

THE HISTORICAL NOVEL IN AMERICA

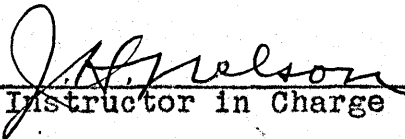
1896 - 1902

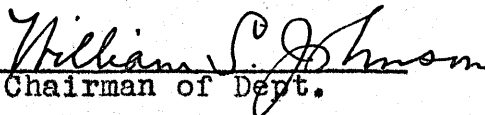
by

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University of Kansas, 1928.

Submitted to the Department  
of English and the Faculty  
of the Graduate School of  
the University of Kansas in  
partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree  
of Master of Arts.

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Date May 17, 1932

DEDICATION

TO

BLESSED THOMAS MORE

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Preface

In making this study of the historical novel, the works of the school of historical romancers which existed between the years 1896 - 1902 are discussed as fiction containing either actual characters or real events, or both. Only those novels have been included which evidenced at least one of two features: namely, that they contain historical characters, or that they are based on actual events. The existence of the school at this particular period of our national history can best be accounted for by noting that it accompanied the Spanish American War, during which the writers as well as the readers of the nation suddenly became aware of a past that was worthy of literary attention. Naturally the novelists interested themselves chiefly in these and other great crises of our national history; hence in this study these crises have been made the units of treatment.

No attempt has been made to set forth any authoritative observations on the matter of history as used by the novelists. Statements of historical facts are accepted for the most part,



without question. The aim has been to give information about the books as fiction. In a few cases where a statement or a character was unconvincing or glaringly improbable this has been commented upon.

Sometimes listed with the works of this school of historical novelists are four novels which it may not be amiss to offer a reason for excluding. They are: Richard Harding Davis's Soldiers of Fortune (1897), George Barr Mc Cutcheon's Graustark (1901), Owen Wister's Virginian (1902), and Henry Harland's Cardinal's Snuff-Box (1901). It so happens that all of them picture life in the decade just preceding their appearance, and that each fails to meet the twofold test by which they might be termed historical novels. In them both characters and events are of the authors' invention. When classifications are more loosely made, these novels, being rather faithful portraits of society, are frequently included.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to those who have helped me in securing the novels and in all other ways, and to Dr. E. M. Hopkins for assistance and direction in a part of this

study. I feel especially indebted to Dr. J. H. Nelson for the careful correction of the manuscript.

*Sister Mary Mark*

## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION

Between the years 1896-1902 there occurred an outburst of interest in historical novel writing in the United States which was so intense and enthusiastic as to constitute a striking phenomenon. A quest for the sources of this interest must extend through the nineteenth century, which saw the creation of the historical novel, and through the fashions of the European countries where that form of romance has flourished. The existence of the movement is a fact in itself well known to anyone familiar with American literary history. Yet the complete account of the movement, its causes, its distinguishing characteristics, and its products, has not before been written. To supply such an account is the purpose of this study.

The term "historical novel" has been variously used and, for the most part, without a definitely established meaning. In attempting to define it in an essay on The American Novel, Paul Leicester Ford said: "An atmosphere can be as historical as an occurrence and a created character can transmit a truer sense of a generation than the most labored biography of some actual person."<sup>1</sup> In this the emphasis is evidently laid upon conveying the truth about the temper or the spirit of the time. Ordinarily, however, there has been the demand that the novel, to be called historical, must contain characters known to have lived. Without going into the whole difficult matter of what or what not the historical novel should be, it is sufficient to explain briefly how the term is used in this study. It was felt that either one of two features, or both, would serve to make a novel rightly "historical." Either it must contain characters known to the historian, and usually to the general reader, or the action of the story must center around some historical situation or happen-

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<sup>1</sup>Atlantic Mo., LXXX, p. 722.

ing. And, as can be readily seen, both of these requirements will frequently be found together .

For the causes which produced this crop of historical novels in America at the close of the nineteenth century, we must look without as well as within the borders of our own country. Here it may be well to state that all other than English influences are ignored in this study, save for a few passing references, not because they were unimportant, but for the sole reason that the scope of this work does not justify the extensive research essential to an accurate account of the influences from those foreign literatures.

The movement is to be explained on several grounds. Possibly the most obvious is the reaction to the advancing realism of the time. Many were tired of the vein represented by Hardy, Zola, Hamlin Garland, and Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. Again the impetus may have been due in part to the Spanish American War, which encouraged a state of mind essentially romantic. It was the first war with a foreign power within the lifespan of most of the then living Americans, and patriotism was aroused and strengthened on reading of events in camp and battle. Evidences of the national de-

light in romances of our own past is given by the graph on page ten , where it can be seen that the most prolific years of the period, 1896-1902, were those following that war. Finally there was the long-existing example of English romancers from Scott to Stevenson - as well as the example of Cooper, Hawthorn and other Americans - who had treated historical material by one method or another.

The influence of the British novelists is sufficient to warrant some attention here. At the dawn of the nineteenth century, the creator is Scott, at the mid-century the innovator is Thackeray, and on towards the close stand the names of Blackmore and Stevenson. Scott in particular possessed what Saintsbury has chosen to call the "historic sense", without which it is not only impossible, he says, for a writer to delineate scene and character at a distance from his time, but for him to depict his own time itself.<sup>1</sup>

On the type of novel which Scott produced, Wilbur Cross comments as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>The English Novel, p. 302.

The novel Scott wrote is of composite character. In it is the story of adventure, the realistic sketch of manners and the saner elements of the Gothic romance; and these varieties of the novel, blended, are placed in an historical background . . . . [This background is] sprinkled with a few historical characters, and placed in the foreground [are] imaginary figures. This union of fact and fiction has prevailed with some exceptions . . . throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

The real power of Scott lies in his ability to depict the large lines of human nature, which is practically the same in all times. Subtle character development, on the other hand, was an element which he neglected entirely. "To analyze character was as little his aim, as it was to promulgate any special dogma . . . . He attracts his readers mainly by an exhibition of the multifarious pageantry of life".<sup>2</sup>

Thackeray stripped the muse of history of her mask, because he felt that the prevailing romance was either a rather pale copy of Scott or the rocco-sentimental style of Bulwer, and the result was "the historical novel-romance of a new kind."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Development of English Novel, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup>Cambridge History of English Literature, vol. XII,

<sup>3</sup>Wilbur Chap. 1, p. 26.  
Cross, Development of English Novel, p. 135.

In Thackeray's novels there are no sallies by the way into "architecture, antiquities, sunrises, and 'dearly beloved readers',"<sup>1</sup> no sprinkling of obsolete words in the conversation of his characters. The History of Henry Esmond (1852) marked a renaissance of English historical fiction and established a new model, rejecting the standards of romanticism and aiming at describing life as realistically as contemporary writers might have represented it.

As William Lyon Phelps points out, "Thackeray not only studied the period he selected with the utmost assiduity but by his sympathetic imagination he gave the very age and body of that time its form and pressure."<sup>2</sup> That no American novelist has attained the same degree of perfection is not due to a want of earnest preparation. Thackeray's influence is perhaps most notable in Winston Churchill's Richard Carvell.

During the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century there occurred a development of realism

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<sup>1</sup> Wilbur Cross, Development of English Novel, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Wm. L. Phelps, Introduction of Henry Esmond (1903), p. 20.



which has been labeled naturalism. Concurrent with this came a notable revival of pure romance ushered in by Blackmore with his Lorna Doone (1869), a romance of Exmoor in Stuart times, which has had numerous imitations, and which initiated a return to the romanticism in historical fiction that Thackeray had excluded in The History of Henry Esmond (1852) and The Virginians (1859).

In Lorna Doone the form of the historical romance is modified:

First, known personages, such as Charles II and the notorious Jeffreys, come only into the remote background of the story; secondly, the theme treated is that of a medieval romance, the deliverance of a lady in duress from the robber race and stronghold by a chivalrous knight of low degree; thirdly there is more occasion for romance; and the story is steeped in romance of many kinds . . . of the legendary deeds wrought by the Doones, the herculean John Ridd and the highwayman Tom Faggus, romance of the glorious hills and valleys that lie between Porlock and Lynton.<sup>1</sup>

"Romance of adventure and action, romance of youthful passion,"<sup>1</sup> and even the romance of tradition furnished the theme of the American historical novelists between the years 1896 and 1902. Not Blackmore's form of the historical romance predominated, however, but rather that of Thackeray and Stevenson.

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<sup>1</sup>Cambridge History of English Literature,  
vol. XIII, Chap. 13, p. 483.

The influence of Robert Louis Stevenson is easily accounted for. He was a contemporary of our novelists; the decade which spans this movement includes also the year of his death. He had visited America, had lived here, had written for an American magazine. His books, with their strange settings, striking characters, and adventurous deeds, were among the best sellers in this country. It is not overestimating the facts to say that as to form and doctrine the historical romances proceeded largely from his example. Stevenson had taken issue with the realists in defence of his own eager preferences for the tradition of Scott, and had led an active group of English romancers, among them Rider Haggard, Conan Doyle and Anthony Hope, to new if not classic triumphs.<sup>1</sup> Certain it is that the English novels were well-known to the American fictionists. Hence there can be no doubt that even when there is no evident imitation, our novelists owed much to this source.

In pointing out the dominant trends of romance at the meeting of the centuries, Manly and

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<sup>1</sup>Carl Van Doren, The American Novel, p. 246.

Rickert say:

Inspired by the examples of Stevenson in Kidnapped (1886) and Rider Haggard in She (1887) and King Solomon's Mines, and stimulated further by the wide popularity of Anthony Hope's The Prisoner of Zenda and Rupert of Hentzau, the American fictionists turned to their task with a zest, and industry that in many instances were abundantly rewarded. To this prodigious activity we owe the still memorable and in some cases still readable instances of S. Weir Mitchell's Hugh Wynne (1897), Charles Major's When Knighthood Was in Flower (1898)-- a great popular success both as a novel and as a play -- and Mary Johnston's To Have and To Hold (1899), which she followed up by a long series of novels of the same type but with an increasing attention to accurate detail. To this same movement belong Winston Churchill's Richard Carvell (1899) and The Crisis (1901), Henry Harland's graceful and sophisticated Cardinal's Snuff-Box (1901), George Barr McCutcheon's popular but meretricious Graustark (1901), and Owen Wister's skillful and honest Virginian (1902).<sup>1</sup>

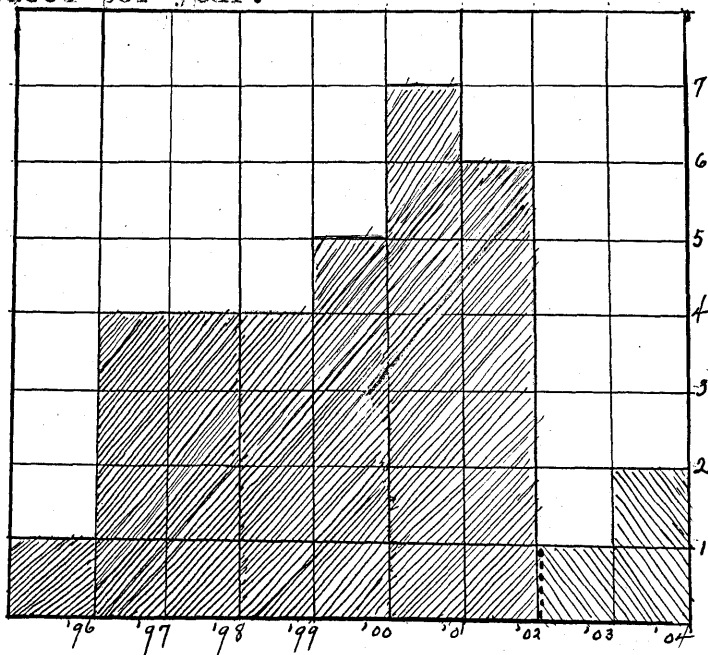
This brief period, namely 1896 to 1902, which beheld the historical romance as its most conspicuous form of fiction, produced just thirty-two novels, which have been called historical, and of them four do not fully meet the test set up at the beginning of this chapter. These romances whose scenes are laid in bygone times are not all of high literary value, although they have sold

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<sup>1</sup>Contemporary American Literature, Revised edition, 1929, p. 23.

and circulated by the hundred thousand. In some it must even be admitted that the style is almost totally lacking in distinction. If no single one can be pronounced of permanent value, the very existence of the movement is of sociological as well as literary significance. Some may even be unwilling to dignify this group of novelists by calling them a school of writers; not one of their number devoted himself exclusively, as did Scott, to the historical novel. In fact, some of them, Mrs. Freeman, for example, tried it but once, while only two produced the maximum number three, the output of Mary Johnston and of Winston Churchill.

The following chart shows the number of novels produced per year.



From this chart it can be readily seen that the close of this brief but active period is even more abrupt than its beginning. To show how speedily this fashion passed, the graph is extended two years beyond the closing date.

For treatment in the two following chapters the novels have been grouped as follows: first, those dealing with settings or characters taken from American history, and secondly, those whose backgrounds or characters are European. Within these chapters a brief account of each novel will be given. Because of the brevity of the period, the chronology of writing, being a minor factor, is here disregarded, and instead the arrangement is chronological according to the event treated in the novel. Hence, with a few gaps, we have a history of the United States in fiction, extending from 1621 to 1890. The gaps occur because most of the novels deal with important happenings in American history such as (1) the period of exploration and settlement, (2) the Revolution, and (3) the Civil War. The third chapter will be devoted to the six novels having European settings. Being so few in number, they treat of widely scat-

tered events, beginning with Marion Crawford's Via Crucis, a story of the second crusade, and closing with Weir Mitchell's Adventures of François, disclosing the fortunes of a fencing master during the French Revolution. The chain of events could be brought one century nearer the present by giving recognition to Henry Harland's Cardinal's Snuff-Box, a delicate and original story of Italian life in the last decade of the nineteenth century, which is, however, excluded because of having neither an actual event nor a character known to the historian.

## Chapter Two

### THE NOVELS DEALING WITH AMERICAN HISTORY

1621- 1890

#### 1. The Colonial Period

There are five historical romances whose settings are placed among the British colonies in the western hemisphere. Three of the number come from the same pen, that of Mary Johnston, daughter of a Confederate veteran and native of Virginia. Her three books offer a history of more than one hundred years of "The Old Dominion." "Among all our writers of historical romance, there is none that tells a better tale or tells it in a more satisfactory way."<sup>1</sup> Incidentally, Miss Johnston has been the most diligent writer of historical novels in America. As a romancer she idealizes the past, and yet her earlier tales are still popular. All told she has given us more than fifteen historical novels. The gracious words of

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<sup>1</sup>Wm. J. Long, American Literature, p. 480.

Raphael Sabatini in a personal letter to her are :

In my early days the work of Mary Johnston profoundly impressed me by the wealth of imagination in its conceptions, by the inevitable logic of its construction and by the indefinable power of recreating atmosphere and giving a sense of actuality to transactions that were centuries old.<sup>1</sup>

To Have and To Hold (1900), or By Order of the Company as it is known in England, is based on the arrival of the shipload of ninety young women at Jamestown in 1621. The expense of bringing them over was apportioned among the group of women, making the cost about one hundred pounds of tobacco for a wife. The sale with its aftermath of weddings takes place on a grassy square. This, the causative incident of the story, is realistically pictured. With all solemnity the ninety maids are paraded into the church where they are preached and prayed over, while the impatient planters are mentally measuring and weighing their visible qualifications. The characters appear to be real people with human passions and aspirations, yet not lacking in chivalry and loyalty. It is for the series of human pictures that the book will be remembered.

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted from Annie Russell Marble, Study of the Modern Novel, p. 31.



A probable incident is that of the pirate ship. Three men, one of them the planter Ralph Percy with his wife, spend some weeks, unwillingly of course, on a pirating cruise in southern waters, until an English vessel rescues them. The authentic characters are placed in minor roles. One is the semi-civilized brother of Pocahontas; another, whose influence is felt though unseen, is the King. The most romantic figure is Jeremy Sparrow, previously a popular Shakespearean actor in London, at the time a minister of the gospel in Jamestown, useful at critical moments through the story because he possesses the strength of ten when dealing with Indians, officers of the law, or pirates.

The heroine, Lady Jocelyn Leigh, belongs to a type commonly used by the novelists in treating of the period. One of the ninety wives, she is not one of them by birth or purpose, but rather the King's ward, fled from England in the disguise of her maid, Patience Worth, in order to escape marrying Lord Carnal. In the cabin of Ralph Percy, the planter who selected her, she is usually pictured as seated in a large chair, arrayed in a brocaded gown, second only to the Queen herself in the

splendor of her personal adornment. Who dresses her hair? Who launders her clothes? Who prepares her food? She may be a statue without such needs for all the concern the novelist gives to them.

Diccon, indentured servant to Captain Percy, is a Sancho Panza who accompanies his owner unbidden, at times even though forbidden. The sole concern of his dull mind is the personal safety of his reckless master.

To Have and To Hold is a well constructed story of the Jamestown settlement, and the scenes already referred to are graphically presented. The sentimental reader will appreciate the knightly qualities of Captain Percy in sheltering Lady Jocelyn Leigh from the villain, Lord Carnal. The book shows humor and zest also, and not to be overlooked are its poetic passages, inspired by nature.

Although dealing with an early period, To Have and To Hold was not the first novel by Miss Johnston. Her first, written in New York City in a quiet corner of Central Park, was Prisoners of Hope (1898). Its English title, The Old Dominion, is a reminder of the proud position which Virginia held when ranked with England, Scotland and Ireland as the fourth dominion of the Empire in 1660.

One feels that the book is the best of the trilogy, that the story in it is better told, more readable, and swifter in movement; more romantic perhaps, yet always convincing.

The time of the story is the reign of Charles II, the place a plantation about five days journey (round trip) from Jamestown. The action is furnished by an uprising among the convicts and indentured servants, who have secured the aid of the negro slaves and the fierce Ricaherians. The element of horror is supplied by the savages, African and Indian. In opposition to King Charles and to his taskmaster, William Berkley, the governor, are the men whose sentiments pervade the book, "a handful of Puritan gentlemen, a few hundred Nonconformists, and the rabble," in other words, men who had fought under Cromwell at Drogheda, men who were victims of the Act of Uniformity---Oliverians, Redemptioners, and sailors. The title is from the words of the dying Muggletonian, Win-Grace Porringer, killed in the attack on the Manor, "Turn ye, turn ye to the Stronghold, ye Prisoners of Hope."

The heroine, Patricia Vernay, beautiful daughter of the plantation owner, is able to step out of

her traditional statue-like role and act like a creature of flesh and blood. Six times she is saved from death by the convict servant, Godfrey Landless, whose father was killed at Worcester fighting under Cromwell. Yet the closing of the story is quite the opposite to the happy one expected. In an emotional moment after Patricia has expressed pity for his fate, Landless answers, "I must dree my own weird."<sup>1</sup> And his fate is almost unendurable. He is last seen in a mountain cave, alone and unable to walk because of a crushed foot. His reward for saving Patricia from death on six occasions is a choice, granted magnanimously by her father, that he may either return to the Jamestown gaol where a speedy execution awaits him as leader of the uprising or ----remain there alone in the cave, where, in his helpless condition, he is sure to be the victim of some beast of the forest. Landless chooses to remain.

Here the scheme of chronology will be broken, and Audrey, which treats of the years 1716 to 1730, will be discussed before Mrs. Freeman's Heart's

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Johnston, Prisoners of Hope, p. 178.

Highway, which is a story of the year 1682. The reason is to preserve a unity in the treatment of Miss Johnston's novels. Audrey (1902), the weakest of the trio, has been justly cited as "rococo." In the first place it is bookish. Instead of making use of contemporary language, it draws upon classical literature for phraseology. The pioneer's wife and daughter are "wood nymphs";<sup>1</sup> "every man is his own Ganymede";<sup>2</sup> there is "Burgundy for the oreads";<sup>3</sup> "one of the company . . . sang the song of Amiens";<sup>4</sup> the grasshopper is "Tithonus";<sup>5</sup> "Homeric laughter shook the air."<sup>6</sup> "The glebe was bounded by a thick wood."<sup>7</sup> And "between the flashes of lightning there was Stygian gloom."<sup>8</sup> Of the heroine in a triumphant moment the author says: "Whether she spoke or moved or stood in silence, Darden's Audrey, that had been a thing of naught, now held every eye, was regnant for an hour in this epitome of the world."<sup>9</sup>

The book is not convincing as history. Instead it portrays the legendary background of

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<sup>1</sup>Audrey, p. 7.      <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 11.      <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 10.      <sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 92.      <sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 409.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 10.      <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 41.      <sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 409

Jamestown, Williamsburg and Westover on the James River. It is romantic, sentimental, and at times, melodramatic. In the latter part, however, there are some excellent passages of dialogue.

Knowing as we do Miss Johnston's devotion to the historical novel, it is not surprising to find her writing three of them within the period of 1896 - 1902. On the other hand, that Mrs. Freeman left off writing her austere tales of rural New England to write a romance of the swashbuckling seventeenth century is sufficient to elicit notice. Only once did she venture into the field, and the product is today one of the most delightful of the group.

The story in The Heart's Highway (1900) opens one Sabbath morning in the month of April, 1682, on the road to the Jamestown meeting house. The historical characters mentioned, such as Lord Culpepper, the governor, his wife, and the King, are unimportant in the plot. More use is made of historical incident. Nathaniel Bacon's Rebellion, which happened six years earlier, supplies the war cry of the tobacco destroyers, "Remember Nathaniel Bacon!" May Day frivolities are similar to those described by Hawthorne in the May Pole of Merry

Mount. Most of this story concerns a plot to destroy in one night all the tobacco plants then growing in the surrounding county as an expression of colonial defiance of regal authority. The King would not pass the measure to cease the planting ; but he has forbidden them to sell to any but English markets, which are already flooded. Herein lies the provocation for the plot to cut down the young tobacco plants as soon as the governor sails for England. In opposition to her grandmother's principles of loyalty to the King, Mary Cavendish takes a leading part in the rebellion, in an astonishing manner for a time when the political equality of woman was little thought of. Indeed, Mrs. Freeman might have named this book, "The Revolt of Mary." For it is Mary who has the arms and ammunition brought from England and concealed in an unoccupied house. And it is she who, under cover of night, arms the men and urges them on to the destruction, until echoes of the cry, "Remember Nathaniel Bacon," finally bring mounted troops on the scene. A true historical touch is in the reading of the Riot Act by the commander of the royal troops to the mob in the tobacco field before arresting them.

The hero in The Heart's Highway, as in Prisoners of Hope, is a convict servant. Both are of gentle birth, and both are innocent of the crime for which they have been convicted. In punishment for taking part in the conspiracy known as the tobacco plot, Harry Wingfield is imprisoned and spends a day in the stocks. On the latter occasion he says, "Full easy it may be for any man with the courage of a man to figure in tragedy, but try him in comedy if you would prove his mettle."<sup>1</sup> Wingfield dreaded the stocks more than the scaffold.

Belonging "to the fringes of the historical fiction"<sup>2</sup> of the day is Frank Stockton's Kate Bonnett: The Romance of a Pirate's Daughter (1902). Captain Bonnett was a sugar planter of the island of Barbados, in the British West Indies, when the gulf of Honduras was a favorite resort of pirates. To escape his shrewish wife, the man became a pirate and an associate of Blackbeard. Kate is his daughter-- "a mythical daughter" as Van Doren says, "of that very authentic buccaneer of the early

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<sup>1</sup>Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, The Heart's Highway, p.276.

<sup>2</sup>Carl Van Doren, The American Novel, p. 250.



eighteenth century, Stede Bonnett."<sup>1</sup> The pages abound in incidents amusing and ridiculous, yet plausible. Perhaps none is more so than the one in which Captain Bonnett, dressed with extreme care for his part, but most unpiratelike, is unceremoniously addressed by Blackbeard as "Captain Night Cap."

One of Stockton's sources was obviously Stevenson, and, as a matter of fact, the hand of Stevenson can be traced in several of the novels dealing with colonial life. The most evident influence traceable is the use several times made of the character of the pirate captain. Among the motley crowd which participated in the destruction of the tobacco, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman has placed Captain Noel Jaynes, who is as much unable to put off the earmarks of a pirate as Stede Bonnett is to put them on. An instance of the sudden transformation of an honest civilian to a full fledged pirate is given by Mary Johnston in To Have and To Hold. Ralph Percy, who finds the outlaw band in the act of burying its captain, succeeds in replacing the lost leader and in being obeyed for

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<sup>1</sup> Carl Van Doren, The American Novel, p. 250.

several weeks. The career of Stockton's hero ends in the noose, whereas Percy is rescued in a series of adventures not wholly convincing. The former becomes a pirate through choice, the latter through necessity, and therein lies much of the difference.

Doubtless each of these novelists owed something to Stevenson's Treasure Island and Kidnapped.

To Stevenson more than to any one else we owe the recrudescence of the historical romance. His treatment of history was mostly in the spirit of adventure after the way of Dumas rather than after the way of Scott. . . . The historic period which most occupied Stevenson's imagination was that of the years following the second Pretender's struggle for the English throne in 1745. Historic battle scenes he did not describe; . . . well known historical characters he rarely more than mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Johnston, Mrs. Freeman, and Mr. Stockton take a similar attitude in regard to the period, the scenes, and the characters. The outstanding difference in the presentation of life among pirates is the total absence of any female character in the books of Stevenson. Both Miss Johnston and Stockton place on the decks of their pirate ships an attractive young woman who sways the course of events. It would be impossible to imagine the

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<sup>1</sup>Wilbur Cross, The English Novel, p. 288-89.

Lady Jocelyn with Jim in the apple barrel, or in Ben Gunn's cave; and equally impossible would it be to picture Kate Bonnett in the roundhouse of the Covenant with David and Alan Breck.

Looking back on these five novels, which are colonial in setting, one sees that all are in a degree novels of adventure. To the extent that each has been influenced by Stevenson, it is still worth reading. Attempts to reproduce the life of the years 1621 to 1735 in language that is bookish and unnatural, as was done most noticeably in Audrey, destroy the success which the novel might otherwise merit. Miss Johnson's heroines all play a traditional statue-like role, yet at times they are able to act as would creatures of flesh and blood. Mary Cavendish, the creation of Mrs. Freeman in The Heart's Highway, is, on the whole, most nearly representative of the early eighteenth century colonial girl. The events which were treated by the three novelists who interested themselves in this colonial period, such as Indian massacres, slave uprisings, the tobacco plot and pirate sieges, were all scenes of blood and horror, and of paramount interest in the life of the time.

## 2. The Revolutionary Period

The Revolutionary period, constituting the greatest crisis in the history of America, was likewise the period of greatest interest to the novelists of 1896 - 1902. In one respect the writers resemble the first publisher of Sir Thomas Malory, whom they so fondly quote "as the truest teacher of virtue."<sup>1</sup> It is said that the Morte d' Arthur came out primarily because it interested the publisher, Caxton. Our romancers studied the Revolutionary period because, of all those in our history, it most interested them. Like Caxton's, however, their taste appears to have been identical with that of their readers, judging from the sales of their books. The seven novels to be treated in this division are not focused on the same events or the same characters. Rather they furnish a panoramic view of the struggle from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi valley, on the ocean as well as on the land. Included among the characters are Cavaliers, Indians, and Frenchmen, frontiersmen, scouts, and trappers, Quakers, Whigs, and Tories.

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<sup>1</sup>Carl Van Doren, The American Novel, p. 254.

Robert W. Chambers' Cardigan (1901), which concerns itself with the beginnings of the Revolutionary struggle, pictures northern frontier life as it ebbs and flows from the residence of a wealthy Englishman, Sir William Johnson, Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Crown. The scene later moves eastward, and the story ends with the Battle of Concord. The character of Sir William Johnson was used again twenty years later by the same author in Little Red Foot (1921), a romance of early Virginia, wherein the Commissioner of Indian Affairs is hailed as "a world figure . . . a wise magistrate, a victorious soldier, a builder of cities amid a wilderness, a redeemer of men."<sup>1</sup>

In the preface, the author gives an estimate of his book from one viewpoint:

Those who read this romance for the sake of what history it may contain will find the histories from which I have helped myself more profitable . . . [It is] a romance for its own useless sake.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Marble, in her Study of the Modern Novel, says in part of Cardigan:

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted from Annie Russell Marble, A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup>Cardigan, Preface.

The dialogue is natural and varied; the history is authentic and colorful. To relieve the tension of war, the author depicts ducks and trouts, the call of the hounds and the imaginary feelings of Warlock, the noble steed, when he was used as "a pack-horse."<sup>1</sup>

The book might gain strength if fewer of its five hundred pages were given to the boyhood of the hero, Michael Cardigan, to the details of Indian scoutcraft, and to passages in which the story is related by Cardigan.

Mr. Chambers reveals a wide knowledge of forest life, of the skills of an Indian scout, of the hardships of travel and the difficulty of communication, yet it is this revelation which so frequently impedes the movement of the story. As a heroine, Silver Heels is far less convincing than the creations of Mrs. Johnston or Mrs. Freeman, largely because of her unquestioning sacrifice for the demented Weasel who imagines himself to be her father.

Most interesting of the characters are Jack Mount and the Weasel, physically and mentally unlike, but morally degraded to the same level. They belong to the type of adventurers who gather

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<sup>1</sup>

A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 220.

knowledge which enables them to serve and to save their friends while they themselves are not bettered. Instead they travel on until they reach the depth of misfortune and unhappiness.

If Chambers, as he said, placed emphasis on the romance for its own useless sake, Paul Leicester Ford laid greater stress on history in Janice Meredith (1899). That the book succeeds also as entertainment is evidenced by the fact that, in 1924, the story was produced as a photoplay starring Marion Davies. Mrs. Annie Russell Marble pronounces the book one of the two outstanding novels of the American Revolution in the later nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The characters of Meredith, Phil Hennion, Lord Clowes, Colonel John Brereton, and Janice, who became Lady Brereton, are developed effectively. The historical characters in the book include General Washington and his wife, Lord Cornwallis, General Clinton, General Lee, and Lafayette. The latter appears but once. General Lee shows symptoms of the insatiable vanity which led him to attempt to sacrifice the colonial cause because of his jealousy of Washington. A noticeable improba-

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<sup>1</sup>A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 220.

bility is that General Washington on several occasions turns to Brereton, a young Englishman, for information about the land over which the army is about to march, whereas the reverse condition would be more likely true.

Janice Meredith is the third novel in which the hero is a bond-servant whom later events prove to have been unjustly accused, a victim of jealousy, and a gentleman by birth. The first of these servants was Godfrey Landless in Prisoners of Hope. The second was Harry Wingfield in the Heart's Highway. The third, Charles Fownes, the bond-servant in Janice Meredith, great-grandson of the king, had indentured himself in a moment of anger, possibly for revenge on his beautiful mother. In the course of events, he ceases to be Fownes and becomes Colonel John Brereton on the staff of General Washington.

The romance in Janice Meredith is in a sense unusual. Janice, the beautiful daughter of a loyal Tory, is thrown alternately with the officers of both armies. Because of her beauty and her father's wealth she is ever being sought in marriage. Her father first promises her to Phil Hennion, who



fighters on the British side. Lord Clowes, earlier known as Evaat, once tries to elope with her. But there are too many incidents; Janice has too many proposals; Lord Clowes gets the upper hand so often that his ups and downs become monotonous. It appears that Janice really loves no one, so easily can she transfer her promise to wed. Charles Fownes, the bond-servant, later Colonel John Brereton on the staff of General Washington, finally marries her.

A particularly noticeable feature in Janice Meredith is the fairness of treatment given the Tory characters. On the subject of the portrayal of the Tory, Mr. Ford says:

Save in one or two of Cooper's novels, it would be well-nigh impossible to find a romance dealing with Revolutionary history which does not make the Whig of that war the patriot, and the Tory the disloyal and, usually, evil-acting man.<sup>1</sup>

Obviously when Mr. Ford came to write novels himself he aimed deliberately at a fair portrait.

The setting of the next novel after Janice Meredith is in colonial Maryland between the years 1760 and 1775, described in Winston Churchill's

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<sup>1</sup>Atlantic Mo., LXXX, p. 723.

Richard Carvel (1899). Five times did the author revise this book, which created a wave of enthusiasm among critics and readers of romance.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Churchill possesses a native story telling gift and, incidentally, "a growing tendency to study contemporary problems."<sup>2</sup> In The Political Novel, Morris Edmund Speare devotes Chapter XIII to "Mr. Winston Churchill and the Novel of Political Reform." He there asserts that Richard Carvel is a political novel which reflects a distinctly national impulse, a national mood.<sup>3</sup> Doubtless the following paragraph, wherein Richard reveals what he has learned of English politics, explains the stand of Mr. Speare:

After that they fell upon politics, I knew that Mr. Fox was already near the head of the King's party, and that he had just received a substantial reward at his Majesty's hands; and I went not far to guess that everyone of these easygoing, devil-may-care macaronies was a follower or sympathizer with Lord North's policy. But what I heard was revelation indeed. I have dignified it by calling it politics. All was frankness here amongst friends. There was no attempt made to gloss over ugly transactions with a veneer of morality.

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<sup>1</sup> Annie Russell Marble, A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 226.

<sup>2</sup> Geo. F. Reynolds and Garland Creever, Facts and Backgrounds, p. 308.

<sup>3</sup> The Political Novel, p. 308.

For this much I honored them. But irresistibly there came into my mind the grand and simple characters of our own public men in America, and it made me shudder to think that, while they strove honestly for our rights, this was the type which opposed them. Motives of personal gain were laid bare, and even the barter and sale of offices of trust took place before my very eyes.<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that Churchill was influenced by both Thackeray and Stevenson. During the early chapters, the hero has experiences similar to those of David Balfour in Kidnapped. Richard, an orphan, heir to his grandfather's estate, is the object of jealousy on the part of his father's younger brother, Grafton Carvel. Treachery similar to that of the Scottish uncle, Ebenezer Balfour of Shaws, is resorted to. Mr. Grafton Carvel bargains with the captain of the Black Moll, a pirate vessel, to kidnap the lad. After his rescue by Captain John Paul, who later takes a third name, Jones, Richard journeys to London, where his experiences resemble those of the Virginians. He enjoys the society of the Court, learns to gamble, fights a duel, finds himself penniless and out of favor. In the closing chapter of both Richard Carvel and The Virginians

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<sup>1</sup> Winston Churchill, Richard Carvel, p. 298.

a colonial estate is restored to the rightful heir.

One of the most touching passages in the book is that describing the last visit of Captain Paul to his old mother in Scotland. The Captain is then just twenty-four. The strength of character he reveals when he renounces the native country which has so unpardonably wronged him renders not the less remarkable the zeal with which he later serves his adopted country, the country of his friend Richard Carvel. John Paul is witty, alert, and self-educated; he is a student of the classics. On one occasion he was able to correct Horace Walpole on a quotation from Virgil. Here is the keynote of the young Scotchman's ambitious character in his own words, "Ye maun ken th'incentive's the maist o' the battle."

Lord Baltimore, Edmund Burke, William Pitt, and Charles Fox appear in the book. The two most convincing historical characters in the fiction of the period are portrayed in this novel. They are John Paul Jones and Charles Fox.

Excellent as is Richard Carvel for its character-drawing and scene-painting, its humor and its pathos, and its varied criticism of life, it is outdone by Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker (1897), the clas-

sis of the American Revolution given us by Silas Weir Mitchell, physician, specialist in nervous diseases, poet, and writer of romantic novels. As in Janice Meredith, so in this work the scene ranges from New York to Yorktown, yet the center of interest is the Philadelphia of the Continental Congress, faithfully depicted. A long period of preparation on the part of the writer is indicated by the unusual number of historical characters appearing. Among them are James Wilson, James Otis, Patrick Henry, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Mr. Carroll, Lafayette, Andre, and Benedict Arnold. With the eyes and ears of a contemporary, the reader witnesses or hears of such events as the burning of the Gaspee, the meeting of the First Continental Congress, the crossing of the Delaware, and the treason of Arnold. With a touch of pathetic humor, Andre's farewell to his friend, Hugh Wynne, is told thus:

Andre was composed and courteous; his ease and quiet seemed amazing. ". . . I shall never forget your kindness," Then he smiled and added, "My 'never' is a brief day for me, Wynne, unless God permits us to remember in the world where I shall be tomorrow."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Silas W. Mitchell, Hugh Wynne, vol II; p. 150-51.

Glimpses of social customs add reality to the atmosphere. One, peculiar to a twentieth century reader, is that invitations to sup or dine were "nearly all writ on the white backs of playing cards." A printed invitation was rare. Playing cards suggest betting books, mentioned also in The Virginians and in Richard Carvel. It is said that many gentlemen then carried small thin tablets for the purpose of recording their bets. A page from the betting-book of Arthur Wynne, Hugh's English cousin, reveals records of bets more curious than reputable. Here are two:

Mr. Harcourt bets Mr. Wynne five pounds that Miss A. will wear red stockings at the play on May 12th. Won, A. Wynne. They were blue, and so was the lady.

A. Wynne bets Mr. Von Speiser ten pounds that he can drink four quarts of Maderia before Mr. Von S. can drink two; Major de Lancy to measure the wine. Lost, A. W. The Dutch pig was too much for me.<sup>1</sup>

Customs peculiar to the Quakers themselves seem almost unnatural to the reader of the twentieth century in the Middle-West. In religion they were the extreme of nonresistance; in dress and language, they observed absolute simplicity; in taste in food,

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<sup>1</sup>Silas W. Mitchell, Hugh Wynne, vol. II, p. 87.

they were noted for their temperance and moderation. Amusements there were none; a Friend read no books except such as dealt with things spiritual or things commercial. Hugh said his father possessed the Quaker habit of absolute self-repression and of concealment of emotion. To us it seems cruel-heartedness on that father's part to invite his son to accompany him to a Friend's Meeting, knowing that the boy's sins would be exposed and that his son would be publicly prayed for by the elders.

But the book would warrant a reading at the present day if only to make a study of the Quaker mother. She is just another proof of the adage, doubtless as old as the human race, that a man's best friend is his mother. The air of Quaker seriousness sustained throughout the book is broken here and there by the little flashes of humor supplied by "that dear Jesuit, your mother." Mistress Wynne was a young Frenchwoman who had become a Quaker at the time of her marriage. Despite her husband's dislikes, she had taught her boy French, and whenever alone with him, she liked to chatter in her mother language. Occasionally a few words of it slipped out in the father's presence.

On finding her in the woods, one day, wearing

a crown of the leaves of the red and yellow maples, the Quaker husband said, "Thou wilt always be a child."

"Je l'espère," said the mother; "must I be put in a corner? The bon Dieu hath just changed the forest fashions. I wonder is He a Quaker?"

On another occasion, describing to Hugh a visit to an Oriental shop with Aunt Gainor Wynne, she said ". . . I did want the Mandarin. He nodded this way - - this way. He wagged his head as a dog wags his tail, like Thomas Scattergood in the Meeting. Comme ça." She became that good man in a moment, turning up the edge of her silk shawl, and nodding solemnly.

The mother is supreme on the morning after the mad scene at the Coffee House whence she had gone at midnight to rescue her son, and where she had been boldly kissed by one of the drunken revelers. Before breakfast there was the usual reading from the Scriptures, and the chapter was the prodigal's story. Later, alone with her boy, she said; "I - - I did not choose it, dear; indeed I did not. It came in order with the day, as your father reads; and I - - I did not think until I began it, and then I would not stop. It is strange for it to so chance. I wonder where that prodigal's mother was all the while?"



Oh, you are better than that wicked, wicked prodigal. I would never have let him go at all - - never if I could have helped it, I mean. Mon Dieu! I think we women were made only for prayer or for forgiveness; we can stop no sin, and when it is done can only cry, 'Come back! come back! I love you'."

Another time on being asked whether she wished her new apron to be patterned or plain, she answered, "Oh, plain. Am I not a Friend? Une Amie? Ciel! but it is droll in French. Sarah Logan is twice as gay as I, but John does not love such vanities. Quant à moi, je les adore. It seems odd to have a color to a religion. I wonder if drab goodness be better than red goodness."

Another spark of humor, somewhat feeble perhaps, comes from the conversation of two women. Discussing the wreck of the king's army under Mr. Braddock, Aunt Gainor Wynne said, "I can remember how they all looked. Not a wig among them. The lodges must have been full of them, but their legs saved their scalps."

"Is it for this they call them wigwams?"cries naughty Miss Chew.

Sharp are the contrasts noted between Hugh

Wynne and the next novel falling within the period, The Tory Lover (1901) by Sarah Orne Jewett. The former spans the years from 1769 to 1783, while the events of the latter are compressed within the years 1777-78. Opposed to the seriousness of Mitchell is the spontaneous humor of Miss Jewett. In length there is another difference. In the two volumes of Hugh Wynne much of the story is told in the third person by the one supposedly writing from memoirs, while The Tory Lover contains deft narrative passages and sparkling conversation. Mitchell keeps his characters within the colonies; the New England lady transports hers from Berwick and Portsmouth to England and France.

In her book Miss Jewett has given us a truly good love story, a story of love that is lawful and beautiful, in this last particular a contrast with Cardigan, The Cavalier, and The Choir Invisible. The Tory Lover is a combination of romance and realism, with passages of subtle humor. In it the novelist has successfully caught "the heroic element in her characters, seeking release from the barriers of convention or misunderstanding."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Annie Russell Marble, A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 382.

The real hero of the book is John Paul Jones, commander of the Ranger on its first voyage in 1777. With him as lieutenant is Roger Wallingford the lover, Tory by virtue of family tradition, who is on this voyage from partial conviction of the justice of the patriot cause, and entire conviction of the loveliness of Mary Hamilton.

In Paris, Captain Jones and Lieutenant Wallingford have an audience with Benjamin Franklin, a "kind old man, with a worn face and a heavy figure. . . a habit of kindly patience and large wisdom." In following the fortunes of the imaginary character, Wallingford, into the Mill Prison, the reader secures a vivid picture of the fate of the American sailors impressed by the British at this time. The respective attitudes of the French and English towards the colonies is also shown.

The year 1778, the closing year of The Tory Lover, also includes the events of Alice of Old Vincennes (1900) by Maurice Thompson. Here the story of pioneering and warfare in the Mississippi valley is united with an account of the expedition of George Rogers Clark. The background is old Fort Vincennes, founded between 1710 and 1730, a strange little post on the Wabash within the borders of the

present state of Indiana; here the Rouissillon cherry tree, le cerisier de Monsieur Rouissillon, stood until 1825. In 1778, the inhabitants of the fort are still the French who first surrender to the Americans, for whom Alice helps to make a banner which is affectionately known through the book as "le bannière d'Alice Rouissillon et de Zhorzh Vasinton." The next surrender is to the English under Hamilton, who, with the Indians, used a demoralizing system of bribery. George Rogers Clark marches from Kaskaskia and secures the final surrender of the little post in February, 1779.

The story has been reconstructed from letters, still in existence, among them one from Gaspard Rouissillon, one from Alice in her later life, and one from a relative of the old scout, Oncle Jazon. Monsieur Vigo and Père Gibault, who figure in The Crossing, are also in this tale. Colonel Francis Vigo, an Italian, some say a Sardinian by birth, who has arrived in New Orleans as a soldier in a Spanish regiment, becomes an American by adoption, and a patriot to the core, with a large influence over both the Indians and creoles in the Illinois country. It is Father Pierre Gibault who brings the news to Vincennes that France and the American

colonies have made common cause against the English in a great war.

A device used by the three of the novelists who interested themselves in the Revolutionary period is a miniature of a beautiful young woman which changes hands several times. Paul Leicester Ford used it in Janice Meredith, as also did Winston Churchill in The Crossing. Maurice Thompson places the miniature of Alice in a locket within which there is also an enameled coat of arms of the Tarleton family of Virginia. This locket was around the neck of Alice when she was received from the Indians and adopted into the family of Monsieur Rouissillon. Eventually it is the means of tracing her English ancestry; but first it serves to save the life of her lover, Captain Beverly, in the hands of Long-Hair, a scout in British employ.

Among all the historical novels written between the years 1896 to 1902, the one most entirely and accurately historical both as to events and to characters is Alice of Old Vincennes. And that is just what would naturally be expected from Maurice Thompson, whose enthusiasm prompted him to write the following about Clark's army, which had fewer than two hundred men to answer roll-call in the

spring of 1779:

We look back with a shiver of awe at the three hundred Spartans for whom Simonides composed his matchless epitaph. They wrought and died gloriously; that was Greek. The one hundred and seventy men, who, led by the back-woodsman, Clark, made conquest of an empire's area for freedom in the west, wrought and lived gloriously; that was American. It is well to bear in mind this distinction by which our civilization separates itself from that of old times. Our heroism has always been of life - - our heroes have conquered and lived to see the effect of conquest. We have fought all sorts of wars and have never yet felt defeat. Washington, Jackson, Taylor, Grant, all lived to enjoy, after successful war, a triumphant peace. "These Americans," said a witty Frenchman, "are either enormously lucky, or possessed of miraculous vitality. You rarely kill them in battle, and if you wound them their wounds are never mortal. Their history is but a chain of impossibilities easily accomplished. Their undertakings have been without preparation, their successes in the nature of stupendous accidents." Such a statement may appear critically sound from a Gallic point of view; but it leaves out the dominant element of American character, namely, heroic efficiency. From the first we had the courage to undertake, the practical common sense which overcomes the lack of technical training, and the vital force which never flags under the stress of adversity.<sup>1</sup>

The pronouncements of two of the newspapers of the year 1901 concerning Alice of Old Vincennes are

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<sup>1</sup>Alice of Old Vincennes, p. 303.

of sufficient interest to warrant quotation here.

The Denver Daily News says:

There are three great chapters of fiction: Scott's tournament on Ashby field, General Wallace's chariot race, and now Maurice Thompson's duel scene and the raising of Alice's flag over old Fort Vincennes.<sup>1</sup>

And the Chicago Times-Herald says:

More original than Richard Carvel, more cohesive than To Have and To Hold, more vital than Janice Meredith, such is Maurice Thompson's superb American romance, Alice of Old Vincennes. It is in addition more artistic and spontaneous than any of its rivals.<sup>2</sup>

The setting of Alice of Old Vincennes, the West during the Revolutionary and Federalist eras, is the same as that of The Crossing (1904) by Winston Churchill. As the title indicates, the book records the beginnings of that great movement westward through the passes of the Alleghenies, a movement which was not to stop until it reached the Pacific. The story is in the form of an autobiography of David Ritchie, "a drummer boy in the Clark expedition from Kentucky to the Wabash and Vincennes. Like Richard Carvel, he is the victim

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Hartwell Catherwood, Lazarre, advertisements on the last pages of the book.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

of an unscrupulous uncle,"<sup>1</sup> and in both boys Churchill has given us excellent portraiture of child life.

The scope of the story can be estimated from the following:

. . . the lonely mountain cabin, the seigniorial life of the tide-water, the foothills and mountains which the Scotch-Irish have marked for their own to this day, the Wilderness Trail, the wonderland of Kentucky, and the cruel fighting in the border forts against the most relentless of foes; George Rogers Clark and his momentous campaign which gave to the Republic Ohio, Indiana and Illinois; the transition period, the coming of the settler after the pioneer; Louisiana, St. Louis and New Orleans; . . . the passions and politics of the time, . . . the counter influence of the French Revolution . . . I have tried to give a true history of Clark's campaign as seen by an eyewitness, trammelled as little as possible by romance. . . . What principality in the world has the story to rival that of John Sevier and the State of Franklin? . . . General Jackson was a boy at the Waxhaws and dug his toes in the red mud. He was a man at Jonesboro, and tradition says that he fought with a fence-rail. Sevier was captured as narrated. Monsieur Gratiot, Monsieur Vigo, and Father Gibeault lost the money which they gave to Clark and their country. Monsieur Vigo actually travelled in the state which Davy describes when he went down the river with him. Monsieur Gratiot and Colonel Auguste Chouteau and Madame Chouteau . . . existed and were the foremost citizens of [ St. Louis ].<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Annie Russell Marble, A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 229-230.

<sup>2</sup>Winston Churchill, The Crossing, Afterword to 1904 edition.



Indirectly through the speakers, we hear of such historical characters as Genet, Livingston, Monroe, Napoleon; and there is a mention of John Paul Jones, and of the King and Queen who were guillotined in France. The combined effect is a general impression of the far-reaching effects of the French Revolution and of the Napoleonic wars.

Vividly pictured is the wedding journey of Tom and Polly Ann westward over the trackless mountains to Kentucky. With them is the orphan Davy. A few years later, Davy and Tom accompany George Rogers Clark on the march to Kaskaskia, participate in its capture, and then in the capture of Cahokia. On another occasion, Davy and Nick Temple spend a day and the ensuing evening in St. Louis, and from there make their first trip down the Mississippi in a fur boat.

A miniature of a beautiful woman which changes hands several times is in this story, as was mentioned previously in the discussion of Alice of Old Vincennes (p. 41). This one is a picture of Hélène de St. Grè, Vicomtesse d'Ivry-le-Tour. The lady herself comes from France in the second half of the book, and, in the last chapters, becomes the wife of the hero, David Ritchie, the drummer boy of Kas-

kaskia.

The novels covering the Revolutionary period are seven in number, forming the largest group within this study. Most of them cover a number of years, following the hero or heroine from childhood to middle age, while no two of them have similar plots. The novelists seem to have had less inclination to use stilted, archaic forms of dialogue. Janice Meredith is the only one in which the reader feels that in language at least the characters belong to a remote period. The movement in this story is noticeably hampered by the obsolete forms of speech. Why any writer should feel it necessary to use speech forms which antedate Shakespeare to create a one hundred year old atmosphere is difficult to understand. It is curious to note that the device of a bond servant who turns out to be a man of rank was used in three novels and that the device of a miniature of a woman which changes hands several times in the story was employed by three of the writers. That two of the novels of the Revolutionary period are from the pen of Winston Churchill is likewise of interest.

### 3. The Post-Revolutionary Period

The years 1786 to 1815 in American history are treated in four historical novels which have been designated as post-Revolutionary, since each of the books is colored to a greater or lesser degree by the preceding struggle. A romance of the rebellion led by Daniel Shays, The Duke of Stockbridge (1900), reveals the story of the great revolt of the debtor farmers of Massachusetts against their oppressive creditors and the cruel courts in 1786. The book was written by Mr. Edward Bellamy in 1879 at the request of the editor of a local paper in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. After completing the book, the author refused the offer of publishers, and determined to delay its appearance until after the publication of Looking Backward (1887), which had already taken shape in his mind. The Duke of Stockbridge "is unique as an historical novel in that it is based not merely upon the movement of romantic adventure, but also upon a significant social problem, cast up by history, which appeals forever to human sympathy."<sup>1</sup> Intimate research among both the

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<sup>1</sup>Francis Bellamy, Introduction to Duke of Stockbridge.

documents and the early traditions of Western Massachusetts such as few historians have given to the episode were made by Mr. Bellamy. He wished to have it understood that Captain Daniel Shays, an ex-Revolutionary officer and the most prominent of the military chiefs, was by no means the general leader of the mutiny; and that "the majority of the men in the rebel ranks were former soldiers of the Revolution, descent from whom today is inestimable."<sup>1</sup> In that day they were nearly all impoverished by their services, and in general were considered ne'er-do-wells by the thrifty well-to-do.<sup>2</sup> The rebels could scarce look upon the state government as anything but harsh and oppressive in a day when the annual tax in Massachusetts amounted to two hundred dollars per family - - more money than the average farmer or mechanic saw in two years. "The chief industry, therefore, was the law; the courts were concerned in emptying the farmers' houses under foreclosures, and in filling the jails with good men who could not pay their debts."<sup>3</sup> With such the

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<sup>1</sup>Francis Bellamy, Introduction to The Duke of Stockbridge.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

state of affairs, the exasperated people began to empty the jails of their friends and neighbors, and, by crude methods, to stop the courts which were breaking up society.

Mr. Francis Bellamy, the author's son, tells us that several of the characters in the romance were real personages who played their parts in the revolt. Among them is Captain Perez Hamlin, "the Duke of Stockbridge," who loves Desire Edwards, granddaughter of Jonathan Edwards. But Desire, who belongs to the "silk-stockinged gentry," disdains him, uses him to shield and save her own family, yet fails to break down the barriers of class prejudice and love of this worthy Yankee hero.

A shadowy figure found in the background of most of the novels of this as well as of the Revolutionary period, is Aaron Burr, here mentioned in connection with his grandfather, Jonathan Edward.

The Riot Act which had been read more than a century before to the tobacco plotters in The Heart's Highway is still in force as shown on two occasions in this novel.<sup>1</sup>

As the plot gradually unfolds, life in puritan-

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<sup>1</sup>Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, The Heart's Highway, pp. 286 and 336.

ical Massachusetts is disclosed. There is a description of the childlike joy of the townspeople, young and old, at the close of a Puritan Sabbath - - sundown.

Here is a convincing, pathetic group of the "malcontents" who are about to participate in the rebellion:

The thirsting eagerness with which they turned their open mouths toward each one as he began to speak, in the hope that he could give expression to some one of the ideas formlessly astir in their own stolid minds, was pathetic testimony to the depth to which the iron of poverty, debt, judicial and governmental oppression had entered their souls. . . . It was evident that the man who could voice their feelings . . . would be master of their actions.<sup>1</sup>

The Duke of Stockbridge is assured of its place among the novels of our period by virtue of its characters, its truthfulness of color, its interpretation of the Yankee type, and its convincing account of a rough and decried struggle. But aside from the historical aspect, the book succeeds as a work of fiction at the present time because the tragic struggles of the hero are known to his present day countryman. In fact, the descriptions of

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Bellamy, The Duke of Stockbridge, p. 70.

the hard times as given on pages 14, 15 and 19 could almost be accounts of conditions in 1931.

Directly opposed to the heavy tragic atmosphere which pervades the Duke of Stockbridge is the adventurous air of the graceful and engaging tale of the mysterious disappearance of the Dauphin, son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, Lazarre (1901) by Mary Hartwell Catherwood. The author imagines the boy as having drifted to America in the Lake George region and reared to young manhood by Indians, among whom he has become a leader.

Carl Van Doren considers Mrs. Catherwood one of the chief forerunners of this school of historical romancers. He contends that during the years 1889-94, she forecast almost all the developments of the more fecund years from 1896-1902. Although her earlier tales were not of permanent value, they did add a definite little province to our historical fiction - - the French in the interior of the continent.<sup>1</sup>

The Prelude of Lazarre reveals a scene in St. Bat's (Bartholomew's) in the heart of London in 1795. Here the French "emmy-grays" who are to have the chief parts in the tale meet by chance before em-

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<sup>1</sup>The American Novel, p. 246-7.

barking for America; they are two children each six years of age - - Eagle de Ferrier and the Dauphin of France. The latter, only recently removed from an airless dungeon after months in rags, and filth, and vermin - months wherein he had been forced to drown memory in fiery liquor - is now nothing more than a breathing corpse. In America, the boy is adopted by an Iriquois chief, Thomas Williams, and given the name Eleazar, which his companions corrupted into Lazarre.

About 1810 Lazarre visits Paris, the Paris of the decade following that of The Tale of Two Cities. He sees the ruins, such as Versailles, which had not yet been restored, and meets other members of the Bourbon family and other pretenders to the throne. Through the malice and jealousy of one of the latter he is imprisoned under conditions almost identical with those which Charles Dickens portrays.

A few years before his trip, Lazarre has met Jerome Bonaparte at a ball in America, and in Paris he sees Napoleon. A speech of Lazarre at this point of the story reveals the breadth of his life experience:

Vaguely I knew that there was life  
on the other side of the great seas,  
and that New York, Boston, Philadelphia,



Baltimore and New Orleans were cities in which men moved and had their being. My country, the United States, had bought from Napoleon Bonaparte a large western tract called Louisiana, which belonged to France. A new state named Ohio was the last added to the roll of commonwealths. Newspapers which the Indian runner once or twice brought us from Albany, chronicled the doings of Aaron Burr, Vice-President of the United States, who had recently drawn much condemnation on himself by a duel.<sup>1</sup>

Descriptions of scenery and Indian customs are accurate. In fact, while reading the book, one feels that in this respect, it is much better written than many of the novels belonging to the period. There is no painstaking effort to reproduce the life of the Indian in long extracts which take away from the main story. Skenedonk, an Oneida who has been educated abroad, and his inseparable companion, Lazarre, who at the age of eighteen knows only Indian life, are men, normal human beings, not interesting creatures of another species who possess superhuman powers of seeing and hearing. There are indications that their faculties are keenly developed, yet they are not continuously displaying them.

Johnny Appleseed, the well-known character from American tradition, appears in Chapter I of Book III

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<sup>1</sup>Mary H. Catherwood, Lazarre, p. 92.

with the little bags of appleseeds for which he is famous.

The woman of the book, Eagle de Ferrier, is a well-portrayed, although imaginary, character. During the years of her married life in America, years of poverty, labor and repression, Eagle kept a journal whose entries reveal an unexpected strength and courage. Some passages from it are:

There is strength in doing the right thing. If there were no God, if Christ had never died on the Cross, I should have to do the right thing because it is right.

People incline to doubt the superiority of a person who will associate with them.

The instinct to conceal defeat and pain is so strong in me that I would have my heart cut out rather than own it ached. Yet many women carry all before them by a little judicious whining and rebellion.

It is the old German fairy story. Every day gold must be spun out of straw. How big the pile of straw looks every morning, and how little the handful of gold every night.

Are all French women cast in such an heroic mould as the two which our American novelists have shown us? The mother of Hugh Wynne and the friend of Lazarre seem to have inherited somewhat of the noble spirit of their country-woman, Saint Joan of Arc.

In the Duke of Stockbridge the characters were

taken entirely from the masses, the common people; in Lazarre most of the pictures of life were those of great numbers of pioneer Americans of the day; but in the next novel to be considered, Gertrude Atherton's The Conqueror (1902), the individuals concerned are taken from the élite of the youthful republic. The story, centering around Alexander Hamilton, was suggested to the author by a line in Bryce's American Commonwealth that she was reading as background for her Senator North.

Mrs. Marble's estimate of Mrs. Atherton's skill is as follows:

To her historical novels she gave wide, careful knowledge of background, a deep interest in all problems of heredity and their reactions . . . . In The Conqueror . . . the leading character, . . . Alexander Hamilton, illegitimate, rises from his blighted boyhood into international honor and influence. . . . The intense zeal of Mrs. Atherton in her subject and her pulsing imagination are exemplified notably in the dramatized biography of Alexander Hamilton. It has been said that she created Hamilton, that she did not portray him, but she never veered from actual history, mingled with accepted tradition. . . about his political conflicts with Clinton and Jefferson, and the kindly relations between the blue-blooded Washington and this brilliant, farsighted younger man whose birth was shrouded in mystery. For readers of the early twentieth century, Alexander Hamilton lives in Mrs. Atherton's The Conqueror, and the stage interpretation of his personality by George Arliss. . . . The lei-

surely movement of the earlier scenes in the West Indies, with the local color in the landscape compared with the later chapters of tense political struggle at Washington shows her grasp of historical atmosphere and character.<sup>1</sup>

The Conqueror is history, animated, vivified, quickened. The characters live and act with the dignity and poise which must have been theirs in real life. In the different scenes, the reader readily becomes the actor, the auditor and sometimes the speaker, for the language is that of the twentieth century. After reading many other of the novels of this group, one notices the absence of obsolete words and archaic expressions. Concerning the diction, the author speaks for herself in a note:

In all the matter published and unpublished, that I have read for this book, I find no excuse for the inverted absurdities and stilted forms with which it is thought necessary to create a hundred-year-old atmosphere.

One of the never-to-be-forgotten scenes from the book is that of the West Indian hurricane which, as a boy, Alexander Hamilton experienced. His horseback ride ahead of the storm, the hours he spent in

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<sup>1</sup>A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 253-255.

<sup>2</sup>The Conqueror, footnote.

the great old house whose worn shutters and storm doors gave way like so much paper, the dead he saw amid the wreckage, all make the account as vivid as any news reel or modern newspaper stories could do.

In The Conqueror there is the epic breadth of subject and of treatment which also characterizes the best work of another woman novelist, Ellen Glasgow. Mrs. Atherton has selected a big basic national problem and filled in the whole background of the canvas;<sup>1</sup> and against it, sharply defined, the personal tragedy of Alexander Hamilton is thrown out in bold relief in the middle of the picture. Mrs. Atherton sees "life with clear-eyed accuracy and without illusions. She is no idealist, inventing an imaginary world because the world of actuality happens at times to contain much that is sordid and painful."<sup>2</sup>

Nothing is to be found in common between The Conqueror and The Choir Invisible (1897), which is the last novel to treat of events of the post-Revolutionary period. The latter suffers measureably in being considered after Mrs. Atherton's animated

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<sup>1</sup> Fredric Taber Cooper, Some American Story Tellers, p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 247.

biography of Hamilton. As fiction, James Lane Allen's Choir Invisible is a strange story with a plot that is scarcely satisfactory. As history, it represents little more than a cross section view of society in Kentucky between the years 1795 and 1815. The Battle of Blue Licks is but briefly narrated, as it had happened about ten years before the action in the book starts. Aaron Burr is once mentioned as meeting with the foremost leaders in his magnificent conspiracy. A letter from the hero, John Gray, tells of an interview with George Washington at Mount Vernon. The principal characters, however, and the major events in their lives are imaginary. In this book there is the usual attempt to display a knowledge of ancient literature. John Gray, while convalescing from a fight with a mountain cougar, is presented with a copy of the Morte d'Arthur together with a lengthy discourse from the giver on its merits.

James Lane Allen was one in whom the naturalism of the nineties aroused a vigorous antagonism. In order that his protest against such fictionists as Tolstoy, Flaubert, and Zola, who were disturbing the simple virtues of American life, might be clear, Mr. Allen deliberately allied himself with the school of American historical novelists. Yet

he did not succeed in catching the spirit of the more successful members of this school.

The four novels just reviewed are each colored to a varying extent by the Revolutionary struggle, but they have little else in common. The Duke of Stockbridge is localized among the debtor farmers of Massachusetts. It is a tragedy, because Desire Edwards, like Patricia Vernay in The Prisoners of Hope, cannot rise above class prejudice and acknowledge her love for a truly yankee hero. Lazarre easily takes precedence over Cardigan, Janice Meredith, and the Crossing by the fact that in the former, Indian life and customs are made known in a brief, matter-of-fact way, whereas in the other three, lengthy, tiresome passages are devoted to descriptions of scenery and of Indians. As an example of reanimated history, the biographical novel, The Conqueror, is outstanding. Yet it must be admitted that the writer presents the consequences of sin as rewards for unvirtuous acts. From her Hamilton we learn that an act is not sinful so long as it can be concealed. The one exciting incident in the otherwise lifeless story of The Choir Invisible is a bloody battle with a prowling cougar. On the whole this book fails to be satisfactory.

#### 4. The Civil War and Its Aftermath

In this, the last division of the historical novels with American settings, the six novels which constitute the group give the story of the Civil War, some of its causes, and many of its after effects, yet all this is shown primarily as seen on Southern territory and in the lives of Southern characters. Only one novel, The Crisis, takes the reader into the North for any major events. Hence in it is given the sole picture of the Great Emancipator. The novelists who interested themselves in the Civil War had the advantage of living among actual participants in the struggle, while the events of their own lives had their roots, if not in the war itself, at least in post war happenings. As would naturally be expected, their stories are more lifelike and more accurate than the novels based on earlier periods of history which necessarily had to be reproduced entirely from written records and oral traditions. But if the novelists found an advantage in having had actual contacts with the Civil war, they likewise met with one great disadvantage in those same contacts, namely, the difficulty of presenting an impartial view



of a war which permitted no such things as impartiality while it lasted. As to the success with which this difficulty was overcome, we have the testimony of Paul Leicester Ford, who says that the American people and the translators of their thought have shown for the most part a very unusual fairness, and that this distinction is in itself proof of the point that distance or lapse of time has nothing to do with a writer's fairness of view. When dealing with the Civil War period, our novelists take a broad and generous view of both sides.<sup>1</sup>

In The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come (1905), John Fox portrays the backward mountaineers of Kentucky, whose manner of life when he wrote the book still resembled that of the frontier of Cooper and Simms. He has infused some sentimentality into the struggles of that state to maintain neutrality when brothers were enlisting on opposite sides for the Civil War. In May of 1861, he tells us, "the State Guards were held in reserve, but there was not a fool in the Commonwealth who did not know that, in sympathy, the State Guards were already for the Confederacy and the Home Guards for the Union cause."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"The American Historical Novel," Atlantic Mo.,  
LXXX, p. 723.

<sup>2</sup>Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, p. 242-3.

Historical characters and events seem to be brought in in a more natural, lifelike way than had been those of Revolutionary times, possibly owing to the fact that the novelist does not feel himself under such a strain in reproducing scenes nearer to his own time. Colonel Ulysses Grant is met with several times; much is seen of "Morgan's Men," "the flower of Kentucky's youth," Confederates who made up bread in an oilcloth, worked up corn meal into dough in the scooped-out half of a pumpkin, baked bread on a flatrock, or twisted the dough round a ramrod.

The military organization of the army was characteristic of the Southerner. A regiment with a popular colonel would have a roll call of over two thousand. Companies often refused to be designated by letter and used the thrilling titles they had given themselves. General Morgan and General Hunt are shown as laughing over "The Yellow Jackets," "The Dead Shots," "The Earthquakes," "The Chickasha Desperadoes," and "The Hell Roarers."

Unlike the Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, Churchill's Crisis (1901) is free from sentimentality and is characterized by a bold vigor and a masculine strength. The Crisis is the sole novel in

this study which portrays the romance of the war from the Union side. William J. Long suggests Miss Johnston's The Long Roll, a story of the Confederate side, as a companion novel, the combination forming a well-rounded account of the war in fictional form. The Long Roll, however, which did not appear till a decade later, is by virtue of that fact excluded from this study.

In The Crisis, Winston Churchill has constructed an historical cycle in three segments, Richard Carvel, The Crossing and The Crisis, the third of which rounds out one hundred years of national history, with outstanding events as milestones, reviewed on his canvas.<sup>1</sup>

. . . he has succeeded admirably in handling big backgrounds: few American novelists have achieved as he has that sense of wide spaces of earth and sky, the weariness of dragging miles, the monotony of passing years, the motley movements of humanity in the mass; . . . his trick of characterization is as graphic . . . as the camera lens. You see face after face, figure behind figure, each drawn with fewer and swifter strokes as they become more blurred by distance, yet everyone individualized and recognizable. . . . [As to historicity, the author] errs too far on the side of accuracy.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Annie Russell Marble, A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup>Fredric Taber Cooper, Some American Story Tellers, p. 53-4.

The setting of The Crisis is St. Louis during the years of the Civil War. In the strict sense of the term, the book is scarcely fiction at all, but rather a sort of pictorial history of that conflict. The plot itself is a string of episodes lending little to the literary quality of the book, which relies rather on individual portraiture and a pervading sense of atmosphere.

Stephen Brice, the leading character, is strong and consistent. The skill with which he is balanced against another Yankee, Eliphalet Hopper, achieves what no other method could have done, showing the reckless generosity with which the former served his fellowmen and the shrewdness with which the latter served himself. Within a few hours of his arrival in St. Louis, Steve witnesses for the first time in his life a slave auction and spends all his money, nine hundred dollars, to free a negro girl. With characteristic Yankee thrift, Hopper succeeds in acquiring a fortune during the War, and thinks, with this in his hands, he should have the beautiful Virginia Carvel as his bride for the asking. Hopper is totally unprepared when Miss Carvel instantly refuses to marry him. What he fails to understand is how

she can refuse his money at a time when it would mean the saving of her father's business.

An evidence of Churchill's graphic characterization is this monologue which took place shortly after Stephen's first meeting with Abraham Lincoln:

"Look here, Steve," said [Lincoln], "you know a parlor from a drawing-room. What did you think of me when you saw me to-night?"

Stephen blushed furiously, and his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth.

"I'll tell you," said Mr. Lincoln, with his characteristic smile, "you thought you wouldn't pick me out of a bunch of horses to race with the Senator [meaning Stephen A. Douglas]."<sup>1</sup>

The Freeport debate is carefully presented from every angle through the events of four chapters. As a justification for devoting so much space to it in the novel, the following picture of one of the auditors is sufficient:

This son of toil who had driven his family thirty miles across the prairie, blanketed his tired horses and slept on the ground the night before, who was willing to stand all through the afternoon and listen with pathetic eagerness to this debate, must be moved by a patriotism divine. In the breast of that farmer, in the breast of his tired wife who held her child by the hand, had been instilled from birth that sublime fervor which is part of their life who inherit the Declaration of Independence. In-

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<sup>1</sup>The Crisis, p. 140.

stinctively these men who had fought and won the West had scented the danger. With the spirit of their ancestors who had left their farms to die on the bridge at Concord, or follow Ethan Allen into Ticonderoga, these had come to Freeport. What were three days of bodily discomfort! What even the loss of part of a cherished crop, if the nation's existence were at stake and their votes might save it!<sup>1</sup>

From the Union side as given in The Crisis we pass to the South in the Civil War as shown in The Cavalier (1901), wherein George W. Cable turned away from his usual field, the short story, to enter the ranks of our school of historical novelists. As to setting, the book is historically correct, but there is a noticeable absence of actual historical characters. The story is told by a Southern soldier who all through the war longed for the "civilities" of life. The humorous character of the book-- or at least he was meant to be.-- is Scott Gohlson who, like the chorus in the Greek play, tells everything which the reader could not otherwise know.

As in The Choir Invisible, there is here a sentimental picture of a beautiful young woman who is unhappily married and whose unhappiness is attri-

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<sup>1</sup>Winston Churchill, The Crisis, p. 154.

buted entirely to the stupidity of her husband. The heroine in The Cavalier, Charlotte Oliver, is in many respects like the unhappy wife in That Dowdy, a once popular dime novel. Cable has somewhat clumsily managed to be rid of the husband, Ned Oliver, who was twice reported dead, yet eventually had to be murdered on the morning of his wife's second wedding.

The redeeming qualities of the book lie in the graphic pictures of army life in the camp and on the march. Cable's poetic powers of description enabled him to make the roadways, swamps, bayous, forests and streams vivid realities to his readers. He possesses a warmth of feeling and a subtle humor. At times his scenes are blood-curdling and sensational, yet the general effect is mild and harmonious. The emphasis is upon characterization rather than upon plot or incident.

The influence of at least one European historical novelist began early in the life of Ellen Glasgow, for it is said that her mother taught her the alphabet from one of Scott's novels. Miss Glasgow is the author of two of the novels of this period dealing with social backgrounds and problems of the Civil War. A blending of history with contemporary

manners is found in these narratives of political and economic conditions in Virginia. "What one remembers about her volumes," wrote Frederic Tabor Cooper, "even after the specific story has faded from the mind, is their atmosphere of old-fashioned Southern courtesy and hospitality, of gentle breeding and steadfast adherence to traditional standards of honor."<sup>1</sup>

The Battleground (1902), by Ellen Glasgow, deals with the fortunes of two Confederate families before and during the war. The book contains a charming romance, based on historical incident, yet lacking in historical characters. There are vivid and attractive pictures of plantation life in the days of slavery, with examples, wholly natural and unsentimental, of the affection which existed between master and slave. Mrs. Ambler and Mrs. Lightfoot, beautiful Southern ladies, are equally solicitous about the spiritual and corporal health of their families and of every slave they own.

The Deliverance (1904), by the same author, is a romance of the Virginia tobacco fields. Although

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<sup>1</sup>Fredric Taber Cooper, Some American Story Tellers (N.Y., 1911), p. 93, as quoted by A. E. Marble, A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 316.



the story begins about fifteen years after the Civil War, it rests entirely on the events of that war. Again there are no historical characters, yet the setting is doubtless a typical one - - the family of an aristocratic plantation owner in dire poverty, the owner himself slain in battle.

Mrs. Blake, the blind old mother, former mistress of three hundred slaves, lives twenty years in a hovel without knowing that she is no longer in Blake Hall, ever thinking the war has been won by the South, and sipping her port wine. To the last she is seen "in a massive Elizabethan chair of blackened oak, a stately, old lady sitting straight and stiff."

"Revenge" would be a fitting title for the book, yet it would not indicate the saving, uplifting power which Maria Fletcher was to Christopher Blake. The development of these two characters should merit lasting fame for the author. The boyhood of Chris in the years following the war was one of ceaseless labor in the tobacco fields under more trying circumstances than any of his father's slaves had formerly known. There were neither schooldays nor holidays to break that period of aching toil. The predominant thought in the boy's mind was to murder Bill

Fletcher, the overseer who had robbed the Blake family of their plantation. But time offered a more satisfactory revenge than murder; Chris succeeded in making Fletcher's grandson a drunkard, who in a moment of passion killed the old man. However, it is a revenge without any feelings of satisfaction, for simultaneously with its progress Christopher Blake has come to love Maria Fletcher, the sister of the boy he ruined. And Miss Glasgow grants to her hero what Edward Bellamy denies to his in the closing chapter of the Duke of Stockbridge - - - the reciprocation of his love under circumstances almost impossible.

The book abounds in bits of philosophy, the most sanguine of which come from the lips of Christopher Blake's elder brother, a veteran of the Civil War who though hopelessly deformed in body reveals the fact that to the extent that his body is misshapen, to the same degree has his soul been developed beautifully. A few examples of his speech are:

If God Almighty ever created a vulgar flower, I have yet to see it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen Glasgow, The Deliverance, p. 32.

The fulness of life does not come from the things outside of us, we ourselves must create the beauty in which we live.<sup>1</sup>

Regret is a dangerous thing, my boy; you let a little one no bigger than a mustard seed into your heart, and before you know it you've hatched out a whole brood.<sup>2</sup>

It is for such philosophy of life that Regis Michaud in his study of The American Novel Today classifies Miss Glasgow among "specialists in 'optimistic realism'."<sup>3</sup>

Like the two novels by Ellen Glasgow, is Thomas Nelson Page's Red Rock (1899), which opens just before the war, yet covers that conflict in about sixty pages, leaving the greater space for the chronicle of the reconstruction. The scene is laid "partly in one of the old Southern States and partly in the land of memory," as the author tells us. The story concerns "carpet-baggers," Ku Klux raids, law suits, and much else besides.

Red Rock is a plantation owned by the Gray family for generations and wrested from them in a sale for taxes. The circumstances are similar to those in The Deliverance. The former overseer, Hiram

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen Glasgow, The Deliverance, p. 434.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 473.

<sup>3</sup>Regis Michaud, The American Novel Today, p. 248, as quoted by A.R. Marble, A Study of the Modern Novel, p. 318.

Still, purchases the plantation. He is the counterpart of Bill Fletcher in Miss Glasgow's story. Both men are coarse, brutal, and unscrupulous; each buys his employer's land with money stolen from him while he was off at war. They are equally anxious to educate their own heirs in order to attain equality of social standing with the "quality" which they have displaced. Hiram Still sees his son Washington Still a practising physician, and he likewise lives to lose his ill-gotten plantation through due process of law.

Ample evidence is furnished of the misplaced sympathy of the Yankee for the freed negroes. Andy Stamper, an impoverished Southerner, speaking of the generosity of Mrs. Welch, a Northern woman, says:

She's gin them niggers the best clo'es you ever see - - coats better then me or you or anyone aroun' heah has seen since the war. What's curious to me is that though she don't seem to like niggers and git along with 'em easy like and natr'l as we all do, in another way she seems to kind o' want to like 'em. It reminds me of takin' physic: she takes 'em with a sort o' gulp, but wants to take 'em and wants to make everbody else do it.<sup>1</sup>

Astounding are the effects of the "ironclad" oath which struck from the rolls of citizenship all

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<sup>1</sup>Thos. N. Page, Red Rock, p. 345.

who could not swear they had never given aid or comfort to the Confederacy. When the new legislature met for the first time after the war, it was a gathering of Carpet-baggers and freed negroes which Hiram Still in his figurative language said resembled "a corn-shuckin'."<sup>1</sup>

As in the novels dealing with the Revolutionary and Post Revolutionary Periods the most usual literary reference was to Malory, so here in the Civil War Period it is to Scott. Page has Miss Blair Cary declare that a visit to Miss Thomasia was like reading one of Scott's novels; that she got back to a land of chivalry and drank at the springs of pure romance.<sup>2</sup> Unlike Scott, however, Page has projected himself into nearly every chapter of the book. He reveals himself here and there in brief comments and deductions. None will fail to understand when he says: "The friend with whom one does not have to make explanation is God-given."<sup>3</sup>

And with Page's Red Rock is concluded the discussion of the works of fiction with American settings produced by the school of historical novelists of the years 1896-1902.

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<sup>1</sup>Thos. N. Page, Red Rock, p.209.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 349.

## CHAPTER THREE

## The Novels Dealing with European History

Of the group of historical novelists considered in this study, there are five who, affected by the "spread of cosmopolitanism in fiction,"<sup>1</sup> interested themselves in European events and characters. Francis Marion Crawford wrote two historical novels on foreign situations, while Mark Twain, Charles Major, Booth Tarkington, and Silas Weir Mitchell each produced one. England, France, Spain, and the Holy Land furnished the settings, while the twelfth and fifteenth centuries each furnished characters for one novel, the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries each for two. Hence the series is distinctly unconnected.

In Via Crucis (1899), Francis Marion Crawford uses scenes of the Second Crusade, and introduces his readers to Europe of the twelfth century. "The historical background is admirable as a piece of verbal painting"<sup>2</sup> and shows the days of careful study which the author habitually put on his novels.

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<sup>1</sup>Fredric T. Cooper, Some American Story Tellers, p.23.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

The actors are transported from England to France, where the greatest man of the age, "Bernard of Clairvaux, moved like a supernal vision of a heavenly dream . . . [and spoke] words which were the truth made light."<sup>1</sup> The response is that vast caravan of men and women bound for the Holy Land. The whole narrative is written with a lightness of movement, for "movement indeed, not plot in the stricter sense, is Crawford's chief excellence."<sup>2</sup>

The historical figure around which centers much of the interest is Eleanor of Guienne, "in whom were all the greatest and least qualities, virtues, and failings of her unborn children - - the Lion Heart of Richard, the heartless selfishness of John, the second Edward's grasping hold, Henry the Third's broad justice and wisdom; the doubt of one, the decision of another, the passions of them all in one."<sup>3</sup>

Eleanor, as yet still of France, because Henry Plantagenet with whom she is to share the English throne is here but a lad of twelve, takes the ladies of the French court on the Crusade.

<sup>1</sup>Via Crucis, p. 92-3.

<sup>2</sup>Cambridge History of American Literature, vol.III, Chap.11, p. 87.

<sup>3</sup>Francis M. Crawford, Via Crucis, p. 154.

Three hundred ladies were to wear mail and to lead the van of battle, the fairest ladies of France and Aquitaine, of Gascony, of Burgundy, and of Provence. . . and each lady had her serving-maid, and her servants, and mules heavy laden with the furniture of beauty, with laces and silks and velvets, jewellery and scented water. . . . It was a little army in itself, recruited of the women, and in which beauty was rank, and rank was power; and in order that the three hundred might ride with Queen Eleanor, . . . a host of some two thousand servants and porters crossed Europe on foot and on horseback from the Rhine to the Bosphorus.<sup>1</sup>

Certain of the scenes are Shakespearean in their sublimity of passion. Gilbert Warde, overwhelmed with the responsibility of guiding that army, of finding food for the men and beasts, of settling dissensions and rivalries, and avoiding enemies, leaves the camp by the green banks of the Maender, where "to the northward rolled away the gentle hills beyond Ephesus. . . . Gilbert's figure [ could have been seen ] walking steadily with bent head, across the plain, away from the river and from the camp, out to the broad solitude beyond."<sup>2</sup>

On another occasion, five hundred Christians, disregarding Gilbert's choice of a path, became

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<sup>1</sup>Francis M. Crawford, Via Crucis, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 300.



trapped in a mountain pass by the Turks. The outcome shows the King of France standing solitary, as Shakespeare placed the Duke of Gloucester in King Henry VI, on the heap of dead.

The Seljuks made room by killing, and climbed upon the slain towards the living . . . . A full hour the Seljuks slew and slew, almost unharmed, and the Christians were dead in thousands under their feet. The King with a hundred followers was at bay by the roots of a huge oak tree, fighting as best he might, and killing a man now and then, though wounded in the face and shoulder, and sorely spent. But he saw that it was a desperate case and that all was lost, and no more of his army were coming up to the rescue, because the narrow pass was choked with dead. So he began to sing the penitential psalms, in time with the swinging of his sword.<sup>1</sup>

The influence of Scott is perhaps nowhere in these novels quite so evident as in this. On the other hand, the differences between Via Crucis and The Talisman, which is a story of the third Crusade, are such that the former cannot be called an imitation of its predecessor, to the extent that Richard Carvel is of The Virginians. The two writers held quite different theories of character drawing. The theory of Mr. Crawford was that "it was a mistake to make a novel too minute a picture of one

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<sup>1</sup>Francis M. Crawford, Via Crucis, p. 346.

generation, lest another should think it 'old-fashioned',<sup>1</sup> whereas Scott tells us in the Introduction to The Talisman that reality, where it exists, is only retained in the characters of the piece.

The second work of Mr. Crawford will be deferred to the place wherein it chronologically falls, the latter half of the sixteenth century. In between, lie the settings of two other novels, the first of which is Mark Twain's Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc (1894). Among all his books, this is the one which Mark Twain liked best, and the one to which he devoted twelve years of study and work. The story professes to be a personal memoir written by Louis de Conte, playmate of Joan's childhood, and companion of her brief career up to her martyrdom. Concerning the reverent treatment of the traditional and the supernatural, Stuart P. Sherman has written:

As in the somewhat similar case of the supernatural powers of Jesus, of which he [Mark Twain] was certainly skeptical, he says nothing to raise a doubt of the Maid's divine assistance; he neither explained nor attempted to explain away Joan's mystery. Her character, her Voices, and her mission he presents throughout with an air of absolute reverence and indeed at times with almost breathless adoration.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cambridge History of American Literature, vol. III  
Chap. 11, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., vol. III, Chap. 8, p. 19.

This statement of Mr. Sherman suggests that Mark Twain has succeeded where at least two English historical novelists of the nineteenth century have not. In the first place, there is nothing in his book which renders Saint Joan of Arc unworthy of the honors of canonization since bestowed upon her. Sir Walter Scott could not draw a saint.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, whereas Mark Twain succeeded in keeping any personal prejudices which he may have had out of his book, Charles Reade fails, miserably to do this in The Cloister and the Hearth.

An historical parallel in Via Crucis and Joan of Arc is the use of the favorite oath of William the Conqueror. Marion Crawford places it on the lips of Beatrix when she learns that Queen Eleanor has determined to win the love of Gilbert Warde, whom Beatrix has loved from childhood.

Men said that in her mother's veins there had run some of the Conqueror's blood, and his great oath sprang to her lips as she answered -- "And by the splendor of God, I tell you that you shall not!"<sup>2</sup>

The calloused old veteran of many battles, he on whom Joan performed the incredible when she in -

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<sup>1</sup>Brother Leo, English Literature, p. 433.

<sup>2</sup>Francis M. Crawford, Via Crucis, p. 261.

duced him to pray, La Hire, says, "Joan of Arc is to the fore, and, by the splendor of God, its fate is sealed."<sup>1</sup> A similar expression is used by De Metz when Joan recognizes the Dauphin in disguise, "By the shadow of God, it is an amazing thing."<sup>2</sup>

Owing to the diligent research made through all the available evidence - and the complete record exists in sworn and attested statements - Mark Twain was able to crowd his book with dramatic scenes, such as the preparations for the coronation, the Council of War, the Great Trial, and the martyrdom.

And yet, deeply sincere and reverent as his mood was in the writing of his "Joan of Arc," even here the habit of professional buffooning betrayed Mark Twain. He almost spoiled the book, his masterpiece, by one unfortunate passage. With moving power he described the scene in which Joan teaches La Hire, the scoffing warrior, to pray. That is beautiful. But in the end Mark Twain made Joan turn and laugh at the heart-touched believing man. There are such things as "purple spots" in writing; and there are bad black spots. This is one of the bad black spots, this unfortunate prayer scene in Mark Twain's "Joan of Arc."<sup>3</sup>

Nearly a century of time elapses between the

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<sup>1</sup>Samuel L. Clemens, Joan of Arc, Volume I, p. 297.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Volume I, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup>Ave Maria, XXXIII, p. 804.

death of the Maid of Orleans and the scenes of the next novel in the group, Charles Major's When Knighthood was in Flower (1898), set in the reign of King Henry VIII. Like some other of the novels produced by this school of historical romancers, this book purports to be "rewritten and rendered into modern English" from accounts of the time written by a contemporary - - this one from the memoirs of "Sir Edwin Caskoden, Master of the Dance under Henry VIII, by Edwin Caskoden (Charles Major)". As history, the book, which purports to be the love story of Charles Brandon and Mary Tudor, the King's sister, is not on the whole convincing. The portrait of Henry VIII is quite faithful, as also is that of Louis, the French monarch. Little is seen of Queen Catherine of Aragon, but she is always shown in an unfavorable light, without the sympathy of the King, of Mary, or of the author. Only slight bits of evidence, mere straws showing which way the wind blows, are given of Henry's future conduct in regard to his wives. Wolsey appears in many scenes.

The book is quite wanting in praiseworthy qualities. Mary is selfish and wilful to the highest degree; her chastity is emphasized too many times. There is not a single thing about the story which

is inspirational or ennobling, although the character of Charles Brandon could have been made so. The few attempts to give the book a religious coloring are largely irreligious, and irreverent, and sometimes seemingly insincere. In truth, the want of sincerity which characterizes the moral standards causes one to wonder whether the book presents ideals of womanhood or just the artificialities of the court life of the time.

How delightful to pass from this novel to one from the pen of Marion Crawford, "the novelist who recognizes that his chief study is to entertain, and who deliberately purposes to leave out of his books all characters whom his readers would not like to resemble and all scenes in which his readers would not care to play a part; . . . [ the man who ] believes that more good can be done by showing men what they may be, ought to be, or can be than by describing their greatest weaknesses with the highest art."<sup>1</sup> Frederic Taber Cooper does not hesitate to say that few novelists of that day have had a more salutary effect in fostering a taste for what is clean and pure and high-minded in literature and life.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fredric T. Cooper, Some American Story Tellers, p.5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

In the Palace of the King (1900) by Francis Marion Crawford is concentrated on the events of a single night in old Madrid during the reign of Philip II. The story takes place about fifty years after the events pictured in When Knighthood Was in Flower. It would be difficult, however, to imagine Don John, as Crawford portrays him, willingly entering a union with the niece of the English Mary.

Don John of Austria, the son of the great dead Emperor Charles V, the uncle of the dead Don Carlos and the half brother of King Philip of Spain -- the man who won glory by land and sea, who won back Granada a second time from the Moors, as bravely as his grandfather Ferdinand had won it, but less cruelly, who won Lepanto, his brother's hatred and a death by poison, the foulest stain in Spanish history [is destined by King Philip to marry Mary Queen of Scots.]<sup>1</sup>

Instead he loves and marries Maria Dolores de Mendoza, daughter of the commander of the palace guards.

Mr. Crawford's "real strength lies not in his mastery of technique or his originality of plot, but in his ability to picture for us honest gentlemen and noble women. . . . If there is room for

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<sup>1</sup>In the Palace of the King, p. 101.

choice, his men are better than his women, more finely drawn, with subtler understanding."<sup>1</sup> Inez, the blind sister of Dolores, is a beautiful character, in whom blindness is rather an addition to her natural gifts than any impediment. The Princess of Eboli is the clever unscrupulous woman of the story, the "power behind the throne." Crawford creates one like her for each of his novels. But Mendoza, the old commander of the place guards, is the supreme achievement of the book. He is presented as the stern unyielding father of two motherless daughters, with a heart seemingly as grizzled as himself. And then with what skill his heart is revealed, a true father's heart!

"In dimensions [ the book resembles A Cigarette Maker's Romance ]; it is a rather long novelette; in structure it obeys the rules of the short story rather than those of the novel. It contains no superfluous character or incident, and its time of action is confined"<sup>2</sup> to one afternoon and the ensuing night. It seems worth while, even at the risk of repeating what is already familiar to many read-

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<sup>1</sup>Fredric T. Cooper, Some American Story Tellers, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 19.



ers, to give a brief résumé of the story. Don John returns in triumph from his conquest of the Moors. During the procession, Dolores and Inez are seen at an upper window, whence the former signals to the Prince, arousing her father's shame and anger, because he considers his daughters' chastity as a most priceless possession, and he knows the King will never permit his brother to marry the daughter of the commander of the palace guards. Dolores he imprisons in the apartment with the declaration that she is to be sent to the convent of Las Huelgas the next day. Disguised as the blind Inez, she escapes and meets Don John, who conceals her in his rooms. The King comes there, the brothers quarrel, and during a struggle the younger falls lifeless. Mendoza, whose faith held three articles - God, the king, Spain - enters at this moment, and at once offers to assume the guilt of the murder. Dolores behind the locked door does not know the whole truth surrounding her father's reckless generosity. Later, feeling that she is the cause of the deed, she declares him innocent, and, to strengthen the weight of her testimony, says that she has secretly been with Don John many times. On the way to his cell, Mendoza meets

his daughter, and each believes the other guilty of the sin so recently confessed. The father cannot bear to die a murderer in the eyes of his child; so he whispers to her of his innocence. Neither can the daughter permit him to die thinking she has violated that most precious of virtues, and she tells him that her confession was a fabrication made to save him. They part with lighter hearts, the one now reconciled to die, the other determined to save him. Dolores sees the King alone and forces him to admit his guilt and to issue a pardon for her father. Meantime Inez finds the deserted body of her dead friend, who, as she kisses him, returns to consciousness. His wound is slight; he had been stunned when the back of his <sup>head</sup> struck the marble floor. Having delivered the pardon, Dolores returns with the jester Antonio to find her lover risen from the dead. Antonio is despatched for the sleeping chaplain, and Don John and Dolores are married in the presence of Inez and the jester.

The two following centuries pass unnoticed by our novelists; next we come to Monsieur Beaucaire (1829), a delightful picture of the reign of "the King of Bath," drawn for us by Booth Tarkington. The shortest of the novels included in this study,

it is "a not undistinguished contribution to the lively but passing vogue of the historical novel."<sup>1</sup> Since its first publication, the book has been produced on the stage and on the screen. James Whitcomb Riley however, did not approve of it and wrote in his copy, "This is like Goldsmith."<sup>2</sup>

Monsieur Beaucaire is a mysterious young Frenchman whose identity is concealed till the end. He comes to England as the valet of the French ambassador. Later owing to advantages gained in cards over the Duke of Winterset, he forces the latter to introduce him into the upper social circles at Bath as the Duke of Chateaurien ( Castle-Nowhere). Rumors that he is Victor the barber, and Beaucaire the gambler, cause the beauty of Bath, Lady Mary Carlisle, to be coldly disdainful. The climax comes when his brother Henri arrives from France, recognizes him, and Beaucaire or Chateaurien is introduced as Prince Louis-Philippe, cousin to Louis XV, King of France.

The charm pervading the book comes largely from the eighteenth century atmosphere which has been so delicately caught. As Fredric Taber Cooper says,

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<sup>1</sup>John M. Manly and Edith Rickert, Contemporary American Literature, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Living Authors, p. 399.

"Something of its fragile charm must inevitably brush off at the first careless touch like the golden pollen on a butterfly's wings."<sup>1</sup>

The characters seem to be living and breathing. The reader is enabled to perceive the slightest feeling which passes over the face of Lady Mary Carlisle when, on that moonlight drive, the Duke of Chateaurien speaks of his love, when she gives the order to drive away from him, and when, two weeks later, his incognito laid aside and her bitter mistake forgiven, she slowly walks alone past him into the ballroom in the moment of her defeat. The bitterness arises from the fact that in the same breath with which he grants her forgiveness, the young Frenchman announces his intention to return to the bride whom his royal brother had selected, the one woman in the whole world "who would not have treated me the way that you treat me."

From the carefree members of the Court of Louis XV as shown in Monsieur Beaucaire, we turn in the next novel to Paris of the days of the French Revolution. The Adventures of François (1897) is Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell's own favorite among his books. The story centers around François, who, as the subtitle tells us, was by turns a foundling, thief, juggler, and

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<sup>1</sup> Some American Story Tellers, p. 204.

fencing master during the French Revolution. He is not a creature of fiction, but a real personage, and Dr. Mitchell's pages tell a story based upon genuine historical information. The book is of special interest and value for its picture of the lower life of Paris during the period known as that of the Reign of Terror. Upon its appearance it was almost as popular as Hugh Wynne. Doubtless the writer was affected by English influences, chiefly Charles Dickens. The Adventures of François is a story of action and character, of grimness, but it contains more of the comic element than is to be found in the English novel. The duel scene in the rooms of the fencing master might be a chapter from the Tale of Two Cities.

In the following prison scene is revealed the wisdom of the physician who had studied mental processes minutely:

François was alone and with leisure to consider the situation. "Attention, Toto!" he said. This putting of thought into an outspoken soliloquy with the judicial silence of the poodle to aid him, was probably a real assistance; for to think aloud formulates conditions and conclusions in a way useful to one untrained to reason. To read one's own mind, and to hear one's own mind, are very different things.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Silas W. Mitchell, Adventures of François, p. 189.

Dr. Mitchell's keenness of perception, gained doubtless from the years in which he diagnosed physical ills, enabled him to sketch characters in brief but striking phrases such as the following:

That was the gentleman with the emigrative mouth.<sup>1</sup>

But the man of the wart is the worst.<sup>2</sup>

You are a marked man. No cabbage of the field is more sure of the knife.<sup>3</sup>

. . . no cause for this long-visaged flap-ear so to mock the justice of the re-public.<sup>4</sup>

. . . the long face, and ears like sails, and the captivating laugh of the former reader of palm . . . [ François ]<sup>5</sup>

The history of Europe as revealed in this chapter is sketchy and incomplete, as is to be expected in view of the fact that there are just six novels to span six centuries of time. It is worthy of note, nevertheless, that most of the characters used by our American novelists are characters which likewise have found a place in the literature of the world. Most popular of them all is perhaps Joan of Arc. "For five hundred years Joan's story

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<sup>1</sup>Silas W. Mitchell, Adventures of François, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 223.

has been an inspiration to the poets and writers of the world. It would be difficult to find a literature in any country which has not produced its quota of poems, dramas, novels and histories dealing with Joan of Arc. . . . One of the best narratives based on the record of her life is Mark Twain's *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc.*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ave Maria XXXIII, p. 803.

## Chapter Four

### Conclusion

In August, 1900, Maurice Thompson wrote concerning the historical romance, "The wave is rising and will roll through its course, obeying an irresistible impulse of life."<sup>1</sup> Through the preceding chapters, this wave has been followed until it broke and disappeared before the oncoming tide of naturalism. Particularly striking was the large masculine power<sup>2</sup> exhibited by the romancers.

A contemporary novelist who held himself aloof from the movement, William Dean Howells, said in 1901: "the new historical romances are untrue to the past" -- because they set forth "duels and battles as the great and prevalent human events" and do it so well that "you almost expect the blood to drip from the printed page."<sup>3</sup> He speaks of the hero as "a ruthless homicide," and of "the pert and foolish doll that passes for the heroine."<sup>3</sup> He considered Mark Twain however, "a true historical novelist because he represents humanity as we know it is."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Independent LII, p. 1921.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 1919.

<sup>3</sup> Current Literature XXX, p. 213.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 214.



Unfortunately, Mr. Howells seems to have failed to see beyond "the bloody scenes in the romances which . . . [ he ] refrained from distinguishing by name."<sup>1</sup>

The views of another critic of the historical novel, Brander Matthews, are:

[ that ] the really trustworthy historical novels are those which were a-writing while the history was a-making. . . . One of the foremost merits of the novel . . . is that it enlarges our sympathy. . . . It forces us to see not only how the other half lives, but also how it feels and how it thinks. We learn not merely what the author meant to teach us: we absorb, in addition, a host of things he did not know he was putting in -- things he took for granted, . . . and things he implied as a matter of course. . . . If we examine carefully the best of the stories usually classed under historical fiction we shall find those to be the most satisfactory in which the history is of the least importance, in which it is present only as a background.<sup>2</sup>

The men and women who felt the urge to write historical novels at the juncture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have left us "an American version of the movement led in England by Robert Louis Stevenson, Rider Haggard, Conan Doyle, and Anthony Hope; . . . [ many of their ] tales were courtly, high-sounding, decorative, and poetical. But their enormous popularity -- some of them sold

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<sup>1</sup>Current Literature XXX, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup>Brander Matthews, The Historical Novel. pp. 19-20.

half a million copies in the two or three years of their brief heyday -- points to some native condition. In the history of the American imagination, they must be thought of as marking that moment at which, in the excitement which accompanied the Spanish War, the nation suddenly rediscovered a longer and more picturesque past than it had been popularly aware of since the Civil War."<sup>1</sup>

Incidentally something of this same patriotic interest in our national past recurred in the next generation, when, in the years following the World War, many of the historical novels written between 1896-1902 were filmed and the screen productions shown to far greater numbers than had ever read the books. The Conqueror was filmed three times; In the Palace of the King, The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, and To Have and to Hold each twice; and Cardigan, The Crisis, Janice Meredith, The Heart's Highway, The Deliverance, Audrey, The Cavalier, When Knighthood Was in Flower and Monsieur Beaucaire each once. Most of the screen productions were accorded a good measure of success.

Many of the writers who contributed to this

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<sup>1</sup>Cambridge History of American Literature, vol.III,  
Chap.11, p. 91.

movement are better known today for other works than for their historical novels. In a few cases at least, the works included in this study are the least known among the writers' works, as is particularly true of The Heart's Highway by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. The movement ceased, as do fashions in other things, almost as abruptly as it had begun. Summarizing an account of this school of historical novelists which flourished in America between the years 1896 and 1902, Carl Van Doren says:

The episode was brief, and most of the books now seem gilt where some of them once looked like gold, but it was a vivid moment in the national consciousness, and if it founded no new legends it deepened old ones.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cambridge History of American Literature, vol. III,  
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