promise of the free market—which make it more realistic than the Old World’s cynicism.”

The LaRouche Factor
It happens to be a fact that Michael Lind is well acquainted with the work of Lyndon LaRouche, the individual who uniquely resurrected the nationalist tradition in contemporary world politics, and in historical analysis. Lind decided to look away from LaRouche, whom the London-New York power axis hates and fears.

But LaRouche has situated the American Revolution in the long fight between oligarchy and humanist republicans. “Hamiltonianism,” minus the deeper philosophical issues in this fight, is nothing but a dead and untruthful doctrinal category, falsely opposed to another unscientific category, “Jeffersonianism.” From this central blunder comes a real mess of historical errors.

Lind wrongly ascribes to personality “quirks,” rather than to patriotic principle, Hamilton’s desertion of the Boston Anglophile traitor-run Federalist party.

Hamilton thus elected Jefferson to the Presidency. Leading Hamiltonians such as John Quincy Adams, Mathew Carey, and Henry Clay, opposed the Federalists. To suit his schema, which deletes the fight with Britain, Lind then entirely blanks out these nationalists’ revival of Hamilton’s program, through their rallying of the nation to fight the defensive War of 1812 against Britain.

Lind makes the Confederate spawn, British-worshipping Teddy Roosevelt into a “neo-Hamiltonian.” T.R.’s financier sponsor, J.P. Morgan, is called by Lind an “industrial magnate of the Gilded Age,” despite Morgan’s stated, fixed principle of never creating a new industry. The mills and railroads of which Morgan seized control were built by the Henry C. Carey Philadelphia anti-London, anti-Wall Street faction of industrial republicans, who are entirely undescribed by Lind. Then, Lind portrays the London-Wall Street Federal Reserve System as “Hamiltonian.”

Lind denounces Abraham Lincoln’s opposition to the Mexican War as “unscrupulous.” He wrongly depicts the two Hamiltonians, Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt, as cleverly dishonest, for publicly invoking Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence. Contrary to Lind’s view, the Declaration was not an Enlightenment document, but the commitment of the American nationalists to the Renaissance Christian image of man; Jefferson himself later split with that commitment after falling in with Enlightenment radicals in France.

A nice Frederick Douglass extract on racial amalgamation buttresses Lind’s attack on multi-culturalism, as a betrayal of the struggle for the Union and universal advancement. But, Lind’s Melting Pot concept is flawed in demanding Irish immigrants leave behind their “quarrels” with the British.

Lind calls John F. Kennedy an “ineffectual” President, a “playboy millionaire” who “treated the executive branch as [his] personal fiefdom and believed [he] was above the law.” But J.F.K. sought to break out of London’s post-World War II strategic straitjacket. Might one suggest for the author, a remedial visit to Bunker Hill and Yorktown?

—Anton Chaikin

When ‘Just the Facts’ Isn’t Enough

Frederick Douglass (1818-1896) had as his guiding principle throughout his career, a commitment to truth and justice as he understood it. He always sought to perfect that understanding. Thus, as he matured, that understanding, particularly of the principles of the American Republic, deepened, lifting him out of the swamp of Garrisonian abolitionism and social reform, to become a spokesman for the principles on which this republic was founded. After 1864, Douglass became a nationalist and a protectionist (in contradistinction to his earlier defense of “free trade”), in accordance with his fight for the rights of all humanity, against the British Empire.

Unfortunately, Benjamin Quarles, a pre-eminent African-American historian whose 1948 biography of Douglass was considered groundbreaking, limited the nature of his investigation of Douglass’s biography.

In his introduction to this new edition of the biography, published in honor of Quarles, who died last year, James McPherson points out that Douglass was “a prime example of an ‘inner-directed’ personality; he grew up subject to all the power of a ‘peculiar institution’ that crushed the spark and ambition of most of its victims, yet somehow he found the inner resources to overcome the disadvantages of slavery.”

That inner-directedness led Douglass to seek out the means to learn to read while still a slave; to learn to play the violin; to organize other slaves, and teach them to read while he and they were still slaves; to devise, with the help of friends, the escape of himself and his wife from slavery; to investigate, when he realized that there was a tragic flaw in Garrisonian abolition, the true anti-slavery nature of the U.S. Constitution.

And such was true of every new political breakthrough Douglass would make throughout his life.

Douglass, while still a slave, became familiar with the speeches of John Quincy Adams, as well as the principled bat-
tle Adams and a handful of others were waging in the U.S. House of Representa-
tives against the British-controlled, intransigent, pro-slavery South. Adams’
fight, Douglass tells us, gave him and other slaves the hope they needed that
America would reject the institution of slavery, and made Adams a folk hero in
many slave quarters. And the eloquence of Adams and other public speakers of
the day led Douglass to learn the art of polemical “speechifying.”

History ‘From the Bottom Up’
While Quarles tells Douglass’s story, he
fails to convey the true nature of Dou-
glass’s intellectual powers. The reason
for that lies in his decision to tell Dou-
glass’s story “from the bottom up,” as
opposed to beginning with a concept of
what the actual fight in America, against British oligarchism, was, before,
during, and after the Civil War.

This is not Quarles’ failing alone; it is
the state of the history profession in gen-
eral. Quarles insists, for example, that in
1860, Douglass was campaigning for the
Liberty Party presidential candidate, Gerrit Smith. Factually, that may be
ture. Douglass, however, knew that
America’s best hope was Lincoln, and in
his newspaper, Douglass’ Monthly,
wrote, “The slaveholders know the day
of their power is over when a Republi-
can President is elected.” His support
for Smith was perfunctory, to say the
least.

To “boil down” Douglass in this way to
“just the facts,” does not permit the
reader to appreciate the full scope of
Douglass’s character, or his political
integrity. This does not mean that Dou-
glass was right all the time; in fact, he
was often, from an empiricist stand-
point, wrong, until he came to an
understanding of what Lincoln stood
for, and was fighting for. However, he
chose his battles carefully, and waged
them with Entschlossenheit. Douglass
also could not be led around by the
nose, by the Garrisonians or anyone
else, which frustrated his white would-
be patrons.

As Quarles notes, Douglass used to
tsay that, “No man can be an enemy of
mine who loves the violin.” He was also
a great lover of the poetry of Robert
Burns. In his 70’s, he began to study
German. Such a man is well worth
knowing, in all his richness—from the
Douglass who waged a determined 18-
month campaign in Scotland against
the Free Church of Scotland’s fundrais-
ing from American slaveowners
(“you’ve got to give the money back”),
to Douglass the violin-player and
proud grandfather of concert violinist
Joseph Douglass.

There are several correctives to the
limitations of this Quarles classic, and its
more recent counterpart, William
McFeely’s biography of Douglass, which
takes the same empirical approach, but
is more detailed, only because it, in turn,
is based on the collected writings of
Douglass currently being published seri-
ally by Yale University Press. These
original writings, along with Philip
Foner’s edition of Douglass’s writings,
which is illuminating if not complete,
are one corrective; the other, is Dou-
glass’s last autobiography, The Life and
Times of Frederick Douglass. These pri-
mary sources will be far more reward-
ing to the serious student, who is willing
to take the time to understand the true
significance of Frederick Douglass’s life
in the context of the fight for the Ameri-
can Republic.

—Denise Henderson

The Characteristic Truth

The publication of the first complete
English translation of Johannes
Kepler’s work, Harmonice Mundi (The
Harmony of the World), is a cause for
great joy. Although parts of this book
are difficult for the non-geometrically
trained, as Kepler says in his preface,
“they should not be frightened off by the
difficulty of the geometrical arguments,
and deprive themselves of the very great
enjoyment of harmonic studies.”

In Harmonice, Kepler presents to
mankind the method by which he had
been able to make the breakthroughs in
astronomy which resulted in the Three
Laws of planetary motion which still
bear his name. This method has been
attacked by more than the mere neglect
which left the works inaccessible to
those who could not read Latin or Ger-
man; it has been buried beneath the
weight of authority accorded to the
assertion that physical processes can be
understood without reference to Reason,
by examination of cause-and-effect rela-
tions which are fundamentally linear.
Kepler, on the other hand, knew that
this could not be true.

In fact, the greatest value of the pub-
cation of this book, is the way in which it
exemplifies Kepler’s method of using his
knowledge of the overall lawfulness of a
system, to develop the proper method of
dealing with specific information about
events within that system. Contrary to
today’s belief, such information can
never define either the appropriate
method for its own analysis, or the law-
fulness of the system from which it
comes. Thus, the most profound truth,
that the Creator must create the best and
most beautiful world, leads Kepler to the
certainty that there must be harmonic
relationships embedded in the elliptical
orbits, making them therefore more per-
fect than the circular shapes that had
been previously assumed. Only from that
standpoint does he ask from the observa-