The Novels of Ann Radcliffe as Phenomena of the Romantic Movement

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THE NOVELS OF ANN RADCLIFFE AS PHENOMENA OF THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

English literature, even during the Classical Period, began to show a general reaction against the prevailing literary forms and the spirit of the eighteenth century, due in part to the great religious and political controversies of the preceding century. Not a small share of this reaction was evident in the Romantic Movement, which developed almost simultaneously in England and on the continent. It is with a phase of the above mentioned movement that this thesis deals, the development of the romantic novel, in the hands of Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, during the last decade of the century. It will be the purpose to determine romantic traits as exhibited in her writings and to trace Mrs. Radcliffe's influence in the further development of Romanticism.
THE SOURCES OF MRS. RADCLIFFE'S ROMANTICISM.

The unity of life and the verity of its laws are as unquestionable in the field of literature as in the world of birds and trees and flowers. The botanist does not analyze a blossom, nor study only the leaves and stem of a flower, but he examines, also, the root and seed which produced such a flower, and the soil which nourished it. Of little value would be our conclusions as to the importance of the influence of "The Mysteries of Udolpho" were we to ignore, altogether, the author, the status of the form in which she wrote, and the time at which her novels appeared.

Little is known of the life of Mrs. Radcliffe, and even less is found to indicate the source of her romantic predilections. Of her taste in this line we have from her scanty biography but one evidence, namely, her love for natural scenery. As to the value of this trait we may accept Professor McClintock's statement that the "presence of a creative romantic movement is almost always shown by the love, study and interpretation of physical nature". It is suggested that romanticism had its root in the desire to "escape into the fresh air and into freer conditions, from a literature which dealt, in a strictly regulated way with the indoor life of a highly artificial society". That this love for the wild and rugged outdoor scenes is absent from the classicists is unmistakably expressed in one of Addison's letters, early in the century, in which he writes of his very troublesome journey over the Alps: "My head is still giddy with mountains and precipices;"

and you can't imagine how much I am pleased with the sight of a plain that is as agreeable to me at present as a shore was a year ago after our tempest at Genoa". Gray voices his appreciation of the same mountains in a vastly different tone when he writes from Geneva: "The road runs over a mountain, which gives you the first taste of the Alps, in its magnificent rudeness, and steep precipices....You here meet with all the beauties so savage and horrid a place can present you with. Rocks of various and uncouth figures, cascades pouring down from an immense height out of hanging groves of Pine Trees, and the solemn sound of the stream that roars below, all concur to form one of the most poetical scenes imaginable".

Radcliffe's propensities are most clearly shown in "A Journey made in the Summer of 1794, through Holland and the western Frontier of Germany, with a Return down the Rhine: to which are added Observations during a Tour to the Lakes of Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland". The author observes in the preface that her journey was performed in the company of her nearest relative and friend, (Mr. Radcliffe), and that in her journal, where the economical and political conditions of countries are touched upon, the remarks are less her own than elsewhere, - so that for our purpose we may take for granted that the passages referring to nature are entirely original with her. From this account one is able to learn directly little of Radcliffe's proclivities, because she is so engrossed with the wonder and beauty of the varying scenes about her that she can do scarcely more than...

point out one object of interest after another. Her husband's conversation seems to have furnished many facts about countries and customs, and to have given a historical background to an occasional ruin.¹

While there are many passages which show her romantic temperament, there is also an occasional paragraph which reminds us that the author of "The Mysteries of Udolpho" is a woman just as we all are, and had she lived in the twentieth century, might have expressed herself in the easy, conversational style of the "Country Contributor". "In our way from the boat to the inn, other fine canals opened upon us on each side, and we looked at them till we had lost the man, whom we should have followed with our baggage. We had no fear that it would be stolen, knowing the infrequency of robberies in Holland; and the first person, of whom we could inquire our way in broken Dutch, acknowledged his country people by answering in very good English".²

The simple description of the town of Schevening³ discloses a picturesque, tidy village of fisher folk, but does not exhibit the pleasure of the writer, as does the sunset on the Rhine. "... the various colouring of a scene more rich than extensive rendered its effect highly interesting. The wide wood on our left, reflecting the evening blush, on a vessel whose full sails caught a yellow gleam from the west, the ramparts and pointed roofs of Nimeguen rising over each other, just tinted by the vapour that

¹ "Journey through Holland" p. 185
² a. One of the very few faint suggestions of humor to be found in all of Radcliffe's works. ² b. Ibid, p. 11
³ Ibid, p. 46
ascended from the bay below; the faint and fainter blue of two ridges of hills in Germany retiring in the distance, with the mellow green of nearer woods and meadows, formed a combination of hues surprisingly gay and beautiful." The account of the mountain scene from the tower of the convent of Sanctae Crucis may almost be said to resemble Rousseau's view of the Rhone. "All the scattered scenes, whose beauty, or sublimity, collected into one vast landscape, and exhibited almost to a single glance.

The point, on which the convent stands, commands the whole horizon. To the north, spread the wide plains, before seen, covered with corn, then just embrowned, and with vines and gardens, whose alternate colours formed a gay checker work with villages, convents and castles. The grandeur of this level was unbroken by any inclosures, that could seem to diminish its vastness. The range of woody heights that bound it on the west, extend to the southward, many leagues beyond the hill Sanctae Crucis; but the uniform and unbroken ridges of distant mountains, on the east, cease before the Seven Mountains rise above the Rhine in all their awful majesty. The bases of the latter were yet concealed by the woody ridge near the convent which gives such enchanting effect to their aerial points. The sky above them was clear and glowing, unstained by the highest vapour; and these mountains still appeared upon it, like unsubstantial visions. On the two highest pinnacles we could just distinguish the ruins of castles....

Very seldom does Mrs. Radcliffe give vent to her desire

1. "Journey through Holland". p. 80
2. Vide supra. p. 17
3. "Journey through Holland". p. 127
to meditate and rhapsodize on the beautiful while in the company of her husband. The return to England is such an occasion, when the author filled with the visions of new scenes, remarks in crossing the Channel, "The vast expanse of water, the character of the cliffs, that guard the coast, the ships of war and various merchant men moored in the Downs, the lighter vessels skimming along the Channel, and the now distant shore of France, with Calais glimmering faintly, and hinting of different modes of life and a new world, all these circumstances formed a scene of preeminent combination, and led to interesting reflection."¹

Judging from the towns named, the Radcliffes, on landing in England, must have immediately directed their path to the Lake District. Here among the hills which had nurtured Wordsworth, and which were to figure yet further in the history of this movement, Ann Radcliffe revelled in the scenes of Westmoreland. The route "over Shapfell, the King of the Westmoreland Mountains,......is the most interesting for simple sublimity, leading through the heart of the wildest tracts and opening to such vast highland scenery as even Derbyshire cannot show. ......The road now lay through shady lanes and over undulating, but gradually ascending ground, from whence were pleasant views of the valley, with now and then a break in the hills, on the left, opening to a glimpse of the distant fells toward Windermere, gray and of more pointed form than any we had yet seen; for hitherto the mountains, though of huge outline, were not so broken, or Alpine in their summits as to strike the fancy with surprise." ....Soon after reaching the summit of the mountain itself:

¹ "Journey through Holland". p.369
"A vale appeared below, a deep retired abode, and we looked down on the left into Long Sleddale, a little scene of exquisite beauty, surrounded with images of greatness. A stream, rolling in its rocky channel, and crossing the road under a rude bridge, was all that broke the solitary silence, or gave animation to the view, except the flocks, that hung upon the precipices, and which, at that height, were scarcely distinguished from the grey round stones, thickly starting out from the heathy steeps. The Highlands of Scotland could scarcely have offered to Ossian more images of simple greatness, or more circumstances for melancholy inspiration. Dark glens and fells, the mossy stone, the lonely blast, descending upon the valley, the roar of distant torrents everywhere occurred; and to the band the "Song of Spirits" would have swelled with these sounds, and their fleeting forms have appeared in the clouds that frequently floated along the mountain tops."  

The hills, the valleys, and the streams of England, which she must have loved and appreciated long before she ever recorded her feelings toward them, are the greatest source of Mrs. Radcliffe's romanticism; why they appealed to her so much more keenly, and awakened in her so many more fancies, than they did in other novelists of her day, can only be answered by the enigma "she was romantic in soul".

Fortunately for the student Mrs. Radcliffe had a habit of prefacing the chapters of her novels with quotations from her favorite poems. "The Romance of the Forest", "The Mysteries of

Udolpho" and "The Italian" furnish over a hundred such passages, which serve as a catalog to the authors on her book shelf; these scraps of verse are of value, further, in that they give a clue to her literary taste and to her temperament.

Mrs. Radcliffe was no less a student of Shakespeare than was her predecessor Horace Walpole: more than a third of the hundred and fifteen quotations are taken from his plays, nine being chosen from "Macbeth", while the others show an acquaintance with "Julius Caesar", "King John", "Richard the Third", "King Lear", "Hamlet", "Twelfth Night", "Romeo and Juliet", "As You Like It" and "Midsummer Night's Dream". As these dramas represent comedy, tragedy and history, it seems to be the passages selected that are significant rather than the class of plays from which they are taken. These quotations tend to show that in her reading it was the beautiful in nature, and the mysterious and awful in life which she retained most vividly in her mind. Among the remaining authors Thomson's name occurs most frequently, and in order, Collins, Beattie, Milton, Walpole, Gray, Mason, Cawthorne, and Warton, with a single quotation each from Seward, Young, Rogers, Goldsmith and Alexander Pope.

These quotations are, almost without exception, romantic in sentiment, and group themselves under such heads as, mystery, love of nature, virtue and religion: there is apparent delight in the supernatural, in fear and terror, in suspense and the foreboding ill-omen.

1. Introduction to "Castle of Otranto".
The lines from Julius Caesar suggest that which is beyond the realm of reason,

"When these prodigies do not conjointly meet, let not men say,
These are their reasons; they are natural,
For I believe they are portentuous things".¹

and again,

"I think it is the weakness of mine eyes,
That shapes this monstrous apparition,
It comes upon me".

From Collins' "Ode to Fear".

"Oh Fear! Oh Fear!
I see, I see thee near!
I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye;
Like thee, I start, like thee disordered fly".²

Shakespeare furnishes many lines conveying the idea of terror.

"Hence, horrible shadow!
unreal mockery, hence "³

and again,

"Now is the time of night,
That, the graves all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his spirits,
In the church-way path to glide".⁴

Suspense is repeatedly suggested in such lines as,

"While anxious doubt distracts the tortured heart".\(^1\)

The foreboding ill-omen often occurs.

"Along the roof sounds the low peal of Death,
And conscience trembles to the boding note;
She views his dim form floating o'er the aisles,
She hears mysterious murmurs in the air,
And voices, strange and potent, hint the crime
That dwells in thought within her secret soul".\(^2\)

Beattie pictures a hero of the early romantic type, one who loved the unusual in nature.

"A strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle and each dreadful scene;
In darkness and in storm he found delight,
Nor less than when on ocean wave serene
The Southern sun diffused his dazzling sheen,
Even sad vicissitudes amused his soul;
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wished not to control".\(^3\)

Her love of the unusual in nature is again exemplified in Mrs. Radcliffe's single quotation from the most strict of the pseudo-classicists, curiously the lines are from Pope's "Translation of Homer", and describe the ocean during a storm,

"As when a wave, that from a cloud impends,
And, swelled with tempests, or the ship descends;

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2. Ibid., p. 607.
3. Ibid., p. 183.
White are the decks with foam; the winds, aloud,
Howl, o'er the masts, and sing through every shroud.\(^1\)

Lines from Mason's "Caractacus" illustrate Mrs. Radcliffe's religious tendencies and at the same time show a delight in solitude and moonlight.

\[\text{Is it not now the hour,}\]
\[\text{The holy hour, when, to the cloudless height,}\]
\[\text{Of you, starred concave, climbs the full-orb'd moon,}\]
\[\text{And to this nether world in solemn stillness,}\]
\[\text{Religion's voice should plead? The very babe}\]
\[\text{knows this, and, 'chance awak'd his little hands}\]
\[\text{Lifts to the Gods, and on his innocent couch}\]
\[\text{Calls down a blessing}.\(^2\)

She believes in the vindication of right.

\[\text{"But in these cases}\]
\[\text{We shall still have judgement here; that we but teach}\]
\[\text{Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return}\]
\[\text{To plague the inventor; thus even-handed Justice}\]
\[\text{Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice}\]
\[\text{To our own lips}.\(^3\)

From these hints, few though they be, it is clear that Mrs. Radcliffe exhibited in her choice of verse a preference for those poets who tended toward romanticism, and that from their writings she selected some of the most romantic passages.

It will be well before attempting to criticize Mrs. Radcliffe's tales to glance at the novel, which during the decades

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2. Ibid. p. 345.
3. Ibid. p. 519.
preceding her period, underwent some very marked changes in the matter of plot, character and setting.

One need not turn to Richardson's "Pamela; or Virtue Rewarded", with the expectation of finding a romantic novel full grown, nor indeed, of finding a romantic novel at all, but rather in search of the slightest trace of a breaking away from "Robinson Crusoe" and "Gulliver's Travels", stories lacking in human interest. There occur in the editor's preface to "Pamela" certain words which compel attention, not because of their value here, so much as on account of their significance in the romantic tendency: - he states that the purpose of the book is "to set virtue in its own amiable light, to make it truly lovely," and "to strongly interest the reader in the edifying story embellished with a great variety of interesting incidents", .....incidents which "have their foundation in truth and nature". The plot of "Pamela", if the device of portraying the characters by means of a series of letters can be called a plot, fails to entertain us with its dry rehearsal of uninteresting incidents. The author does not avail himself of the opportunity of using English landscape as the setting for his story of English country folk, and in this he follows the example of Addison. He selects his characters from among the middle and lower classes, and shows us that men and women, from whatever rank, are human beings, who think, feel, laugh and weep as we do,(it is true that in "Pamela" they seem to feel and weep mostly). So great is the relief, on her escape from the self-contained, proper lady whom Lord Chesterfield portrays, that Pamela sheds rivers of tears and on the slightest

provocation falls fainting. While Richardson's girl may be called sentimental rather than romantic, she has at least broken away from the old type and is in a tangible form ready to be moulded into a romantic heroine by succeeding writers. The desire to exalt virtue is a characteristic which he shares with the authors of the romantic novel. Richardson may be said to exhibit a romantic tendency in that he praises virtue, shows an interest in the lower classes and breaks away from the cold-hearted formal type of character admired by the classicist.

Horace Walpole, who next introduced a romantic element into the novel, deserves the title of "inventor of the romantic novel". How consciously and hesitantly he undertook this task is shown in the preface to his novel, "The Castle of Otranto", (published in 1764, the year of Mrs. Radcliffe's birth) was, perhaps the first modern work of fiction which depended for its interest on the incidents of a chivalrous age,...the feudal tyrant, the venerable ecclesiastic, the forlorn but virtuous damsel, the castle itself with its solemn corridors are all devices which, here introduced for the first time, constantly recur in the succeeding novels. As with Shakespeare, to whom Walpole referred as his model, the story begins in the midst of the action, and immediately tells of the Prince's dread of seeing accomplished an ancient prophecy, "that the castle and lordship of Otranto should pass from the present family whenever the real owner should be grown too large to inhabit it". This mystery leads to the introduction of the supernatural, which is used merely as a mechanical device to assist in the effort to reproduce the spirit of medievalism.

and in no sense, as plausible; there occur, also, certain mysterious incidents which are later explained. There is nothing in the way of artistic setting save as the ancient castle lends its charms, nature is scarcely referred to except when a clap of thunder or a storm is added to increase the terror and awfulness of some gloomy scene. Walpole has lost nothing in the character as invented by Richardson, he has infused the spirit of medievalism into his setting, and has employed the supernatural in working out his plot.

"The Champion of Virtue", a Gothic Story", later changed to "The Old English Baron", was written by Clara Reeve in 1776. She herself, informed us that this novel is the "literary offspring" of the "Castle of Otranto", and, further, she has pointed out the different and more limited view which she has adopted, of the supernatural machinery employed by Horace Walpole, whom she condemns for the extravagance of several of his conceptions. A ghost, she contends, "to be admitted as an ingredient in romance must behave himself like ghosts of sober demeanor, and subject himself to the common rules still preserved in grange and hall as circumscribing beings of his description". Miss Reeve makes use of a medium-sized ghost, a ghost none the less, she employs the stock characters found in Walpole, she takes as a foundation an enlargement of the plot found in the pattern novel. Throughout the book, the absence of a regard for nature is evident.

A new and valuable influence on the novel came in 1760 with the appearance of "The Poems of Ossian", Our interest lies not in the plot of these fragments, for they have a mere thread of a
story, but in the descriptions of the scenery of the Western Highlands of Scotland. Previous to Mrs. Radcliffe there is not to be found in English fiction, outside of Ossian, such rhapsodies on nature as "Hast thou left thy blue course in heaven, golden-haired son of the sky! The west has opened its gates; the bed of thy repose is there, the waves come to behold thy beauty. They lift their trembling heads. They see thee lovely in thy sleep; they shrink away with fear. Rest in thy shadowy cave, 0 sun! let thy return be in joy."

"A narrow plain spreads beneath, covered with grass and ancient trees, which the midnight winds in their wrath, had torn from the shaggy rock. The course of a stream is there! the lonely blast of ocean pursues the thistle's beard." The descriptions of scenery throughout Radcliffe show the influence of this Scottish epic, and in one instance a distinct reference is made to Ossian. The similarity of nature in these two authors is not to be mistaken for likeness in mode of expression, for the strong and broken style of Ossian cannot be detected in the flimsy, weak, affected tone of the novelist. In love of the out-of-doors they are one, and in the vagueness and unreality of the natural phenomena which they portray these authors again resemble each other.

"Pleasant is thy voice in Ossian's ear, daughter of carbone Scroglan! But retire to the hall of shells; to the beam of the burning oak. Attend to the murmur of the sea; it rolls at Dunsciah's walls; let sleep descend on thy blue eyes, and the hero come to thy dreams.

2. Ibid., p. 380.
"Auchullin sits at Lego's lake, at the dark rolling of waters. Night is around the hero;...Carril strikes the harp, beneath a tree; his gray locks glitter in the beam; the rustling blast of night is near, and lights his aged hair". 1 In Radcliffe we find pictures of the same scenes, and enjoyment of the same emotions, solitude by the rolling waves. "One evening she took her lute to a favorite spot on the sea-shore, and resigning herself to a pleasing sadness, touched some sweet and plaintive airs. The purple flush of evening was diffused over the heavens. The sun, involved in clouds of splendid and innumerable hues, was setting o'er the distant waters, whose clear bosom glowed with rich reflection. The beauty of the scene, the soothing murmurs of the high trees, waved by the light air which overshadowed her, and the soft shelling of the waves that flowed gently in upon the shores, insensibly sunk her mind into a state of repose. She touched the chords of her lute in sweet and wild melody,...". 2

Simultaneously with the development of these new traits in the English novel, a like change took place across the channel which reacted on English fiction; here one can trace the influence of Richardson's works, especially his "Clarissa Harlowe", a book in plan and in theme, similar to "Pamela". In 1773 appeared Rousseau's "La Nouvelle Heloise" in which the problem of marriage between classes is discussed. Eloise, the heroine, consents to marry the suitor chosen by her father, thus following social con-

vention instead of the dictates of her own heart. She writes letters of consolation to her forlorn lover, constantly advising him to be more reasonable in his passion for her and to concentrate his mind on and to pursue his moral studies. Rousseau endeavors to show the eversaving power of religion in times of need, and by introducing Eloise's death-bed scene, he succeeds in winning her husband from atheism. The novel resembles Richardson's in many ways, - the central figure is a girl sought in marriage against her will, letters serve to tell the story of the unsmooth path of true love, and of virtue. The feature in which Rousseau is most original and for which "La Nouvelle Heloise" is most valuable in this study, is his treatment of nature. Richardson's conception of nature was the human life. Rousseau furnished this picture of human life with a back-ground of natural scenery. It is noticeable that throughout the first two volumes there does not occur a single description of nature; they are found only in the third volume where Swiss lakes and the Alps serve as a back-ground to the happy scenes in the life of the virtuous Eloise. He shows us the quiet pastoral landscape, the softly flowing river, the clear blue sky, the morning song of birds; but his soul is none the less deeply moved by the stupenduous grandeur of the mountains, the solitude of Alpine passes, the deafening crash of mighty torrents, the awe-inspiring spectacle of a world of ice and snow. "La j'expliquais à Julie toutes les parties du superbe horizon qui nous entourait. Je lui montrais de l'in des embouchures du Rhône, dont l'impe'tureux cours s'arrête tout-à-coup au bout d'un quart de lieue, et semble craindre de souiller de ses eaux bourbeuses le cristal azuré du lac. Je lui
faies observer les redans des montagnes, dont les angles correspondants et parallèles forment dans l'espace qui les sépare un lit digne du fleuve qui remplit. En l'écartant de nos côtes jamais à lui faire admirer les riches et charmantes rives du pays de Gaul, où quantité des villes, l'innombrable foule du peuple, les coteaux verdoyants et parés de toutes partes, forment un tableau revisant.  

The significant thing in Rousseau's work is that the nature element entered in almost twenty years before it appeared in the English novel.

We have found that during the latter part of the eighteenth century, there was evident a breaking away from Augustan ideals of life, and the manifestation of emotion and sentiment, in the characters in fiction; from the dull recital of uninteresting incidents, there is a tendency to enliven the story by introducing characteristics of the middle ages, and by the use of the supernatural; from a total ignorance of the presence of nature, there appeared in the Scotch contribution, and in the French, a passion for the country and the elements.

The question naturally arises at this point as to the relation of the brief review of these novels and facts to the romanticism of Radcliffe. The second chapter will attempt to show the various ways in which Radcliffe was romantic, and to prove that she possessed romantic qualities at all. Hence we have endeavored here to trace the possible sources of that romanticism. Aside from the works cited, fiction in the eighteenth century was barren of such. Radcliffe was without a doubt acquainted with the gentle

1. "La Nouvelle Heloise" Partie IV. Lettre XVI.
maidens of Richardson, with the terrible mysteries and the supernatural of Walpole, with the disinherited heir of Clara Reeve, she may possibly have read the nature descriptions of Rousseau, it is certain that she enjoyed the rhapsodies of Ossian; — it remains for us to learn what she was able to add to this scanty inheritance, and to estimate the value of her contributions.
CHAPTER II.

THE PLOT OF THE NOVELS OF RADCLIFFE.

That there was in the eighteenth century a turning away from the ideals of the age of Pope and Addison to a literature of sentiment, of sympathy with man and nature, and that this movement was clearly marked in the rise of the romantic novel is obvious. It will be well to notice first the general plan of the novels of Radcliffe,1 which in the bare details of plot, possess many of the features common to Richardson, Walpole and Reeve.

These once famous fictions are characterized by H. A. Beers as being very long, very much alike, and very much overloaded with sentiment and description, with plots that were complicated and abounded in the wildest improbabilities and in incidents which were once the commonplace of romantic fiction, but which realism has now turned out of doors: concealments, assassinations, duels, disguises, kidnapings, escapes, elopements, intrigues, forged documents, discoveries of old crimes, and identifications of lost heirs, are devices frequently resorted to.2

1. Mrs. Radcliffe's romances: "The castles of Athlin and Dundoe," (1769); "Sicilian Romances" (1790); "Romance of the Forest" (1791); "Mysteries of Udolphi" (1794); "The Italian" (1797); "Gaston de Blondeville" (written 1802, pub. 1826). The first collection of her poems was published in 1816.

Notwithstanding their length and tediousness, these romances possess interest as well as value in illustrating a phase in the development of the novel. An idea of their form can best be gained from a brief sketch of the three most famous.

"The Romance of the Forest." The heroine, Adeline, an orphan, homeward bound from a convent, is discovered in the hands of banditti at a lonely house on the heath near Paris, by Pierre de la Motte, who is fleeing vengeance, deserved on account of his gambling debts. La Motte, who also has been held up by the ruffians, is granted his freedom on the condition that he relieve the fellows of their helpless prisoner. The fugitive and his family seek refuge in a deserted and supposedly haunted abbey. La Motte, whose morals gradually decline, agrees to barter Adeline to the Marquis de Montalt in order to secure for himself wealth and position. A young soldier, Theodore, attempts her rescue, but is wounded and imprisoned, while Adeline is cared for and adopted by his family who little suspect that their long lost son is nearby and in need. In conclusion, Theodore regains his health and liberty, and marries the lady Adeline; Pierre de la Motte, whose guilt and identity have been discovered, is banished from France, and lives to become a reformed man; the wicked Marquis alone, suffers unrepentant for his sins.

"The Mysteries of Udolpho." The Story opens in the Pyrenees Mountains, where Emily St. Aubert is traveling with her father, whose health has been shattered by the recent death of his wife. During their journey they meet Valancourt, a young
nobleman of limited means, who immediately falls in love with Emily. St. Aubert dies at a chateau where they have stopped for the night, and Emily returns to her home. At her father's last request she destroys certain papers unopened, and closing her old home, she goes to live with an aunt. Her guardian marries a Signor Montoni, and removes with Emily to Venice. Here in conjunction with this Montoni the cruel aunt plans a further alliance with nobility by compelling her niece to marry a count. Emily, who constantly loves Valancourt, escapes this marriage by the sudden departure of their household for Udolpho, the mountain chateau of the desperado Montoni. Here in this desolate retreat the villain turns his ill-will on his wife and almost murders her in the vain endeavor to wrest from her possession the little yet remaining in her name. Madame Montoni, realizing the fatal error of her marriage, pleads for liberty for Emily, and then dies, a prisoner in the house of her husband. Through the aid of two servants and another prisoner who soon becomes her suitor, Emily escapes from Udolpho. While crossing a bay the party is wrecked, and repair to a castle nearby, which proves to be the place where Emily had spent a night the year before. During the stay here various mysteries are unravelled; the former mistress of Udolpho is identified as an insane nun in a neighboring convent; the contents of her father's letters is made plain to Emily; all the supernatural and unusual which has not already been laid bare is here disclosed. Valancourt, whose character was for a time questioned, is exonerated, and the happy wedding of the hero and heroine completes the tale.
"The Italian." A gentle orphan girl, Ellena, who lives quietly with her guardian, is courted by Vivaldi, noble and wealthy. Schedoni, a foul priest, plans with the Marchesa Vivaldi to prevent the marriage, and employs ruffians to place Vivaldi in temporary confinement and to kidnap the girl. Vivaldi, uninformed as to her location, traces Ellena to a convent, where the Sister Olivia (Ellena's long lost mother), assists them to escape. They repair to a cathedral, and while awaiting the marriage service, are arrested by agents of the Inquisition. Vivaldi is taken to Rome. Ellena is removed to a lone house in a desert region, where Schedoni plans to murder her with his own hand; a locket reveals to him her identity, and supposing she is his own daughter he spares her. Schedoni is finally drawn into the dungeons of the Inquisition, where he dies in the most awful agony from poison administered by his own hand; the Marchesa repents on her death-bed; Ellena learns through her newly found mother, Olivia, that the wicked Schedoni is not her father; Vivaldi is liberated and marries Ellena.

The plots of the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe, like those of "Pamela," "The Castle of Otranto," "La Nouvelle Héloïse," and "The Old English Baron," have for a basis the love between persons of unequal rank. The plans are all complicated and contain many subplots; "The Mysteries of Udolpho" alone presents four love affairs; Vivaldi--Emily, Madame Chέron-Signor Montoni, Annette-Ludovico, Blanche de Villefort-St. Foix; while there is a definite interest in mystery awakened in La Vallée, in Udolpho, and in the Château de Blanc.
The romances of Mrs. Radcliffe bear about the same relation to the novel that the modern melodrama does to the drama proper. Their interest depends not on the plot, for having gone through one or two of her books, the reader is satisfied that the lovers will eventually gain the consent of the tyrannical parent, and that the wicked will be punished for their sins, unless they repent, which is more likely. Each tale completes its task perfectly, in that it leaves nothing unexplained; every suggestion of the supernatural is shown to be nothing out of the ordinary. Mrs. Radcliffe does not once indulge in the unsolved mystery which lends charm to the "Twice Told Tales" and to "Christabel." Analysis of one of these novels will prove that the recital of single incidents in rapid succession carries the interest, and that these incidents do not particularly further the plot.

The friendship of Valancourt and Emily, or of Vivaldi and Ellena illustrates the continual recurrence of events which grows monotonous. Although this method of narration does not build a strong plot, the incidents themselves are of great interest, and, in spite of provoked patience, compel attention. Skill grew with practice and her last novel, "The Italian," furnishes an incident which would rank favorably with Stevenson. The Marchesa Vivaldi confers with her father confessor, Schedoni, and together they plot the destruction of Ellena. Long and skillfully the priest discusses the honor of family, personal virtue and integrity, and finally succeeds in instigating the Marchesa herself to consent to, in fact to suggest, the death of Ellena. The entire passage possesses interest increasing as it progresses toward the climax. Having pronounced the fate of
her innocent victim the Marchesa comes to with a start, "Avoid violence, if that be possible," she added, immediately comprehending him, "but let her die quickly! The punishment is due to the crime."

"The Marchesa happened, as she said this, to cast her eyes upon the inscription over a confessional, where appeared in black letters, these awful words, "God hears thee!" It appeared an awful warning; her countenance changed; it had struck upon her heart. Schedoni was too much engaged by his own thoughts to observe, or understand, her silence. She soon recovered herself, considering that this was a common inscription for confessionals, disregarded what she had at first considered as a peculiar admonition; yet some moments elapsed, before she could renew the subject.

"You were speaking of a place, father, resumed the Marchesa a -----

"Ay," muttered the confessor, still musing--"in a chamber of that house there is--"

"What noise is that"? said the Marchesa, interrupting him. They listened. A few low and querulous notes of the organ sounded at a distance, and stopped again.

"What mournful music is that"? said the Marchesa, in a faltering voice; "it was touched by a fearful hand! Vespers were over long ago!"

"Daughter," said Schedoni, somewhat sternly, "You said you had a man's courage. Alas! you have a woman's heart."

"Excuse me, father; I know not why I felt this agitation, but I will command it.--That chamber"?
"In that chamber," resumed the confessor, "is a secret
door, constructed long ago."

"And for what purpose constructed"? said the fearful
Marchesa.

"Pardon me, daughter; 'tis sufficient that it is there;
we will make a good use of it. Through that door in the night
when she sleeps--"

"I comprehend you," said the Marchesa. "I comprehend
you, But why,—you have your reasons, no doubt,—but why the
necessity of a secret door in a house which you say is so lonely—
inhabited by only one person"?

"A passage leads to the sea," continued Schedoni,
without replying to the question. "There on the shore, when
darkness covers it; there, plunged amid the waves no stain shall
hint of—"

"Hark!" interrupted the Marchesa, starting, "that note
again!"

The organ sounded faintly from the choir, and paused,
as before. In the next moment, a slow chanting of voices was
heard, mingling with the rising peal, in a strain particularly
melancholy and solemn.

"Who is dead"? said the Marchesa, changing countenance;
"it is a requiem!"

"Peace be with the departed!" exclaimed Schedoni, and
crossed himself; "the soul has but just quitted the body!"

They listened in silence. The Marchesa was much affected;
her complexion varied at every instant; her breathings were
short and interrupted, and she even shed a few tears, but they were those of despair, rather than of sorrow.

An incident from the first chapter of "The Italian" is scarcely to be surpassed as an introduction for it at once clinches the attention.

"About the year 1764 some English travellers in Italy, during one of their excursions in the environs of Naples, happened to stop before the portico of the Santo Maria del Pianto, a Church belonging to a very ancient convent of the order of the Black Pentitents. The magnificence of this portico, though impaired by time, excited so much admiration, that the travellers were curious to survey the structure to which it belonged, and with this intention they ascended the marble steps that led to it.

"Within the shade of the portico, a person with folded arms, and eyes directed towards the ground, was pacing behind the pillars the whole extent of the pavement, and was apparently so engaged by his own thoughts, as not to observe that strangers were approaching. He turned, however, suddenly, as if startled by the sound of steps, and then, without further pausing, glided into the door that opened into the church, and disappeared.

"There was something too extraordinary in the figure of this man, and too singular in his conduct to pass unnoticed by the visitors. He was of a tall thin figure, bending forward from the shoulders; of a sallow complexion, and harsh features, and had an eye, which, as it looked up from the cloak that muffled the lower part of his countenance, was expressive of uncommon ferocity.

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"The travellers, on entering the church, looked round for the stranger who had passed hither before them, but he was nowhere to be seen, through all the shade of the long aisles."

This passage displays Mrs. Radcliffe's ability in technique at its height, and would do honor to many a writer whose heritage was vastly superior to hers. It seems to suggest and fittingly, in theme and location, as well as in art, George Eliot's "Romola;" though there is no reason to think that it had any influence on the latter, nor is the similarity close enough for that.

The concluding chapters deserve no such praise as the introduction for without exception they try the patience, with the meting out of justice to good and evil. The conclusion of "The Romance of the Forest" recalls the old fashioned country merry making of days not far distant; throughout the tale time has been too pressing and the characters too much beset by trials to indulge in a moment of recreation or diversion, except the solitary play on the flute or the reciting of melancholy twenty line sonnets, but at the end, the reader is detained while the author arranges a general celebration, for the entire community, on the occasion of the marriage of Adeline and Theodore.

With Mrs. Radcliffe, the Gothic romance is a tale of romantic love, beset in rapid succession with every conceivable obstacle. Compared with modern fiction, the plot is not well planned, for it contains a number of sub-plots loosely joined together. But plot is not the strong point nor the center of

interest in these novels. Praise is due to it for improvement over the formless "Pamela," and the weak plan of "Castle of Otranto." In fine the plot was adequate and served as a foundation for the romantic setting and the romantic characters.
CHAPTER III.
CHARACTER IN THE NOVELS OF RADCLIFFE.

The character is one of the greatest possibilities in the hands of the novelist, for through this medium the author can express his opinions impersonally. Radcliffe did not fully avail herself of this opportunity. Her characters have been criticised as "unnatural" and "weak;" and they are weak compared with the thinking, struggling men and women of the psychological novel of Hawthorne, but that is an unfair comparison. To value justly Radcliffe's originality in the portrayal of romantic character, and to estimate her debt to her predecessors, it will be well to notice the living people of her day.

Satires, correspondence and drama reveal the society of the pseudo-classical age. Lord Chesterfield, a cold-hearted, polished gentleman, exhorts his godson to choose his associates from the upper class only, "aim at the best...... those societies where great politeness, good breeding, and decency, though perhaps not always virtue, prevail." The standard of morality was far from high, but the watch-word "conform" advocated the avoidance of the depths. As for religion, although one is advised not to be a "repairer of wrongs nor a reformer of manners," church-going is considered necessary to respectability. Con-

Formity was the watch-word in customs and styles, "Never be the first or last in fashion." ¹ In this artificial society, the gentleman with powdered wig, and the lady of learning who continually turned off rhyme ² are not unusual figures.

In selecting characters Radcliffe kept within the limits of polite social circles of her time, and with few exceptions chose them from the houses of lords, barons, counts and persons of wealth and title. There is always some worthy lad or lass, who in the beginning lacks both means and position, but who receives his full share of good fortune during the tale; Alleyn, Theodore, Valancourt and Adeline are on this list, alike young, handsome, virtuous, and sufferers from misjudgments.

Ranked with the servant class come the shepherds, not picturesque, but rude peasants and uncouth, who serve only to detain a forlorn damsel or to direct the path to some misguided traveller. Bands of robbers furnish entertainment to those who journey over the mountains or across the country. It almost seems that these numerous bandits infest the lonely places just to appear whenever the author thinks it convenient for the kidnapped heroine to pass into other hands, or when it is needful to introduce some incident in order to keep up the interest of the reader.

It may almost be said that a set of stock characters people these books, for the persons introduced bear the features, not of individuals, but of the class to which they belong. The

². Pope: "Three Hours After Marriage."
following plan suggests the entire list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heroine</th>
<th>Her parents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>her maid</td>
<td>'or guardians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her lover</td>
<td>or mother-in-law-to-be</td>
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<tr>
<td>other suitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>servants</td>
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**villain  -  leading character**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bandits, robbers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>peasants, shepherds.</td>
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The heroine, Mary--Julia--Adeline--Emily--Ellena, is a lady whose beauty has seldom been exceeded. Her person is "finely proportioned; her complexiion is fair, her brown flaxen hair, and her dark blue eyes full of sweet expression;" her manners are dignified and elegant, and her air is a feminine softness; a tender timidity, which irresistibly attracts the heart of the beholder," or perhaps "her figure is light and graceful -- her step is airy -- her mien animated, and her smile enchanting; her eyes are dark, and full of fire, but tempered with modest sweetness; her features are finely turned-- every laughing grace plays round her mouth, and her countenance quickly discovers all the various emotions of her soul. The dark auburn hair, which curls in beautiful profusion on her neck, gives a finishing charm to her appearance."  

1. The lack of coherence is a common error in these romances.  
Into this lovely creature Mrs. Radcliffe throws herself as into an autobiography; indeed the reader can almost see the timidity, grace and propriety of the author in Emily, who conceals her emotions, confides neither in heaven nor those about her,—never makes an exhibition of herself. "She loved to indulge the melancholy of her heart in the solitude of the woods. One evening she took her lute to a favorite spot on the sea shore, and resigning herself to pleasing sadness touched some sweet and plaintive airs.¹ The beauty of the scene, the soothing trees, waved by the light air, and the soft shelling of the waves that flowed gently in upon the shores, insensibly sunk her mind into a state of repose. She touched the chords of her lute in sweet wild melody and sung² the following ode.³

The songs to which these damsels give birth are such as sentimental Mrs. Radcliffe loved to compose.⁴ Notwithstanding their condition of chronic melancholia, innumerable eruption of tears, superinduced by the floods of emotion which sweep over them, notwithstanding the fact that they faint periodically, as the authoress periodically brings in some unspeakable danger or thrills them with the "wail of a lost soul seeking whom he might devour," the heroines have the hardihood of constitution to resist the effects of such melancholia, tears, emotional sweepings, faintings, and dangers unspeakable, and invariably

¹ Vide supra. p.
² Mrs. Radcliffe frequently employs an incorrect form for the 'past tense.
⁴ "To the vision of Fancy." "Dear wild Illusions of Creative Mind." Ibid., Vol. X, p. 90.
maintain the unequal struggle with life until the end of the book.

Mrs. Radcliffe's heroines show the influence of Richardson and may be called descendants of Pamela and Clarissa Harlowe, but under more romantic circumstances. Her girls are sweet and good and beset by troubles as is Pamela, but they possess a degree of accomplishment and culture which is absent from the latter.

The leading character in each of the novels of Mrs. Radcliffe is a villain of the blackest hue. The father of Julia and Emilia is no father, but he is a scoundrel who values at naught the virtue and happiness of his daughters; their stepmother is a woman barren of all motherly instincts. The Marquis de Montalt is a creature composed of cruelty. The mother of Vivaldi is of "violent passions, haughty, vindictive, yet crafty and deceitful; patient in stratagem, and indefatigable in pursuit of vengeance on the unhappy objects who offended her."¹ Signor Montoni, when he first appears as a gentleman, though he attracts her, yet "he arouses in Emily a degree of fear she knew not exactly wherefore."² In depicting such individuals Mrs. Radcliffe exhibits great powers of fancy in throwing about them a dubious and mysterious light; the description of the Monk Schedoni in the "Italian" illustrates well her talent in picturing the evil-doer. "An Italian, as his

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¹ Ballantyne. X, p. 584.
² Ballantyne. X, p. 278.
name imported, but whose family was unknown, and from some circumstances it appeared, that he wished to throw an impene-
trable wall over his origin...... His figure was striking, but not so from grace; it was tall, and, though extremely thin, his limbs were large and uncouth, and as he stalked along, wrapt in the black garments of his order, there was something terrible in its air; something almost superhuman. His cowl, too, as it threw a shade over the livid paleness of his face, increased its severe character, and gave an effect to his large melancholy eye, which approached to horror. His was not the mel-
ancholy of a sensible and wounded heart, but apparently that of a gloomy and ferocious disposition. There was something in his physiognomy extremely singular, and that cannot easily be defined. It bore the traces of many passions, which seemed to have fixed the features they no longer animated. An habitual gloom and severity prevailed over the deep lines of his coun-
tenance; and his eyes were so piercing, that they seemed to penetrate, at a single glance, into the hearts of men, and to read their most secret thoughts; few persons could support their scrutiny, or even endure to meet them twice. Yet, not-
withstanding all this gloom and austerity, some rare occasion of interest had called forth a character upon his countenance entirely different; and he could adapt himself to the tempers and passions of persons whom he wished to conciliate with astonishing facility, and generally with complete triumph."

This is the figure Mrs. Radcliffe most delighted to paint. He is an artificial type rather than a particular human being. The fascination, here as elsewhere, lies in dim, suggestive portrayal, and not in a clear cut picture.

This character contains great interest as a predecessor of the introspective scientist in succeeding novels. As presented, the Italian Schedoni possesses great energy, and is consumed by a burning desire to accomplish certain ends. Could he retain the energy, the same unsocial disposition, and exchange his malicious purpose for a thirst for knowledge, Schedoni would be no longer a plotting priest, but a scholar, a pseudo-scientist, an alchemist, bending every force to discover the secret of life. It is not strange that Mrs. Radcliffe failed to give this character the touch which was added by later writers. She lived apart, and came in touch with the busy world very little as compared with Mary Godwin Shelley. The latter, who discussed Darwinism and the various scientific discoveries of the day, could easily infuse these interests into the men already invented by Mrs. Radcliffe. Byron's "Manfred" was a much refined Frankenstein, polished by a touch of medieval culture; possibly suggested by "Dr. Faustus."

The hero, who is the lover, resembles Theodore in "The Castle of Otranto," but possesses also new traits; he has acquired a love for good literature, he composes poetry, he plays the flute and enjoys the solitude of nature. This character is most interesting as a forerunner of a great hero in
real life rather than as a figure in later literature. Take from Valancourt his prudishness and place him in the atmosphere of revolt of eighteen hundred, and he becomes a reckless roving Lord Byron. The likeness between the two is very striking. Valancourt was from a noble family; he enjoyed reading, especially the classics; purposeless and melancholy in disposition, he loved solitude; he revelled in the beauty of nature and travelled, aimlessly, through the Pyrenees mountains; he admired the beauty of women; he liked to talk of morality, although he was reported to have lived riotously. Thus far the description is equally applicable to Valancourt or Byron; instead of convention and prudishness, add the qualities of looseness and revolt and it describes Byron.

"The servant class serve as audience to the complaints and sorrows of their masters and mistresses. Peter is a vociferous, general utility man who tries the patience of his master, and of the reader also, by the long drawn out recital of critical incidents; his style of narration resembles that of Mrs. Radcliffe herself, when he relates to La Motte the appearance of a stranger, and he either tauntingly or stupidly delays the points of greatest interest. Dorothea illustrates the inquisitive, brooding type, and hoards up in her memory the fact and fiction of the household for generations past. In conclusion, while her characters possess many romantic tendencies, Mrs. Radcliffe has been conventional in the class

2. Ibid., p. 445.
and in the general type of character she has chosen to portray. She endowed them with romantic traits, but she did not detach them from the mannerisms of the conventional eighteenth century.

Religiously, the heroine in these romances is exemplary; at the time of slightest need she addresses a prayer to that "Being, who had hitherto protected her," and her mind becomes elevated and a sublime complacency fills her breast." ¹

In marked contrast stands Schedoni who appears almost incapable of kindness. Although his connection with the church and the tragedy of his death give frequent opportunity, there is not a single expression of religious faith on his part.

"The Marchesa Vivaldi, between these extremes, feels a superstitious fear, rather than a love for God; to this fear she yields only after all opportunity to accomplish evil is past.--"

Struck with a remorse for the crime she had meditated against Ellena, and with terror of the punishment due to it, she sent, when on her death-bed, for a confessor............. from whom she hoped to receive an alleviation of her despair."²

In no way does the contemporary discussion of religious problems enter into Radcliffe's novels, there is always due regard for the form of the Roman Catholic Church. In her earlier works there does not occur a reference to any denomination, and the occasional supplication comes as an exclamatory outburst and not a meditated petition.³ God is addressed as "Father

2. Ibid., p. 703.
3. Ibid., p. 723.
of Good" and "Author of Nature,"\(^1\) which suggest the "almighty Cause"\(^2\) of Pope, and indicate that it is only the emotional side of the religion which is romantic.

As of the religious so of the moral side of these persons, some reach the acme of perfection and others are usually the blackest scoundrels. The maidens are all generous and kindly to everyone, even to their enemies,—the lovers are all good and brave, the despotic parents and guardians are true to their color. Social conventions are closely adhered to by the mistreated damsels. Much to the disgust of the reader, Emily and Ellena postpone their nuptials out of all reason and by so doing subject themselves and their lovers to numberless and unspeakable trials; neither of the stories\(^3\) could have dragged out more than half its length if the over-fastidious heroines had consented to a slightly unconventional marriage. A ludicrous phase of this propriety occurs, when, after the murderous death of her aunt, Emily appeals to Signor Montoni whose prisoner she is, with the plea that, "I can no longer remain here with propriety, sir, said she, and I may be allowed to ask, by what right you detain me?.........................

While my aunt lived, sir, said she, my residence here was not improper; but now, that she is no more, I may surely be permitted to depart."\(^4\) And of Julia it is said "she would escape

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3. "Romance of the Forest" and "The Italian." (See notes above)
the dreadful destiny awaiting her, but must, perhaps, sully the purity of that reputation, which was dearer to her than existence."¹ Although the villains plan and suggest the most terrible crimes and do commit murder and death by torture, they are on the whole quite free from social immorality; the women, too, are all virtuous. It seems that in this Mrs. Radcliffe's own pure and gentle personality breaks through, for there is but a single instance of that untamed passion which filled the realistic novels of the century. "Tom Jones" abounds with that side of English life, and it is not omitted even in "The Castle of Otranto," but it is absent from "The Mysteries of Udolpho." Quite as striking is the absence of that liberty which was approved by later romantics. In all, these characters are more moral than convention required.

As for learning, there is not a single instance of a college bred man, nor of an educated woman, save such acquaintance with the ancients as training in a convent would give, along with lessons in embroidery. The heroine delights in the old poets and carries in her hand-bag a library, which consoles her in melancholy moments. The hero is not devoid of love for literature. Valancourt is equipped with a copy of Petrarch's poems which he exchanges for a book from which Emily has read to him.² This companionship with books is not

² Ibid, p. 249.
due to a mere love of learning, but, judging from the marked passages "descriptive of delicate tenderness" is indicative of their sentimental nature.

Study is almost always resorted to as a source of diversion, rather than a means toward an end. "One of the amusements of St. Aubert was the study of botany."¹ As for Emily's education, "St. Aubert cultivated her understanding with the most scrupulous care. He gave her a general view of the sciences, and an exact acquaintance with every part of elegant literature. He taught her Latin and English, chiefly that she might understand the sublimity of their poets..... A well-informed mind, he would say, is the best security against the contagion of folly and of vice......Thought and cultivation are necessary equally to the happiness of a country and a city life;...... they afford a sublime pleasure in the taste they create for the beautiful and grand."²

This taste for literature is decidedly poetical, as Ossian is the only book mentioned which is not poetry in the strictest sense of the word. The passion for poetry is not confined alone to reading, but it is even more strongly expressed in the composition of verse.

Emily and Adeline are most frequently visited by the muse; with a mind tranquilized by the surrounding scenery, she "wooed the gentle muse, and indulged in ideal happiness. The

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² Ibid., p. 225.
delight of these moments she commemorated in the following address:

TO THE VISIONS OF FANCY.

"Dear, wild illusions of creature mind! Whose varying hues arise to Fancy's art, And by her magic force are swift combined In forms that please, and scenes that touch the breast; Oh! whether at her voice ye soft assume The pensive grace of Sorrow drooping low; Or rise sublime on Terror's lofty plume, And shake the soul with wildly thrilling woe; Or, sweetly bright, your gayer tints ye spread, Bid scenes of pleasure steal upon my view, Love wave his purple pinion o'er my head, And wake the tender thought to passion true Oh! still -- ye shadowy forms! attend my lonely hours, Still chase my real cares with your illusive powers!" 1

But more frequently the muse is sought as a solace to present woes.-- Emily, "her eyes on the towering Apennines, recollected the terrific scenery they had exhibited, and the horrors she had suffered, on the preceding night, particularly at the moment when Bertrand had betrayed himself to be an assassin; and these remembrances awakened a train of images, which since they abstracted her from a consideration of her own situation, she pursued for sometime, and then arranged in the following lines; pleased to have discovered any innocent means by which she could beguile an hour of misfortune." 2 Then follows "The Pilgrim," the pathetic tale of the sufferings and death of "Unhappy Luke," who dying, for his murd' rer breathed -- a sainted prayer." Were it our province here to

criticise this poetry, we could only say of it as of Mrs. Radcliffe's other poetical compositions, that it displays more liveliness and richness of fancy than correctness of taste and expression; their introduction here was with the intention to show that the characters are sensitive; in this trait as in others the heroines resemble their creator. Subject this poem to the Augustan ideal that a poem, "either wildly improbable and extravagant, or else over-sentimental deserved an unqualified condemnation,"¹ and it would receive that fate which time has allotted to it.

The personality of the character in these romances does not grow and develop, but remains a type throughout the book. LaMotte is the only philosophizing and deeply thoughtful person on the list. As he muses on a tomb in the forest, he wonders about the ancient monk, whose ashes are deposited in it; of the life of abstinence and prayer, and he asks, "Did he think a life of mere negative virtue deserved an eternal reward? Mistaken man! reason, had you trusted to its dictates, would have informed you, that the active virtues, the adherence to the golden rule, Do as you would be done unto, could alone deserve the favour of a Deity, whose glory is benevolence."² Pierre de la Motte was one whose conscience was blunted, but never wholly dead, and the soul struggles of this man, infirm of resolution, are recorded throughout

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3. Ibid., p. 78.
"The Romance of the Forest." It is usual in these romances for one in the lap of luxury or on the occasion of terrible calamity to sit by the seaside and dreamily wonder the wherefore, the whence and the whither, but LaMotte alone seems to try in real earnest to solve the problems of life which almost overpower his weak spirit.

The instances of verse cited will serve to show that these poetical aspirations were due to emotional rather than to intellectual tendencies. Adeline a dozen times resorted to composition as an outlet by which to express the "feelings of the moment". ¹

"...... can these charms suppress the sigh,
Or chase the tear from Sorrow's eye?
........................................ or impart
One ray of peace to sorrow's heart"²

Lady Mary Montagu, a representative of the eighteenth century attitude to emotion, says, I do not "think our English proper to express such violence of passion which is very seldom felt among us." The "man of the world" and the "woman of the world" of the past age had been superior to emotion; they went to no extremes of feeling, of either depression or of joy, nor did they ever betray to their fellows any feeling but that of the common level, the dead mean; their attitude toward all expression of emotion was that of disdain,

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2. Ibid., p. 169.
and their view of life was artificial. In Radcliffe the attitude towards life may be very little less artificial, but this is due to no lack of emotion, which escapes by every possible outlet.

Exaltation of feeling is manifest in all the worthy characters. One among many illustrations is Ellena's visit to the balcony in the monastery of San Stefano. "To Ellena, whose mind was capable of being highly elevated, or sweetly soothed, by scenes of nature..............there, gazing upon the stupendous imagery around her, looking, as it were, beyond the awful veil, which obscures the features of the Deity, and conceals Him from the eyes of his creatures, dwelling as with a present God, in the midst of his sublime works; with a mind thus elevated, how insignificant would appear to her the transactions, and the sufferings of this world! How poor the boasted power of man, when the fall from a single cliff of these mountains would with ease destroy thousands of his race assembled on the plains below! How would it avail them, that they were accoutred for battle, armed with all the instruments of destruction that human invention ever fashioned! Thus man, the giant who held her in captivity, would shrink to the diminutiveness of a fairy; and she would experience, that his utmost force was unable to enchain her soul, or compel her to fear him, while he was destitute of virtue."¹

These characters, especially the girls, feed upon wonder, every unusual phenomenon awakes in them the deepest interest. The sudden appearance of a light in an unusual apartment furnishes subject for speculation for months.¹ Not only does such an occurrence attract attention, but often it demands a solution; the inhabitants of the house of Mazzini were seized with a burning desire which almost consumed them, in their efforts to explain the mysterious lights and sounds.

Closely akin to this wonder and most frequently aroused by it is curiosity. The heroines possess an insatiable supply, and continually expose themselves to conditions which are likely to arouse a great and unanswerable interest. It is not surprising that Emily, who saw her father sitting in his study in the middle of the night, "was detained there by a mixture of curiosity and tenderness. She could not witness his sorrow without being anxious to know the subject of it; and she therefore continued to observe him in silence, concluding that those papers were letters of her late mother...... Emily was hastily retiring; but she saw him turn again to the papers, and she stopped.........recollecting that she was intruding on his private sorrows, she softly withdrew from the chamber." Here is one instance in which her good breeding and respect for the privacy of others did not assert itself until all hope of satisfying her curiosity

were past. On another occasion after Emily has, to her sorrow, looked upon the veiled statue, she makes the following nice speech to her maid. "No, Annette, I am well enough, but I have no desire to see this picture; return into the hall."  

"Yes, Annette, you love the wonderful; but do you know that unless you guard against this inclination it will lead you into all the misery of superstition!" Annette might have smiled in her turn at this sage observation of Emily, who could tremble with ideal terrors as much as herself, and listen almost as eagerly to the recital of a mysterious story." 1  

Enthusiasm is no longer looked on with contempt and disfavor, but expresses in the romantic novel the height of poetical fervor and inspiration. The detestable Madame Cheron, who represents in her interests and aspirations the lady of Lord Chesterfield's time, complains that her deceased brother "took likes and dislikes, when no other person saw any reason for them at all; nay, indeed, I have often thought the people he disapproved were much more agreeable than those he admired. But there is no accounting for such tastes. He was always so much influenced by people's countenances! Now I have no notion of this; it is all a ridiculous enthusiasm." 2  

St. Aubert remembered the home of his youth with enthusiasm; 3 he sauntered among the cliffs inaccessible to all but the enthusiast. 4 His daughter, Emily, inherited

3. Ibid., p. 224.  
4. Ibid., p. 224.
this trait, and loved to ramble among the mountain recesses where the silence and grandeur of solitude impressed a sacred awe upon her heart, and lifted her thoughts to God and awakened her mind to enthusiasm and poetry.¹

Sympathy was another feature common to the cultured, refined, and gentle men and women in Radcliffe's works. Everyone who is not absolutely wicked and plotting against his neighbor feels for the sad-hearted "that sympathy suited to the occasion." The heart of the strongest man"melts at the sigh of an unfortunate lady."²

The characters of Radcliffe like to give themselves over to wonder and enchantment, and almost literally float away in a state of ecstasy; this feeling manifests itself in two ways, as an engrossing joy, and occasionally as an overmastering and violent emotion. Having performed a service of mercy to the needy family of a peasant, "Valancourt had seldom felt his heart so light as at this moment; his gay spirits danced with pleasure; every object around him appeared more interesting, or beautiful, than before............... O, what a lovely day! How brightly the sun shines! How pure is this air! What enchanting scenery! - - It is, indeed, enchanting, said St. Aubert, whom early experience had taught

². Ibid., p. 61.
to understand the nature of Valancourt's present feelings."¹

of Blanche it is said that as she silently surveyed the vast horizon and the distant ocean she was seized by an emotion of the sublimest rapture.²

As in the first illustration this feeling of ecstasy is often produced as a reward for sympathy. The sympathetic heroine always weeps with those who weep and finds pleasure in the gladness of others. These feelings of ecstasy, sometimes result in the fainting fits which so frequently occur; these are of the common variety of spells - "the nerves shake, a mist falls over the eyes, and she sinks onto the floor."³

When fact fails to feed the admiration and wonder, imagination furnishes that on which the fancy subsists. "Instances of this temporary failure of mind had more than once occurred since her return home; particularly when, wandering through this lonely mansion in the evening twilight, she had been alarmed by appearances which would have been unseen in her more cheerful days. To this infirm state of her nerves may be attributed what she imagined, when, her eyes glancing a second time on the arm-chair which stood in an obscure part of the closet, the countenance of her dead father appeared

2. Ibid., p. 440.
3. Ibid., p. 738.
there. Emily stood fixed for a moment to the floor.\textsuperscript{1}

Again, as she spends sleepless nights in Udolpho, assisted by the uncertain rays of the lamp, Emily, "almost fancied she saw shapes flit past her curtains, and glide into the remote obscurity of her chamber."\textsuperscript{2}

It has been remarked that wonder easily develops into imagination and curiosity, and from that it is but a step further to that prominent characteristic of the romantic movement, the quest of the strange and terrible. Heroines manifest a great delight in this means of pastime, and their wonder being aroused they easily lose themselves in its pursuit. Mrs. Radcliffe brings on the scene Fear and Terror, themselves, the grandeur of the known world, and the awe of the unknown; the human characters here become puppets in her hands, as people in storms and earthquakes are puppets in the hands of nature. \textsuperscript{3} Eagerness and desire for mystery seem to be ingrained in the very nature of Ferdinand, for when he "learned the circumstances relative to the southern side of the castle, his imagination seized with avidity each appearance of mystery, and inspired him with an irresistible desire to penetrate the secrets of this desolate part of the fabric. He very readily consented to watch..............

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ballantyne. Vol. X, p. 351.
\item Ibid., p. 332.
\item Leigh Hunt: "A Book for a Corner": 1847; p. 104.
\end{enumerate}
and waited the return of night with restless and fearful impatience. Indeed their minds became so wholly occupied with wonder, that they could with difficulty await the return of night. An incident at the Castle of Udolpho furnishes another instance of Emily's keen enjoyment of the thrills of terror. "When night returned, she recollected the mysterious strains of music.............. The influence of superstition now gained on the weakness of her long-harassed mind; she looked with enthusiastic expectation to the guardian spirit of her father, and ........ determined to watch alone for their return.............. anxious to call off her thoughts from distressing subjects, she sat down with one of the few books she had brought from France; but her mind, refusing control, became restless and agitated, and she went often to the casement to listen for a sound." Such tendencies are evident in the preceding romantic novels, but no place are they so frequently employed as in Radcliffe, who well deserves criticism for using them too lavishly.

In their delight in the strange and terrible, these fictions beings did not so often meditate on and yearn for death as did those living people of the eighteenth century; in only a single instance does one go so far as to take his own life. Schedoni, who has planned and committed many crimes,

2. Ibid., p. 17.
3. Ibid., p. 383.
cannot bear the humiliation of submitting to capital punishment, and resorts to poison. Although they are not reduced to suicide they enjoy solemn thought as thoroughly as did Cowper himself; Emily says

"I hear,

Upon the silence of the midnight air,
Celestial voices swell in holy chorus,
That bears the soul to heaven........"

"She long indulged the pleasing sadness that had stolen upon her spirits."\(^1\) Another instance of this baptism of melancholy is shown at the festival at the Château-de-Blanc, when Emily's "spirits were too much depressed to permit her to engage in the present festivity, which called to her remembrances...... melancholy scenes.

"Overcome by these recollections, she left the spot, and walked slowly into the woods; where the softened music soothed her melancholy mind......"\(^2\) At another time, when awaiting an adventurous expedition in the dead of night, "she withdrew from the window, and sat at her bedside, indulging in melancholy reveries, which the loneliness of the hour assisted."\(^3\)

There appears in these romances a classical prejudice against superstition; while the characters show a feeling of disdain for it, they are strongly influenced by a fear of the supernatural in life. La Motte unwillingly felt a super-

2. Ibid., p. 450.
3. Ibid. p. 462.
stitious dread stealing upon him. Adeline had never before been superstitious but circumstances so uncommon had hitherto conspired in this affair that she could not believe them accidental."

The watch of Ludovico, one of the most thrilling incidents in the novels, is prepared for by the long drawn out tradition narrated by the loquacious Dorothée. Rumors of strange appearances and mysterious noises in the deserted apartment so aroused the household (and at the same time the reader) that the venturesome Ludovico volunteers to spend the night in the haunted room. As he whiles away the evening with a tale of Provençal, a thrilling ghost story, he is interrupted by voices in the chamber. Strange sounds and faces continue to haunt him but he pursues his story to the end.

On the following morning no Ludovico appeared. At last Count de Villefort forced open the door,--all was silent, the profound stillness confirmed his apprehensions for Ludovico, not even the breathings of a person in sleep were heard. It appeared that Ludovico must have quitted these rooms by some concealed passage, for the count could not believe that any supernatural means had occasioned this event; yet, if there was any such passage, it seemed inexplicable why he

2. Ibid., p. 132.
should retreat through it, and it was equally surprising, that not even the smallest vestige should appear by which his progress could be traced."

The effort made to connect the disappearance of Ludovico with the apparitions, was fruitless. This mystery remained unsolved through many chapters, and would have excited great interest had not the author referred so frequently to the folly of explaining it on the grounds of the supernatural.

Before the concluding chapter the mysterious disappearance is strangely accounted for in the raids of a band of robbers who frequented the deserted wing by means of a hidden passage leading up from the sea. This apartment they used as a place of rendezvous; many readers would disagree with Sir Walter Scott in saying that this explanation "is completely satisfactory," because it is so extremely improbable.


2. In the use of suspense Mrs. Radcliffe is well-nigh perfect, using just enough obscurity to attract and hold the interest. The great fault is the rule which she imposed on herself, that all the circumstances of her narrative, however mysterious, and apparently superhuman, must be accounted for on natural principles at the winding up of the story; this plan, which was also closely practised by Clara Reeve, is the source of the greatest disappointment in Radcliffe.

The character in Radcliffe is composite, it contains traces of the eighteenth century and elements of the new romanticism. Reaction against existing conventions and against theological beliefs was not yet marked as revolt. The people indulged in dreams and fancies and felt little the responsibility of living. Friends were bound by an intense human sympathy; they delighted in exaltation of feeling, in imagination, wonder, enthusiasm, ecstasy and in melancholy, they expressed an interest in the supernatural, and they went in quest of the strange and terrible. The people of Radcliffe exemplified yet another phase of romanticism, the love of external nature. This is effectively used as background in her novels.
CHAPTER IV

THE ROMANTIC SETTING OF THE NOVELS OF MRS. RADCLIFFE.

In the development of the Gothic romance the setting furnished a broad opportunity for the novelist. The prominent characteristics of the movement in this field were the return to the middle ages and an awakening of interest in nature.

The possibilities for development of medieval characteristics were many. Historical incidents and atmosphere were of prime importance, these naturally included interest in customs of the time, and in the church which was closely connected with the art and literature. One of the sources which later proved most fruitful was the institution of feudalism and chivalry.

In the discussion of medievalism Heine's definition of romanticism is of interest; "The awakening of poetry of the middle ages, as it manifested itself in the poems, paintings, and sculptures, in the art and life of those times." 1

If the year fourteen hundred A.D. were rigidly adhered to as the limit of the middle ages, all of the novels of Mrs. Radcliffe, Gaston de Blondeville alone excepted, would be

excluded, but inasmuch as she has endeavored to gain this effect by turning back several years, her works must be allowed to be romantic, even though not strictly medieval. She assigns her various books in time as follows: the first may be truly medieval for all the introduction states, as in "The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne" we are told only that Matilda, the beautiful widow of the noble earl of Athlin, lived in the ancient seat of feudal government; ¹ "The Sicilian Romance" is assigned to the close of the sixteenth century; ² "The Romance of the Forest" is placed in the seventeenth century; ³ "The Mysteries of Udolpho" is definitely placed in the year 1584, ⁴ while "The Italian" is dated almost two centuries later, 1758; ⁵ "Gaston de Blondeville" goes back to the year 1256. ⁶

As the last named belongs to a special period we shall here consider only the first five.

In these historical settings, customs and fashions suited to the age are strangely lacking. For recreation we resort to no such retreat as Bath, nor do we enjoy the social life of the English city in the eighteenth century, but it is almost true that we live over, in these books, the quiet country life with real romantic English men and women; for

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2. Ibid., p. 3.
3. Ibid., p. 77.
4. Ibid., p. 223.
5. Ibid., p. 533.
there is little which suggests life in a foreign land, two centuries earlier. Fashions remain untouched, save as religious regulations call forth comment on the subject of garb.

Very little is said of the customs of the countries in which Mrs. Radcliffe places her novels, due probably in the first three to a lack of information; her "Journey through Holland and Germany" contains a vast deal of history and customs of the countries visited which is conscientiously attributed to her husband. Failure to introduce the historical setting does not deserve severe censure as Mrs. Radcliffe is not noticeably lacking in that particular when compared with her contemporaries, who had done less than she.

The ancient offices of chivalry and feudalism are only faintly suggested. The Marquis de Montalt, as all the persons of rank, owns a vast estate, and controls a large number of retainers. The grand celebrations which are given for his entire following on the occasion of weddings and birthdays, recall the grand good times, which Addison recounts, of English life in the seventeenth century. Seloncourt is the scene of a memorable season of rejoicing in the "Romance of the Forest" when "the venerable La Luc sat among the elder peasants, and as he surveyed the scene--his children and people thus assembled round him in one grand compact of harmony and joy--the frequent tear bedewed his cheek, and he seemed to taste

1. Radcliffe, "Journey through Holland &c." Introduction.
the fulness of an exalted delight. So much was every heart roused to gladness, that the morning dawn began to peep upon the scene of their festivity, when every cottager returned to his home, blessing the benevolence of La Luc.  

There is in the heroic lover a high degree of chivalry. Theodore endures hardship and sickness, and almost death in his effort to save Adeline, as did Theodore in "The Castle of Otranto;" St. Foix braves the dangers of a stormy sea and the terrors of a band of robbers in order to rescue Emily from the grasp of the villainous Marquis de Montoni; Valancourt exhibits all the "various emotions" that would naturally come to one who sought to relieve a friend in trouble; Vivaldi dares the terrors of the Inquisition,--all to save from trouble and distress hapless maids. The question arises as to the reality of these pictures of chivalry. A genuine knight of old, after having saved a lady from danger a half dozen times, would almost have compelled the long delayed wedding, whereas these gallant lovers are so wavering and irresolute that they submit to her wish to postpone it.

"Gaston de Blondeville" is an attempt at historical novel, written ten years before Sir Walter Scott wrote "Waverley." Inspired by a visit to Kenilworth castle it was composed fifteen years before Scott's "Kenilworth," though it did not appear until after the death of Mrs. Radcliffe. The old device of a

manuscript dug up in the ruins of the castle serves to introduce the "Boke contenyng a trew chronique of what passed at Killingworth, in Ardenne, when Our Soveren Lord, the Kynge, kept ther his fest of Senzt Michel; with ye marvelousous accident, that ther befel, at the solemnissazion of the marriage of Gaston de Blondeville. With divers things, curious to be known, thereunto purtauynge. With an account of the grete Turney, there held in the yeer MCCLVI. Changed out of the Norman tongue by Grymbald, Monk of Senzt Marie Priori in Killingworth."¹ This book does not resemble Scott's "Kenilworth" but is like her former romances with an additional attempt at a historical setting. Like them the plot is fictitious, with less time devoted to nature scenes and more stress laid on the portrayal of feudal manners. The castle is definitely described; the apparel of the king, the equipment of the knights and the appearance of the retainers are accurately noted; the customs of the court and various ceremonies are tediously rehearsed. Mrs. Radcliffe conscientiously cites the sources of her information. Manuscripts in the Cottonian and Harleian Libraries, "Household Book of Edward the Fourth," and Warton's "History of English Poetry," which she employs liberally, but much less artfully than Scott. Mystery is used and as in her other works the supernatural is resorted to. The most striking feature is that here alone of all her works

the supernatural is not explained away. The ghost is a real ghost, the spirit of a murdered knight, who goes in and out at all hours of the day so often as to become somewhat of a bore. "He ultimately destroys both first and second murderer, one in his cell, the other in open tournament, where his exploits as a mysterious knight in black armor may have given Scott a hint for his black knight at the lists of Ashby-de-la-Zouche in Ivanhoe."^2 His first appearance is in the chamber of the king, with whom he holds a long conversation. "The worm is my sister," he says, "the mist of death is on me. My bed is darkness. The prisoner is innocent. Be warned!" This book containing both characters and setting which proved fruitful in the hands of Scott, is not valuable as a historical novel. Mrs. Radcliffe had not a knowledge of facts broad enough nor an insight into life keen enough to pursue this line of the development of the novel, and successfully compete with later writers.

An integral factor of the middle age was the Roman Catholic Church and its various institutions. Mrs. Radcliffe turned to this vast storehouse for both atmosphere and incidents; but she did not take so deep an interest in the development of the religious side as did some of her contemporaries, as is shown by turning to a work of that time. François de René de Chateaubriand in his "Le Génie du Christianisme" affords a clear indication of the want of serious

reality in the religious regeneration of the day. Its point of view is that which men have agreed to call the romantic. It is to the past it turns, and as the romanticist is a man of imagination, he sees the past in an imaginary light. He conceived the idea that the classical period had reached the term of its natural life, and that the imitation of the works of heathen antiquity ought now to cease, "it was time for France, (and was it not equally true of England?) to dismiss mythology and have a literature inspired by its own history and its own religion." Mrs. Radcliffe does not take up the discussion of religion, as does Chateaubriand, much less does she dwell on such details as the sacrament, celibacy of the priesthood, and the teachings of Christ. She does not even take time and pains to vindicate the beauty of Christianity and show its superiority to any of the heathen religions. The moral tone of Radcliffe is above reproach, and there prevails throughout the characters a humble, penitent attitude toward God and toward church authority. It seems that this is used in order to gain an effect in harmony with the natural setting, and that she has introduced religion for the reason which Brandes assigns to all the romanticists who use the church, "a parade for religion, a tool for the politician, a lyre for the poet, a symbol for the philosopher, a fashion for the man of the world."  

2. Ibid., p. 81  
The convent which appears in each story, is brought in only to furnish shelter to travelers who have lost their way, to shield a maiden from tyrannous pursuers, or to imprison her to await the pleasure of an intriguing aunt. A suitable occasion presented, the author makes the most of her opportunity, and portrays the church as it existed in her own day,—sometimes a body of true, good and religious souls, again, merely a covering for iniquity. An exposition of the decay of this organization occurs during the search of the Duke and Ricardo for Julia. "After much wandering and difficulty, they arrived overcome with weariness, at the gates of a large and gloomy fabric.......................... They became convinced it was the monastery they had sought, and the Duke himself struck loudly upon the gate. Several minutes elapsed, no person appeared, and he repeated the stroke. A step was presently heard within, the gate was unbarred, and a thin shivering figure presented itself. The Duke solicited admission, but was refused, and reprimanded for disturbing the convent at the sacred hour of prayer.......................... he had almost closed the gate, when the Duke, whom hunger and fatigue made desperate, rushed by him, and passed into the court.......................... he had not proceeded far when the sound of laughter, and of many voices in loud and mirthful jollity, attracted his steps..........................
"He unclosed the door, and beheld in a large room, well-lighted,
a company of friars, dressed in the habit of their order, placed round a table which was profusely spread with wines and fruits. The Superior, whose habit distinguished him from his associates, appeared at the head of the table. He was lifting a large goblet of wine to his lips, and was roaring out, 'Pro-
fusion and confusion,' at the moment when the Duke entered.
His appearance caused a general alarm. . . . . . .
the Superior, dropping the goblet from his hands, endeavored to assume a look of austerity which his rosy countenance belied. The Duke received a reprimand, delivered in the lisping ac-
cents of intoxication, and embellished with frequent inter-
jections of hiccup. . . . . . . When the Superior understood the distinction of his quest, his features relaxed into a smile of joyous welcome; and, taking him by the hand, he placed him by his side.............. . . . . . . . .
we had been told that the enjoyment of the good things of this life was the surest sign of the gratitude of Heaven; and it appeared, that within the walls of a Sicilian monastery, the precept and the practice were equally enforced.  

Occasionally one of these houses by the wayside protects kindly the helpless heroine, as does the sanctuary of Our Lady of Pity when it opens its doors to Ellen.  There is as vast a difference in the characters of the Monks and nuns as in the nature of the various church institutions.

2. Ibid., p. 695.
The picture of the religious organization is interesting and is true, but it is not more characteristic of churches in medieval times than in the eighteenth century.

Mrs. Radcliffe touches on only one side of the art subject, the architecture; unless the drawing fad prevalent among the girls could be called art. Her Corot-like landscapes are almost real enough to be admitted under this head and fail only because they are written in ink instead of in oil, in spirit they are beautiful pictures. Architecture here is found to apply only to the ancient Gothic structures, which became popular in the latter part of the eighteenth century, as material for romantic writers. In his "History of the Gothic Revival," Eastlake says of Horace Walpole that his "Castle of Otranto" was perhaps the first modern work of fiction which depended for its interest on the incidents of a chivalrous age, and it thus became the prototype of that class of novel which was afterward imitated by Mrs. Radcliffe and perfected by Sir Walter Scott......the castle itself, with its moats and drawbridge, its gloomy dungeons and solemn corridors."¹

Of all artists at that time Anne Radcliffe stands unexcelled as a painter of picturesque ruins and of old castles. The love for these ancient edifices was a characteristic from her childhood, and in travels with her husband she enjoyed them, and employed in her novels descriptions of many she

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had seen, long before she wrote accounts of them in her journals for publication. The first sentence of the first chapter of her first novel tells of the castle of Athlin, an edifice built on the summit of a rock, "this pile was venerable from its antiquity, and from its Gothic structure." ¹ All the characters except peasants live in these stately structures, and the mountain sides and lonely roads are dotted with them. In appearance they belong to one general class, and possess few distinguishing features, except that they are in various stages of decay.

As in the "Castle of Otranto," and "The Old English Baron," the real hero of the story is commonly some haunted building, ² so in the "Mysteries of Udolpho" it is a castle in the Apennines; in the "Romance of the Forest," a deserted abbey in the depth of the woods; in "The Italian," the cloister of the Black Penitents. These Gothic structures possess the machinery necessary to such romances. They have trap-doors, secret chambers, underground passages just as did Otranto, and they possess, furthermore, a picturesqueness that was lacking in Walpole's work.

The castle which sheltered the La Motte household makes an interesting study. ".......the Gothic remains of an abbey; it stood on a kind of rude lawn, overshadowed by high and spreading trees, which seemed coeval with the building, and diffused a romantic gloom around. The greater part of

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the pile appeared to be sinking into ruin, and that which had
withstood the ravages of time, showed the remaining features
more awful in decay. The lofty battlements, thickly enwreathed
with ivy, were half demolished and became the residence of
birds of prey. Huge fragments of the eastern tower, which was
almost demolished, lay scattered amid the high grass, that
waved slowly to the breeze, the thistle shook its lonely head; the moss whistled to the wind. A Gothic gate, richly ornamented
with fret-work opened into the main body of the edifice, but
which was now obstructed with brush-wood, remained entire.
Above the vast and magnificent portal of this gate arose a
window of the same order, whose pointed arches still exhibited
fragments of stained glass, once the pride of monkish devotion.1

The interior of the same "shews a narrow staircase that wound a-
round the tower; but La Motte, observing the second door, drew
back the rusty bolts, and entered a spacious apartment, which
from its style and condition, was evidently of a much later
date than the other part of the structure . . . . . . . . .
they passed on to a suite of apartments resembling the first
they had seen, and expressed their surprise at the incongruous
appearance of this part of the edifice with the mouldering
walls they had left behind. Those apartments conducted them to
a winding passage that received light and air through narrow
cavities, placed high in the wall,"2 and so continue innumerable

1. (Quoted from Ossian).
3. Ibid., p. 84.
vaulted chambers connected by narrow passages with bolted doors. In general features the castle repeats itself throughout the five novels,—but the castle of Udolpho stands pre-eminent as a twilight picture. "Emily gazed with melancholy awe upon the castle, . . . . . . . . for, though it was now lighted up by the setting sun, the Gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark gray stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. . . . . . . The light cied away on its walls, leaving a melancholy purple tint, which spread deeper and deeper, as the thin vapour crept up the mountain, while the battlements above were still tipped with splendour. From those, too, the rays soon faded, and the whole edifice was invested with the common darkness of evening. Silent, lonely, and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene, and to frown defiance on all who dared to invade its solitary reign. As the twilight deepened, its features became more awful in obscurity, . . . . . . . till its clustering towers were alone seen over the tops of the woods . . . . . . the gloom that overspread it, allowed her to distinguish little more than a part of its outline, with the mossy walls of the ramparts, and to know that it was ancient, vast and dreary. . . . The gateway leading into the courts, was of gigantic size, and was defended by two round towers, crowned by overhanging turrets, embattled, where, instead of banners, now waved long grass and wild plants, that had taken root among the mouldering stones, and which seemed to sigh, as the breezes
rolled past, over the desolation around them. The towers were united by a curtain, pierced and embattled also, below which appeared the pointed arch of a huge portcullis, surmounting the gates; from these, the walls of the ramparts extended to other towers, overlooking the precipice, whose shattered outline, appearing on a gleam that lingered in the west, told of the ravages of war. Beyond these all was lost in obscurity.

In no instance does the love for the Gothic allow Mrs. Radcliffe to develop a remodelled castle, surrounded with artificial gardening and waterfalls as that at Strawberry Hill; for her it must remain the old ruin with its vine covered walls, deep set among stately hills in a recess in the mountain side. She is most truly romantic in thus ignoring the pseudo-romantic in architecture and returning to the genuine medieval.

That broadest and most beautiful side of romanticism, the Love for Nature, is developed for the first time in English fiction, in "The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne;" and nowhere in all fiction has it received a more sympathetic treatment than in the works of Mrs. Radcliffe. With a mind keen and observing, and a temperament sensitive to the highest degree, she lived in a state of ecstacy in the presence of nature. The women in her novels, who are her own counterparts, and the men too, in fact all who are good, look on nature with the same reverence as does their creator. It may be of interest to consider her treatment of the natural setting as to location,

the paucity of city scenes, the love of rural life, the pleasure in quiet moonlight nights and the delight in the grand and unusual in nature.

Definite geographical locations are assigned as follows:

"Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne," The Scottish highlands,
"The Sicilian romance," Island of Sicily,
"The Romance of the Forest," France,
"The Mysteries of Udolpho," France, Italy and the Pyrenees mountains,
"The Italian," Italy,
"Gaston de Blondeville," Kenilworth Castle.

Sicily and France furnished as setting before the author had even visited the continent, and although the "Mysteries of Udolpho" and "The Italian" appeared after her visit to France, she continued to place them in lands she was never to see, in Italy and the Pyrenees. Ignorance of these countries does not seem to have disturbed her, for here, as elsewhere, the setting is in reality that of England and the Scottish border, with, perhaps, a few additional crags and waterfalls among the mountains, and balmy air and canals for Italy and Venice.

As a rule these scenes are original and characteristic of their author; an exception may be made in the case of a river and mountain view which recalls that already quoted in this thesis from "La Nouvelle Héloïse." ¹ The following is from "The Mysteries of Udolpho:"

¹ Vide supra. p.17.
confined by stupendous walls of rock, grey and barren, except where shrubs fringed their summits, or patches of meagre vegetation tinted their recesses, in which the wild goat was frequently browsing, and now the way led to the lofty cliffs, from whence the landscape was seen extending in all its magnificence. Emily could not restrain her transport as she looked over the pine forests of the mountains upon the vast plains, that, enriched with woods, towers, blushing vines, and plantations of almonds, palms, and olives, stretched along, till their various colours melted in distance into one harmonious hue, that seemed to unite earth with heaven. Through the whole of the glorious scene the Garonne wandered; descending from its source among the Pyrenees, and winding its blue waves toward the Bay of Biscay.1

Sir Walter Scott, in his Prefatory Memoir to the Ballantyne Collection of her novels, although he devotes only a few lines to comment on this appreciation of nature, remarks that Mrs. Radcliffe's beautiful descriptions of foreign scenery, "composed solely from the materials afforded by travellers, collected, and embodied by her own genius, were marked to a peculiar degree with the characteristics of fancy portraits."2 It is due perhaps to this fact that the passages in her diary, recording these travels, are much superior in the truthfulness and local color of their nature sketching to those in her novels.

2. Ibid., p. XXXIV.
The Augustan Age presents "the man of the world," a conformist to the conventions of society, and bored by the country; this absence of appreciation of nature prevails in the eighteenth century as is shown by a letter written by Pope to Mrs. J. Cowper in 1722, in which he says, "I . . . . wish you may love the town. . . . . these many years. It is time enough to like or affect to like, the country, when one is out of love with all but one's self."¹ The new school of romanticism discovered the country, and turned from society to the worship of nature and solitude. Although a suggestion of this tendency manifested itself in poetry as early as the second quarter of the century it did not appear in fiction until 1789.

In her novels Mrs. Radcliffe avoided urban scenes, and when occasionally compelled to introduce them, she escaped again to the country as soon as possible. In her treatment of the town, it was almost universally the seat of crime whose allurements all good persons fled. "Since La Luc would not reside in France, Theodore and Adeline, to whom the splendid gaieties that courted them at Paris were very inferior temptations to the sweet domestic pleasures and refined society which Seloncourt would afford, determined to accompany

La Luc and Monsieur and Madame Verneuil abroad.\(^1\) The Sicilian Romance furnishes an illustration of the depraved character who sought the city, in the Marquis de Mazzine, "an arrogant and impetuous man, whose heart was dead to paternal tenderness," and whose present lady "was too volatile to attend to domestic concerns." \(\ldots\) "He quitted Mazzine soon after his second marriage for the gaieties and splendor of Naples."\(^2\)

The love of rural life and scenes is evident in all worthy characters; Monsieur St. Aubert is an example of one who consciously chose it as superior to the crowded city streets, for we are told that "he had known life in other forms than those of pastoral simplicity, having mingled in the gay and in the busy scenes of the world; but the flattering portrait of mankind, which his heart had delineated in early youth, his experience had too sorrowfully corrected. Yet, amidst the changing visions of life, his principles remained unshaken, his benevolence unchilled; and he retired from the multitude, more in pity than in anger, to scenes of simple nature. \(\ldots\) \ldots\ He had been attached to the spot from his infancy. He had often made excursions to it when a boy. \(\ldots\)

The green pastures, along which he had so often bounded in the exultation of health, and youthful freedom—the woods, under whose refreshing shade he had first indulged that pensive melancholy, which afterwards made a strong feature of his

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2. Ibid., p. 4.
character—the wild walks of the mountains, the river, on whose waves he had floated, and the distant plains, which seemed boundless as his early hopes—were never after remembered with St. Aubert but with enthusiasm. ¹ He sighs to think that nature and simplicity are now so little known to the world, which, he says, ridicules a passion which it seldom feels; "its scenes and its interests, distract the mind, deprave the taste, corrupt the heart; and love cannot exist in a heart that has lost the meek dignity of innocence. Virtue and taste are nearly the same; for virtue is little more than active taste; and the most delicate affections of each combine in real love. How then are we to look for love in great cities, where selfishness, dissipation, and insincerity, supply the place of tenderness, simplicity, and truth"?²

Nature serves as a solace for the ills of life and soothes the troubled heart after the bursts of violent emotions to which it was subject. The pale moonlight and gentle waves quiet the throbbing brain and restless spirit. These scenes are likely to occur at sunset, oftentimes continuing as it gradually emerges from the dying light of day to the rising of the moon.

"She was particularly fond of walking in the woods, that hung on a promontory overlooking the sea. Their luxuriant shade was soothing to her pensive mind; and, in the partial views

². Ibid., p. 245.
which they afforded of the Mediterranean, with its winding shores and passing sails, tranquil beauty was united with grandeur. ... Beneath this deep umbrage, the eye passed over the tops of the woods to the Mediterranean; and, to the left through an opening, was seen a ruined watch-tower, standing on a point of rock, near the sea, and rising from among the tufted foliage. ... one evening she lingered here to a late hour; ... watching, in tranquil melancholy, the gradual effect of evening over the extensive prospect, till the grey waters of the Mediterranean, and the mossy woods, were almost the only features of the scene that remained visible; when, as she gazed alternately on these, and on the mild blue of the heavens, where the first pale star of evening appeared she personified the hour in the following 'lines':  

Next to twilight the hour of midnight is pleasing, the troubled sleeper then enjoys the death-like stillness or the hootings of a solitary owl. "The night was so calm that no sound could have escaped; but she heard only the plaintive sweetness of the nightingale, with the light shiver of the leaves."  

The dawn, too, is pleasing, for with its freshness it dispels the brooded sorrow. "The faint light of day now trembled through the clouds, and, gradually spreading from the horizon, announced the rising sun. Every feature of the landscape was slowly unveiled, moist with the dews of

2. Ibid., p. 292.
night and brightening with the dawn, till at length the sun appeared, and shed the full light of day. The beauty of the hour invited her to walk, and she went forth into the forest to taste the sweets of morning. The carols of new-waked birds saluted her as she passed, and the fresh gale came scented with the breath of flowers, whose tints glowed more vivid through the dew-drops that hung on their leaves.

"She wandered on without noticing the distance, and, following the winding of the river, came to a dewy glade, whose woods sweeping down to the very edge of the water, formed a scene so sweetly romantic, that she seated herself at the foot of a tree, to contemplate its beauty. These images insensibly soothed her sorrow, and inspired her with that pleasing melancholy, so dear to the feeling mind. For some time she sat lost in reverie, while the flowers that grew on the bank beside her, seemed to smile in new life, and drew from her a comparison with her own condition. She mused and sighed, and then, in a voice whose charming melody was modulated by the tenderness of her heart, she sung the following words--

'TO THE LILY'.

'Soft silken flower! that in the dewey vale
Unfolds thy modest beauties to the morn,
And breath'st thy fragrance on her wand'ring gale,
O'er earth's green hills and shadowy valleys borne.'

These mornings vary only slightly, they all show an enthusiasm for God's world, and they are bright,.

While quiet scenes meet the demands of certain moods, the extreme and unusual in nature most delights the romanticist. Mrs. Radcliffe created lavishly views of the sea, the mountain, the torrent and precipice.

The description of scenes on the water are usually short and lacking in variety, and character. "A dead calm had succeeded the light breeze that wafted them hither... around, the waters were spread into one vast expanse of polished mirror, reflecting the grey cliffs and feathery woods that overhung its surface, the glow of the western horizon, and the dark clouds that came slowly from the east."¹ It is more frequently as an accompaniment of the surrounding cliffs that the sea is portrayed, as is the case in the view of the Mediterranean.²

The Pyrenees furnish the scenes of sublime height. The road from Beaulèrre had constantly ascended, conducting the travellers into "the higher regions of the air, where immense glaciers exhibited their frozen horrors, and eternal snow² whitened the summits of the mountains. They looked over dark forests of fir, and precipices where the human foot had never wandered, into the glen—so deep that the thunder of the torrent which was seen to foam along the bottom was scarcely heard to murmur. Over these crags rose others of stupendous height, and fantastic shape; some shooting into cones; others impending far over their base, in huge masses of

². Suggests Mary Godwin Shelley's "Frankenstein."
granite, along whose broken ridges was often lodged a weight of snow, that, trembling even to the vibration of a sound, threatened to bear destruction in its course to the vale. Around, on every side, far as the eye could penetrate, were only forms of grandeur—the long perspective of mountain-tops, tinged with ethereal blue, or white with snow; valleys of ice, and forests of gloomy fir. The serenity and clearness of the air in these high regions were particularly delightful to the travellers; it seemed to inspire them with a finer spirit, and diffused an indescribable complacency over their minds. They had no words to express the emotions they felt. The deep silence of these solitudes was broken only at intervals by the scream of the vultures, seen cowering round some cliff below, or by the cry of the eagle sailing high in the air; except when the travellers listened to the hollow thunder which sometimes muttered at their feet. While, above, the deep blue of the heavens was unobscured by the lightest cloud, half way down the mountains long billows of vapour were frequently seen rolling, now wholly excluding the country below, and now opening, and partially revealing its features.¹

Natural scenery is not always beautiful nor does it universally soothe the soul. This Ellena learned to her pain when she was hauled over a rough mountain road by kidnappers, she observed that the hills and crags assumed a front as hard and relentless as the hearts of her persecutors. Only pinnacles and vast precipices of marble, intermingled with

scanty vegetation, met her gaze; the stunted pinasters, dwarf oak and holly gave dark touches to the many-coloured cliffs, and stretched in shadowy masses to deep valleys winding away into obscurity, and suggesting curious scenes beyond.

"Along this deep and shadowy perspective, a river which was seen descending among the cliffs of a mountain, rolled with impetuous force, fretting and foaming amidst the dark rocks in its descent, and then flowing in a limpid lapse to the brink of other precipices, whence again it fell with thundering strength to the abyss, throwing its misty clouds of spray high in the air, and seeming to claim the sole empire of this solitary wild. . . . . . The road, therefore, was carried high among the cliffs that impended over the river, and seemed as if suspended in air; while the gloom and vastness of the precipices, which towered above and sunk below it, together with the amazing force and uproar of the falling waters, combined to render the pass more terrific than the pencil could describe, or language can express." 1

Such as the above were the first wild outbursts of enthusiastic appreciation of nature in English story; the tendency is absent from Richardson, it is not to be found in the "Castle of Otranto," even though that was written by one interested early in landscape.

In the memoir of her life and writings, Mrs. Radcliffe's husband recognizes her special sphere, and characterizes he-

romances as forming a class apart from all which had gone before, and unapproached by imitators, and wearing a certain air of antiquity so that they seemed scarcely to belong to the world of reality; and they are a class apart in that they possess that atmosphere of mystery more universally than either of their predecessors, "The Castle of Otranto" and "The Old English Baron." Walpole produced that air of mystery largely by the aid of an immense helmet, a sword which required a hundred men to lift it,—blood dropping from the nose of a statue,—the moving of the eyes in an ancient portrait, and hollow groans, together with the Gothic castle; Clara Reeve also resorts to the supernatural, but in a milder form, Mrs. Radcliffe aims at the same result, but employs slightly different means.

That atmosphere, which evades definition, yet which is essential to every true work of art, pervades these romances; it is a chief essence in the description of the Castle of Udolpho on Emily's first approach; it pervades the forest of Mount-de-Blanc and casts about the castle a dim uncertain light. The scenes from nature, while they supply the most noble and vigorous ideas for producing a general effect, leave the task of tracing a distinct and accurate outline to the imagination; a haze hangs over the landscapes, softening the scene, adding interest and dignity to particular parts and thereby producing that effect desired, but without communica-


2. Vide supra, p. 68.
ting an absolutely precise or individual image; in the same way is the story itself enveloped in mystery.

It seems that the principal object of this terror-creating woman, was to fan into a flame that spark of certain superstitious dread of the world unknown, which exists in every heart; she calculated to raise powerful emotions of surprise, awe and especially terror, by means and agents apparently supernatural. Amid scenes which strongly excite the imagination, dim forests, "Gothic castles, gloomy abbeys, subterranean passages, the haunts of banditti, the sobbing of the wind, and howling of the storm, are all employed for the purpose,"¹ In such surroundings of solitude and darkness, a beautiful but unprotected heroine is ensnared by the blackest of villains, is haunted by low-whispered sounds and by obscure glimpses of shadowy objects moving in the dim distance.

Mrs. Kadcliffe differs from her predecessors in that she can successfully hold the reader's interest throughout five volumes, while the mystery and the terror of Walpole grow wearisome in one short book. She differs again in that she refrained absolutely from the use of the supernatural, except in one work which she never intended for the public eye. This last trait is to be accounted to her discredit rather than her praise, because the long drawn out explanation, so conscientiously attended to, tries the patience of even the most faithful reader. Almost better would it have been for

the veiled picture to remain shrouded in mystery to the end, than that the powerful interest aroused through hours of breathless wonder and speculation should be dashed to pieces by the appearance of a wax figure.

Scene in the Castle of Udolpho; characters, Emily and her maid Annette; Emily passing the light hastily over several pictures came to one concealed by a veil of black silk. "The singularity of the circumstances struck her, and she stopped before it, wishing to remove the veil, and examine what could thus carefully be concealed, but somewhat wanting courage.

"Holy Virgin! What can this mean"? exclaimed Annette. "This is surely the picture they told me of at Venice."

"What picture"? said Emily.---"Why a picture--a picture," replied Annette, hesitatingly; "but I never could make out exactly what it was about either."

"Remove the veil, Annette."

"What! I, ma'amelle! - I! not for the world!" Emily, turning round, saw Annette's countenance grow pale. "And, pray, what have you heard of this picture, to terrify you so, my good girl "? said she.---"Nothing, ma'amelle; I have heard nothing, only let us find our way out. . . . . . . . . . . . . only I have heard there is something very dreadful belonging to it--and that it has been covered up in black ever since--and that nobody has looked at it for a great many years--and it somehow has to do with the owner of the castle, before Signor Montoni came to the possession of it--and--. . . . ."¹

¹ Ballentyne: Vol. x, p. 328.
Another day Annette tells of the former mistress of Udolpho. Now it was not Signor Montoni's always, nor his father's, no: but, "by some law or other, it was to come to the Signor if the lady died unmarried. . . they called her Signora Laurentini. She was very handsome, and was also very melancholy and unhappy and used to walk upon the terrace, then under the windows; and once late in the year, this grand lady walked out of the castle into the woods below, all alone; the wind blew cold, and whistled dismally about; they saw her go down among the woods, but night came and she did not return; they searched all night long, but could not find any trace of her; and, from that day to this, ma'am, she has never been heard of. . . . But they do say, she added, lowering her voice, they do say, that the Signora has been seen, several times since, walking in the woods, and about the castle in the night. . . . . But did nobody speak to her, said Emily? Speak--speak to her! cried Annette, with a look of terror, 'What, speak to a spirit!' Her curiosity so aroused, Emily resolved to examine the veiled picture. "As she passed through the chambers that led to this, she found herself somewhat agitated, its connection with the late lady of the castle, and the conversation of Annette, together with the circumstances of the veil, throwing a mystery over the object that excited a faint degree of terror. . . . . . .
Emily passed on with faltering steps, and having paused a moment at the door, before she attempted to open it, she then hastily entered the chamber, and went towards the picture, which appeared to be enclosed in a frame of uncommon size, that hung in a dark part of the room. She paused again, and then, with a timid hand, lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall—perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture, and before she could leave the chamber, she dropped senseless on the floor."¹

For two hundred pages following, the desire for explanation grows higher, and comes down with a thud when the secret is revealed in the last of the book.

"... on lifting the curtain, there appeared, instead of the picture she had expected, within a recess of the wall, a human figure, of ghastly paleness, stretched at its length, and dressed in the habiliments of the grave. What added to the horror of the spectacle, was, that the face appeared partly decayed and disfigured by worms, which were visible on the features and hands. On such an object it will be readily believed that no person could endure to look twice. Emily, it may be recollected, had, after the first glance, let the veil drop, and her terror had prevented her from ever after provoking a renewal of such suffering as she had experienced.

¹ Had she dared to look again, her delusion and fears would

have vanished together, and she would have perceived that the figure before her was not human, but formed of wax.\(^1\)

This trick of explanation is carried beyond all bounds of endurance, and after the reader has been duped by having all sights and sounds unusual, explained away, he resolves to be no more deceived; yet the very next incident excites just as much terror and arouses the credence of the gullible, who, after all, is not so much abused, for as a matter of fact her explanations never seem plausible enough to quite solve the mystery. The strange sounds heard and the sights seen are too indelibly stamped on the mind to be blotted out by an artificial explanation.

Radcliffe's romanticism was many sided. Her characters possessed many traits which had been shown clearly in the personality of preceding romantic poets, and which anticipated a further development in the poet of the succeeding generation. She reproduced the old gothic castle perfectly, and was the first novelist to give it a background of natural scenery, and to throw about it an air of mystery, her own invention. Into this combination of setting and character she infused a degree of terror which was for many decades unsurpassed, indeed it is a question whether her romantic thrills and shudders have yet been excelled.

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Such was the contribution of Radcliffe to the fiction of the eighteenth century, fiction which was for the most part saturated with the affairs and manners of contemporary England. Coming as a relief to the realistic novel, her books were seized with avidity. Though they now lie dusty and forgotten, they were once read by everyone. And they once did sell which is evidence of their success. They served their own generation in that they gave pleasure to the people, and prepared the way for the development of a more healthful and vigorous romanticism in Scott and Hawthorne and Stevenson.

CHAPTER V.

THE INFLUENCE OF ANN RADCLIFFE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

"All art is the expression of life in forms of truth and beauty; or rather, it is the reflection of some truth and beauty which are in the world, but which remained unnoticed until called to our attention by some sensitive soul." ¹ Ann Radcliffe was the sensitive soul who saw beauty, and terror too, where the unobserving had seen only barren hillsides and uninteresting ruins; these qualities once brought to mind could never again be ignored, they continued to grow in intensity and breadth, developing in ever increasing circles.

The influence of her love for external nature can never be estimated. Contemporary novelists employed descriptions of the out-door world shortly after they were used by Mrs. Radcliffe. Charlotte Smith ² charmingly introduced scenes from English landscapes shortly after the appearance of "The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne." The members of the then future Lake School of Poets were even during the period of her productivity, turning to the wilds of Westmoreland, which had previously been celebrated by this author in her "Journey through Holland," and it is not improbable that she had a part in directing the minds of the writers of verse as well as the writers of prose. She has had few superiors in the art of poetical landscape, and is interesting as a precursor of that general movement.

² Smith, Charlotte; "The Old Manor House." 1793
towards the delineation and comprehension of external nature, which was to characterize the nineteenth century. It would require an intricate solution to decide just what part of this movement was due to this novelist, and what part should be attributed to those eighteenth century poets who had dared to love the country.

There is another line of development even more striking, as shown by occasional references in old diaries and essays. The popularity of these romances is sufficiently attested by the fact that Joseph Warton, seventy-nine years of age at the time of the publication of "The Mysteries of Udolpho," was so much entranced that he sat up the greater part of the night to finish it."¹ In his Diary, Henry Crabbe Robinson² criticises the author of "Waverly" because his sense of the romantic and picturesque in nature is not so delicate, nor his execution so powerful as Mrs. Radcliffe's.

³ William Hazlitt criticises her characterless heroes, but attributes to her influence his love of moonlight, and of the mysterious.

Leigh Hunt honors her with a place in "A Book for a Corner; or Selections in Prose and Verse from Authors the best suited to that mode of enjoyment."⁴ He agrees with Hazlitt

and with Scott in pronouncing the Provençal tale followed by the mysterious disappearance of Ludovico the greatest treat which Mrs. Radcliffe's pen has provided for the lover of the marvellous and the terrible, and he accords to it a place in his collection of stories.

Thomas Moore was not uninfluenced by these works for he writes in his Memoirs, "During a great part of this happy vacation I remained on a visit with my young friend Burston, at his father's country seat; and then reading Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, and listening, while I read to Hayden's music." ¹

The path of the successful writer is by no means smooth, and though the romances were popular, praise of Mrs. Radcliffe was not universal even in her own day. In writing of the novels and novelists of the eighteenth century, one critic says "I say nothing of such romances as "The Castle of Otranto" of Horace Walpole, which some think intended as a burlesque, and "The Old English Baron" of Clara Reeve, and "The Romance of the Forest" and "The Mysteries of Udolpho" of Mrs. Radcliffe. They are too unreal to be of any service to my purpose, and it is enough to say that no young gentleman or young lady of the present day is likely to be frightened at night and disturbed in sleep by reading these shadowy horrors." ² Yet he devotes three pages to satirizing the romances of the last named author.

Jane Austen was one of the first to rebel against the turn the romances had taken, and in "Northanger Abbey," written

in 1796, she spends much effort in caricaturing their prominent features; indeed, her novel might almost be called a parody on "The Mysteries of Udolpho." Throughout the book this farce is carried on; it is not confined to the "Mysteries" alone, but the author herself is often ridiculed. The spirit of censure is found in the first chapter in the description of the heroine, who possessed few traces of the rare qualities so generously attributed to the girls in the preceding novel. It is much easier to make sport of the work of another, than to produce an original idea. Miss Austin has chosen the simpler task and has succeeded admirably.

Books furnish a topic for the conversation of the young people.

"Have you ever read 'Udolpho,' Mr. Thorpe?"

"'Udolpho! oh, Lord! not I; I never read novels; I have something else to do."

"Catherine, humbled and ashamed, was going to apologize for her question; but he prevented her by saying, 'Novels are all so full of nonsense and stuff! there has not been a tolerably decent one come out since "Tom Jones," except "The Monk;" I read that t'other day; but as for all the others, they are the stupidest things in creation."

"I think you must like 'Udolpho,' if you were to read it; it is so very interesting."

"Not I, faith! no, if I read any it shall be Mrs. Radcliffe's; her novels are amusing enough; they are worth reading; some fun and nature in them."
"'Udolpho' was written by Mrs. Radcliffe," said Catherine with some hesitation."

In her visit to Northanger Abbey Catherine vainly tries to arouse the sentiments of Udolpho, which would have been in keeping with the storm raging without. "She looked round the room. The window curtains seemed in motion. It could be nothing but the violence of the wind penetrating through the divisions of the shutters; and she stepped boldly forward, carelessly humming a tune, to assure herself of its being so, peeped courageously behind each curtain, saw nothing on either low window-seat to scare her, and on placing a hand against the shutter, felt the strongest conviction of the wind's force. A glance at the old chest, as she turned away from this examination, was not without its use; she scorned the causeless fears of an idle fancy,..... on giving a parting glance round the room, she was struck by the appearance of a high old-fashioned black cabinet, which though in a situation conspicuous enough, had never caught her notice before...... she could not sleep till she had examined it.

So, placing the candle with great caution on a chair, she seized the key with a very tremulous hand, and tried to turn it, but it resisted her utmost strength. Alarmed, but not discouraged, she tried it another way. A bat flew, and she believed herself successful; but how strangely mysterious! the door was still immoveable. She paused a moment in breathless wonder. The wind roared down the chimney, the rain beat in torrents against the

windows, and everything seemed to speak the awfulness of her situation. To retire to bed, however, unsatisfied on such a point, would be vain, since sleep must be impossible with the consciousness of a cabinet so mysteriously closed in her immediate vicinity. Again, therefore, she applied herself to the key, and after moving it in every possible way, for some instants, with the determined celerity of hope's last effort, the door suddenly yielded to her hand; her heart leaped with exultation at such a victory, and having thrown open each folding door, the second being secured only by bolts of less wonderful construction than the lock, though in that her eye could not discover anything unusual, a double range of small drawers above and below them, and in the center, a small door, closed also with lock and key, secured in all probability a cavity of importance."

With much difficulty, and after many flutterings of the heart and trembling of the knees she succeeded in opening other drawers and apartments, and not in vain was her search, "her quick eyes directly fell on a roll of papers pushed back into the further part of the cavity, apparently for concealment, and her feelings at that moment were indescribable......she seized, with an unsteady hand, the precious manuscript, for half a glance sufficed to ascertain written characters." Unfortunately her candle failed her at that critical moment, and not until morning was she able to peruse the manuscript, which consisted entirely of small disjointed sheets. "Her greedy eye glanced rapidly over a page. She started at its import. Could it be possible, or did not her senses play her false? An inventory
of linen, in coarse and modern characters seemed all that was before her! If the evidences of sight might be trusted. She held a washing-bill in her hand."\(^1\)

"The visions of romance were over"\(^2\) but not until they had served Miss Austen in thoroughly satirizing the love of the strange and the terrible. As her province lay in the portrayal of eighteenth century domestic life, it is natural that in the study of this petty, provincial world she opposed the impossible situations and strained emotions of the romanticists; but even then it was most unbecoming in her to satirize in this drastic fashion so shy, timid and unobtrusive a soul as Mrs. Radcliffe.

Although he later requites her for his slings, Sir Walter Scott does not spare Mrs. Radcliffe. In his introductory chapter to "Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty years Since," he explains at length his reason for choosing this particular title, "an uncontaminated name bearing with its sound little of good or evil."..... he continues, "Had I, for example, announced in my frontispiece, Waverley, a Tale of Other Days, must not every novel reader have anticipated a castle scarce less than that Udolpho, of which the eastern wing had long been uninhabited, and the keys either lost, or consigned to the care of some aged butler or housekeeper, whose trembling steps, about the middle of the second volume, were doomed to guide the hero, or heroine, to the ruinous precincts? Would not the owl have shrieked and

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2. Ibid., p. 190
the cricket cried in my very title-page? And could it have been possible, for me, with a modest attention to decorum, to introduce any scene more lively than might be produced by the jocularity of a clownish but faithful valet, or the garrulous narrative of the heroine's fille-de-chambre, when rehearsing the stories of blood and horror which she had heard in the servants' hall? 

This slight is due to no unjust depreciation of the works of Radcliffe, but rather to the different view held by the respective authors. Sir Walter who was a thorough-going romanticist probably felt inclined to reprobate the concessions made by Mrs. Radcliffe in her efforts to explain the strangest occurrences by accidents within the realm of human possibility; yet, after all, the reference to Udolpho indicates truly the feeling of the times and testifies to the wide-spread popularity of these novels.

Another testimony of the popularity of these romances occurs in "English Humorists," where Thackeray says that a lady of his acquaintance, an inveterate novel reader, names Valancourt as one of the favorite heroes of her youth. 

In discussing the element of the terrible, in his correspondence with William Godwin, Lamb replies, to the objection that certain things in Ulysses are nauseous but true, "Speaking as an author to an author, I must say that I think the terrible in those two passages seems to me so much to preponderate

on the nauseous, as to make them rather fine than disgusting. Who is to read them--I don't know; who is it that reads Tales of Terror and Mysteries of Udolpho? Such things sell." 1

In another connection Lamb ranks the creations of Mrs. Radcliffe with the folk-lore; in speaking of "The Danger of Confounding Moral with Personal Deformity," he says, "The tales of our nursery,--the reading of our youth,--the ill-looking man that was hired by the uncle to dispatch the children in the woods,--the grim ruffians who smothered the babes in the Tower,--the black and beetle-browed assassin of Mrs. Radcliffe,--the shag-haired villain of Mr. Monk Lewis,--the Tarquin tread, the mill-stone dropping eyes, of murder in Shakespeare." 2

Not only was the reading of these romances a popular fad at the time of their appearance, but it continued long after their maker had ceased to write, and they live in the works of others even when they are no more read themselves. Walpole, Reeve, and Radcliffe, of whom the last named is by no means the least, made a school which has found many admirers and has given a vast deal of pleasure. The School of Terror, for so this group of romances is called, was founded on wrong principles and could not endure; "it is impossible for the mind to enjoy the supernatural while it is chained down to everyday life by realistic description of scenes and persons, and it is

equally impossible to permanently please by fear-inspiring narratives, when the reader is aware that all the while there is no sufficient cause for the hero's terror." ¹ In spite of adverse criticism, vast contributions to literature can be traced to the influence of this school.

The success of this new form of fiction was immense. "The public taste grew by what it fed on, and numberless romances appeared, in which no attempt was made to paint any single aspect of human life with fidelity or truth. The more horrible and blood curdling the tale, and the more abnormal and monstrous the action in it, the more certain was the author of success. Yet it must be remembered that, however crudely and coarsely this new romantic spirit expressed itself, it possessed the secret of genuine literary impulse."² The list of the exponents of the School of Terror is long; beginning with Matthew Gregory Lewis, it includes such men as Poe, Hawthorne and Stevenson.

"Monk" Lewis,—so called from the immense success of his story "The Monk" (1795)—deals in crude horror with a hand much less scrupulous than Mrs. Radcliffe's. As the name indicates, the theme is connected with the Roman Catholic Church; it is enacted in Madrid. The plot rests on the romances of two handsome youths, and two innocent and beautiful girls who were plotted against by cruel and conscienceless officers of the church. The Mother Abbess and the "Monk" Ambrosio were the

chief executors of destruction; Ambrosio being assisted in
his desire for all that is sensual in this world by one of the
'brothers,' who is in reality a demon with supernatural power,
in the form of a woman, masked as a man. Antonia and Agnes, who
share honors as heroines, are innocent and delicate and pretty,—
their lovers are good and true; aside from these particulars the
book presents nothing that is elevating or worthy of admiration.
Here the maidens do not, as in Radcliffe, escape by the hair's
breadth, but they suffer the most ignominious and disgraceful
tortures, inflicted by their persecutors. These tortures are
described in a most revolting manner by the author, who delights
in depicting incidents unfit for books, and which add to the
terror a tone of vulgarity, and rob it of the faintest possi-
Bility of being classed as art. "The Monk," while it suggests
the style of "Frankenstein" soon to follow, outdoes it in ghastly
detail, but lacks the psychological and pseudo-scientific in-
terest of the latter.

In a conversation Lord Byron remarked that among ro-
mances, "The Monk" is perhaps one of the best in any language.
"It only wanted one thing as I told Lewis, to have rendered it
perfect. He should have made the demon really in love with Am-
бросio; this would have given it a human interest."¹

We should rejoice that it escaped being any more typical of hu-
manity and real life, for it is terrible enough as it stands.

It resembles in many ways the romances of Radcliffe,—

¹. Medwin, Thomas; "Conversation of Byron." London. 1824.
p. 229
plot, characters, and incidents are fairly representative, but it goes beyond the bounds of the latter in that it resorts to the supernatural by the introduction of the ghost of the bleeding nun. Further, "The Monk" does not stop with intimation or even suggestion of crime, it records the complete performance of the deed, and gloats over each point of description; it does not cease with the completion, but continues that description of evil past all bounds of reason and endurance, as in the instance of the death of the babe of Agnes. "But my grief was unavailing, my infant was no more; nor could all my sighs impart to the little tender form the breath of a moment. I rent my winding-sheet and wrapped in it my lovely child. I placed it on my bosom, the soft arms folded round my neck, and its pale cold cheek rested upon mine. Thus did its lifeless limbs repose while I covered it with kisses, talked to it, wept, and moaned over it without remission day or night.....I vowed not to part with it while I had life; its presence was my only comfort, and no persuasion could induce me to give it up.....I endeavored to retrace its features through the livid corruption with which they were overspread. Thus did I drag on a miserable existence. Far from growing familiar with my prison, I beheld it every moment with new horror. The cold seemed more piercing and bitter,

2. The fact that the eye of the bleeding nun had the power of the rattlesnake suggests an almost purely scientific novel of the last century, "Elsie Venner," by Oliver Wendell Holmes.
the air more thick and pestilential....My slumbers were constantly interrupted by some obnoxious insect crawling over me. Sometimes I felt the bloated toad, hideous and pampered with the poisonous vapours of the dungeon, dragging his loathsome length along my bosom; sometimes the quick cold lizard roused me, leaving his slimy track upon my face, and entangling itself in the tresses of my wild and matted hair. Often have I at waking found my fingers ringed with the long worms which bred in the corrupted flesh of my infant. At such time, I shrieked with terror and disgust, and while I shook off the reptile, trembled with all a woman's weakness.¹

It is not needful to dwell further on a work devoid of beauty and art, in order to see to what lengths the extravagance of conception may lead a writer.

Charles Robert Maturin (1682-1824), novelist and dramatist adds his contribution to the tales of terror. He characterizes the nature of his literary talent as follows: "If I possess any talent, it is that of darkening the gloomy, and of deepening the sad; of painting life in extremes, and representing those struggles of passion when the soul trembles on the verge of the unlawful and the unhallowed." He might in addition have credited himself with eloquence and reproached himself with a lack of artistic instinct and constructive skill; on the whole his horrors are too purely physical.²

He pursues much the same method as Mrs. Radcliffe. In "The Fatal Revenge, or the Family of Montorio" (1807) he employs the manuscript device in an exaggerated form; here are the closing words of a document discovered by one of the characters in that work;--"was that shriek fancy?--again, again impossible! beneath the turret..."What is this they tell me?" The most instantaneous and agitating of experiences, down to the death gasp, are duly recorded on parchment, and stored away in a vault to await an appropriate discovery.

Percy Bysshe Shelley, while still a boy of sixteen at Eton, wrote a crude romance, "Zastrozzi," in imitation of Mrs. Radcliffe. Hardly a sentence in the book fails to furnish traces of its predecessors. A "battlemented castle built in the Gothic style of architecture" is occupied by Laurentine and Ferdinand, a crime is attempted on a "remote and desolate heath," and the hero chained to a rock in a dark cavern wastes away while the worms twine themselves in his long and matted hair and the stirring lizard crosses his naked and motionless limbs. Although written in perfectly good faith this book is a more perfect caricature of the romance, than even "Northanger Abbey," the very eagerness of its youthful author inspired it with this exaggeration in a high degree. Each paragraph abounds with expressions of an ultra-romantic character, which would have been avoided by a more mature author.

2. Names occurring in Radcliffe's "The Mystery of Udolpho" and "The Sicilian Romance."
4. Ibid., p. 8. This remark suggests Lewis's "Monk."
In direct line of development comes "Frankenstein." In 1816 while on his way to Italy "Monk" Lewis sojourned for a space with Byron and the Shellesys in their Swiss retreat and set the company to composing goblin stories; the most remarkable outcome of this queer symposium was Mrs. Shelley's abnormal romance.¹ She explains that her purpose was to produce a ghost story which would speak to "the mysterious fears of our nature, and awaken thrilling horror--one to make the reader dread to look around, to curdle the blood, and quicken the beatings of the heart;"² she says further, that a discussion of Darwin led up to the story. Frankenstein is a young philosopher who in his search for knowledge creates life, out of the horrid remnants of the church yard and dissecting room, he constructs a kind of monster. He recounts the creation of his dreams." It was a dreary night of November, that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils, with an anxiety that almost amounted to agony I collected the instruments of life around me that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burned out, when, by the glimmer of a half extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creation

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2. Shelley, Mary Godwin: "Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus." London. 1877. p. IX.
open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs." ¹ Conscious of his own deformity, and craving after human sympathy, the monster at first involuntarily and then deliberately seeks vengeance by inflicting the most dreadful retribution on his creator, the guilty philosopher. Frankenstein determines to destroy the work of his science and follows to his death the horrid apparition. The ghostly creature, dead to feelings of pain from cold, leads on among the eternal snows, where it points out the path, and provides for its pursuer just enough food to sustain his life and enable him to drag out, a little longer, his weary existence.

"The Ancient Mariner," is recalled by the voyage and the remark that the voyager will kill no albatross. ² The Swiss background here suggests few scenes such as abound in Radcliffe. It is no doubt true that "Frankenstein" with its morbid and gloomy atmosphere of terror, was descended from "The Mysteries of Udolpho," but such a child as the author of that work would dislike to own. The natural setting, used to bring out the dismal and depressing atmosphere of hatred, is ever lacking in artistic effect and in beauty. Although Elizabeth is sweet, she enters into the story scarcely enough to be called its heroine, and leaves the book without attractive characters. While the authoress has succeeded in producing the effect of

¹ Shelley, "Frankenstein." p. 56.
the horrible, she has omitted to introduce anything beautiful as a contrast. "Frankenstein" contains not the least suggestion that fate may change and a happy moment come to the lives of the characters, but it is predominated throughout by a hard, ever-enduring fatalism.

Although Scott had sneered at "The Mysteries of Udolpho" in "Waverly," he did not fail to see the merits of the author. His heroines resembled those in earlier romances. His scenes from nature, while no more beautiful and lacking in the twilight effect of Mrs. Radcliffe, possessed more character and were used more sparingly. A striking similarity occurs between the tournament scene in "Gaston de Blondeville" and that in "Ivanhoe," the general arrangement, the details mentioned, and even the introduction of the Jew and the Black Knight are much the same; the mysterious thing about it is that although "Gaston de Blondeville" was composed in 1802 it remained unpublished until after the author's death (1823), "Ivanhoe" appearing in 1814. This very coincidence would suggest a great likeness in the taste of the two authors.

The romantic impulse in English Literature was not confined to Great Britain alone, for Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810), the first American to take up letters as a profession, was of a sensitive and imaginative temperament and early responded to the extravagances of the age. His first publication "Alcuin" was a dialogue on the rights of woman.
Fiction was his favorite field and he exhibits a certain genius in his novels; yet, although he holds the attention, on account of absurdities in the plot, he does not altogether command the respect of the reader. He was a lover of nature, and given to solitary meditations amidst romantically gloomy surroundings. Combined with this was his great admiration for the works of Walpole, Radcliffe, "Monk" Lewis and Godwin.

His best known novel, "Wieland," is a narrative deeply enshrouded in an atmosphere of mystery, which is at last dissipated in orthodox fashion by a scientific explanation. The characters of the book, heroes and heroines, forfeit their lives to the wiles of a diabolical ruffian who is merely experimenting with his power as a ventriloquist;—Theodore Wieland, a religious fanatic, murders his wife and children at the bidding of certain "divine voices." That such a thing might happen is possible, but it is so improbable, that the reader is outraged by being imposed on throughout the tale. The nervous, stilted style, the monotonous sentences and the roundabout phrases, can be seen from a short quotation.

Catherine Wieland has been disturbed by a strange sound and awful shriek. "Oh, may my ears lose their sensibility ere they be again assailed by a shriek so terrible! Not merely my understanding was subdued by the sound; it acted on my nerves like an edge of steel. It appeared to cut asunder the fibres of my brain and rack every joint with agony.

"The cry, loud and piercing as it was, was nevertheless
human. No articulation was ever more distinct. The breath which accompanied it did not fan my hair, yet did every circumstance combine to persuade me that the lips which uttered it touched my very shoulder.

"'Hold! hold!' were the words of this tremendous prohibition, in whose tone the whole soul seemed to be wrapped up, and every energy converted into eagerness and terror.

"Shuddering, I dashed myself against the wall, and, by the same involuntary impulse, turned my face backward to examine the mysterious monitor. The moonlight streamed into each window, and every corner of the room was conspicuous, and yet I beheld nothing! .........................................................

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"Which of my senses was the prey of a fatal illusion? The shock which the sound produced was still felt in every part of my frame. The sound, therefore, could not but be a genuine commotion. But that I had heard it was not more true than that the being who uttered it was stationed at my right ear; yet my attendant was invisible.

"I cannot describe the state of my thoughts at that moment. Surprise had mastered my faculties. My frame shook, and the vital current was congealed."¹

Brown serves as an illustration of the decadence of the

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movement, rather than an influential exponent; his works
enthrall the reader in an intense disgust, instead of holding
him entranced, as Radcliffe does.

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) takes up the romance, and
furnishes it not with a background of feudalism and mysticism,
but with certain old superstitions of New England, witchcraft
and demonology, and the pseudo-science of alchemy; he links
with those evidences of the not very remote past a human element,
by means of which he infuses them with an allegorical meaning.
The "Twice Told Tales," which contains legends of the Puritans,
is especially fruitful in this line.

"Edward Randolph's Portrait", from the "Legends of
the Province House", with its veiled picture recalls to mind the
"Mystery of Udolpho." In this case a painting grown dim with
age furnishes subject for conversation, from which it appears by
one of the best accredited accounts, that it was "an original
and authentic portrait of the Evil One, taken at a watch meet-
ing near Salem; and that its strong and terrible resemblance
had been confirmed by several of the confessing wizards and witch-
es, at their trial, in open court. It was likewise affirmed
that the familiar spirit or demon abode behind the blackness
of the picture, and had shown himself, at seasons of public
calamity, to more than one of the royal governors." ¹ This picture

¹ Hawthorne, Nathaniel: "Twice Told Tales."
through the agency of the delicate Alice Vane, is mysteriously no more a solid waste of canvas, but grows clear and starts out of the background so distinctly that it has the appearance of a person looking down from the wall at the astonished and awestricken spectator. "The expression of the face, if any words can convey an idea of it, was that of a wretch detected in some hideous guilt, and exposed to the bitter hatred and laughter and withering scorn of a vast surrounding multitude. There was the strength of defiance, beaten down and overwhelmed by the crushing weight of ignominy. The torture of the soul had come forth upon the countenance. It seemed as if the picture, while hidden behind the cloud of immemorial years, had been all the time acquiring an intense depth and darkness of expression, till now it gloomed forth again and threw the evil omen over the present hour."¹ When dawn came, the figure had fled, spirit-like, and hidden itself behind a century's obscurity, for within the antique frame nothing could be discerned save the impene-trable cloud, which had covered the canvas since the memory of man. In this, as in his numerous other suggestions of the supernatural, Hawthorne neither affirms it nor denies it, but creates the atmosphere of mystery, and leaves the reader to please himself.

The tramp of footsteps in "Old Esther Dudley," is neither supported nor disproved. The scarlet letter, like the mark of shame and seal of sorrow of the damsel in "Christabel" remains a mystery.

¹ "Twice Told Tales." p. 303.
Hawthorne's tales must be admitted to the highest rank even though they differ widely from the early romances. Though many are only a few pages in length, they are not less perfect on this account; lacking in much that others had considered needful for the background of a romance, they are none the less romances, made, not of external trappings and picturesque fancy costumes, but sought out deep down in the soul of man himself. These stories surpass other prose romances and rise to the level of the poetical romance in perfection of form.

While the rule that to every action there is an opposite and equal reaction holds true, it is also certain that the pendulum swings to the very end of the path before it returns. In the school of terror Poe's tales are found to embody the extreme; as illustrations of the grotesque and the horrible there is hardly a better example than "The Black Cat." In artistic atmospheric effect "The Fall of the House of Usher" closely competes with the work of Mrs. Radcliffe; but unfortunately the author of "The Black Cat" did not at all times maintain the high standard set for himself in his poetry and in occasional of his prose tales, and this story illustrates the disintegration of the movement.

In the first sentence Poe departs from the fashion of the founders of the school by remarking that he "neither expects nor solicits belief." His purpose is to place before the world, plainly and succinctly, and without comment, a
series of household events, which in their consequences have terrified, tortured, and destroyed him. Then follows that which scarcely deserves the name of tale, so slight is the plot. The story, told in first person rests on these few facts. "Docile of disposition, and tender of heart, I was especially fond of animals. Among my pets was a cat, Pluto, all black. On account of increasing dissipation, I grew regardless of the feelings of others, abused my wife and ill-used my pets, and in a fit of anger I plucked out one eye of this favorite pet, and hung the poor creature." He relates the unusual phenomenon of the figure of the cat in the moist plaster after the burning of his home; and tells how he found a new cat, like the former, only with a white spot on her neck, which gradually assumed the ghastly image of the Gallows. The animal haunted him day and night and became an incarnate night-mare, incumbent externally upon his heart. One day exasperated beyond endurance by the skulking cat, and by her endeavor to protect the dumb thing, he struck his wife a blow which killed her: "To cover up the crime I sealed her lifeless body up in the wall of the cellar, and found, that the cat too has disappeared and that I was no more troubled by it. On conducting detectives in search of the body through my house, I happened to strike the hollow wall of the basement! No sooner had the reverberation of my blow sunk into silence than I was answered by a voice from within the tomb!--by a cry, at first muffled and broken like the sobbing of a child,
and then quickly swelling into one long, loud, and continuous scream, utterly anomalous and inhuman—a howl—a wailing shriek, half of horror and half of triumph such as might have arisen only out of hell, conjointly from throats of the damned in their agony and of the demons that exult in the damnation.

In a moment a dozen stout arms were toiling at the wall. It fell bodily. The corpse, already greatly decayed and clotted with gore, stood erect before the eyes of the spectators. Upon its head, red with extended and solitary eye of fire, sat the hideous beast whose craft had seduced me into the murder, and whose informing voice had consigned me to the hangman. I had walled the monster up within the tomb."¹ For naked horror "The Black Cat" is not surpassed, but it does not mark the close of the school; indeed no such definite limitations are found, for Poe was succeeded by a writer who was far less extreme than he.

Toward the close of the nineteenth century the works of Robert Louis Stevenson turn our attention again to the land of Scott. He succeeds, by his slight suggestions of setting and characterization, in portraying more realistically than Mrs. Radcliffe. Nor is he compelled to resort to such violent and long-winded means to secure the atmosphere and the effect of the terrible and the strange. "Thrawn Janet," a sketch of fourteen pages, is almost as powerful, and is much

more convincing than the horrors of Udolpho. We are told that there was one spot in the neighborhood which was regarded with especial awe, and that when the morn cam' there was sic a fear fell upon a' Ba'weary that the bairns hid theirsels, and that even the men folks stood and keepit frae their doors. "For there was Janet comin' down the clachan--her or her likeness, nane could tell--with' her neck thrawn, and her heid on ae side, like a body that has been hangit, and a grin on her face like an unstreakit corp." "Seven corbie craws flecin' round the auld kirkyard, pointed out to the minister a man, or the appearance of a man, sittin' ae the inside upon a grave." "he was of a great stature, and black as hell, and his e'en were singular to sec." 2 "He spake never a word; he got upon his feet; and run, hop, step, an' lowp, ower Dule water to the manse. At night-time when the minister entered her room," "Whaten a weary sicht was that for the puir man's een! For there was Janet hangin' frae a nail beside the auld aik cabinet, the tongue projeckit frae her mouth, and her heels were two feet clear abune the floor. 3..........hangin' frae a single nail an' by a single wursted thread fa' darnin't hose. It's an awfu' thing to be your lane at nicht wi' siccon prodigies o' darkness;...........He couldnae pray, he couldnae think, he

2. Ibid. p. 124.
was dreepin' wi' caul' swat, an' nothing could he hear but the
dunt-dunt-duntin' o' his ain heart. He micht maybe have stood
there an hour, or maybe twa, he minded sae little; when a' o'
sudden, he heard a laigh, uncanny steer upstairs; a foot gaed
to an' fro in the chalmer whaur the corp was hengin'; syne the
door was opened, though he mended well that he had lockit it;...
by this time the foot was comin' through the passage for the
door; he could hear a hand skirt along the wa' as if the fear-
some thing was feelin' for its way..... a long sigh cam' ower
the hills, the flame o' the can'le was blawn aboot; an'
there stood the corp of Thrawn Janet, wi' her grograin gown an'
hers black mutch, wi' the heid aye upon the shoulder, an' the
grin still upon the face o't--leerin', ye wad have said, as
Mr. Soulis well kenned......
"She didnae stand there long; she began to move again an' cam'
slowly towards Mr. Soulis where he stood under the sanglis....
It seemed she was goin' to speak, but wanted words, an' made a
sign wi' the left hand. There cam' a clap o' wind, like a cat's
fufi; out ga'ed the can'le, the sanglis skrieghed like folk.....
An' at that moment the Lord's ain hand out o' the Heavens struck
the Horror whaur it stood; the auld, deid, desecrated corp
o' the witch-wife, sae lang keepit frae the grave and brisled
round by deils, lowed up like a brunstane spunk and fell in
ashes to the ground;"\(^1\)

Stevenson does not always confine himself to the short
picturesque tale, his "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" is a parable

of great ethical value, founded on an intensely interesting plot; it is a case of dual personality, which is connected with the scientist and with the laboratory. Here the creation is not, as in "Frankenstein," a strange monster, but a hideous, haunting, criminal second-self. Insight into the struggle of Dr. Jekyll is gained when he seeks freedom from the haunting Mr. Hyde, through the assistance of a friend. The mystery is not cleared up as in Radcliffe, but is artistically left unsolved. Hastie Lanion, the witness, writes, "I saw what I saw, I heard what I heard, and my soul sickened at it; and yet now when that sight has faded from my eyes I ask myself if I believe it, and I cannot answer. My life is shaken to the roots; sleep has left me; the deadliest terror sits by me at all hours of day and night; I feel that my days are numbered, and that I must die; and yet I shall die incredulous. As for the moral turpitude that man unveiled to me, even with tears of penitence, I cannot, even in memory, dwell on it without a start of horror."¹ This figure might be likened to a Montoni or a Schedoni, whose better self was not entirely dead.

Stevenson sometimes suggests the power of the superhuman by employing a character defective in some sense; the hero of "Treasure Island" is savagely pursued by an active and malicious blind man.

The influence of the School of Terror was felt not alone in prose fiction, but in poetry also. The narrative poem, which had never been wholly dead, flourished with the rise of romanticism and is found to have many of the traits of the

romantic novel. Three years after the publication of "The Mysteries of Udolpho," Samuel Taylor Coleridge composed "Christabel." This poem possesses the same haunting charm, and displays the same subtle art in the use of the supernatural as does "The Ancient Mariner," but it exhibits certain Gothic characteristics not to be found in other poems of this author. The castle, the forest, the old father and his young daughter, and the strange lady are all common features.

"'Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awak'ned the crowing cock;  
The night is chill, the cloud is gray;  
The lovely lady Christabel,  
Whom her father loves so well,  
What makes her in the woods so late,  
A furlong from the castle gate?  
She had dreams all yesternight,  
Of her own betrothed knight;  
And she in the midnight wood will pray  
For the weal of her lover that's far away."  

The mastiff barks, the sounds of the night are ominous, and Christabel sees a damsel bright, a lady strange, and in distress, standing before her; she hospitably receives beautiful Geraldine into her home. The supreme art of the poet is shown by the way in which he excites curiosity and suspends, -- not simply, like Mrs. Radcliffe, postpones, the gratification of it to the end of the poem. What Geraldine was we are not told,--a witch with glittering eye? And what was seen on her bosom?--"A sight to dream of, not to tell!" And what was the source of

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1. Published 1814.
2. Coleridge, Samuel Taylor: Christabel; Part I.
3. Ibid. 1. 253.
the spell worked on Christabel? Whence disappeared Geraldine?... for as Christabel looked on "that bosom old, that bosom cold," she drew in her breath with a hissing sound.

"Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,
And nothing saw................
The torch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,

Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes

'All will yet be well!' I ween, she had no powers to tell
Aught else; so mighty was the spell."

Christabel possesses all the mystery of the "Scarlet Letter," is more ethereal, and has an advantage over the longer romances in that it can be read entire at a single sitting. It can be read again and again, each time presenting anew the problem for solution, and never answering it satisfactorily.

Mrs. Radcliffe's ability to create is found not only in men in books, but also in living characters; her invention passed from art into life, and furnishes in Lord Byron, one who tried to be what the romanticist had conceived as the ideal hero. His apotheistic attitude toward women was one of his strongest traits. The best portrait of this gloomy, unhappy, restless, remorseful, unbelieving still unsatisfied soul is that of the Dark Page watching the dying "Lord."

"He clasps the hand that pang which would assuage,
And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page,
Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds, nor sees,
Save that damp brow which rests upon his knees;

1. Christabel, 1. 460 ff.
Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though dim, held all the light that shone on earth for him.

"His dying tones are in that other tongue, To which some strange remembrance wildly clung. They spoke of other scenes, but what is known To Kaled, whom their meaning reached alone; And he replied, though faintly, to their sound, While gazed the rest in dumb amazement round. They seem'd even then, that twain, unto the last To half forget the present in the past; To share between themselves some separate fate, "Those darkness none beside should penetrate."

"Lara" (1814) presents nothing new and original in setting, for the feudal estate, with lords and serfs and gay retainers had become commonplaces in the hands of Lewis and Scott; the solitary hall, the gloomy vaults, the moonbeams shining dimly through the latticed window have all appeared before. The great interest lies in Lara, whence he came, and what his purpose, and in his page, that stripling who obeyed his word and sign, who

"For hours on Lara would fix his glance, As all-forgotten in that watchful trance; And from his chief withdrawn, he wander'd lone, 

He walks the wood, his sport some foreign book, His resting place the bank that curbs the brook, He seem'd, like him he served, to live apart From all that lures the eye and fills the heart."

Of higher birth he seem'd, and better days, Nor mark of vulgar toil that hand betrays, So femininely white it might bespeak Another sex, when match'd with that smooth cheek, But for his garb, and something in his gaze, More wild and high than woman's eye betrays."

The grief of Kaled on the death of Lara reveals him to be not a page, but a woman, who, impelled by the love she bore to her master, pined away and died, leaving her tale and her mystery untold.

The poem illustrates another phase of the romantic movement, in Lara's decision to free his slaves. The disappearance of Sir Ezzelin suggests a mystery which was never wholly explained. In fine, one is forced to admit that while "Lara" does show evidence of various romantic traits, it is not a great credit to the School of Terror, nor to the movement in general, and one can easily believe that it was written as the author says "while undressing after coming home from balls and masquerades in the year of revelry, 1814."

Another resemblance to Radcliffe is found in "The Eve of St. Agnes," written by John Keats in 1820; the likeness here consists in the gothic castle and in the atmosphere of the poem. Prospero, with heart on fire, seeks Madeline on that evening which legends have appointed for the meeting of lovers, he enters by the portal door, hid from the torch's flame, and stands behind a broad hall-pillar.

"He followed Angela the lovely arched way
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;"¹

"And found him in a little moonlight room
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb."²

"Through many a dusky gallery they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed, and chaste."³

"A casement high and triple-arched there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-masked wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of
queens and kings."⁴

Atmospheric effect is produced by much the same means employed
by Radcliffe; the moonlight shines in varying effects, it
lights the way for Porphyry⁵; it sheds a "pale and languid light"
in Angela's chamber⁶; through the "dim and dusky gallery"
Madeline guides Angela.⁸

"Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine died."⁹

¹ Keats: "The Eve of St. Agnes." l 110.
² Ibid. 187.
³ "Eve of St. Agnes." l. 187.
⁴ Ibid. l. 209.
⁵ Ibid. l. 79
⁶ Ibid. l. 14.
⁷ Ibid. l. 128.
⁸ Ibid. l. 300.
The light effect reaches its height as the wintry moon shone.

"Full on this casement
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair heart,
Rosebloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory like a saint."¹

As the night wanes the faded moon made
a dim, silver twilight."²

"Shaded was her dream by the dusk curtains;--
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam."³

"St. Agnes' moon hath set,
'Tis dark."⁴

In such a setting, after having created the atmosphere, Keats leads forth the lovers, and achieves a terror less intense, but more artistic and fierce than Mrs. Radcliffe's.

"She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps with ready spears--
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found,--
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horsemen, hawk and hound,
Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.
"They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms, to the wide porch, they glide;

"By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide;--
The chains lie silent on the foot-worn stones;--
The sky turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.
"And they are gone; ay, ages long ago
Those lovers fled away into the storm." ⁵

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3. Ibid. 1. 282.
4. Ibid. 1. 325.
5. Ibid. 1. 356 ff.
The action takes place in the realm of unreality; for it was an "elfin storm from fairyland" that came to aid the lovers' flight, and all the creatures of the tale are but the

"Shadows haunting fairly
The brain new stuffed in youth with triumphs gay
Of old Romance." 1

In conclusion we may say that the absurdities of the renascent romance, truly are great, and are obvious. The merits of Mrs. Radcliffe are less evident to a generation to whom her devices are no longer new, yet with her works the Romantic School sprang at once into maturity. The romantic movement may be described, in one aspect, as an invasion of the realm of prose by the matter of poetry; and in this regard no bolder inroads are to be chronicled from first to last than those she planned and executed. 2 If we accept as true the statement that the aim of art is to please, then has this author succeeded admirably; she has lightened the tedium of life with a cheerful wit, and has stimulated the fancy, has "gilded the passing hour, provided a refuge for the weary mind, and summoned to her mimic stage those who need some pleasure and brief distraction from monotonous and anxious thoughts." 3

On the whole it must be granted that the current set in

motion by the creation of terror has broadened. It furnishes us now, not a dim and misty picture of ghosts and goblins, but the reflection of the unusual and the strange in real life; it furnishes, further, evidences that truth is even more wonderful than fiction. Absurd as it may seem today, this romance was a fit forerunner of the investigating, introspective, nineteenth century; it was right in line with the scientific investigation of the time and set people to thinking. It was the early novel of the unseen world. - To the classicist the world is a scheme; to the romanticist the world is a mystery; the romantic novel is a departure from the contemporaneous, from the accepted, from the probable, in search of a new emotion; and so the novel of wild romance is in some sense a prophecy in that it foreshadows the novel of problem, and of psychological study.

We may place it to the credit of Mrs. Radcliffe, in a degree at least, that one of her lineal descendents the pseudo-scientific "Frankenstein", suggests books much less morbid than itself, as "Elsie Venner;" Other novels of a decidedly romantic turn bring to mind "Caleb Williams," the "Marble Faun," and "The Scarlet Letter."

Turning again for a moment to the gloomy side of the novel of Terror, it is true that Mrs. Radcliffe has in later

1. Oliver Wendell Holmes.
2. William Godwin.
times been most unjustly made to bear the sins of her imita-
tors. "The truth is," says Mr. George Moir, "that the
sarcasms which have been directed against the puerile hor-
rors of Mrs. Radcliffeought justly to have been confined to
the extravagances of her successors, who imitated her manner
without either her imagination or her judgment, and con-
ceived that the surest means of producing effect consisted in
pressing the springs of the terrible as far as they would go."¹

Might we not address those who have wandered from the highest
romanticism as we would Poe,

"Oh, child of the night and mist!
Whom the sun never kissed
With his all-cheering ray,
Far from the light of day,
Sunk deep within the gloom of years long gone,
Still as the sphinx thou broodest all alone,
Or with thy thin lips mutterest a prayer,
To owl or raven hovering in the air.

"From out the smould'ring embers on thy hearth,
Foul grinning fiends and leering death's heads rise.
They fill the room with sounds of horrid mirth
And shriek thy name with awful prophecies,
Then maidens fair like far off memories
Take form and live again before thy eyes,
But in a moment all the shades expire
And leave thee shudd'ring by the half-dead fire.

"Awake! awake! heed not the owl's dread wail,
Go change thy raven for a nightingale.
Stir up thy fire, and in its merry blaze,
Behold the joyous hopes of future days,
And living love, not love that wanes and dies,
Throw wide thy shutters to the morning skies,
And kiss thy fingers to the morning light,
And live thy life, oh child of the mist and night!"
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