide as to the primacy of the various explanations of it that have been offered—financial advantage, home environment, class differences in intelligence, diversity of motive, and the like. We need concern ourselves only with the proposition that, if social status is related to level of education, this is to a very significant degree the same as to say that a man's status is closely related to that of his father. The degree of this association has been already examined; but what are the dimensions of the relationship between education and social status? These are vividly revealed (Table 30) when we calculate the mean social status of subjects at each level of educational achievement: social status rises consistently and unequivocally as we move up

the educational hierarchy. It is noteworthy also that men whose educational attainments are below that of the complete technical-vocational course tend to be below the sample average for social status: while those with educational attainments beyond this tend to have a social status above the sample mean. We have already commented in other contexts on the barrier separating manual from non-manual occupations—a barrier to which these educational data again draw our attention. But from the viewpoint of social mobility Table 30 seems fully to confirm the general assumption that education plays a crucial part in its encouragement. It might then be expected that had there been an improvement in educational

TABLE 30: MEAN STATUS OF SUBJECTS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Education Level	Mean Status	N
No formal education	6·18	11
Primary—incomplete	5·93	245
Primary—complete	5·58	968
Technical and vocational—incomplete	5·19	114
Technical and vocational—complete	4·78	292
Secondary—incomplete	4·46	276
Secondary—complete	3·55	365
University—incomplete	2·93	46
University—complete	1·83	184
Total (all subjects)	4·75	2,501*

*Excluding 39 cases for whom information was incomplete.

levels in Dublin during the past half-century, the opportunities for social mobility would be increased accordingly. The analysis in Table 31 shows fairly

TABLE 31: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF SUBJECTS, RELATED TO YEAR OF BIRTH

Educational Level	Informant's Year of Birth					Total
	1938-47	1928-37	1918-27	1908-17	Before 1908	
	%					
No formal education	—	0·4	0·4	0·4	1·5	0·4
Primary—incomplete	5·7	8·5	8·3	11·0	18·0	9·6
Primary—complete	20·5	37·1	40·6	43·9	47·4	38·4
Technical and vocational—incomplete	6·8	7·0	3·1	3·4	1·0	4·6
Technical and vocational—complete	19·7	13·8	8·7	7·6	5·1	11·8
Secondary—incomplete	10·3	10·8	14·2	10·1	8·8	11·1
Secondary—complete	16·2	13·4	17·7	13·3	10·5	14·7
University—incomplete	6·2	1·9	1·5	1·1	1·2	1·8
University—complete	8·7	7·0	5·6	9·3	6·6	7·5
N =	600	528	520	474	411	2,533*

*Excluding 7 cases lacking information as to year of birth or as to education.

clearly that, among the sample of men interviewed, there has been a rise in educational attainment. For example, two-thirds of the men now over the age of 60 did not succeed in moving beyond the primary level; but among men born between 1938 and 1947 the proportion drops to barely one-third. Technical and vocational training has also increased in recent decades, and it is this that, generally speaking, accounts for the fall in the proportions completing their education at the primary level—although there are some indications of a trend towards greater educational provision at the secondary and university levels. It therefore seems that the course of events during the last fifty years, in raising the general educational level, should have provided a setting in which (supposing educational attainment alone were an important factor) the incidence of social mobility, especially in the upward direction, ought to have been increasing. In other words, an analysis by age should show an inverse relationship between the incidence of mobility and age. But the descriptive analysis (Table 23) has already shown that in fact the relationship is negligible; and this was confirmed by the indices of association calculated for five-year age-groups. Improvement in access to formal education therefore does not appear to have had the expected effect on rates of social mobility. We may take the matter a stage beyond this indirect evidence, examining subjects' educational attainment in the light of their mobility history (Table 32).

By inspection the relationship between the two variables does not appear striking, although it is statistically significant ($P < 0.001$); and such as there is may be largely though not entirely dissolved if we discount the heavy contribution of the university-trained, and the small contribution of the "incomplete primary", to the upward-mobile category. With these exceptions, there is little evidence that by itself the acquisition of (or the failure to acquire) formal education is significantly related to social mobility; and the same conclusion is forced upon us if

we examine the relationship between social mobility and the age at completion, or the total number of years, of formal education.

The answer, of course, is implicit in other relationships to which we earlier drew attention: that a son tends to retain the social status of his father, that his educational achievement largely depends also upon paternal status, and that filial status is closely related to filial educational level. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that certain levels of education are appropriate to the maintenance of filial status at the paternal level. To fall short of the appropriate level may therefore involve downward mobility; while to exceed it facilitates promotion to higher status levels. On this assumption we would thus expect to find a significant relationship existing between social mobility and *relative* educational level—in other words, that a son who had more education than his father tends to move upward, while a son who had less tends to move down. This is, in fact, what appears to happen. If we examine mobility history in the light of the subject's level of education relative to his father

TABLE 33: SUBJECT'S SOCIAL STATUS RELATIVE TO THAT OF HIS FATHER, BY SUBJECT'S RELATIVE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Subject's Educational Level Relative to Father	Subject's Status Relative to Father			N
	Higher	Same	Lower	
	%			
Higher	42.1	37.2	20.6	804
Same	29.2	43.5	27.2	705
Lower	23.3	34.5	42.2	249
Total	34.3	39.4	26.3	1,758*

*Excluding 782 cases lacking information on subject's status or education, or on father's status or educational level, or on some combination of these. There were 742 subjects who were ignorant of their father's education.

(Table 33) two things become clear. First, upward social mobility is nearly twice as common among

TABLE 32: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF SUBJECTS, RELATED TO SOCIAL MOBILITY

Educational Level	Subject's Status Relative to Father			Total
	Higher	Same	Lower	
	%			
No formal education	0.1	0.6	0.6	0.4
Primary—incomplete	5.9	12.4	10.2	9.6
Primary—complete	33.9	41.5	39.4	38.4
Technical and vocational—incomplete	4.2	4.7	4.9	4.6
Technical and vocational—complete	11.6	10.9	13.4	11.8
Secondary—incomplete	10.0	10.9	12.8	11.1
Secondary—complete	18.0	12.3	14.3	14.7
University—incomplete	2.3	1.6	1.5	1.8
University—complete	13.9	5.1	2.9	7.5
N =	828	976	657	2,461*

*Excluding 79 cases lacking information as to education or to social mobility, or both.

men with more, compared with men who had fewer, educational attainments than their fathers. Secondly, the rate of downward mobility is twice as great among those with less education than their fathers, compared with those with more. There is thus a general indication that the significance of education in the process of status maintenance lies in its "appropriateness" to the position whose maintenance is sought. Failure to achieve this, either by exceeding it or by falling short, appears to introduce a disequilibrium whose resolution is in many cases only obtained through the subject's movement to some other position of status. It is clear that the degree of appropriateness that a level of educational attainment possesses must vary from one status category to another. We must therefore inquire what these appropriate levels are. A clear-cut answer is more than we can hope for; but Table 34 indicates what the nature of such an answer might be. In this Table we have examined, at each level of paternal status, filial social mobility history in relation to the several levels of educational attainment—a procedure which enables us to disregard for the moment the tendency for education to be dependent upon paternal status. The results of the analysis are clear enough. For example, of men born into category 1 who failed to surpass the secondary level of education nearly three-quarters later fell to a lower social status. In contrast, the sons of unskilled manual workers who obtained a secondary education nearly without exception rose to higher status than their fathers. There are significant indications of the sort of education necessary at various positions on the status hierarchy for the maintenance of paternal status. If we define an "appropriate" educational attainment for a given status level as one which results in fifty per cent. or more of sons continuing to share their father's status, we see that this occurs among sons born to category 7 having only a primary

education; among those born to category 5 having a technical education; among those born to category 4 having a secondary education, and among men born into category 1 who had a university education.

We may look first at the effect on social mobility of primary education at each level of status origin. The relationship between social origin and the incidence of mobility is immediately obvious: the higher the status origin of the individual the less probable that, with only primary education, he is successful in reaching a level of status above that of his father. Conversely, the higher his status origin, the more probable that, with such educational attainments, he falls to a lower level of status. In the present sample, upward social mobility in this education group is rare amongst men who inherited category 4 status or higher, but loss of status is heavy. Altogether it would seem that in general primary education discourages upward and encourages downward mobility; but this is not true of men born into category 7, nor, to an appreciable degree, of men born to category 6. In other words, a limited primary education offers the means of upward mobility only to men of these status origins. In status categories above these primary education is at best only partially effective, and indeed tends rather to be associated with loss of status.

The efficacy of primary education is somewhat augmented if it has been followed by a technical or vocational course of study. But the effect of this combination is not that of raising the status threshold beyond which upward mobility is no longer facilitated: this remains the same. At category 5 and beyond, technical, like primary, education has a relatively small effect upon the incidence of upward mobility. Below this level, however, the effect is quite dramatic in that more than three-quarters of the men gained status. In category 5 itself technical education was most effective in halting the decline in

TABLE 34: SUBJECT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, RELATED TO HIS SOCIAL MOBILITY HISTORY, AND TO PATERNAL SOCIAL STATUS

Father's Status Category	Subject's Educational Level											
	Primary			Technical and Vocational			Secondary			University		
	Higher Status	Same Status	Lower Status	Higher Status	Same Status	Lower Status	Higher Status	Same Status	Lower Status	Higher Status	Same Status	Lower Status
	%											
1	—	—	100·0*	—	—	100·0*	—	28·0	72·0	—	64·1	35·9
2	7·1	—	92·9	7·1	7·1	85·8	7·3	21·8	70·9	38·9	38·9	22·2
3	10·3	17·2	72·5	8·7	17·4	73·9	17·8	24·8	57·4	61·0	32·2	6·8
4	4·1	35·1	60·8	13·8	18·1	68·1	28·5	53·4	18·1	86·0	14·0	—
5	20·3	14·7	65·0	18·4	64·4	17·2	53·1	35·7	11·2	94·4	5·6	—
6	39·6	31·7	28·7	74·6	18·6	6·8	57·1	31·4	11·5	50·0*	—	50·0*
7	49·9	50·1	—	81·1	18·9	—	93·8	6·2	—	—	—	—
Total ..	33·4	33·5	33·1	32·9	38·4	28·7	36·3	36·1	27·6	58·5	29·7	11·8

*N < 10. In the preparation of this Table no distinction has been made as between complete and incomplete courses.

status brought about by those of its members who had received only primary education. On the other hand, among sons who were of category 1 to 4 origin, having no more than a technical and vocational education loss of status was extremely common.

The role of secondary education seems equally well-defined. More than half those born into categories 5, 6 and 7 of secondary educational attainment subsequently moved to higher levels of status. At category 4, secondary education serves a similar proportion merely to *maintain* paternal status. At status levels beyond this it is associated with loss of status for approximately two-thirds of our subjects. The case of university training is comparatively simple. Men born into category 1 are largely enabled, as a consequence, to conserve their high status. Individuals of lower status origin who have had a university education, with the exception of those born into category 2, normally ascend to higher status levels; and the contrary movement is rare.

This supplementary analysis of the data imposes certain modifications on our earlier conclusions. The failure, or the success, of education of a given level in facilitating social mobility, in either direction, depends upon the individual's social origin. Thus, although primary education in isolation appeared to have a limited effect upon, or association with, the incidence of social mobility in the sample as a whole (Table 32) the later analysis shows that among men from categories 6 and 7 the proportion who are upward-mobile is considerably above the expected if they have primary education (though the significance of this is reduced by the small proportion who had no education at all). The same conclusion may be extended to include secondary and university education, which contribute to a more than expected proportion to the upward mobility of sons originating in categories 5 to 7 in the first case, and in categories 3 and below in the second. In short, looking at Table 34 as a whole, it appears that the higher the individual's status origin, the greater the quantum of education he requires to move to a level above that of his birth.

We can facilitate the analysis further if we cease to pay attention to the specific nature of educational attainments, and look instead at a notional measure of "quantity". In order to do this it is necessary to employ some fairly arbitrary method of evaluation which would indicate that a man with university training, for example, has "more" education than one whose formal education did not extend beyond the primary level. Such an index can then be related to inherited status (that is, paternal social status) and to mobility history. With such data available we can then see not only the "quantum" of education that an individual of given origin may expect to

receive, but also how the educational index varies in relation to the individual's history of social mobility. The following arbitrary values³⁵ were allotted to the several levels of education: Primary—1; Technical and Vocational—2; Secondary—4; and University—8. The result of the application of these values may be seen in Table 35, where the educational index is related to paternal status and to the subject's mobility history.

One fact stands out immediately from this analysis: class differences in education persist whatever the social mobility history. We noted earlier how closely educational level is associated with paternal social status. We now see that the association is visible not

TABLE 35: EDUCATION INDEX IN RELATION TO FATHER'S STATUS, AND TO SUBJECT'S MOBILITY HISTORY

Father's Status Category	Subject's Status Relative to Father		
	Higher	Same	Lower
1	—	7·13	5·19
2	6·55	6·00	3·57
3	6·22	5·00	3·19
4	5·39	3·40	2·08
5	3·59	2·50	1·42
6	1·77	1·19	1·34
7	1·51	1·08	—

merely amongst those who maintained but equally amongst those who rose above or fell below their inherited status. That is to say that, for example, an individual born into category 4 is likely to have more education than another born into category 5 (and less than one born into category 3), independently of whether he subsequently gained or lost status, or merely maintained the social status of his father. This can be seen from a vertical reading of Table 35. If we now look at the Table in the horizontal sense, it also 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. That is, vertical and horizontal readings show that although class differences in educational attainment persist independently of the individual's subsequent mobility history, 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 different, less arbitrary, and in some respects a more sensitive measure of the "quantity" of education is provided by the total number of years during which the subject was receiving formal education. Such a measure, of course, fails to allow for differ-

³⁵One may equally use the values 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively. However, their use does not affect the trend visible in Table 35.

ences in educational level; but it can be assumed that, generally speaking, the more time spent in formal education, the higher the level finally attained.³⁶ Table 36 shows mean years' education at each level of paternal status in relation to the subject's mobility history. As with the index of education, mean years, education declines with decreasing paternal social status, irrespective of whether the subject was socially mobile or not. Men who moved to a status

TABLE 36: MEAN YEARS OF FORMAL EDUCATION, RELATED TO FATHER'S STATUS, AND TO SUBJECT'S MOBILITY HISTORY

Father's Status Category	Subject's Status Relative to Father		
	Higher	Same	Lower
1	—	18.0	15.3
2	16.9	17.5	14.8
3	18.6	15.5	13.1
4	16.3	13.2	12.7
5	14.2	12.5	10.2
6	12.0	10.2	9.5
7	11.3	9.2	—

position above that of their fathers invariably had more years of education than men moving down from the status category immediately above them; and at many levels of paternal status, upward-mobile subjects had more education (in terms of years) than men maintaining their inherited status in the next-highest category. If we look at men who inherited a position in category 5, for example, it appears that those who remained at this level had on the average 12.5 years, formal education—approximately the same number of years as men, born into category 4, who subsequently moved to lower status positions. Similarly, men who were downward-mobile from category 5 had had the same amount of education as men maintaining their father's status in category 6. Finally, men who were promoted from category 5 to higher status levels had on average a year's more education than men born into and remaining in category 4.

The relationship between education and social mobility has been to some extent clarified by the preceding detailed analysis. Summarising the discussion, it must be repeated that if we look at the male population as a whole, level of education in the absolute sense appears to have a limited influence on mobility. This partial failure of the traditional educational system to function as an auxiliary in the processes of social mobility arises from differing social expectations as to the educational attainment appropriate to various levels of social status. Of

³⁶This assumption would have to be treated with caution where—as in many developing countries—a high proportion of pupils find it necessary to repeat each year of schooling as they complete it.

course, the origins of this educational conformity are probably various: nevertheless it may be supposed that economic factors play an appreciable part, even in the simplest sense that the higher a father's social status the longer he can forego his son's earning-power, and the more expensive an education he can provide. Thus the system is self-perpetuating, since a given level of education allows entry into certain types of employment; and these in turn are powerful determinants of an individual's social status. In consequence we are obliged to seek the true relationship between education and social mobility at each level of status, leaving aside global figures which, because they conceal significant sub-group differences, are capable of leading us to an erroneous conclusion.

Class differences in educational expectations, allied to the educational demands of the occupations each class characteristically enters, form the key to an understanding of the role of education in social mobility. Our data leave us in little doubt that adequate educational attainments comprise one of the most important qualifications for membership of a given category of social status; and that downward social mobility occurs when educational qualifications suitable to an inherited status position are not obtained. Thus, for a full understanding of the manner in which education may influence ultimate social status this concept of an "expected" or "normal" class educational level seems essential, for its corollary is that an individual's educational attainment is significant, from the viewpoint of mobility, only in relation to it.

The Influence of Family Background

It is sometimes supposed that order of birth produces inequalities of opportunity and endowment that lead to some individuals being favoured and others handicapped in the competitive setting of social mobility.³⁷ The factors giving rise to such supposed inequalities, or differences, fall into two main classes. The first of these, covering the psychological characteristics of the individual in relation to his ordinal position in the family, has been the subject of systematic study since well before the turn of the century. Problems of intelligence, emotional stability, aggressiveness, school performance, delinquency, and the like, have all been approached in this way. Generally speaking, however, the results have been contradictory, inconclusive or both, one

³⁷A useful summary and discussion of some recent work on problems connected with order of birth will be found in, J. Magaud and L. Henry, "Le rang de naissance dans les phénomènes démographiques," *Population*, vol. xxiii, no. 5, September-October, 1968, pp. 879-920. The authors draw attention to the necessity of eliminating the effects of purely demographic factors if misleading interpretations are to be avoided.

TABLE 37: SUBJECT'S SOCIAL STATUS RELATED TO HIS POSITION AMONG HIS BROTHERS

Position Among Brothers	Subject's Status Category							Total	Mean Status
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	%								
Eldest ..	33.9	37.2	34.6	31.8	31.5	27.0	27.6	31.0	4.63
Youngest ..	25.6	26.4	28.0	27.0	25.0	26.7	25.4	26.0	4.74
Middle ..	23.1	21.7	25.1	30.0	33.1	37.1	39.6	32.4	5.01
Only son ..	17.4	14.7	12.3	11.2	10.3	9.2	7.4	10.6	4.42
N =	121	129	211	463	831	326	417	2,498*	

*Excluding 42 cases lacking information either as to social status or as to family position.

of the few exceptions³⁸ being the Scottish intelligence survey, which showed some association between birth order and IQ—though this, too, was overshadowed by the influence of family size. The reason for the paucity of reliable conclusions seems clear enough: for although it is probably true that a child's *psychological* position in the family is important to his development, his position as he feels it need not by any means be entirely, or even largely, dependent on his ordinal position. We are here concerned exclusively with the other of the two groups of factors to which we referred: those arising from social conventions that secure educational and other advantages to some children and not to others merely by reason of the order in which they were born. The matters we have in mind are familiar enough. In some communities, for example, parents of limited means select their eldest for higher education if they are unable to educate all their children; others select the youngest. Communities whose system of inheritance is linked with primogeniture thereby tend to restrict the social mobility of eldest sons, while encouraging it among the younger. Those leaving inheritance, especially of land, in doubt until after the father's death (as appears to have happened in parts of traditional Ireland) may discourage mobility altogether. Other communities have established occupational traditions related to family ordinal position—eldest sons traditionally taking over the family business, youngest sons entering the priesthood, middle sons the learned professions—which may well be expected to offer differing opportunities for social mobility. It therefore seemed not impossible that the data accruing from the present inquiry might show some relationship between birth order and the incidence of mobility; and since our entirely adult sample may be supposed to have been drawn almost exclusively from completed families our data are not affected (as are those referring to children) by uncertainty as to the latter's final dimensions.

³⁸The *Trend of Scottish Intelligence*, London, 1949. See also, for personality differences: J. Price, "Personality differences within families: comparison of adult brothers and sisters", *Journal of Biosocial Science*, Vol. I, No. 2, April, 1969, pp. 177-205.

Our first approach to the problem is not encouraging (Table 37). The percentage distributions according to subjects' social status do not show variations related to order of birth that are both marked and statistically significant.³⁹ Such noticeable differences as there are—as, for example, the higher incidence of only sons in category 1 compared with category 7, and the contrary tendency among middle sons—seem adequately explained on the basis of class differences in family size. That is to say, there are more middle sons at the unskilled and semi-skilled levels, not because their intermediate family positions make them less well-equipped for the struggle for status, but because their parents had larger families, making middle sons more numerous. The values for mean status summarises a general position in which only sons have the highest, and middle sons the lowest average position on the hierarchy of status; but the objection to them, as to the percentages, remains. As for the effect of sibling position on social mobility, matters are somewhat clearer, although it would be an exaggeration to claim that the relationship is a consistent or an obvious one. It will be seen (Table 38) that the index

TABLE 38: INDICES OF ASSOCIATION AT EACH LEVEL OF SUBJECT'S PRESENT STATUS, RELATED TO ORDER OF BIRTH

Subject's Status Category	Order of Birth			
	Eldest son	Middle son	Youngest son	Only son
1	9.37	11.71	7.59	8.05
2	4.40	5.13	3.49	3.81
3	3.67	2.64	2.60	2.33
4	2.28	1.87	2.01	1.81
5	1.42	1.42	1.44	1.68
6	2.33	2.00	2.35	2.18
7	2.90	2.35	2.40	3.72
Total ..	1.95	1.77	1.89	2.10

³⁹The data have to be treated with caution because the distribution according to family position appears to show "eldest brothers" to be over-, and "youngest brothers" under-represented. If informants understood the question, these groups presumably should be equal in size. We have encountered the same apparent bias in Brazil. It may, however, be evidence for differential rates of overseas migration in the case of Dublin, though there were other considerations in Brazil.

of association does not vary significantly according to the subject's ordinal position in his family unless we control his status position; and even if we do this, the numerical bases on which the indices are calculated are too small, and the differences between the indices too narrow, to justify anything but a negative conclusion. There is little evidence in Table 38 to support the hypothesis that birth order is a significant factor in the processes of social mobility. Nor is there much evidence that, in Dublin, a son's position in the family influences the education he received: only middle sons appear to have received an appreciably smaller amount of education than the others; and on average the difference amounted to little more than one year's schooling. It is therefore not surprising that the global figures for the several birth-order classes show only small variation.

More definite results, however, are suggested by an examination of subjects' relative social status (Table 39). Generally speaking, it appears that at all levels of paternal status, except perhaps the lowest, eldest sons and only sons are somewhat less likely to fall to lower status positions. They are also more likely (though here the trend is less clear cut) to rise to higher levels. As far as our materials allow us to go, therefore, our conclusion is similar to that reached by Blau and Duncan in their more elaborate study of 20,000 American males.⁴⁰ The size of our

⁴⁰P. M. Blau and O. D. Duncan, *The American Occupational Structure*, New York, 1967, pp. 307-313.

sample, however, precludes us from following their example by controlling simultaneously by family size and by educational attainment—a procedure which in the American case tended to erode very considerably the apparent independent influence of sibling position. By controlling for the subject's status origin, we were able to examine in a somewhat rudimentary fashion the possibility that the incidence of social mobility is related to the size of the family from which the subject comes. There appeared a tendency for the only child more frequently to remain in his inherited status; but in general the outcome was inconclusive.

We therefore decided to stretch the resources of our sample somewhat further, though incurring the risk of an enlarged sampling error, in order to examine mean status and social mobility while controlling for status origin and for size of family. This procedure (which, it will be noted, now disregards ordinal position) gave more positive results.

It seems that, irrespective of the social status to which he was born, the more brothers and sisters a man has the lower his acquired status is likely to be. As will be seen (Table 40) the differences between the means are not large, but they are consistent, with the exception of category 1—an anomaly not readily explained. But the general explanation of the relationship, in Dublin, as in the United States, may be supposed to lie largely in differences in educational attainment arising from the financial inability of parents. When we take the matter further, and look

TABLE 39: PERCENTAGES OF SUBJECTS, AT EACH LEVEL OF PATERNAL STATUS, EXCEEDING OR FALLING BELOW THEIR INHERITED STATUS, RELATED TO ORDER OF BIRTH

Father's Status Category	Subject's Status Relative to Father							
	Higher				Lower			
	Eldest son	Middle son	Youngest son	Only son	Eldest son	Middle son	Youngest son	Only son
	%							
1	—	—	—	—	50.0	58.8	63.2	36.4
2	20.0	17.4	14.0	14.3	52.5	65.2	67.4	57.1
3	28.6	21.6	34.0	32.0	36.5	60.8	42.0	44.0
4	32.2	24.8	25.0	36.7	24.8	42.7	36.3	26.9
5	26.6	23.5	26.1	28.1	24.9	28.5	28.0	20.2
6	54.1	42.7	48.1	44.1	19.5	27.2	21.0	25.0
7	57.7	52.4	60.9	55.9	—	—	—	—
Total ..	34.9	32.0	34.0	34.4	23.2	28.6	28.4	24.5

TABLE 40: MEAN CURRENT STATUS OF SUBJECTS, RELATED TO FATHER'S STATUS, AND TO NUMBER OF SIBLINGS

Number of Siblings	Father's Status Category						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
0-3	2.32	2.85	3.13	3.76	4.83	5.72	5.84
4-7	2.23	3.16	3.26	4.03	5.04	6.05	5.96
8 or more	2.00*	3.57	3.77	4.10	5.13	6.36	6.06

*N < 10

TABLE 41: PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS MOVING ABOVE OR BELOW PATERNAL STATUS, RELATED TO FATHER'S STATUS AND TO NUMBER OF SIBLINGS

Number of Siblings	Father's Status													
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
	Up	Down	Up	Down	Up	Down	Up	Down	Up	Down	Up	Down	Up	Down
%														
0-3 ..	—	51.2	20.0	51.7	37.3	39.8	32.0	26.6	28.9	23.2	43.6	35.3	60.5	—
4-7 ..	—	57.1	15.6	71.1	22.4	45.9	25.4	38.1	25.1	27.6	33.8	48.2	57.3	—
8+ ..	—		7.1	64.3	20.9	65.1	26.9	44.3	21.9	27.0	18.9	59.4	50.0	—

at the differences in social mobility, the significance of family size remains evident. At all levels of hereditary status, the larger a man's family (that is, the more brothers and sisters he has) the less successful he is likely to be in achieving upward mobility. The corollary of this tendency is not, as might be supposed, that men from larger families merely maintain the social status to which they were born: it is, on the contrary, that they are consistently more prone to loss of status whatever their origin (Table 41). Our data therefore force us to the conclusion that in Dublin occupational achievement and promotion on the status hierarchy are hindered if the family is large, encouraged if it is small. Yet even this conclusion must be approached with caution.

We have been obliged to ignore the time factor in the preceding discussion; yet this, were it examined, might well prove sufficiently potent to eliminate a significant part of the relationship with family size. For if family size has declined during recent decades, and if opportunities for certain types of mobility have increased simultaneously, then it will be seen that the link between size of family and mobility could be a largely spurious one. Moreover, if it were shown that in our sample men from larger families came noticeably more often from parts of the country (were, for example, rural migrants to Dublin) that have made a contribution to mobility that is below average, then the issue would be still further confused.

Examination of the relative incidence of social mobility according to birthplace shows the country-born to be below average in the proportion who gained, and above average in the proportion who lost status; and we have already seen (Table 6) that their mean status is below that of other migrant groups (possibly influenced by a movement of farmers' sons to urban manual occupations). It is therefore no matter for surprise that, when we analysed the number of siblings a subject had in relation to his place of birth, it became clear that country migrants to Dublin came from families larger than the average (Table 42). In other words

the relationship between social mobility and size of family that is suggested by Table 41 is partially explained by Table 42. Failure to ascend and proneness to descend the status hierarchy, being associated with rural migrants, is as a consequence also associated with larger families. The original relationship is further dissolved when we look at mean family size by subject's age (Table 43). The older the subject, the more brothers and sisters he is likely to have had. We saw earlier (Table 23) that failure to rise and proneness to fall is more characteristic of older subjects. It must therefore be assumed that a further part of the apparent relationship between family size and social mobility can be accounted for on these grounds. As a result of these two analyses we are no longer in a position to reach a definite conclusion as to the significance of family size in relation to social mobility. Tables 42 and 43 do not *disprove* the hypothesis that upward mobility is less likely among men from large families: they cannot, for Table 41 has already shown this to be the case. What they do is to suggest alternative explanations; and without further and more intensive research we cannot decide between them.

TABLE 42: MEAN NUMBER OF SIBLINGS, RELATED TO SUBJECT'S PLACE OF BIRTH

Birthplace	Mean number of Siblings
Dublin	4.96
Other large city	4.18
Town	4.62
Village	4.94
Country	5.75
Total	4.97

TABLE 43: MEAN NUMBER OF SIBLINGS RELATED TO AGE OF SUBJECT

Age Group (Years)	Mean number of Siblings
21-30	4.40
31-40	4.83
41-50	5.06
51-60	5.36
61 and over	5.44
Total	4.97

Summary

It is a general belief in contemporary Western society that opportunities for circulation between the several status levels of the community are desirable and should be encouraged. This view is held, not only out of considerations of social equity, but because such circulation, or social mobility, is thought to contribute to economic and social efficiency. A study of the male adult population of the city of Dublin was therefore undertaken in an attempt to determine the incidence of social mobility among it, and to ascertain some of the factors which seem to encourage, or to hinder, free circulation from one level of status to another. A total of 2,540 male Dubliners was interviewed during the first half of 1968, and their social status (and that of their fathers) assessed from detailed information on their occupations. Inter-generational social mobility was held to have taken place where filial differed from paternal status.

Partly because the view had been expressed to us that "social classes" in Ireland have almost totally withered away since Independence, and partly as a check on our method of ascertaining social status, subjects were asked to assess their own "class". This a large majority was both able and willing to do. There was, nevertheless, a sizeable remainder—proportionally larger than has been encountered in one or two similar studies abroad—who said either that they "did not know" their social class (among the three "working", "middle" and "upper" suggested to them), or, knowing their class, were unwilling to state, or did not know, whether they belonged to the upper or lower half of it. The numbers involved (12.9 per cent. of the sample failing to answer on one or other of the counts) are insufficiently large to justify a belief that the idea of such distinctions in social status is already disappearing from the Dublin population. That "there are no social classes in Ireland" was affirmed by a negligible proportion of the sample. Moreover, the lower a subject's social status estimated by his occupation, the more willing he was to assess his own social class—though there was also less unanimity of assessment with declining social status. Our experiment, in other words, provided little evidence, even from those who might be held to suffer most from the present system, suggesting that ranking by "class" or by status is no longer widely acceptable. On the other hand, the study was not designed specifically for the study of this question, and it is conceivable that we would have reached other conclusions had it been so designed. Nevertheless it was felt that our proposal to classify our sample according to their social status had a basis in social reality; and in fact the determination of social status from occupation gave distributions fairly closely

similar to those provided by the subjects themselves. Where the two estimates did not coincide we were usually inclined to accept our own rather than the subjects'—on the grounds (to take extreme examples), that claims of members of the liberal professions to belong to the "working class", or of unskilled workers to the "upper-upper class", are not likely to be upheld by the community generally.

The distributions of the sample of subjects, and of their fathers, according to the seven categories of status obtained from the information as to their occupations, were very similar to corresponding distributions for England and Wales (1954). That is, the picture of social status as it exists in Dublin is close to, but not entirely identical with, the equivalent picture obtained in England. The most notable differences, though remaining small, probably arise from the lower level of industrialisation in Dublin, and lead to a somewhat higher proportion of men in the lowest (unskilled) status category and a correspondingly lower proportion in the middle (skilled and semi-skilled) categories. Counterbalancing this, however, is a greater concentration in the Capital of men in the two highest categories of status. As might have been expected, analysis by religious adherence shows a significant difference between the status composition of the Catholic and non-Catholic sections of the Dublin community: two-thirds of Catholic men are to be found in the three lowest status categories; but three-quarters of the non-Catholics are in the four upper, or non-manual, categories. The proportion of non-Catholics in the highest category of social status is four times that of Catholics. In the lowest status category the proportion of Catholics is double that of non-Catholics. But the historical and other reasons that have given non-Catholics this apparent advantage do not appreciably affect on the overall status distribution of the Catholic majority, which is very close to that of the dominantly Protestant population of England and Wales.

A large minority of Dublin men, approximately a third, was born elsewhere; and these seem to be of a higher average social status than their Dublin-born colleagues: the Dublin-born become relatively more numerous as we descend the status hierarchy. Such social and economic success, however, is not enjoyed equally by all migrants to the City. It was noticeable that men born on farms, or otherwise away from population nuclei, do not differ in status significantly from the Dublin-born average. Nevertheless, it remains true that four-fifths of the lowest categories of status are occupied by the Dublin-born, who are likewise under-represented at the higher levels of the hierarchy (though some Dubliners are probably occupying higher status occupations in the provinces). In considering these phenomena, however, the

possibility has to be borne in mind that Dublin aspirants to higher status levels combine social with geographical mobility—that is, that they are now overseas and hence form no part of our sample. Yet it is also clear that the Dublin-born, on the whole, are less educated than migrants to Dublin from other parts of the country; or, in other words, that it is the better-educated of the provincial born who move to the Capital, with the result that upward mobility is also more common among them.

But whatever their birthplace, there was a general belief among the men making up the sample that they were better, or at any rate no worse off than their fathers. Yet almost irrespective of whether his own social status differed from that of his father, one man in every two regarded upward mobility as a “rather difficult” process; and two-fifths were of the opinion that “a good education” is the main factor in success. But while the virtues of education and hard work are together seen as of major importance in mobility by about two men out of three, these become less popular as we descend the status hierarchy, where “good luck” and “knowing the right people” become increasingly popular—the latter being more than usually often quoted by men who had lost status, though generally speaking mobility history made little difference to informants’ views on the problem.

Of the entire sample, 40 per cent. had retained their inherited social status, 26.4 per cent. had fallen below it, and 33.6 per cent. had moved to a higher status than the one to which they were born. The incidence of social mobility suggested by these figures thus only slightly falls short of the British rate. Nevertheless, in Dublin as elsewhere class self-recruitment remains highly characteristic of the population. Half the men now in the lowest status category were born into it, and less than six per cent. were recruited from status positions above that of skilled workers. Similar, if less extreme examples of the same tendency can be seen among men now in categories 4, 5 and 6, the bulk of whom had their origin either at their current status level or in categories adjacent to it. The four lowest categories of status, that is, are dominantly recruited from among themselves, and are not composed of a cross-section of the entire population as would happen if opportunities for social mobility were the same for all. Unexpectedly, perhaps, this appears more nearly the case in the two highest status categories, nearly three-quarters of which have been recruited from below—considerably more than has happened at other levels of status. Despite a general tendency in Dublin for men (and especially those in skilled and unskilled occupations) to maintain the social status of their fathers, it nevertheless remains true that all levels of status are quite heavily composed of men

who have acquired a new status since taking up paid employment.

In considering the incidence of social mobility, however, much depends upon the “distance” that individuals are normally able to move along the status hierarchy. It appears that in Dublin rather more than half the socially mobile men moved no further than the category of status lying adjacent to that of their fathers, either above or below it. There is little evidence of dramatic gains or losses of status, partly because the system itself appears to preclude them. Downward mobility in the higher, or non-manual, categories tends to occur internally: there is little crossing of the line separating them from the manual categories. Similarly, it is comparatively rare for men moving upwards in the lower manual categories to succeed in crossing the same frontier to occupy a position at the non-manual levels. Generally speaking, crossing the manual/non-manual boundary occurs most frequently among men into the middle status categories, where, of course, the event is less dramatic.

There appears a tendency for the likelihood of upward mobility to be inversely related to paternal status: the lower a man’s inherited status, the more likely he is to have moved to a higher one. Conversely, the higher the status to which a man was born, the more probable that he falls to a lower one. This conclusion cannot be entirely explained away on the quasi-statistical grounds that the nearer a man is to the extremes of the hierarchy the more the odds in favour of mobility. Owing to the fairly narrow limits within which mobility takes place (only 11 per cent. moved to positions as remote as three or more status categories distant from their fathers) differential odds of this sort are largely irrelevant. The inverse relationship observed appears to be partly the outcome of changes in the occupational structure affecting differentially the various status levels in the community. When the effect of such changes is controlled, it is found that the highest degree of intensity of association between parental and filial status is found in the top categories 1 and 2, and the lowest among subjects in category 5. In this respect, as in others, Dublin differs little from England and Wales—or, indeed, from other parts of the world in which comparable studies have been made. The absence of a downward trend by age in the intensity of class self-recruitment suggests that the current status system is as yet in little danger of dissolution, despite easier access to education.

A distinction has been drawn between social mobility of the “exchange” type (that results from mutually compensating gains and losses of social status), and “structural” mobility made possible by new status positions thrown open by changes in the

occupational structure. In Dublin, 84.5 per cent. of socially mobile men had exchanged status positions between themselves. The remainder had moved without there being visible any compensatory movements—both proportions being close to those obtaining in England and Wales in 1954. But the numerical importance of structural mobility varies with its direction. A quarter of all status promotion in Dublin was possible only because new opportunities had arisen in the employment structure of the Capital. In contrast, the effect of new opportunities on downward mobility was small. In other words, recent economic development in Dublin has raised average social status: in Britain it has reduced it. Dublin has offered to the four highest status categories new opportunities far in excess, proportionally, of their equivalents in Britain. On the other hand, there has been a greater expansion at the unskilled and semi-skilled level in Britain than in Dublin. The two tendencies do much to explain the character of Irish migration to Britain, which has a preference for semi-skilled and unskilled occupations, and a below-average level of educational attainment.

As for the relationship between education and social mobility, for the male adult population as a whole this appears to be small. The apparent failure of the traditional educational system to function as an auxiliary in the processes of social mobility arises from differing social expectations as to the educational attainment appropriate at various levels of social status. That is, it seems that in each of the seven status categories a certain level of education is "normal" for its members. Though the origins of such educational conformity may be various, economic factors influencing a father's financial ability to educate his children are presumably highly significant. The present study leaves us in little doubt that adequate educational attainments comprise one of the most important qualifications for membership of a given category of social status. Downward mobility occurs when the educational qualifications suitable to a man's inherited status are not obtained; and a man tends to move to a higher level of status if his education significantly exceeds the level normal to his class position.

Appendix

Additional Tables of Absolute Frequencies for Selected
Basic Variables

TABLE I: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE BY SUBJECT'S AND BY FATHER'S STATUS CATEGORY

Subject's Status Category	Father's Status Category								Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	No Information	
1 (highest) ..	32	20	28	26	13	1	—	1	121
2 ..	10	27	31	44	14	1	1	1	129
3 ..	14	25	53	48	57	9	6	—	212
4 ..	7	31	59	158	141	25	36	6	463
5 ..	3	11	32	108	423	108	130	18	833
6 ..	1	3	6	19	117	86	88	6	326
7 ..	2	3	3	16	111	69	204	10	418
No information ..	5	5	4	11	9	—	1	3	38
All Subjects ..	74	125	216	430	885	299	466	45	2,540

TABLE IIA: SUBJECT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL RELATED TO THAT OF HIS FATHER:
(A) UPWARD-MOBILE SUBJECTS

Father's Educational Level	Subject's Educational Level										Total
	None	Primary incomplete	Primary complete	Technical and Vocational incomplete	Technical and Vocational complete	Secondary incomplete	Secondary complete	University incomplete	University complete	No Information	
None	—	—	4	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	5
Primary—incomplete ..	—	20	19	2	6	4	3	1	—	—	55
Primary—complete ..	—	14	142	19	58	40	61	11	47	—	392
Technical—incomplete ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2
Technical—complete ..	—	—	2	—	1	3	2	1	—	—	9
Secondary—incomplete ..	—	—	4	—	3	3	13	3	8	—	34
Secondary—complete ..	—	1	3	—	4	6	33	1	30	—	78
University—incomplete ..	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	3
University—complete ..	—	—	1	—	2	3	2	—	7	—	15
Other	—	—	1	—	—	—	3	1	5	—	10
No Information ..	1	14	103	14	21	23	31	1	17	—	225
All upward mobile subjects ..	1	49	281	35	96	83	149	19	115	—	828

TABLE IIB: SUBJECT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL RELATED TO THAT OF HIS FATHER:
(B) NON-MOBILE SUBJECTS

Father's Educational Level	Subject's Educational Level										Total
	None	Primary incomplete	Primary complete	Technical and Vocational incomplete	Technical and Vocational complete	Secondary incomplete	Secondary complete	University incomplete	University complete	No Information	
None	—	10	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14
Primary—incomplete ..	—	34	33	—	4	10	—	—	1	—	82
Primary—complete ..	2	27	214	27	60	50	42	3	10	—	435
Technical—incomplete ..	—	—	—	1	2	—	2	—	—	—	5
Technical—complete ..	—	—	—	1	3	3	—	—	—	—	7
Secondary—incomplete ..	—	—	3	2	3	10	13	1	2	—	34
Secondary—complete ..	1	3	7	4	5	6	29	5	11	—	71
University—incomplete ..	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	6	—	8
University—complete ..	—	—	3	—	1	3	1	1	16	—	25
Other	—	—	3	—	2	—	2	2	2	—	11
No Information ..	3	47	138	11	25	24	30	4	2	—	284
All non-mobile subjects ..	6	121	405	46	106	106	120	16	50	—	976

TABLE IIC: SUBJECT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL RELATED TO THAT OF HIS FATHER:
(C) DOWNWARD-MOBILE SUBJECTS

Father's Educational Level	Subject's Educational Level										Total
	None	Primary incomplete	Primary complete	Technical and Vocational incomplete	Technical and Vocational complete	Secondary incomplete	Secondary complete	University incomplete	University complete	No Information	
None	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Primary—incomplete	—	17	14	1	3	2	1	—	—	—	38
Primary—complete	—	13	127	15	39	38	23	3	2	1	261
Technical—incomplete	—	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	4
Technical—complete	—	—	2	—	4	—	2	—	1	—	9
Secondary—incomplete	—	1	11	3	7	5	8	3	1	—	39
Secondary—complete	—	4	9	3	7	12	24	1	—	—	63
University—incomplete	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	3
University—complete	—	1	2	—	3	—	11	1	12	—	30
Other	—	—	2	—	2	1	5	1	—	—	11
No Information	2	28	91	9	21	24	19	1	—	—	195
All downward mobile subjects ..	4	67	259	32	88	84	94	10	19	1	658

TABLE III: SUBJECT'S PRESENT SOCIAL STATUS, BY AGE GROUPS

Subject's Status Category	Age Groups (Years)					Total
	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61 and over	
1	18	22	19	33	29	121
2	34	31	22	21	21	129
3	50	51	46	44	21	212
4	114	83	125	76	65	463
5	213	188	158	150	124	833
6	75	65	69	59	53	326
7	72	89	81	88	88	418
No Information ..	25	1	1	5	6	38
All Informants ..	601	530	521	476	412	2,540

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