THE PRESENT TENDENCIES OF AMERICAN FICTION.

A THESIS:
PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
COLLEGE OF LITERATURE AND ARTS
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS,
FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF THE DEGREE
MASTER OF LITERATURE,
BY
ANNA SHATTUCK PALMER.
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It is curious—this constant demand for new literature. Each generation turns from the literary product of the preceding age and demands something descriptive of its own life and conditions. This is as true of fiction as of any other branch of literature and by carefully watching each new development in narrative writing, especially the novel which though yet immature has a most promising outlook, we may trace the thought of the day and note the tendencies for the future.

It is a necessity of our being to imitate and the great writer is he who acknowledges no master but the Creator and copies only the life works of God. Fiction is the interpretation of human life—the imaginary interpretation. Literature is an
Art is creative and so is literature creative, not imitative merely. In this speculative way, the novel has been dissected as everything else has been and its principles laid bare. Novels have been divided into two schools, the idealistic and the realistic.

Idealism: Hamilton W. Labie says, "The oldest art of the world is based on the conception that life is at bottom a revelation; that human growth under all conditions has a spiritual law back of it, human revelations of all kinds have spiritual types back of them and the clear, noble embodiment of them in various forms is the office of genius and the end of art." The artist does not copy the face alone, the mere features the vacant smile; he puts an expression upon the face, an expression of the soul beneath the
surface. Can a photograph, however beautiful, send the thrill through the beholder that is caused by a work of art? Can a phonograph, however perfected the machine, move us as would a girl herself singing that same song? No mechanical device can ever supplant art. So in literature, to be an artist, one must not feebly portray only the outside of life, he must tell of the emotions, the inspirations within.

Says Madame Stcher, "The novel should paint a possible better world." Sophocles pictured "men as they ought to be," and his wise words are as valued today as when he taught in the streets of Athens. Great romances such as Ivanhoe, The Scarlet Letter, Les Misérables and Romola, so full of humanity and idealism, appeal to the imagination of man; their future lit
secured them. They are written for all times, there is something in them above mere outdoor circumstance which will make them survive the popular novels of many generations. These were written by idealists.

Realism. Lola is admitted to be the founder of the "experimental novel". His Le Roman Expérimental was regarded as the message of the coming novel. Lola claimed like as Rousseau did that he returned to nature.

The first principle of this school was the exact reproduction of life, but Lola said "portray, do not photograph." The tenets of this school as here set forth seemed reasonable, but experience brought out unexpected meat points— a lack of proportion, of symmetrical development. Life is broad and elusive, the narrator is necessarily
limited and can not assume a wholly disinterested attitude. Lola himself though great has grave moral defects. As someone has said, "He has painted the cess-torts of life." Only Lola's wonderful genius will save his books to future generations and they will always be read under protest. Lola's two most distinguished disciples no longer follow him.

Maupassant is a psychologist, Karsman, a mystic.

Henry James, in 1877, with his American introduced the experimental novel into the English language. Howells followed his example though it was some time before he could produce a purely realistic novel. Modern American realism is fond of details, it deals much with international episodes and European travel, though
it moulds its foreign material into something American. It insists upon reporting life as it is and yet leave out some of life's most important elements, for it treats of the outside and not of that which is beneath and which is the motive for the outward manifestations. Realism is still more discussed than any other phase of our literature and yet it has had its day both here and abroad. James and Késmé have few, if any, following. Loa is more criticised than admired. Such books as Daisy Miller and Anna Karenina are not wholly satisfactory. There is a feeling of incompleteness as though the author had not grasped something. Instead of a broad, full idea of life being given us, a warped and melancholy part is presented.
Loebe claims that "realism has cleared
the air of a thousand follies, has fatted a
whole fleet of oratorical bubbles", but it must
give way now to a new movement. The novel
is ready for another reaction. The present intent
shown in Hawthorne's pure idealism is indicative
of the direction the tide has taken in this country.

Fiction ought to describe the whole of man's
idealistic and realistic. "Good fiction may be
described as that kind of imaginative writing
which lies nearest to the epic, dramatic, and or
narrative masterpieces of the past." The narrative
art has not yet reached its perfection. There is
much yet to do, but each new generation adds
a little. It is the opinion of W. T. H. Page that
"fiction is unquestionably the most attractive
and influential forms through which men of
literary genius express themselves today, and no fact of social significance, no human relationship, no class limitation, capacity or condition will escape the instinctive search for life which possesses this generation."

Our American fiction, though in its infancy, is growing rapidly. There is great excellence in parts and these contribute to the building up of the perfect whole. This great, crude country, undeveloped in its political, material and social conditions, this huge experiment, the tendencies of which are carefully watched by thoughtful men the world over, is likewise immature and indicative of many things in its literature, especially fiction, which reflects the character of the people and the country. All around us, much rich, unworked
material lies ready for future writers of fiction, with which to build up a national literature worthy of our country. American fiction is naturally divided into two distinct classes, the novel, and the short story. The latter.

Henry James. The name of Henry James must always be linked with the realistic movement in the history of nineteenth century literature. Whether his work be lasting or not, he will be known as one of the men who have been an influence in American literature. When such men as Lowell turn aside from their natural bent and follow another, we know that their master must possess power. James began his work with short stories published in The ‘Hakluyt’. These stories were
not remarkable, but there was a fineness of touch and undetective quality in them that won them readers and admirers. Some of these early tales have been preserved in book form. Of these may be mentioned The Passionate Pilgrim, a romantic tale quite unlike James's usual style and that odd account, The Romance of Certain Old Clothes, which is sensational in tone. We see from this first work of James that he did not adopt the construction method at once. Indeed, his criticisms and travels at this date show more of this later method. But from the very first of James's work, one feels the lack of real human interest on the part of the author. We know that his is not a broad genial nature and his stories do not come from his heart. The conditions of his life were such
as to intensify this head work. James's life has been cosmopolitan; he has constantly traveled and come in contact with the culture of many lands, and with his natural calmness of mind, the result has been the cold, reflective, impersonal realism for which he is noted. By James is said to have three distinct manners. Of the first, The Passionate Pilgrim may be taken as a representative; of the second, Daisy Miller; of the third, The Bostonians. Enough has already been said of The Passionate Pilgrim. Daisy Miller is popularly supposed by foreigners to be a typical American girl. We can not agree with them; though she is truly a product of our society yet, even in America, she would have been considered a fact, ignorant girl, allowed to roam wild in Europe by a foolish, helpless mother, her crudeness and lack of all conventionality are startling.
James makes her charming, nevertheless, for she is exceedingly pretty, elegantly dressed and possessed of considerable childish innocence in spite of her boldness. Randolph Miller, Daisy's little brother, is very cleverly sketched. He would not have "lessons in the care", but was "very smart. In the words of his sister, "She ought to learn more. He's only nine. She's going to college."

Daisy Miller is a representative of a class of young women that could originate only in the United States with its free, more simple form of society. She had no idea of conventionalities, was innocent in heart, but gay and fond of society. She conducted herself in Italy as she would have done in New York, and after recovering from the first shock, society dropped her. James has succeeded in bringing a distinct figure...
int literature and Daisy Millerian is an expression as well known abroad as at home.

The Bostonians is an excellent example of James's style. Although, it is interminable and the greater part is hopelessly dull, yet the reader holds along, for Mr. James in spite of his faults can hold his audience. In this book, we are introduced to some typical Bostonians, Olive Chancellor, a puritanic mixture of the present day, with an intense idea of duty and of necessity for the elevation of her sex. Slim, nervous and intense, she is a representative of a large class of New England girls. Nice Burdeyce is a little old lady of many reforms; Mrs. France, a brisk young woman whose practical common sense is refreshing. An original figure is Serena Tannet, the pretty young advocate of woman's rights who
"has a gift" and is Vice Chancellor's protege. Basil Ransome is a young Southerner who finally falls in love with Serena. The Bostonian introduces us to many queer dances and reform meetings which are perhaps more interesting to James' character than they are to his readers.

James' books are numerous, and some of his later works do not show that careful finish which characterized his first work. Mr. James is very fond of international narratives. An International Episode is one of the best known of his short stories. It is extremely amusing on its readers. His character are so typical as to be trite. There are no surprises. The Boston girl and English nobleman have been so often done as to be as familiar as Yankee Doodle and John Bull.

In this story, James is perfectly true to his theory
of realism. The description of scenery is exact; the conversation is natural. One speech from Mr. Westgate covers over four pages without a break and the reader is not spared one of the useless details that are always expanded upon by a talkative woman.

James's longer international novel is better and an artistic touch is given which much improves the style. The Portrait of a Lady is the best of these books. Mr. James draws his characters from the better class of society, but he usually chooses commonplace people from that class. He describes these uninteresting personages at length. He is extremely fond of detail and long, wearisome conversations. We feel that we can get these any day of our lives and hardly feel that we need to turn to a book of Mr. James's to obtain
information on these phases of existence. James's style seems to be working toward a definite end. He is perfectly impersonal. He presents a piece of life as a spectator who can not penetrate beneath the surface. He describes the figures which pass his window in a single day. Thus we do not get a rounded human life, a complete whole. But in spite of this cold, incomplete method of James, there are qualities in his best works which interest and charm, an elegance, an intellectual culture, a fine polish which is appreciated by his many readers both here and abroad. Not only Romeille has been affected by James's influence, but others, especially young novelists, have adopted his method more or less. But James's force has been spent and our young writers are turning toward the ideal as well as
the real.

William Dean Howells. We have no writer more thoroughly American than William Dean Howells. Even when he gives his characters transatlantic surroundings, they are genuinely American. His work is of today, his characters are contemporaneous with their author. There is a briskness and a freshness in Howells's self-confident style that makes the reader feel that he is in the current of the latest ideas, that he is in the very midst of our busy, everyday life. Howells is a versatile man, a novelist, poet, critic and writer of comedy, but preeminently, a novelist. Among his early books may be mentioned Their Wedding Journey, A Chance Acquaintance and A Foregone Conclusion. There was a decided charm about these bright, energetic stories. Their
scope was narrow, but Lowells was highly successful as far as he went. Yet he did not appear satisfied with his achievements, for after The Lady of the Loomost, Lowell changed his method of writing and became a disciple of Henry James, though James's senior in years.

"The stories have all been told," said Lowell and prepared to give the public some carefully directed types of New England life. His later manner, A Modern Instance is a representative work.

A Modern Instance opens with a description of a New England village in winter. It reminds one of Snow Bound and yet it lacks the spirit of Whittier's poem. The description is true, but it is of externals only. A Modern Instance is a story of today, of two obscure young people's
courtship and married life; the woman, pretty, passionate, jealous and narrow in her absorbing love. The man such a young fellow as New England society often produces, selfish and conceited to a degree. Unfortunately Bartley and Nancia were incompatible in character, as are so many husbands and wives. They grow farther apart and finally Bartley leaves his wife and child and goes west. She never ceases to love him, but grows harder and more narrow. The effect upon her character of Bartley’s desertion is well drawn by Cowper. The character of the good Gallick and his faithful love for Nancia, his faith in no creed, and finally after pain and sorrow, his decision to enter the ministry is true to life. The relentless old squire with his hatred of his daughter’s husband is a strong
This book is lifelike and truly realistic, but it is quite prosaic and a little disagreeable to have the heroine discover a tiny mole in the eyebrow of the hero immediately after the first kiss, while he in his turn remarks upon a slight scar at the left of his ladylove's lower lip. This is strict realism to doubt, but I am rather sceptical as to the value of all these petty details. The real worth of the book is marred by these grating notes.

*The Rise of Silas Lapham.* Silas Lapham is a large, coarse, honest man who has made a fortune in middle life from his mineral paint. His early life was full of hardship and poverty and he went to war from a sense of duty to his country. In this story, Howells
has described an American, a rich man, but one who has obtained his wealth honestly, and who when trouble comes preserves all his former integrity of character. The scene is laid in Boston. The book is interesting in spite of Howells' insistent descriptions of petty details and long, stupid conversations. A vein of humor relieves the prosaic character of the work. Of course, there is no plot, the book is an exhibition of some typical characters from a large class of American society, the suddenly rich. The novel is faithfully done, a life is held up for your inspection and you watch the different stages of desire and ambition with which riches affect the human mind, however humble and honest. Silas Lapham reminds one of Balzac's Étienne Bouvard, we see the same slow, honest, nature; Silas Lapham possessed the same blind faith and pride
in his paint that Binetian felt in his perfume,
and both showed nobility of nature when misfor-
tune came. The Lapham family is not so crude
as the rich Dryfoose family in A Hazard of New
Fortunes. Penelope is particularly interesting,
untamed, but original and humorous. Mrs. Lapham
is the faithful wife, happier in her busy poverty
than she ever was in her idle wealth.

A Hazard of New Fortunes, the best of
Howells' later novels, deals with more character
than are met with in Silas Lapham, and
exhibits more contrasts. There is a change of
scene from Boston to New York; the book is less
 provincial than those which preceded it. The new-
paper scheme which takes Basil March and his
family to New York is rather an improbable affair
but it serves to keep the various characters togeth-
Fuller's, slangy, humorous, full of nervous life, and proceeded by great advertising ability is admirable. The 'Angel,' Dryfose, who supplies the backings for their newspapers is a thick headed, obstinate, coarse man whom richer have not improved. The pathetic figures of his wife and son, and the two nursing, smooth daughter complete this interesting family. The southern Colonel and his daughter are rather flat. Beaton, the artist, is hardly worth so much space as is devoted to him. Lily Leighton, the bright, sensible young girl, and Linda, the one-handed German socialist, are two distinct characters. Koursk in this story, as in many others, has described to perfection the small inconsistencies of woman's character. This I Hazard of New Fortunes, upon the whole, does not present anything new. Koursk has employed the same
system, dry and meagre, but perfect in its way. His descriptions of New York are true and interesting, and relieve the long conversations. Howells regards the trivialities of life as important and sincerely believes that true art consists in describing the common circumstances of daily life, but his realism finally becomes hard and unsympathetic. It is so uncompromising, it leads nowhere. Howells possesses great talent as he could not be read. There is a tinge of humor in much that he has done which saves it from the commonplace, and he possesses a wonderful ability to portray such people as we meet and know as well ourselves. Howells is not as heavy as James, but he also lacks the finish of the latter. Yet he has more naturalness than James, for he becomes as interested in his characters as sometimes to forget his theory of writing.
and then we have many delightful pages.

In Criticism and Fiction, Kowelle makes this statement: "The light of civilization has already broken even upon the novel and no conscientious man can now set about painting an image of life without perpetual question of the society of his work and without feeling bound to distinguish so clearly that no reader of his may be misled between what is right and what is wrong, what is noble and what is base, etc." This is a very laudable ambition, but all the truth has not been told by these latter day novelists. Fielding, 1748, Sterne, 1768, George Eliot and Victor Hugo had a few good ideas. Kowelle must pay the penalty of all writers who neglect the ideal for the real alone. Future generations who have gone beyond our style and manners of today may show a little curiosity about
this author, but his work will be dropped for want
descriptions only of the outward commonplace of existence,
but also of the inner life of the soul.

Narcan Crawford, of American parent though
born in Italy, has produced a multitude of books. As
living writers of repute he is so prolific. Mr. Crawford
makes novel-wring a business. In fact, he confers
this in a sordid and worthless booklet entitled, The
Novel. He treats the subject from a purely business
point of view and applies the law of supply and
demand with the coolness of a book-keeper. He says,

"A novel is a marketable commodity of the class
collectively termed literature." He scorns the "surface
novel"; the novel, he agrees with Conan Doyle, "is
to amuse the public." Crawford complains that the
overworked author who "falls into slipshod, careless
work is often cruelly, if not altogether unjustly blamed." He
public says, "He has written himself out," but the
poor professional must go on writing as a business.
With this exalted idea of his art, we could hardly
expect the work of Marian Crawford to be of the
first order. His writing is most uneven and of a
wide range of subjects. Persian, Turkish, Russian,
Italian, German, English and American life has
all been pictured by him. Crawford has spent his
time in continental travel and has lived the life of
many countries. Now that he is nearing middle age,
he has selected the United States as his home and
has come to New York to live.

A Roman Singer is perhaps Crawford's best
novel. It is a tale of Italian life. Cornelo Grandi,
the old professor of philosophy, tells the love story of
his adopted son, Aimo. Aimo Bardegra, from a little
peasant lad always warbling and whistling becomes
a great singer. Before he makes his debut, he falls violently in love with Hedwig, a cold, angelic looking German girl. A sharp contrast to Hedwig is the brilliant, passionate Baroness who dies such a tragic death. Hedwig’s father, Von Lira, the harsh old soldier who will not listen to his daughter’s wedding a singer, is a forcible character. The most mysterious fantastic figure in the book is Baron Benoni whom we suspect of being the Wandering Jew till we are informed at last that he is a maniac, a Russian bandit, escaped from an asylum. One of the most artistic touches in the book is the moonlight scene in the Pantheon. “Hedwig stood out alone upon the white circle on the pavement beneath the dome and looked up as though she could see the angels coming and going.” Then rose the wonderful voice that burst through the night in a great passion
of song, the love song of Vims. The story is told in a simple, attractive way by the old Professor who, under his outer talk of economy and timidity carries a noble heart. The Roman Singer is valuable as giving us a picture of Roman life and custom of this century.

Characters, an historical novel, is another of Crawford's best works. The grand figure of the Persian stands out clear and bold against a rich oriental background. Crawford has shown much dramatic skill in the handling of his material and has produced some artistic effects. Dr. Claudine, Carl Patoff and Griffensteine are some of the most interesting works of this period.

Saracinesca, the first of three novels on modern Italy, is the best of Crawford's later works. Saracinesca is a novel of Roman life immediately
before the revolution of 1870. The conditions existing in the last days of the Papal temporal power are described. Saracinesca is of ancient family and rich. A lean, dark man, of middle height, but powerful and strong. The Duchess d'Astaradente, the woman with whom he is in love, is a wonderful, dark beauty of noble character. She is very kind to her pitiful old fool of a husband who loves her deeply. Donna Tullia is a vivid figure. She is the widow whom Saracinesca's father wishes him to marry. She is moody, coarse, wears loud colors, and the "disagreeable blue eyes" of which we tire as the author refers to them so often. The Prince is a representative of the old days, passionate in temper, haughty, bigoted, but gallant. Olo del Ferice is a smooth, clever villain, who makes trouble and then profites by it. One can not help admiring the
nobility of Saracinese and the Duchesse in spite of
their faultes, and the reader rejoiceth at their marriage.
The Roman picture are drawn with an artistic
stroke. The description of the Roman family in these
troubled times and the picture of an aristocratic
young man's life at this period are particularly
interesting and instructive.

Crawford is now writing as rapidly as ever.
Katherine Lauderdale is as flat as possible; whole
conversations being repeated and the story lacking
entirely in interest. "Love in Idleness," a Bar-Harbor
story, written for the "Century" is to be equalled in
idleness and utter worthlessness only by Katherine
Lauderdale. The busy pen of this author has just
completed the sequel to Katherine Lauderdale and is
now occupied with Lorea Broccio, an Italian story.
It is sad to see a really talented author, as is Marion
Crawford, degenerate into a writer of mere literary hack
his international romances have pleased the public and
his popularity has been long enduring, but it will
not stand the test of many more Katherine Landseer.
An author must have a higher aim than writing
for money. He must be more than a literary
machine. A few of Crawford's novels, such as, A
Roman Singer, Loretta and Saracinesca may be
remembered in the coming century, but the greater
number of his books will be forgotten as soon as not
by the present generation.

Leo Wallace is known as the author of
three books, 'The Fair God,' 'Ben Hur' and 'The Prince'
of India. Of these, 'Ben Hur,' a tale of the Christian
is the most popular. There are a few vivid pictures
in the book, as for instance, the celebrated chariot race,
but there is much that is dull and lovelv contrived.
The book owes its popularity no doubt to religious sentiment. The Faust God, the first of Ben Wallace's books, is less pretentious, but the material is better arranged than in Ben Hur. The story is of the Aztec's beneficent God, Tezcatl; the struggle of the Aztecs against the cruel Spaniards is described, and the fall of Montezuma, the Aztec king.

The Prince of India, a long work of two volumes which came out two years ago, does not seem to have attained the wide popularity of Wallace's other books; in fact, it leaves a most unsatisfactory impression. It treats of that elusive old character, the wandering Jew. The most interesting part of the book is the comparison of religions, but it is likewise one of the most unsatisfactory, for the author leaves it in an unfinished state, as he does so much that he
write. This looseness of construction, which is such a prominent fault of Lew Wallace’s, is more plainly evident in The Prince of India than in anything he has written.

Lew Wallace aspired to be our historical novelist, but he has produced no great historical novel as yet. His books are interesting and much read, because they treat of subjects interesting in themselves, not because Lew Wallace has true literary merit, though occasionally some one scene stands out clear cut and effective from the mass of monotonous description.

Charles Dudley Warner, our genial essayist, has written two novels of considerable merit, Little Journey in the World and the Golden House. The first book illustrates the deadening influence of great wealth and at fashionable life when a
fine nature; such as Margaret. The second work contains many of the same people as some found in A Little Journey in the World. Again, the subject of wealth and soiled life is dealt with, this time we note the effect upon a young man before the crash comes and he loses his fortune. There are some fine touches in The Golden House and strong contrasts brought out, but it ends rather abruptly.

Never have we noted as many women’s names in literature as at the present time. Though none are preeminent, yet many have done excellent work. It is right that woman should bring her experience into this record of life. Her point of view is not the same as that of man and literature is the richer for her contributions. We see more and more women entering this field of work and with experience, no doubt will come great excellence.
John Ward, Preacher, by Margaret Olinda, is a strong book which has been much read. It appeared at the time that Robert Elmore was creating such a furor, and received immediate attention. John Ward is a logical Asceticist, almost unnatural in his intensity, but strong. John Ward's lack of self-assertion seems a weak point and yet such fine, true nature as here sometimes fail when tested along certain lines. There are some lovely, fragrant scenes in the old house and garden which please me, but the true spirit and worth of the book lie in its beautiful picture of the happy, trustful married life of a good and loving man and woman before religious fanaticism had entered in and ruined their earthly paradise. Philippe's Wife, a later book, which treats of an uncongenial married couple, has occasioned but little
Mrs. Katherwood writes historical novelettes. She has made a study of the early history of Illinois and South-east Canada and has woven many a tale from their records and traditions. The Romance of Dollard, first published in "The Century," at once won favor. The pathetic love story of Dollard, which ended so sadly in the death of the newly made husband and wife, was followed by The Story of Tonty, in which we find the interesting figure of La Salle. The Lady of Fort St. John, Mrs. Katherwood's latest romance, is as touching and exquisite as anything which she has written. The noble lady of St. John and the death of her brave men can not soon be forgotten by those who have read the tragedy. Mrs. Katherwood's stories always end in death, but she is not morbid; she always sees the bright, blue sky above the scaffold. She
sketches with a delicate touch and brings in many little scenes from nature which give her work a singular charm of primitive woods and shining waters. Mrs. Gathwood is working along a new line and has a choice of materials, but much will be left which can be developed by future authors.

Mrs. Burnett was born in England, but at an early age was brought to America where the family settled in the South. Her stories treat mainly of English and American life. The brightness and vivacity of her style are very attractive, but her morals, though pleasing, are not particularly valuable. The type of independent American girl as pictured in her Emralda and Louisiana is the most distinctive word in the novel that she has done. Her best sketches of English life are That Lane, Love, a kindly story, and Truly Tim's Troubles,
a most touching and pitiful story of life in the mines.

It has been said of Julian Hawthorne that he is clearly and easily the first of living romancers. This is an exaggerated statement and yet Julian Hawthorne certainly does possess great talent. Archibald Macindoe is the most original of his contemporaries. It is a romance, pure and simple. Sebastian Stone which has been compared to Adam Bede is a very strong book. Sinéire is an intense romance and Faith Shakespeare is another interesting work. Julian Hawthorne deals with life, not society. He studies the human soul and pictures character. The later works of this talented author are more and more emotional; he is now writing merely for money.

Edward Eggleston is a writer of the worst,
Illinois and Indiana especially. He writes of life he saw in the middle part of this century, as he traveled, a Methodist preacher and later as a Sunday school worker through this part of our country. The Koger Schoolmaster, The Circuit Rider, Roy, and The Draytones are all descriptive of the rude, hard-working life lead by our western pioneers, but Eggleston describes not only the outward circumstances, how and hard as they were, he tells us of the true hearts and strong character hidden under the homespun.

Eggleston's writing is a contribution toward the national literature which is rapidly being built up, literature description of every class of people and every section of country.

The Short Story.

The Americans have made the short
story their special province and are excelled by none in this special branch of literature. Many questions have been asked as to the reason of the short story. Is it the result of climate; national restlessness; are the writers scant of breath; do they not see life as a whole?

A great variety of climate is found within our borders; we have the warm, semi-tropical climate of the extreme south and the black cold which reigns in northern Maine and on the shores of Lake Superior, and yet, it is true that by far the greater part of our country enjoys a temperate climate. We are subject however to sudden changes and these stimulate the energy to concentrated effort and again encourage and strengthen the will. So do the forces of nature mould the character of man. Can the languid Kindos or the stolid Sequoian say
loses from his climatic fate? The atmosphere of sudden change is said to be productive of the best results in work. And yet with the advantage inevitably comes its disadvantage; our efforts can not be sustained. This climatic influence affects literary work as well as other branches of industry. The high-strung and restless spirit of this age and particularly of this country is another influence which seems to have affected the mind of our thinkers that he is incapable of producing meritorious work of great length. Moreover, there is no demand for such literature. Our public is restless as well as our writers and the cry at present seems to be for short stories. Reading is one of our favorite forms of amusement, but we are a working people, we have but little leisure; business engrosses our attention and in
our brief periods of rest, we ask for something clever, artistic, but short. The Europeans in the
calmier times and longer periods of leisure can
not feel our need. Because of this condition in
our country, numbers of writers have risen who
produce what they do, not from lack of thought
and nerve to express their thoughts or because
they do not see life as a whole, but because the
conditions are such that works of greater length
are not in demand. But our public is critical,
what it does not require in quantity, it exacts
in quality. We are an educated people and our
great reading public is cultured enough to require
good literature. Of the merit of the American
short story, there is no doubt. Some of these stories
are positive flashes of genuine. In how few stories
characters and places have been struck off by
these writers. They succeed in giving me, in a few well-chosen words, vivid impressions of classes of people and whole sections of country.

The cry that fiction is not as good as it used to be is nonsense. Look over the books and the magazines of the last few years. We may not find such works as Cooper or Hawthorne, but we do find a much higher average of literature than formerly. The magazines are an organ of the short story is a prevailing force today. Such magazines as "The Harpers", "The Century", "Scribner's", "The Atlantic" and "The Cosmopolitan" are read all over the land. The short story has grown with the magazine. The magazine necessarily required short stories and as the popularity of magazines increased, there was a greater demand for short stories which thus circulated widely.
though the mass of the people. In spite of the
great amount of good work that has been done
already, a bright future lies before the story-
writer, for our American authors have not
gone below the surface; they have only dipped
here and there and unused material lies in many
sides. As our country becomes more settled and our
line quieter, the demand for the short story may
not be so great, but bright and clever minds shall
will ever hold a place in our literature.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich, a New England
writer, is both a poet and a prose writer.
His unique and bright Marjorie Dan first gave
him a place among story writers. Marjorie Dan
consists of a series of letters written by a young
man to a sick friend. The young man wishes
to amuse his friend, as he pictures as though
real, an imaginary house across the street and
a lovely maiden. Every letter is full of Marjorie
Darn with whom the sick man falls deeply
in love. Finally, recovering, he hastens, unsuspec-
tedly to his friends, to the Town of his lady love
when he there is no old house across the street
as Marjorie Darn and all has been a dream.
The poetic attitude of Aldrich's mind is
carried into his prose and gives it a color
and fineness of finish. Some of his short
stories are Two Bites at a Cherry, My Cousin
the Colonel, and The Dying Verder.

Edward Everett Hale, an Unitarian minister
of Boston, has written not only on religious, social
and historical subjects, but also has given me some
excellent stories. The Man without a Country is his
best known story. This is the pathetic history of a
man who wished with a curse that he had never had a country and as a punishment, he was made an exile and was not allowed the rest of his life to hear the name of his country or touch the star and stripes. Yet he died, after an unhappy life, a patriot at heart and longing for the country which he had cast off. This story made a strong impression and the phrase, a "man without a country," is often quoted.

Ten Times One is Ten is another of Baker's well-known writings. Mr. Baker is one of our prominent literary men, a popular lecturer, and a man of wide influence.

Sarah Orne Jewett is a writer whose stories are always good and hence are much read. The large, square house, dim, cool rooms and prim garden of the New England village are found in
most of her stories. She pictures the gentle class.

Her style is natural, healthy and always interesting.

In Country Doctor is her most ambitious work.

In this book, she describes a young girl, an orphan, who brought up with a physician decided to enter the medical profession herself. Isn't it true type of an independent American girl.

Some of her best known stories are Tales of New England, A March Island, A White Cover, The King of Folly Island, and A Native of Stony. There is a freshness of outdoor life about these little stories which makes them charming. This is true both of A March Island and The King of Folly Island.

A March Island is a rich farm, high above the marshes, which is discovered one night by a young artist in search of a lodging place. Here he mingles on, making sketches in the fields...
and woods and working in the studio which he has fitted up in an unused part of the house. The simple, charming life and his study of the farmer's daughter, one of those high, true New England girls, hold him until his wealthy relative reclaim him and carry him back to the old society life once more.

"The King of Talcott Island" is an angry, resentful man who vows at an injury done him that he will live on his land but his own. A young man of New York, worn out with business cares, comes to the island to rest. The study of the stubborn old man, the pathetic figure of his daughter, innocent victim of his pride, and the many touches from nature render this story one of the most attractive Mrs. Jennett has written.

In her tales of New England, Mrs. Jennett has picked up many of the odd, quaint characters of
which obscure corners of New England are so full and
has placed them before us in her usual bright and
entertaining manner.

Mary Wilkins is one of our best known
writers of short stories. Her stories, like Nissfjellt,
are of New England life, but she does not describe
the aristocratic and cultured class, her entire field of
work is confined to the common and poor. The lot
of her people appear as meager, plain and often
repulsive, but how full of human nature! As hot,
just some incident of everyday life and all the
bare details given. Miss Wilkins is narrow, even
more so than Miss Jewett. She deals with but a
single phase of New England life and that the most
restrained. Her character of here is sure to be some
quaint, solitary body with Puritanic tendencies who
has seldom or never left her plain and narrow
surroundings. There is one very noticeable peculiarity in Miss Wildrime's work—her characters are 
heroinces. Rarely, a man is introduced incidentally, 
but he is of importance only as he relates to some 
woman. Her women all possess a purple dress or 
a purple ribbon. This monotony of trifles wears on 
the reader—one can not overlook this, for these 
stories are made up of petty details.

A collection of Mary Wildrime's stories must 
not be read at one time, but a story here and 
there with heavier reading in between will make 
these little sketches very attractive. The place that 
Miss Wildrime holds in American literature 
might be compared to that held by Millet in art. 
Their works is quite similar. They both paint the 
hard, common life of the poor; they both express 
the spirit, the beauty, the reverence that can shine
through plain, rough exteriors. Compare the homely figure of "The Man with a Hoe" with Polly Hoed in Sister Liddy, or Betsey, in A Porter, and I think you will feel that something of the same spirit is expressed in the work of Grant and written in Jane Field is the author's first attempt at a long story. It is a little book which relates the struggle of Jane Field, a New England woman of bare, hard aspect and the possessor of a Puritan conscience. For the love of her daughter, Lois, who is a frail girl with consumptive symptoms, Jane Field represents herself as her sister, Esther Harris, whom she strongly resembles, but who is dead. In this way, she becomes heiress to a sum of money and Lois is brought to a more healthful town. Jane Field does not touch the money however, but depends all her little earnings to keep them alive
while Luc constantly reproaches her mother for her dishonesty. Jane Field's repentance is the most pitiful part of the book. Shy goes to every house in the village, saying, "I ain't Esther Maxwell, and to the end of her life, she continues to say to every stranger, "I ain't Esther Maxwell." I doubt the value of Jane Field. Mary Wilkins has given us enough of this peculiar type and in spite of some good work, the book seems a little superfluous.

The strength of Miss Wilkins lies in her comprehension and delineation of the New England character. Neither she nor Miss Jennett is a great writer, but the true, charming little sketches of both will long be remembered. Within the last few years, there has been a revival of learning in the south—an
awakening from the long stupor which followed the war. Whole sections of country and many classes of southern society comparatively unknown before have been laid open to us by a bevy of bright southern writers. Thomas Nelson Page has described Virginia; Joel Chandler Harris, Georgia; James Lane, Kentucky; Charles Egbert Craddock, Tennessee, and George Cable has portrayed the languid, yet passionate and fascinating Creole of Louisiana. The negro problem has been agitating our people ever since the civil war, and the valuable description of negro character and life have been read with absorbing interest. Not only the negro with his warm sunny nature, tinged with superstition, but the shiftless poor "white trash," the simple, hardy mountain men and the cultured, chivalrous southern gentleman have been pictured for us.
We have become acquainted with the natural beauty of the South, the broad plantations, the
stream, cloudy mountains, the floral wilderness of
St. John's river. Surely, much has been added to
the richness and beauty of our literature by these
glowing southern pictures.

Thomas Nelson Page has taken the nags and 'poor white trash' as his particular subjects,
but he has written no better story than Eliza. On
Eliza, daughter of Vikings, was deserted by her
English love. Page brings out the pathos of her
sad experience with a few masterly strokes. This
story has been called "a little masterpiece."

A typical story of Thomas Nelson Page's is
an old negro, is second in a duel. He is told by
his master that he must be shot, in case of the
absence of his principal. The demeanor of the old man and the humorous qualities of the negro character are brought out vividly by Page in this sketch. Born to Seed is pitched rather high, but shows strikingly the condition to which many a good Southern family was brought by the war. To David Payne, Blankie Tannant and many other stories of the author might be mentioned. Page’s latest story is Little Darby, a picture of war times.

Joe Chandler Carric is famous for his Uncle Remus stories. Probably, no writer has a greater knowledge of the negro character than Mr. Carric. Though Mr. Carric is not so brilliant or so varied in his talents as Mr. Page, yet this ability to portray the negro character in all its phases of mirth and sadness renders his work equally valuable. The stories told by his old negroes in their fantastic
dialect have something of the effect of folk lore
which is quaint and pleasing.

A few of Harriet's best known tales beside
the Uncle Remus stories are "Where's Duncan",
Balloon and his Master, Amanias, and Aunt
Fountain's Prisoner, also, Two Joe and Other Stories.

Thomas Nelson Page and Joel Chandler Harris
are pleasing, bright writers, but much more
important than either is George Cable, the most
noted of our southern writer. "Old Creole Days"
is the first and most popular of his stories. It
consists of a collection of short stories, illustrating
the character and kind of the Creoles of Louisiana.
The enter the old Creole quarter of New Orleans
and the new world is left behind. We catch
a glimpse of the old régime and are shown the
strange mixture of untruth, grace, courtesy,
selfishness, bravery, and cunning which compose
the Creole character. The childlike quality is often
seen in the Latin races is strong in the Creole
and a passionate dislike of change in their mode
of living. Some of these stories are Sen George,
Madame Delicience, Jean at Coquehina and The
Belles Demoiselles Plantation.

The second of Cable's books was The
Grandissiime which dealt with the feud of
the Grandissiime and Frigibes, in New Orleans,
in the early part of this century when Napoleon
ceded Louisiana to the United States. This book
shows the stubborn adherence of the Creoles to
the old regime.

Some of George Cable's other books are
Madame Delphine, Bonaventure and his
novel and latest work, John March, Southerner,
which is loosely put together and inferior to his early work. Wible is a keen observer, has a simple style, has the ability of bringing out the nobility of commonplace, uncouth character and possesses a quiet appreciation of humor which saves him from falling into sentimentality. He has also the advantage of an original line of work, and his tale of Creole life will live far into the future.

Charles Egbert Craddock (Miss Nufree) is probably the best known woman writer of the South. She has confined herself almost exclusively to one locality in the Tennessee mountains, and one particular peak, "Great Smoky," is apt to rise in the background of most of her stories. Mountainous character is faithfully delineated by her and we become well acquainted with the
lonely dwellers on mountain sides and with the roughness, joy and hatred of their lives. Some of her best known stories are *The Prophet of the Great Smoky*, *In the Tennessee Mountains*, *In the Bluffe* and *Story of Keeton Bluffs*. Nice Krutie's faults are an inclination to exalt the commonplace and a lack of humor.

Another well-known woman who writes of the south is Octave Thanet (née Trench). For a number of years, she spent the winter in Arkansas and as a result of her experiences, she has given the world her forcible long story, *Expiation*. It is a powerful and dramatic picture of war packers in Arkansas and is the best thing she has done. She has contributed quite extensively to the magazines. *The Day of the Cyclone* is one of the most interesting of these tales; *Otto, the Knight*
it also good, but there is rather a striving for effect which detracts from the naturalness of the theme.

James Lane Allen's fine pictures of Sister Doloresa, a nun in love, Two Gentlemen of Kentucky and The Flute and Violin are well known to readers of the magazines. King Solomon of Kentucky is a touching description of an old vagrant who was considered of no earthly good and yet when the plague swept the town and all who could were flying for their lives, he remained and dug graves for the victims of the plague. There is a delicate finish and warmth about Allen's work which is quite unique in its way.

Hart Farnam, the noted humorist, may be mentioned among these writers, for within...
the last year, he has published *Puddin' Head Wilson*, not a short story to be sure, but from its disconnectedness, it has the effect of being such. The meritorious part of this work is the original calendar kept by that unfortunate philosopher, "Puddin' Head Wilson". The novel is not Mark Twain's line of work and will never bring him fame.

The southern writers have done good work but there is better yet to be done. Their work is steadily improving and broadening out as their country is developed. The dialect story has been overdone and even now the indications are that it will lose its predominance. A certain color is given by the use of dialect, but it should bear touch here and there and not used almost exclusively. The character of the southern story is far more
been chosen largely from the lower orders of society. The negroes, the poor white trash, the mountaineers, form a part of society and are full of human nature, but we do not wish to devote all our time to them. The southern gentleman, the young girl in high life, the business man and woman, the statesman, all these are of interest to us and are worthy of being portrayed. Stories may be written merely to amuse us, but there are forms of amusement which benefit us and those which do not. The negroes and ignorant white man are not improving, we would not associate with them in real life and why spend much time with them in literature? After we have once informed ourselves upon their characteristics and capabilities and modes of life, let us drop them as far as our reading is concerned.
More stories should be and will be produced of the character of Colonel Carter of Cartersville and I War Debt by the bright and capable southern writers who seem to be increasing daily.

Bret Care is still a force among the writers of short stories. The luck of Roaring Camp is as famous as ever and Bret Care still holds his supremacy abroad. His stories are of western life and his characters are quite sure to bring up sooner or later on the Pacific slope. Some of Care's typical stories are The Story of a Nine, The Town of Table Mountain, A Phyllis of the Sierras, and The Argonauts of West Liberty. Bret Carter is purely spontaneous, broad, breezy and romantic. He has no theory regarding his art; he simply tells his story. But Bret Carter's star of fame has reached its zenith; the vast west is populated
now, it is no longer a great unexplored, romantic possibility; other writers have sprung up of great merit also, and now Bret Harte must divide his literary laurels.

Mary Mapes Dodge has written much of the west, both long and short stories. She is an artist and has illustrated many of her descriptions with well executed and suggestive sketches. Her delightful bits from nature are the best work she has done. The Ted Krez Chimes and Cour D’Alaine are two representative stories.

Richard Harding Davis is a very popular young writer of the day. There is a dash and a swing and a frank, youthful quality in his style that has caught the public fancy. Davis has been compared often to Kipling, but beyond the facts that they are both bright, young and humorous, there is
little resemblance. The character of Gallagher first brought Richard Harding Davis before the public. Gallagher was a newspaper office-boy with a street education, quick, cheerful, hardy, plucky. His interest in crime was his ruling passion and he had a positive talent for detective work. Van Bibber is another well known character. The wealthy young man, good and honorable, but gay and careless, and the experiences of himself and friends, all of the leisure class, are described in a breezy clear manner. Some of Davis's later efforts have an attempt at moral teaching which is a little unexpected from him, and which does not improve his style. He wants something clean and string, but not a didactic tone from the gifted young favorite.

Richard Harding Davis's latest collection
of stories, entitled *The Exiles*, consists of a series of tales, the scenes of which are laid in foreign lands, and it must be acknowledged that his character loses something from change of surroundings. Richard Harding Davis belongs to New York and never appears the same away from his native city. His future is uncertain. His stories as far have been animated and interesting, but he is doing something of really permanent value, that remains yet to be seen.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps has written some powerful stories, full of strong religious feeling. Some of her best stories are *Katie Ayer*, *The Story of Alice*, *Fourteen to One*, and *A Singularity*. Her **Berne** and *Short Suits* are clever little sketches, though several of them are a trifle coarse. They have a wide spread popularity.
in that large class of people who read to be amused.

Fortnight in France and Lady Pine are two
bright stories. Bunnicke's work is full of quiet
stories and is very amusing.

Late Douglas Riggin writes in a
spiritually, humorous way. She at once takes the
reader into her confidence and makes him feel
at ease. A Cathedral Courtship is a bright, fresh
love story in which two young American students
of cathedral are the principal characters. Timothy
Oust is a simple, touching child's story much
read by older people. A Summer in a Canon
Penelope English Experiences are equally
entertaining.

Mrs. Burton Harrison's society novellems
have been popular for the last few years. Her
first story to attract attention, The Inglomance,
is her best. Sweet Bells out of Tune followed the and her latest is A Bachelor Said. The subject of this latest effort is the advanced girl of the period—a hackneyed subject, upon which Mrs. Burton Harrison has cast no new light. A Bachelor Said is flat and uninteresting and it is an effort to follow her career to the end which is marriage of course. Mrs. Harrison's fame is not transitory. She writes for the public of today which enjoys her society people. She may be useful as a reporter of social usages and fashionable froweages but she has no real literary merit.

Hopkinson Smith is the author of Colonel Carter of Casterville; Janvier wrote The Uncle of an Angel and E. J. Edwards has written many good southern stories.

There is such a multitude of writers of fiction.
constantly supplying our reading public that it is hard to pick out representative work, but all these parts go to make up a whole which is called American fiction of the present day. We now have too many sketchers and not enough artists. This quick, hurried work of a new country and a nervous, rushed century must give way to quieter and more thorough methods.

Hamilton H. Nabie says: "When we bring the books of a nation together, we become conscious that there is such a thing as national literature, because we perceive in them certain common qualities." Surely, in building up our national literature, judging from present indications, no branch of work will have more power in forming the minds of the people than our Fiction.