A COMPARATIVE STUDY

OF

GEORGE SAND AND GEORGE ELIOT

BY

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Standing almost contemporaneously in the literary history of France and England are two famous women: George Sand, and George Eliot. Each lived and wrote of life and all its rich and varied experiences with singular and fascinating power. Each stirred men's souls to deeper emotions, and quickened men's minds with fresh and new ideas. To each belongs the honor of shedding the light of genius upon the darkened ways of human life.

To study to bring out the best thoughts, the true significance of the life and work of these two notable characters is the purpose of the following pages. Associated always in our minds by many resemblances, these two women present in their lives, characters, and work, many suggestive contrasts. The endeavor of the following study is to set forth those elements which are most typically significant.
Synopsis:

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A Comparative Study of George Sand and George Eliot.

It has been said that George Sand is a remarkably good study of the pedigree of a genius. His ancestors, and the circumstances of his childhood show plainly the sources of his imagination. "L'Histoire de ma Vie," written when she was fifty years old, though it has a characteristic lack of pravity, sheds much light upon the heroine's parents and grandparents.

"George Sand" was born in 1804. Her father, Maurice Dukin, was an enthusiastic soldier and a clever writer. While quite young he married a Parisian milliner, much against the will of his aristocratic mother, who treated him with alternate indulgence and sternness. Thus by her mother a child of the people, and by her father the daughter of the aristocracy, George Sand owns many of her instincts to the simplicity of her position, between, as it were, the two classes.
In her we see the confluence of blood almost royal, with the most plebian. The union of her four paternal ancestors was unusual, two being without the sanction of the law. In each case the woman was loved with a passion which defied all conventionally. Is it surprising that George Sand so firmly espoused the doctrine of free love?

The marriage of her father with a woman of the lower classes brought him into conflict with his own family. This fact, together with the violent temper of her mother, produced constant jarring between the two factions throughout Madame Sand's childhood. Her early life was made up of many contests, and she suffered much from this distinction of classes. Many of what she calls her later "knitting and democratic instincts" were merely the explosions of long standing grudges. She was imbued with all the prejudices of two distinctly opposed lines of ancestry. She had the blood of two classes in her, and in addition to this, was a genuine child of Paris. She seemed to have two phases in her mind, one inclined to dark thoughts, and the other eager for distraction.
She was a dreamy child who seemed to be constantly thinking. At this period of her life she read little, but her imagination was silently active. She seemed to meditate upon what she saw or heard until she lost consciousness of reality, and lived in an atmosphere of her own. With these tendencies the passion for romance took possession of her guilt naturally. She composed numberless stories while yet a child and acted them out with her sisters. She read Madame de Genlis' "The Pattercads," a story, somewhat socialistic in a small way, and obtained some ideas which always clung to her.

Her peculiar education fostered all her early tendencies. It was by fits, philosophic and religious. Her study at the convent where she was placed was irregular and restless. She always opposed Boniface's idea that the miraculous should be suppressed on the pretext that it is a lie. She revelled in imaginary fantastic scenes, and delighted in the emotions of fear which they gave her. At sixteen, while yet at the convent, she experienced a great religious crisis. Her emotion seemed to be genuine, and
certainly was ecstatic. She says she suffered the "sacred malady," felt the tears of joy, and the exaltations of faith. As soon as her religious fervor abated somewhat, she determined to educate herself, and began a course of reading which attracted her. She read entirely as her fancy led her, and without direction. She gave up her religious literature and turned to the poetry of the Romantic School; then to Philosophy. She was too young and enthusiastic to take such doses of metaphysics without detriment, and she fell into a sort of intellectual confusion. She took possession of all she read, but could not choose between them. She read the poets and the moralists just as they came to her — and finally rescued them. She submitted to his logic and gave up Catholicism.

During the first years of her married life her intellectual pursuits became neglected, and her readings and notes were abandoned. As soon as she had ended her unhappy married life by a legal separation from her husband, she went to Paris with her children in search of work, and there her literary career began. Her first work was written in connection with Jules Sandeau, and after this she adopted the
pseudonym of George Sand. She had read much and had induced
real sorrow, and at first she wrote spontaneously from the depths of her own
emotions. "Indiana," "Jacques," "Lelia," "Valentine" belong to this period.
Then, as she was an impressionable woman, other influences were brought
to bear upon her. She was swayed by political, religious, and social
subjects. Apologies of all sorts of theories found a ready spokesman in her.
She wrote then guided by a system. To this class belong "Anne," "Jeanne," "Consuelo.
Later she began to feel a weariness for this theorizing, and
returned to nature and simplicity. She felt again her old love for the
country, for the fields at Berry and her early poetic dreams. Then
"Le Mai au Château" and "François le Champlain" were written.
The social novel constituted the last class of her long labors. "Jean
de la Roche," and "Le Marquis de Villemer." In 1833 she departed for
Italy in company with Alfred de Musset, a trip which was interrupted
by de Musset's sudden return. To this incident we owe "Elle et Lui"
and "La Confession d'un Enfant du Siècle." For friends she had
nearly all the celebrities of Paris. Hervé, Lamennais, Descamps, Lizot,
Flaubert, and Chopin. Chopin accompanied her to Marjorquie and there in the old château of Valdemona the two worked together. It was probably due to this intimacy that "Consuelo" was written.

The personal history of George Eliot, though not so striking as that of George Sand, is probably reflected quite as much in her writings.

George Eliot was born in a commonplace district of England in 1819. Her father was a carpenter, but of a superior education. She had a quiet life, assuming control of the household after her mother's death. She was passionately fond of an older friend, and indeed all her life shows a craving for affection and support. She read much with her father and was ambitious and faithful in all her studies. At the school where she was sent, she gave herself up to religious influences, but her religious fervor seemed prompted by duty rather than by any personal emotion. It was a matter of sentiment and conscience with her and later her thoroughness and craving for complete satisfaction led her to doubt some of her experiences. She became
acquainted with some free thinkers with whom she had constant intercourse for eight years. Her orthodox father was very much alarmed to find his favorite daughter going astray, but she continued to maintain with her own liberty and her father's affection.

She translated Strauss's "Life of Jesus", read liberalist books, and after her father's death went abroad with literary friends to perfect herself in foreign languages. Returning to London, she became assistant editor of the Westminster Review. Like George Sand, she was greatly impressed by Rousseau, but the person whom she calls her greatest help in life was George H. Lewes, who worked with her and directed her labors. He was not in a position to marry her, but she joined herself to him and they set out for Germany together. His influence over her had no effect of lowering the moral tone of her writings; in fact, quite the opposite. They spent the winter in Germany, and then proceeded to France. She was very fond of travel, and during an Italian trip gained material for "Pamela" by a thorough
She was a deep thinker, calm and reflective, yet with no lack of natural warmth. In books, she was fond of Milton, as so serious and sublime a soul as hers would be. Wordsworth and Motive were also favorites. Byron she considered a “vulgar genius.” Herbert Spencer exercised a great influence on her thought. He had just published his work on Social Statics, a subject in which she was greatly interested, for though politics had no attraction for her, she fully hoped for great social revolutions.

In viewing the lives of these two great women we see many contrasts. To their ancestry and early surroundings it is due that George Sand became so impressionable and George Eliot so calm and clear-headed. Sand was much more influenced by outward circumstances than Eliot; whence we can see that Sand was a creature of emotion, and Eliot of intellect. Their studies were pursued in quite a different manner. There was no such conflict in Eliot as in Sand.
The former worked steadily, in reading, digesting and discarding what she thought was fake. It is noteworthy that both were influenced by Rousseau, though Sand to a much greater extent than Eliot. Politics attracted Sand, but had no charms for Eliot. They were both true to nature, Sand perhaps more than Eliot. Both had their seasons of religious fervor but differed in that Eliot developed into a sort of agnosticism. George Sand was essentially a Frenchwoman, and George Eliot an Englishwoman, and as such they are typical of their natures: George Sand, idealistic and romantic, and George Eliot, realistic and didactic.

For special comparison of the literary work of these authors we take up as illustrations Eliot's "Pimola," and Sand's "Converso."

Pimola is an historical work - a perfect picture of Florence in the fifteenth century. It gives an account of the struggle of faith and culture for pre-eminence. Pimola herself is the daughter of Bardo di Bardi, a blind old scholar, who lives this daughter and herself in his cherished library, quite apart from the outer world.
He has renounced his only son because he has become a monk. So Zomola lives in bound exclusion until the beautiful Greek Tito comes and with his bright smile and pleasant manner wins her heart.

Tito had been raised from poverty and neglect while yet a small child by his foster-father Baldassare. They had both suffered shipwreck in a journey. Tito had escaped to Florence, and the old man had been sold into slavery with the Turks, expecting Tito to sell the gems which he had, and ransom him. Tito, however, persuaded himself that his duty lay in Florence, and married Zomola. He hid there in prosperity until Baldassare escaped from slavery, and came seeking vengeance for his neglect. Then trouble began to close in on Tito from all sides. The vices of his nature, at first not great, rapidly developed as he tried to avoid the consequences of his deeds. He denied his father, deceived his wife, and was treacherous to his political friends. Worst of all, Zomola learns of his treachery, and decides to flee from Florence. Escaping in the disguise of a nun, she is met by Sarnavola, who convinced...
her of a higher duty than her own desire, and she turns back to Tsiago.

Political complications arise, and Tito decides to leave Florence,
but is met by the mob at a bridge before he can escape. They are pressing
him down when his ready wit saves him. Throwing his felt and
scarella far into the crowd, he cries "There is money - there are
diamonds," and then leaps into the river. The waves buffet him
outrageously, but he is young and strong, and keeps his strength until at
a safe distance from the city. Cast fainting upon the bank, he
opens his eyes to find a new danger in the shape of his father, a
withered and broken, yet furious old man, bending over him with a
fierce joy in his eyes. The old man has feasted that this victim so
strangely cast at his feet may be dead, and as he has cheated him of
his vengeance, and to see his foster-son open his eyes is the mostest
right he has known for years. He kneels beside the prostrate form and
grasps the neck of the tunic. Slowly he presses his knuckles against
the smooth round throat, and the next day finds them locked in
each others embrace, silent forever.
After Titus's death, Amnola hunts out a simple little cotadino whom Titus has designated as his mock marriage, and spends the rest of her life in company with this other wife and her children, sad in her thoughts of the troubled past, yet calmly happy in the consciousness of obedience to the higher will.

Amnola is a moral tragedy, a history of the development and degeneracy of character. Take it as the ethical interest, and the motive of the book is gone. Every interest is made subordinate to this question of the ruin or restoration of character. These moral situations of hers would be quite impossible to George Sand. There is little satire in Amnola—George Eliot is too serious and kindly sympathetic for that—and the raising she never attempts. Still the book is not devoid of humor of a gentle and kindly sort. Although Eliot is not at home in depicting scenes of English rural life, her genius did not desert her when she tried to portray a passage in a foreign country. So perfect a picture of Florence is Amnola that the book has been sold to travelers as a guide book of the streets of that city. She describes the town and the
epoch admirably. Romola herself seems a trifle too modern, but the
political disturbances, the struggle between the old faith and the new,
and the influence of the ardent Savonarola are faithfully drawn. The
setting for the story is admirably and conscientiously worked out with
careful attention to detail.

Of the central character of the book we feel that poor Manua
Trigida gave the best description when she said Romola had a way
of "walking like a procession." An admirable character, noble, pure and
lifty, but feeling herself superior to ordinary people—perhaps unconsciously.
She was taught up on books, and the pagan traditions. Her attitude
from the first was quite separate from ordinary life, which she
rather disdained but is quite ignorant of. It is not that she is
wise of her own faculty or personal attainments for she hardly knows
the processes any, but she seems to have a feeling of vague superiority.
Possibly this is due to the fact that she knows herself to be pure
and noble while the world is not. She has not seen enough of the
world to understand the workings of human nature, or of any nature.
water than her own. Her own loftiness is hand in hand with a
certain narrowness - she is as studied and constrained. She herself says
to her father:

"It is a great gift of the gods to have been born with a hatred and
contempt of all injustice and meanness. There is strength in scorn
as there was in the martial fancy by which men became insensible
to wounds."

Yet later in her life she learns that scorn for injustice and
meanness has not so much effect as she thinks in so far as it avails
little toward righting it. She never seems to be on a level with
any one for she is noble, high-minded, and elevated; a true daughter
of the gods, and fully conscious of it. Even the influence of Sardanapal
is powerful at one time, though it modifies some of her feelings, does
does not produce a radical change in her nature. It teaches her
that her duty is beside her worthless husband, but it does not raise
her dead love for him or make her more gentle or tender toward him.
He is nothing to her now. She sees in him, not a husband whom she
once dearly loved, but only a man who has committed grievous sins. Her love for Tito once lit up her colorless life with all the splendor of everlasting life. When she finds him false and treacherous, it turns to a stone in her heart. There is no touch of pity, no relenting toward him. She has not enough insight into human character or sympathy for the weakness of it to enable her to check Tito's downward course for an instant.

Tito himself was a tomahawk through a despicable character; a mixture of good and evil which excited directly opposed opinions concerning it. His crowning weakness was a fear of ease and a dislike for anything hard or disagreeable. His superficial charms are so great, he is so gentle, so respectful to his elders, so devoid of vanity, and yet withal shows such an absence of integrity and honesty that we wonder how a man could have so much good in conjunction with so much evil. We cannot see how a villain could be so kind to the helpless, and so altogether charming. At first the good certainly predominated in his nature, but his cardinal weakness
led him further and further downward. In his heart he preferred good to evil, but his first he necessitated another, and from lying and petty deceit he came to treachery of the vilest kind. Yet he never lost his natural scruples of discretion. He was never harsh unless his own safety absolutely demanded it, and justice could have termed it made easier for him he would have him nothing but victims. Such natures are not admirable — no one can defend them — but the life of one possessing such a nature is more largely shaped by circumstances. Threw lay Romola's opportunity, had she been other than Romola, to have dominated his life and cherished these traces of a better nature. But Romola was too inaccessible in her own purity and nobility. She was too intolerant of evil, too far above weak human nature, and consequently too ignorant of it, to gain any hold upon Tito's life. He turned for consolation to the pretty, childish Texas, to the trusting little creature with no more intellect than a kitten. She soothes and comforts him because she believes in him, and does not remind him of unpleasant duties to be done, or cruel wrongs to be righted.
Of all the characters of the book, that of Parmelee stamps itself upon the mind as the most powerful. He was a man of grand energy, splendid aims, and passionate sympathy. Narrow, superstitious, and poor-loving though he was, his moral fire was too great to be resisted. His dogmas and prophecies were exceedingly distasteful to Femla, who had been brought up with a dread of fanaticalism and monkish piety; yet he was a man whose presence inspired trust and reverence, a great man in spite of his dogmas. Femla recognized in him a nature greater than her own. He came into her life as a rock of defense at a time when she was torn with anguish and uncertain what course to pursue. He inspired her with a feeling of something great to which she was called by a stranger king who aroused a new strength within her. His personal influence, and the feeling that his words implied a higher law than any she had yet known, overcame all her prejudices. She submitted her mind to his because she found there satisfaction for her moral needs for which all her previous culture had been inadequate. As for his dogmas and prophecies
of coming regeneration, she allowed herself little thought about them.

Ivanová's great distinction from the rest of the clergy lay in the energy
with which he tried to make Christian life a reality.

"Consuelo" is classed among the works of the second period of Modune
Sand's literary life, and of these works is popularly considered the most typical.

It is essentially a romance; a tale of mystery, adventure, and love.

The heroine Consuelo, as we see her first, is an awkward child in
the most unprogressing stage of girlhood. She is a musician with a
most beautiful voice, a child of the streets. She is a charity pupil of
the great teacher Porpora, who characterizes her as the most studious and
most docile of his pupils; pure, and innocent and devoted to her art.
She is early betrothed to Angolato, a handsome good-for-nothing Venetian,
who worships her as much as his shallow nature will allow. They live to-
gether happily until the time comes when Consuelo, now grown to be a
beautiful woman, begins to sing in the same theatre with Angolato
under the patronage of Count Justiniani. Here she wins great fame
as a singer, but loses her faithless love. He becomes enamored with
Crisilla, an ordinary type of choragoirl, and plans to leave Venice with her. Consuelo wishes to go to Angolito, and entreats him not to forsake her, but Bepora prevents her and hurries her away to Bohemia. There he places her in charge of the Kandelstadto, a noble family and friends of his. The avails at the Castle of the Giants on a stormy night, written with anxiety and terror. The son of the house, the noble Count Albert, rovants continually about the bloody deeds of John Secre and the Husilts, falls in love with her and haunts her with his mysterions ways. He leads her to underground caverns where he toxic for days with a violent idiot for a companion while his people mourn him as lost. Finally, Angolito, tired of Crisilla, finds her here, and representing himself as her father, forces her to flee to avoid him. On her way to Vienna, she meets the boy Joseph Haydn in the fields, and they decide to journey to Vienna together. Consuelo disguises herself as a boy, and they thread through all sorts of thrilling adventures. They pass successfully bandits, assassins, and others, and arrive safe at Vienna, where they obtain places in a theatre. Consuelo sings before
Maria Theresa, and is a great success, but at the height of her fame it is informed that Count Albert is dying. She hurried back to Bohemia and arrived in time to fulfill his dying wish, and marry him. The sequel of the romance is given in "The Countess of Omdurman," an account of Coruelo's further life, and what became of Count Albert after his death. The romance of Coruelo's life is long and strange, dealing with wonders and mysteries which enliven the story from an artistic point of view. At this time a mysterious sect had a theory of writing in a single principle the love equality and community of all, and the phrases of this sect appear frequently in Count Albert's mad speeches. Apart from this theory, free love is the theme of the story. There is no satire in "Coruelo" and even less humor than in "Romola." "Coruelo" is as perfect a picture of Venice as "Romola" is of Florence. Its beginning particularly is Venetian, representing the city in all its phases. It is a beautiful background for a love story and one truly fitting. Envolving ladies in palaces and gardens, lulled by the soft rocking of the waters, and dreamy songs, make a spell about the
city which makes it seem like enchanted ground. The life of the lower classes who labor in the hot sun is made to seem not less beautiful. Consuelo sits on the steps of the landing place dangling her feet in the water while she threads the shells for necklaces. She goes through the streets careless and free, happy and unconscious of her work. Consuelo belongs distinctly to a past age, and is portrayed perhaps more in keeping with the time and place than is Pomola. There is much more accepted superstition about the book than in Pomola, and the heart-rending experiences of emotion are dealt upon at a terrible extent.

Of the characters of "Consuelo", there is only one which can be compared with those of "Pomola". Angoloto is a common type of the unworthy love; not at all so superior a villain as Tito. He is shallow and petulant, like Tito, a beautiful young Adonis, it is true, but in other respects he is utterly unlike him. Angoloto is weak, indolent, and vain; in fact, his best point is his firm belief in the goodness of Consuelo. "Il traitait Consuelo comme ces matrons dont les femmes italiennes im-}


face à l’heure du péché.

Porpora, though a great and distinguished musician, is bitter and cynical, quite cursed by disappointment. Count Justiniani is a dissipated pleasure seeker, and the poor Count Albert is too mystical and uncanny a creature to be analyzed.

But the character of Consuelo herself leaves nothing to be desired. She is the closest of all the lovely pictures of Venice which George Sand has given us. She is simple and natural with nothing false or sham about her. Although a Gipsy, the daughter of a vagabond singer, and with all the freedom of the very lowest social class, she is pure and sweet, not by training or tradition, but by some noble instinct. She is brought up in the midst of vice, yet instinctively holds herself free from contamination. She is tolerant and not horrified by evil as the high-minded Pomola is, for she seems to accept it as something not hers to judge. This seems to be her natural character and the one most suited to her. Didacticism does not come from her as well as from Pomola, and the few instances where she is made to seem didactic have a jarring note as of something
forced and obstinate. Consuelo is in everything unconscious. She is busy
with her lessons, with her art, with those around her, never with herself.
There is so much going on in her quiet mind that she never has time to
measure herself and see how she stands among others. She is superior
to everyone around her yet she is the only one unconscious of the fact. The
most delightful characteristic of Consuelo is her complete ignorance of the
real difference between her nature and those around her. The contrast
between her and Amoleto in this respect is most marked, and I am
certain many will agree, rather unfavorable to Amoleto. Consuelo lives in
constant companionship with Amoleto, and he is far from being as pure
as she; yet under her influence their intercourse is marked by a
cordial familiarity and brotherly affection. Amoleto realizes how
much better she is than he; yet she herself never makes this dif-
ference obvious to him. She knows his faults and she has within her a
mastery of the knowledge of human nature and tolerance for its imperfection.
She has no grand ideas or expectations about her lover, but with all the
serenity of natures like hers, she loves him. He makes up her world
for her, and she expects no transformation of character but only the
comfort of mutual support in which she will share even more than her
share of hardships. This is a noble type of love than that which
pretends to much more, as Armitio did, and never, it exists longer
and endures more. When her love wrongs her, she is filled with an-
guish, yet feels for him only tenderness and a desire to save him from
the consequences of his own wrong doing. There is nothing heroic in this
to her, but only the promptings of her own heart. To Armitio, the re-
turn to his husband was an act of heroism, and the war through the
 ordeal like a Spartan, rigid and uncomplaining, except when the
natural fire of her character flares through the coal of her conventionality.
Carmela is buried out of her love's reach to prevent her forgiving and suf-
ferring too much. Armitio was capable of noble self-sacrifice, but not of
total self-abnegation as Carmela was. Armitio was conventional, Carmela,
spontaneous. Carmela asks nothing in return for her love, and does not
find it dead when she receives nothing for it. With Armitio all
love for her husband was buried with her knowledge of his crimes.
The character of Amelie is worked out with much more grandeur
and elaboration than that of Concuelo. She may be superior to Concuelo
from an artistic standpoint, but in nature the Venetian surely stands
above the Florentine. The mass of readers will prefer Concuelo for
they will feel that she will have more sympathy for them. Concuelo, even
at the height of her fame and success is too great for none of us.
She is always quiet and friendly, and seems to be on a level with the most
common of us. In acts of kindness she performed like a sympathetic
woman, Amelie, proudly, like a queen. There is no ground for union to-
turn Amelie and her readers, for there is no fellow-feeling between them.
She seems to be outside the pale of mere humanity, for she was high above
more common souls. She had the greater fame, but perhaps would herself
have preferred the lesser, and longed sometimes to tear away the bonds
of the constraint and conventionality of her nature. Of these two
characters which was the greater? When we know whether true
art is embodied in the simple and understanding, or in the noble and
the great, that question will be answered.
We can hardly compare the two books in general. They are built upon such absolutely opposite plans that we have said all when we say that one was French and the other English. The one delineated passion and nature; the other intellect. In "Consuelo," imagination predominates; in "Arnold," intellect can be traced throughout the whole work. In "Consuelo," there seems to be no development of a theme, no plan whatever. George Sand seemed to be governed in writing it by impulse, for the first part of the work is far superior to the last. There is a "commençement enchanteur" puis une "sort de fatigue." When her inspiration lagged, she brought in her social theory, quite incoherently and apparently as a makeshift. So the book lacks unity. The writer's interest in Consuelo seemed to have failed her, and she then gave this creature of her fancy over to the mercies of the unlucky Count Albrecht—a sad fate for one so lonely as Consuelo. She seems to admit the right of private revenge about her work; her purpose was only selfish.

In "Arnold," on the other hand, there are evidences of conscientious research and careful reflection. In fact, the plan is almost too obvious;
there is a tendency to fatalism. George Eliot’s characters are not cold characters like George Sand’s. They are persons with a mixture of good and evil in them. She shows the importance of each act in forming the character and making up the higher life. She shows the human soul, hungering for joy, and struggling with moral forces. In her intense morality is one of the strongest contrasts to Consuelo. She gives nothing of the excitements and troubles of love and in this—to an English mind at least—is superior to George Sand. In Consuelo the divine passion is made rather common by being dwelt upon. She handles it until all the gilt is worn off. All its ups and downs she exposes to view, showing no discretion or sense of delicacy. George Sand felt human nature. She had not made it a study, she did not know it as George Eliot did.

Much of George Eliot’s power lies in this feature of her mind—in her psychology rather than her ethics. In her subtle understanding of the lives of men and women, rather than in her extreme morality. George Eliot shows herself a creature of fact; George Sand, of fancy. Exactitude is lacking in Consuelo and is very apparent in “Amboise.” With me
admireable in giving a background for their characters. George Eliot's characters seem a part of their setting. George Sand's backgrounds are made essential to her characters, and are chosen only to harmonize with the mood or nature of the chief character.

George Eliot's method of law is very marked. She groups facts into laws, and teaches not surmises but stern truths from which there is no escape. Each character is made to work out his own fate. "As a man sows, so shall he reap." There is a tragic earnestness about life as she shows it, that might drive upon the reader. In "Amleth" there is something relentless in the way Tito is taken to his ruin. We feel as if his character were designed to prove a theory of the author. It is very skilfully done, but we feel an unwillingness to witness it. The futility of the thing is oppressive. Yet she takes great pains to show that his downfall was of his own producing. Of what avail were his smaller virtues if he had within him one great weakness? There is a burden of philosophic teaching about it which is too heavy for a story. Her agnosticism heightens this. The idea of destiny which she works in gives us the
feling that the world is hopelessly dark. Her rule of action is stern and rigid. Berthe would be glad to be relieved from the responsibilities of a sorrowful life but cannot be released from the higher rule. Her only happiness comes from self-nunciation, and that is only a sort of sorrowful content. There is a gloom on the story, and clouds seem inevitable.

On the contrary, Sand spreads the rosecolor of romance over her work. It is not strictly satisfactory, nor does she explain how her happy situations come about. She is never chained to stern fact but appeals to her imagination, and leaves everything delightfully hazy. Like a fairy tale, somehow the desirable comes to pass, just how we must not ask. In depth and earnestness and moral teaching, George Sand can never compare with George Eliot. In this respect we can only show their great contrast. We do not dream of claiming distinction for George Sand on the ground of any of the solid virtues which George Eliot possesses. Neither has George Sand the qualities which will make her writings live as George Eliot has. Even now George Sand's style is obsolete; nature has supplanted idealism, and she is, to a large extent, forgotten.
But there are parts of her works which are not perishable. She has an advantage in that she most truly depicted passion and the forces of the heart as no Englishman has ever done. She ought to show that love is divine and something, and in this lay her greatest claim to superiority. There is much about her work which is charming and even extraordinary. Her style is expressive and full of color. It is graceful and easy, and when the public mind, fickle as ever, will have oscillated from the realistic to the idealistic again, then will George Sand arise from her unjust oblivion to attract new generations by the splendor of her poetry.