classified air to identify what were considered to be dangerous, even deadly, odors. A strong whiff of "excrement, mud, ooze, and corpses provoked panic," says Corbin, particularly among finer folk. As for the stench of the poor, it merely offended the gentry, who, in their effort to create a well-scented "personalized atmosphere," supported a growing perfume industry.

Cholera epidemics during the 1830s brought home the urgency of "cleaning up the wretched." But the common man, long attached to strong, foul odors, resisted: The use of the newly discovered disinfectant chlorine in water was seen by the fearful "as evidence that the elite were bent on mass homicide." Unlike London (which began building sewer systems during the 1860s), Paris in 1911 still stank. Incompetent officials were only partly to blame; French antipathy toward sanitation stemmed from an ingrained "collective attitude toward the body, organic functions, and the sensory messages."

Contemporary Affairs

RIVAL VIEWS OF THE MARKET SOCIETY
and Other Recent Essays
by Albert O. Hirschman
Viking, 1987
197 pp. $18.95

Hirschman, an economist and emeritus professor at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, is justly respected for boldness of thought in a field increasingly known for its narrow focus on quantification. As these 10 essays show, he is a philosopher about matters monetary.

In four retrospective pieces, Hirschman, after 30 years of experience, reexamines conclusions drawn by a younger self. Serving as financial adviser to the Colombian government from 1952–54, he found that decisions made *al reves* (the wrong way around) often had "hidden rationalities." Unbalanced growth could prove desirable, as when tensions between various sectors led to overall economic growth.

Elsewhere, he examines the meanings of basic economic concepts. "Interest," for example, synonymous with usury in the Middle Ages, came to signify to 18th-century thinkers the glue holding civilized society together. Another related notion is self-interest, and Hirschman applauds the current tendency among more perspicacious economists to question its place as the primary motive for human action. He then elaborates two concepts of his own: "exit" and "voice." Defined as possible options linking economic and political behavior, "exit" is the individual's ability to choose, to leave intolerable business relationships, avoid badly made products, etc. The alternative, "voice," is the act of criticizing or commenting, aimed at changing the system.

Is capitalism, as Montesquieu and others thought, a civilizing influence on mankind (the *doux-commerce* theory)? Or does it breed its own destruction by undermining the morality on which it is based? Neither, says Hirschman, in one of his more provocative essays. Economists take far too simple a view of human behavior. "The incredible complexity of human nature must be spoon-fed back into the traditional [economic] findings for the sake of greater realism."

CRISIS IN BETHLEHEM: Big Steel's Battle to Survive
by John Strohmeyer
Adler, 1986
242 pp. $17.95

UP FROM THE ASHES: The Rise of the Steel Minimill in the United States
by Donald F. Barnett
and Robert W. Crandall
Brookings, 1986
135 pp. $26.95 cloth, $9.95 paper

In 1958, seven of the 10 highest-paid men in America were executives of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. Since those glorious days, Big Steel has lost 25 percent of its home market to foreign competitors, abandoned innumerable mills to rust, and shifted its own scarce capital to other industries. Some 250,000 well-paid blue-collar jobs have been lost forever.

As Strohmeyer, former editor of the *Globe Times* of Bethlehem, Pa., is careful to note in his sympathetic, often moving elegy for Big Steel, no single factor accounts for the industry's decline. Its executives, lulled by the absence of foreign competition after World War II, ignored inefficiency in their unrelenting drive to expand output. (Today, the world's steel mills can turn out 90 million tons of steel, but only 60 million tons are needed.) To buy labor peace, Big Steel's leaders regularly agreed to generous wage increases. By 1982, steelworkers made over $26 an hour, double the average U.S. manufacturing wage.

Strohmeyer argues that union work rules requiring extensive featherbedding, not high wages, are the industry's costliest burden. However, in 1959, when the steelmakers weathered a 116-day strike to force the United Steelworkers of America to relax the rules, Washington intervened. The union won.

In *Up from the Ashes*, Brookings researchers